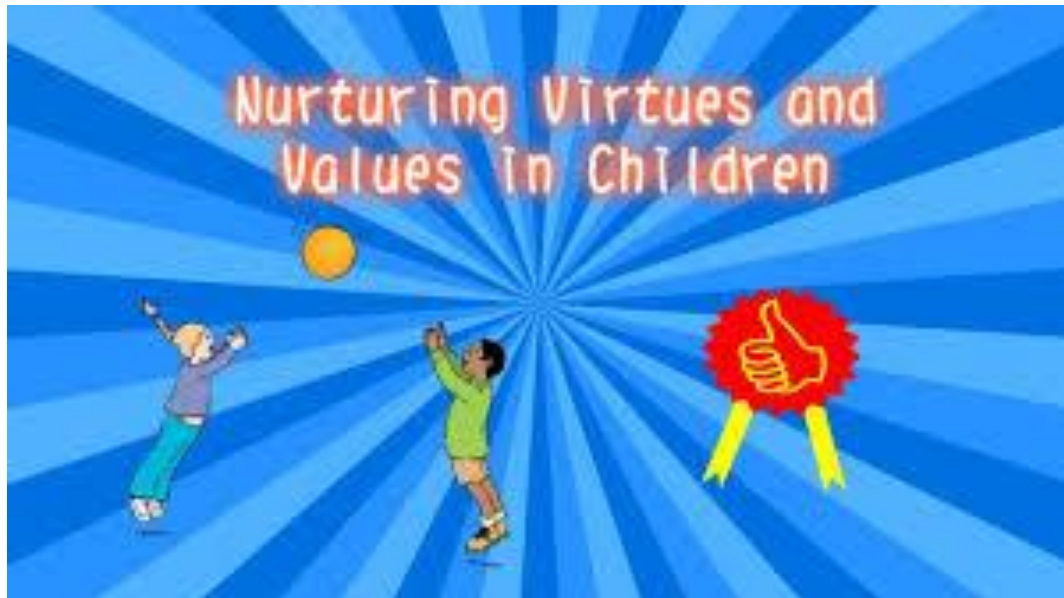




The Newsletter of the Catholic Commission for Social Justice Issue 36, December 2020

**BUILDING A JUST SOCIETY:**  
**NURTURING VALUES AND VIRTUES IN CHILDREN**  
**A PARENT'S PERSPECTIVE (Part 1)**

**BY GISELA**  
**FOR**  
**THE CATHOLIC COMMISSION FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE (CCSJ)**



“If people of faith do not transmit concrete values to young people, the message will get stuck in the incomprehensible abstract... The responsibility towards the new generations requires above all the commitment to form them and listen to them in order to respond to the challenges of our times, without denying the immutable value of truth, but with a comprehensible and current language” (Pope Francis).

# CONTENTS

Introduction	3
Chapter 1 LOVE	10
Chapter 2 PATIENCE	15
Chapter 3 RESPECT	20
Chapter 4 HONESTY	28
Chapter 5 GENEROSITY	32
A Note of Gratitude	35
Pope Francis on Parenting	36
Some Prayers on Virtues	41

## Introduction by Leela Ramdeen, Chair, CCSJ

*“The value of democracy stands or falls with the truths and values which it embodies and promotes. But these values themselves must have an objective content. Otherwise, they correspond only to the power of the majority or the wishes of the most vocal”* (St John Paul II, October 8, 1995)



# Parents Matter

Parents are the first educators of their children. God instilled a moral order in our hearts, but we must nurture this in ourselves and in our children if we are to promote authentic integral human development.

My sincere thanks to Gisela who, having retired as an Attorney-at-Law with a prominent Law Firm in Trinidad and Tobago, offered her God-given gifts as a volunteer in our Archdiocese. His Grace directed her to CCSJ, and I cannot thank him enough! During my initial discussion with her, we discussed the challenges that many parents/guardians have in instilling virtues and values in their children. She agreed to partner with CCSJ on a Project to produce material that can be disseminated widely to assist us in building a just society.





As a mother of two children, she agreed to share with the wider community, through CCSJ, some of the values that she and her husband, Jerome, sought to instil in their children as they were growing up. Gisela makes it clear that by sharing her thoughts on the 5 virtues and values contained in this booklet, she is not claiming that she and her husband are perfect parents. As one writer says: "There IS no such thing as perfect...it's just us parents doing the best we can." Or, as the award-winning Blogger, Lyn Dove, says:

"I never claimed to be a perfect parent, far from it, but if success could be measured in effort, I think I could at least claim a passing grade. ..

Someone asked me what age I preferred to parent: Baby, Toddler, Preschool, Child, Middle School, Senior High...? I just shook my head, just like my Dad. I have gray hairs from each era, each of my three children "peaking" at different ages to test my parenting prowess.

I had one single phrase I cried out repeatedly throughout those years, "Lord, help me!"

And He did.

Every time.



When I did not have the wisdom, or the strength, or the energy to face another day parenting my three strong-willed children, I cried out to the Lord because I



knew only One Person could claim the title of “Perfect Parent”. When I needed encouragement as a parent, He was there, comforting me through His Word. When I needed wisdom, He gave me Godly friends who gave me sound advice and occasionally a shoulder to cry on. When I needed energy and strength to help with class projects, put together birthday parties, attend school concerts and the like, He supplied my needs.

Lastly, when I sometimes focus on how rotten a job I am doing as a parent, He reminds me how much I am loved.

“Mom, could you help me?”

“Mom, where’s my....?”

“Mom, I need....”

“Mom, thanks! You’re the best!”

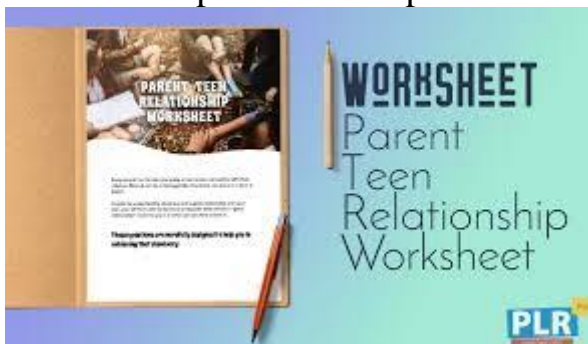
I may not be perfect...but I’m okay with that."

(For parents who need a little encouragement from other parents who have “been there, done that”, pick up a copy of “Chicken Soup for the Soul – Parenthood”.

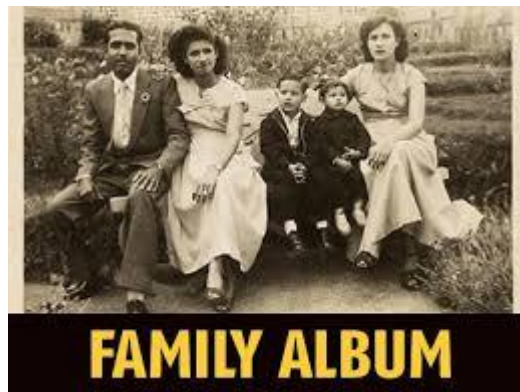
Lyn's story, “Do Angels Wear Glasses?” is on page 89.)



This booklet is the first in a series that Gisela will produce for CCSJ. Inevitably, each parent/guardian will have examples of their own to share. At a time when many are struggling with child-rearing responsibilities, remember that, as the saying goes, it takes a village to raise a child. There is no one-size-fits-all, but let’s share “best” practice to inspire others.



