

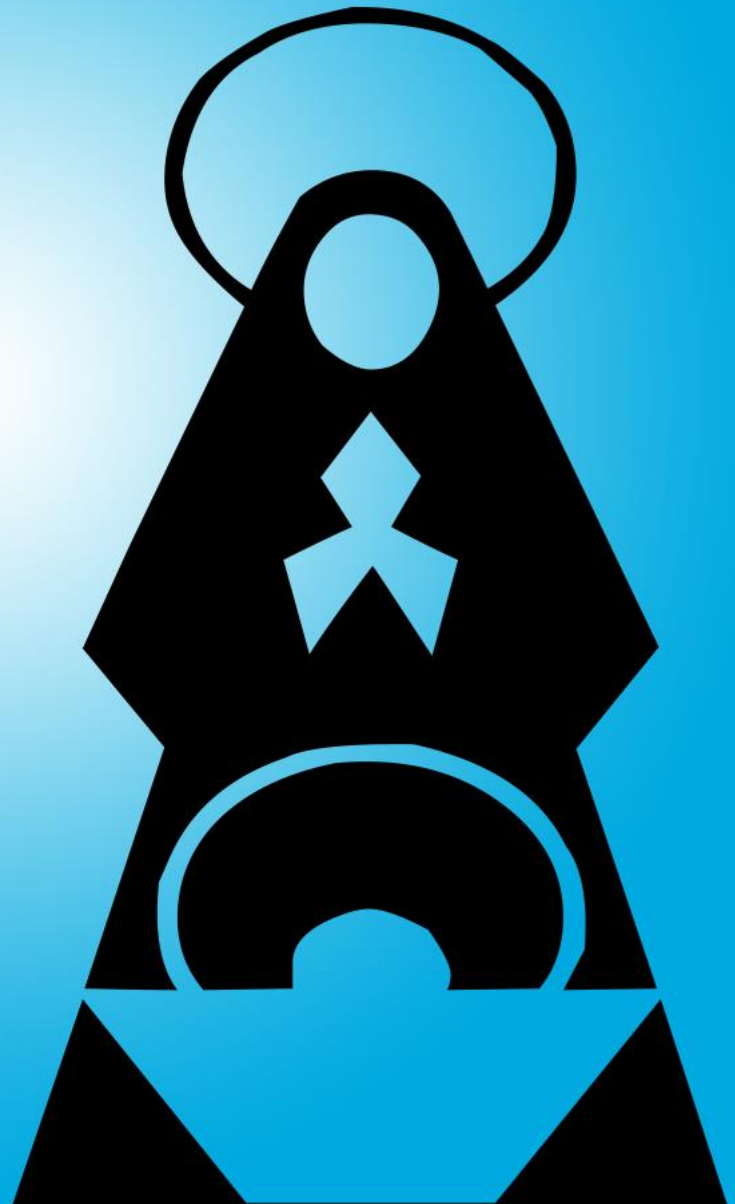


APOSTOLIC BRIEFINGS *and* COMMUNICATIONS

Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary | Villa Maria House of Studies | Immaculata, PA 19345

*Peace
on
Earth*

“For unto you is
born this day in the
city of David a
Savior, which is
Christ the Lord.”





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♥ Love ♥ Creative Hope ♥ Fidelity ♥ Love ♥ Creative Hope ♥ Fidelity ♥ Love ♥ Creative Hope ♥ Fidelity ♥

**Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary
Proclaiming the Gospel Message in the Spirit of Jesus the Redeemer**

IHM Best Practices

Skills of yesterday are still needed today - a Case for Cursive Handwriting, Memorization, and Keeping Christ in Christmas



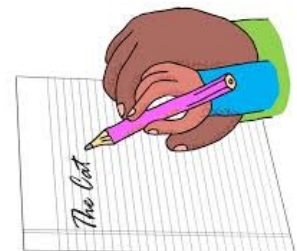
A Case for Cursive Handwriting



With the Common Core State Standards stress on keyboarding skills, cursive handwriting has come under scrutiny with many school districts eliminating cursive handwriting from the curriculum. The Common Core calls for print handwriting to be taught in kindergarten and first grade and only keyboarding skills thereafter leaving no time for instruction in cursive handwriting. Catholic Schools continue to teach cursive and students should be writing in cursive all the time from the middle of third grade onwards unless the assignment will be completed on a computer. Researchers have built a defense case for cursive which is as follows:

- Cursive handwriting is an important tool for cognitive development to reach the capacity for optimal efficiency. Cursive handwriting helps train the brain to integrate visual, tactile information and fine motor dexterity along with thinking, language and working memory.
- Cursive handwriting develops brain functions that integrate movement control and thinking. Areas of the brain become activated while learning of cursive writing and these brain functions are not activated in learning keyboarding skills.
- A unique relationship exists between the brain and hand while writing in cursive. Research proves that students in grades 2, 4, and 6 wrote faster, and expressed more ideas when writing essays in cursive as compared with writing essays on a keyboard.
- Cursive handwriting stimulates brain synapses and synchronicity between the left and right hemispheres, something absent from printing and typing.
- The College Board found that students who wrote in cursive for the essay portion of the SAT scored slightly higher than those who printed.
- Research suggests that writing by hand allows students to process a lecture's content and reframe it leading to better understanding and memory encoding.
- In cursive writing, the child begins to understand how much force is needed to be applied to the pencil/ pen and the paper, positioning of the writing instrument at the proper angle which allows them to write but more importantly builds the neural foundation of the sensory skills needed for a myriad of everyday tasks such as buttoning, fastening, tying shoes, picking up objects, shaking hands, and most importantly, reading. The same regions of the brain are activated during reading and cursive handwriting, but not during typing.

The bottom line is that cursive handwriting assists in brain development by making various connections between the hand and the brain. In the 21st century, keyboarding skills are essential; however, cursive handwriting benefits students greatly and should be taught within reasonable time parameters. While the days of perfect Palmer Method may have passed and hours spent on handwriting lessons have gone, cursive handwriting should still be a hallmark of Catholic Education.





Keeping Christ in Christmas

Between the materialistic commercials and newspaper ads, each year it seems harder and harder to Keep Christ in *Christmas*. Catholic and faith based schools have the singular opportunity to teach the real meaning of Christmas and to develop spirituality in children. While Advent is in the near future, Sunday, November 27th, take some time to see what you will do in your classroom to ensure that your students know they are in a Catholic School. Here are some suggestions for you:

- As a class, discuss that Advent means *Coming*. Who is coming? What do we do to prepare when a special person is coming to our homes? Jesus is coming on December 25th, what can we do in our classroom to prepare for him?
- Remind the students that our Church New Year is the first Sunday of Advent – the New Liturgical year.
- Have an Advent Wreath ceremony either weekly or daily in your classroom. Many beautiful ceremonies are available in the church missalette and online.
- Sing an Advent Hymn daily such as *The King of Glory* or *Stay Awake, Be Ready* by Christopher Walker. These hymns may be found on YouTube.
- When the time comes closer to Christmas, sing Christian Christmas Carols.
- Google: “Christian coloring sheets to prepare for Christmas.” An array of free reproducible sheets comes up. Choose one and each day ask the children to color a little bit of it if they have done something for Advent.
- Insist on saying, *Merry Christmas* rather than *Happy Holidays*.
- Ask your students how their families *Keeps Christ in Christmas*? Consider making it a homework assignment that they discuss as a family. In class, have them share what their families do.
- In the older grades, teach the children the Special Christmas Prayer or Novena of St. Andrew listed below. St. Andrew was the first apostle and as we begin the new liturgical year, this prayer is associated with him. From the Feast of **Saint Andrew the Apostle** (11/30) to Christmas (12/25) one may begin a special prayer, simply called the “Christmas Prayer” to obtain favors if one’s requests are in accordance with God’s will. It is believed that whoever recites the following prayer with a pious heart **15 times a day** from 11/30 to 12/25, will obtain whatever is asked.

