



## St. Martin of Tours Parish

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### 7 ways to encourage family prayer

"Parents who pray together teach by the way they live that God is real; that he is present, listening, and eager to be a part of our lives" (Archbishop Charles Chaput). Try these ideas to add more family prayer.

**Make the Sign of the Cross upon waking.** Let this be the first prayer you each say every day.

**Pray the Angelus at 6:00am, 12 noon, 6:00pm, when you are together.** This happy prayer reminds us of Jesus' birth.

**Invite him to join you.** Light a candle at each family gathering to represent Christ, our family guest.

**Teach prayerful listening.** Write down children's prayer intentions on a calendar and monitor the results. How prayer is answered

teaches us about ways God communicates.

**Turn the car into a chapel.** Use the drive to the grocery store, to practices, or play dates for family prayer, to sing favorite hymns, listen to sacred music, or count blessings together.

**Develop spontaneous prayer skills.** We have such a rich treasure of Catholic prayer that we forget to pray spontaneously. Encourage children to pray unrehearsed

and detailed prayers aloud to build a lifelong habit.

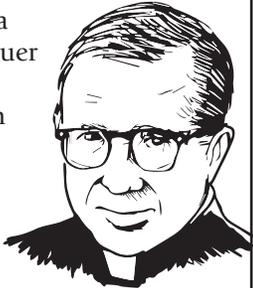
**Practice acceptance.** It is important for children to learn early that while what we want may be compelling, what God wants for us counts most. Besides, God's ideas are always better than ours.



## Thoughtful Moments

### St. Josemaría Escrivá

St. Josemaría Escrivá de Balaguer was born in Barbastro, Spain in 1902. As a youngster, he saw a monk walk barefoot in the snow and was inspired to become a priest. Ordained in 1925, St. Josemaría had to minister secretly because of religious persecution during the Spanish Civil War. In 1928, he founded Opus Dei (Work of God), an organization based on the idea that people can obtain holiness by performing their everyday tasks with a Christian spirit.



### When plans go wrong...

Although St. Joseph was blessed as Jesus' earthly father, life didn't always go smoothly for him. In addition to the regular paternal duties, Joseph had to protect and raise God's son amidst great danger and responsibility. When life doesn't go as planned, St. Joseph can be our model for what to do: pray, listen, and trust.

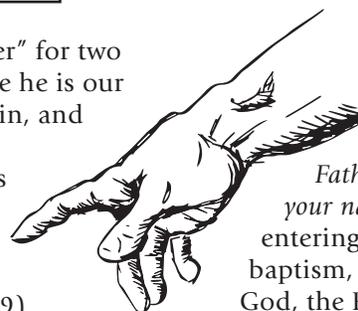
"Entrust your works to the LORD, and your plans will succeed" (Proverbs 16:3).



## Why Do Catholics Do That ?

### Why do Catholics call God "Father"?

We call God "Father" for two reasons: first, because he is our Creator and our origin, and second because he loves and cares for us as a father does for his children (Catechism of the Catholic Church, # 239).



Moreover, Jesus taught us to call God "Our Father." "This is how you are to pray: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name" (Matthew 6:9). Upon entering the Church through our baptism, we become children of God, the Father.

## Enjoy your happy family

The essence of a happy family is that members have a sense of meaning and purpose. They enjoy each other's company and can work together to become the people God intended them to be. Here are ways to enjoy your happy family:

- **Swap stories.** When the family is home, leave the screens off so you can reconnect. Tell about interesting moments of your day. Find out the story of your child's day – even if a tidbit is all he will share.
- **Put family first.** Family time comes ahead



of work, play dates, sports practice, television, game time. Friends are important, but family comes first.

- **Stay calm.** Avoid losing control in front of the children. Keep a peaceful environment in the home and children will feel safe and learn self-control, too.
- **Develop family rituals.** Rituals and traditions add to a child's sense of family identity. Mass on Sunday mornings followed by a favorite breakfast, for example. Pizza and game night on Fridays. Patron saint feast day celebrations. Family prayer before meals.

### Scripture LESSON

#### Luke 9:51-62, What does it take to be a disciple?

In this Gospel reading, we meet three men who were eager to be Jesus' disciples, but weren't yet disciple-ready.

The first man was caught up by Jesus' message but he wasn't prepared for the cost. Jesus had no home, no shelter, and no family – none of the things people then considered necessary for a happy life. It is not always comfortable to be a Christian.

The second man was also eager. Burying one's parent was considered a binding religious duty among the Jews, so he wanted to bury his parents before



becoming Jesus' disciple. Yet, when Jesus says "it's time to act," little else matters. We must act in God's time, not ours.

In the third story, Jesus explained that looking back while plowing can ruin the row. He wanted the third man to understand that we need determination for discipleship.

**What can a parent do?** Remind children that it isn't always easy to be a follower of Jesus. There are luxuries we have to give up and comforts we may have to sacrifice, but the rewards will be unimaginable.

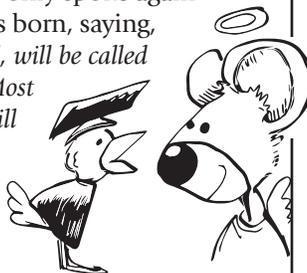
### Feasts & Celebrations

**June 3 – St. Charles Lwanga and his companions (1886).** While serving under Ugandan King Mwangi II, St. Charles and his friends faced persecution for their faith. When Lwanga and 21 of his companions refused King Mwangi's immoral demands, the king ordered them all to be executed, which they underwent in joyful anticipation.

**June 21– St. Aloysius Gonzaga (1591).** St. Aloysius prayed vigorously and fasted from age 7. Upon joining the Society of Jesus, he was ordered to

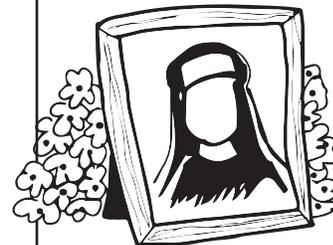
cut back in order to study and spend time with the other students. He died while nursing the sick.

**June 24 – The Nativity of St. John the Baptist (1st century).** Before St. John was born, his father, Zechariah received a message from the angel Gabriel foretelling his birth. For his doubt, Zechariah was struck speechless and only spoke again when John was born, saying, "And you, child, will be called prophet of the Most High, for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways" (Luke 1:76).



### Parent TALK

When my daughter was ten, her school principal—Sister Bernadette—died. Kara had never been to a funeral before, so we talked about what to expect, what to wear, and how to be a comforting presence to others. I explained that death is a part of life and



that because of our faith, we don't have to be afraid of death.

When we got to the funeral, the church was packed! Kara was impressed by how many people came to remember Sister Bernadette and celebrate her life. I explained that the funeral was for us to say good-bye.

Later, at the reception, Kara was surprised to see people laughing and joking. I explained that, far from being disrespectful, this was another way to remember Sister and how she touched our lives. Sister Bernadette was gone, but going to her funeral reminded us that we would see her again in Heaven.

### Our Mission

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