

# Apostolic Briefings & Communications



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

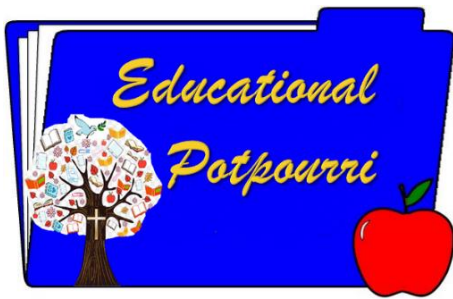


In all  
your ways  
acknowledge



*Him,*

and He will direct your paths.



## *What Is Your Mindset? Are You Gritty?*

How and what we think determines our decisions, our outlook on life. How we view ourselves, the messages we voice to ourselves, positive or negative, often determine success in life. A plethora of theories abound today offering people strategies for achieving lifelong goals, such as, tools for stretching the brain, activities for developing noncognitive or soft skills (motivation, emotional and social skills), and techniques for strengthening important character traits, for example, grit. Schools can purchase programs to help their students advance in these areas. However, Catholic Schools are blessed with the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the teachings of the Catholic Church. Jesus taught us how to attain true happiness and peace in this life. He has provided us with many avenues for holiness: receiving the Eucharist, practicing the Beatitudes as a way of life, and following His teachings as proclaimed in the Gospels. The noncognitive skills of Jesus that we find in the Gospels include loving our neighbors as ourselves, being the servant of all, showing compassion to the poor, and forgiving one another as Jesus has forgiven us. When one follows and lives according to the teachings of Jesus, then his/her behavior strives to manifest the Fruits of the Holy Spirit: charity, generosity, joy, gentleness, peace, faithfulness, patience, modesty, kindness, self-control, goodness, and chastity (Galatians:5).

These gifts are expressed daily in Catholic schools by our dedicated and selfless administrators, staffs and teachers. We pass on and live the Spirit's Gifts and Fruits by our example. We teach students the tenets of the faith. We highlight the importance of service to others by praying for the needs of all and by conducting service projects in our own parishes and neighborhoods.

Catholic Schools likewise benefit from the findings of educational research, such as the important *Mindset* work of Stanford University Psychology Professor, Dr. Carol Dweck. Her educational research offers us many insights that we can and should apply in our Catholic Schools. One important outcome of Dweck's research is the *Mindset* concept and how it impacts a person's ability to achieve.

She proposes that a **Fixed Mindset** is one in which a person's self-talk would mimic something like the following, "My intelligence is what it is and there is nothing I can do about it." Children who have been praised over and over again for being intelligent are likely not to take chances in a challenging endeavor for fear that their level of intelligence would be questioned. Therefore, the children believe, "I'm intelligent so I should be able to answer this problem with little or no effort." Children then begin to believe and act according to what others have instilled in them concerning their intellectual ability. Consequently, when faced with a challenge they may avoid it for fear that if they fail, others may come to the conclusion that perhaps they are not as intelligent as everyone thinks and they do not want to face embarrassment or perhaps be a disappointment to others. Conversely, a person with a **Growth Mindset** believes that working hard, putting in effort over and over again, and recognizing that mistakes are stepping stones to achievement and a means of coming to a deeper understanding actually achieve more than those with a Fixed Mindset. Dweck encourages educators to be sure to keep the findings of her research in mind when offering students praise. She has found in her years of research that offering empty praise, such as, "Good job." "Wow, you are so smart," promotes in the child a Fixed Mindset. Accordingly, the child looks for outward sources for encouragement rather than looking within, recognizing that time, effort, and persistence produce positive results. Dweck is not mandating that no praise be given to children, but suggests rather, that the praise be specific, and that it should focus on the effort and strategies used in problem solving instead of just saying something such as, "I knew you could do it." An appropriate, specific form of praise may be, "I noticed how you stuck with that project and came up with creative solutions. Way to go!" This form of encouragement is specific and pinpoints the process rather than the result. One receiving this type of encouragement will then be willing to take on challenges in the future, because he/she recognizes the importance of effort and perseverance. Take this test to determine your Mindset. <https://mindsetonline.com/testyourmindset/step1.php>

In addition to promoting a Growth Mindset, we can also review the research of University of Pennsylvania Professor Dr. Angela Duckworth, the guru of **Grit**. Dr. Duckworth studied characteristics of highly successful people and found that they exhibited the following traits: passion, determination, and direction when pursuing a goal, and exerted hours upon hours of deliberate, purposeful practice to gain skill proficiency. When these experts reached the pinnacle of success, they didn't stop there. Instead, they assessed their areas of weakness and worked to improve upon these, and committed themselves to making continuous improvement an integral part of their daily routine. These people continually challenged themselves for the sake and thrill of learning, and for the purpose of serving others in order to make a positive difference in others' lives and in the world. Is this not the goal and mission of Catholic schools? Do we not believe that God has called us to teach His children to be upstanding citizens of this world, and in cooperating with His grace to become holy, so that one day we may enjoy eternal life with Him in heaven? Educational and psychological research has so much to offer, and we as educators use these valuable resources to make our schools

the best that they can be. Want to know how gritty you are? Check your rating at: <https://angeladuckworth.com/grit-scale/>

One such example of a school that fosters the Growth Mindset and Grit is Saint Francis de Sales School in Southwest Philadelphia. *Do It Better! How the Kids of St. Francis de Sales Exceeded Everyone's Expectations* is a book written by Sisters Constance Touey and Jeannette Lucey, IHM, who share their stories of 31 years serving Saint Francis de Sales students. The school has students representing almost 50 countries throughout the world. This is a book that will inspire every Catholic school educator, evidence that each one of us truly makes a difference in each of the children and families we serve.

Sister Constance, principal, and Sister Jeannette, grade 8 teacher, in collaboration with dedicated faculty instilled in students the Grit and Growth Mindset framework. Grit was taught through their example in never giving up during times when financial hardships for the school, parish, and families seemed insurmountable. Their determination proved to students that hard work, a lot of time and effort, and a never-give-up spirit is what makes for a successful and compassionate school community. Many of the students came from very traumatic circumstances, such as fleeing from a war-torn country or seeking refuge in school from a violent neighborhood or from an abusive home situation. The attitude of Sisters Constance and Jeannette was not one of pity, but as former student John explained, "There were many students at de Sales with difficult lives, but the Sisters never accepted excuses. They were compassionate and gave us the sense that 'we're giving you opportunities; don't make excuses'" (p. 120). The faculty reinforced the "We" attitude, that is, when students participated in a contest, it wasn't just about the one child in the contest, but also those who practiced with the contestant and encouraged him/her: teacher-coach, parent-coach, student-coach, and classmates-coaches, and student body-coaches. One might say – all were contest participants!

The "We" attitude and a deep sense of welcome made all students understand that individually they may be culturally different, but cultural diversity was celebrated as a means of learning and appreciating what each group brings to the whole. Josh Walls described, "We learned diversity on so many levels at SFDS – to be accepting of people from other races, countries, and cultures.... de Sales helped us all to understand that people are people at the end of the day" (p. 129). As Sister Jeannette expressed so meaningfully, "While some refer to the United States as a melting pot, we like to describe our community as an orchestra – made up of all the beautiful customs that each child brings from his and her native land. Together they became a magnificent symphony" (p. 24).

In addition to instilling tenacity, perseverance, and grit in students these characteristics took on meaning as Sister Constance described, "Our purpose is to spread the word that every effort possible should be made to unfold the potential in a budding child so that he or she can become a beautiful flower to enhance this world and the next" (p. 145). Sister Jeannette added, "What I know is that by defying stereotypes of race, sex, ethnicity, and culture, we wheedled from these young vessels full of promise and possibility some thing wonderful, some one wonderful" (p. 146)! Saint Francis de Sales is just one example of many Catholic schools that teach students the tremendous importance of putting forth consistent effort, persevering even when the going gets tough, using our gifts and talents to the best of our abilities, and recognizing the truth that our intelligence, gifts, and talents are not fixed, but, in fact, can grow and develop in unimaginable ways throughout our lives. Now this certainly is a hopeful and exciting message!