Saint Andrew Christmas Novena

Hail and blessed be the hour and moment in which the Son of God was born of the most pure Virgin Mary, at midnight, in Bethlehem, in piercing cold. In that hour, vouchsafe, I beseech Thee, O my God! to hear my prayer and grant my desires, (mention your intention here) through the merits of Our Savior Jesus Christ, and of His Blessed Mother. Amen
(Say 15 times every day from 11/30 to 12/25 for a special favor)



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Website to purchase Cursive Composition Book: www.shopbecker.com/

For additional information regarding the IHM Best Practices contact Sister Margaret Rose Adams, IHM at smgadams@gmail.com. 11-16

STRATEGIES TO STRENGTHEN MATH INSTRUCTION

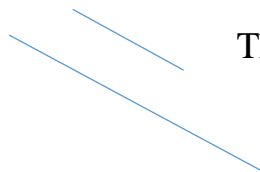
Mental Math is a prerequisite for working with fractions and decimals. It gives auditory learners a chance to succeed. (If you've surveyed the learning styles in your class you know who those children are, so you're already differentiating your instruction!) The beauty of mental math is that it can be done anytime, anywhere. After a concept has been taught and understood, students can practice skills while waiting in a lunch line, transitioning from one subject/book to another. This might be the place for fact drills, multiplication tables, percent to fractional or decimal equivalents. The art teacher can point out shapes, angles, proportion and measurement. The music teacher can equate note values to fractions as parts of wholes. Another opportunity is the recess yard. Many schools have hopscotch templates on the ground. The students could add or multiply numbers that they land on! (Incidentally, never hesitate to strengthen another curriculum area through drills and rapid recall; e.g. states and capitals, prefixes/suffixes etc.)

Understanding a concept begins at the concrete level. Therefore, manipulatives are a must. Moving virtual tiles around the smart board is fine; however, your kinesthetic students will blossom by using their own sets of manipulatives. Even older students benefit from this tactile experience. Borrow some 100 flats and rods from other grades to use for more complex processes in upper grades (e.g. the distributive property). Algebra tiles work miracles when teaching integer concepts, absolute value, the zero principle, multiplication of binomials, as well as reinforcing the distributive property.

Give students multiple experiences of the same concept, *which is not equal to the same experience many times*. Model drawings can help here. When teaching geometry, expose the class to various orientations of the same shape. For example: these triangles are the same, no matter the direction.



direction.



These lines are parallel no matter the length or

Mental Math Tips:

Younger students learn how to break numbers apart and bundle 10s. Why not continue that technique as numbers get larger?

$427 + 306$ is easier to think of as $400 + 300$, then $27 + 6$. Answer: 733

$2 \times 224 \times 5$ looks easier when students rearrange as follows:

$2 \times 5 \times 224 = 10 \times 224$. Mentioning the technical name of the commutative property isn't necessary until the children experience the concept. Remember: build from the ground up...concrete always comes first! Use simple language until they "get it". For instance when calculating $98 + 27$ say, "If only that 98 were 100! Wouldn't it be easy? But my answer would be 2 too big. So let's just cut the answer down by 2." Or say, "Let that 27 lend 2 to the 98."
 $100 + 25 = 125$

Multiplication can work the same way: 26×5 would be easier if the 5 were a 10. So all we have to do is split the product of 26×5 (260) in half. (Answer = 130)

Attribute blocks from the primary grades work wonders with older students. Ask them to build the following and tell you all the possible answers.


$$\text{circle} + \text{triangle} = 20$$

Then ask for 2 circles or 2 triangles. Now the only possible answer is $10 + 10$. Ask why? When they realize that the same shape represents the same number each time, maybe they'll be less likely to try adding X to X squared. Practicing these visual patterns will help them succeed in standardized testing also.

Students don't have to be artists to create their own visuals. Basic shapes can do the trick. Use the bars below to visualize this problem: *A big penguin eats 3 times as much as a small penguin. If the big penguin eats 420g of fish, how much will the small penguin eat?*

Once they see that the three connected bars represent the 420g that the big penguin eats, it's easier to understand that splitting 420 into 3 parts gives the amount that the small penguin eats (140g).

Hint: If there are artists in your class, discourage them from drawing actual penguins! This takes too much time away from the point of the lesson which is problem solving through visuals.



We'll continue with these strategies in the next issue. In the meantime, keep building from the ground up! Use manipulatives, drills and drawings in all grades. Good luck.

PRIME TIMES



Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary
Immaculata, Pennsylvania 19345

November, 2016

Advent Candles

Week One

One candle
Shines so bright
Like the blazing star
On Christmas night.



Week Two

Two candles
Shine so bright
Like Mary and Joseph's
Smiles of delight



Week Three

Three candles
Shine so bright
Like the shepherds' faces
In the firelight



Week Four

Four candles
Shine so bright
Like the joy around the world
At the special sight.

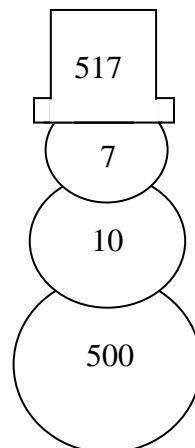


Calendar Creations

Use this activity in your writing center. Outdated calendars become picture-perfect writing prompts! To prepare the calendar, cover each monthly grid with colorful construction paper. Then cut a supply of writing paper to fit atop the construction paper pages. Place writing paper, glue, pencils and two or more prepared calendars at a center. A child selects a calendar picture that is opposite blank construction paper. He writes about the picture on writing paper and then glues his writing atop the construction paper. When all the construction paper pages of a calendar are filled, place the resulting booklet in the classroom library for all to enjoy.

Place Value Snowmen

Write a three-digit number on a snowman's hat. Write the ones, tens, and hundreds values on small, medium, and large snowballs. Instruct the children to build snowmen by matching the snowballs to the hat.



Parking Lot Math Center

On a piece of cardboard, large sheet paper, or laminated board draw "parking space" lines. In each parking spot write an addition or subtraction problem. On the top of Match Box cars have the answers. Students then need to "drive" their car into the lot and "park it" in the correct space. When finished the student can



check if the answers were correct with a self-checking diagram.

National Handwriting Day



John Hancock, born on January 23, 1737, was the first to sign the Declaration of Independence. He signed his name in bold, beautiful handwriting. National Handwriting Day is celebrated on January 23rd, the anniversary of Hancock's birth. Give out John Hancock Writing Awards to students during this week for their work that demonstrates the qualities of good handwriting.

A Song of Snowflakes

Sing a song of snowflakes
Flying through the air
Pretty little snowflakes
Falling everywhere
Tired little snowflakes
Resting on the ground
Quiet little snowflakes
Making not a sound



Snowman

I'm a little snowman, round and fat.
Here are my mittens, here is my hat.
Add a little scarf and a carrot nose.
I stand so tall when the cold wind blows.

February Days



February has many special days,
That we can celebrate in lots of ways.
It's winter and it's time for snow,
Listen to the cold winds blow.
Our heavy coats feel warm and nice,
Careful now! Don't slip on ice!
Mr. Groundhog peeks from his hole,
Predicting springtime is his role.
If he sees his shadow, winter stays we fear.
If there is no shadow, then springtime is near.
Thomas Edison's ideas were bright,
We thank him for the electric light.
Science was important to this man,
For many inventions he had a plan.
February 12 – that's the date,
Lincoln's birthday – he was great.
Abe was honest, all could see,
He helped the slaves to be free.
Valentine's Day is almost here,
Send a card to someone dear.
Valentine parties filled with fun,
A happy time for everyone.
Washington's birthday – the 22nd day,
As our first president, he led the way.
He and his soldiers crossed the Delaware River,
Bitter cold weather really made them shiver.
February has many special days,
That we can celebrate in lots of ways.

