

# Partners in FAITH™



Helping our children grow in their Catholic faith.

March 2025

St. Aloysius Catholic Church/School

Rev. Tom McQuillen, Pastor Mrs. Andrea Puhl, Principal Ms. Denise Brennan, Religious Education



## Thoughtful Moments

### St. Agnes of Bohemia

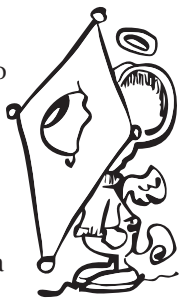
St. Agnes was born a princess of Bohemia, expected to marry another royal. She was offered in marriage to kings and an emperor, but her heart belonged to the King of Heaven. With the help of Pope Gregory IX, she was freed to enter religious life. In 1236, Agnes joined seven noblewomen in entering a Poor Clare monastery in Prague. She became known for her dedication to prayer, obedience, and humility. Her religious sisters valued her kindness.



### St. Joseph, pray for us!

Although Scripture preserves his silence, St. Joseph's actions speak volumes about faith, courage, and devotion. Chosen by God to safeguard His Son and the Blessed Mother, St. Joseph's quiet strength and humble obedience inspire us to follow his example of faith, devotion and integrity.

"I have never known anyone who ... honored [St. Joseph] by particular services who did not advance greatly in virtue." —St. Teresa of Avila



## Guide children to "the way, the truth, and the life"

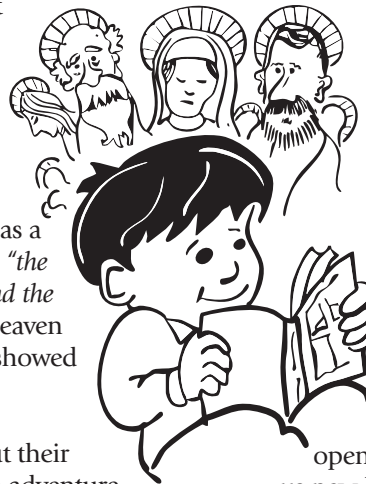
For children, penance can feel like punishment—a chore they'd rather skip. But Lent isn't about punishment; it's about beginning a journey that leads to the joy of Easter. To help children rethink the gift of Lent, try framing it as a path to discovering "the way and the truth and the life" that leads to Heaven (John 14:6). Jesus showed us how.

**The Way** – Invite children to map out their own 40-day Lenten adventure. Instead of one long sacrifice, let them choose several short-term challenges. Plan days of "fasting" from a favorite snack or screen time, days of "abstaining" from habits like arguing or complaining, and days focused on

prayer and good deeds. This keeps the journey dynamic and meaningful.

**The Truth** – Explore the true meaning of discipleship by discovering stories of those who followed Jesus wholeheartedly. Read about saints or biblical heroes who allowed God to work through them, transforming ordinary lives into extraordinary legacies. These stories can inspire children to see God's potential in themselves.

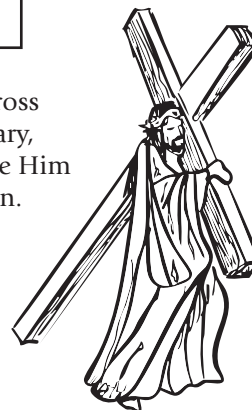
**The Life** – On Easter, Jesus opened the doors to Heaven, offering us new life. Every Mass is a chance to receive that life in Holy Communion. Encourage children to carry their Lenten lessons forward—speaking kindly, helping others, and deepening their prayer life—to preserve and celebrate their "new life" in Christ.



## Why Do Catholics Do That?

### Why do Catholics pray the Stations of the Cross?

The Stations of the Cross trace Jesus' steps to Calvary, inviting us to walk beside Him and reflect on His Passion. This "mini pilgrimage," especially meaningful during Lent, reveals the cost of our sins and the depth of God's love

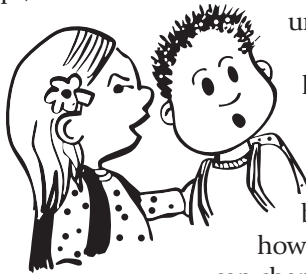


(John 3:16). As we meditate on Christ's suffering, we are called to unite our own struggles with His redemptive sacrifice. In this shared journey, pain finds purpose, and death is transformed by the promise of Resurrection and eternal life.