The Growth Mindset and Grit is still alive and well in our IHM schools since 1845. On November 10, we IHMs celebrated our 173<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of our founding in Monroe, Michigan by Fr. Louis Florent Gillet, a Redemptorist missionary and our founding Sister Theresa Maxis, IHM. Fr. Gillet with Sisters Ann Schaaf and Sister Celestine Renauld joined Mother Theresa to begin a community based on the spirituality of St. Alphonsus Liguori. Thus began the educational apostolate of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Many hardships were endured in these humble beginnings, but Fr. Gillet and the Sisters were on fire with the love of God and wanted to share this love and knowledge of God through Catholic education. They had a clear vision and mission to continue the mandate of Jesus, the Redeemer, to "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations" (Mt. 28:19). We continue this legacy as we IHMs work hand in hand with our wonderful and dedicated lay colleagues promoting Gospel values to all we serve. Many of our IHM schools have implemented the *Virtue of the Month*, adapted from Father Daniel Lowery's, C.S.S.R., *Growth through Virtue: Month by Month with Saint Alphonsus Liguori* (1984). This is a practice that helps to strengthen virtue in our students and provides practical applications. Click here for the Virtues of the Month: <http://ihmimmaculata.org/wp-content/uploads/13.-Religious-Education-Treasures.pdf>

Please visit our IHM website to learn more about our Congregation and perhaps consider whether God may be calling you to religious life ☺ <http://ihmimmaculata.org/>

**Fixed/Growth Mindset Activities:** Teach students the meaning of a Fixed and Growth Mindset. Have them act out scenarios and decide which mindset the actor/actress is employing. For example: A student is preparing for a math test. He thinks to himself, "I've never been good at math, I'm probably going to bomb this test as I have done in the past." Have students assign the type of mindset utilized in this situation (Fixed). Then act out how a student can change his thinking and experience success in math or any subject or challenging activity. Students will discuss, perhaps with the

teacher's coaching, that with practice and hard work, a person will eventually improve their skills. It's important to stress that improvement requires time and consistent effort and that failure is part of the learning process.

The following YouTube clips help to explain the Fixed and Growth Mindsets. After viewing one of the videos, have students create scenarios of their own with various solutions. Students may find it difficult to accept that there may be a number of solutions to the same problem. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M1CHPnZfFmU>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YyiDqWQLlaQ> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2zrtHt3bBmQ>

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KUWn\\_TJTrnU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KUWn_TJTrnU) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aNHas97iE78>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pamzG81yt7g> – Which Mindset are you quiz?

**Fostering Grit Activities:** The following are some worthwhile sites that will assist in strengthening grit in children and also a growth mindset. Working with children to establish goals to complete a particular task is a skill that will benefit them throughout life. Together as a class, solve problems that will aid in creating a more peaceful classroom environment. When there are problems at recess and inevitably the conflict continues when they re-enter the classroom, take the opportunity to address creatively the concerns. These type of activities develop their stick-to-it-ness skill. It is essential that students have experiences of truly listening to one another, gaining one another's perspective, and then calmly resolving an issue. In situations like this, it is worthwhile to pause and pray spontaneously asking the Holy Spirit to guide the class' deliberations. Allowing a student who is willing to lead the prayer is often very touching and inspirational. <https://biglifejournal.com/blogs/blog/activities-grit-resilience-children>  
<https://www.teachstarter.com/blog/15-books-and-activities-to-foster-grit-in-the-classroom/>

If you type in Grit or Growth Mindset in Pinterest or Teachers Pay Teachers, there are hundreds of activities to teach and strengthen these concepts. Here are a few Grit YouTube videos, enjoy☺

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uwsZZ2rprqc>

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UGKSb\\_dSZII](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UGKSb_dSZII)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vzle\\_Puyg5o](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vzle_Puyg5o)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NuTY-xEdf74> Grit song

Famous Marshmallow Test: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QX\\_oy9614HQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QX_oy9614HQ)

We, IHMs, are blessed to work with our colleagues in Catholic education. Your dedication, grit, growth mindset, and love of God's children are an inspiration! May God bless each of you and your loved ones in a special way this Thanksgiving, Christmas, and always☺

Take care and God bless,

Sister Mary C. Chapman, IHM, Ed.D.

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Duckworth, A. (2016). *Grit: The Power of Passion and Perseverance*. NY: Scribner.

Dweck, C. (2006). *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*. NY: Ballantine Books.

*Resilience and Learning*. (2013). Educational Leadership:71(1)

Hoerr, T. (2017). *The Formative Five: Fostering Grit, Empathy, and Other Success Skills Every Student Needs*. VA: ASCD.

Touey, C. & Lucey, J. (2018). *Do It Better! How the Kids of St. Francis de Sales Exceeded Everyone's Expectations*.

PA: Touey & Lucey Publishing. **You may order copies of Sisters Constance and Jeannette's book at [thewelcomeschool.com](http://thewelcomeschool.com) (It's cheaper and faster this way). Their book is also available through Amazon and at Barnes and Noble. This book makes a GREAT gift: Christmas, Birthday, Graduation, or just for everyday reading! "Do It Better! offers hope and optimism amidst today's divisive conversations about immigrants and refugees."** <https://www.thewelcomeschool.com/> **Enjoy☺**

Tough, P. (2016). *Helping Children Succeed: What Works and Why*. UK: Penguin Random House.

## More Productive ELA Classes Using “Kid Smarts”

(a.k.a. Multiple Intelligences)

I hope you took the opportunity to survey your students to ascertain which “smarts” are present in your class. Children always enjoy these kinds of surveys because, after all, it’s about them! They get to learn how they learn and are more apt to accept your differentiation in the classroom. As promised in the last issue, we’ll peruse the logical-mathematical, the verbal-linguistic and the bodily-



kinesthetic “smarts” here, and also supply more attention getters (ATs): those techniques to use when *hocus- pocus- everybody-focus* gets old.

***Logical-Mathematical:*** Besides the obvious gift of enjoying numbers, these students have an inquisitive nature. They want to know how things work, they ask lots of questions, and think precisely and methodically. How can you target this MI when it’s not math time?

In ELA class students could:

- construct a time line of story events. (You’ll be pleased with how precise it is.)
- draw a floor plan of a room in the story; sketch a map to scale of a scene from the story. Remember that these children aren’t necessarily artistic, so reassure them that they are not being judged on that ability.
- create a code for the dialogue in the text. They can use numbers or design their own symbols. This is especially enjoyable if it’s a mystery story! (If Egypt is part of your Social Studies curriculum, you can connect this to hieroglyphics.)
- benefit from learning roots or base words. This appeals to their sense of logic, because once the root is learned it has the same meaning every time it’s encountered. (Loyola Press publishes two excellent resources for Latin and Greek roots and base words: *Voyages In English* and *Vocabulary In Action*.)



***Here's a management tip:*** As stated above, these children are inquisitive and ask many questions. It seems their hands are always up, until sometimes you're running out of patience and time. Do you ever feel like saying, "Let me continue the lesson and your question might get answered"? Try this. Have a *quiet, confidential chat* as you give these children an index card. (You don't want to embarrass them, or make them think they're in trouble.) On the card they write down key words about questions they have. As you teach, if a question gets answered they cross it out. When you *do* pause for questions, they may ask the **one** or **two** *burning* questions that are uppermost on the list. This requires decision making and prioritizing skills as well.

ATs: Because these learners are focused on detail and accomplishing tasks, these may be helpful.

T: *A mistake is a chance* Ss: *to try harder.*

T: *If you can't make a mistake* Ss: *you can't make anything.*

T: *To infinity...* Ss: *and beyond.*

***Verbal-Linguistic:*** In addition to being generally good writers and readers these students use expanded vocabulary, and enjoy word games, puns and riddles. They have a sensitivity to the meaning and order of words, and they like to be read to.