Year of Mercy Ending



As the Year of Mercy comes to a close have your students reflect on what they have learned about the corporal and spiritual works of mercy. Have each student pick a work of mercy that they liked or grew to understand better and give a brief presentation (either through a skit, Q&A, report, etc.) to the class.

Using Songs and Poems

Seasonal poems and songs can be teaching tools in the ELA program. Display the poem or song on the smartboard or poster board. Have students locate rhyming words, long/short vowel words, compound words, nouns, verbs, and adjectives. Look at Chubby Little Snowman – see if you can find the following: rhyming words, nouns, adjectives, compound words, a word that means the same as small, a word that has the same vowel sound as **toast, cake, cat, sit, cup**.

Chubby Little Snowman

A chubby little snowman
Had a carrot nose.
Along came a bunny,
And what do you suppose?
That hungry little bunny,
Looking for his lunch,
Ate the snowman's carrot nose.
Nibble, Nibble, Crunch!



Winter

Tune: Sing a Song of Sixpence
Sing a song of winter,
Frost is in the air.
Sing a song of winter,
Snowflakes everywhere.
Sing a song of winter,
Hear the sleigh bells chime.
Can you think of anything as nice as winter time?



A Winter Song

Tune: Row, Row, Row your boat

Zip! Zip! Bundle up,
I'm toasty warm inside.
Quick! Quick! Out the door,
Then down the hill I'll glide.
No! No! It isn't fair,
It simply isn't right.
Snow! Snow! I see no snow,
It melted overnight!



The Groundhog

By Margaret Hillert

The groundhog poked his head up
And peeking all around
Saw his little shadow
Lying on the ground.

The groundhog knew that winter
Would last for six weeks more.
And so he pulled himself back down
Inside his little door.



I'm a Little Groundhog

Tune: I'm a Little Teapot

I'm a little groundhog
In my hole
On February 2nd
You will know
If I see my shadow
It will be
Six more weeks of winter
For you and me.

Mail Call

Use inexpensive valentines to make grammar practice a treat. Attach three paper mailbags to the folder or bulletin board labeled noun, verb, adjective, etc... Circle one word on each of 20 valentines. Students look at the circled word on each valentine and place it in the correct pocket.



Short Vowel Sound Song

Tune: Doe a Deer

A says a the word is **add**.
E says e the word is **Ed**.
I says i the word is **it**.
O says o for **octopus**.
U says u for **up, up, up**.
5 short vowels we've learned today.
Think of more words we can say
That will help us with our short vowel sounds.
Oh! A.....

Mr. Lincoln

Tune: If you're Happy and You Know It

Mr. Lincoln, Mr. Lincoln,
You were brave, (clap, clap)
Mr. Lincoln, Mr. Lincoln,
You were brave. (clap, clap)
You stood for what was right,
You didn't give up the fight,
Mr. Lincoln, Mr. Lincoln,
You were brave. (clap, clap)
Mr. Lincoln, Mr. Lincoln,
You were good. (clap, clap)
Mr. Lincoln, Mr. Lincoln,
You were good. (clap, clap)
You served our country well,
Your stories we will tell.
Mr. Lincoln. Mr. Lincoln,
You were good. (clap, clap)



George Washington

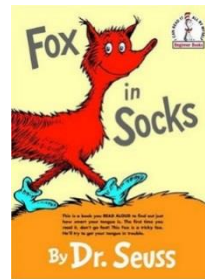
I am George Washington,
Have you heard of me?
I fought in the Revolution
And helped us to be free.
I served as the first president
And led the U.S.A.
"The Father of Our Country"
Is what I'm called today.



Dr. Seuss' Birthday

March 2nd

In his hilarious book Fox in Socks by Dr. Seuss, Fox in Socks teaches a baffled Mr. Knox some of the quickest tongue-twisters in town. Read this book to your class. Have students identify the tongue twisters. Then, individually or in small groups, invite the students to write a tongue-twister, illustrate it and, if time permits, read it to the class.



Managing Manipulatives

Organizing manipulatives

Students will have frequently used paper manipulatives, such as, mini hundreds charts and small rulers, at their fingertips with this simple idea. Glue a library pocket or create your own in the back of each math workbook. This pocket storage eliminates unnecessary desk-rummaging and helps students remain organized.

Clothes Hangers

Clothes hangers are great for putting letters or numbers in order. Use clip clothes pins and label them. One side can be letters for a, b, c order the other side for number order. Clip clothes pins can be used for skip counting, place value, greater than less than, rounding to the nearest 10, 100, and organizing story elements. For place value you can clip the place value name to the hanger and have a student create a number by clipping a clothes pin with a number on it to a certain place value and choosing For story elements you can clip the story element words on the hanger: ex. Setting: time and place, characters, problem, solution. Student chooses a clothes pin, reads what is written on it – example: characters. The student tells the name or names of the main characters and clips the clothes pin on the word character. Continue until all clothes pins are clipped.



Storage Display

Looking for a convenient way to store small classroom supplies? Try using an over-the-door shoe organizer. Keep supplies for student use in



the lower pockets and teacher supplies in the upper pockets. Label each pocket with its contents. Not only will the supplies be easy to find, they will also be easy to keep organized!

Pizza Pan Organizer

Writing process

Keep track of where each student is in the writing process with the help of a large metal pizza pan. Use a permanent marker to divide the pan into sections one for each writing process step. Next, glue a photo of each student on a cardboard circle. Laminate or contact the pictures. Place a magnetic piece on the back of each picture. The students can place them on the front of their desks or in a plastic container. As a child moves through the writing process, he/she places their photo in the appropriate section of the pan. A quick glance tells you where each student is in his/her work.



Editing Sticks

Skill editing

One way to keep students focused when they peer-edit is by programming craft sticks with editing topics such as: capitalization, punctuation, complete sentence, spelling, and correct verb usage. Put a set of sticks in a plastic resealable bag for each pair of students. Then, to begin editing, one partner draws a stick and each child checks his/her partner's paper for that convention. Next, the other partner draws a stick and the twosome look for errors with that convention. The partners continue drawing sticks until they have fully edited each partner's work.



IHM Good Writers Club



Grades 3 & 4

JANUARY

I thank You, Jesus
I offer You praise,
Help me to be like You
And imitate Your ways.

FEBRUARY

On February second
The groundhog looked about
The sun wasn't shining brightly
So his shadow wasn't out.

Grade 5 & 6

JANUARY

An expert at anything
was once a beginner.

H. Jackson Brown, Sr.

FEBRUARY

Every time you smile at someone
it is an act of love;
a gift to that person,
a beautiful thing.

St. Teresa of Calcutta

Grades 7 & 8

JANUARY

Kind words do not cost much
yet they accomplish much.

Blaise Pascal

FEBRUARY

It is not how much we do;
It is how much love we put into
that action.

St. Teresa of Calcutta

MARCH



Grades 3 & 4

The wind is full of tricks today
It almost blew me far away
It almost blew me off my feet
As I went walking down the street!

Grades 5 & 6

When someone says “I’m sorry!”
and it’s really from the heart,
forgive and forget what happened.
Give your friend a brand new start.

Grades 7 & 8

Life doesn’t require that we do the best –
only that we try our best.

H. Jackson Brown, Jr.

PROFICIENCY IN PENMANSHIP



This certifies that

has attained that level of proficiency in penmanship
required by the IHM GOOD WRITERS CLUB
for Grade _____

and thereby is entitled to this

Certificate of Merit

awarded by the IHM Good Writers Club

Date

Member of the official Board of Evaluators

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RELIGIOUS EDUCATION...Cover Sheet
I.H.M. ABC NOTES -- WINTER, 2016

USCCB CATECHETICAL THEME, 2016 – 2017
“PRAYER: THE FAITH PRAYED”

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We are very grateful to those who contributed creative Religious Education ideas to this *Winter Issue*. Their creativity has certainly enhanced this publication!

