

# Partners in FAITH™



Helping our children grow in their Catholic faith.

January 2014



## Thoughtful Moments

### Mother Seton

Elizabeth Ann Seton converted to Catholicism when her dear husband, William, died. Rejected by her Episcopalian family, and without support for her family, she welcomed the invitation to open a Catholic school for girls near Baltimore.



Leading a group of women in the spring of 1809, the community became the Sisters of St. Joseph and Elizabeth became Mother Seton. The number of sisters grew and so did their schools and orphanages marking the beginnings of the U.S. parochial school system.

### Time

We each have been given different gifts to be used to expand God's kingdom. But there is one gift we have all been given equally: time. If at night we can say that our time that day has been spent serving God and our family, then we have been faithful to both.

### God listens

*"I love the Lord, because he has heard my voice and my supplications"*  
(Psalm 116:1).



## God can help you become a better parent

Each year we resolve to be a better parent than the year before - wise, kind, courageous and loving, just like our Heavenly Father. Why not draw inspiration from his Word to become a better parent in the New Year?

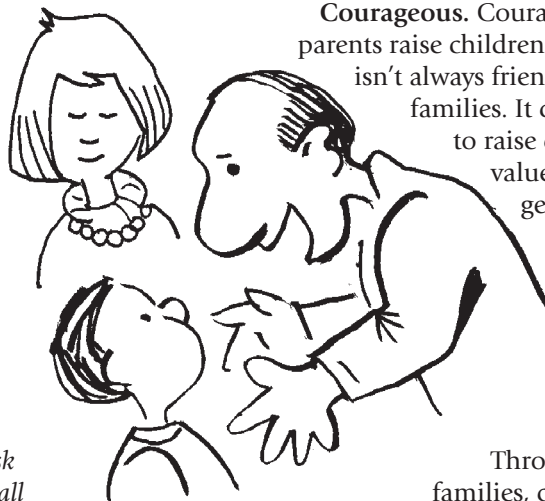
**Wiser.** If only children came with instructions. Instead, ask for the wisdom to know the right thing to do. *"If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives to all men generously and without reproaching, and it will be given him"* (James 1:5).

**Kinder.** We are sometimes short-tempered or impatient with our children but would rather be kind and loving. They key is to remember how

God treats us. *"... Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you"* (Ephesians 4:32).

**Courageous.** Courage helps Catholic parents raise children in a society that isn't always friendly to religious families. It can take courage to raise children with values such as faith, generosity, and modesty. *"Say these things. Exhort and correct with all authority"* (Titus 2:15).

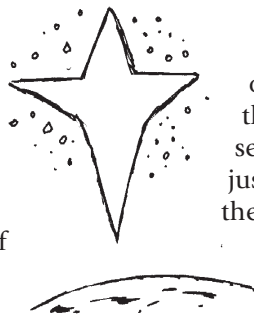
**More loving.** Through their families, children first learn about love. Demonstrate love daily in ways your children receive love. Confident of a parent's love, children then learn how to love God and others. *"Above all, let your love for one another be intense ..."* (1 Peter 4:8-9).



## Why Do Catholics Do That ?

## Why do Catholics celebrate the Epiphany?

Epiphany is Greek for manifestation. The Feast of the Epiphany of Our Lord is the celebration of the visit of the wise men to the newborn Jesus. When they honored him, they bore witness to the fulfillment of God's promise of a savior.



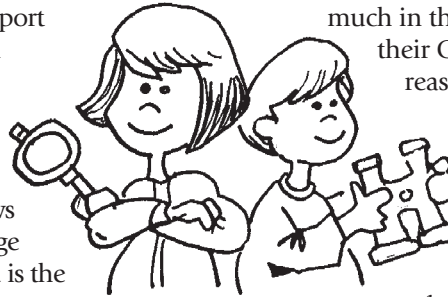
This feast reminds us of our duty to adore our Lord through prayer, worship and self-sacrificing good work, just as the magi did when they traveled many miles to worship the infant who was God made flesh.

## Teach children to look for God

God is in the hearts of all who do good. Make a game out of looking for these signs of God's presence in the world...

**Acts of kindness and compassion.** Report when you "catch" strangers helping each other. God is behind all quiet deeds of charity.

**People of power or celebrity who make generous donations to the poor or dispossessed.** Watch or listen for news reports of prominent people making large donations to victims of misfortune. God is the inspiration for genuine philanthropy.



**Someone who won't compromise on his principles or morals - despite what the rest of society is doing.** There is much in the news about people who won't compromise their Christian principles. That's God working to reassert his just laws.

**Victims of tragedy who move from "Why did this happen?" to "What can I do now?"** Look for reports of those who do good from tragedies. Hope for the future comes from God.

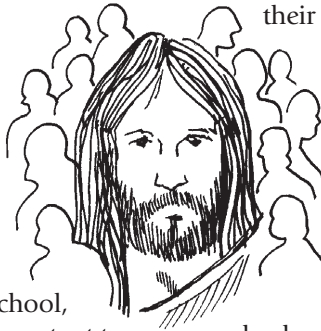
Jesus said, "I am with you always, until the end of the age" (Matthew 28:20).

### Scripture LESSON

#### Matthew 4:12-23; Follow the leader.

Almost every child has played some version of "Follow the Leader." In the game, players follow a "leader" wherever he goes and do whatever he does. We stomp through puddles, climb over fences, swing from trees, all to stay in the game.

We follow leaders in real life, too. There are leaders we may follow at school, in sports, at church. It is important to choose a leader who will lead us in the right direction. Then we have to decide how much of what a leader asks that we are willing to do.



Jesus chose twelve special men to be his closest followers and he became their leader. They went where he told them and did what he asked. Jesus is still calling people to follow him today. In fact, he has called each of us to follow him.

**What can a parent do?** Jesus is our true leader. We follow him before any other leader. Help children understand what it means to go where Jesus tells us and to do what he asks. The prize is worth it.

### Parent TALK

Now that she is 10 years old, it's time for me to stop solving my daughter's problems and let her advocate for herself.



Kara wears thick glasses and has always sat in the front row of classrooms to better see the board.

This year her teacher placed her toward the back, saying that children with more pressing problems needed the front-row spots. But that made it hard for Kara to see. When her grades started to drop, I almost called the teacher but decided to let Kara try instead.

We rehearsed a respectful conversation between Kara and her teacher and she went in the next day prepared. The teacher said she appreciated Kara's courtesy and together they chose a desk in the second row with an unobstructed view of the board.

Solving her own problem, Kara developed negotiating skills and confidence. That was better than any "fix" I could have made.

### Feasts & Celebrations

**January 1 – Solemnity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Holy Mother of God.** We honor Mary in her role as the Mother of Jesus, the Son of God.

**January 2 – St. Basil the Great (379).** St. Basil founded the first monastery in Asia Minor. He fought passionately to protect religious freedom and against the Arian heresy threatening the Church. He is best known as a skilled orator and tireless pastor.

**January 26 – Sts. Timothy and Titus (1st century).** Timothy was converted by St. Paul and became his

trusted friend. He was with Paul at the founding of the Church in Corinth. Titus, also a friend of Paul's, served the early Church as a peacemaker and as administrator to a community on the island of Crete.

**January 28 – St. Thomas Aquinas (1274).** Despite being imprisoned for a year by his mother to prevent his ordination, St. Thomas Aquinas became one of the greatest theologians of the Church. His writings are still fundamental to Christian education today.



### Our Mission

To help parents raise faithful Catholic children  
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