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Let go.

How are you doing this spring? Busy as ever? I know I am. Being busy is fine, but it’s not a badge of honor. I say that, knowing I often tell people how busy I am because it makes me feel good about all the stuff I am doing. But really, how much of what I do is necessary? Or healthy? Do I really benefit from all those things or from constantly running around? How does it impact my family? Does it improve my relationships? Am I attached to the need to always be occupied?

If I ask myself these questions honestly and strive to answer them truthfully, I start realizing how much I need to let go. Often without realizing it, most of us are attached to habits that we don’t take time to consider. Time. Time is fleeting. But there are just as many minutes in an hour as there were ten years ago. I’ve just added more more things to worry about. Let me be clear: there is nothing wrong with more things. But thoughtlessly adding more for the sake of more is not healthy or good. Every so often, I need to take some time to assess what I am doing with my life.

All of us should.

Lent is the perfect time to slow down and reflect on our lives. That is partly why the Church gives us this season. As Jesus took time in the wilderness to deal with the devil, so must we. We need to consider the temptations of our own lives and learn how to deal with them. Maybe follow Jesus’ example. My life has important needs in the long run that should not be sacrificed for the needs of today. Maybe I should be humble enough to take responsibility for my own life. Maybe I should set my own house in order before I criticize the world. I’ll try those things this Lent. Maybe you will too.

Peace and good,

James
## March Lent
31-DAY BIBLE READING PLAN

### WEEK 1 – The Last Supper
- Day 1: Matthew 26:17-19
- Day 2: Matthew 26:20-23
- Day 3: Matthew 26:24-25
- Day 4: Matthew 26:26-28
- Day 5: Matthew 26:29-30
- Day 6: Matthew 26:31-33
- Day 7: Matthew 26:34-35

### WEEK 2 – In Gethsemane
- Day 8: Mark 14:32-34
- Day 9: Mark 14:35-36
- Day 10: Mark 14:37-40
- Day 11: Mark 14:41-42
- Day 12: Mark 14:43-46
- Day 13: Mark 14:47-49
- Day 14: Mark 14:50-51

### WEEK 3 – Jesus’ trial
- Day 15: John 18:28-32
- Day 16: John 18:33-40
- Day 17: John 19:1-3
- Day 18: John 19:4-6
- Day 19: John 19:7-10
- Day 20: John 19:11-13
- Day 21: John 19:14-16

### WEEK 4 – Jesus’ death
The Pillars of Lent

I don’t know about you, but I have found that the observation and celebration of Lent with kids is tricky business. I feel like it’s important to teach them the traditions, but not to the point that they are discouraged or put off by what can be considered very mature and adult-like practices of our faith. Fasting and abstinence, for example, are pretty hard for a child to fully understand! That is one of the reasons why the church doesn’t recommend that fasting and abstinence be fully practiced until age 14. But even then—try telling a growing teenage boy that he needs to abstain from a snack after school on Ash Wednesday! This is not for the faint of heart, my friends!

So, for my family I have chosen to focus on bringing the three pillars of Lent—prayer, fasting and almsgiving—into our Lenten practice in a very focused and practical way. If I can weave these three things into our lives in a way that makes sense to our family, the kids seem more open to the practice. Sitting them down and really explaining why we are doing what we are doing helps a great deal as well!

Prayer—This is something our family typically does together at meal times in the form of a spontaneous prayer of thanksgiving. This year, for Lent, I have challenged each of us to find a time each day to spend 5 minutes (or more) in personal conversation with God. If that happens only a handful of times throughout the 40 days, I am a happy mama! This practice is much easier for some children than others. The same is true for adults, right? And focused prayer takes practice! So, this is a great time of year to practice prayer. Remember that we are laying foundations for them to build their Catholic faith upon. Memories of these practices as adults will be both comforting and instructive to them later in life.

Fasting—This is where the traditional “giving something up for Lent” comes into play. This year, I have given up my beloved Starbucks (it’s going to be a loooong 40 days, friends), and I have challenged my teenagers to consider doing something similar. But at this point, it’s just that—a challenge.

Upcoming Events

♦ **Sunday, March 22nd**
  Family Lent Retreat
  12:30pm—3:30pm

♦ **Friday, April 3rd**
  Family Stations of the Cross
  5:30pm—Simple soup supper along with a family cross making craft will be offered after.

♦ **Sunday, April 26th**
  Family Catechesis Session
  10:45am—12:00pm

♦ **Sunday, May 17th**
  End of the Year Celebration!

♦ **Friday, May 29th**
  Family Annual Cookout and Pool Party, 4:00pm—8:00pm
The Pillars of Lent (cont.)