# CHILDREN need FAMILIES

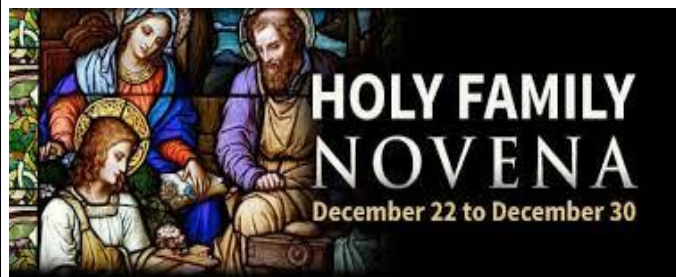



As Educator, Sam Carr, says: "Most parents would agree that parenting is extremely complex and challenging. What works for one child, might not work for another – even within the same family...Researchers have explored cultural and historical differences in parenting practices for many years. Studies tend to agree that three major factors often explain differences in parenting style: emotional warmth versus hostility (how loving, warm, and affectionate parents are towards children), autonomy versus control (the degree to which children are given a sense of control over their lives), and structure versus chaos (how much children’s lives are given a sense of structure and predictability)."



	Supportive Parent is accepting and child-centered	Unsupportive Parent is rejecting and parent-centered
Demanding Parent expects much of child	<b>Authoritative Parenting</b> Relationship is reciprocal, responsive; high in bidirectional communication	<b>Authoritarian Parenting</b> Relationship is controlling, power-assertive; high in unidirectional communication
Undemanding Parent expects little of child	<b>Permissive Parenting</b> Relationship is indulgent; low in control attempts	<b>Rejecting-Neglecting Parenting</b> Relationship is rejecting or neglecting; uninvolved

Raising holy, virtuous children is challenging. But, in a world that is becoming more and more secular, parents/guardians have a duty to nurture in their children Catholic values/virtues. Remember our Catechism states that, “The Holy Spirit is the source and giver of all holiness” (CCC 749). Pray, therefore, and ask the Holy Spirit, for guidance and wisdom to develop values/virtues-driven homes/children.





AND



The Catechism of the Catholic Church tells us that: “Virtue is a habitual and firm disposition to do good. It allows the person not only to perform good acts, but to give the best of himself/herself ... ‘The goal of a virtuous life is to become like God.’(St Gregory of Nyssa)” (no. 1803). (See also Part 3, Article 7, p 443-451 of the Catechism for references to “Virtue.”).

St. Thomas defines virtue as “a good habit bearing on activity.” Therefore, throughout this programme, students should be given the opportunity to practise the values and virtues that you are seeking to instill in them. Students should understand, though, that not all habits are virtuous.



The New Zealand Education Office Ltd. has produced a very helpful document entitled: Taking the high ground: Virtues and Values in Catholic Schools (see:<http://www.nzceo.catholic.org.nz/media/resources/publications/schools-valuesvirtues.pdf>).

In this document Values and Virtues are defined as follows:

“**Values** are internalised sets of beliefs or principles of behaviour. Not all values are consonant with moral or ethical behaviour, even though they may be strongly upheld. Nor do people necessarily act in accordance with the values they hold.

“**Virtues** are qualities of moral goodness or excellence. Many virtues can be derived from universally accepted principles. To be effective, they need to be nurtured and practised so that individuals live by them, not merely believe in them.”



**Virtue Ethics**

- Virtues refer to specific character traits
  - Examples: truth-telling, honest, courage, kindness, respectfulness, compassion, fairness, integrity
- Virtues become apparent through one's behavior and are obviously linked to ethical principles
- Descriptions of character portray a way of being rather than the process of decision-making
- The ability to respond to ethical dilemmas then becomes hinged upon one's character



The moral compass of each child will be shaped by a number of factors such as family, peer-group, school/community/society, the media, and from their own experiences as they journey through life. The challenge for parents/guardians is to give their children life-skills; to offer them a sound foundation that, hopefully, will stand them in good stead as they are buffeted by the winds of the negative aspects of materialism, individualism, selfishness, moral relativism and so on.

In 2015, Pope Francis used his Christmas Speech to call for values such as humanity, accountability and humility. Archbishop Jason rightly says the family is the pivotal point. If the family is doing what it is supposed to be doing, then all those within will LIVE Church as they are supposed to live.

And while the sacrament of marriage (1601-1666 in our Catechism) is the ideal to form the domestic Church, let us not turn our backs on those who “parent” in other situations e.g., those who are divorced, single, widowed. In his apostolic exhortation on the family, “Amoris Laetitia,” Pope Francis wrote, “A pastor cannot feel that it is enough to simply apply moral laws to those living in ‘irregular’ situations, as if they were stones to throw at people’s lives.”

**THEOLOGICAL VIRTUES**

**FAITH**  
The virtue by which we believe in God and in all that He has revealed to us.

**HOPE**  
The virtue by which we trust God will fulfill his promises and look forward to eternal life.

**CHARITY**  
The virtue by which we love God above all things and our neighbor as ourselves.

Humility is the solid foundation of all virtues.

Confucius

**HUMILITY**  
Pass It On.com



COVID-19 has presented new challenges for families, but as His Grace has said, “we have managed the pandemic well in TT, and we should appreciate it. But while we have experienced the fragility of life, we have experienced the goodness of God...as Church we have reached out to those who are in need and who are vulnerable...it has been a year of incredible Grace.” There are many families that are in need. As the year comes to a close, let us continue to wait in joyful hope for the birth of the Christ-child. May we all continue to play our part in transforming our society so that it reflects Gospel values.

Once again, I thank Gisela for her amazing generosity in committing to share her views with us, and we look forward to future booklets by her in this series. And I urge readers to use every teachable moment to share the values and virtues of our Catholic Faith.

**The Four Virtues**

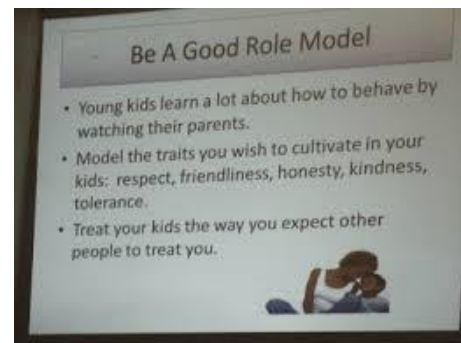
**Prudence**  
habit of making wise decisions

**Justice**  
habit of being fair to others

**Fortitude/courage**  
habit of doing the right thing even when afraid

**Temperance**  
habit of resisting temptation to do something wrong

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM & BUSINESS FOUNDATION  
FAITH & BUSINESS BUILD A BETTER WORLD



Values and Virtues formation should permeate children’s lives. Nothing less than Jesus’ standard should be expected. A good question that acts as a “barometer” is: “What would Jesus do in this situation?” If we are to “do right” by our children, such formation should be an integral part of faith formation and should begin in their early years at home, school and community. If you have any questions or comments on this booklet, please send them to me, Leela Ramdeen, via email at: [socialjustice@catholictt.org](mailto:socialjustice@catholictt.org)

I take this opportunity to invite readers who wish to share their parenting journey with others, to contact me on 299 8945. Let us share more widely the tips that you may have so that other parents/would-be parents/the wider community can learn from them.



# CHAPTER 1. LOVE



*“...there are three things that last: faith, hope and love; and the greatest of these is love.”* (1 Corinthians 13:13)

Sometimes I wish that there were a tried and tested handbook on parenting that would list out the Do's and Don'ts which would give a guarantee that, once followed, my children would grow to be independent, loving, caring compassionate human beings with a deep love for God, for humanity and for God's Creation.

One thing is certain. No two children are the same and there are no guarantees that even with all the best parenting skills in the world, your child will evolve into the amazing human being that you have tried so hard to mould.

Our responsibility as Catholic Parents is to love and nurture our children and to foster in them Catholic virtues. Our role is to lead our children to a close personal relationship with Almighty God, our Father.



