

*Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary*

# IHM Catholic EdNotes

Volume 1, Issue No. 1



**Coronavirus Pandemic:  
*Reshaping the Education Landscape***

[WWW.IHMIMMACULATA.ORG](http://WWW.IHMIMMACULATA.ORG)

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Dear Friends,

*Welcome to our inaugural issue of the IHM Catholic EdNotes, formerly known and loved as the ABC Notes!*

Within its pages you will find several of the familiar features you have come to find helpful in your ministry of Catholic Education as an administrator, catechist or classroom teacher! We have also added some interesting new features that we hope will support your best practices!

At this current time of distress and anxiety caused by the COVID-19 crisis as well as the heightened sense of urgency to overcome the evils of racism, we pray that you will have a renewed sense of the power of your influence as an educator to bring hopeful and peaceful change to your local community! We can be better and do better together!

If you have any comments or suggestions, please contact us at:

[ihmcatholicednotes@gmail.com](mailto:ihmcatholicednotes@gmail.com)

*God bless you and keep you well and safe!*

**Thank You!**  
**THANK YOU!**

# #IHMCharism



## Charismatic – Who Me?

We have all met them, fascinating people who seem to draw us in like a magnet, those with charm, with whom we hang on every word. We may wonder – is it nature or nurture? Were these unique gifts which show themselves in such mesmerizing ways, a part of the person since birth or gathered and developed along the way?

But, what of the word itself? Charismatic is a derivative of *charisma*, which takes its meaning from the Greek *charis* meaning a favor or a grace (“Charisma”). This would certainly give credibility to the nature over nurture argument. The Catechism of the Catholic Church (1997) defined charism as “graces of the Holy Spirit which directly or indirectly benefit the Church” (p.799). These spiritual gifts are given to the faithful, not so we can be labeled individually charismatic but, so the faithful can use these gifts for the good of all the Church. They show themselves in the energy, inspiration, and impetus of service in the Church. We can see examples of these profound spiritual gifts in the lives of the saints and in the religious communities they founded. Take, for example, St. Francis, who desired nothing more than to live humbly and follow Christ and the Franciscans today, who today live simply in community and give service in a number of ministries.

The Spirit continues to give graces in abundance to those willing to accept His gifts and offer those gifts in service to the Church. So, are you charismatic? You certainly are. ***How will you use the gifts God has given to you for the good of all His Church?***

*Catechism of the Catholic Church* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed). (1997). Washington, D.C. United States Catholic Conference

"Charisma." Merriam-Webster's Learners Dictionary, *Merriam-Webster*. [www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/charisma](http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/charisma). Accessed 25 Jul 2020.





# The Mindful Educator



## *Hope Amidst an Uncertain World*

In Hebrews we read, "*We have this hope as an anchor for the soul. A hope both sure and steadfast.*" Jesus is our anchor, our hope in an uncertain world. United with Jesus, together with our school communities, we begin a new school year with a positive and

hopeful outlook in the midst of so much uncertainty. We can prepare ourselves in a variety of ways so that our message and teachings are proclaimed with authenticity and courage. The familiar adage is so true, *we cannot give what we do not possess*. Therefore, it is important that we anchor ourselves in Jesus through prayer, participating in the sacraments, reading Scripture, making time for rest, relaxation, and fun with family and friends, to list just a few.



Once spiritually, physically, and emotionally enriched we are then ready to tackle all the directives proposed by the CDC, the state, local school districts, and the Offices of Catholic Education in order to ensure a safe, healthy, and engaging learning environment for all. Change is never easy and it is not uncommon to experience anxiety about the many questions whirling about in our minds, such as: Will the children keep their masks on once they leave their cohort? Where are the students academically after all this online learning? How will I keep a check on my students' health on a daily basis? How do I encourage the children to abide by these health directives consistently for the benefit of all? and How do we address the students' worries and concerns? Thank God, there are a plethora of resources to give us hope as educators and strategies for creating a worthwhile learning experience, whether the instruction is in-person or virtual. There are also materials available that assist educators in explaining and working with students in dealing with the *new normal* and strategies for dealing with the effects of the pandemic in an age-appropriate manner.

Administrators, colleagues, parents, and students were awed with how educators continued instructing their students and preparing them to advance for the next grade level from day one of the quarantine. Creating these lessons was a lot of work, but the dedication and countless hours of preparing stimulating virtual classes was absolutely amazing and inspiring. Many have said and we know it to be true that teaching in-person is more advantageous for all, but the reality is that in order to meet the needs of all students, especially those with compromised health conditions, we must offer instruction in a variety of ways including virtual learning until a vaccine is discovered. Teachers have reflected on the online experience and recognized what was effective and what strategies may need to be tweaked for future virtual lessons.

Teachers instinctively were able to put into practice strategies suggested by the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) by reassuring students that these are difficult times and adults are working hard to find a cure and keep all of us protected. This compassionate attitude discussed in virtual classes provided the children the opportunity to express their worries and concerns. Teachers and classmates listened and offered their own perspectives; thus, these types of age-appropriate conversations were a source of support. Additionally, some teachers implemented time after instruction for students to visit with their classmates, thus enhancing their social-emotional needs. The NASP emphasized that the daily interaction with teachers and classmates offered students consistency and some predictability in these unprecedented times.

After six months of being apart from the standard school setting, in addition to addressing COVID-19 concerns, teachers, students, school communities, and the entire country are currently dealing with civil unrest. This is a major concern that cannot be overlooked or ignored. "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God" (Mt 5: 9) is one of the eight beatitudes proclaimed by Jesus Christ. Jesus also taught us the greatest law: "Love your neighbor as yourself" (Mt 22: 39). We discover in the story of the Good Samaritan, that our neighbor is all of humanity. Catholic means universal; therefore, we must strive to implement the "*be-attitude*" of peacemaking, putting Jesus' law of love into action. We make Jesus' words come alive through our "*be-attitudes*" of respect and reverence for the dignity of human life that is the right of every person since we are all made in the image and likeness of God.

According to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, "Catholic social teaching is a central and essential element of our faith. It is a teaching founded on the life and words of Jesus Christ, who came 'to bring glad tidings to the poor ... liberty to captives ... recovery of sight to the blind' (Lk 4: 18-19), and who identified himself with the 'least of these,' the hungry and the stranger" (cf. Mt 25:45) (USCCB, 1998, pg. 2). As Catholic schools, we adhere to the teachings of Jesus and the magisterium of the Church, therefore, the school community must provide opportunities for students to foster a genuine concern and respect for our neighbor in the school, the home, the community, and the world through participation in a variety of service projects.

One enjoyable activity to emphasize the importance of respecting diversity is by providing each child with a piece of fruit, for example, an orange. Ask each child to carefully examine and to note the details of their orange. After about five minutes the oranges are collected and mixed together. The students are then asked to select their orange. Surprisingly, students have no problem locating their orange. This exercise would lead into a discussion about how, like oranges, each of us is a unique and special gift of God's creation. In the discussion, teachers would relay to students their own acceptance of differences in others. As students witness the open-mindedness and welcoming attitude of their teacher and other adults, the good example they observe may cause them to become more accepting and sensitive members in today's diversified world.

Another exercise in accepting and respecting cultural diversity would be to inquire of school families their cultural origins. Students can then work together to explore the language, food, art, entertainment, geographic, and historic aspects of various cultures represented in the school. The study of these cultures may include the following: way of life; map skills/geography; music/hobbies/art/games; and famous people from that culture. While studying a specific culture, students can make flags and design a travel brochure, cook various ethnic foods, design clothes, play games from that culture, sing or perform songs, make puppets, assemble a collage or album of pictures, learn to count to ten in a foreign language; learn to say, "Hello, how are you?"; establish an Internet pen-pal connection with someone from the country studied. It is hoped that by learning about cultures through various engaging activities, students will appreciate, respect, and value cultural differences. United with Jesus the Divine Peacemaker, we hope that acceptance and respect for the giftedness of others will happen through activities such as these and more. Together we can be a catalyst for peace and hope for a more respectful world!

