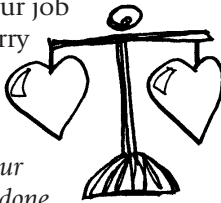




Thoughtful Moments

Afraid of mistakes?

Sometimes we get overwhelmed by the weight of our job as parents. We worry that our mistakes will have lasting negative consequences. *"Your every act should be done with love"* (1 Corinthians 16:14). Remember that if all you do is done with love, based in love, and out of true love, you will be in harmony with God's will.



Breathe

All parents have days when we forget to be slow to anger and steadfast in love. When we run late, something spills or breaks, or life fails to go according to plan, remember to start breathing deeply. Picture God's breath washing over you as it did when Jesus breathed on his disciples (John 20:22). The Holy Spirit will help you control your passions.

For fathers

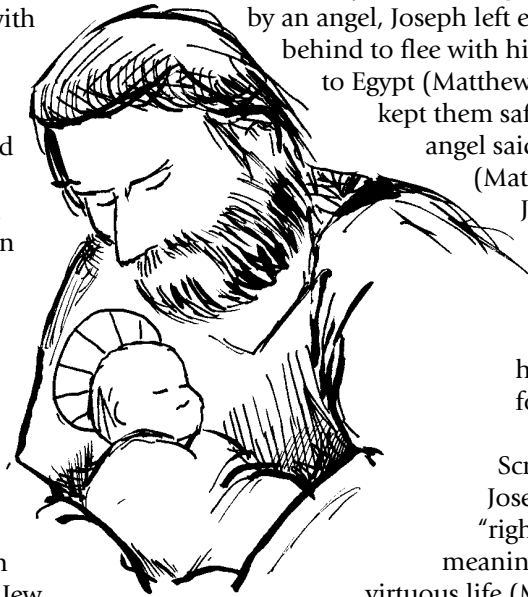
"In word and deed honor your father that his blessing may come upon you; For a father's blessing gives a family firm roots" (Sirach 3:7-9).



The ultimate earthly father

Scripture doesn't tell us much about St. Joseph. We have no reason to believe he was born with special graces, yet he was chosen to raise God's Son. The Bible doesn't say that he had a gift of prophecy, yet Joseph never doubted God's word. He was an ordinary man who lived an extraordinary life.

Ever faithful. It would have been hard for any man to believe his fiancé was pregnant by the Holy Spirit, let alone to listen to an angel in a dream. As a faithful Jew, though, Joseph knew that God sometimes sent angels with important messages, and he knew what was written about the birth of the Savior. So Joseph's devotion to God's Word helped



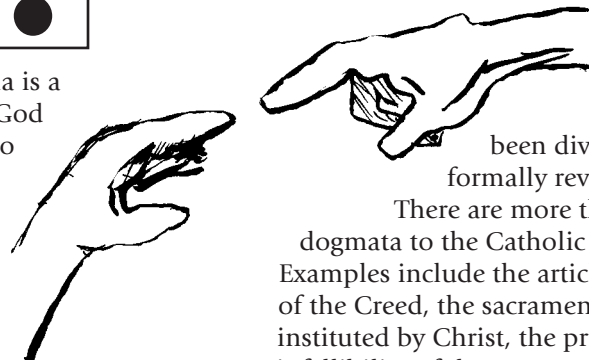
him to be ready to do God's will. **Steady provider.** Again, prompted by an angel, Joseph left everything behind to flee with his new family to Egypt (Matthew 2:13-15). He kept them safe until the angel said to move back (Matthew 2:20-23). Joseph's hard work and skill helped provide for his family in a foreign land. **Good man.** Scripture calls St. Joseph, a "righteous man," meaning he lived a virtuous life (Matthew 1:19).

We also know he was compassionate by his treatment of Mary. Who better to raise the Son of God and care for his Mother than the ultimate earthly father?

Why Do Catholics Do That ?

What is dogma?

A Catholic dogma is a truth, revealed by God and passed down to us through Scripture or Tradition and accepted as fact by the Church and her faithful. It is a teaching that the Church has found to have

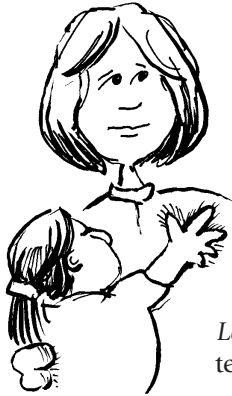


been divinely and formally revealed. There are more than 250 dogmata to the Catholic faith. Examples include the articles of faith of the Creed, the sacraments instituted by Christ, the primacy and infallibility of the Pope, and the existence of Original Sin.