Catholic Schools Week 2017

Teacher Appreciation Prayer Service in Honor of Saint Teresa of Calcutta

Call to Prayer:



The recent canonization of Mother Teresa of Calcutta has invited all of us to reflect more deeply on this “saint of mercy”, as well as on how well our own daily actions mirror her generous and compassionate love for Jesus. Our teachers are like Mother in their devotion, dedication, and unconditional love for us. As a teacher and a principal herself for 20 years before founding the Missionaries of Charity, Mother Teresa knew firsthand the opportunity education brings and the benefit it can be in one’s life and the lives of others. Her very first missionary endeavor was a slum school, where the ground was her blackboard and a stick was her chalk. She also taught her Sisters to offer religious and moral instruction as they ministered wherever possible.

At Saint Teresa of Calcutta’s canonization, Pope Francis said that we all have our own “Calcutta” – a place where we can truly “make a difference” in the lives of others. Thank you dear teachers for “making a difference” in our lives each and every day.

Opening Hymn:

Open My Eyes Verses 1,2,3

Presider:

Sign of the Cross

Greeting:

May we possess a heart to love and hands to serve all those in need.

All:

May we do everything for Jesus. Glory to the Father. . .

Antiphon:

“Make your schools centers for radiating Christ.”

Mother Teresa

Please Pray in Unison:

Prayer of John Henry Cardinal Newman
(Prayed daily by Mother Teresa after Holy Communion)

Dear Jesus, help me to spread Your fragrance wherever I go.
Flood my soul with Your Spirit and life.
Penetrate and possess my whole being so utterly,
that my life may only be a radiance of yours.



Shine through me, and be so in me
that every soul I come in contact with
may feel Your presence in my soul.
Let them look up, and see no longer me, but only Jesus!
Stay with me and then I will begin to shine as You shine,
so to shine as to be a light to others.
The light, O Jesus, will be all from You;
none of it will be mine.
It will be You, shining on others through me.
Let me thus praise You in the way which You love best,
by shining on those around me.
Let me preach You without preaching,
not by words but by my example,
by the catching force,
the sympathetic influence of what I do,
the evident fullness of the love my heart bears for You.
Amen

Glory to the Father. . .

Reading:

Philippians 1: 3-6, 9-11

“I thank my God whenever I think of you”

Sung Response:

Be Glorified

In your saints, Lord, be glorified. . . today.
Through our teachers, be glorified. . .
By their love, Lord, be glorified. . .

Intercessions

Introduction:

Heavenly Father, we lift up in prayer our teachers. Using the words of Mother Teresa, we thank you for the many ways they radiate the love of Jesus to us.

RESPONSE: We thank you, God our Father.

“Do small things with great love.”

For the countless hours spent on ***“small things”***, such as preparing lessons, marking papers, updating web sites, or monitoring recess and the cafeteria, we pray. . .

“We belong to each other”

For teaching us by word and example the importance of living as a family of faith, accepting, supporting, and helping each other, we pray. . .



“Peace begins with a smile”

For being true peacemakers for us through the joy you share with us, we pray. . .

“If we are humble like Mary and holy like Jesus, they will see Jesus in us and we will see Jesus in them.”

For seeing Jesus in us, even on the days that we are not our best selves, and for mirroring the face of Jesus to us, we pray. . .

“Make of your life something beautiful for God.”

For weaving generosity, patience, kindness, and hope into a quilt of love for us, that is truly ***“something beautiful for God,”*** we pray. . .

Our Father

Closing Prayer

Loving God, Mother Teresa once said: ***“Let no one come to you without leaving you better or happier.”*** Thank you for our teachers whose loving ministry to us makes our lives better and our hearts happier. Surround them with graces and blessings beyond measure. We ask this in Your Name. Amen.

Blessing over Teachers:

Please extend your right hand towards your teacher:

May God “Who began such good work in you, carry it through to completion.” Philippians 1:6

Closing Hymn:

Go Make a Difference or Take the Word of God with You

Advent Prayer Service For Staff and Student Body



Gathering Rite: With lights dimmed, four students carrying candles will light the Advent Wreath, while “O Come O Come Emmanuel” is played. *(Battery powered candles are suggested as safer, three with purple and one with pink ribbon around them at the candle base.)*

Call to Prayer: It is almost Christmas and everyone is excited. What better way to end our Advent time together and begin our Christmas celebration, than by asking our Blessed Mother to bring us, all our family, and our friends closer to Her Infant Son. May she make our hearts like hers: generous, kind, compassionate, and loving as we journey with her to Bethlehem. May she protect all of our children, touch the world with peace, and help us remember that Jesus is always the Center of our lives, and is the “Reason for the Season”.

Gathering Song: “Silent Night”

Greeting

Opening Prayer: Heavenly Father, we praise and thank You for the gift of Your Son. We are waiting to celebrate the coming of Jesus, as Mary – His mother and our mother – waited. Bless all of our final preparations for Jesus our King, as we urgently pray, “Come Lord, Jesus, Come and be born in our hearts”. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, Our Lord, forever and ever. Amen.

Reading: Zephaniah 3:14-18a

Response: “Come, Lord Jesus”

Acclamation: “Alleluia! Hurry, the Lord is Near”

Gospel: Luke 1:39-45
The Visitation of Mary to Elizabeth

Reflection: Silence, soft music, or an excerpt read if so desired

(Over)

Intercessions

Presider: Jesus, our Savior and Messiah, was called by many names in the Bible. Let us ask Him through His many Holy Names to be awake and alert for the grace of His coming.

Petitions: O Wisdom, show us how to love one another, as we pray ...
Sung Response: Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to Thee!

O Lord, our God, guard us from evil, as we pray ...

O Flower of Jesse's root, help us grow in holiness, as we pray ...

O Key of David, forgive our sins, as we pray ...

O Radiant Dawn, help us to learn, as we pray ...

O King of all Nations, unite us as one people, as we pray ...

O Emmanuel, walk beside us always, as we pray ...

Presider &
Assembly: Hail Mary, full of grace ...

Closing
Prayer: Loving God, we place ourselves into Your hands and pray that You will bless us, our families and friends, during these coming holy days. Help us to make our homes places of joy, peace, love and safety. May we become generous and considerate, and think not about ourselves, that others may enjoy the blessings of Christmas. We ask this in Jesus' Name. Amen.

Sign of
Peace: Let us offer one another the peace of Jesus, the Prince of Peace!

Final
Blessing

Closing Hymn: "O Come All Ye Faithful"

*"May you keep your eye on the Star within you,
and trust this Loving Light to guide and direct you each day."*

- Joyce Rupp



Happy, Holy Christmas Season!

Examination of Conscience On the Beatitudes



1. ***How blessed are the poor in spirit; theirs is the kingdom of heaven.***

How do I practice this beatitude?

Am I satisfied with what my parents give me, or do I always demand more?

Do I accept the gifts and abilities God has given me? Do I use the intelligence which God has given me, or do I cheat to get ahead?

Am I content with the clothes and possessions I have, or must I have the latest fashions, the newest gimmicks? Do I even steal to get what I want?

2. ***Blessed are the gentle; they shall have the earth for their heritage.***

How do I practice this beatitude?

Am I afraid to admit a mistake and apologize for it? Or do I get angry?

Do I respect other peoples' property, or do I destroy it?

Do I affirm those who need my support? And do I help my younger brothers and sisters?

Do I accept correction and advice from those in authority or do I rebel?

3. ***Blessed are those who mourn; they shall be consoled.***

How do I practice this beatitude?

Am I sensitive to the feelings of others, to their hurts and their needs? Do I really listen to them or do I walk away because I'm too busy?

If someone has lost a family member or friend through death, do I offer them my support, comfort and prayers?

Am I understanding of my parents when they have worries?

