

# Partners in FAITH™



Helping our children grow in their Catholic faith.

February 2011

**St. Matthew Catholic School**

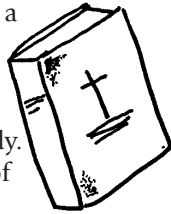
Beverly Viotti, Principal



## Thoughtful Moments

### A Catholic library

Whenever you have a question about the faith or how a life problem can be answered in faith, it's helpful to have a Catholic resource handy. Keep a copy on hand of the Revised Standard Version Bible, the *New American Bible* or the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (which has a great glossary in the back). Call the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops Publishing division (800-235-8722) or visit the website [www.usccb.org](http://www.usccb.org) for more suggestions.



### Telling is not tattling

At times of stress, we want our children to come to us for help but they hesitate to "tattle." Remind children periodically that as a parent, you are on the same team. Telling isn't the same as tattling. Everyone needs help sometimes.

*"His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to \* his own glory and excellence"* (2 Peter 1:3).



## Tips for raising kinder Catholic children

Catholics can make our marks on the world by demonstrating more kindness. *"Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience ..."* (Colossians 3:12). Try these ideas for raising kinder Catholic children:

**Search comic books, joke books, and funny movies for lines to repeat.** Discourage children from putting others down to make friends laugh. Making fun of others isn't kind even if it is funny. Offer alternatives.

**Provide opportunities to demonstrate kindness in your home.** Setting the example within your family and teaching children how to be kind will give youngsters practical skills they

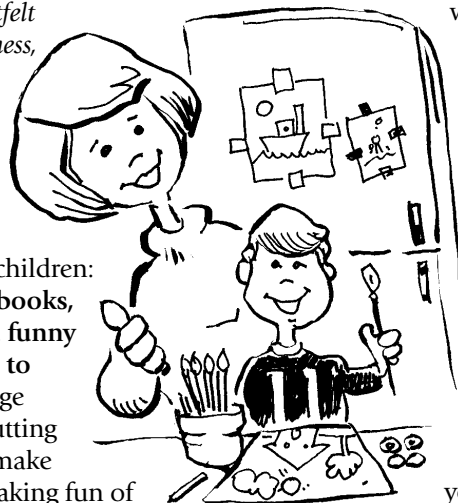
can carry outside the home.

**Respect the power of words.** Purge your family vocabulary of words that are violent, hurtful, or unkind. A quick correction may be all that is necessary.

**Praise your child's gifts and talents.** Children who feel good about themselves are more likely to be kind to others and less likely to feel the need to put others down.

**Realize the value of example.** No matter what you say, it's what you do that matters. If you

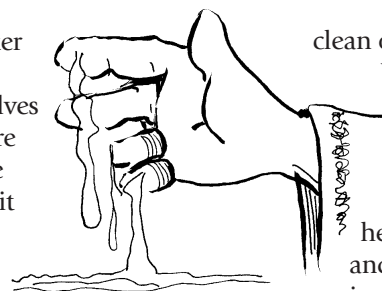
counsel kindness but children hear you gossip or see you snub a neighbor, that's the behavior they will imitate. Likewise, if youngsters are surrounded by kindness at home, that's the behavior they will come to know as right.



## Why Do Catholics Do That ?

### Why do Catholics use holy water?

The use of holy water has several purposes. When we bless ourselves with holy water before and after entering the church, for example, it calls to mind our baptism when our souls were washed



clean of original sin.

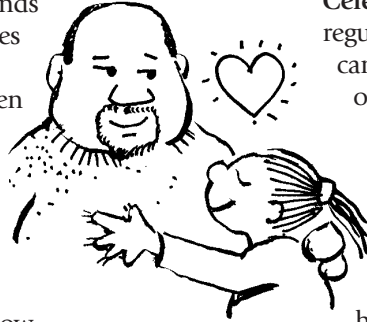
When we use it to bless items, it consecrates them to God and reminds us to them in his service.

And, using holy water helps to drive away evil spirits and calls to mind the purity of required of followers of Christ.

## Children learn about God from a parent's love

Our children's relationship with God depends on what we as parents are doing in our homes every day, right now. Here are the most important things we can do to help strengthen that relationship:

**Communicate love.** The steady loving attention we give our children now teaches them to turn to people, not things, in times of need. And, by showing them love, they learn to accept love. So, they first learn to accept God's love by the way we love them now.