They are fascinated by etymology (origins of words). So spice up a lesson by tossing in a little trivia, even if it's not ELA class. For example in Social Studies as you're covering the Civil War, tell the students that it's during this period when the term "sideburns" originated. The Civil War General Burnside wore long facial hair below his ears. The soldiers reversed the syllables in his name, and "sideburns" was born. In math class they'll be fascinated to realize that calculate comes from the Latin root *calculus* but it doesn't mean compute. It means pebble! Pebbles were used in the first abacus on which computations were done.

Because they are verbal, these children may whisper while reading. In days gone by, it used to be said that these students had a reading difficulty, but that's not always the case. When we recognize the "verbal smarts" from which they operate, we realize that the words they hear in their minds are coming alive through their lips. So encourage the whispering of a passage with expression.

In ELA class, students could:

- write a radio ad or news article for the story/book telling why others should read it.
- create a word list related to or characteristic of the story using all the letters A-Z. (The words don't have to be from the story. They'll love to find colorful words in a thesaurus.)
- retell their favorite (or least favorite) part in their own words.
- talk through a process. This is especially helpful in math, since that's not their "smart". But their verbal ability will help them understand a complicated process if they can talk it out. Then they can summarize it and even write it out. Give them a prompt such as "This concept didn't click until I realized that..."

ATs:

T: *Chicka chicka*                      Ss: *Boom boom*  
 T: *Hakuna*                                Ss: *Matata*  
 T: *Hi ho, hi ho*                        Ss: *It's off to work we go.*

***Bodily-Kinesthetic:*** These children are skilled in using their bodies: they can fix things, will try new activities, enjoy physical rewards, and are often good athletes. It may be annoying that they tap their pencil or foot while learning/studying, but this is how they process the learning... through their bodies. It's motion that makes the learning stick!

In ELA class, students could:

- enact one scene from the story quickly (no props or costumes for time sake); create a tableau of the scene, freeze and take a picture.
- make a model of a scene or character from the text. (This could be part of a center activity, since it may take some time.)
- choose 4 or 5 letter sounds that you've been working on in the primary grades. You then whisper each sound to a child until everyone has a sound. At your signal, children make their sound and circulate until they find classmates with the matching sound.
- practice spelling words while pretending to dribble and shoot a basketball, jump rope or play with a yo-yo.
- pace across the back of the room while studying spelling or vocabulary.

- play charades: act out the verb in the sentence, or a vocabulary word and the class has to guess what the word is. This helps tremendously with shades of meaning for standardized testing: e.g. *stride*, *amble*, *lope*, *saunter* etc.
- spell out loud as they stand for a vowel and sit for a consonant.

ATs:

T: *Are you ready, class?* Ss: (while saluting) *Aye! Aye! Captain!*

T: *Everybody rock...* Ss: (while moving arms in circle) *...everybody roll.*

T: *If we all don't row...* Ss: (while rowing with pretend oars) *...then we don't go.*

In the next issue, we'll take a look at the remaining "smarts": interpersonal, intrapersonal and naturalist. Until then try again to move out of your comfort zone with an idea or two above. Good luck!





# PRIME TIMES



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

November, 2018

## JESUS WAS BORN ON CHRISTMAS DAY

Tune: Rudolph the Red Nose Reindeer  
Taken from Reading with Mrs. D.

Jesus was born on Christmas.  
On a very Holy Night.  
And in the sky above Him.  
Shone the very brightest light.

All of the heavenly angels,  
Sang a song to praise His name.  
They told the lowly shepherds,  
So they left their sheep and came.

From the east the Wisemen came,  
Bringing gifts to share.  
Riches for the king of kings,  
To show the Savior that they care.

Now we celebrate His birthday,  
In our hearts and every day.  
Jesus in your humble manger,  
Your true love is here to stay.



## WISEMEN

Tune: Twinkle, Twinkle  
Taken from Reading with Mrs. D

Once there was a star so bright  
Wisemen followed it at night  
All the way across the sand  
Bringing presents in their hands  
Baby Jesus was the boy  
Who they came to see with joy.

## CHRISTMAS SONG

Tune: I'm a Little Teapot

I'm a little snowman, round and fat,  
Here is my scarf and here is my hat.  
When Christmas comes around just hear me shout,  
"Here comes Santa. You better watch out!"

I'm a little light bulb, round and bright,  
Here is my twinkle; oh, what a sight!  
When Christmas comes around just plug me in,  
And watch me blink again and again.

I'm a little Christmas tree, short and green,  
Here are my branches, the cutest you've seen.  
When I get all decorated, hear me cheer,  
"Merry Christmas and Happy New Year?"

## Here We Go to Bethlehem

Tune: "The Mulberry Bush"

Here we go to Bethlehem,  
Bethlehem, Bethlehem.  
Here we go to Bethlehem,  
to see the newborn King.



The Wise Men came from far away,  
far away, far away.  
The Wise Men came from far away,  
gifts the three did bring.

All bow down and worship Him,  
worship Him, Worship Him.  
All bow down and worship Him,  
praises we will sing.

## THE GINGERBREAD BOY

If you are working on adjectives the story “The Gingerbread Boy” may create a fun time for your students. After reading the story give out a cutout of the gingerbread boy and ask the students to trace the cut out on light brown paper. Then cut it out. Ask each student to write inside the shape adjectives that describe the gingerbread boy. You can also use a cutout of the fox and ask what adjectives describe the fox. Students can work in small groups or independently. They may be surprised at the different adjectives that surface. They can also compare the adjectives used to describe the gingerbread boy and the fox.



## THE ELVES AND THE SHOEMAKER

By: The Brothers Grimm

The theme of the story has to do with hard work, caring and sharing. A good story for the Advent/Christmas seasons. If you google “The Elves and the Shoemaker” by the Brothers Grimm you will find comprehension questions, discussion questions and some extension questions. There are also worksheets that can be used with the story.

### Extended Activities

Write the rhyming pairs in the poems and song.  
Find the nouns in the poems and song.  
Find the proper nouns.  
Are there any adjectives or adverbs?

## CHRISTMAS ADVERBS

By: Mama’s Learning Corner

Read each set of actions below. Then write several adverbs to describe how you might do these actions.

Singing “Silent Night” - example reverently,  
tenderly, lovingly  
Baking cookies -  
Wrapping presents -  
Buying gifts for someone else -



## I SENSE A NEW YEAR

Create an activity sheet that lists the five senses. Ask students to describe what they did over the Christmas holidays using their senses - What I saw, what I touched, what I smelled, what I heard, and what I tasted. They can write or draw their responses.

## OUR FIVE SENSES

Tune: BINGO



We have five senses that we use each and every day

Sight, smell, taste, touch, hear  
Sight, smell, taste, touch, hear  
Sight, smell, taste, touch, hear  
These are our five senses.

## STILL WATERS

Start the New Year off with a game called “Still Waters.” The students will know the game begins when the teacher says, “1, 2, 3, 3, 2, 1 Still Waters has begun.”

1. When the students hear this, they are to freeze and not say a word or move.
2. Time them to see how long they can stay still as a whole class. The goal is for them to break their best record.
3. The teacher will hold a fist in the air and each time someone moves or talks, you put a finger up. You stop when all 5 fingers are up. Post in a designated spot how many seconds the class lasted.  
At the end of the day, list their best time.
4. By this time you will have their attention and can give directions for what they are to do.
5. Record the time in a place where the students can see it.
6. At the end of the week, if they beat their best time, offer a special treat.

This activity can be done a few times during the day when you know you need every ones attention.



## PARTS OF A STORY RHYME

Here is a rhyme that may help students remember the parts of a story. It can be placed on a story character to make it stand out. Ex. Snowman, Christmas tree, heart, etc.

When I read a story it has more than one part!  
The **title and the author** are just the place I start!  
The **setting, characters, and problem** are parts of the story, too!  
**Beginning, middle, end and solution** help me retell the story to you!