Resources for discussing racism with students:

<https://www.unicef.org/parenting/talking-to-your-kids-about-racism>

<https://tinyurl.com/ycmz3tpj>

<https://www.pbs.org/parents/thrive/how-to-talk-honestly-with-children-about-racism>

<https://www.racepride.pitt.edu/>



*Educational Leadership* has published a free issue entitled "Time Well-Managed" to assist educators in preparing for the 2020-2021 school year. It can be accessed at

<http://www.ascd.org/publications/educationalleadership/jun20/vol77/num09/toc.aspx>

Materials for discussing COVID-19 with children and strategies for online learning:

<https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-climate-safety-and-crisis/health-crisis-resources/helping-children-cope-with-changes-resulting-from-covid-19>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/talking-with-children.html>

<https://onlinelearningconsortium.org/learn/resources-for-k-12-educators/>

<https://www.weareteachers.com/free-online-learning-resources/#elementary>

<https://www.teachforamerica.org/stories/7-tips-for-being-a-great-virtual-teacher>

# Work for Peace and Justice

**Turn peace and justice into verbs! Do something!**

**“We call on everyone, especially all Christians and those of other faith traditions, to help repair the breach caused by racism, which damages the human family.” - *Open Wide Our Hearts (U.S. Bishops)***



**Educational resources from the US Conference of Catholic Bishops**

**Lesson Plans for every Grade Level and other resources:**

<https://catholiccurrent.org/combating-racism/>

<https://store.loyolapress.com/everyone-belongs>

## Morning Prayer for a New Year of Ministry

**Call to Prayer:** Pope Francis once said: "The Gospel teaches us that the Spirit of Jesus can bring new life to every human heart and can transform any situation, even apparently hopeless ones. Jesus can change everything. This is the message that you are called upon to share with the people around you."

The past six months have dramatically impacted our lives in so many unique ways. Like the disciples gathered in the Upper Room after Good Friday, we have known fear, insecurity, grief, isolation, the pain of injustice, and the reality of being "locked inside." The sickness of the body, that is COVID 19, along with the sickness of soul, that is the pandemic of racism, have also offered us an opportunity to rediscover our priorities and to remember what is really most important.

Like the disciples, Jesus wants so much to penetrate the "locked doors" of our hearts and fill us with His Easter PEACE; a PEACE that is both a gift to receive and a challenge to share that PEACE with others who are hurting.

As we begin a new year of ministry with our students, their families, and one another, let us commit ourselves to living our IHM Charism of Love, Creative Hope, and Fidelity, by being true PEACEMAKERS. Through us, may the Holy Spirit ignite in the hearts of

all whom we serve the desire to recreate our world in peace and harmony. Let us not only provide a safe and healthy environment for enthusiastic learning, but also a "holy ground" of welcome, respect, compassion, and justice.

**Leader:** Peace be with you.

**All:** And with your spirit. Glory be to the Father...

**Opening Hymn:** Christ be Our Light - Verses 2 and 5

**Antiphon:** "Go therefore, make disciples of all nations." Mt.28:19

**Pray Antiphonally:** The Canticle of Isaiah 61:1-3

The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me. He has sent me to bring glad tidings to the lowly, to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to captives and release to prisoners.

To announce a year of favor from the Lord and a day of vindication by our God to comfort all who mourn.

To give them the oil of gladness in place of mourning, a glorious mantle instead of a listless spirit.

Glory be to the Father...



**Antiphon:** "Blessed are the Peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God. " Mt. 5:9

**Pray in Unison:** The Prayer of Saint Francis of Assisi

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love. Where there is injury, pardon. Where there is doubt, faith. Where there is despair, hope. Where there is darkness, light. Where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled, as to console; to be understood, as to understand; to be loved, as to love.

For it is in giving, that we receive. It is in pardoning, that we are pardoned, and it is in dying that we are born to Eternal Life. Amen. Glory be to the Father...

**Reading:** Gospel of John: 20:19-21

*Silent Reflection*

*Peace*

Commitment to Peacemaking

**Leader:** Jesus taught us the Two Great Commandments: to love God with our whole heart, mind, body, soul, and strength and to love our neighbor as ourselves. As His devoted disciples, let us renew our love for the God of Peace, pledge to be His Peacemakers and to energize others to be Peacemakers this year.

**We pray together, pausing after each intercession:**

*Touch*

*Forehead:*      *Saturate my mind, Lord, with wisdom and knowledge, that I may teach as You did.*

*Touch Eyes:*      *Give me Your vision, Lord, that I may see Your face in my colleagues, as well as the children and parents I encounter.*

*Touch Ears:*      *Open my ears, Lord, that I may hear Your voice in the cry of the poor. Teach me to listen to and to notice all who are in need of Your love and compassion.*

*Touch Mouth:*      *Grant me the courage, Lord, to always share the truth with kindness and patience and to speak up for those who are suffering from injustice in any form.*

*Touch Hands:*      *Empty my hands of any selfishness, Lord, and fill them with generosity, joy, and gratitude.*

*Touch Heart:*      *Help me to love You and my neighbor, Lord, more and more each day.*

**Closing Prayer:** Let us conclude our prayer by asking Our Lady, Queen of Peace to show us how to live in peace and to educate ourselves and others for peace.

Hail Mary...

**Closing Hymn:** Peace is Flowing Like a River - Verses 1,2,3



*"May God bless us with every grace we need  
to act justly,  
love tenderly,  
and  
walk humbly  
like Jesus, with the Gospel as our guide."*

Give Us This Day - 7/7/20



# The Engaging Educator

## *Increasing Student Participation*

*...by decreasing teacher talk!*



In 1960 Joe Jones recorded a song called “You Talk Too Much”. As a teen I thought it was just a funny song about his talkative girlfriend. Then I became a teacher...and I realized Joe was singing to me. I talked too much! My thinking was, “If I’m not teaching, there couldn’t possibly be learning going on.” How wrong I was.

*Are you conscious of talking too much in your classroom?* We must certainly instruct, but we have to control how much of the class period we consume. Otherwise, we deprive students of their active learning time. Students need to participate. Not only must they be physically present to learn, but their minds have to come to school, too. Do you find yourself saying, “Same hands all the time”? Maybe it’s because the verbal/linguistic or the interpersonal ones are with us. Where are the others? “Teacher Talk” may result in students’ willful distractions or boredom! It also makes the class need us all the more. You know that’s true if you’ve stopped by a working group who asks so many questions that they hope you’ll do their work for them. To some degree it seems they’ve become needy, high-maintenance, dependent. So what do we do to increase effective “student talk”? Here are some ideas:

- A. **Plan deliberate “student moments”.** We’re so excited about what we’re going to teach, that we become the “sage on the stage”. How do we become the “guide on the side” without abdicating our role as teacher?
  - Plan *stop points* periodically to ask the students to rephrase to a partner (turn-and-teach). Sometimes that’s more effective than turn-and-talk. Ask them to explain, review a process, or summarize yesterday’s lesson at the beginning of class. Let the *student-become-teacher* by consistently sending them to the board to prove a problem or diagram a sentence.

- Allow them to give constructive feedback to each other. In keeping with our Catholic identity and the IHM charism, teach the students charitable discussion methods. For example, “I agree with Sarah because...” or “I’d like to add something to Josh’s thought”. Watch for facial expressions or body language that would indicate that someone thinks another’s answer is wrong, or worse, stupid. Nip that in the bud. We need to show interest in their contributions and sound sincerely inviting. Let your face light up as if to say tell-me-more. Raise an eyebrow to invite a continued comment.

**B. Avoid answering your own questions.** What’s the point of asking formative questions and using higher order thinking verbs if we answer the question? We’re supposed to be prodding their thinking, checking for comprehension, and empowering them to speak, write and practice the learning. How?

- Provide a focus question/statement (e.g. I have a serious question for you; we need to find a way to prove...; What would happen if...?)
- Use more *wait* time! We’re so happy to see hands up that we call on the same ones all the time. If it’s true that 20% of our students do 80% of the participating, we’re reinforcing the problem if we call on that 20%. Some of our students are process thinkers. They just need more time, and might not be struggling learners. So *triple* your wait time. Then say, “I’ll accept hands up in 5, 4, 3, 2, 1.” If you get the sense that some sincerely struggle to understand the question, ask **students** to rephrase it. Students can sometimes communicate to their peers better than we can.
- If you still get wrong answers, don’t give in. Tell them that trying shows they’re thinking. Provide clues to the answer. Let them work with a partner, or write their answers. Writing allows them to rethink and craft a better answer, especially if they are process thinkers.

The next two featured articles will explore more suggestions on increasing student participation. In the meantime, here are some references you may find helpful:

<https://achievethecore.org>

[teach.conceptuamath.com](https://teach.conceptuamath.com) Note: This site covers subjects beyond math.

<https://busyteacher.org> (by Claire Pesce)



# Messaging 101: Get on BOARD!

Here are some unique ways to message students:

*It's loomy!*

**Lower Grades:** <https://www.loom.com/share/9b4b29622f2f4dec9fc43348cff1a997>

**Upper Grades:** <https://www.loom.com/share/6c899cbd6af5422187c17485f221e18a>



## SAINTS HELPING US THROUGH THESE UNUSUAL TIMES!

Enjoy these *loomy* prayer reflections to  
share with students!

<https://www.loom.com/share/b0a134c614274f1b87a9a5d66c2036a0>

<https://www.loom.com/share/32336fcffc0c4a1e8e40b3538065d1a2>

<https://www.loom.com/share/52a04f8b56b54ebea1168a526a20c0b1>

A decorative border of colored pencils surrounds the text. At the top are a purple pencil and a light blue pencil. On the left side, from top to bottom, are a yellow pencil, a teal pencil, and a red pencil. On the right side, from top to bottom, are an orange pencil, a purple pencil, and a green pencil. At the bottom are a blue pencil and a pink pencil.