These are just a few thoughts and guidelines from a practical viewpoint as a mother. I hope that they bring some insight into the world of parenting.

The key to successful Parenting is Love. How can we as Parents show Love and how can we nurture our children to Love?

" You must Love the Lord your God with All your Heart, all your Soul, all your Mind, and all your Strength....Love your Neighbour as Yourself" ( Mark 12:30-31)



Love can be divided in to Four parts; Love of God; Love of humanity; Love of Creation, and Love of Self.

In a way, the Four are connected and flow naturally into one another

How can we Teach our children to Love God?

1. Firstly, it is important to teach our children that God Loves them unconditionally. Teach them that they are children of God, made in His Image and Likeness and that they are precious.

2. Give examples to your children of God's Love and mercy towards them. This would in turn teach your children that if God Loves them and is Merciful, then they too should Love and show compassion and Mercy to their friends, neighbours, members of their community, and by extension to every single human being that they may meet as they journey through life. When shown that God is Love and God loves me unconditionally with all my faults, flaws, imperfections, and sins, then it gives the child the confidence to love himself/herself.





3. Teach children to pray. Educate them on the fundamental prayers of the Catholic Church and teach them the Ten Commandments and the Beatitudes.

4. Explain that talking to God is also a form of prayer. Children should learn that they can turn to God with all their problems and burdens. Help them to understand from an early age that through surrendering to God's Love they can conquer any and all problems in Life.

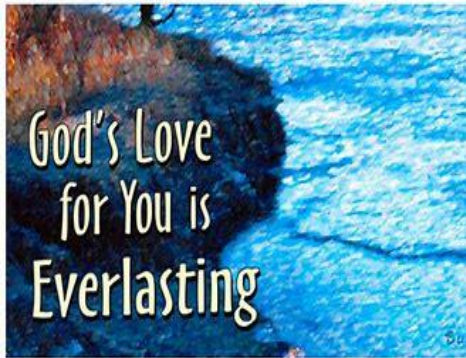
5. It is important for children to understand that God is not separate and apart from them, but that God lives in their Hearts and Souls. God is the Source of All Love.

6. Demonstrate the importance of incorporating God into every aspect of their lives and into every sphere of their beings. Every thought, every action, every deed should and must be done in communion with Almighty God, Our Lord and Saviour. Teach them about the Holy Trinity – Father, Son and Holy spirit, and about how the Holy Spirit works in our daily lives. If this is truly understood then you will be one step closer to enabling your children to fully experience the Love of God in their Hearts and every thought, word Deed will be done with Love for God, Humanity, Creation, and Self.

6. Spend time together reading the Bible and teaching them the many ways that Jesus shows how to love. Read the Scriptures to them. Explain the moral and spiritual lessons from which we can learn in the Parables in the Bible, and how they relate to us in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

7. When children understand or have some sense of the depth of God's love for them, they automatically become more confident with who they are as people and

they build self-esteem and love of self. They develop a strong foundation that will be better able to withstand peer pressure that can lure them into the abyss of substance abuse and other social evils.



8. By our examples we can teach our children to see God in everybody. If they know and understand that God is Love and that God Loves unconditionally, then it becomes easier to understand that Love and God resides within the hearts of All. We are all children of God and we are all connected. Therefore, the call to love my brother / my neighbour as myself comes naturally.

9. During these challenging times, as we face Covid 19 together, we can use this period to try little activities to promote a healthy family life. During these activities, we can nurture our children and show love such as:

- \*\*\*Spending Quality time together without the distractions of the television, Phones, and social media devices
- \*\*\* Having Meals together
- \*\*\*Playing Board games or outdoor activities
- \*\*\*Connecting as a Family to attend Mass together
- \*\*\*Talk to each other about the many ways in which God has Blessed your Family, your Friends, your Neighbours, your Colleagues -with Gratitude and Love in your Hearts.





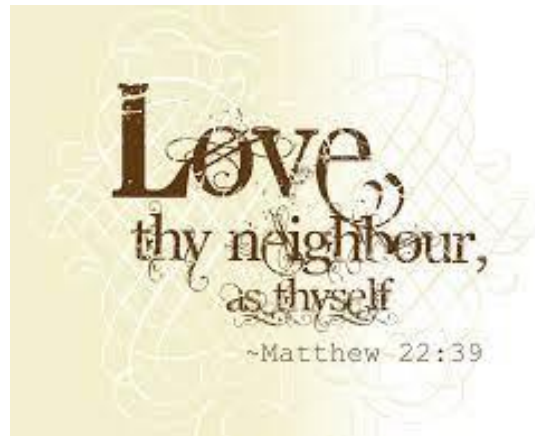
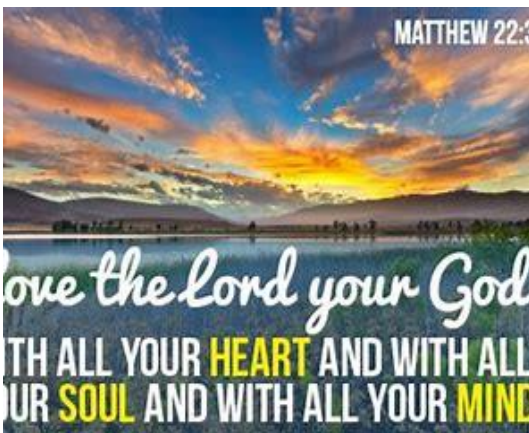
The following is an excerpt from an address by Pope Francis that gives us guidance:

Vatican City, Jun 14, 2015 / 02:31 pm MT – “In an address on Sunday, Pope Francis asked parents if they believed in the beauty of the love God gives to a man and a woman and told them to make sure their children see this love in little signs of affection.

“God calls men and women to be parents who believe in love, who believe in its beauty,” the Pope said.

“I want to ask you do you believe in the beauty of love? Do you believe in the greatness of love? Do you have faith in this? This is a daily faith.”

Don't ever forget that your children are always watching you, and when they see that a father and mother love each other, children grown in an air of love, in happiness, also in security, because they know that they are safe in the love of their father and mother,” the Pope continued.





## CHAPTER 2 - PATIENCE



*" But the fruits of the Spirit are Love, Joy, Peace, **Patience**, Kindness. Goodness, faithfulness, trustfulness and self-control." Galatians 5:22-23"*

Patience is most definitely a virtue. Personally, I think it is sometimes very difficult to exercise patience and to teach patience to children when faced with the trials that accompany parenthood.

How is it possible to be patient and to foster patience in our children when we live in such a fast-paced world where everything is expected to happen instantly? One of the challenges with living in this modern world is that we expect that everything must be done and/ or be obtained immediately. Instant gratification. No one seems to have patience to wait for anything. If we, however, as parents, are not patient, then how can we expect our children to learn and exercise patience?



The definition of "Patience" in the Catholic dictionary is "A form of the moral virtue of fortitude. It enables one to endure present evils without sadness or resentment in conformity with the will of God. Patience is mainly concerned with bearing evils caused by another. The three grades of Patience are: to bear difficulties without interior complaint, to use hardships to make progress in virtue, and even to desire the cross and afflictions out of Love of God and accept them with spiritual Joy."

Patience is taught by example. It is perfectly normal to have family disagreements when tempers may flare, and family members may get on each other's nerves. When emotions run high, situations may get out of control and parents may say or do things that are hurtful and that may later regret. It is, however, important to stay calm and think through situations thoroughly before reacting. We can teach our children patience by demonstrating how to deal with disagreements and cope with life situations with patience.



The following are just a few tips that might help in exercising patience and thereby teach the virtue of patience to our children.

