

The Collection Basket



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IDEAS FOR LIVING BETTER FROM THE FAMILY LIFE OFFICE

Family Ritual

For several months now, new Christians have been preparing to be entered into the Church Family in your parish at the Easter Vigil.

- Welcome them by making a card, crafting a cross, or by some other kind deed to let them know you and your family are thinking of them.
- Get their names from the parish office and pray for them daily.

Dying to Self

When you are forgotten or neglected and you don't hurt with the insult, but your heart is happy—that is dying to self.

When your advice is disregarded, your opinions ridiculed, and you refuse to let anger rise in your heart, and take it all in patient, loving silence—that is dying to self.

When you lovingly and patiently bear disorder, irregularity, tardiness, and annoyance...and endure it as Jesus endured it—that is dying to self.

When you never care to refer to yourself in conversation or record your own good works, or itch for praise after an accomplishment, when you can truly love to be unknown—that is dying to self.

When you can see your brother or sister prosper and can honestly rejoice with them, and feel no envy even though your needs are greater—that is dying to self.

When you are content with any food, any offering, any raiment, any climate, or any society—that is dying to self.

When you can take correction, when you can humbly submit inwardly as well as outwardly, with no rebellion or resentment rising up within your heart—that is dying to self.

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"Apple Seeds"

Fr. Brian Cavanaugh, T.O.R.

Spring into Light

On the first day of Spring, the northern world officially moves from the season of darkness into the season of light. We are called to be "children of light." Like the Spring, we are called to be people of hope, new life and warmth. The warmer sun is a key element in the appearance now of flowers, green grass, blossoms and all the preparations for crops.

Not many years ago, the first week of Spring contained three days of fast and abstinence. They were called Ember Days. In many rural areas, the farm fields were blessed on these days so that the crops would be plentiful. The Fast was to remind us all of the value of food—the gift of food that had sustained us through the long winter months—and the value of the labors that would bring more crops later in the year. Something of these old traditions can easily be celebrated in our homes today.

If you have a garden, this would be a good day to bless it with a prayer that might also be used as a meal prayer also.



God our Creator, maker of all things, help us grow in our appreciation for the good earth You have given us. We thank You for all the gifts of food You have given from the garden to the table. Today, we ask You to bless it still with many new and vibrant forms of life in food that will sustain us. Grant this through Jesus, our Savior. Amen.

Adapted from the booklet published by the Family Life Office entitled "A CHANGE OF HEART—Lent and Easter at Home."

Where there is doubt - Let me sow faith

Some doubt your existence or your goodness, Lord.

Teach me to bring peace, to assure others

You are with us and for us!

Families and the Gospel

March 3

Luke 6:39-45

Today Jesus tells us: "Why do you see the speck in someone else's eye but miss the log in your own eye?" It's always easier to try to change someone else than face the things in ourselves which need change. What a waste of time for we can't change anyone but ourselves.

March 10

Luke 4:1-13

Jesus "was led by the Spirit in the wilderness." What is the wilderness in your life to which the Holy Spirit is leading you this Lent? Perhaps there are uncharted areas in your marriage or family relationships. Spend this Lent in your "wilderness" with God. Where is the Spirit leading you.

March 17

Luke 9:28b-36

Jesus "went up the mountain to pray" and he was "changed." Prayer has the power to change us. This Lent set aside a few minutes each day to pray for members of your family. Pray before each meal and if you are married, spend five minutes in prayer together.

March 24

Luke 13:1-9

The owner of the fig tree was impatient because the tree did not live up to his expectations. In families there are those who don't live up to our expectations. Imitate the gardener and give them more time and help. Don't cut them out of your life. Love asks us to be connected, not productive.

March 31

Luke 15:1-3, 11-32

We may feel like the Prodigal Son but the gospel wants us to focus on the father who was forgiving and understanding. We all make mistakes and need forgiveness. Who in your family needs your forgiveness and acceptance this Lent?

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A Family Perspective by Bud Ozar



Where to Turn in the Bible for Prayer

Where do you go when you want to pray with the Bible?

When you are not sure what to do.

Matt. 22:34-40; 25:31-46; Eph. 4:25-32.

When you are anxious for someone you love.

Luke 12:22-34; John 17.

When you need to forgive.

Matt 5:43-48; Luke 23:34

When you need to be forgiven

Ps 51; Isaiah 53; Matt 16:18-19

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Family Music Time

More adults should start music lessons with their children because making music is so much fun.

However, a family doesn't have to play to enjoy music.

Get two or three copies of songbooks so that everyone has the words and can follow along.

Even in families where no one can carry a tune, the rhythmic elements of music can be enjoyed. Get up a family rhythm band with an empty oil drum, washboards, pots & pans, spoons and the like for instruments. Put on a song and go with the beat.

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A Lenten Reflection

By Mary Carol Kendzia

Whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites; When you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face. —Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18

A few years back, Bobby McFerrin sang "Don't worry, be happy." This could well be our theme song for Lent. Jesus tells us that when we undertake the three key Lenten practices—to fast, pray and give alms—we should smile and go about our work without a grand show of self-righteousness. "Do not let your left hand know what the right hand is doing."

Traditionally, Lent is a time of penance and increased self-discipline. And yet, in the midst of this, Lent can still be a time of joy. It is a time to devote our hearts and minds to becoming better Christians. It is a time to lay down our worldly burdens and put on the robes of reconciliation. It is a time to take on an attitude of simplicity in our everyday life, a time to move closer to God with our family. Most of all, it is a time to say, "Don't worry. God will provide." And that is great cause for happiness.

Leader: Lord, you watch over us and provide for us every minute of our lives. Teach us not to worry, and to trust in your everlasting care.

All: Jesus, fill our hearts with the joy of your love.

Leader: Jesus, you offer us everlasting life, a gift more precious than anything money can buy.

All: We thank you, Jesus, for your kindness and goodness.

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