



Thoughtful Moments

St. Zita of Lucca

Born to poor, pious parents in Monsagrati, Italy, St. Zita became the servant of the wealthy Fatinelli family at age twelve. Her hard work, piety, and generosity made the other servants envious, but her kindness eventually won them over. According to one legend, she left baking the bread to tend to someone in need, and the servants told the Fatinellis. When they went to investigate, they found angels in the kitchen, baking the bread for her.



To imitate Christ

Jesus often reached out to people no one else would talk to. We all know people who are left out—at church, at work, even among our own relatives. When we do reach out to them, we imitate Christ, who taught that God's perfect love extends to everyone.

"Christ's love is always stronger than the evil in the world, so we need to love and to be loved."

St. Teresa of Calcutta



Lead your family to right worship

Worship is showing the adoration and reverence for God that he is due. Because of who he is, it is right to worship him. It is our natural response to knowing God. When the family centers around right worship, we are filled with the grace we need to live happy, holy lives.

R - Regular. An activity practiced regularly becomes a habit. Developing consistent family worship into routines builds into each member the habit of listening to God and responding to him in love.

I - Intentional. Spontaneous worship can be joyful, but deliberate devotion creates a sacred space in family life. Establishing a pattern, planned and protected, will make family worship a standard part of your home.



G - Gathered. Catholic families are loving communities created by God.

Gather daily for meals and devotion, prayer and laughter. As a family, attend Sunday Mass each week, seek absolution in the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation at least monthly, and pray daily for God's guidance to live his vision of love better.

H - Heartfelt. Accepting and loving everyone in the home without

reserve is how God loves

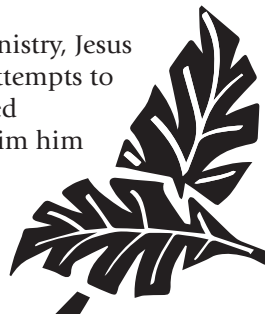
us. Right worship means teaching children about God's love by lavishing them with our own.

T - Thorough. The best response to God's majesty to us is to give gratitude, respect, and adoration with our whole hearts.

Why Do Catholics Do That?

Why do Catholics distribute palms on Palm Sunday?

Although during his ministry, Jesus had refused the crowd's attempts to make him king, he allowed people to publically acclaim him as the Messiah when he entered Jerusalem the Sunday before his passion and death. The crowds "took palm



branches and went out to meet him" (John 12:13). To the ancient Jews, palms were a symbol of triumph and celebration. Today we are given palms as part of the Passion (Palm) Sunday liturgy to commemorate that last trip to Jerusalem.

Make Easter joy last all year

The joy of Easter morning is meant to come more than once a year. "Sunday recalls the day of Christ's Resurrection. It is Easter which returns week by week, celebrating Christ's victory over sin and death" (*Dies Domini*, Pope John Paul II). Spread Easter joy by making every Sunday, "little Easter."

Darkness comes before the dawn. Atoning for sin isn't comfortable but it is essential to experiencing the joy of Easter. Make Fridays penitential days in your home. Share meatless meals, fast from television or video games, or perform a family act of charity.



Rejoice in second chances. Jesus knew that while our intentions may be good, our resolve isn't perfect so he created the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Take your family to Confession at least monthly. When children see that you seek God's forgiveness, they will learn that it's there for them, too.

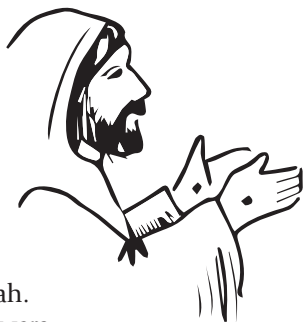
Experience the Mass. It's not meant to be observed. Preview the readings together before Mass. Sing out loud. Pray responses with feeling. Celebrate the Resurrection with joy.

Scripture LESSON

Luke 24:13-35, The real Jesus

Once Jesus revealed that he was the Messiah, his followers formed opinions of how he should use his power that had little to do with who he was. When he died such an awful death, many were shocked and wondered if he really was the Messiah.

Two of Jesus' followers were on the road to Emmaus, feeling shocked and disappointed. They were so focused on what they wanted Jesus to be, they failed to really see him—even when he walked



alongside them on the road!

What can a parent do? Children often want God to reveal himself in spectacular ways that have little to do with who he is. Parents can teach children that the real way to find out who God is requires spending time with him, reading Scripture, and seeking him in the people around them. Then we will truly come to know Jesus as he is.



Feasts & Celebrations

April 8 – St. Julie Billiart (1816). Born in Cuvilly, France, St. Julie taught farmworkers to help support her family. At age 22 she fell ill, and was completely paralyzed. With Françoise Blin de Bourdon, she founded the Institute of Notre Dame—an order dedicated to education, especially for young girls (unusual at the time). She recovered and established schools in France and Belgium.

April 23 – Divine Mercy Sunday. In 1931, Jesus appeared to St. Faustina and asked that the Sunday after Easter

become the "Feast of Mercy." Jesus promised that anyone who honors him as King of Mercy and prays the Chaplet of Divine Mercy – the prayer he gave St. Faustina – would receive special graces and great mercy.

April 30 – St. Pius V (1572). He was born Antonio Ghislieri, in Bosco, Italy. As pope, St. Pius instituted a number of reforms, built hospitals, and provided food and money for the poor. He also organized the Christian fleet that won the Battle of Lepanto in 1571.



Parent TALK

For more than a week, Tessa came home upset about the environment in her classroom. The way Tessa told it, the teacher had little control over the class, nor any idea of what the kids were up to when her back was turned.



When it continued into the next week, I decided to email the teacher to tell her I wasn't happy. As I started typing, I realized I wasn't being fair.

What if Tessa wasn't giving me the whole story? Shouldn't I be helpful rather than critical?

My email instead asked for a meeting and the teacher responded immediately. When we met, she acknowledged that there were issues in class but detailed the excellent steps she was taking to get on top of them. Further, she had suggestions for how I could support her at home.

This experience convinced me to be a partner rather than a critic.

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