1. Be willing to listen to your child's problem or grievance without being dismissive or trivializing his/her emotions. Sometimes children just need to be heard and understood. Stop, listen, and show compassion.
2. Use words of acceptance and love in a calm manner.
3. Practice staying calm in stressful situations. Show your children that being patient does not only mean that you have the ability to wait but that you can wait

in a calm manner without the complaining, rolling their eyes and/or whinging that usually accompanies impatience.

4. Making light of a situation or injecting humour can also help to diffuse situations in which tempers are waiting to erupt. Even making little games out of a situation can assist for example if your children are running late for school and everybody is rushing and patience is wearing thin, sometimes playing a game of "let's see who can tie their shoelaces the fastest" might help take the focus off from being impatient to getting the job done faster and in a fun way.

5. Demonstrate that it is possible to verbalise a problem and discuss solutions instead of getting upset and impatient.

6. It is important to teach children to be mindful of each and every moment and to strive to enjoy whatever they are experiencing at that moment in time. Rushing from one frenzied activity to the next may lead to frustration, impatience, and a sense of emptiness.



7. Sometimes we are so busy rushing to work, school and extra- curricular activities that we forget to stop or slow down to enjoy the beauty around us. By helping our children to connect with nature and observe the beauty of a flower as it slowly blooms, look at plants as they grow and bear fruit, they can learn that everything develops in its own perfect time according to God's will.

8. Patience takes Practice.

9. Pray



*"When Abram was ninety-nine years old the Lord appeared to him and said, 'I am God almighty. Bear yourself blameless in my presence, and I will make a Covenant between myself and you and increase your numbers greatly.'*

*Abram bowed to the ground and God said this to him, 'Here now is my covenant with you: you shall become the father of a multitude of nations. You shall no longer be called Abram; your name shall be Abraham, for I make you father of a multitude of nations. I will make you most fruitful. I will make you into nations, and your issue shall be kings...Abraham bowed to the ground, and he laughed, thinking to himself, 'Is a child to be born to a man one hundred years old, and will Sarah have a child at the age of ninety?'* Genesis 17:1-6, 17



**Sometimes God asks us to wait for something even though he has promised it to us.** God promised Abraham he would be the father of many people. But at a very old age, he was still without any children. Abraham and Sarah knew what God had told them, but they had yet to see evidence of the promise in their lives. How could Abraham become the father of many when he did not have any children? Abraham and Sarah trusted God and they waited patiently for Him. This does not mean they waited perfectly. They took matters into their own hands at times. But God's grace covered them, and He still fulfilled his promise, in His perfect timing.

Use this story to share with your child that sometimes God and parents ask us to wait for things. We must trust that they know what is best for us and will do what they promised. As we wait, it can be tempting to make things happen on our own or to run ahead. But waiting patiently means waiting without questioning or complaining. Doing so will make the blessing we receive so much sweeter.

**Related verse:** "I waited patiently for the Lord; he inclined to me and heard my cry." Psalm 40:1 (*Inclined means he leaned into or came towards. Explain to your child that this means God is near as we wait. He understands our struggle and will help us if we ask Him to.*) Read more: [Minno - Stories Kids Love, Values Parents Trust \(gominno.com\)](http://Minno - Stories Kids Love, Values Parents Trust (gominno.com))

"We must never get tired of doing good because if we don't give up the struggle we shall get our harvest at the proper time." (Galatians 6:9)  
Read more: <https://www.whatchristianswanttoknow.com/bible-stories-about-patience-5-important-scripture-summaries/#ixzz6gSp2DOg1>



### **POPE FRANCIS' WORDS ON PATIENCE:**

"The patience of God is a mystery! How much patience he has with us! We do so many things, but He is patient... Let us think of our personal relationship, in this week: How patient has Jesus been with me in my life? Just this. And then the words will rise from our hearts: 'Thank you, Lord! Thank you for your patience.'"

"Christian patience is neither 'resignation' nor an attitude of 'defeat.' Rather, it is a virtue of those who are 'on the journey', those who are moving forward, rather than stopping and becoming closed off."

"Let us heed the reminder of Pope Francis about the great mercy, love, and **patience** that God has for us, and let us seek to mirror this love and patience in our encounters with others." [Pope Francis on patience | Catholic Ecology](#)

## CHAPTER 3- RESPECT



We all know what respect means but it is helpful to define it to give some clarity. The Catechism of the Catholic Church, Paragraphs 1930 and 1931 state:

**1930:** Respect for the human person entails respect for the rights that flow from his dignity as a creature. These rights are prior to society and must be recognized by it. They are the basis of the moral legitimacy of every authority: by flouting them, or refusing to recognize them in its positive legislation, a society undermines its own moral legitimacy (Cf. John XXIII, *PT* 65). If it does not respect them, authority can rely only on force or violence to obtain obedience from its subjects. It is the Church's role to remind men of good will of these rights and to distinguish them from unwarranted or false claims.



**1931** Respect for the human person proceeds by way of respect for the principle that "everyone should look upon his neighbour (without any exception) as 'another self,' above all bearing in mind his life and the means necessary for living it with dignity" (*GS* 27 § 1). No legislation could by itself do away with the fears, prejudices, and attitudes of pride and selfishness which obstruct the establishment



of truly fraternal societies. Such behaviour will cease only through the charity that finds in every man a "neighbour," a brother/sister.

How do we simplify and condense Respect so that we can impart this to our children? Firstly we need to be role models to our children and demonstrate by our words and our actions towards others and to God's Creation that we respect and treat each human being as a brother or sister, and that we strive to live in harmony with all God's Creation.

## RESPECT FOR SELF

In a world in which some believe that they can do what they like with their bodies, it is important to teach child from an early age that his/her body is the temple of the Holy Spirit and that in order to maintain one's dignity, it is important to have self-respect, for example, not to use harmful drugs.



## RESPECT FOR YOUR NEIGHBOUR/BROTHER/SISTER

We are all brothers/sisters created in God's image and likeness, and as parents we must demonstrate to our children, by our actions, how we are to show love and respect for each other.

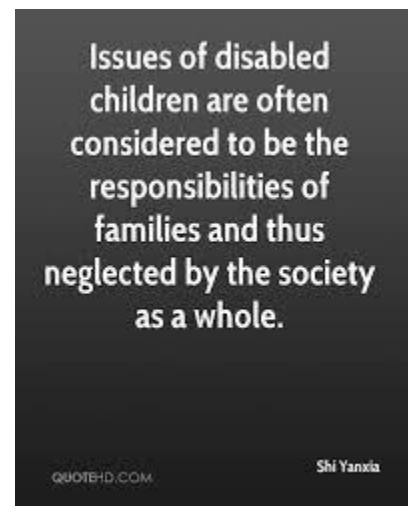
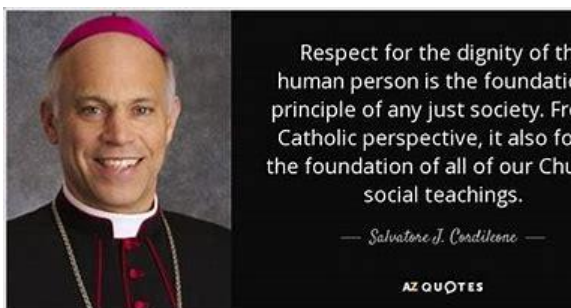
*"...for in him were created all things in heaven and on earth, everything visible and everything invisible. Thrones, Dominations, Sovereignities, Powers – all things were created through him and for him. Before anything was created, he existed, and he holds all things in unity."*

*(Colossians 1:16-17)*



It is fundamental in our role as parents to teach our children that God created us all and that we are all children of God. Every human person possesses a God-given dignity. Our duty is to teach our children that the dignity of each human being must not only be recognised but must be respected and promoted.