## CHRYSANTHEMUM

If you haven't read the book **Chrysanthemum by Kevin Henkes**, it may be a nice way to move into the New Year. The story, with the teacher's help, guides the students into thinking about how words and actions impact other people. You can google **the title and author** and find numerous activities you might use with the story.



## THE FRIENDSHIP TREE

**The Friendship Tree** may help your students share their ideas about friends and friendship. It would also make a nice bulletin board for February. Begin by tracing your own hand and forearm on brown paper for the branches. Then make a trunk. Brainstorm with your students about what makes someone a good friend. Pass out heart tracers and have each student trace a heart on red construction paper and cut the heart out. Each student can write one word or phrase on the heart about what makes a good friend. They can decorate the heart and place it on the classroom tree. Check out **Classroom Friendship Tree** on Pinterest for more information.

## All About Spelling

Check out Pinterest which has number of free ideas for students who struggle with spelling.

**Word Building Travel Activity Kit** on Pinterest has a great idea for using metal containers for reviewing sight words, color words, word families, vocabulary words, math words etc. Metal pencil boxes, lunch boxes, candy tins, or cookie tins are great to use with magnetic letters. This can be adapted for use in the classroom.

## SPARKLE "E"

Tune: Twinkle, Twinkle

Hello my name is Sparkle "E,"  
and you'll love to come meet me.  
When I show up, vowels say their name,  
which changes words like Sam to same.  
Sparkle "E" will make no sound  
whenever it will come around.

## Singing Dr. King's Praises

Tune: "Old MacDonald"

Dr. King had a dream for p-e-a-c-e.  
He wanted people to be friends and live in harmony.  
He had lots of love to share.  
He spread kindness everywhere.  
Dr. King has a dream for p-e-a-c-e.

## Groundhog Day

February 2<sup>nd</sup> - -  
Today is Groundhog Day!  
Sleepy little groundhog  
Comes crawling out to play.  
If he spots his shadow  
Hiding so very near,  
Six more weeks of winter  
Are certain to appear!



## Winter Thank You

Thank You, God, for winter  
With snow and frosty air  
For those who love and keep us  
For the warm house that we share.

I give You thanks, O Father,  
And pray to heaven above  
To guard me through the days of winter  
With the warmth of Your dear love. Amen.

## The Snowman and the Bunny

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 that little snowman's nose . . .  
Nibble, nibble, crunch!

## 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 23<sup>rd</sup>, 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.



## Author's Birthdays

What better way to highlight various authors than to celebrate their birthday by reading one of their books. Below are just a few of the authors that have birthdays coming up.

November 25<sup>th</sup> – Marc Brown  
November 25<sup>th</sup> – P.D. Eastman  
November 26<sup>th</sup> – Charles Schulz  
December 1<sup>st</sup> – Jan Brett  
December 19<sup>th</sup> – Eve Bunting  
January 4<sup>th</sup> – Jacob Grimm  
January 27<sup>th</sup> – Lewis Carroll

## There Was a Class That Swallowed . . .

Teach sequencing with your class as the stars of the book. Using the pattern of the "There Was an Old Lady Who Swallowed..." books have your students create a book telling of the many things that the class ate and why in a sequential order. This activity is flexible and can be completed in a whole group, teacher directed small group or even as a center.



## What's the Question?

Here's a good thinking activity for your students! Give them an "answer" and have them think of a question that fits it.

For example: The answer is red.

The question could be:

What color is Santa's suit?

What color is Rudolph's nose?



## Math Football

Divide your students into groups. Each group receives a football with math facts written on it. Each student must solve one math fact and then pass the football on to one of his/her teammates. The first group of students to complete the passes with all the answers correct scores a touchdown. This concept can also be easily adapted to the other subject areas.



# IHM Good Writers Club



Grades 3 & 4

## **JANUARY**

Being thoughtful of others  
Is something I do  
I look when they speak  
And listen well too.

## **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

Grade 5 & 6

## **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.

Grades 7 & 8

## **JANUARY**

Character takes courage.  
It requires doing what is right  
Not what's easy or popular.

## **FEBRUARY**

God's works are links  
That form a chain of love.

St. Teresa of Calcutta

## MARCH



Grades 3 & 4

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

H. Jackson Brown, Jr.

Grades 5 & 6

You have not lived a perfect day,  
unless you have done something  
for someone who will never  
be able to repay you.

Ruth Smeltzer

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Grades 7 & 8

Wisdom is knowing what to do next.  
Virtue is doing it.

David Starr Jordan

---

Winter, 2018 – 2019



# 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

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Date

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Member of the official Board of Evaluators

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## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION RESOURCES**

*IDEAS TO SHARE WITH ALL WHO ENGAGE IN FAITH FORMATION THROUGH  
THE TEACHING OF RELIGION*

***I.H.M. ABC NOTES \*\* WINTER, 2018-19***



### **“Enlisting Witnesses for Jesus Christ”**

In this issue...

**Courts of the Infant King...*Sisters of I.H.M.***

**Prayer for Christmas** (*Incorporating the Courts of the Infant King*)  
***Sister Eileen Tiernan, I.H.M.***

**Prayer for Catholic Schools Week 2019...***Thanking and Blessing our Teachers*  
***Sister Mary Anne Sweeney, I.H.M.***

**Religious Education Treasures...***A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words*  
***Sister Jeanne M. Baker, I.H.M.***

**Religion Bulletin Boards ...***Themes on Missionary Discipleship:*  
*December, January, February*  
***Sister Edward William Quinn, I.H.M.***

**Catholic Technology Resources for Religious Education...***Websites & Apps*  
***Sister Carmen Teresa Fernandez, I.H.M.***

**Seek First the Kingdom...***Parents – First Teachers of Prayer*  
*(Part 2 of 6: Parent Blessings)*  
***Sister Patricia M. McCormack, I.H.M.***  
***Spanish Translation by Sr. Eileen Reilly, IHM***

### **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

Many thanks to those who contributed Religious Education ideas to this Issue.  
Thank you for being Joyful Bearers of God's Redeeming Love!



# Christmas Prayer Service

**Leader:** As we prepare to celebrate the birth of Christ, we pause to contemplate the scene of Christ's birth in a poor manger. When we look upon the figures of a manger scene, the Christmas gospel comes alive for us and we rejoice in this wonderful event that God so loved us that he sent His Son to be born for all of us!

*++Each person chooses a card with their place at the Court of the Infant King. While doing so music can be played in the background.*

*++Use a table top Nativity scene. Choose children to carry up each individual figure to add to the Nativity scene as the prayer is read for that particular figure.*

*++As the figure is carried up to the Nativity scene, the children who chose that "Court" stand and pray the prayer together, led by the reader. Reader must pause in between each prayer to give time for the figure to be placed in the nativity scene.*

## Placement of Nativity Figures

**Reader:** Please stand at your place as the Court of the King is read.

- May I, like the stable, be a shelter for those who need help.
- May I, like the crib, offer my heart as a place for Jesus to live.
- May I, like the star, be the Light of Christ always leading others to Jesus.
- May I, like the angels, sing God's praises and bring the good news to others.



- May I, like the Wise Men, give the gift of myself to others.
- May I, like the shepherds, listen to Jesus speaking to my mind and heart.
- May I, like St. Joseph, trust in God and care for others.
- May I, like Mary, see Jesus in the heart of all those I meet.
- Father, we now place the Baby Jesus in our Nativity scene. Please help us all to remember that Christmas is a celebration of His birthday, that He came into the world to save us, and that no present we receive could ever compare to this gift of your Son to us. Thank you, for Jesus is born!

Sing: Children Run Joyfully (Bob Dufford) or Away in a Manger or any Christmas Carol



Reading of the Good News of Jesus' Birth from St. Luke's Gospel

Luke 2: 1-20

### Prayers of Intercession

**Leader:** We ask God to hear us and watch over us as He did for the whole world on that first Christmas night.

- We pray for the safety and well- being of all children throughout the world...Lord, hear our prayer.