## Good Writers' Club

**The Good Writers' Club is designed to assist teachers in:**

- providing motivation to write properly
- developing skills of legible handwriting
- establishing a means for a sense of achievement
- fostering pride in daily work.

**We encourage a continued effort in all grades in providing daily instruction and encouragement in:**

- correct letter formation
- uniform height and width of letters
- uniform slant
- proper alignment
- neat and clean work
- good margins
- a specified arrangement of papers.

**Within each school, a designated evaluator could be chosen, or classroom teachers may evaluate within the grade to choose those students each month who have exhibited good writing skills. Perhaps a "Good Writers' of the Month" Bulletin Board in the classroom or in an area in the school where all would have access to the "Good Writers' " would be a few ways to display work and/or names in order to heighten motivation. Certificates can be distributed.**

**Monthly samples for Grades 3 thru 8 will be provided in each issue of the *IHM Catholic EdNotes***

**A sample certificate page will also be included in each issue of the *IHM Catholic EdNotes* for your convenience to print on cardstock.**

**Thank you for all you do to encourage and foster these good writing skills in your students on a daily basis.**

***Why Cursive?* Here are some interesting thoughts:**

<http://www.cursivelogic.com/why-cursive>



# IHM GOOD WRITERS' CLUB

## RATIONALE

1. To assist teachers in providing motivation
2. To develop skills of legible handwriting
3. To provide a means for a sense of achievement
4. To foster pride in daily work

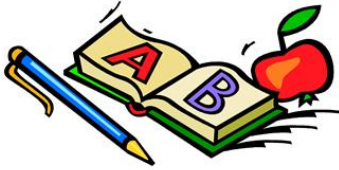
## TIPS FOR TEACHERS

1. Select a definite objective for each lesson.
2. Allocate a specific time for penmanship each day.
3. Study techniques outlined in your Teacher's Manual, noting the letter formation peculiar to your series (Palmer, Noble, Zaner Blozer, Universal Publishing etc).
4. Provide thorough instruction by demonstrating formation, size, shape, alignment, appearance, spacing and slant.

- |                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| 1. <b>SHAPE</b>      | correct formation of letters   |
| 2. <b>SIZE</b>       | uniform, correct height and width of letters                         |
| 3. <b>SLANT</b>      | uniform, diagonal slope of strokes                                   |
| 4. <b>ALIGNMENT</b>  | tangency to baseline with down-strokes                               |
| 5. <b>APPEARANCE</b> | neat, clean work; proper margins;<br>specified arrangement of papers |

*Classes should come to an agreement on one alphabet.  
Having the alphabet on display in each classroom is most  
beneficial to proper letter formation.*

# IHM Good Writers' Club



Grades 3 & 4

## OCTOBER

Twenty-five cents,  
Money that rhymes,  
Take one nickel,  
Add two dimes.

## NOVEMBER

Dear God, hear my evening prayer.  
I thank you for your love and care.

Grades 5 & 6

## OCTOBER

Reading is to the mind  
What exercise is to the body.

Sir Richard Steele

## NOVEMBER

What really matters  
Is what you do  
With what you have.

Shirley Lord

Grades 7 & 8

## OCTOBER

Always be trustworthy  
Care about others.  
Take responsibility for your actions.

## NOVEMBER

It takes the best in each of us  
To bring out the best in all of us.



## DECEMBER

Grades 3 & 4

Three Wise Men  
Came from afar,  
Led by night  
By one bright star.

Grades 5 & 6

On a cold winter night  
With no place to stay,  
Jesus was born  
In a manger of hay.

Grades 7 & 8

Three Wise Men  
All knelt and saw  
The love of God  
Asleep in the straw





# 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

---

Member of the official Board of Evaluators

# PROFICIENCY IN PENMANSHIP



This certifies that

---

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Date

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Member of the official Board of Evaluators

# **It's All About Right Relationships!**



## **Virtue-Based Restorative Discipline (VBRD) and the Catholic Education Mission**

Most Catholic School mission statements declare that Christ is the reason for the school and that religious teaching is integrated into every area of the school's curriculum. Our Catholic Parish Religious Education programs' mission statements have similar premises. If the words in mission statements are to become reality, then gospel values need to be a part of every action and policy in the school, including the discipline. Like schools and parish programs everywhere, teachers encounter discipline problems. As an elementary school principal, I heard parents whose children were the target of deliberate, malicious, cruel, and injurious actions say, "This should not happen in a Catholic School." I could not have agreed more. It should not happen in any school or parish program, but because of sin it does happen. The response of Catholic educators to misbehavior can be uniquely Catholic. With the gospel and the teachings of the Church, we have the tools to overcome evil with virtue. "Do not be conquered by evil but conquer evil with good." (Romans 12:21). Like Jesus, the Catholic educator condemns sin and loves the sinner. Like Jesus, teachers and administrators need to demonstrate mercy and redemption. When harmful conduct occurs, Catholic educators need to minister to both the one who has been harmed and the one who has caused the harm. When the intentional practice of virtue is the foundation of disciplinary practices, relationships are restored, kindness

is cultivated, and all parties grow in the knowledge that they have been created for love by a loving God.

Several years ago, the teachers of Trinity Academy in Shenandoah formed a summer educational book club using the book, *Virtue-Based Restorative Discipline* by Lynne M. Lang. (Our Sunday Visitor, 2013). The ideas in the book resonated in my IHM heart in a way that other professional reading had never done before. Virtue-based discipline is about restoration rather than punishment. The teaching of virtue has always been a central part of the Redemptorist/IHM tradition. Restorative practices are redemptive in nature. Lynne Lang's approach to restorative discipline changed my attitude in a permanent and profound way. I began to look at discipline as an opportunity to evangelize and teach virtue literacy. In the VBRD™ model, children are taught to restore relationships and return to good behavior. There are consequences for those who do harm. However, the consequences are restorative rather than punitive. Trinity Academy began to incorporate the ideas in *Virtue-Based Restorative Discipline* into the life of the school. The process included prayerful discernment by both adults and children. Children were encouraged to examine their behavior in light of Christ's teaching. When improper conduct occurred, all involved prayed for the Holy Spirit to be present and direct thoughts, words and actions. In reviewing what happened, children asked themselves what virtue needed to be cultivated in order to correct the situation. The child identified the harm that has been done and suggested ways to repair the damage. (see *Revised Primer for Implementing Virtue-Based Restorative Discipline*.™ *A Catholic Response to Bullying and Discipline*, Lynne Lang, 2017, p. 16) The VBRD™ approach to discipline leads to real change, and growth in virtue. It is redemptive in nature.

Schools and Religious Education programs that adopt VBRD™ commit to four guiding principles. They are:

1. We will dedicate ourselves to living virtue.
2. We will support others in living virtue.
3. We will commit to constructive thoughts, words, and deeds.
4. When faced with challenges and conflict, we will find solutions that cultivate virtue for ourselves and for one another.



(Lynne M. Lang, *Virtue-Based Restorative Discipline*, Our Sunday Visitor, 2013)

Just imagine the difference commitment to those principles could make in your personal life.

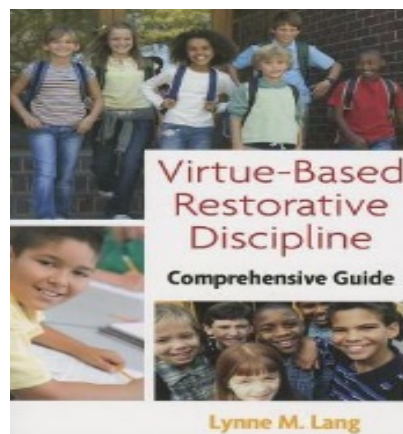
Imagine the effect on school climate if every individual embraced those guiding principles.

VBRD™ has the potential to make our schools and parish religious education programs more Catholic and help us to be who we say we are.

For more information visit: <https://www.restorationmatters.org/>

*Virtue-Based Restorative Discipline* is available at <https://www.amazon.com/> and

<https://www.barnesandnoble.com/> and <https://store.iirp.edu/our-sunday-visitor/>



# Mac YYAC

## IHM Youth and Young Adult Communication

Today's youth and young adults are the future of the Church. In his papal exhortation, *Christus Vivit*, Pope Francis, tells us that the "entire community has to be involved in evangelizing them" (#202). Youth ministry should "involve a 'journeying together' that values 'the charisms that the Spirit bestows in accordance with the vocation and role of each of the Church's members, through a process of co-responsibility'" (#206). As educators and youth ministers, we want to accompany our young people as they renew and deepen their relationship with the Lord and discover God's great love for them.