Do I recognize my sinfulness?

4. ***Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for holiness and for what is right; they shall be satisfied.***

How do I practice this beatitude?

Do I respect God's word, His Holy Name, and do I pray to Him during the day and especially on Sunday at Mass?

Do I act justly toward others?

Do I do my share of responsibility at home, at school, in my neighborhood?

(over)

5. ***Blessed are the merciful; they shall have mercy shown them.***

How do I practice this beatitude?

Do I identify with Jesus and show compassion to those in need, to the poor and underprivileged, and the rejected? Or must I be self-centered -- **#1**?

Do I forgive or do I hold a grudge?



6. ***Blessed are the pure in heart; they shall see God.***

How do I practice this beatitude?

Do I respect my body and the bodies of others?

Do I have the right attitude toward others? Am I honest with them or do I use others for selfish purposes, to gain what I want with a disregard for what they want and need? Am I willing to be of service when it is needed?

7. ***Blessed are the peacemakers; they shall be called sons of God.***

How do I practice this beatitude?

Am I an instrument of peace or do I disrupt everything when I appear?

Do I express hatred for anything or anyone?

Do I help people to reconcile their differences or do I create problems by my gossip? Do I judge others? Am I honest?

8. ***Blessed are those who are persecuted for holiness; theirs is the kingdom of heaven.***

How do I practice this beatitude?

Am I willing to keep the Commandments of God and the Beatitudes, or do I worry about what people think of me?

Am I willing to practice my faith in spite of what others do? Do I give true witness and example when I am with my peers, or do I give into the crowd?

Do I pray to God to keep me strong so that I can keep my faith?

Compiled by:

Sister Mary of the Sacred Heart Brignola, I.H.M.
Sister Patricia Helene Earl, I.H.M.



Music in the Religion Class

*Suggestions for Catholic School Religion Teachers
and Religious Education Program Catechists*



“Music is love in search of a word.”
- Sidney Lanier

Music offers wonderful opportunities to touch hearts and express that which words alone cannot express. The purpose of this page is to give religion teachers and catechists some ideas and resources for incorporating music into religion classes.

Starting and Ending with Music - Advent and Christmas

Beginning or ending religion class with the refrain or a verse of a hymn is a wonderful way to set the time apart from all the other times of the day. There are many wonderful seasonal songs which will remind the children of the season of the Church Year at the same time! If you are comfortable leading your class in singing you can use many songs from the Today's Missal (the missal, not the Music Issue) which is used in many parishes.

For Advent, songs from “Rise Up and Sing – Young People’s Music Resource” published by OCP are often used in group liturgical celebrations. It would be great to use them in your regular setting as well! Please be sure to stay with the Advent Season until returning after the Christmas break. Some ideas are:

- Come, O Come, Emmanuel – with 7 verses, you can rotate daily or weekly
- Stay Awake – This one includes hand clapping – always a favorite!
- For Advent Week 3 – Alleluia, Hurry the Lord is Near
- Prepare the Way
- The Whole World is Waiting for Love by Sr Marianne Misetch SNJM

For the Christmas Season as you return in January: go with the standards! We usually do not get to sing Christmas hymns enough. Joy to the World, O Come All Ye Faithful, We Three Kings – add your own favorites!

Music Connected to Scripture

Using a song as a follow-up to a scripture story is another great way to use music in your class. Stories and Songs of Jesus is a CD by Paule Freeburg, D.C. and Christopher Walker and is a gold mine for this. Volume 2 is More Stories and Songs of Jesus, and Volume 3 is Many More Stories and Songs of Jesus. They include both a narrated story and a related song for many scripture stories, and the songs will appeal to many ages. I have used them myself as high as 5th grade and as low as

Kindergarten. The songs help to tell the story in another way and also provide a deepening of the message of the scripture.

The 2 CD sets are expensive, but individual songs are available on iTunes or from the OCP website.

Here is a sampling of the stories with associated songs:

- Angel Gabriel Comes to See Mary – An Angel Came from Heaven
- Jesus Goes to a Wedding – Yes, We Will Do What Jesus Says
- Jesus and Peter Go Fishing – Fishing for People
- Jesus Heals a Man Who Cannot Hear – How Much God Loves Us
- The Boy Who Came Home – I'm Sorry
- Jesus Heals a Man Who Cannot Walk – Walking Up to Jesus (a favorite in middle grades)
- Jesus Heals a Man Who Cannot See – Bartimaeus (another favorite)

These are just a few examples. Here are links to lists for all 3 volumes of these CD's:

Volume 1 - <https://www.ocp.org/en-us/collections/pg/907> (click on view songs button)

Volume 2 - <https://www.ocp.org/en-us/collections/pg/909> (click on view songs button)

Volume 3 - <https://www.ocp.org/en-us/collections/pg/E86> (click on view songs button)

If there is any way you could provide them with the lyrics, it is much better for them to sing it than just listen to it.



Web Resources

- Catholic Mom – a nice listing of some Catholic Christmas music CDs
http://www.catholicmom.com/christmas_music.htm
- Ten Advent Songs to Remind You It's Not Yet Christmas – YouTube videos of several songs, mostly traditional. Andrea Bocelli singing Ave Maria would be wonderful background music as the children make an advent wreath
- From Our Sunday Visitor – an article to download entitled "Using Music and Movement in Religious Education. The link will automatically download the article.
http://www.calltofaith.osv.com/download_file/1527/ev2653vd4uopnlgfvv6unlrf06



Religion Bulletin Boards

2016-2017 – Qualities of Mary

As noted in the past, Bulletin boards have an important place in every classroom. They should be interactive as they provide a way to introduce new concepts or display student work related to the concept. Every classroom in a Catholic school/PREP program should have at least one bulletin board dedicated to increasing student awareness of faith values. They should be changed/updated on a regular basis throughout the school year.

Teachers and catechists should create boards that are equally engaging and educational. The use of interactive boards in the classroom ensures that students recognize the importance of the posted materials.

*Our last series of Bulletin boards focused on the Year of Mercy. As we move forward into the year 2017, we will commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Apparitions of Our Lady of Fatima. Our Bulletin Boards for the remainder of the school year will focus on Mary—her feasts, her qualities and her messages. The Marian feasts of December provide a perfect transition from one theme to another. In Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*, there is a beautiful reflection on the virtue of mercy:*

*The quality of mercy is not strained;
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath. It is twice blest;
It blesseth him that gives and him that takes . . .
It is an attribute of God himself.”:*

This description could very well apply to Mary—her gentleness, her giving of self and her taking to heart the wishes of her Son.

There are many little-known feasts of Mary that can be shared with the students—not for the purpose of identifying the dates on the calendar, but with the intent of making Mary and her importance in the life of the Church better known to the students. Each month we will identify some of those commemorated during that time with suggestions for using the bulletin boards as a teaching tool. The background of all of these can be found at <http://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/marian-calendar.html>

December-Mary, Model of Mercy (“His mercy extends to those who fear him, from generation to generation.”)

January- Mary, Model of Faith (“Do Whatever HE Tells You”)

February–Mary, Model of Love and Joy (“My Spirit rejoices in God My Savior.”)

March – Mary, Model of Hope and Trust (“Be It Done to Me as You have Said.”)

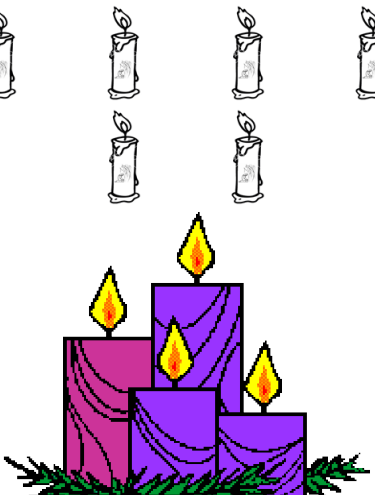
April – Mary, Model of Concern for Others (“Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you.”)