- We pray for all parents, that Blessed Mother Mary and St. Joseph will help them and guide them...Lord, hear our prayer.
- We pray for all families everywhere, that they will live in love and care for each other, in imitation of the Holy Family...Lord, hear our prayer.
- We pray for poor and hurting people, that they will never be forgotten, and our care will ease their pain...Lord, hear our prayer.
- We pray for all newborn babies, and babies waiting to be born, that their new lives may bring great joy to all...Lord, hear our prayer.

Let us now together pray the prayer Our Lord Jesus taught us.  
Our Father...



### Blessing of Manger Scene (holy water may be used)

Lord Jesus, we are so happy to celebrate your birthday. As we recall that blessed event, look down upon us and fill us with your grace. Bless our manger and all who pray at the manger scene. May it help us to remember the true celebration of Christmas, your humble birth long ago. Thank you for being born for us!

Song: Children, Run Joyfully or Happy Birthday, Baby Jesus  
(found on "Sunshine and Snowflakes") or any Christmas Carol



### Courts of the Infant King

One of our IHM prayer customs, at the Christmas Season, is to choose a role in the Court of the Infant King. This is customarily done on Christmas Eve. This prayer custom has its roots in the spirituality of St. Alphonsus Liguori.



In the middle ages, in the days of castles and monarchs, a royal court would be filled with people of different roles to serve the king or queen. At the birth of Jesus, our Infant King, he was surrounded with his own “court”...Mary, Joseph, the shepherds, the Wise Men, the animals, the star, etc. Each year, we choose a card that has one of the roles at the Court of the Infant King, and we try to live out that role all through the coming year. We have included with this issue a set of cards adapted for children. There is also another set of cards on our IHM website ([ihmimmaculata.org/pray-with-us/spiritual-resources](http://ihmimmaculata.org/pray-with-us/spiritual-resources)).

Each child may choose a card randomly, or choose for themselves what role they wish. Perhaps they may like to make their own cards and write a simple prayer for each. There are many variations that can be applied to this devotion. We invite you to share with all IHMs in this prayer devotion as we honor the birth of our Infant King.







May I like the

## ***Angels***

Sing God's praises and  
bring the good news to  
others.



May I like the

## ***Crib***

Offer my heart as a place  
for Jesus to live.



May I like the

## ***Wise Men***

Give the gift of myself to  
others.



May I like

## ***Mary***

See Jesus in the heart of all  
those I meet.



May I like the

## ***Stable***

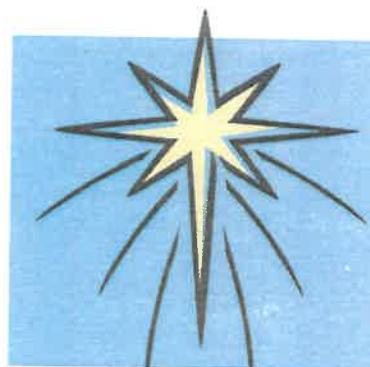
Be a shelter for those who  
need help.



May I like

## ***St. Joseph***

Trust in God and care for  
others.



May I like the

## ***Star***

Be the Light of Christ  
always leading others to  
Jesus.



May I like the

## ***Shepherds***

Listen to Jesus speaking to  
my mind and heart.



## Catholic Schools Week 2019

**LEARN – SERVE – LEAD – SUCCEED**

### *Prayer Service of Appreciation for our Teachers*

**Call to Prayer:**

Catholic Schools Week provides a beautiful opportunity to reflect on the treasure of a Catholic Education and to give thanks to all of the dedicated people who make it possible. The devotion and generosity of our teachers cannot be measured. Through the years, they have not only formed the minds and shaped the hearts of countless students, but they have also animated their souls to be committed disciples of Jesus Christ. Sharing in the call of our IHM Congregation to be “joyful bearers of God’s redeeming love,” they are an inspiration and source of joy to all of us. Thank you, dear teachers, for bringing LOVE, CREATIVE HOPE, and FIDELITY to us each day in so many ways.

**Presider:**

We give thanks to God every time we think of you.

**All:**

Which is constantly in every prayer. Glory be to the Father...

**Opening Hymn:**

We Are Called (David Haas)

Verse 1

**Antiphon:**

“Love never says ENOUGH!” *Saint Alphonsus Liguori*

**Please pray in Unison:**

**Prayer of Saint Teresa of Avila**

Christ has no body but yours  
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,  
Yours are the eyes with which He looks  
Compassion on the world,  
Yours are the feet with which He walks to do good,  
Yours are the hands, with which He blesses all the world.  
Yours are the hands, yours are the feet,  
Yours are the eyes, you are His body.  
Christ has no body now but yours,  
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,  
Yours are the eyes with which He looks compassion  
on this world.  
Christ has no body now on earth but yours.  
Glory be to the Father...



**Reading:**

Ephesians 3: 14 – 21

*“May Christ dwell in your heart.”*

**Our Sung Response to the Reading will also be the Response to the Intercessions:**

*Rejoice and be glad. Blessed are you. Holy are you. Rejoice and be glad. Yours is the Kingdom of God.*

**Intercessions**

**Introduction:**

Heavenly Father, we lift up our teachers in prayer. Using the virtues of our IHM Charism, we thank You for the many ways they bring the love of Jesus to us.

**Petitions:**

We give thanks for the FIDELITY of our teachers. Through their example, we LEARN to be more faithful disciples of Jesus, as we pray... *Rejoice and be glad...*

We give thanks for the JOYFUL SERVICE of our teachers. By their witness of serving us each day, we are inspired to SERVE others, as we pray...

We give thanks for the LOVE of our teachers. Through their prayers and self-sacrifice, we are daily invited to LEAD with humility and generosity, as we pray...

We give thanks for the CREATIVE HOPE of our teachers. Imitating their trust in God and in each one of us, we believe we can SUCCEED by never giving up and always finding a way to make our best better, as we pray...



**Closing Prayer:**

God of Boundless Love, thank You for blessing our teachers with a passionate spirit to live the virtues of LOVE, CREATIVE HOPE, and FIDELITY. Give them the graces they need to continually proclaim the Gospel message in the spirit of Jesus the Redeemer. Help them to always inspire us to radiate joyful service with compassion for all God's people. Amen.

**Final Blessing:**

Please extend your right hand towards your teacher and pray:

“May God Who began such good work in you, carry it through to completion. Amen.” *Philippians 1:2*

**Closing Hymn:**

We Are Called

Verse 2





# Religion Bulletin Boards

2018- 2019

## Celebrating Missionary Discipleship in the Church

*We continue this school year with prayer and reflection on the missionary work of the Church.*

*As previously noted, October 2019 was chosen to be an extraordinary month dedicated to the missionary work of the Church because of its proximity to the centenary anniversary of Pope Benedict XV's November 1919 apostolic letter, **Maximum Illud**, calling for renewed missionary zeal following World War I. World Mission Sunday falls on the penultimate Sunday of October each year.*

*Pope Francis said that he hopes the month will be a promising time of prayer and reflection on the testimony of missionary saints and martyrs, the Bible and theology, as well as catechesis and charitable missionary work towards the evangelization of the Church.*

*In preparation for the extraordinary Month of Mission, this year's bulletin boards will continue to focus on the Church's call for all to participate in the Evangelization of Mission. They will also focus on those who gave witness to missionary discipleship.*

*In December, the focus is on "firsts."*

- *The Angels who were the first to proclaim to the world the Good News of Emmanuel—God is with us!*
- *Mary, the Mother of Jesus—truly the first missionary and Model and Mother for all missionaries.*

*During January the Church celebrates the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. This time of prayer invites the whole Christian community throughout the world to pray in communion with the prayer of Jesus "that they all may be one" (John 17:21). The traditional period for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is January 18 to 25. Feasts of the Chair of St. Peter (January 18) and the Conversion of St. Paul (January 25), and therefore have a symbolic significance. Saints Peter and Paul were among the first missionaries of the early Church.*