In the coming issues of our IHM Catholic EdNotes, we will share various topics and ideas related to youth and young adult ministry. We welcome your input and suggestions as well.

### *Who are today's youth and young adults?*

#### **Millennial Generation** (Current Young Adults)

- Born between 1981-1996
- Social media savvy and digitally connected, yet many report feeling lonely
- Tolerant of differences, yet have experienced high rates of bullying/cyberbullying between peers as teens
- Have increased awareness of sexual harassment, yet are increasingly sexualized because of being exposed at younger ages to pornography through technology
- Believe in themselves, yet anxious for their future
  - High rates of anxiety, depression, suicide and addiction
  - Massive student debts
- Generally not religious, yet want to find meaning in their lives
  - Large number report having no religious affiliation, yet they are not atheists
  - Want to make a difference in world
  - Called "Generation Nice" by recent NY Times article

#### **iGen, also known as Generation Z** (Current Children, Youth, and College-aged Young Adults)

- Growing up entirely in digital world of instant information; "Digital bond" with technology
- Growing up in post-9/11 world of globalized terrorism, yet have little or no memory of 9/11 themselves
- Many were born or grew up in economic recession
- Worried about their future
- Growing up in diverse society: growing Hispanic population, witnessed 1<sup>st</sup> African-American president, legalized same-sex marriage
- Growing up in more polarized society



***Want to Learn More? Here are some Mac YYAC suggested resources.***

<https://bustedhalo.com>

Suggestions and activities for engaging youth and young adults. <https://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/faithful-citizenship/campuses-and-young-adults/ideas-for-ministry-to-young-adults>

Social Justice and Charitable Acts

<https://www.usccb.org/resources/two-feet-love-action-los-dos-pies-del-amor-en-accion>

“Best Practices for Engaging Youth.” *US Catholic*.

<https://uscatholic.org/articles/201403/best-practices-for-engaging-youth/>

5 Awesome, Little Prep Games for Teens

<https://lifeteen.com/cym/blog/5-awesome-little-preparation-games-for-teens/>

Pope Francis. 2019. *Christus Vivit*.

[http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost\\_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco\\_esortazione-ap\\_20190325\\_christus-vivit.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20190325_christus-vivit.html)

"My dear young people,  
**the Church needs you,**  
your enthusiasm,  
your creativity  
and the joy that is so  
characteristic of you!"



# CATHOLIC TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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

## Catholic Podcasts

*The Father Mike Schmitz Catholic Podcast*

Fr. Mike discusses topics affecting today's Catholics, including pop culture, Faith and headline reflections. His podcasts range from 5 minutes to one hour in length.

*Ask Father Josh: Your Catholic Question and Answer Podcast*

Fr. Josh describes his podcast as a place where he hears Catholics and does his best to help them navigate the tricky times in Catholic life. In each episode Fr. Josh addresses three or four questions. His podcasts range in between 30 minutes to one hour in length.

*The Catholic Teacher Podcast Jonathan Doyle*

The Catholic Teacher Podcast is a daily dose of encouragement and motivation for Catholic teachers around the world. Jonathan Doyle brings the listener daily insights, inspiration, motivation, guests and more. The podcasts range between 10 minutes to one hour in length.

## Apps for Ipad, Iphone, Ipod

### IPieta App

*IPieta* is a free Catholic app that contains many prayers, spiritual readings and the Catholic calendar. It includes the writings of St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Teresa of Avila and St. John of the Cross, just to name a few. Also included are St. Alphonsus' Way of the Cross and the Catechism. It's a great resource for personal and professional needs.



### Formed App

*Formed* is our Catholic Faith on Demand! Through *Formed* the user is able to access thousands of Catholic study programs, movies, documentaries audio talks and audio books. There is a free version but in order to access all of its features you will need to subscribe. Subscription can be done right in the app and all payments can be made through an iTunes account. You can also check to see if your Parish has an account.



### Christian Emoji App

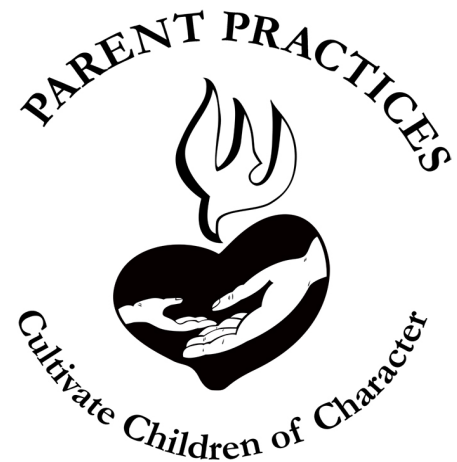
The *Christian Emoji* App is just fun. It has Holy Bible and Catholic Pope emojis. There are 82 customized emojis. You do need to allow full keyboard access so I would suggest that you turn on access whenever you want to use it.



### Shared Wisdom

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

# Raising Self-Esteem during Quarantine!



Quarantine provides an opportunity to develop self-confidence and self-reliance within school-aged children. In all seasons – quarantine or not – positive self-esteem requires a steady diet of practices that foster routine, responsibility, self-starting, and stick-to-it-tive-ness.

Positive self-esteem increases with reasonable, scheduled, anticipated practices. **Self-reliance** blooms when children are responsibly independent to make age-appropriate decisions. **Initiative** requires repeated opportunities to originate plans and conquer tasks. **Competence** develops when children work steadily over time to complete a task, learn to manage time, and develop organizational skills.

## STRUCTURE DAILY LIVING

Ensure a minimum of eight hours' sleep nightly. Consistently observe routines for wake up, daytime activities and bedtime. Design a workable schedule that includes personal hygiene needs, bedroom clean up, meals, school work, leisure time, chores, family time, periods for TV/computer/electronic device, solitude, faith formation, and personal prayer. Distinguish weekdays from weekends.

Require older children to post their schedule. For younger children, create a timeline of index cards. Hang them on a wall, one activity per card. Make adjustments as needed. Sequence the cards to prioritize school work interspersed with fun activities of 5-15 minute periods, meals and family time. For instance: breakfast, bedroom cleanup, Math, Spelling, SNACK, pet care/chores, Social Studies, LUNCH, leisure time, Science, Reading, outdoor exercise, leisure time, DINNER, etc.

Designate a place and reserve scheduled time(s) for schoolwork. On a day that your child does not have a specific assignment for the subject session then expect him/her to use the allotted time to review work or to read ahead.

## IDENTIFY LEISURE TIME ACTIVITIES

Brainstorm a list of half-hour free time activities. Expand the list beyond social media and digital games to include cultural, educational and spiritual enrichment. For example:

- Watch a TV episode from National Geographic, Planet Earth, Animal Planet, Discovery Channel, or TCL.
- Browse a news magazine or an alphabetical section of a dictionary or encyclopedia.
- Read an entire series of age-appropriate books.
- Hang out with the saints! Read a biography, a Wikipedia synopsis, or view saint films.
- Virtually explore museums, zoos and aquariums.
- Pursue hobbies like coloring, painting, assembling models, solving puzzles . . .

## EXPAND KNOWLEDGE OF CATHOLIC CULTURE

As a family activity, dedicate a portion of every week to explore topics like the Commandments, Sacraments, Mary & Saints, Rituals/Practices (*like Stations of the Cross, the Rosary, formula for confession*), details of Catholic disciplines (*like holy days of obligation, fast, abstinence*), the Mass, the Bible, Christian morality, Catholic traditions, and common prayers.

Digital resources include YouTube videos, [BustedHalo.com](http://BustedHalo.com), [SkitGuys.com](http://SkitGuys.com), [Formed.org](http://Formed.org), and [WordOnFire.org](http://WordOnFire.org). Possibly your child will also include these resources as free-time, leisure activities.

# i Levanta la Autoestima durante la Cuarentena !



La cuarentena presenta una oportunidad para desarrollar la autoconfianza y la autosuficiencia en los niños en edad escolar. En todas las estaciones, en cuarentena o no, la autoestima positiva requiere una dieta constante de prácticas que fomenten la rutina, la responsabilidad, el inicio propio y a la perseverancia.

La autoestima positiva aumenta con prácticas razonables, programadas y anticipadas. **La autoconfianza** florece cuando los niños son responsables e independientes para tomar decisiones apropiadas para su edad. **La iniciativa** requiere oportunidades repetidas para crear planes y conquistar tareas. **La competencia** se desarrolla cuando los niños trabajan constantemente a lo largo del tiempo para completar una tarea, aprenden a administrar el tiempo y desarrollan habilidades de organización.

