

# Partners in FAITH™



Helping our children grow in their Catholic faith.

September 2009



## Thoughtful Moments

### Strangers

During his public ministry, Jesus traveled across the country. He knew what it felt like to be away from home and to be treated as a foreigner. Whenever you see someone who dresses or speaks differently than you, think of Jesus and make him feel welcome.

### Language of love

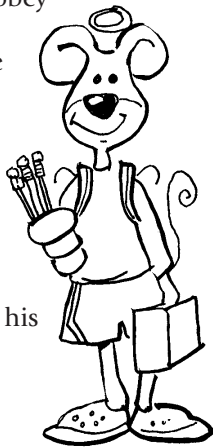
Those of us who know and love God must be his voice in our world.

We need to speak with gentle voices using kind and loving language. Spreading God's love is what he wants us to do.

### Real obedience

Jesus told the story of two sons whose father gave them instructions. The first son refused at first, but then obeyed. The second son pretended to obey but didn't.

It isn't easy to be Christian and like the first son, we may balk at first. In the end, we follow God's laws because we love him and we know his way leads us to happiness.



## Strong families are all about "We"

In a society that encourages a "Me" mentality, it can be difficult to look at ourselves as part of a family rather than as individuals. But families that teach the importance of "We" can instill accountability, responsibility, and confidence in their children. Working together with your family to create your own special identity will help unite you as "We."

**Decide what it means to be part of your family.** What qualities are special to you? For example, our family is kind, compassionate, always willing to lend a hand, faithful Catholics, etc.

**Write down the traits and behaviors you agree are important,** such as respect, reverence of God, model

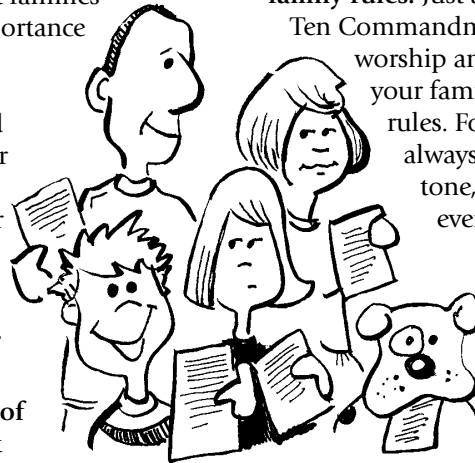
conduct or positive attitudes. These will help set the standards.

**Turn these standards into a set of family rules.** Just as God gave Moses the Ten Commandments outlining true worship and morality, outline for your family a set of concrete rules. For example, "Joneses always talk in a respectful tone," or "We attend mass every Sunday."

**Be sure to involve your children in the process.** This gives them a sense of ownership.

Working together to follow the rules can unite a family giving it power, purpose and a backbone for growth.

And children who are comfortable contributing to a family will also feel comfortable contributing to their school, their parish, and their community.



## Why Do Catholics Do That ?

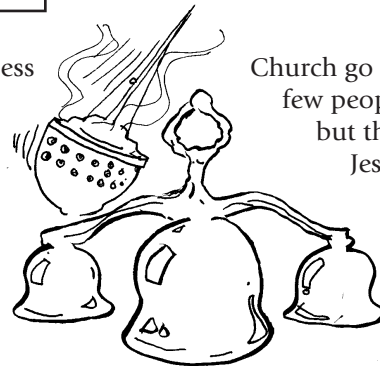
## Why do Catholics use rituals?

Our everyday awareness of God comes to us through our senses: Sight, sound, smell, touch, and taste. They are the pathways to the deepest parts of our imagination and understanding.

Some rituals of the

Church go back to the times when few people could read or write – but they could be drawn to Jesus by using their senses.

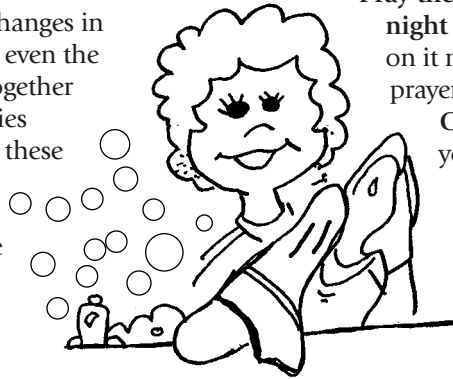
Now we use sacred music, bells, incense, poetic prayers – they all plant our faith deep in our body and bones as Catholics.