"The duty to respect the dignity of each human being, in whose nature the image of the Creator is reflected, means in consequence that the person cannot be disposed of at will. Those with greater political, technical, or economic power may not use that power to violate the rights of others who are less fortunate. Peace is based on respect for the rights of all. (Pope Benedict XVI, in his *Message for the Celebration of the World Day of Peace, 1 January 2007*)"



If our peers, friends, or family disagree with us or hold a different point of view on a particular issue, do we denigrate them or show disrespect? Is a person less worthy because they do not share our views? "People don't have worth because they agree with us, they have worth because they are humans created in the image of God."

(6 Biblical Truths to Teach Your Teen About Respect by Dan Darling).

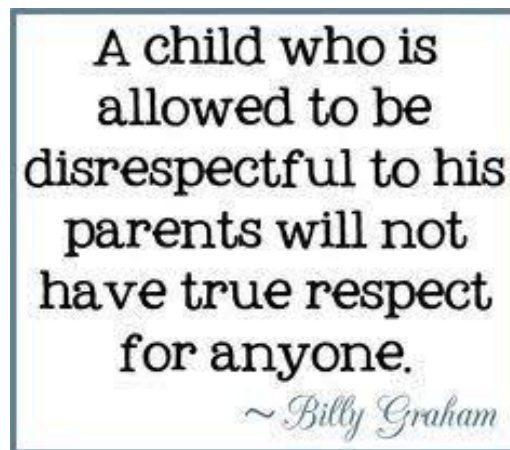
## RESPECT FOR YOUR MOTHER AND FATHER

*“Honour your father and your mother, as the Lord your God has commanded you, so that you may have long life and may prosper in the land that the Lord your god gives to you.” (Deuteronomy 5:16).*

How can children show respect to their parents? They should be taught to be obedient and to abide by family rules/boundaries. All too often with modern families I have seen situations where parents bend over backwards to please and pacify their children and give in to temper tantrums. Parents yield to screaming children who yell and demand what they want and when they want. Parents must set boundaries and make it clear to the child as to what is acceptable behaviour and what is not. There should be consequences to disrespectful behaviour. I have found that sending the child to his/her room to think about disrespectful action and requesting the child to write a letter of apology helps the child to reflect on what he/she has done.

It is also important for children to show respect and gratitude towards the elders in the family. Simple activities can include attending a family gathering with grandparents and elders in the family, not only create a family bond, but also demonstrate to children how to show love and respect towards elders.

The most important lessons will likely come as our kids watch the way we live out the gospel and the way we treat other human beings. Children will model in their own lives the lessons we are teaching them by our own behaviour.





## RESPECT FOR HUMAN LIFE

### "POPE TO PARENTS: TEACH YOUR CHILDREN TO RESPECT, DEFEND HUMAN LIFE"

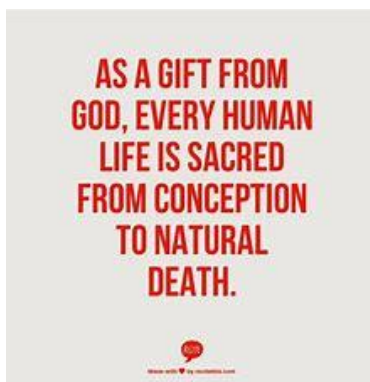


*The Catholic Telegraph* / August 13, 2013 / 3.2k

"VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Respect for human life from conception until natural death is something children must be taught, not mainly with words, but by the example of their parents, Pope Francis said.

“Parents are called to pass on to their children the awareness that life must always be defended,” Pope Francis wrote in a message to people joining in the Brazilian Catholic Church’s celebration of Family Week, which began Aug. 11, 2013.

“The pope returned to his condemnation of the ‘throwaway culture,’ something he spoke against several times during his July 22-28 visit to Brazil. He had said that modern cultures tend to treat even human lives as disposable, pointing to the way people, societies and even governments tend to treat both the young and the old.



“In his message for Family Week, he said parents have a responsibility to fight that disposable culture by teaching their children that human life, ‘from the womb,’ is a gift from God. New life ensures the future of humanity, he said, while

older people — especially grandparents — ‘are the living memory of a people and transmit the wisdom of life.’”

## RESPECT FOR THE ENVIRONMENT – GOD’S CREATION



We need to read our Scriptures to our children and help them to understand what God’s plan is for his Creation. In Genesis we read that man and woman were placed on this earth to cultivate and care for the earth, which is our common home, as Pope Francis reminds us in his 2015 encyclical, *Laudato Si’: On the care of our common home*.

He has said: “I renew my urgent call to respond to the ecological crisis. The cry of the Earth and the cry of the poor cannot continue. Let’s take care of creation, a gift of our good Creator God...We are called to protect creation—and we are missing the mark. Something good in the eyes of God has become something exploitable in human hands.” He urges us to reflect on our lifestyles. “Let’s change and adopt simpler and more respectful lifestyles!”



Our *Catechism* tells us: “...Human beings’ dominion over inanimate and other living beings granted by the Creator is not absolute; it is limited by concern for

the quality of life of their neighbour, including generations to come; it requires a religious respect for the integrity of creation” (2415).

Parents/Guardians can nurture in their children right relationship with God’s Creation. Teach them that everything we do has an impact on Creation, since everything is interconnected. Youth are partners in the process of promoting integral ecology, which Pope Francis spoke about in his encyclical, *Laudato Si*. They can become advocates/active stewards of God’s Creation. Teach them to avoid waste and to protect the environment by practising the sustainable Rs: reduce, reuse, recycle, restore/repair.



## GENERAL TIPS:

1. Show respect to your children. Each child is different and they each have their own unique personalities. Allow them to express their individual thoughts, views, opinions, likes and dislikes with respect.

2. Set Boundaries and Guidelines. Educate your child as to what is acceptable behaviour and what is not; what is rude and what is not; what is impolite and what is not. Develop ways of speaking that is always respectful **"The gospel not only shapes what we say, but how we say it.** There should be a distinct flavour in the way that Christians speak. Every argument, every conversation, every social media post should include grace." **(Biblical Truths to Teach Your Teen About Respect by Dan Darling)**

**"Your speech should always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you should answer each person." Colossians 4:6**



Respect for life and for the dignity of the human person also extends to the rest of creation, which is called to join man in praising God.

Pope John Paul II



3. Be quick to point out to your child when he/she is being rude or disrespectful and deal with this issue immediately. Respond quickly and maybe say things like "that was disrespectful" or "you are crossing the line."

### When family boundaries dysfunction...

<p><b>TOO ENMESHED</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No one feels entitled to own thoughts, feelings</li> <li>• One person speaks for everyone</li> <li>• Individual privacy impossible</li> <li>• Ambitions beyond family disloyal</li> </ul>	<p><b>TOO DIFFERENTIATED</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No unifying hopes, dreams, values</li> <li>• Little sense of belonging</li> <li>• Feelings denied</li> <li>• Appearances important</li> <li>• Minimal communication</li> </ul>
---	--



4. If disrespectful behaviour continues, implement consequences, depending on the age of the child, such as time out or send to their room to reflect on their actions and write a letter of apology.

5. Do NOT GIVE UP!!! Disrespect can bring us to our knees and make us cry! In our frustration as parents with disrespectful children, we might be tempted to give up and let things pass but do not give up. Keep at it and point out every instance of disrespect and gradually our children will get the picture and hopefully mature to become loving respectful adults.



## CHAPTER 4 - HONESTY



What does Honesty really mean and why is it important for us to nurture Honesty in our children?

The Catechism of the Catholic Church states in **ARTICLE 8. THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT**

"You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour (*Ex* 20:16; cf. *Deut* 5:20).