## ESTABLECER UNA ESTRUCTURA PARA LA VIDA DIARIA

Asegúrese de dormir un mínimo de ocho horas por noche. Observe constantemente las rutinas para despertarse, las actividades diurnas y la hora de acostarse. Diseñe un horario viable que incluya las necesidades de higiene personal, limpieza de la habitación, comidas, trabajo escolar, tiempo libre, tareas, tiempo en familia, períodos para TV / computadora / dispositivos electrónicos, tiempo personal, formación en la fe y oración personal. Establezca distinciones entre semana y fines de semana.

Solicite a los niños mayores que publiquen su tabla u horario. Para los niños más pequeños, cree una línea de tiempo de fichas. Cuélguelos en la pared, una actividad por tarjeta. Haga los ajustes necesarios. Ordene las tarjetas para priorizar el trabajo escolar intercalado con actividades divertidas de períodos de 5-15 minutos, comidas y tiempo en familia. Por ejemplo: hacer la cama, desayuno / limpieza, matemáticas, tareas de ortografía, SNACK, cuidado de mascotas / tareas, estudios sociales, ALMUERZO, tiempo libre, ciencia, lectura, ejercicio al aire libre, tiempo libre, CENA, etc.

Designe un lugar y reserve tiempo(s) programado para el trabajo escolar. En un día en que su hijo no tenga una tarea específica asignada por su profesor(a) para una asignatura, espere que use el tiempo registrado para revisar el trabajo ya hecho o leer con anticipación.

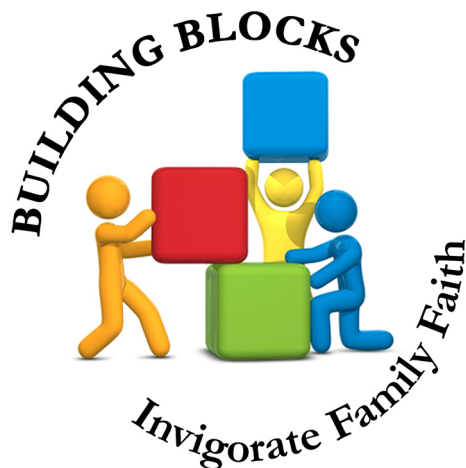
## CONVERSAR SOBRE POSIBLE ACTIVIDADES DE TIEMPO LIBRE

Haga una lluvia de ideas de una lista de actividades de media hora de tiempo libre. Incluya en esta lista más allá de las redes sociales y los juegos digitales, de manera de incluir enriquecimiento cultural, educativo y espiritual. Por ejemplo:

- Mire un episodio de TV de National Geographic, Planet Earth, Animal Planet, Discovery Channel o TCL.
- Hojee una revista de noticias o una sección alfabética de un diccionario o enciclopedia.
- Lea una serie completa de libros apropiados para su edad.
- Vea una película o lea acerca de la vida de los santos! Lea una biografía, vea una sinopsis de Wikipedia;
- Visite museos, zoológicos y acuarios que ofrecen recorridos virtuales
- Entreténgase con pasatiempos como colorear, pintar, armar modelos, resolver acertijos . . .

## AMPLIAR EL CONOCIMIENTO DE LA CULTURA CATÓLICA

Como familia, dedique una parte de cada semana a explorar temas como los Mandamientos, Sacramentos, María y los Santos, Rituales / Prácticas (*como Estaciones de la Cruz, el Rosario, fórmula para la confesión*), detalles de las disciplinas católicas (*como los días santos de obligación, ayuno y abstinencia*), la misa, la Biblia, la moral cristiana, las tradiciones católicas y las oraciones comunes. Los recursos digitales incluyen videos de **YouTube**, **BustedHalo.com**, **SkitGuys.com**, **Formed.org** y **WordOnFire.org**. Posiblemente su hijo también podría incluirá estos recursos como actividades de tiempo libre y de relajación.



# Quarantine . . . A Time for Treasure Seeking

Crisis and Opportunity . . . “When one door closes another opens!” Cultivate that attitude during pandemic quarantine days. A Stay-At-Home order creates time to pursue new interests; to delve into topics that escape us in our otherwise busy lives.

This is true of the treasures of our Catholic culture. Programs of religious instruction condense material to 30 weekly hourly-sessions. Capitalize on Covid time! Expand your family’s knowledge of topics like the Commandments, Sacraments, Saints, Rituals and Practices (*like Stations of the Cross, the Rosary, formula for confession*), details of Catholic disciplines (*like holy days of obligation, fast, abstinence*), the Mass, the Bible, Christian morality, Catholic traditions, and common prayers.

Some free digital resources include: **Busted Halo.com**, a web-video series with topics like *Sacraments 101* with Fr. Dave Dwyer, CSP, *Sacraments 201* with Fr. Steven Bell, CSP, *You Don’t Know Jack ... about Lent, Advent, Halloween, Valentines’ Day, New Year’s*, and similar traditions by Fr. Jack Collins, CSP; or **SkitGuys.com** YouTube videos like *Chiseled, Grace*, and *Triduum*.

**Mary** is a particular faith treasure well worth exploring! We know her as a teenager, cousin of Elizabeth, wife of Joseph, mother of Jesus, homeless, emigrant/immigrant, widow, hospitable neighbor, counselor to the apostles, and courageous woman who stood by her son who was unjustly mistreated and murdered. As a family walk in her sandals!

## 1. PROFILE MARY

Whenever we spend time with a person we can “pick up” character traits that we admire. Read the scripture references to Mary. Make a list of 10 character traits or personality qualities of Mary that emerge. Next to each trait, write one example of something you could do to imitate Mary. Practice that trait.

Mary Scripture Citations: Luke 1: 26-38 ([Annunciation](#)); Luke 1: 39-45 ([Visitation](#)); Luke 1: 46-56 ([Magnificat](#)); Luke 2: 6-7 ([Bethlehem Birth](#)); Luke 2: 15-20 ([Shepherd’s Visit](#)); Luke 2: 22-35 ([Presentation](#)); Matthew 2:13-16 ([Egypt Exile](#)); Matthew 2: 19-23 ([Return to Nazareth](#)); Luke 2: 41-52 ([Lost and Found](#)); John 19:25 ([Crucifixion](#)); Acts 1:14 ([Cenacle](#)).

## 2. LEARN MARY APPARITIONS

Did you know that Mary appeared on earth several times? Do you know the stories about those visits (apparitions)? What did Mary communicate during the visits? The stories of Lourdes, Fatima, Guadalupe, and the Miraculous Medal/ Saint Catherine Labouré are available for free as *YouTube Movies*. Additionally, the Augustine Institute ([www.Formed.org](http://www.Formed.org)) offers movies and presentations on these topics and many other topics of Catholic interest.

Choose an apparition. View the movie. Discuss the story with your family members. Discover the feast date and a prayer that is connected to the apparition feast.

## 3. Design a Mary Marathon

Combine the above ideas with learning the rosary (the meaning of its prayers and how to make a rosary); titles in the Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary; multicultural representations of Mary; and the major Marian feast days.





# Cuarentena . . . Haga Tiempo para Buscar el Tesoro

Crisis y Oportunidad. . . "¡Cuando una puerta se cierra, otra se abre!"  
Cultive esa actitud durante los días de cuarentena debido a la pandemia. Una orden de quedarse en casa crea tiempo para perseguir nuevos intereses; para profundizar en temas que se nos escapan en nuestras vidas agitadas.

Los programas de instrucción de nuestra cultura católica religiosa condensan el material en 30 sesiones semanales por hora. ¡Aproveche el tiempo de Covid! Profundice el conocimiento de su familia sobre temas como los mandamientos, los sacramentos, los santos, los rituales y las prácticas (como las Estaciones de la Cruz, el Rosario, la fórmula para la confesión), los detalles de las disciplinas católicas (como los días santos de obligación, ayuno, abstinencia), la misa, la Biblia, la moral cristiana, las tradiciones católicas y las oraciones comunes.

Algunos recursos digitales gratuitos incluyen:  
**Busted Halo.com**, una serie de videos web con temas como *Sacramentos 101* con el Padre Dave Dwyer, CSP, *Sacramentos 201* con el Padre Steven Bell, CSP, *No sabes Jack ... sobre Cuaresma, Adviento, Halloween, Día de San Valentín, Año Nuevo* y tradiciones similares del Padre Jack Collins, CSP; o videos de YouTube **SkitGuys.com** como *Chiseled, Grace y Triduum*.

¡**María** es un tesoro de fe en particular que vale la pena explorar! La conocemos desde cuando era adolescente, prima de Elizabeth, esposa de José, madre de Jesús, sin hogar, emigrante / inmigrante, viuda, vecina hospitalaria, consejera de los apóstoles y valiente mujer que estuvo junto a su hijo que fue injustamente maltratado y asesinado. ¡Como una familia camina siguiendo sus huellas!

