

The **COLLECTION** Basket



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IDEAS FOR LIVING BETTER FROM THE FAMILY LIFE OFFICE



Family Ritual

A Winter Picnic

When your family has the “winter blahs” you might surprise them with a winter picnic right at home to lift their spirits. Eat traditional picnic foods from your picnic basket. Be sure to cover your table with a summer picnic tablecloth. To make the atmosphere complete, cut out tiny ants from black construction paper and place on the table!

Excerpted from Ordinary Times
For sale by the Family Life Office
(814) 695-5579

Ordinary Times in the Life of a Family

Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. — Galatians 6:2

God created each of us as unique individuals, but that doesn't mean He intended for us to make our way in this world on our own. Just as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are in relationship with each other, so we human beings are meant to live in loving fellowship with those around us. And when hard times come, we can bear those burdens together with divine grace.

Permission granted The Christophers
<https://www.christophers.org/>

Happy
Valentine's
Day



“For the love of God is this, that we keep his commandments.” 1 John 5:3

The sixth commandment in the Bible is found in Exodus 20:13 and tells us, “Thou shall not kill.” Abortion, euthanasia and physician assisted suicide is not health care, it is taking the life of the most vulnerable human beings. As Catholics, we believe that life begins at the moment of conception and ends at the moment of natural death. We must respect and love all life, especially the most vulnerable, and continue to pray for an end to abortion, euthanasia and physician assisted suicide. We must love one another as God loves us.

“Beloved, Let us love one another.” 1 John 4:7

The Respect Life Committee of the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown is committed to creating a culture of life throughout the diocese by supporting respect life programs and developing new ones.

For more information on the Respect Life Committee and how you can get involved in Pro-life activities in the diocese, please contact:
RespectLifegm@gmail.com

Families and the Gospel

Fourth Sunday 2/1/2026

Matthew 5:1-12

It is in our family where we learn to be merciful and comforting to others. The Beatitudes of the Kingdom of God begin at home and depend on you. Parents lead the way.

Fifth Sunday 2/8/2026

Matthew 5:13-16

Today's gospel challenges us to be a "light" to our family. Parents shine their guiding light, not in front but behind them, inviting their children to follow their "good deeds."

Sixth Sunday 2/15/2026

Matthew 5:17-37

To experience the peace which Christ promises we must shed our grudges, jealousy and feelings of being misunderstood, unappreciated or ignored. Peace and anger don't mix. Today's gospel warns, if you want peace in your heart and home, get rid of your anger. Anger is too costly.

LENT

First Sunday of Lent 2/22/2026 Matthew 4:1-11

In today's gospel Jesus cautions it is not enough to provide food for our children; "one does not live on bread alone." Let Lent 2026 be a time when you are "led by the Spirit" to explore new ways to be a moral guide to your children.

Permission granted from *A Family Perspective*
By Bud Ozar

A Guide to Catholic Fasting



There is great wisdom in the Christian practice of fasting—even though its benefits are largely forgotten. Fasting is a spiritual exercise, and as such is primarily an action of the inner life. Authentic fasting draws us nearer to God and opens our hearts to receive his many gifts.

Fasting is also a sharp reminder that there are more important things in life than food. Authentic Christian fasting helps to release us from our attachments to the things of this world. It is often these worldly attachments that prevent us from becoming the-best-version-of-ourselves. Fasting also serves as a reminder that everything in this world is passing and thus encourages us to consider life beyond death.

On Ash Wednesday, you can get your forehead blessed with ashes at Mass or a prayer service. These ashes are a reminder that we need to repent.

Try going without food for several hours and you will quickly realize how truly weak, fragile, and dependent we are. This self-knowledge strips away arrogance and fosters a loving acknowledgment of our utter dependence on God.

Once you realize the spiritual power of fasting, you'll notice that it can be applied to aspects of life beyond food. You can fast from TV, social media, cursing, gossip, or any other habit that doesn't feed your soul.

This Lent, make a point to rediscover the power of fasting in your life!

More at [Catholic Fasting and Abstinence Guide 2026](#) | [Dynamic Catholic](#)

www.dynamiccatholic.com