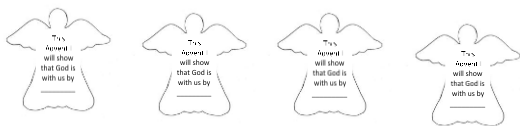
*The celebration of patriotic holidays in February focuses our attention on the Home Missions—those areas within our own country where missionary activity is very real and in need of our support.*

*Additional resources can be found at the Missionary Childhood Association web site:  
<http://phillymissions.org/our-work/youth-in-mission/>*

## December

### *The First “Missionaries”*

#### Glory to God in the Highest



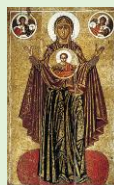
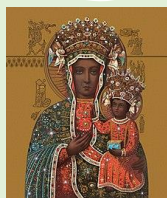
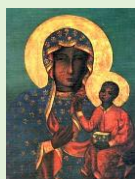
**Peace to all on Earth!**

#### *Advent Angels*

The angels were the first to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Birth. Prepare a bulletin Board with a Nativity scene in the center. Explain to the students that missionaries are like the angels as it is important to share the message of Jesus' presence among us with those who do not know Him. Have each student reflect on how they can be like missionaries and spread the Good News of Jesus to others. Have them complete an angel (see attached blackline masters) and place them on the bulletin board as a reminder of their calling to be missionaries in today's world.



#### *Mary, Mother of Missionaries*



**Advent is a special time to celebrate Mary, the “first” missionary.**

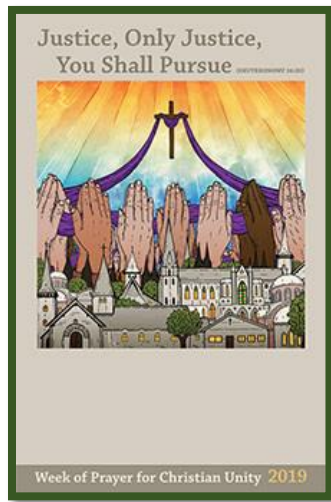
*In the Virgin Mary who goes to visit her relative Elizabeth, we recognize the true meaning and the way of the Church herself. The Church is Missionary by nature, called to proclaim the Gospel everywhere and always. Mary's is a true Missionary journey . . . one that leads her far from home, leading her into the world, in places foreign to her daily activities; it makes her reach, in a sense, to the very ends of where she can reach.” Pope Benedict, Agenzia Fides, May, 2010*

Devotion to the Blessed Mother is deep and strong in many Mission lands as they may recognize Mary as the Queen of Missions. Mary's faith and example is a model for Missionaries throughout the world. She not only shows the need for prayer but also reaches outside herself to serve. Prepare a bulletin board showing the many images of Mary as seen in other lands. Have the students research and identify each image.



# January

## Week of Prayer for Church Unity



**We are Called  
to Act with Justice.**

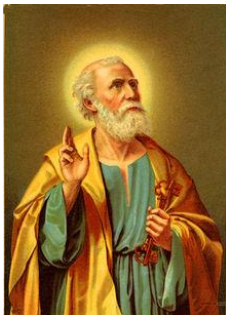
The theme for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2019 finds its origins in Deuteronomy. *"Justice, Only Justice, You Shall Pursue"* (cf. Deuteronomy 16:20) It was chosen for its powerful message of promoting truth, equality and unity.

On the center of the bulletin board, place the poster showing this year's theme. Spend some time with the students reflecting on the seven themes of Social Justice. (A good resource is [www.usccb.org/.../seven-themes-of-catholic-social-teaching.cfm](http://www.usccb.org/.../seven-themes-of-catholic-social-teaching.cfm)) Create a chart with the students (Copy found on following pages) to show how missionaries work to promote social justice and how we can imitate their actions. Hang the chart in a prominent place near the bulletin board.

The following web site has additional teaching resources and prayers for the Week of Prayer:

Website [www.geii.org](http://www.geii.org)

### Saints Peter and Paul



**Chair of**

**St. Peter**

**January 18**

**Conversion  
of**

**St. Paul**

**January 25**



**Intercede for us!**

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity begins on the original Feast of the Chair of St. Peter and ends on the feast of the Conversion of St. Paul. These two saints were among the first missionaries of the early Church.

**Note:** The feast of the Chair of Saint Peter at Rome has been celebrated from the early days of the Christian era on 18 January, in commemoration of the day when Saint Peter held his first service in Rome. The feast of the Chair of Saint Peter at Antioch, commemorating his foundation of the See of Antioch, has also been long celebrated at Rome, on 22 February.

This feast of the Chair of St. Peter is a very opportune feast, because it celebrates the infallible chair [cathedra] of St. Peter teaching to the entire world, and the Pope when he teaches infallibly from St. Peter's chair.

Prepare a bulletin board honoring these two saints. In discussion with the students help them to realize that there are many modern "missionaries" who work for peace and Christian unity. Since this time is also near to the day on which we commemorate the legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr, he could be used as an example of a modern-day person who fought for peace and justice.

## February Remembering the Home Missions

### Give to and pray for our

CATHOLIC EXTENSION  
Building Faith | Inspiring Hope | Igniting Change

Mission Dioceses



### Home Missions

February is a good time to focus on our home missions. Many of our students do not realize that there are many in our own country that are in need of missionary support. As we approach the season of Lent, encourage the students to begin a personal mission fund to help support those in our own country who are in need. Suggest that they “tithe” a part of their weekly allowance or commit to setting aside loose change for the missions.

Put a map on the bulletin board showing the “mission” territories in the U.S. These can be found on the web sites of the USCCB and The Catholic Extension Society. Have the students select an area to research and prepare a slide presentation to share with their classmates about the American missions.



### Our Giving Tree

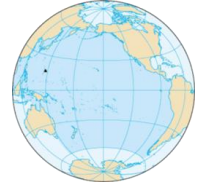


During the winter months the trees are often bare and lifeless. Using the tree as an analogy compare the life in mission areas to a tree without its leaves. It needs help to grow. Make this a Lenten activity to support the missions. Start with an empty tree. Put a green leaf on the tree for each contribution made to the missions.

Read the story, “*The Giving Tree*” by Shel Silverstein. This can lead to several important lessons:

- We can give to the missions in many ways through prayer and giving.
- Giving is a life-long commitment and they should give as long as they are able.
- Every gift—no matter how small—is a valuable gift.