## 1. DESCUBRIR LAS CUALIDADES DE MARÍA

Cada vez que convivimos y pasamos tiempo con una persona podemos "incorporar o adquirir" rasgos de carácter que admiramos. Lea las referencias de las Escrituras acerca de María. Haga una lista de 10 rasgos de carácter o cualidades de personalidad de María que surjan de la lectura. Al lado de cada rasgo, escriba un ejemplo de algo que podría hacer para imitar a María. Ponga en práctica esa cualidad.

Citas de las Escrituras de María: Lucas 1: 26-38 ([Anunciación](#)); Lucas 1: 39-45 ([Visitación](#)); Lucas 1: 46-56 ([Magnificat](#)); Lucas 2: 6-7 ([Nacimiento en Belén](#)); Lucas 2: 15-20 ([Visita del Pastor](#)); Lucas 2: 22-35 ([Presentación en el Templo](#)); Mateo 2: 13-16 ([Egipto](#)); Mateo 2: 19-23 ([Regreso a Nazaret](#)); Lucas 2: 41-52 ([Perdido y Encontrado](#)); Juan 19:25 ([Crucifixión](#)); Hechos 1:14 ([Cenáculo](#)).

## 2. APRENDE LAS APARICIONES DE MARÍA

¿Sabías que María apareció en la tierra varias veces? ¿Conoces las historias sobre esas visitas (apariciones)? ¿Conoces acerca de aquello que comunicó María durante esas visitas? Las historias de Lourdes, Fátima, Guadalupe y la Medalla Milagrosa / Santa Catalina Labouré están disponibles de forma gratuita como películas de *YouTube*. Además, el Instituto Agustín ([www.Formed.org](http://www.Formed.org)) ofrece películas y presentaciones sobre estos temas y muchos otros temas de interés católico.

Elige una aparición. Vea la película y converse acerca de la historia con los miembros de su familia. Descubra la fecha de la fiesta y una oración relacionada con la celebración de la aparición.

## 3. DISEÑA UN MARATÓN DE MARÍA

Combina las ideas anteriores con el aprendizaje del rosario (el significado de sus oraciones y cómo hacer un rosario); títulos en la Letanía de la Virgen María; representaciones multiculturales de María; y los principales fechas de fiestas marianas.



Welcome to the first edition of **Stepping Stones.** May this be a valuable resource for teachers of young children. Each publication will hold tips for: organization/management, Spiritual, social and environmental awareness and theme activities.

## Pre-Kindergarten/Kindergarten Ideas



### Organization/management



Model and practice: quietly getting out of chair and pushing in chair, quietly coming to their place on rug. Praise and thank them...You could also make this into a Simon says game.

### Social Awareness Environment



Read the book Thank you Omu [click here](#) (for youtube) Talk to the children about giving and receiving and about children who are hungry.



Prayer to thank God for food: Lord, we thank you for the food we eat.  
We ask that you feed children who are hungry. Amen.

### Theme: Season of Fall



Activities:



[Read apples on top](#)

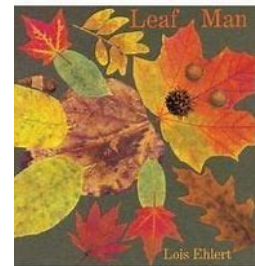
Apple Template, pg. 34



Apple tasting directions  
on pg. 32-33

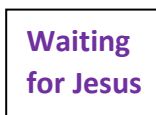


Hand Leaf Directions  
on pg. 35



[Read Leaf Man](#)

Directions on pg. 36-37



Baby Jesus, pg 38

Advent Projects on pg. 39

Advent Calendar on pg. 40



[Read The Lion](#)

Letter L Craft, pg. 41

[Turkey Trouble](#)

[Letter T craft](#)



## **Directions for Apple Taste Testing and Graphing**

### **Materials:**

1. Red apples
2. Yellow apples
3. Green apples
4. Apple taste test paper
5. Class paper or white board

### **Instructions:**

Each student gets:

- 1 apple slice of each color (3 slices total)
- 1 Apple Taste Test paper

**BEFORE YOU START MAKE SURE TO TELL STUDENTS YOU ARE TASTING EACH SLICE AT THE**

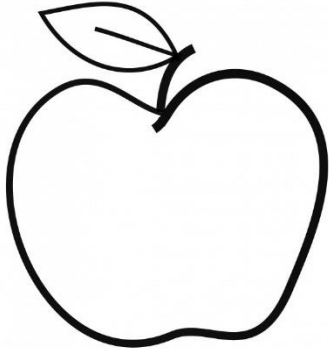
1. A simple apple taste test paper included
2. Distribute apple slices to children
3. As a class, each student tastes:
  - a. Red apple slice
    - i. Ask children to talk about the taste.....encourage adjectives..
    - ii. list on class paper or white board
    - iii. Have children fill in their Taste Test paper
  - b. Yellow apple slice
    - i. Ask children to talk about the taste.....encourage adjectives
    - ii. list on class paper or white board
    - iii. Have children fill in their Taste Test paper
  - c. Green apple slice
    - i. Ask children to talk about the taste.....encourage adjectives
    - ii. list on class paper or white board
    - iii. Have children fill in their Taste Test paper
4. Distribute 1 small apple to each child and ask what apple was their favorite?
5. Have the children color their favorite apple .
6. Use these apples to create a graph titled: What apple do YOU like the best?



# Apple Taste Testing

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

## 1.The Red Apple



## What did it taste like?

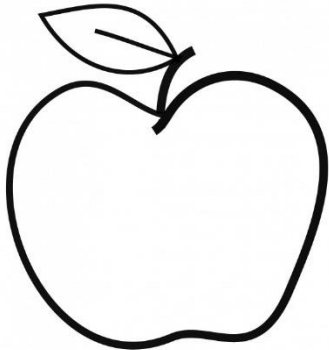
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**Did you like it? Circle:**

**Yes      No**

[illegible]

## 2. The Green Apple



## What did it taste like?

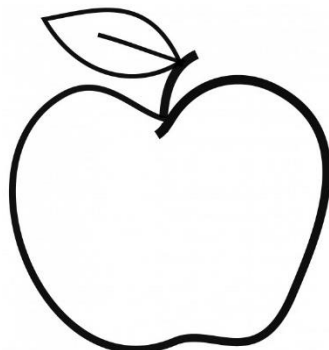
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**Did you like it? Circle:**

**Yes      No**

[illegible]

### 3. The Yellow Apple

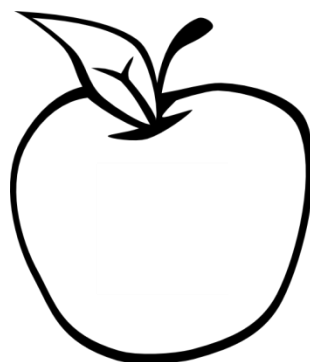
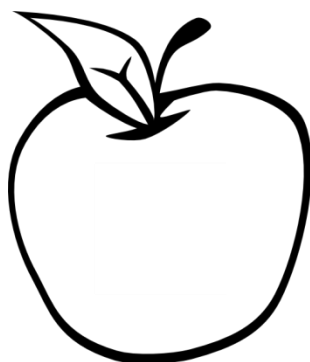
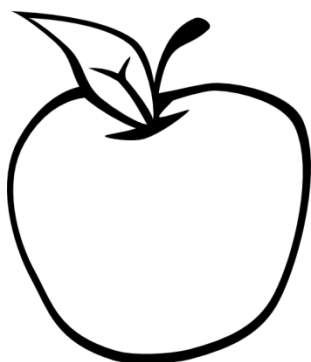
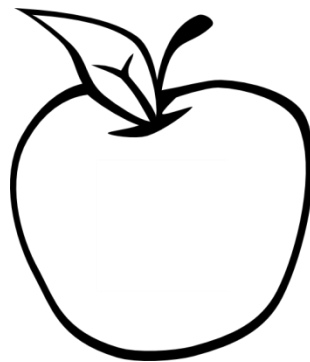
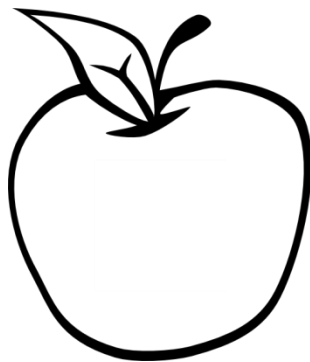
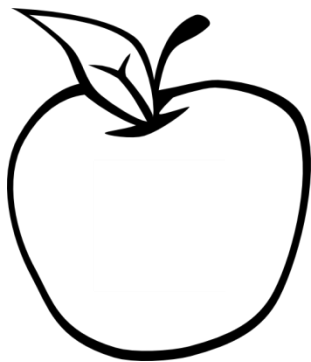
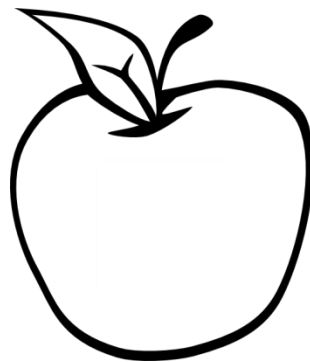
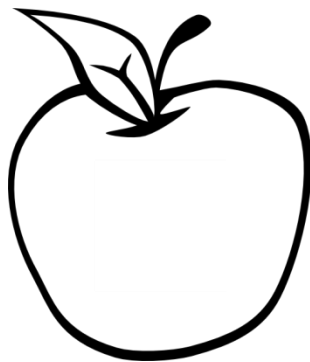
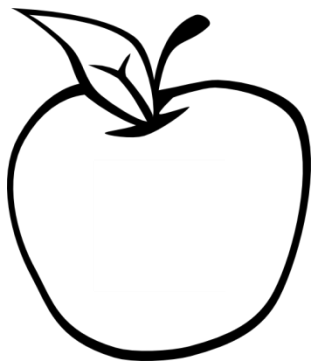
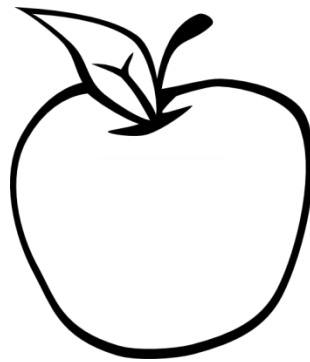
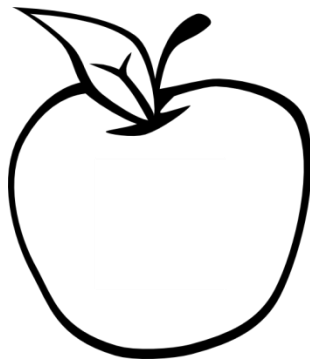
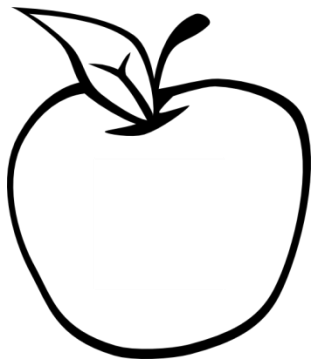


