

THE FAMILY ZONE

A FAITH-FILLED NEWSLETTER TO BUILD YOUR DOMESTIC CHURCH AND SUPPORT YOUR HOUSEHOLD DURING OUR TIME AT HOME



INTRODUCTIONS FROM OUR HOME OFFICE TO YOURS

Dear Families,

With our churches temporarily closed, for the safety of all, it might be hard to feel a connection to your parish.

However, we need our faith now, more than ever, so we are sending you this newsletter each week to give you an opportunity to share faith in your own "domestic church." The domestic church is the church of the home and it is a very important place for your child to grow in faith.

You may remember at your child's baptism, that you were told you were the primary catechist of your child.

Because you are the most important person to your child, it is logical that what you do, makes a big impact on them.

While these days at home can try our patience, they are also a great opportunity to embrace new traditions for your family.

In the pages that follow, you will find some wonderful opportunities to share time with your child. We hope you will enjoy!

With prayers to your family for hope and courage in difficult days,

The Office of Evangelization and Catechesis

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"DID I NOT TELL YOU
THAT IF YOU
BELIEVE, YOU WILL
SEE THE GLORY OF
GOD?"

JOHN 11:1-45 THE RAISING OF LAZARUS This Week's Gospel Activity

You can access this Sunday's gospel by visiting:

<http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings/032920.cfm> (An audio version is also available) and pflaum.com/readings

The Power of Jesus gives us HOPE

In the Gospel story this week, we are reminded of the great power of Jesus. When Jesus heads back to Judea his friend Lazarus is already dead, and Martha and Mary are desperate for Jesus to do something for them. They have been waiting for him to arrive; uncertain as to what will come next. Jesus says : "Did I not tell you that if you believe you will see the glory of God?" He reminds his friends Martha and Mary to have faith and to believe that all things are possible with the power of God. Martha and Mary are desiring immediate gratification which is much like we have been programmed to expect in today's world. Not all good things happen immediately. Sometimes we have to engage our patience and wait for the good to come. Are you feeling impatient? We are sure you are and you are not alone.

Patience is being asked of us right now. Can you wait for the goodness of Jesus Christ to make positive changes in the world? Good things are happening already. How can you be a witness to the Good News this week?

As a family, talk about the good things and good people that have touched your lives this week.

How can you be a beacon of light and hope to others? Who might you want to reach out to or check on to bring hope to their day?

Think about family activities that require and improve patience. This week, do you have a jigsaw puzzle you can set up and complete together? Can you bake and decorate something special and taste its sweetness after some hard work? Can you write a prayer, story or song together and work to get it right? Wonderful things are created from patient work we do together and all things are possible with Christ!



Let us Pray

Last Wednesday, it was the Feast of the Annunciation and Pope Francis prayed the Our Father with the entire world. In case you were unable to hear his message, this is how he began his prayer:

" Dear brothers and sisters, today we have gathered together, all the Christians of the world, to pray together the Our Father, the prayer that Jesus taught us. As trustful children we turn to the Father. We do it every day, several times a day; but right now we wish to beg mercy for mankind, so sorely tried by the coronavirus pandemic. And we do this together, Christians of every Church and Community, of every age, language, and nation. We pray for the sick and their families; for health care workers and those who help them; for the authorities, law enforcement agencies and volunteers; for the ministers of our communities. Today many of us celebrate the Incarnation of the Word in the womb of the Virgin Mary, when her humble and total "here I am" reflected the "here I am" of the Son of God. We too entrust ourselves, with full confidence, to the hands of God, and with one heart and one soul we pray:"

And then, the world prayed the Our Father, together in solidarity, for healing and mercy. **Maybe your family can choose a time that you will pray the *Our Father* together each day? You might also consider praying for all of the important people Pope Francis mentioned above, and for the important people in your own lives.**

Get Moving!

Active family ideas from our CYO office!

Taking Care of Yourself During This Difficult Time at Home

1. **Start bringing movement into tiny moments and think creatively (dance as a family!)**
2. **Improvise for tools; they are all around you..think soup cans and milk jugs!**
3. **Get your heart rate up multiple times a day by jogging in place, doing calisthenics or other faster exercises**
4. **Get out and walk; even for just a little bit**
5. **Stretch it out for at least 30 seconds a position or consider a whole yoga session as a family!**
6. **Work on your breathing because anxiety is real**

These ideas came from a NY Times article which can be found at [nytimes.com/2020/03/20/self-care/isolation-exercise-meditation-coronavirus.html](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/20/self-care/isolation-exercise-meditation-coronavirus.html)

Craft with us!

During these unsettling times, there have been many efforts to bring peace, hope and happiness to those in our communities. One activity we

have seen many times on the internet, and are starting to see in our very own neighborhoods are placing rainbows in the front windows. Have you done it? If not, this week is a great time to tackle that family craft. Rainbows are a sign of the covenant God made with Noah after the great flood. They are a sign of hope and trust and a reminder that God is the creator of amazing, awe-inspiring things! This bright and colorful symbol brings joy to those inside and outside your home! You can use markers, crayons, window markers, m&ms, pom poms, fruit loops...be creative! Already made a rainbow? How about a stained glass window for your domestic church? Here is a video demonstration:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kHax38AtEul>

Recipe of the Week

A cookie to honor the Feast of the Annunciation

Moravian Spice Cookies

YIELD: [100 COOKIES] PREP TIME: [30 MINUTES]

TOTAL TIME: [1 HOUR]

Ingredients

1/4 cup | melted butter

1/2 cup | warm molasses

1/4 cup | brown sugar

1-7/8 cups | flour

1/3 teaspoon | baking soda

1/3 teaspoon | salt

1/3 teaspoon | ginger

1/3 teaspoon | cloves

1/3 teaspoon | cinnamon

1/8 teaspoon | nutmeg

1/8 teaspoon | allspice

Directions

Mix butter, molasses and sugar. Add sifted dry ingredients. Chill until hard (preferably overnight). Roll very thin. Bake in a moderate oven (375°) for six minutes. Cookies may be iced.