It was said to the men of old, "You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform to the Lord what you have sworn" (*Mt* 5:33).

**"2464** The eighth commandment forbids misrepresenting the truth in our relations with others. This moral prescription flows from the vocation of the holy people to bear witness to their God who is the truth and wills the truth. Offenses against the truth express by word or deed a refusal to commit oneself to moral uprightness: they are fundamental infidelities to God, and, in this sense, they undermine the foundations of the covenant."





God has commanded us to always tell the truth. God is the Truth and if we are to follow Him, we are called to always be honest and truthful. As parents it is our duty and responsibility to teach our children that this is fundamental to our being and that Honesty is a core value that cannot be compromised.

***Luke 16:10 - "The man who can be trusted in little things can be trusted in great; the man who is dishonest in little things will be dishonest in great."***

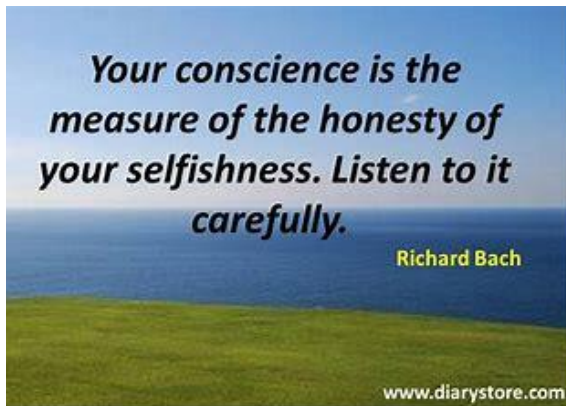
Children should be taught from a very early age to always tell the truth. They must understand that all lies are equally wrong and that telling "small " lies could eventually lead to "big" and more damaging lies.



As parents we need to show our children that to be honest and full of integrity is a direct reflection of their character. Being dishonest and lying could lead one to develop into a person who cannot be trusted.

***1 Timothy 1:19 - "Cling to your faith in Christ and keep your conscience clear. Some people have put conscience aside and wrecked their faith in consequence."***





It is not always easy to be honest and children are sometimes faced with awkward situations in which they will be tempted to tell a "white lie" to avoid a problem. They need to understand the importance of having a clear, clean conscience and holding on to their faith. God made Honesty and telling the truth one of His Commandments. The truth always comes out so they should learn from an early age to take a deep breath, tell the truth and deal with whatever consequences that may come their way.

*Proverbs 12:5 - "The plans of virtuous men are honest, the intrigues of the wicked are nothing if not deceit."*

Children should be taught and should understand that deception in any form is sinful. We must remember that we are living examples to our children of how they should live their lives with honesty and integrity. What examples do your children see?

## **TIPS ON TEACHING HONESTY TO OUR CHILDREN**

1. Create an atmosphere where your children feel safe to come to you as the parent to confide in you and tell the truth. Remember that children will sometimes tell lies to avoid the consequences of being punished. If the child feels scared that they will be yelled at or severely punished they will not come to you.
2. Try to remain calm and speak to your child in a calm tone of voice (easier said than done, I know). Do not yell and get angry as this may result in a reluctance of your child to come to you in the future. Discuss and explore with your child the solution to the problem that was the root cause of the lie.

**Ways to Teach Kids to Be HONEST**




1. Encourage them instead of praising them.
- Help them distinguish between reality and wishes.
- Show them you value honesty.
- Use a problem-solving approach with accidents and poor choices.
- Describe what you see and ask the child to make amends.
- Avoid using questions that set your child up to lie.

OneTime Thru

# HONESTY

Doing what's right regardless of who's around. Being someone other's can trust.



3. Try to turn the mistake into an opportunity to right the wrong. For instance, your child goes into a store and makes a purchase. However the cashier mistakenly puts 5 items in the bag instead of the 4 items that were paid for. Your child knowingly leaves with the five items instead of 4. Do you turn a blind eye? Or do you use this as an opportunity to take back the items to the store, return the extra item and use this as an opportunity to demonstrate to your child how to correct the act of dishonesty?

4. When your child comes to you to “fess up”, I think that it is important to show appreciation for their honesty. Use words such as "I know that it was difficult for you to tell me the truth, but I appreciate your honesty."

5. Even when our children make mistakes and lie, we must continue to show unconditional love, mercy, and compassion in the same way that Almighty God shows us unconditional love, mercy and compassion.

The first step towards God is Honesty

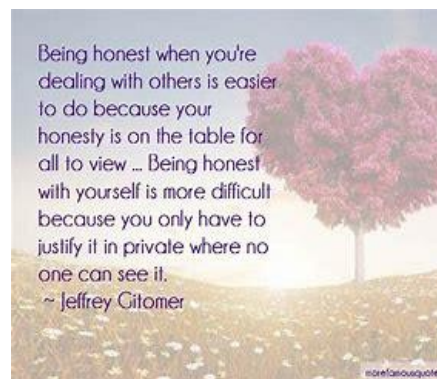
Honesty begets Truth

Truth begets Light

And the Truth will set you free

Being honest when you're dealing with others is easier to do because your honesty is on the table for all to view ... Being honest with yourself is more difficult because you only have to justify it in private where no one can see it.

~ Jeffrey Gitomer



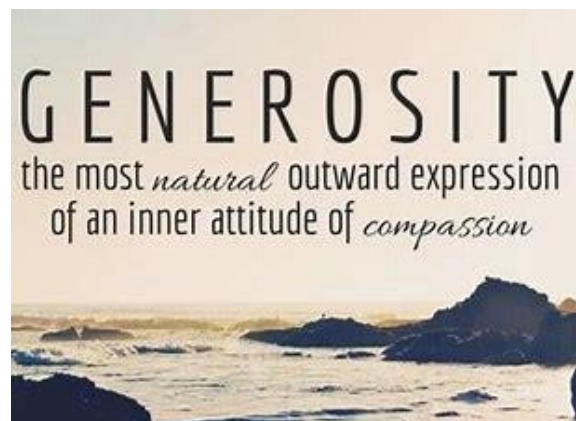
## CHAPTER 5- GENEROSITY

*Then Jesus took the loaves, gave thanks and gave them out to all who were sitting ready; he then did the same with the fish, giving out as much as was wanted. When they had eaten enough, he said to the disciples, 'Pick up the pieces left over, so that nothing gets wasted.' So they picked them up and filled twelve hampers with scraps left over from the meal of five barley loaves." John 6:11-13.*



This is a great verse from John 6 that demonstrates to our children Jesus's generosity. Jesus fed thousands of people with five barley loaves and two small fish. He is showing us that just as He is abundantly generous in his Blessings towards us, we too are called to be generous in the same way. As parents, it is our responsibility to teach our children to have a social conscience and to be generous. It is important to encourage good habits of giving not only at Christmas time but throughout the year.

What is the definition of Generosity? Does Generosity only include the giving of Money? What about Generosity with Time? And Generosity with giving of gifts/food to the needy and helping in our communities?



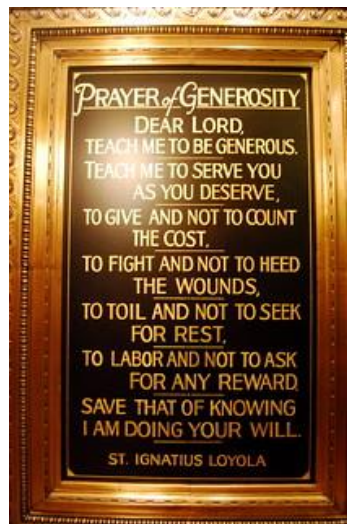






This generosity toward others is expressed through having an open heart and an eagerness to help meet the needs of others. It is also expressed in living as people of integrity... Generosity is not solely about abundance in giving, but about having a sincere heart.