## Avoiding the slippery slope of gossip

Gossip is a common problem — even among children. It destroys reputations and relationships, sometimes beyond repair. As Christ's followers, we are called to speak charitably, whether the other person is around or not. Teach children to fight the destructive sin of gossip:

**Avoid complaining about others:** It's fine to "let off steam" — for example, "I'm tired of having to remind Katie about our group project" — but it's a slippery slope to detraction and gossip: "Katie is such a ditz.



You'll want to avoid working with her." Encourage children to focus on problem solving rather than blaming. It's unproductive and never ends well.

**Keep confidences:** When youngsters are asked to keep something a secret "between you and me," nine times out of ten, it needs to stay that way (unless it's an emergency). Good friends keep confidences.

**Stand up for others:** No one deserves to be bad-mouthed behind their backs. Coach children on how to respond when conversations turn to gossip: they can change subjects, politely ask to stop, or leave.

### Scripture LESSON

## John 9:1-41, Faith is spiritual vision

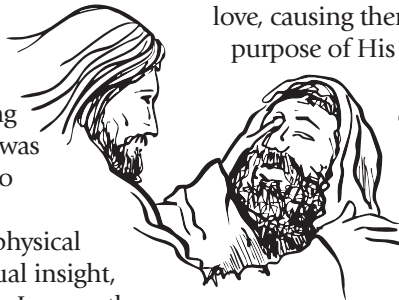
When Jesus met a blind beggar, His disciples asked if the man's suffering was due to his sins or his parents' sins, believing suffering was always a punishment. Jesus corrected them, explaining that the man's blindness was not for punishment but to reveal God's power. Jesus restored the man's physical sight and gave him spiritual insight, allowing him to recognize Jesus as the Son of God. His faith inspired others to believe in Jesus.

However, the Pharisees were divided. Some were impressed because they saw God at work in Jesus, while others

condemned Him for healing on the Sabbath. Their strict focus on the Law blinded them to God's mercy and love, causing them to miss the true purpose of His Commandments.

*What can a parent do?* In Baptism, we receive the gift of faith—the ability to trust God's love and plan, even in suffering. The more we follow Jesus, the

more we see as He does. Regular Mass, Confession, and daily prayer help us strengthen this spiritual vision and better understand God's purpose in our lives.



### Feasts & Celebrations

**March 3 – St. Katharine Drexel (1955).** A Philadelphia heiress, Katharine Drexel became a nun and used her inheritance to establish the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament to minister to African and Native American peoples.

**March 5 – Ash Wednesday:** The first day of Lent. Ashes of old palms are placed on the forehead, as a sign of penance. It's also a day of abstinence from meat and fasting – one regular meal and two small meals that together don't equal a full meal.

**March 7 – Saints Perpetua and Felicity (203).** Perpetua was a young mother and Carthaginian noblewoman who refused to renounce her faith. Felicity was a slave and expectant mother who also refused to deny her faith in Christ. Both were martyred.

**March 17 – St. Patrick of Ireland (c.461).** Born in Scotland, St. Patrick was kidnapped by pirates and brought to Ireland as a slave. He escaped but later returned to become the first bishop of Ireland. He is credited for having established the Church there.



### Parent TALK

Lent had become routine for our family. We'd given up chocolate, TV, and video games so many times that it

felt more like a chore

than a spiritual journey. We needed a fresh approach.

Then, inspiration struck: a good deeds competition. I bought a giant roll of tickets and set up



four jars—one for each of us. The rules were simple: do a good deed, earn a ticket. Make it anonymous, earn two.

Halfway through Lent, we counted the tickets. The person who had the most chose where we went for Sunday brunch. We repeated this on Easter Sunday.

It was a game-changer. Lent became a season of sacrifice, kindness, and generosity. The kids were excited to find ways to help each other secretly, and our home was filled with unexpected acts of love. It turned out to be one of our most meaningful and fruitful Lenten seasons.

### Our Mission

To help parents raise faithful Catholic children  
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