Last week (March 25) the church celebrated the most important and blessed event in Church history. March 25, Annunciation Day, sometimes called Lady Day, celebrates the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the day when the Angel Gabriel appeared to Our Lady and told her that she was to be the mother of a son called Jesus, the Savior of the world.

This year the feast day occurs during the Lenten season. We might recall that some beautiful words from the Epistle of the Mass on Assumption Day, another feast day dedicated to Mary, call her "exalted like a cedar in Libanus, a cypress tree on Mt. Sion, a palm in Cades, a rose plant in Jericho; a fair olive tree by the water, a sweet smell like cinnamon and aromatic balm, a sweet odor like the best myrrh." What, then, could be a more appropriate way to mark this feast than having spicy cookies, wafting their fragrance through the house as they bake?

For Your Viewing Pleasure



<https://youtu.be/RTP5P9PtYwA>

This video from Fr. Mike Schmitz is a great opportunity for parents, teens and older children to reflect on how you might respond in these unprecedented times. Watch it together and have a family conversation about how you might be a source of compassionate response to family and friends.

Consider writing a note of support to our Bishop, a politician in charge or a medical professional to thank them for making difficult decisions on behalf of us all

Catholic Connections from the Catechism

TO HELP YOU LEARN THE FAITH AT HOME TOGETHER

What is the Domestic Church?

Vatican II reinforced the ancient teaching that the Church is the Body of Christ, the People of God. It is not the building, or the clergy, it is all of us. In order to fulfill her mission, the Church is divided into smaller groupings.

Universal Church – everyone everywhere, led by the Pope

Diocesan (local) Church – a regional grouping, led by the Bishop

Parish Church – a community of believers, led by a pastor

Domestic Church – the family, led by parents

This means that each family is the smallest example of Church. In the family we can see examples (or opportunities for examples) of the rest of the Church. The true beauty of this is that it reinforces that ALL of us are part of the Church, from the babies to the elderly, we all make up the Body of Christ.

So what is the Church? We profess 4 marks of the Church:

One – we are all united to the rest of the Church. Church is never us and them, it's we.

Holy – it is from God, not us. God has blessed and guides the Church, at all levels.

Catholic – it is universal and welcoming. Being a part of the Church is open to anyone.

Apostolic – it comes from the Apostles who learned it directly from Jesus.

The *Domestic Church* has these marks as well:

Family Life is Sacred – It comes from God. Your family is blessed.

Family Activity is Holy – What you do is from God.

Families have a Unique Ministry – You are not like other families – and that is OK!

Families are an Evangelizing Community – Your family is called to share the Church with others.

Watch this video for more details: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vWhcaEEemDHo&t=>

Going Deeper

Adults/Parents: Lead your family in prayer before they go to bed tonight. Start with the Sign of the Cross and help them praise God. (Examples are here: <http://www.catholicfamilyfaith.org/praying.html>)

Teens: Consider how you use social media to share your faith and values to others. Could you use it during this time to “Reach Three”? Message, tag, or engage three people a day so they are not isolated. Then do the same for your family.

Tweens: The Mass is important to the Universal Church. Help make a meal and then offer to lead Grace before you eat. (You can find the traditional grace before meals and others here: <https://www.xavier.edu/jesuitresource/online-resources/prayer-index/mealtime-prayers.php>)

Elementary & Pre-School: Church does things for others. Help your family today by either cleaning up something you got out, or creating an art piece for the fridge that shows your family!

Ideas for ENHANCING your domestic church: Create a prayer space that you will use as a family daily. Encourage family members to add to the space with drawings of hope, prayers for one another and any sacramentals you have in your house like a crucifix or rosary!



HELPFUL LINKS TO KEEP YOU

CONNECTED

Our Diocese of Rochester resource page for your family: <https://covid.dor.org/>

On this page you will find:

Prayer resources for all members of your family

Links to videos and articles that will help you deal with anxiety around this difficult time

A calendar of virtual prayer and support gatherings both around our diocese and nationally

Activities you can enjoy with your family

Links to our YouTube channel

Links to our Pinterest page

and more! Please visit it frequently!

Links for adults to refresh their spirit :

<http://www.usccb.org/about/communications/usccb-president-reflection-and-prayer-during-coronavirus.cfm>

<https://stjohnneumann.org/faith-miracles/light-a-candle-online/>

For teens: Spotify Playlist: <https://open.spotify.com/playlist/5E0UohqkMllcqQTBodZXiz?si=xsULH6KkSXibAJkD35lkiQ>

For tweens: This video will help to clearly understand the coronavirus and open up opportunities for families with tweens to learn together, discuss and pray:

<https://www.brainpop.com/health/diseasesinjuriesandconditions/coronavirus/>

For children: Virtually visiting Grandma and Grandpa? Here are some tips to help your child interact : <https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/2535-five-tips-to-make-the-most-of-video-chats>