If all they do is abstain from meat on Fridays (the only practice of fasting & abstinence during Lent that is insisted upon in our house), I am considering it a win. The fact that they will observe their dad and I in this practice will go just as far in their futures as practicing Catholics adults as them doing it themselves.

Almsgiving—This is perhaps the easiest one to weave into our daily lives... which makes me question why we, as a family, are not doing it more throughout the year. I have explained to the kids that tipping people who are providing a service to us a little more and more often is a great way to consciously participate in almsgiving. Maybe drop your change in the change jar the next time you are going through a drive through instead of into the little cup you have for such things in your car. The other way that our family participates in almsgiving this time of year is cleaning out the garage and our closets! Not only do we de-clutter our living environment doing this, but the donated clothes, toys, electronics and kitchenware that has been collecting through the year, will go to help those less fortunate.

I am sure that you have ideas of your own to incorporate the three pillars of Lent into your families Lenten journey. I would love to hear what they are! My wish for all of you is a joyful, reflective and cleansing Lent. Our yearly preparation for the celebration of Easter is one of the most beautiful gifts the Church gives us, when practiced with intentional and willing hearts.

Peace,

Donna

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2020 Lenten Schedule for the Casa

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date/Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stations of the Cross</td>
<td>Friday’s at 5:45pm</td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Stations of the Cross for Families will be on Friday, April 3</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Simple Soup Supper</td>
<td>Friday’s after Stations of the Cross</td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Donations gratefully accepted &amp; given to the poor (almsgiving).</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Taizé Prayer Around the Cross</td>
<td>Friday’s at 7pm</td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>We will gather inside the church to sing simple and meditative songs.</em></td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>There will be no Taizé Prayer on Friday, March 6.</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Food for Thought: Lenten Course on Hunger and Food Insecurity</td>
<td>Monday’s, March 2, 9, 16 and 23 from 6:30pm—8:30pm</td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Check bulletin for Faith In Action opportunities during Lent.</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Organ Dedication and Recital</td>
<td>Friday, March 6 at 7pm</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Featuring Dr. Curt Sather, with the Casa Choir.</em></td>
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*See the Year Two Sacrament Preparation Page for dates and times to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation during Lent.
Year Two Sacrament Preparation

IT’S LENT!

A time of fasting, praying, almsgiving and... Reconciliation!

Yes – THAT Reconciliation, aka “confession” or “penance”!

Why should we celebrate this sacrament when God certainly knows when we are sorry for our sins and is there to meet us with forgiveness? As humans we need a more concrete way of experiencing God’s love for us. Family and friends can show love by making time for us, taking us to lunch or buying us a gift. We know the friend cares, but the concrete action is a confirmation and reassurance that human love needs.

As Catholics we are given the sacraments to do just that. Reconciliation provides us with a tangible experience of God’s forgiveness and our reconciliation with the church. God’s forgiving power also works through the “Rite of Penance: during Mass. The Mass itself is a Sacrament that conveys that God’s forgiveness. There are times though, that we have strayed from God’s love and the sacrament of Reconciliation is the vehicle to healing and restoring relationship with God.

Reconciliation is a concrete opportunity to experience and celebrate God’s unconditional love and forgiveness.

Upcoming Events

♦ Sunday, March 8th
Lesson Ten
10:45am—12:00pm

♦ Sunday, March 22nd
Family Lent Retreat
12:30pm—3:30pm

♦ Saturday, March 28th
Liturgy for the Celebration of First Reconciliation, 9am

♦ Friday, April 3rd
Family Stations of the Cross
5:30pm—Simple soup supper along with at family cross making craft will be offered after.

♦ Sunday, April 19th
Retreat for Confirmation & First Eucharist, 11:00am—3:30pm

♦ Saturday, May 9th
Confirmation and First Eucharist Mass, 10:00am

♦ Sunday, May 17th
A Welcome to Friends of Francis Youth Group! 10:45am—12:00pm Students will be welcomed into youth group, paired up with a 4th—6th grade ambassador, and given a sneak peak of what is to come in youth group next year!

♦ Friday, May 29th
Family Annual Cookout and Pool Party, 4:00pm—8:00pm

LENiben RECONCILIATION TIMES AT THE CASA:

Thursday, March 12, 10am—12pm
Saturday, March 14, 9am—11am & 1pm—3pm
Friday, March 20, 10am—12pm
Monday, March 23, 6pm—8pm
Thursday, March 26, 6pm—8pm

~In the Church~
CELEBRATING FIRST RECONCILIATION!

Keep our wonderful students in prayer as they prepare to encounter God’s forgiveness in this sacrament for the very first time on Saturday, March 28th.

This will be the largest celebration in our Family Catechesis history – 82 students in grades 2 – 10!