Parenting lessons from Scripture

Children don't come with owners' manuals but sage advice from the Bible can help in three key areas:

Patience – In Jesus' story of the Prodigal son, the father let his son experience the consequences of his choices, as painful as they were, and the son learned valuable lessons as a result. We, too, must be patient enough to let our children experience the occasional negative consequence in order to learn valuable lessons. Sometimes that's the best way to learn.



Sacrifice – As Mother of God, Mary could have expected an easy life, yet it was one of heartache and suffering. Simeon predicted that when he first held the infant Savior, *"and you yourself a sword will pierce"* (Luke 2:35). Yet Mary put her family and her desire to serve God before herself. As Catholic parents, we are prepared to do the same.

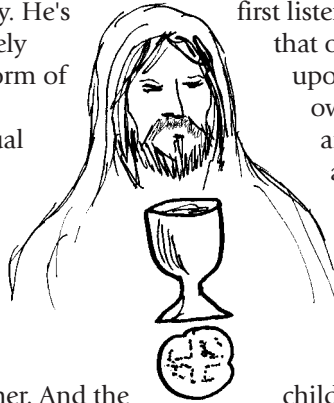
Respect – *"Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up with the training and instruction of the Lord"* (Ephesians 6:4). Modeling respect is the best way to teach it.

Scripture LESSON

John 6:51-58, The most holy Body and Blood of Christ

Jesus is present in the Eucharist but not in a merely passive way. He's dynamically present, actively present. He is present in form of bread and wine, offering himself to us as our spiritual food and drink: "My flesh," he assures us, "is real food ... my blood is real drink." He explains that when we share in this sacred meal we draw life from him just as he draws life from the Father. And the life is eternal.

This was a shocking message for Jesus' audience. To eat flesh and drink blood



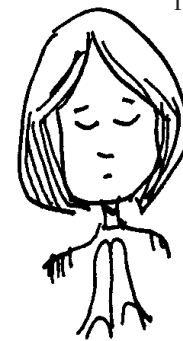
probably sounded cannibalistic to his first listeners. But Jesus was saying that our salvation depends upon his life becoming our own. When we eat his flesh and drink his blood, we accept Christ into our lives and become united with him.

What can a parent do? The Eucharist is our nourishment.

Nourish your children by talking with them about Jesus and by taking them every Sunday to Mass for their share of the Body and Blood of Christ.

Parent TALK

I watched painfully one Sunday as my nine year old daughter sauntered back from receiving Communion waving at friends and munching on the host like a cookie.



Instead of behaving as if she had just received the Body and Blood of Christ, she acted like she was finishing lunch at the school cafeteria.

After Mass was over, we stayed behind and practiced

making reverent bows as we approached the altar before pretending to receive the host, standing before the Eucharistic Minister (me) with hands cupped, and walking back to the pew with hands folded in prayer. It took several tries but eventually each of the children remembered how to behave reverently in church.

The following Sunday I was pleased to see that our "refresher course" paid off and all three children showed increased reverence. I admit, I even focused more fully. A periodic refresher is a pretty good idea.

Feasts & Celebrations

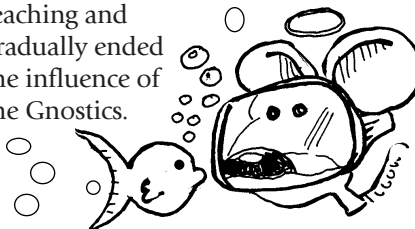
June 12 – Pentecost (1st century). After the Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus, the Holy Spirit was given to the Church at the first Pentecost. When the apostles received the Holy Spirit, the "new age" of the Church was born.

June 20 – Immaculate Heart of Mary. In response to the request made by Our Lady of Fatima, Pope Pius XII consecrated the world to Mary's gentle and devout Immaculate Heart in 1942, and initiated this feast in 1945.

June 21 – St. Aloysius Gonzaga (1591). St. Aloysius prayed vigorously and fasted from age 7. Upon joining

the Society of Jesus, he was ordered to cut back in order to study and spend time with the other students. He died while nursing the sick.

June 28 – St. Irenaeus (220). As bishop of Lyons, Irenaeus investigated and disproved assertions of the Gnostics who claimed secret knowledge imparted by Jesus to select disciples. In great service to the Church, Irenaeus clarified Church teaching and gradually ended the influence of the Gnostics.



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