God is a generous God and He calls us to be generous people. As we receive His love and share it with others, God's name will be glorified." (ref: [compellingtruth.org](http://compellingtruth.org))



## TIPS ON ENCOURAGING A GENEROUS SPIRIT

1. Chat with your children about some one in need. Discuss what his/her needs are and think of ways that your family can help. Involve the children in the decision-making and in carrying out the plan. For instance, there may be a family in your community in need of food and clothes. Involve the children in an effort to get

donations of clothing; have them select grocery items and package the items to deliver to the family.



2. Discuss ways that God has shown His Blessings and Generosity and find ways that the family can in turn be a Blessing to others in need.

3. With Christmas 2020 upon us, there are many children who would love to receive a Christmas secret Santa gift. Ask your child what he/she thinks and let your child choose the gift for a boy or a girl, wrap it in Christmas paper and deliver it either to your Church for distribution or directly to the child.

4. If your children are teens, encourage them to get involved in a soup kitchen, or some form of community service which would help develop their awareness and build a spirit of generosity.

### **A NOTE OF GRATITUDE:**

On behalf of all members of CCSJ, I would like to thank Gisela for her insightful contribution to our work. Building the civilisation of love starts in the home. Each parent/guardian will have his/her experiences of child rearing. Reach out to the various Ministries/Commissions in our Church if you need support.



We end this booklet with a quotation from Pope Francis and with his views on Parenting, as expressed in *Amoris Laetitia* (The Joy of Love), the post-Synodal apostolic exhortation by Pope Francis on **love** in the family. “It was signed on 19 March 2016 on the Solemnity of St. Joseph and brings together the results of the two Synods on the family convoked by Pope Francis in 2014 and 2015.”



**Pope Francis, Oct 31, 2019:** “The responsibility towards the new generations requires above all the commitment to form them and listen to them in order to respond to the challenges of our times, without denying the immutable value of truth, but with a comprehensible and current language... many times we too, women and men of faith, limit ourselves to giving indications rather than transmitting the experience of values and virtues. And so, in the face of conflicts and the need to build peace, we do not realize that our message is likely to be abstract and remain unheard... dialogue does not only serve to prevent and resolve conflicts, but it is a way to bring out the values and virtues that God has written in the heart of every man and has made evident in the order of creation.”

### ***POPE FRANCIS ON PARENTING Excerpts from: Amoris Laetitia (The Joy of Love) (2016)***

**“The Essential Role of Parents:** Parents always influence the moral development of their children, for better or for worse. It follows that they should take up this essential role and carry it out consciously, enthusiastically, reasonably and appropriately (n. 259). Parents need to consider what they want their children to be exposed to, and this necessarily means being concerned about who is providing their entertainment, who is entering their rooms through television and electronic devices, and with whom they are spending their free time. Only if we devote time to our children, speaking of important things with simplicity and concern, and

finding healthy ways for them to spend their time, will we be able to shield them from harm. Vigilance is always necessary, and neglect is never beneficial (n. 260).

**Helping Children Mature:** What is most important is the ability lovingly to help [children] grow in freedom, maturity, overall discipline and real autonomy. Only in this way will children come to possess the wherewithal needed to fend for themselves and to act intelligently and prudently whenever they meet with difficulties. The real question, then, is not where our children are physically, or whom they are with at any given time, but rather where they are existentially, where they stand in terms of their convictions, goals, desires and dreams (n. 261). Inevitably, each child will surprise us with ideas and projects born of that [inherent inner personal] freedom, which challenge us to rethink our own ideas. This is a good thing. Education includes encouraging the responsible use of freedom to face issues with good sense and intelligence (n. 262).

**Moral Training of Children:** A person's affective and ethical development is ultimately grounded in a particular experience, namely, that his or her parents can be trusted [emphasis added]. This means that parents, as educators, are responsible, by their affection and example, for instilling in their children trust and loving respect. When children no longer feel that, for all their faults, they are important to their parents, or that their parents are sincerely concerned about them, this causes deep hurt and many difficulties along their pathway to maturity (n. 263). Parents are also responsible for shaping the will of their children, fostering good habits and a natural inclination to goodness. . . Moral formation should always take place with active methods and a dialogue that teaches through sensitivity and by using a language children can understand (n. 264). Good habits need to be developed. Even childhood habits can help to translate important interiorized values into sound and steady ways of acting (n. 266). Moral education has to do with cultivating freedom through ideas, incentives, practical applications, stimuli, rewards, examples, models, symbols, reflections, encouragement, dialogue and a constant rethinking of our way of doing things; all these can help develop those stable interior principles that lead us spontaneously to do good (n. 267).



**Dear God,**  
Please keep my family ,friends,  
and loved ones safe.  
Please watch over them always,  
and let good health, happiness,  
and your blessings be  
upon them. Amen.

Share Catholic  
www.ShareCatholic.com

**Family Prayer**

God be with our family,  
From the youngest to the oldest,  
Lighting up our relationships,  
Sowing grace into our troubles.

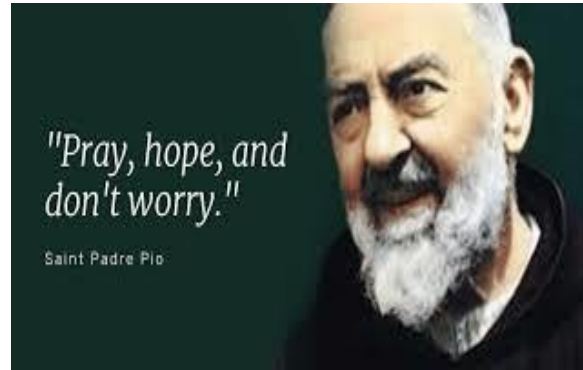
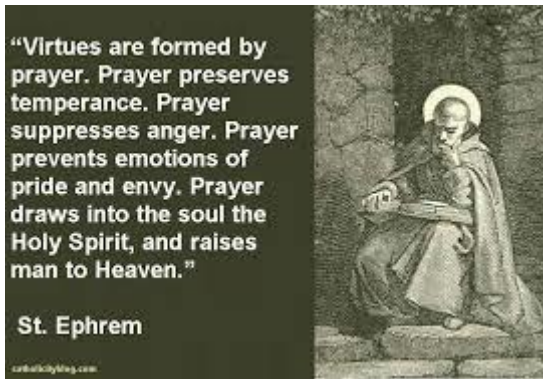
God be with our family,  
Weaving love into our work,  
Our rest, and our play.

Amen.

[www.lords-prayer-words.com](http://www.lords-prayer-words.com)

**Correcting Children Lovingly:** It is also essential to help children and adolescents to realize that misbehaviour has consequences. They need to be encouraged to put themselves in other people’s shoes and to acknowledge the hurt they have caused. Some punishments—those for aggressive, antisocial conduct—can partially serve this purpose. It is important to train children firmly to ask forgiveness and to repair the harm done to others (n. 268). Children who are lovingly corrected feel cared for; they perceive that they are individuals whose potential is recognized. This does not require parents to be perfect, but to be able humbly to acknowledge their own limitations and make efforts to improve. Still, one of the things children need to learn from their parents is not to get carried away by anger. A child who does something wrong must be corrected, but never treated as an enemy or an object on which to take out one’s own frustrations. Adults also need to realize that some kinds of misbehaviour have to do with the frailty and limitations typical of youth. An attitude constantly prone to punishment would be harmful and not help children to realize that some actions are more serious than others. It would lead to discouragement and resentment . . . (n. 269).

