

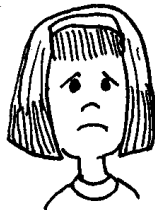


Thoughtful Moments

Don't rush to rescue

Many parents don't want their children to experience sadness, frustration, or discomfort. In fact, these emotions can be valuable teachers for our youngsters.

Avoid rescuing your children when they make a bad choice. Holding them accountable for what they do is the best way to teach responsibility.



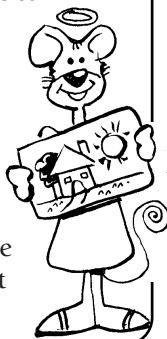
Servanthood

According to Jesus, the greatest are those who give themselves to God and others. Teach children to serve by assigning age-appropriate chores, asking them to help, or encouraging thoughtful acts. Older children can volunteer for your parish, their school, or another worthy charity.

Kind rules

Household rules help parents to peacefully discipline. Setting rules lets children know what is expected of them and how they are to behave.

Someone is going to discipline our children. Either we can do it while they're young or an employer or teacher will do it when they're older. Parents are a better choice because we discipline out of love.

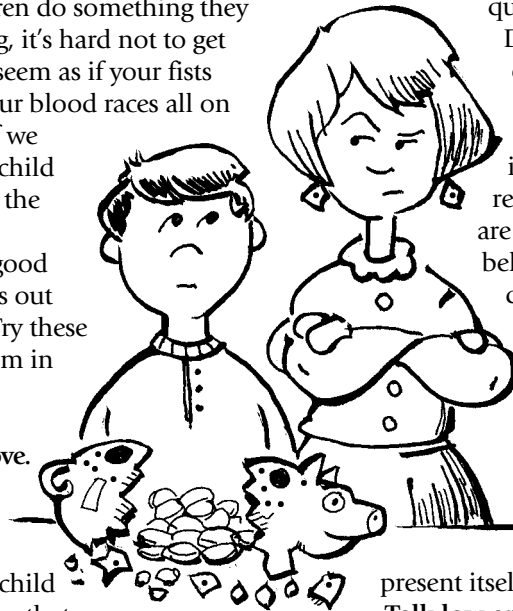


Stay calm and cool under parenting fire

When children do something they know is wrong, it's hard not to get angry. It may seem as if your fists clench and your blood races all on its own. Yet, if we get angry, the child will get upset, the matter could escalate, and good discipline goes out the window. Try these tips to stay calm in the face of disobedience:

Start with love. Say "I love you," right away so that you and your child both remember that what you do next flows from your love as a parent and God's love for you both.

Act early. Don't allow an exchange to become a debate, negotiation, or argument. To keep frustration lower, act



quickly in the event chain. Discipline before the exchange takes off.

Take time. It's not as important to react immediately as it is to react appropriately. If you are surprised by a new behavior or if a solution doesn't come quickly to mind, take some time to think about it. Putting time and distance between the misconduct and your response can calm the emotions and a good resolution may

present itself.

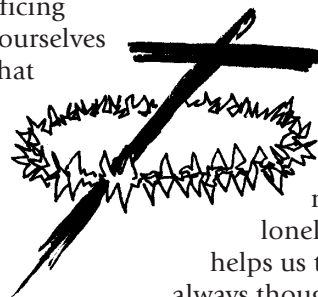
Talk low and slow. No matter how you feel, lower your voice. Speak clearly and quietly. This is especially effective if your child is already upset. Keeping the volume down will help calm the situation.

Why Do Catholics Do That?

Why do we make sacrifices during Lent?

One purpose of sacrificing during Lent is to deny ourselves "things" of the world that may distract us from thinking about God. Making Lenten sacrifices also teaches children self-control and self-denial.

Some sacrifices



that the Church recommends during Lent are prayer, fasting, and works of charity. These deeds can help rid us of our selfishness and make us more attuned to poor and lonely people around us. And that helps us to be more like Jesus who always thought of others before himself.

Family Blessings

Blessing objects we use each day turns ordinary items into holy objects dedicated to God. Such blessings can help children see that pets, homes, cars, and bedrooms can become holy things and holy places that remind us God's love is all around.

Why bless? Dedicating every day things to God's use is one way to teach children that they themselves have the power to bless. Then they can make their own little corners of the world holy.

What to bless? Bless people, events, places, and objects – and especially that which is important to

you and your family. For example, a new car, a favorite toy, a family pet, or even special rooms in your home can be blessed and dedicated to God's use.

Prayers to use. A blessing does not have to involve books or formula prayers. In fact, families can design their own blessings using intentions or prayers that are special to them. For ideas and guidance, refer to *Catholic Household Blessings and Prayers*

(www.usccbpublishing.org, 800-235-8722).

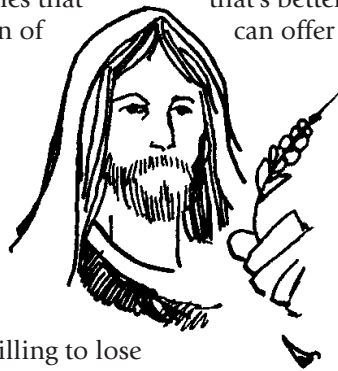


Scripture LESSON

John 12:20-33, obedient like Jesus

Being a follower of Christ can be hard. Jesus told his disciples that it's similar to being a grain of wheat. Like most seeds, it has to die in order to produce new life. For us that means being less concerned about what we want and more concerned about what God wants.

Jesus said that we must "hate" our lives and be willing to lose them so that we can live. He meant that we have to push aside our attachment to possessions, concern for our own pleasure, and worry about how others see us so that we can serve God properly.



Serving God brings eternal life and that's better than anything the world can offer us.

Jesus knew he would be crucified and, being human, he dreaded it. He also knew that God sent him here to pay the price for our sins, so Jesus said "no" to what he wanted and obeyed his Father.

What can a parent do? Help children

understand that obeying God is more important than anything the world can give us – and the reward lasts forever.

Parent TALK

From birth my daughter, Tessa, has had a paralyzed right arm. No feeling. No movement. Many times I have

begged God to cure her arm so she can function "normally."

One day she fell and badly broke her paralyzed arm.

Doctors at our local hospital were baffled by both her injury and her paralysis.

They prodded her arm in ways that would



have tormented someone with sensation. Tessa didn't make a sound.

That night we ended our prayers with our usual plea, "Please, dear Lord, give us a cure for Tessa's arm." Tessa said, "It's a good thing God said, 'no,' huh?" At my puzzled look she said, "Well, if he fixed my arm, that would have just hurt a whole lot. Guess he's smarter than we are." Trust a child to see clear through to God's purpose; "... *the kingdom of God belongs to such as these*" (Mark 10:14).

Feasts & Celebrations

March 7 – Sts. Perpetua and Felicity (203). Perpetua was a noble young mother who refused to renounce her faith. Felicity was a slave and expectant mother who also refused to deny her Christianity. Felicity gave birth and both women were martyred three days later.

March 9 – St. Frances of Rome (1440). Although she preferred a life of service, Frances' wealthy parents required that she marry. With a sister-in-law, Frances formed a group of women dedicated to serving the poor. Frances honored her husband and

cared for her children until their deaths, and heroically served the poor and sick.

March 17 – St. Patrick (493). Born in Scotland, St. Patrick was kidnapped and brought to Ireland as a slave. He escaped but later returned to become the bishop of Ireland and is credited for having established the Church there.

March 19 – St. Joseph (1st century). Jesus' earthly father and husband to the Blessed Mother, St. Joseph is a model of fatherhood and a protector of families.



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