May– Mary, Model of Prayer (“Pray the Rosary.”)

December

Mary, Model of Mercy

"His mercy extends to those who fear him, from generation to generation."



Mary **Model of Mercy**



Our Lady of Guadalupe ***Mother of Mercy*** ***Patroness of the Americas***

Start Advent with an Advent wreath on the Bulletin Board. Explain that the candles represent the waiting the world went through in preparation for the coming of their Savior; for Mary, this waiting was an act of a merciful mother. As a reminder place some images of Mary's time of waiting on the candles. Invite the students to place their own candles on the bulletin board. On the back of each write a simple prayer of waiting, Example: ***Mary, help me to be patient as I wait.***

The month of December is a time of preparation for the Christmas Season. No one was more a part of the preparation for the coming of Jesus than Mary. Among the feasts celebrated during December is Our Lady of Guadalupe. Just as a rose is a symbol of Christmas, it is also a symbol of Guadalupe. On a bulletin board place an image of Our Lady of Guadalupe. Tell the students the story of Juan Diego and explain how the roses were an act of Mary's mercy shown to the people of Guadalupe. Place a rose on the bulletin board for each act of mercy the students do as part of their Advent preparation.

Other feasts of Mary in December:

- 8. Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary /Our Lady of Good Health (1554)
- 10. Translation of the Holy House of Loreto, Italy (1291)
- 11. Our Lady of the Angels, Paris (1212)
- 12. Our Lady of Guadalupe, Patroness of the Americas, Mexico (1531)
- 15. Our Lady of the Armed Forces
- 24. Chaste Nuptial of Our Lady and St. Joseph
- 25. Nativity of the Lord - Christmas

JANUARY

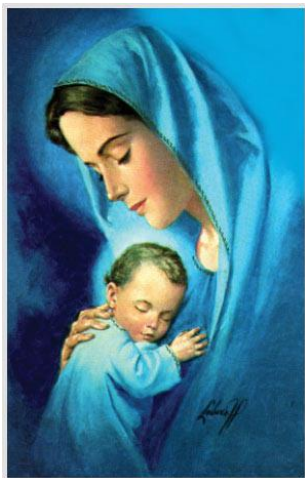
Mary, Model of Faith

Do Whatever HE Tells You”

Mother of God

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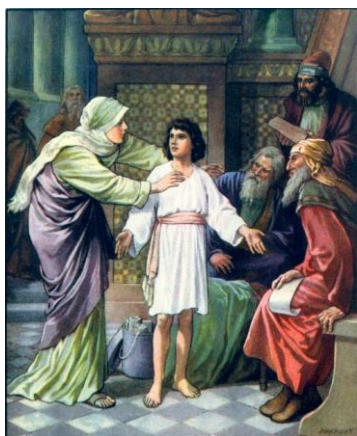
During January, we commemorate Mary as the Mother of God and our Mother. Dedicate a bulletin board to Mary as Mother. Discuss with the students what it means to be a good mother and ask them to identify the good qualities they see in their own mothers. Have them complete the statement, **“My mother is like Mary because...”** Have the student place their responses in an envelope on the bulletin board.

January is a good time to focus on the Gospel passages reflecting Jesus’ childhood. Use this bulletin board to engage the students in reflecting on where they find Jesus in their lives.

Other feasts of Mary in January:

1. Mary, Mother of God
2. Our Lady of the Pillar (40 A.D.)
3. Our Lady of Sichem, Belgium (474)
6. Our Lady of Cana
7. Our Lady of Egypt
8. Our Lady of Prompt Succor, New Orleans, Louisiana (1809)
13. Our Lady of Victory, Prague, Czechoslovakia (1620), home of the Infant of Prague
15. Our Lady of Banneux, Belgium (1933)
16. Our Lady, Refuge of Sinners
19. The Finding of Jesus in the Temple
22. Our Lady of Bethlehem
23. Feast of Our Lady’s Espousals, approved by Pope Paul III (1546)
24. Our Lady of Peace (1917)
28. Our Lady of Good Succor, (1613)

Finding of Jesus



Mary found Jesus in the Temple

Where do you find Him?

FEBRUARY

Mary, Model of Love and Joy

"My Spirit rejoices in God My Savior."



*O Mary,
Conceived
Without Sin,*



*Pray for us who
have recourse to
Thee!*



In February we remember the apparitions of Our Lady at Lourdes. At Lourdes, Mary identified herself as the Immaculate Conception. The Miraculous Medal is the medal of the Immaculate Conception. On the reverse of the medal is the Marian Cross—a representation of Mary standing at the foot of the cross. This is a good time to teach the prayer and to encourage the students to wear a miraculous medal.

A bulletin board reflecting the many titles of Mary provides the opportunity to teach the students the Litany of the Blessed Virgin and to explain her many titles.

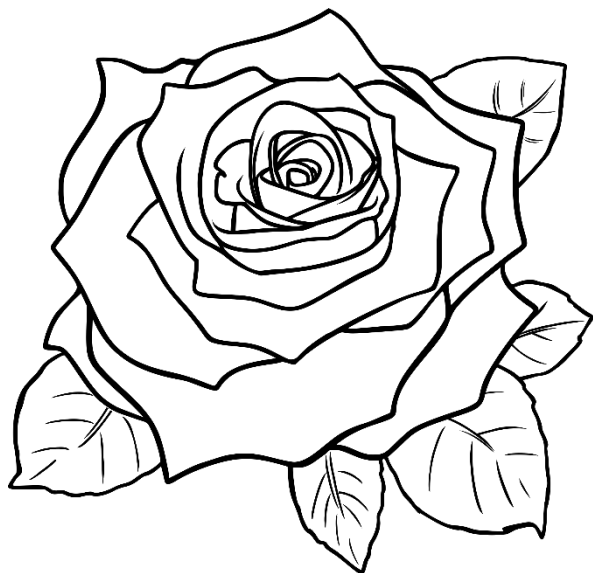
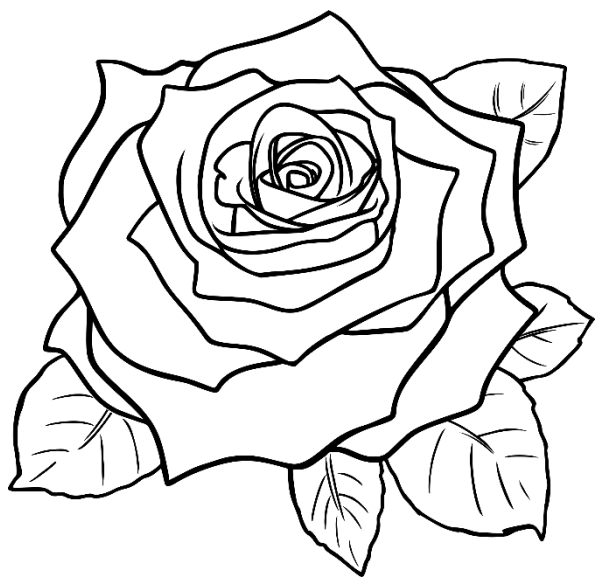
Other feasts of Mary in February:

2. Purification of Our Lady, Jerusalem
5. Dedication of the first Church of our Lady, by St. Peter, Tortosa, Italy
6. Our Lady of Louvain, Belgium (1444)
7. Our Lady of Grace
11. Our Lady of Lourdes, France (1858)
15. Our Lady of Paris, France (522)
24. Plague in Rome ends after Pope St. Gregory the Great leads a procession with a painting of Our Lady by St. Luke (591)
25. Our Lady of Victory, Constantinople (621) / Our Lady of Great Power, Quebec, Canada, (1673)
27. Our Lady of Light

Titles of Mary

Our Lady of Light	Our Lady of Grace
	
Our Mother of Perpetual Help	
	
Queen of Angels	Our Lady of Good Counsel
	





CATHOLIC TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Instruct the wise and they become wiser still. Proverbs 9: 9

Good Ground Press

<http://www.goodgroundpress.com/retreats.aspx>

Good Ground Press, Resources for Daily Living is a Publishing Ministry of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet. The site contains a variety of resources to encourage the spiritual life for people of all ages. There are online retreats, free printables, as well as prayers and gospel reflections. In addition, other content can be purchased through the site.