## What did it taste like?

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**Did you like it? Circle:**

**Yes**      **No**



### **Directions for hand traced tree with leaves**

#### **Materials:**

1. Construction paper
2. Crayons
3. Leaves from outside
4. Glue stick

#### **Instructions:**

Each student needs:

- 1 piece of construction paper
- Handful of leaves (4-5 will work)

1. Discuss how leaves change and fall through the seasons
2. Have students collect a handful of leaves that have fallen on the ground
3. Students will trace their hand to form a tree and color brown.
4. Students use the leaves they picked as the branches; Glue leaves on construction paper

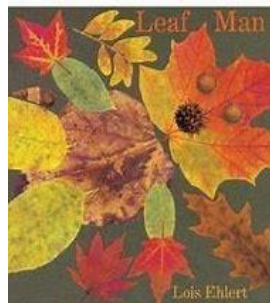
## Leaves

### Home Connection:

- The Friday prior to your exploration of leaves, send each child home with a brown paper bag.
- Explain to them using pictures, a book, or a look outside that the trees are changing, and can they notice the change.
- Once they make the connection that the leaves are changing their colors and are falling off the trees, explain to them that next week they will be exploring leaves and that you need their help by having them go on Nature Walks around their neighborhoods to collect leaves. They are to fill their brown bag with leaves from their neighborhood with the help of their families.
- By sending the bags home to their individual communities you are most likely going to then collect a variety of types and colors of leaves for the children to explore!

### Reading:

- I love using the book *Leaf Man* by Lois Ehlert for my Morning Meeting. The book follows a group of autumn leaves as they are blown by the wind over various backdrops and take on a different configuration in each location. Within the book the illustrator uses collages of real leaves to help form all of the illustrations. For instance, a leaf man, leaf birds, leaf fish, leaf prairies, and a leaf forest.
- After reading the book, have the children take out their brown bag of collected leaves and ask for them to construct an object using the pictures. Give them ideas by sitting with them and constructing your own picture. Sometimes for the younger students I guide them through this process by selecting one of the collage pictures from the actual book and ask for them to recreate their own version of a leaf man, leaf birds, leaf fish, etc.
- After they have constructed their leaf collage and are happy with the results, have them glue the picture onto construction paper. I have found in the past that using either black or white construction paper really allows for the color in the leaves to pop! It is easier for the children to use a liquid glue and a paint brush in order to help the leaves not tear or break.
- Once the children's leaf collages are dried, I ask for them to describe what they have created using their leaves so that I can then label each child's creation.
- We then display the artwork in hallway along with a copy of the book.





### **Handwriting:**

- A big part of our curriculum within the fall is for the children in Pre-Kindergarten to not only recognize their first name but to also be able to spell their first name. To help with this task we have the students construct Leaf Names!
- To begin you will have the child use their name template to count the amount of the letters used within their first name.
- Once they have counted the letters used in their first name, they are then to count the same number of leaves from their brown bag.
- Again, you will use liquid glue and paint brushes to adhere the correct number of leaves onto construction paper. For this project we ask for the children to select a piece of construction paper from colors in which the leaves change during the fall. For example, red, orange, yellow, brown, purple, and green.
- Once the leaves have dried, it is time to write their first name!
- This step is based upon the readiness of your students. For some students, it is necessary for me to dot-dot their first names and have them trace over them. For others they are able to look and copy the letters in their first name from their name plate at their individual spots. Either way is fine and will need to be completed using either a black marker or a black Sharpe.
- We love using this project because this is one that can be conducted time and time again within the program simply by changing the items or theme!



# Special Advent Projects



## **Individual management**

Fill Jesus' crib with straw everytime you do a kindness/good deed/listen/follow directions. Make crib from half piece of brown construction paper (no legs) and cut up yellow construction paper into pieces. At the end of Advent place Jesus in the crib to be taken home at Christmas and put under your Christmas tree.



## **Morning Meeting/Prayer**

Prior to the start of Advent, each student is given a strip of green or red paper. You send the strip home along with a note that you are creating a Classroom Advent Prayer Chain and need for the family to write their special intention onto the strip of paper with a return date again prior to the start of Advent.

- Using your student's knowledge of patterns, have them use their Fine Motor Skills to help assemble the strips of paper in a green-red-green-red pattern and link them together to form a chain.
- At the top of the chain we place an empty manger picture located in our religion textbook and display the chain in the front of the classroom for everyone to see.
- On a daily basis during our Morning Meeting prior to our opening prayer, the teacher will then remove the bottom link and read the student's prayer intention and pray for that family. This is continued all during the season of Advent.