RCIA for Children & Teens

Children ages 7 and above who have never been baptized prepare to receive all three sacraments of Initiation at the Easter Vigil on Sat. April 11th 2020.

Please pray for:

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR “ELECT”!

If you were at the 9:15 am mass today, you had the opportunity to participate in the Rite of Election for our eight students preparing for full initiation into the church at the Easter Vigil.

This Rite is the point where parents, sponsors and catechists are asked if the students are ready to proceed to the sacraments.

Fr. Peter asked the following questions... Has each candidate:

- Shown a desire for Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist?
- Listened well to the Word of God?
- Tried to live as a faithful follower?
- Taken part in the community’s life of prayer and service?

With great joy the parents affirmed that these children have indeed done these things and continue to grow in faith and knowledge of Christ and the Church.

Michael, Sofia, Tommy, Luke, Jackson, Matthew, Eliana and Calvin have been Elected to the ranks of the faithful, their names inscribed into the Book of the Elect!

We as community can support and inspire these students and the adults in RCIA, by praying for them during this season of prayer and enlightenment. You can also stop by the hospitality area where the RCIA/Family Catechesis table and is set up so that you can share some of your Lenten practices with them (this is their first Lent!) or to write a note of blessing and encouragement.

Please pray for:
CALVIN ~ ELIANA ~ JACKSON ~ LUKE ~ MATTHEW ~ MICHAEL ~ SOFIA ~ TOMMY
EDGE CAMP 2020

Hey Middle Schoolers & Friends of Francis 5th graders!! Registration for Edge Camp is now open! Let's have the biggest group ever this year! Check it out:

Edge Camp is organized in conjunction with St. Patrick's Catholic Community, St. Francis Xavier Parish & the Franciscan Renewal Center.

Peace,

James
LIFETEEN SUMMER RETREAT 2020

Hey High School Teens! Registration for the LifeTeen Summer Retreat is now open!

THERE’S JUST SOMETHING ABOUT SUMMER, SACRAMENTS & DISNEYLAND.

FRIDAY, JULY 24—SUNDAY, JULY 26
Steubenville San Diego Youth Conference:
Thousands of Catholic Teens coming together for a weekend of powerful prayer, community, inspiring talks, the Sacraments & FUN!

SUNDAY, JULY 26
Mission San Luis Rey & Beach Day.

MONDAY, JULY 27
A day at Disneyland!

TUESDAY, JULY 28
Return home.

Contact James:
youth@thecasa.org for registration details!

Retreat organized and hosted by St. Patrick Catholic Community:
Becky Whitaker
Life Teen Coordinator
bwhitaker@stpatcc.org

Upcoming Events

♦ Sunday, March 8th
  Youth Group Session
  10:30am—12:00pm

♦ Sunday, March 22nd
  Family Lent Retreat
  12:30pm—3:30pm

♦ Sunday, March 29th
  LifeTeen Session - high school only
  10:30am—12:00pm

♦ Friday, April 3rd
  Family Stations of the Cross
  5:30pm—Simple soup supper along with at family cross making craft will be offered after.

♦ Sunday, April 19th
  Youth Group Session
  10:30am—12:00pm

♦ Sunday, April 26th
  Family Catechesis Session
  10:45am—12:00pm

♦ Sunday, May 3rd
  Youth Group Session
  10:30am—12:00pm

♦ Sunday, May 17th
  End of the Year Celebration!
  10:45am—12:00pm

♦ Friday, May 29th
  Family Annual Cookout and Pool Party, 4:00pm—8:00pm

♦ Week of June 1st-4th
  EDGE Camp, Tonto Rim Christian Camp—Payson, AZ. Open to all students who are incoming 6th-9th graders for fall 2020.

♦ Week of July 24th—28th
  LifeTeen Summer Retreat—California trip. Open to all students who are in 9th—12th grade.
St. Joseph, Husband of Mary, Pray for us...

(? - ?) ~ Feast Day: March 19

The Bible pays Joseph the highest compliment: he was a “just” man. The quality meant a lot more than faithfulness in paying debts.

When the Bible speaks of God “justifying” someone, it means that God, the all-holy or “righteous” one, so transforms a person that the individual shares somehow in God’s own holiness, and hence it is really “right” for God to love him or her. In other words, God is not playing games, acting as if we were lovable when we are not.

By saying Joseph was “just,” the Bible means that he was one who was completely open to all that God wanted to do for him. He became holy by opening himself totally to God.

The rest we can easily surmise. Think of the kind of love with which he wooed and won Mary, and the depth of the love they shared during their marriage.

It is no contradiction of Joseph’s manly holiness that he decided to divorce Mary when she was found to be with child. The important words of the Bible are that he planned to do this “quietly” because he was “a righteous man, yet unwilling to expose her to shame” (Matthew 1:19).