Wingclips

<http://www.wingclips.com>

Wingclips provides a host of inspirational movies and outlines. Movies can be sorted by title, Scripture, category or theme. The site also contains sermon outlines, which can assist teachers and spiritual leaders in illustrating concepts to others.

Catechism of Catholic Church

<http://ccc.usccb.org/flipbooks/catechism/index.html>

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* flipbook includes a table of contents and index, as well as a powerful search tool. It has the ability to bookmark pages for easy reference.

Apps for Ipad, Iphone, Ipod

Jesuit Prayer App

The *Jesuit Prayer* app is a wonderful tool for daily prayer. The tab for daily prayer contains the Gospel of the day, a reflection and a short prayer, which provide the reader with food for thought for each day. The app includes a link to Holy Father's monthly Prayer intentions. In addition, there is a straightforward guide for the daily examen, as well as virtual prayer cards highlighting Jesuit saints and prayers.



Advent and Christmas Daily Blessings App

The *Advent and Christmas Daily Blessings* app is a daily reflection tool for the seasons of Advent and Christmas. It contains the daily Mass readings, as well as an Advent reflection to assist the user in preparing themselves for the celebration of the Nativity of our Lord.



Catholic News Agency App

The *Catholic News Agency* app is an effective way to keep up with current events and news from a Catholic perspective. The app organizes information into four categories: World, USA, Vatican and the Americas.



Shared Wisdom

Two heads are better than one. Please submit your favorite technology resources for Catholic religious education at s.carmen@yahoo.com. Submissions will be included in upcoming issues. Many thanks to those who shared tools for this issue.



Religious Education Treasures

First Friday Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus

“Behold this heart that has so greatly loved people”

Purpose of the Lesson: To provide a periodic recall of the origin and practice of First Friday devotion.

Suggestion: Take a survey (if your children have the privilege of going to Mass on the First Fridays of the month) of how many children understand why this practice exists.

Context: Relationship of Devotion to the Sacred Heart and Eucharistic Devotion.

Some Vocabulary: cloister, novice, vision, revelation, apparition, devotion, reparation, confessor.

Visuals: Picture of Sacred Heart of Jesus surrounded by flames of love and encircled with crown of thorns; Picture of St. Margaret Mary.

Background: Biography of St. Margaret Mary Alacoque (Loyola Press compilation Saints or Google a Catholic website)

Who she was

When/where she lived (Details depend on age of students)

Vocation to religious life

Needs of church at the time

Mission given by Jesus



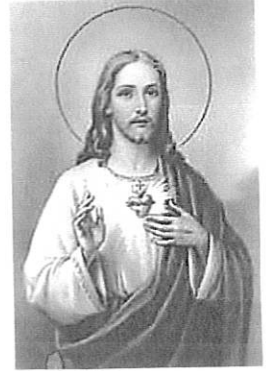
Time Line of Apparitions and Mission: 1672- Vision of Jesus' wounded side
1673- Vision of Sacred Heart
1673- Apparition of Jesus and request to make reparation through 3-fold plan.

Three-fold Object of Mission: 1. Revelation of 12 promises to those who faithfully receive Holy Eucharist for 9 consecutive First Fridays.
2. A Holy Hour each First Friday in reparation to Jesus for sins of the world.
3. A feast of the Sacred Heart to be established on the Friday following the “octave” (no longer an octave) of Corpus Christi.

The Twelve Promises Revealed to St. Margaret Mary (for those who faithfully fulfill the practice of the nine First Fridays.)

- *I will give them all the graces necessary for their state in life.*
- *I will establish peace in their families.*

- *I will console them in all their troubles.*
- *They shall find in My Heart an assured refuge during life and especially at the hour of their death.*
- *I will pour abundant blessings on all their undertakings.*
- *Sinners shall find in My Heart the source of an infinite ocean of mercy.*
- *Fervid souls shall grow fervent.*
- *Fervent souls shall quickly grow to high perfection.*
- *I will bless every place in which a picture of my Heart shall be honored.*
- *I will give to priests the gift of touching the most hardened hearts.*
- *Those who promote this devotion shall have their names written in my Heart, never to be blotted out.*
- *I promise in the excessive mercy of My Heart that my all-powerful love will grant to all those who communicate on the First Friday in nine consecutive months the grace of final repentance; they shall not die in my displeasure nor without receiving the Sacraments. My Divine Heart shall be their safe refuge in this last moment.*



Suggested presentation: Take one each day for 12 days of class. Explore with students what that would mean for them personally, for their families, for the world. For those students who do not have the opportunity now, this is still a good lesson for them to have so that when/if the opportunity arises they will understand.



Seek First the Kingdom

Parents in Partnership with God – Sharing Faith with Children

A Ministry of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Immaculata, Pennsylvania

PARENT ADVICE FROM POPE FRANCIS -- PART 2 of 6

The Joy of Love (Apostolic Exhortation), Chapter 4: “Love in Marriage”

Jealousy, boastfulness, competition and arrogance are stumbling blocks in relational living. Pope Francis, reflecting on St. Paul’s “love homily” (I Corinthians 13: 4-7), urges us to practice humble love that encourages, accepts and celebrates others. *The Joy of Love*, chapter four, spotlights this kind of love in the family.

LOVE IS NOT JEALOUS

Jealousy resents the achievements, prosperity and success of others. It takes pleasure when another person fails or meets with misfortune. Envy views another person as a threat to personal well-being and it causes us to close in on ourselves.

On the contrary, true love *“recognizes that everyone has different gifts and a unique path to life. So it strives to discover its own road to happiness, while allowing others to find theirs.”* (#95)

Parent Ponder-Points:

- Sibling rivalry is a form of envy most likely to occur when children are less than 3 years apart in age and when they are of the same gender. Feelings of jealousy, resentment, hostility and competition surface for any event that threatens the pre-existing relational position of a child and his/her self-concept. Parenting practices can ease tension between siblings. Read more detail and practical suggestions at:

[www.ParentTeacherSupport.org/Newsletters/CharacterDevelopment/Guide for Difficult Behaviors/Sibling Rivalry](http://www.ParentTeacherSupport.org/Newsletters/CharacterDevelopment/Guide%20for%20Difficult%20Behaviors/Sibling%20Rivalry).

- Elicit the input of trusted friends and family members to brainstorm characteristics, achievements, and notable memories about each child in your family. Store the information in your “spiritual pocket” so that you have it on hand whenever conversations of comparison surface. For instance, when Henry says of his brother Austin, “He always wins awards in sports” be ready to respond, “And you are famous for your sense of humor, creativity, and practical helpfulness.”

- Establish a birthday custom where each family member identifies two positive characteristics or achievements of the birthday-person. Publish it in some visual way. Celebrate individuality.

Reflection Questions:

1. When do you find it easiest to show pleasure in the good fortune of another person, and when is it most difficult?
2. How do you combat the human tendency to be jealous, competitive, or arrogant on behalf of your child?
3. How frequently do you speak words of encouragement, affirmation and validation?
4. Read *The Joy of Love*, #95-96. With what thought do you most resonate?

LOVE IS NOT BOASTFUL OR ARROGANT

People who love refrain from speaking too much about themselves; they focus on others; and they do not need to be the center of attention. They do not seek vainglory, domination or competition. Nor are they haughty, nitpicking, pushy or inflated with their own importance. Humility makes it possible for them to understand, to forgive and to serve others joyfully.