**We are like Missionaries—acting to provide a better world**



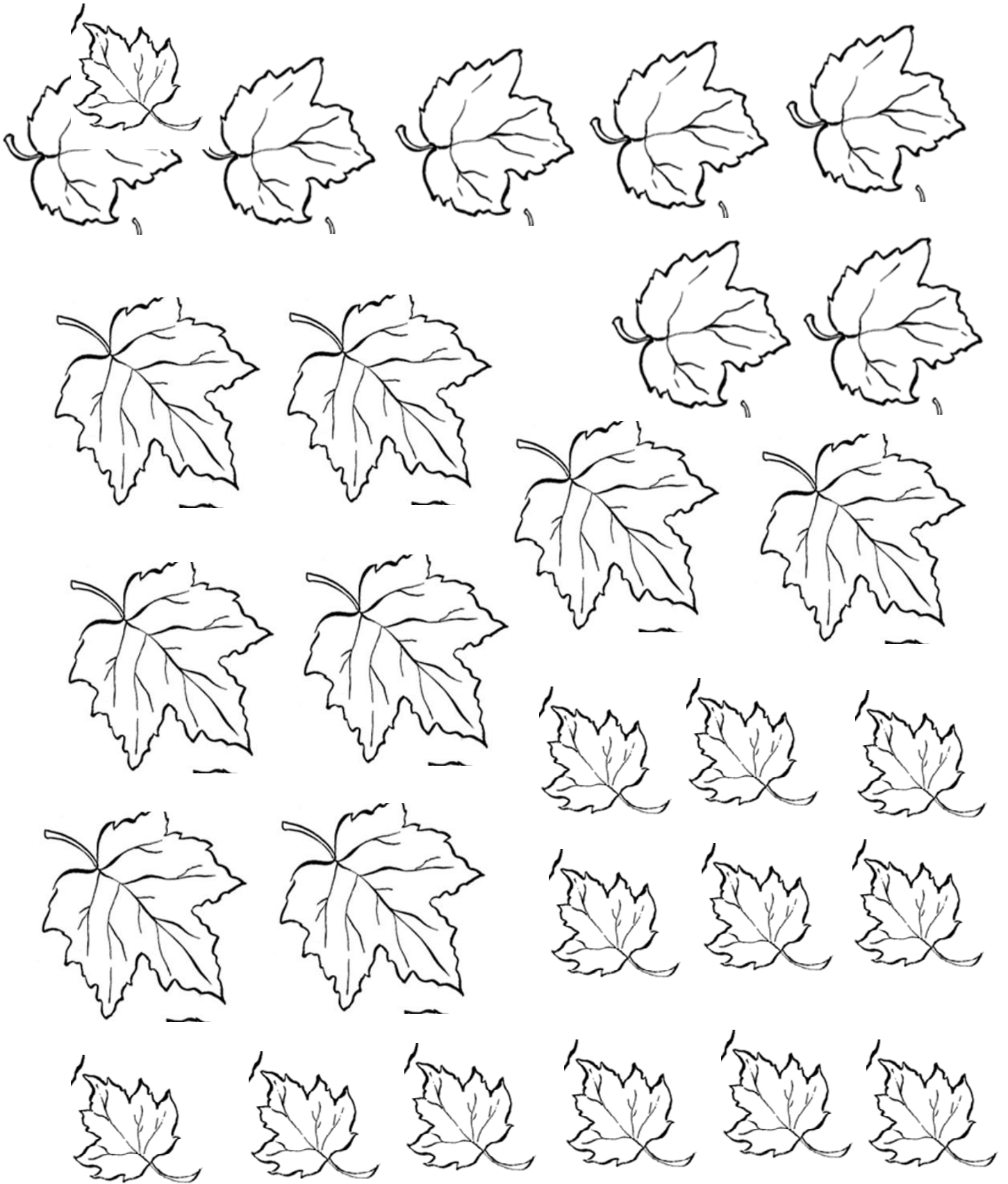
**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Social Justice Theme</b>	<b>What missionaries do</b>	<b>What I can do</b>
<b>Life and Dignity of the Human Person</b>		
<b>Call to Family, Community, and Participation</b>		
<b>Human Rights and Responsibilities</b>		
<b>Option for the Poor and Vulnerable</b>		
<b>The Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers</b>		
<b>Solidarity</b>		
<b>Care for God's Creation</b>		



## Leaves for Giving Tree

(duplicate on different shades of green paper)





# CATHOLIC TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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

## Catechist Magazine

<http://www.catechist.com>

The *Catechist Magazine* website is a useful tool for all Catholics, particularly for Catechists and parents. It contains practical ideas and information that can be used in sharing the faith with young people.

## Zenit

[www.zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)

The *Zenit* webpage is the product of an independent, international news agency that strives to disseminate news through the lens of the Vatican and Catholic doctrine. Their coverage focuses on the Pope's activities, international events and the Vatican's response as well as issues concerning human rights and peace.

## Formed

[www.formed.org](http://www.formed.org)

*Formed* is a library of Catholic movies, videos, podcasts, book reviews. Many are available on demand and others can be rented or purchased digitally. Use of the materials *Formed* offers, requires a paid subscription. It is an excellent resource for educators.

## Apps for Ipad, Iphone, Ipod

### 9 Days for Life App

The *9 Days for Life* app is produced by the USCCB Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities, and contains resources that promote respect for all human life from conception to natural death. Although the app is organized around the annual period of prayer and action, January 18- January 26, the novena provides Catholic educators with tools that highlight many other facets of respecting each other's God-given dignity, especially by respecting human life at every stage and in every circumstance.



### Reimagining the Examen App

The *Reimagining the Examen* app, created by Loyola Press is based on the bestselling book, *Reimagining the Ignatian Examen* by Mark Thibodeaux, SJ, which offers creative ways to apply the Examen to one's daily life. The app guides the user through the Examen focused on a theme the user selected at the start.



### Shared Wisdom

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





## “A PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS”

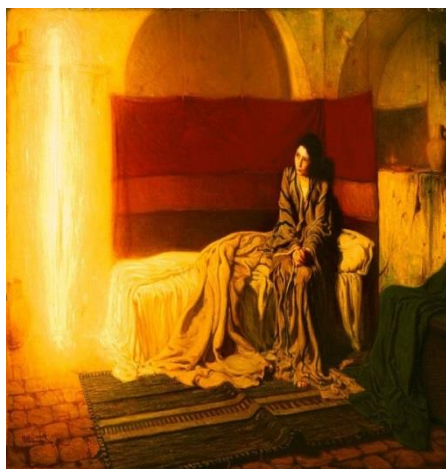
### JOINING ART WITH RELIGION – THE ANGELUS

During a time when the classroom teacher taught every single lesson, (a little mind-boggling to imagine these days), one of my favorite lessons was called ‘Picture Study’. Our class would open our little blue Picture Study books to the ‘Picture of the Month’. One painting I remember most especially was *The Angelus* by Jean Francois Millet. In presenting the picture, I recall Sister pointing out to us the two peasant farmers who stopped their work in a potato field to say the evening *Angelus*. Sister then asked if we saw anything else in the painting. Finally, someone pointed out the church in the far distance. She then explained that the artist painted that detail because the church bells rang during the day at 6:00 in the morning, noon, and 6:00 in the evening to remind everyone in the village to stop and pray the *Angelus*. During our religion lesson the next day, Sister reviewed the meaning of the parts of the *Angelus* which we prayed each day around noon. Having the image of the painting in my mind and Sister’s explanation, I realized the beauty and significance of what I was praying. It made a lasting impression on this eighth grade student...a picture is worth a thousand words!



A lesson on the *Angelus* can be presented at any time, but the **Advent Season** is a beautiful time to explain it to your students. The reading for the Fourth Sunday of Advent tells the story of the Annunciation, the event from which the words of the *Angelus* flows. This also affords an opportunity to present to your students the beautiful painting of *The Annunciation*, by Henry Tanner which is displayed at the Philadelphia Art Museum.

Have your students take time to examine the painting. Ask them what they think the stream of light might signify. You can then guide your students in recalling the message that was given to Mary by the Angel Gabriel. Allow them time to critique this picture painted in the period of realism. How does Our Lady appear to feel hearing this message? Do they like the way the artist portrayed Our Lady? If they were painting a pictures of the Annunciation where would they have the Annunciation take place? How would they portray Our Lady and the Angel Gabriel? What expression would they put on Our Lady’s face?



By asking these questions your students will be immersing themselves in the event that changed Our Lady's life and all humanity ... "And the Word was made Flesh."

Another painting that you might like to introduce to your students is *The Annunciation* by John Collier, an American artist. Your students should recognize that this painting is from the modern era. John Collier gives an excellent explanation on a YouTube presentation (web site listed below) explaining why he decided to portray Our Lady in such a different way. He also talks about the imagery he included in his painting. After listening to the artist's explanation you might want to ask your students if they like this portrayal of Mary. Does seeing Our Lady as a young school girl impress upon them how young Mary was when she was asked to be the Mother of Our Savior? Would they have recognized this picture as the Annunciation before knowing the title?



These three paintings present a small, but beautiful tapestry, of the *Angelus* which your students can draw upon as they recite it each day. At another time you might want to look up other paintings for such prayers as the Our Father, the Hail Mary, or the Mysteries of the Rosary.