**Celebrate each child.** One simple way to do this is to regularly spend one-on-one time with each one. You can run errands, go for lunch, or just talk. Singling out your child for time together tells him that he is valued.

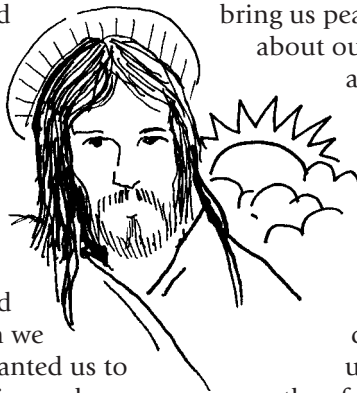
**Earn honor.** The Fourth Commandment directs children to honor us as parents but it implies that we have earned that respect. Modeling the behavior we want our children to adapt tells them that we can be trusted and helps them understand that God is trustworthy, too.

### Scripture LESSON

#### Matthew 6:24-34, Useless worry.

When Jesus became one of us, he didn't choose to live with all the comforts our world could offer. He knew what it was like to be hungry and thirsty, to wonder where he would sleep at night. So when he told us to trust God with everything, he could speak with authority and understand how we would feel when we heard his words. Jesus wanted us to truly listen and follow his words.

Jesus told us not to worry about where our next meal was coming from or where we would sleep at night.

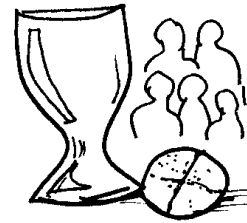


Rich or poor, having material goods doesn't make us comfortable or bring us peace. In fact, worrying about our physical needs draws attention from the inner stability that is so necessary for peace. Only God can provide what we truly need.

**What can a parent do?** Remind your children that worry is a useless activity. When they feel anxious, teach them to ask God for help and then put it out of their minds. God will take care of the rest.

### Parent TALK

As children, we never missed Mass. That's why I was shocked when my brother recently declared that he doesn't take his children to Mass. "It's enough that I bring them to religious education class every week," he said.



"We're too busy for Mass, too."

Why would anyone teach children a religion but prevent them from practicing it? In class children learn about a Catholic's serious obligation to attend Mass and the wonderful graces we get from the Eucharist. At home, they learn that soccer practice or birthday parties come before Mass. How confusing.

I decided to send my brother a copy of *Follow the Way of Love*, a message to families from the U.S. bishops. It's about how God's love is experienced in a family and how it is supported by the whole Church. Hopefully it will help him see being Catholic as a gift and not a burden.

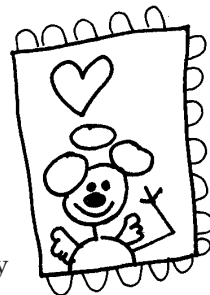
### Feasts & Celebrations

**February 10 – St. Scholastica (547).** Twin sister to St. Benedict, St. Scholastica established a community of religious women about five miles from her brother's monastery.

**February 11 – Our Lady of Lourdes (1858)** A heavenly "lady" appeared to St. Bernadette Soubirous, a poor and sickly girl from a small village in France. Soon after the first vision, a spring with miraculous, healing waters emerged from a nearby cave. The "lady" revealed herself as the "Immaculate Conception" – the Blessed Virgin Mary. Pilgrims still flock to Lourdes today.

**February 22 – St. Peter's Chair.** We celebrate St. Peter's establishment of the Holy See and pray for the preservation of God's Church.

**February 23 – St. Polycarp (156).** Bishop of Smyrna, Asia-Minor, Polycarp was a disciple of the apostle St. John and a friend of St. Ignatius of Antioch. He faithfully cared for his flock despite being surrounded by pagans and a government opposed to his religion. Before he was martyred, he thanked God for making him worthy of a martyr's death.



### Our Mission

To help parents raise faithful Catholic children  
Success Publishing & Media, LLC  
Publishers of Growing in Faith™ and Partners in Faith™  
(540)662-7844 (540)662-7847 fax  
<http://www.growinginfaith.com>  
(Unless noted Bible quotes and references are from the Revised Standard Version and the New American Bible.)

© Copyright 2011 Success Publishing & Media, LLC