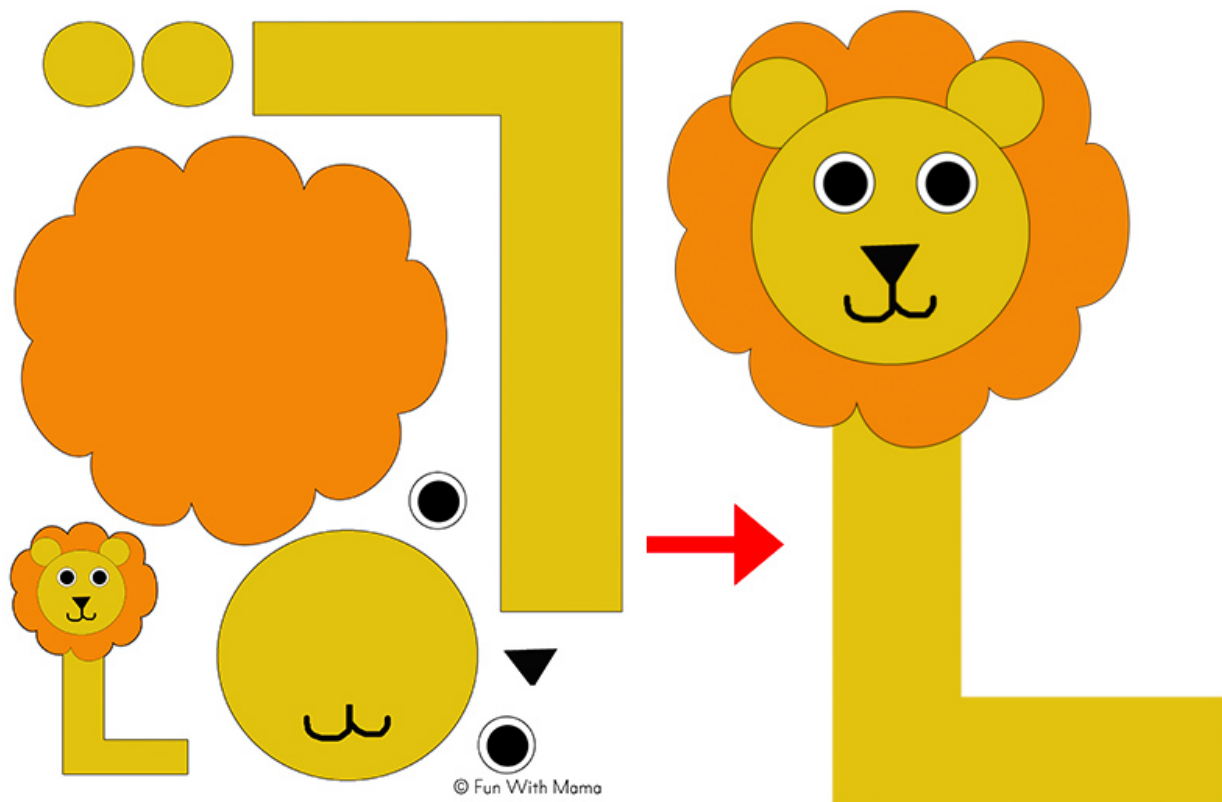
## **Advent Calendar**

- On the first day of Advent send home with your students a Countdown to Christmas: Family Acts of Kindness Calendar. This calendar would consist of 25 simple acts of kindness that can be completed for each day of Advent by either the entire family or the student themselves.
- I ask for the family to keep this calendar within their student's folder and to color in the box of the kind acts they have completed.
- When a student returns with a box colored in, we then add a star above our Nativity scene on our classroom's religious board. This action is completed for everyday during our time together in Advent.
- By the end of the season, our board is typically covered in yellow stars that help to show our students their preparation for the birth of Jesus by completing acts of kindness for others during this holy season within our Church.

## Christmas: Family Acts of Kindness Calendar

1. Give out a complement.	2. Write a kind note to someone within your family.	3. Donate canned goods to a local food bank.	4. Rake leaves or shovel snow for a neighbor.	5. Draw a picture for someone in a nursing home.
6. Donate a coat, gloves, or hat to charity.	7. Smile all day	8. Make a bird feeder for the birds for winter.	9. Recycle to help take care of our Earth.	10. Make Christmas cards for your friends or neighbors.
11. Send a note or Christmas card to someone in the military.	12. Leave chalk messages or kind messages for others to see.	13. Help make family dinner.	14. Donate a book to the local library.	15. Tidy your bedroom or playroom.
16. Sit next to and talk with someone new at lunch or during Center Time.	17. Bake cookies for the local fire or police station.	18. Find three of your toys to give to your local children's hospital or charity.	19. Introduce yourself to someone new today at school.	20. Hold the door open for someone today.
21. Make a paper hug and send it to someone you love.	22. Read a book to your sibling.	23. Make a special Christmas decoration for someone you care about.	24. Write a thank you note to Jesus!	25. Remember to celebrate the birth of Jesus today by praying and singing to him! Merry Christmas!

# PRINTABLE CRAFT



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# STEPPING STONES



Welcome to the first edition of STEPPING STONES! It is our hope that this will be a valuable resource for teachers of young children. Developing good habits and learning skills in early childhood years offers young learners the stepping stones needed to enter primary grades with confidence. Each publication will hold tips for organization and classroom management, spiritual, social and environmental awareness through literature, theme activities and some digital resources for teachers. As we progress with this new work, we hope teachers will forward ideas and suggestions to the writers to be shared in future publications.

## ORGANIZATION for Primary Grades 1, 2, 3

Every child is created in the image and likeness of a God. Reflecting on the beauty and order of creation we view with our eyes, we must be aware that the young child has an innate need for order. Beginning the year with a plan for classroom order will give children a sense of comfort and feeling at home, in due time. Particularly *this* year, teachers will want to create a good plan of operation and present it to children and parents with calm and concern for the good of all. Let's begin!

- ✓ Decorations: -place decorations so that they are easily visible and meaningful for children
  - Religion or prayer center - leave this space undecorated so that children might help to create the center that reminds them God is at their center. It may include a children's bible, a small statue of Our Lady, a flip book with each child's page with family names. The center can be maintained by children in turn and be changed according to liturgical season. [Look here.](#)
  - Instructional posters can be introduced as needed. If the room is fully "postered" upon children's arrival they will not really pay attention to much of it. Let them focus on a few important points at a time. Let parents know the room will grow with their children. 😊

## MANAGEMENT

- ✓ Readiness and Patience

Most of the children you will receive this year have been in your school. Due to the fact that school will operate differently, it will be important to patiently go through the protocols and reminders to create ease and awareness of others.

  - seating
  - movement around the room
  - going to the restroom
  - walking in line
  - ordering personal space
  - one way traffic for social distancing

## Presentation of Religion text

- ✓ Play soft background music. Tell the children you have a gift for them.
- ✓ Have religion texts on special cloth on table.
- ✓ Call each child forward by name: Abby, you are a special child of God. Take this book and you will come to know and love Jesus more. God bless you, Abby. (Sign the child's forehead with a cross as you say "God bless you." Allow the children time to look through the book.



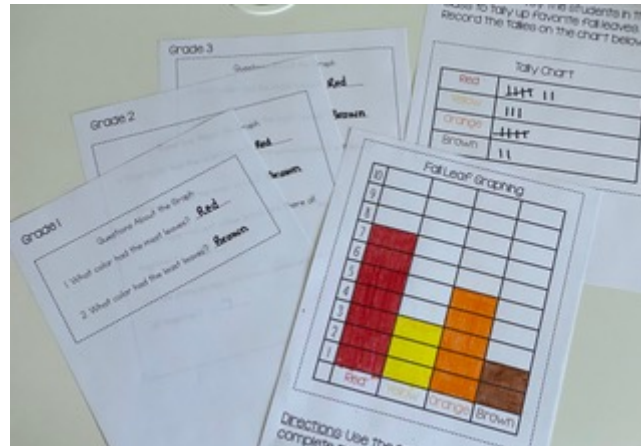
## Literature and Social Awareness

- ✓ Share the book Thank you, Omu written by Oge Mora. This award winning book is a great conversation starter to encourage children to be aware of the needs of others. Several read alouds of the book are available on YouTube. One in [particular](#) has many guides for the teacher to engage the children in every aspect of the book.

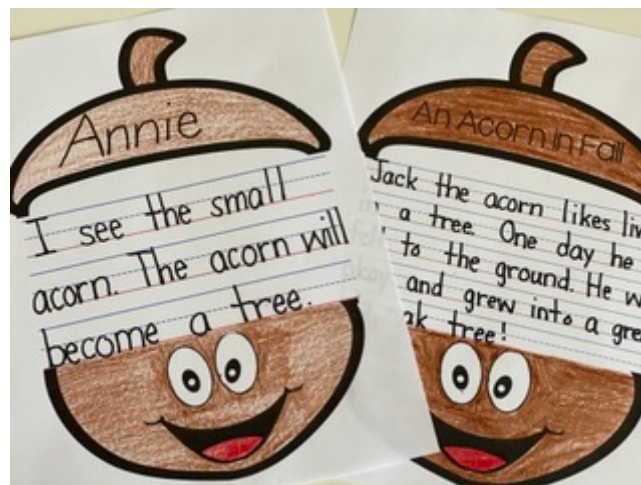


### Thanksgiving Prayer (to be adapted for grade level)

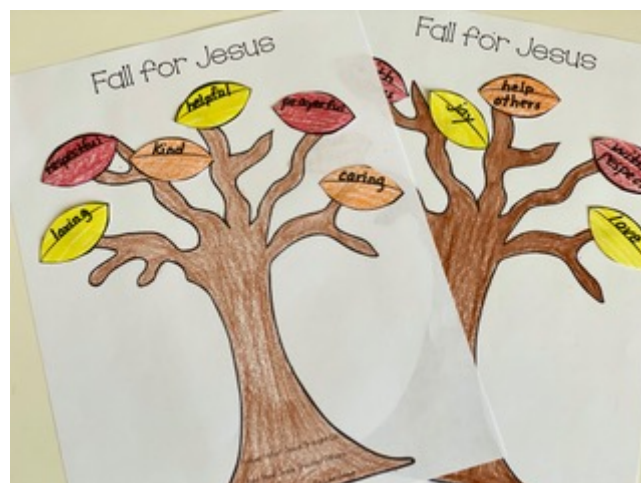
According to each grade level direct children to list things and people they are grateful for each day. This could begin early in November when children can speak of things for which they are grateful. Teach the litany form of prayer using the combined student suggestions during the week leading to Thanksgiving holiday. Encourage children to share this type of prayer with family. Here is an [explanation](#) of litany prayer and some samples. This [link](#) has many suggestions for thanksgiving prayer forms for young children related to creation.



[Fall Leaf Graphing Activity Plan and Templates](#)



[Acorn Writing Activity Plan and Templates](#)



[Adjectives for Jesus Activity Plan and Templates](#)



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