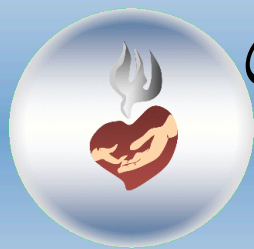
Some people mistakenly define their self-worth or sense of importance on the basis of knowledge, power, or achievement. They act superior and condescending towards others. ***“Yet what really makes us important is a love that understands, shows concern, and embraces the weak (#97). “Christian love is not about importance and power” (#98).***

Parent Ponder-Points:

- “Humility” and “pride” are opposites. “Humility” is the antidote for “pride.” Guide children in the ways of humility. For instance, practice being approachable by greeting others with a smile and eye-contact, express interest in the affairs of others, withhold your opinion until others have expressed theirs, ask for advice, compliment others, express appreciation; verbally celebrate the achievements of others and speak admiration about another person.
- “Me, Myself and I” is the hallmark of pride! Guide children to adopt the language of “we/us/ours” as their primary expression rather than “I, me and mine.”
- Adopt as a family motto: “It is nice to be important but it is far more important to be nice!”
- Remember WHO you are and WHOSE you are! You are a child of God, made in the image of God. All that you are is an un-earned gift. “Who we are is God’s gift to us. What we make of ourselves is our gift to God!”

Reflection Questions:

1. How frequently do you speak words of encouragement, affirmation and validation?
2. Pride is ego-based. Consider that EGO might mean “Edge God Out.” How might this acronym help you in the future?
3. If an impartial, invisible guest spent the last three days in your home, would he/she view you as humble and approachable?
4. Read *The Joy of Love*, #97-98. With what thought do you most resonate?



Busquen Primero el Reino

Padres de Familia Cooperando con Dios-

Compartiendo su Fe con sus Hijos/Hijas

Un Ministerio de las Hermanas, Siervas del Inmaculado Corazón de María

CONSEJOS DEL PAPA FRANCISCO PARA LOS PADRES DE FAMILIA

SEGUNDA PARTE 2 de 6 **"La Alegría del Amor"** (Exhortación Apostólica),

Capítulo 4: "El Amor en el Matrimonio"

Los celos, el jactarse, la competencia y la arrogancia son obstáculos para la vida de relaciones con otros. El papa Francisco, al reflexionar sobre "la homilía de amor" de Sn. Pablo (I Corintios 13: 4-7), nos impulsa a practicar el amor humilde que alienta, acepta y celebra a otros. *La Alegría del Amor*, el capítulo cuatro, destaca este tipo de amor en la familia.

EL AMOR NO ES CELOSO

Los sentimientos de celos resiente de los logros ajenos, de la prosperidad y el éxito de otros, siente placer cuando otra persona no logra lo deseado, se complace con la desgracia ajena. La envidia ve a otra persona como una amenaza para el propio bienestar y nos lleva a encerrarnos en nosotros mismos.

El amor verdadero, sin embargo, *"Acepta que cada uno tiene dones diferentes y distintos caminos en la vida. Entonces, procura descubrir su propio camino para ser feliz, dejando que los demás encuentren el suyo."* (#95)

Padres: Para reflexionar:

- La rivalidad entre hermanos es una forma de envidia, es más probable que ocurra cuando los niños son aún pequeños y/o en aquellos que tienen más de 3 años de diferencia y cuando son del mismo género. Los sentimientos de celos, resentimiento, hostilidad y de competencia entre ellos amenaza las buenas relaciones entre hermanos, su concepto de sí mismo. Buenas prácticas de crianza en este aspecto pueden aliviar la tensión entre hermanos cuando ello sucede. Lea más al respecto y sugerencias prácticas en:

www.ParentTeacherSupport.org/Newsletters/CharacterDevelopment/ Guide for Difficult Behaviors/Sibling Rivalry.

- Promueva y facilite la relación con amigos y familiares de confianza para intercambiar la vida diaria de su familia, de esa forma estará contribuyendo al legado relacional de vínculos con otros referentes y su familia. Almacene la información en una especie de "bolsillo espiritual", de manera que pueda acceder a él cada vez que aparezcan las comparaciones entre hermanos. Por ejemplo, cuando Henry dice de su hermano Austin, "Él siempre gana premios en los deportes" esté preparado para responder "Tú te caracterizas por tu buen sentido del humor, tu creatividad, y por lo práctico que eres para resolver problemas cuando se te presentan."

- Establezca ritos: Por ejemplo, durante la celebración de los cumpleaños de sus hijo/as proponga la siguiente actividad para algún momento de la celebración: Pida a sus invitados que cada uno pueda decirle al festejado dos características positivas o logros obtenidos a la fecha en el colegio, en la familia, etc. De esta forma podrá validar y celebrar la individualidad y unicidad de cada uno de sus hijo/as.

Preguntas

para la reflexión:

1. ¿En qué oportunidades le resulta más fácil empatizar con la felicidad de la buena suerte de otra persona, y cuándo le es más difícil?
2. ¿Cómo combate o trabaja la tendencia humana a ser celoso/a, competitivo/a, o arrogante en la crianza de su hijo?
3. ¿Con qué frecuencia les ofrece como padres palabras de: "ánimo", "afirmación y/o validación" a sus hijo/as?
4. Lea *La Alegría del Amor*, # 95-96. ¿Qué concepto o idea es el que más lo interpela?

EL AMOR NO ES JACTANCIOSO O ARROGANTE

Personas que aman se abstienen de hablar demasiado sobre sí mismos; se centran en los demás; no necesitan ser el centro de atención. No buscan la vanagloria, la dominación o la competencia. Tampoco son altivos, agresivos, o se jactan de ser más importantes que otros. El valor de la humildad hace que sea posible para ellos comprender, perdonar y servir a los demás con alegría.

Algunas personas definen erróneamente su autoestima o sentido de importancia sobre la base del conocimiento, el poder, o el logro, esto les hace actuar de forma altiva, creyéndose superiores a otros y proyectan acciones condescendientes hacia los demás. *"... en realidad lo que nos hace grandes es el amor que comprende, cuida, protege al débil."* (# 97). *"La lógica del amor cristiano no se basa en quien se siente más que otros y necesita de hacerles sentir su poder."* (#98)

Padres: Para reflexionar

"La humildad" y "el orgullo" son opuestos. "La Humildad" es el antídoto para el "orgullo." Practique algunas acciones de rutina, por ejemplo: muéstrese accesible para las necesidades de otros, salude con una sonrisa y siempre haga contacto visual, manifieste real interés por los asuntos de los demás, guarde su opinión hasta que otros hayan expresado la suya. Verbalice alguna felicitación por los logros ajenos, exprese a otros su admiración acerca de otra persona

- "Yo y mi Ser" (Me, Myself, I) (Yo, yo y yo) Máxima expresión de egocentrismo. Guíe a sus hijo/as a adoptar un lenguaje de "nosotros / nuestro" como parte de su lenguaje habitual.

- Adopte un lema de familia: Por ejemplo "Es agradable ser importante, pero es mucho más importante ser amable con los demás!"

- Recuerda quién eres y de quién provienes! Eres un hijo de Dios, hecho a su imagen y semejanza. Todo lo que eres es un regalo gratuito, no has trabajado para merecerlo, te fue dado por Amor. "Lo que somos es el regalo de Dios para nosotros. Lo que hacemos de nosotros mismos es nuestro regalo para Dios."

Preguntas para la reflexión:

1. ¿Con qué frecuencia usted habla palabras de ánimo, la afirmación y de validación?
2. Si reflexiono y asumo que el ego es parte de mi ser, ¿Cómo podría trabajarlo?
3. Si un extraño fuese invitado a pasar unos días con usted y su familia, ¿Crees que ante sus ojos te vería cercano y humilde?
4. Lea *La Alegría del Amor*, # 97-98. ¿Qué concepto o idea es el que más lo interpela?