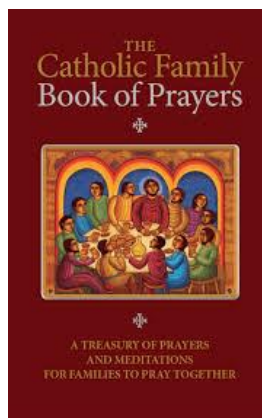
**Patience is Needed:** In proposing values, we have to proceed slowly, taking into consideration the child’s age and abilities, without presuming to apply rigid and inflexible methods. The valuable contributions of psychology and the educational sciences have shown that changing a child’s behaviour involves a gradual process, but also that freedom needs to be channelled and stimulated, since by itself it does not ensure growth in maturity (n. 273).



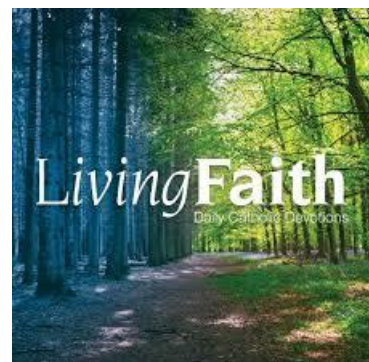
**The Importance of Family Life:** The family is the first school of human values, where we learn the wise use of freedom. Certain inclinations develop in childhood and become so deeply rooted that they remain throughout life, either as attractions to a particular value or a natural repugnance to certain ways of acting (n. 274). . . . One of the most important tasks of families is to provide an education in hope. . . . When children or adolescents are not helped to realize that some things have to be waited for, they can become obsessed with satisfying their immediate needs and develop the vice of “wanting it all now.” This is a grand illusion which does not favour freedom but weakens it. On the other hand, when we are taught to postpone some things until the right moment, we learn self-mastery and detachment from our impulses. When children realize that they have to be responsible for themselves, their self-esteem is enriched. This in turn teaches them to respect the freedom of others (n. 275).

**The Need for Sex Education:** The Second Vatican Council spoke of the need for “a positive and prudent sex education” to be imparted to children and adolescents. . . . It is not easy to approach the issue of sex education in an age when sexuality tends to be trivialized and impoverished. It can only be seen within the broader framework of an education for love, for mutual self-giving. In such a way, the language of sexuality would not be sadly impoverished but illuminated and enriched. The sexual urge can be directed through a process of growth in self-knowledge and self-control capable of nurturing valuable capacities for joy and for loving encounter (n. 280). Young people need to realize that they are bombarded by messages that are not beneficial for their growth towards maturity. They should be helped to recognize and to seek out positive influences, while shunning the things that cripple their capacity for love (n. 281).

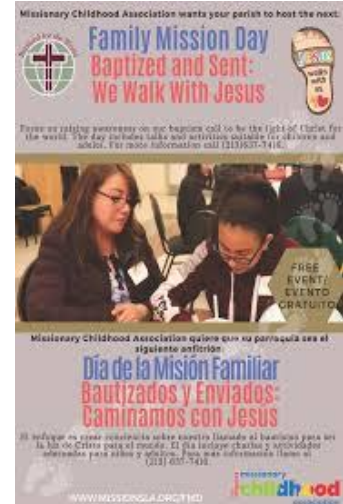
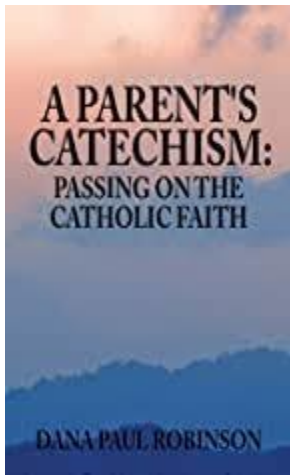
**Passing on the Faith:** Raising children calls for an orderly process of handing on the Faith. This is made difficult by current lifestyles, work schedules and the complexity of today’s world. . . Even so, the home must continue to be the place where we learn to appreciate the meaning and beauty of the Faith, to pray and to serve our neighbour. . . Handing on the faith presumes that parents themselves genuinely trust God, seek Him and sense their need for Him . . . (n. 287). Children need symbols, actions, and stories. Since adolescents usually have issues with authority and rules, it is best to encourage their own experience of faith and to provide them with attractive testimonies that win them over by their sheer beauty.



. . . It is essential that children see that, for their parents, prayer is something truly important. Hence moments of family prayer and acts of devotion can be more powerful for evangelization than any catechism class or sermon (n. 288). In all families the Good News needs to resound, in good times and in bad, as a source of light along the way. All of us should be able to say, thanks to the experience of our life in the family: “We come to believe in the love that God has for us” (1 Jn. 4:16).”







## ***SOME PRAYERS ON VIRTUES***

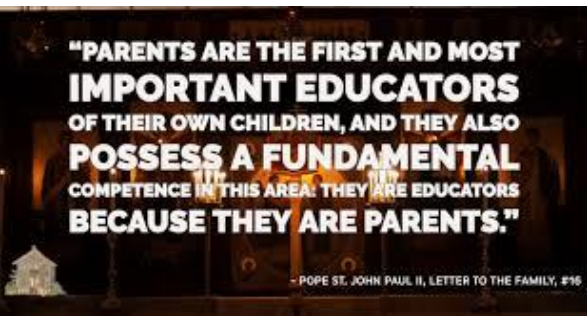
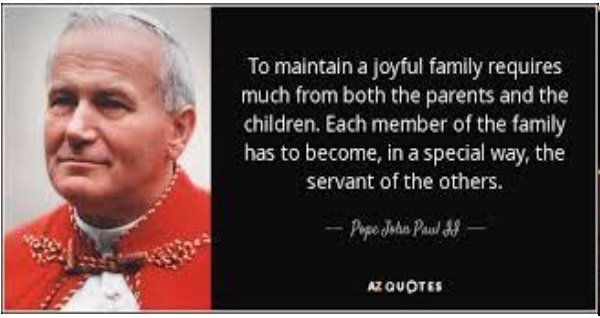
### **A Prayer for the Virtue of Honesty**

Jesus, Prince of all Heavenly truths, Your Words are carved for eternity! You have commanded the virtue of honesty, It is the power against all deceptions. Direct Your Spirit of honesty upon me, That by soul may always remain stainless. Guide my daily thoughts, words and actions, To join those living by the Spirit of truth. For honesty yields harmony and loyalty, Enriching all human relationships. By the power of Your Spirit that flourishes, Honesty will prevail in this world!

**A Prayer for the Virtue of Patience:** Patience is a virtue of the Lord: He awaits the return of His children. Forgive my trespasses Oh Lord Jesus, For many times have I tested You. I deserved the wrath of Your hand, But You saw greater things for me: Your patience has been enormous! Grant me a droplet of such endurance, That I may abolish my impious impatience, Refraining from using unpleasant words, And always reflecting Your serenity. Great is the Lord Jesus in His ways!

**A Prayer for the Virtue of Respect:** I genuflect before You Honourable Jesus, Respecting Your Will, Plan and Judgment! You overcame earthly evil temptations, Maintaining Self-respect to the end. Jesus, You are my code of conduct; I strive to comply with Your precepts. Teach me all I need to know about respect, Its mastery being my long-term objective. May this include learning to listen, Allowing others to share their opinions. May my respect towards other humans Truly reflect Your love towards all! ([Virtue Prayers - Prayers - Catholic Online](#))





**CONTACT CCSJ:**

Office: 622 6680

Episcopal Delegate for Social Justice/ Chair of CCSJ: Leela Ramdeen: 299-8945

E-mail: [socialjustice@catholicct.org](mailto:socialjustice@catholicct.org)

Website: <http://rcsocialjusticett.org>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ccsjtt>