## Healthy ways to deal with hardship

The troubled economy means that many of us are experiencing unexpected and unwelcome changes in our lives. Such unplanned events can make even the strongest adults feel helpless. Yet, pulling together and relying on our faith can help our families cope and come out stronger in the end. Try these ideas to help:

**Let children help.** Giving children an additional chore or job may help minimize the powerlessness they feel. Each time they do their job, remind them of the help they are giving to the family by their effort.



**Pray the rosary or another favorite prayer every night as a family.** There is power in prayer. Lean on it now. Let youngsters offer their concerns in prayer.

**Count your blessings.** They are all around you. Try going through the alphabet and assigning a blessing to each letter like "Anne's smile" or "Beautiful butterflies."

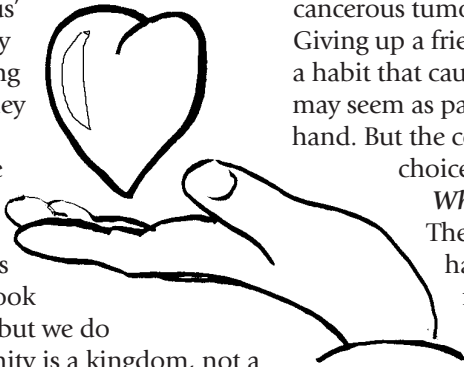
**Look for the silver lining.** Look for God's hand in your lives by finding at least one positive outcome of your situation to share each day.

### Scripture LESSON

### Mark 9:38-48, Work together for God

In this reading, the disciples were upset because a man they didn't know was healing in Jesus' name. Perhaps they were afraid of losing the spotlight, or they may have been concerned because he was different from them.

Faithful followers of Jesus don't all look alike or talk alike, but we do act alike. Christianity is a kingdom, not a competition. All are welcome to work together to build it up. Those who share a common faith in Christ cooperate, not compete.



Some of Jesus' words sound strange but he is very clear; we treat sin like a cancerous tumor and cut it out. Giving up a friendship, an activity, or a habit that causes us to do wrong may seem as painful as cutting off a hand. But the consequences of our choices last forever.

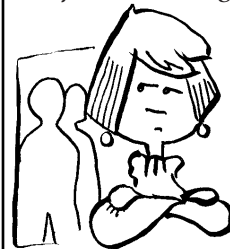
*What can a parent do?*

The caution against harming little ones in faith applies to us as parents and teachers. Our thoughts and

actions must be motivated by love so that we can model Christian behavior for our children.

### Parent TALK

When my brother and his fiancée said they were coming for a weekend visit, I was thrilled. It would be a wonderful opportunity for my children to spend time with their uncle and the woman who would soon be their aunt.



My excitement faded when I learned that my brother expected different sleeping arrangements than I had in mind. He anticipated that they would share a room.

With two children approaching their teenage years, I felt it was important that the rules in our home apply to visitors. Marriage is a blessed sacrament and I wanted my children to understand that it comes with joys and privileges worth waiting for. Sharing a room is one of them.

Although displeased, my brother respected my concern and the two enjoyed their stay without incident. When they later returned as a married couple, they were thrilled to share a room in our home together.

### Feasts & Celebrations

Sept. 16 – St. Cornelius (253).

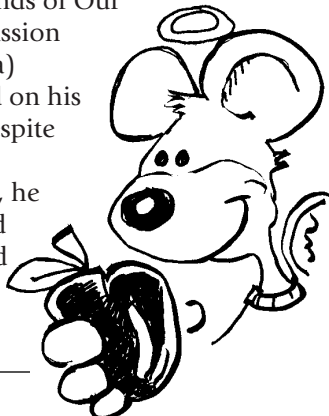
Despite a Roman decree outlawing a new pope, St. Cornelius was secretly elected and bravely led the Church. He modeled forgiveness, embracing people who repented renouncing their faith under persecution.

Sept. 19 – St. Januarius (304).

Bishop of Benevento, Italy, during a time of great persecution, Januarius visited Christians in prison and was arrested himself. He and his companions were thrown to wild beasts in the amphitheater but were

not harmed. They were later beheaded.

Sept. 23 – St. Padre Pio (1968). Born to farmers in Italy, he became a Capuchin Friar. Eight years later, the five wounds of Our Lord's Passion (stigmata) appeared on his body. Despite intense suffering, he remained dedicated to prayer.



### Our Mission

To help parents raise faithful Catholic children  
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