The just man was simply, joyfully, wholeheartedly obedient to God—in marrying Mary, in naming Jesus, in shepherding the precious pair to Egypt, in bringing them to Nazareth, in the undetermined number of years of quiet faith and courage.

Reflection

The Bible tells us nothing of Joseph in the years after the return to Nazareth except the incident of finding Jesus in the Temple (Luke 2:41–51). Perhaps this can be taken to mean that God wants us to realize that the holiest family was like every other family, that the circumstances of life for the holiest family were like those of every family, so that when Jesus’ mysterious nature began to appear, people couldn’t believe that he came from such humble beginnings: “Is he not the carpenter’s son? Is not his mother named Mary...?” (Matthew 13:55a). It was almost as indignant as “Can anything good come from Nazareth?” (John 1:46b).

St. Joseph is the patron saint of:

Belgium, Canada, Carpenters, China, Fathers, Happy death, Peru, Russia, Social Justice, Travelers, Universal Church, Vietnam, Workers
SAFE ENVIRONMENT TRAINING FOR EARLY FAITH FORMATION CHILDREN

Our Lady of the Angels is committed to the protection of all minors and vulnerable adults. We offer Safe Environment training to every child enrolled in the Family Catechesis or Sacrament Preparation programs.

Our Youth Ministry department (for grades 4—12) has already conducted in class training on boundaries.
For our younger children (grades PK—3) you have the option of:
- Using the Smart Kids/Safe Kids booklet to present this information to your children at home.
- Reading the “Just Because I Am” Book of Affirmations here on campus to your child (this is not a take home activity, but an independent family activity, books are available in the parent room).
- Opting out of using any of our materials. If you choose to opt out, please sign the “opt out” form provided in the parent session.

We recommend reinforcing the message that your children are loved by God, the church and you, their parents. And that you remind them they must tell a trusted adult if they, or someone they know, if they are ever being scared or hurt by another person.

Please contact Patty Tafolla for any questions that you may have: dcm@thecasa.org

Dinnertime Discussion

Here are some discussion questions to get the family talking!
- Describe your dream vacation. Where would you go and what would you do?
- If you could turn yourself into an animal for just one day what kind of animal would you be, and why?

Building a Domestic Church...

Family Faith Activities for March

- Write a prayer journal or work on a craft to decorate a new prayer journal to start using or to give to someone has a gift. The things we know about Ss. Perpetua and Felicity are because of a journal kept by Saint Perpetua. Their feast days is March 7.
- Go to a book store story time or just take time to enjoy browsing at your local bookstore on March 8—the feast day of St. John of God, the patron saint of booksellers.
- Have a meal featuring Irish foods and green foods on the feast of Saint Patrick—March 17. As your family enjoys the meal, discuss how our Catholic traditions have made their way into society. This can be an eye opening discussion, especially for teenagers.
- Make cards for the fathers in your life. Saint Joseph was a wonderful husband and father—and his feast day is March 19.
- Go on a nature walk and look for signs of spring. This is especially easy here in Arizona since spring arrives early every year! The first day of spring is March 20.
- Make your favorite angel craft or maybe even a tasty treat like angel shaped cookies or angel food cake to celebrate the Annunciation of the Lord on March 25.
Coffee & Chat

Parents, we love your kids... but we want you to know that we are here for you as well! If ever you want to talk, have questions, or just want an hour to slip away from the kids and get to know one of us better, we would love to set that up!

Send Patty, James or Donna an email—we will grab some coffee and chat!

Join Today!

Did you know? We have our very own private Facebook Group! Get news, updates and see pictures of all our programs, including Family Catechesis, Sacrament Prep, Friends of Francis, Edge and LifeTeen!

Search: Family Catechesis OLA

Liturgy of the Word for Children

This is the practice of children being dismissed from the main assembly at Mass to attend a celebration of the Liturgy of the Word which is more appropriate to their level of understanding. What they will experience is the same content as they receive in Mass - this is not catechesis, Sunday School, or faith-based childcare.

WHO? Children ages 6-12. Children toward the top of that age range will be given the opportunity to participate as leaders in the celebration.

WHERE? Children will be invited to the front of the church and then dismissed to process out to the Children's Liturgy building for their celebration of the Liturgy of the Word. They will return to sit with their families before the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

WHEN? Every 9:15 am Mass, September through May.

How about becoming part of the Liturgy of the Word for Children core team?

Adults and teens are invited to become core team members. Team members will work on a rotating schedule, all materials and training will be provided. Please let us know if you would be interested in learning more about this opportunity to serve!

Need more info?
Contact Donna - donna@thecasa.org