*All these paintings can be found on Google images.*

*Listed below are some web sites that might help you with your presentation.*

<https://theannunciationandvisitation.wordpress.com/2015/02/26/john-colliers-image-of-the-annunciation/> JOHN COLLIER'S EXPLANATION OF HIS PAINTING, *THE ANNUNCIATION*

<https://www.thereligionteacher.com/angelus-prayer-for-children/>  
LESSON ON THE ANGELUS PRAYER FOR CHILDREN/*THE RELIGION TEACHER*

<https://udayton.edu/imri/mary/a/angelus-painting-by-millet.php> *THE ANGELUS BY MILLET*

<http://catholicism.org/origin-of-the-angelus.html> VERY GOOD EXPLANATION OF THE ANGELUS

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bCkXS4JlcT8> VIDEO OF THE ANGELUS PRAYER

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2D8yJxYjctM> ANGELUS BELLS (You can play this video while praying the Angelus ).

<http://21essays.blogspot.com/2014/12/meditation-on-henry-ossawa-tanners.html>  
MEDITATION ON TANNER'S PAINTING, *THE ANNUNCIATION*

<https://literarylfe.org/2017/08/18/the-annunciation-by-henry-ossawa-tanner-1898/>  
ABOUT TANNER'S *THE ANNUNCIATION*

[http://www.jesus-story.net/painting\\_annunciation.htm](http://www.jesus-story.net/painting_annunciation.htm) OTHER PAINTINGS OF THE ANNUNCIATION



# 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*

## PARENTS – FIRST TEACHERS OF PRAYER

### Part 2 of 6: Parent Blessings

As the *First Herald of the Gospel* to children, it is the parent-privilege to introduce a child to God and to prayer-ways that engage the child in conversation with God.

Conversation leads to knowing;  
knowing leads to loving;  
loving leads to serving.

This bulletin is one of six newsletters:

- Prayer Prompts
- Parent Blessings
- Love for Scripture
- Blessed Sacrament Prayer
- Participation in Mass
- Sunday Gospel "Take-Aways"

May the suggestions that follow support you, the parent, to fulfill this divine task.

Heart-lessons can come from any source. For instance, in the Shakespeare play, *The Merchant of Venice*, the character Portia told Shylock that mercy is a gift that keeps on giving. She said that mercy "is twice blest: it blesses him that gives and him that receives."

Parents exercise that dynamic when they BLESS their children. A blessing calls on God to gift another. And while gifting, the blessing binds a parent closer to the child and visa-versa.

Though ordained priests are universally viewed as dispensers of blessings, all baptized persons are charged to imitate Jesus – the High Priest – who is priest, prophet, and king. Baptism and the promises that parents made at the baptism of their children commission parents to live the role of parent-priest within the family.

A blessing is a form of prayer. Imagine the effect if a child routinely heard his/her parent recite the words: *"The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace."* (Deuteronomy 6: 24-26)

Blessings can take any form. Some examples follow:

1. **Upon wakeup** the parent says, "Good morning, Hart. You are a gift from God." Hart responds: "And everything God makes is good!"

2. **At bedtime** the parent says, "Good night, Brennan, and God bless you. May God watch over you and keep you, and may you grow up to be a good and healthy girl." (Kiss) "I love you, Brennan."

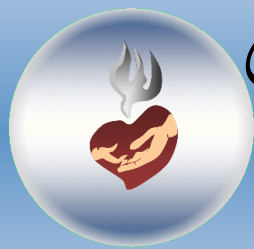
3. **Upon leaving the house** the parent signs the child's forehead with a cross. Perhaps saying, "Represent our family well and until we meet again, may God hold you in the palm of his hand."

4. **At the sound of sirens** pray something like, "O God, we beseech you to help your servants whom you have redeemed

with your precious blood." Or "Come to their aid, O God of the universe!"

5. When **beginning a conversation of substance**: "May the word of God be in our minds, on our lips, and in our hearts." Trace the Sign of the Cross on the forehead, on top of the lips, and over the heart while saying the blessing.

6. Have at-the-ready abbreviated **scripture pocket-phrases** like "Go in peace! May God be your rock, your refuge, your shield" (2 Samuel 22:3-4). "May the peace of God, which transcends all understanding guard your heart and mind in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:7). "May the God of all comfort, comfort you in your situation" (2 Corinthians 1:3-5). "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope" (Romans 15:13).



# 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*

## PADRES - PRIMEROS MAESTROS DE ORACIÓN

### Parte 2 de 6: Bendiciones de los Padres

Como el **Primer Heraldo del Evangelio** para los niños, es el privilegio de los padres presentar a un niño a Dios y a las formas de oración que involucran al niño en la conversación con Dios.

La conversación conduce al conocimiento;  
saber conduce a amar;  
amar conduce a servir.

Este boletín es uno de seis boletines informativos:

- Mensajes de oración
- Bendiciones de los padres
- Amor por las Escrituras
- Oración del Santísimo Sacramento
- Participación en la misa
- Material Dominical para llevar a casa

Las lecciones del corazón pueden provenir de cualquier fuente. Por ejemplo, en la obra de Shakespeare, El mercader de Venecia, el personaje Portia le dijo a Shylock que la misericordia es un regalo que sigue dando. Ella dijo que la misericordia "es doblemente bendecida: bendice a quien la da y a quien la recibe."

Los padres ejercitan esa dinámica cuando BENDICEN a sus hijos. Una bendición llama a Dios a regalar otra. Y mientras regala, la bendición vincula a un padre más cercanamente al niño y viceversa.

Aunque los sacerdotes ordenados son vistos universalmente como dispensadores de bendiciones, todos los bautizados están encargados de imitar a Jesús, el Sumo Sacerdote, que es sacerdote, profeta y rey. El bautismo y las promesas que los padres hicieron en el bautismo de sus hijos comisionan a los padres a vivir el papel de padre- sacerdote dentro de la familia.

Una bendición es una forma de oración. Imagine el efecto si un niño oye rutinariamente a su padre recitar las palabras: "El Señor te bendiga y te guarde; el Señor haga brillar su rostro sobre ti y sea misericordioso contigo; el Señor vuelve su rostro hacia ti y te da paz. "

(Deuteronomio 6: 24-26)

Las bendiciones pueden tomar cualquier forma. Algunos ejemplos:

1. **Al despertar**, el padre dice: "Buenos días, Hart. Eres un regalo de Dios." Hart responde: "¡Y todo lo que Dios hace es bueno! "
2. **Al acostarse**, el padre dice: "Buenas noches, Brennan, y que Dios te bendiga". Que Dios te cuide y te guarde, y que crezcas para ser una niña buena y saludable. "(Beso)" Te amo, Brennan."
3. **Al salir de la casa**, el padre le hace la señal de la cruz en la frente del niño Tal vez diciendo: "Representa bien a nuestra familia y hasta que nos volvamos a encontrar, que Dios te sostenga en la palma de su mano."
4. **Al sonido de las sirenas**, oren algo como: "Oh Dios, te suplicamos que ayudes a tus siervos a quienes redimiste con tu preciosa sangre". O "¡Ven en su ayuda, oh Dios del universo!"
5. **Al comenzar una conversación de fondo**: "Que la palabra de Dios esté en nuestras mentes, en nuestros labios y en nuestros corazones". Al decirlo vuelva a hacer la señal de la cruz, en la parte superior de los labios y sobre el corazón.
6. **Ten a bien alguna de estas frases en tu rutina diaria** "¡Id en paz! Que Dios sea tu roca, tu refugio, tu escudo" (2 Samuel 22: 3-4). "Que la paz de Dios, que sobrepasa todo entendimiento, guarde tu corazón y tu mente en Cristo Jesús" (Filipenses 4: 7). "Que el Dios de todo consuelo te consuele en tu situación" (2 Corintios 1: 3-5). "Que el Dios de la esperanza te llene de toda alegría y paz como tú confías en él, para que desbordes de esperanza" (Romanos 15:13).