

The **COLLECTION** Basket



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IDEAS FOR LIVING BETTER FROM THE FAMILY LIFE OFFICE

Family Ritual

New Years Resolutions...many have stopped making them because we're used to breaking them. But some resolutions are important to make and keep, as well as to improve on. Too often, we've become too busy to focus on what matters most. One such resolution is to spend more time with your family. Resolve to give each child in your family at least ten minutes of uninterrupted, focused, one-on-one time every day. Also, try to have at least one "Family Night" a month, if not every week. At mealtimes, put away all electronics and look each other in the eye as you talk about your day. And pray as a family at least once every day. These little resolutions will go a long way toward a stronger family. Happy New Year!

Andre McCarville
Director of Family Life and Missions
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JESUS REMAINS

"Long after the angels disappear into the heavens, the shepherds return to their flocks, the magi journey home and the great star sets, **Jesus remains.**

The Child in whom we rediscover God's great love for humanity becomes the adult Redeemer who challenges us to imitate his selflessness and compassion in order that we might transform our world in love...

May we allow the miracle of Christmas to continue long after the holiday trappings have been packed away; may we welcome the adult Messiah and his challenging Gospel to recreate our lives, making the peace, justice and hope of this holy season a reality in every season of the new year."

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The Power of Persuasion

"Thomas Aquinas, who knew more about education and persuasion than almost anybody who ever lived, once said that when you want to convert someone to your view, you go over to where he is standing, take him (mentally speaking), and **guide** him.

You don't stand across the room and shout at him; you don't call him a dummy; you don't order him to come over to where you are. You start where he is, and work from that position. That's the only way to get him to **guide** him."
[Sydney J. Harris](#)

A NEW YEAR by William Arthur Ward

**Another fresh new year is here...
Another year to live!
To banish worry, doubt, and
fear,
To love and laugh and give!**

**This bright new year is given
me
To live each day with zest...
To daily grow and try to be
My highest and my best!**

**I have the opportunity
Once more to right some
wrongs,
To pray for peace, to plant a
tree,
And sing more joyful songs!**

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Families and the Gospel

January 5
Epiphany

Matthew 2:1-12

Today's gospel tells us "all Jerusalem" was upset because "King Herod was deeply troubled." A similar ripple effect happens in families; one person's negative attitude can affect the whole family. If you want a peaceful and joyful home, it must start with you. Be peaceful and joyful!

January 12

Baptism of the Lord

Matthew 3:13-17

The words in today's gospel, "This is my beloved, with Him I am pleased" are words every child needs to hear often. Affirmation is important to raise happy and confident children.

January 19

John 1:29-34

Can you say "I have testified Jesus is the Son of God?" If you aren't talking about Jesus in your family, you aren't testifying. If you are not walking your talk, your children will see your words as meaningless.

January 26

Matthew 4:12--23

When Jesus called his disciples, they came "immediately." Parents wish their children would respond as quickly, but they don't. Children grow slowly into responsibility. It is a process like walking, not done "immediately", but in small steps. Parenting demands patient encouragement.

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A Family Perspective by Bud Ozar

Distinctly Catholic

Many people view the World as good and holy. Catholics call this a "sacramental worldview." Finding God in all creation and within all human experience. What sets Catholics apart is how we celebrate and ritualize certain life moments as sacraments.

In our sacraments we celebrate the invisible God made visible in human life and simple symbols. We celebrate the Incarnation- "God with us."

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ST. THOMAS AQUINAS

It is difficult not to use superlatives when speaking of **St. Thomas Aquinas**, one of the greatest and most influential theologians the



Church has known. Yet there was a simple, humble side to the man who is honored with the title of **Doctor of the Church**.

Born in southern Italy (January 28, 1225) into a prosperous family, Thomas was a quiet boy and a gifted student. His parents, hopeful he would join an established and highly regarded Benedictine monastery, were devastated when he announced his decision to join the newly established **Dominican Order**. His brothers were sent to kidnap him and held him for more than a year before relenting. *Editor's note: I read that his Mom helped him to escape; she purposely left a window unlocked for him to exit from and he ran off to meet Dominican friars.*

He proceeded to Paris, France and to Koln, Germany, where he studied under (St.) Albert the Great and astonished his teachers with his intellectual gifts and his skills in teaching, writing and preaching. Following ordination, Thomas began work on his masterpiece, ***The Summa Theologica***, a systematic explanation of the Catholic faith. Rather than simply appeal to authority or refuse to entertain objections, Thomas explored other points of view, including those of the "pagan" Aristotle as well as scholars of other faiths.

A man of great holiness too, Thomas mysteriously and abruptly stopped work on his *Summa* in late 1273. he seems to have had a mystical experience while celebrating Mass. "I cannot go on," he said. "All that I have written seems to me like so much straw compared to what I have seen and what has been revealed to me."

While on his way to the Council of Lyons several months later, Thomas Aquinas, 49, fell ill and died. He was canonized almost 50 years later. He is the patron of Catholic universities and students. His feast day is **January 28**.

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