

The Collection Basket



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IDEAS FOR LIVING BETTER FROM THE FAMILY LIFE OFFICE

Family Ritual

Make Decorating Easter eggs as Family project. Involve everyone including grandparents. Have the grandparents talk about all the different ways they colored Easter eggs throughout their life time. This can be a teaching time as well as fun for all the family members.



A Time to Grow

Lent is a time to grow in our faith and in our spirituality. Here are some family ideas for Lenten practices:

- Eat pancakes on Tuesdays throughout Lent. Put the equivalent of the money you save with this simple meal into your mite box or rice bowl.
- Offer a smile and warm greeting to a person that you usually criticize or regard with dislike.
- Visually fast by putting away a favorite knickknack or decoration, and leaving the space open.
- Volunteer to help do spring cleaning in a public space, for example, a park building or street.
- Increase the time you spend on family prayer.
- Take fifteen minutes or so every evening to read aloud with your family from the Bible or a spiritual book.
- Fast from a certain food throughout Lent, and donate that item to a food pantry or soup kit.

-Shiela Kielly and Sheila Geraghty

The Church's official Easter celebration is the Easter Vigil on Saturday night.

The themes of the ceremony focus on **LIGHT** that drives out darkness and **WATER** that brings new life. Christ is seen as the light of the world. At the ceremony, a large candle represents Christ. It is carried into darkened Church at the beginning, All present have received smaller candles and they are lit from the Christ Candle to show what can happen to a dark world when Christ enters with His own message of peace and meaningful life of love. It is called the Paschal or "Passover" Candle—the passage from one life to another. This is what Lent is all about—Easter and New Life!

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

Going the Second Mile

A farmer left his son to plow a large field, instructing him to plow out the peach trees and try to finish the job by the end of the day.

When the farmer returned that evening, he discovered that his son had plowed all the way out to the road, far beyond the peach trees. It was almost twice the amount of work he had expected his son to do. When he asked his son about it, the boy replied. "Dad, I plowed out to the peach tree because you told me to. But I plowed on out to the road because I wanted to."

The *wanted to* in this boy's response is the language of genuine love. Only the love of Christ within us can compel us to go beyond the requirements and give more than expected. Christians should pray daily for the love of Christ to direct us in all our dealings with others.

"And whoever compels you to go one mile," Jesus taught, "go with him two." (Matt. 5:41).

Clip-Art Features for Church
Newsletter 4
George W. Knight, Compiler
Howard Paris, Illustrator



Families and the Gospel

April 7

John 8:1-11

Stoning is not just an ancient act of violence. Each day in our homes we throw stones of ridicule, criticism, name-calling and put-downs. All of it is deadly. Hear Jesus in today's gospel: "Whoever is without sin can throw the first stone." Rid your home of violence. Stop verbal stoning!

April 14

Luke 22:14-23:56

Today Jesus tells us "I am among you as one who serves." In accepting the palm branch today you publicly confirm your baptismal promise to follow Jesus as "one who serves." Selfless service defines a family as Christian.

April 21

John 20:1-9

Millions of Christians around the world celebrate the Resurrection today. It all began simply on the first Easter with one person telling another: "Mary told Peter" and "they believed." Faith is passed one person to another; it is caught, not taught and parents are the most effective persons to pass faith to their children.

April 28

John 20:19-31

Jesus connects PEACE and FORGIVENESS in today's gospel. In our families we will only experience peace to the extent we forgive one another. Peace is purchased with the currency of forgiveness. When we allow our anger and pride to lock out others, we also lock out peace and harmony.



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A Family Perspective by Bud Ozar

MY DIFFICULT WORD

By Steve Goodier

An office reported that they have an answering machine that instructs callers to leave their name and address, and spell any difficult words.

Early on Monday morning when the secretary was reviewing the weekend messages, she heard an enthusiastic young woman recite her name and address and then confidently say "My difficult word is R-e-c-o-n-c-i-l-i-a-t-i-o-n—reconciliation."

Everyone is a comic! But in another sense, reconciliation is a difficult word. If not difficult to spell, then difficult to carry out. Also difficult is saying, "I'm sorry," or "I forgive you."

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TRANSFORMATION TO NEW LIFE

By Cecil B. Mille (adapted)

"What a great afternoon this is," thought the young boy. "Grandpa and me fishing all by ourselves." The two of them just talked and fished, and aimlessly drifted in a rowboat on a lake. The boy became restless—normal for a boy—and learned over the side to look into the water. There just beneath the surface, a bunch of water beetles were flitting around as if they were playing.

Suddenly one of the water beetles crawled up on the oar. When it got halfway up, it attached the talons of its legs to the wooden oar and died. The boy's curiosity was aroused and he interrupted his grandfather's nap to show him. Then they went back to fishing.

About three hours later, the boy looked down at the dead beetle. What he saw caused him to jump, almost tipping the boat. The beetle had dried up and its shell started to crack open. Both the astonished grandfather and the boy watched silently at what unfolded before their eyes.

Something began to emerge from the opening: first long tentacles, then a head, then moist wings until, finally, a beautiful dragonfly fully emerged.

They both stared in awe. The dragonfly began to move its wings, slowly at first. Then it hovered gracefully over the water where the other water beetles were still fitting around. They didn't realize that it was the same beetle they had played with some three hours earlier.

The boy took his finger and nudged the dried-out shell of the beetle. It was like an empty tomb.

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**"Father of Life, you have given us an
amazing human family.**

**Within this family is so
much diversity and yet all
of us are your own.**

**Give us the insight and
courage to love another as
you love us."**



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