

Partners in

FAITH™



Helping our children grow in their Catholic faith.

November 2014

Saint Dominic School

Thoughtful Moments

St. Andrew Dung-Lac

St. Andrew was born to a poor, non-Christian family in Vietnam around 1785. He converted to Christianity, became a priest and worked in the missions. As part of terrible religious persecution between 1820 and 1840 by the emperor of Vietnam, Minh-Meng, St. Andrew and several companions were arrested and tortured in an effort to force them to renounce their faith. They refused and were martyred. Today, such religious persecution continues in many parts of the world.



Love is the heart

"The life of a family is filled with beautiful moments... But if love is missing, joy is missing, nothing is fun. Jesus always gives us that love: he is its endless source." Pope Francis

Happy New Year!

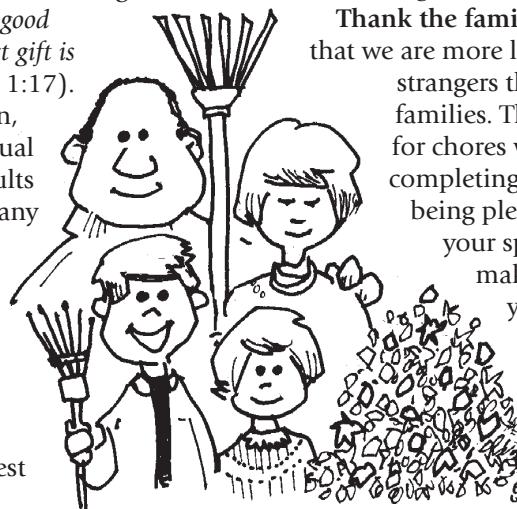
Each year, the Church begins a new liturgical year on the Sunday closest to the feast of the apostle Andrew. This year November 30th is the first Sunday of Advent. Liturgical cycle B begins.



Raising thankful children

Gratitude is a feeling of appreciation or thanks. God is good and all gifts come from him. *"All good giving and every perfect gift is from above..."* (James 1:17). Therefore, satisfaction, happiness, and spiritual growth are direct results of recognizing the many blessings God has bestowed upon us. Gratitude is like a muscle. It takes practice to make this quality strong in our children.

Thank God. The best way we can teach gratitude is to be grateful ourselves. Make recognizing blessings a constant conversation with God throughout the day that includes your children. Together, thank God in the morning for another day, before opening a gift, prior to eating a meal,



for a warm bath. Best of all, thank God for the gift of family.

Thank the family. Studies show that we are more likely to thank strangers than our families. Thank your child for chores well done, for completing homework, for being pleasant. Thank your spouse for making dinner, for yard work, for thoughtful gestures.

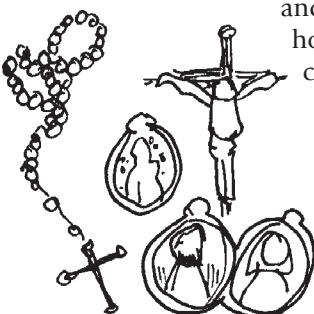
Thank the community. Children learn by

doing. In return for blessings your family has received, come up with a plan to bless others. Perhaps your child could do extra chores to earn money to put in the poor box, volunteer at a charity, do yard work for a neighbor, or donate a toy.

Why Do Catholics Do That?

Sacramentals are sacred signs instituted by the Church to praise God for his works and gifts and to ask the Church's intercession that we use God's gifts in his service. Sacramentals always include a prayer and can include blessings, actions,

Why do Catholics use sacramentals?



and other objects such as holy water, palms, ashes, candles, and medals.

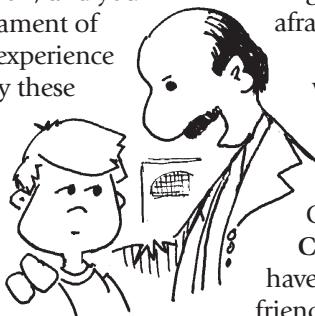
Through the blessing of the Church and the Holy Spirit, sacramentals appeal to our basic human need to touch, see, and feel the grace of God around us.

Help children love Confession

Ask children to accompany you to Confession, and you may not hear much enthusiasm. Yet the Sacrament of Reconciliation is a gift from Jesus to help us experience his grace and make things right with God. Try these tips to brighten the family trip to Confession:

Set the tone. Remind everyone that Jesus created this Sacrament (Matthew 16:19) because he loves us and knew we needed extra help to stay holy.

Work out the jitters. Rehearse with your child so that the real thing will feel familiar.



Taking notes with her into the confessional is fine if she's afraid of forgetting something.

Set the expectation. Going to Confession regularly will strengthen the entire family. Pick a set day and time so that no one is surprised when it comes around. Mark it on the calendar and schedule around it. Then be the first person into the Confessional.

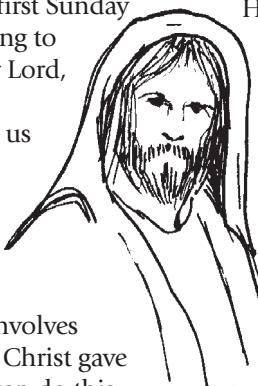
Celebrate. Afterwards go out for an ice cream treat or have a special family meal to celebrate coming back into friendship with God.

Scripture LESSON

Mark 13:33-37, Be watchful, be alert

This gospel is from the first Sunday of Advent. We are preparing to celebrate the birth of Our Lord, his first coming.

But Advent is a time for us to prepare for the Second Coming. We don't know when this will happen. Jesus' message is to be watchful and alert for his coming. To be watchful involves getting our lives in order. Christ gave us the sacraments so we can do this, especially the Sacrament of Penance. Being in a state of grace means we're ready to meet Jesus.



However, this preparation involves each of us gathering the harvest. It means each of us being a missionary in our lives so everyone may come to know and love the Lord when they come face to face with God.

What can a parent do? This Gospel gives parents a chance to explain to our children what the Second Coming means: that Jesus will come to earth again. This should not be something to fear. Rather, it will be as wonderful as Christmas itself since it means we'll be with God forever.

Feasts & Celebrations

In November we celebrate the saints on All Saints Day (Nov. 1) and pray for our loved ones and souls in Purgatory on All Souls Day (Nov. 2). Plus, the first day of Advent falls on Nov. 30th this year. The Advent wreath is lit in households all over the world as we anticipate the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Nov. 11 - St. Martin of Tours (397). The patron of soldiers, St. Martin was forced to join the army at the age of 15 in what is now Hungary but left to become a priest. He founded a monastery near Poitiers, France, and

later became bishop of Tours.

Nov. 17 – St. Elizabeth of Hungary (1231). The daughter of the King of Hungary, Elizabeth was married at the age of 14. Her beloved husband was killed after only six years of marriage. She joined the Secular Franciscan Order and spent the last years of her life caring for the poor.



Parent TALK

Our holidays were so hectic that I stopped enjoying them. Instead of celebrating on Christmas morning, I wanted to stay in bed. Two years ago I was so cranky and tired, I almost ruined everyone else's day.



So last year I asked the guests we expected for Christmas dinner to each bring a dish. That way I wouldn't have to spend days cooking.

Next, I drew up a short list of our closest friends and family and bought gifts for them. Then the children and I spent a weekend baking and wrapping gift baskets for everyone else. People loved the homemade touch.

Finally, I put the children's bedtime off each night by 15 minutes and we spent that time lighting the Advent wreath and praying the Rosary.

On Christmas morning, I cooked a special breakfast, sang joyfully at Mass, and enjoyed our Christmas celebration. I finally had my blessed family Christmas.

Our Mission

To help parents raise faithful Catholic children

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(Unless noted Bible quotes and references are from the Revised Standard Version and the New American Bible.)

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