

# The **COLLECTION** Basket



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## IDEAS FOR LIVING BETTER FROM THE FAMILY LIFE OFFICE

### Family Ritual

Place a picture of Jesus on a table. Invite everyone to bring a favorite stuffed animal and sit around that table. Imagine that Jesus is holding you on his lap just as you are holding your animal.

Be very quiet for a moment and try to feel the warm and tender way Jesus is holding you. Look at the picture and each of you thank Jesus for His love.



### Rituals Help to Form Children

Catholicism is steeped in ritual. We love the breaking of bread, splash of water, blazing Easter fire and smell of the oil of chrism. Every sacrament has “outward signs” because the Church understands that these signs and rituals teach faith in a way that words cannot. The Holy Spirit takes ordinary things and gives them power and sacred meaning.

When we introduce children to sacred signs, something wonderful happens: They embrace the action and sense the grace imparted without any explanation. When we bury our beloved old dog with a tender prayer and a good cry, the good-bye becomes sacred and comforting.

Parents are the guideposts of faith. A fun way to guide our children into this mystery is by celebrating the seasons, saints and liturgical year at home. There are excellent resources available to enhance a Catholic family’s faith formation with rituals and prayers that help immerse children in Catholic tradition. Each week choose something that works with your schedules. Celebrate Mary’s birthday with a blue cake. Wear crosses and learn about the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. On October 4th, feast of Saint Francis of Assisi, get a new puppy. Name it Francis!

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### Brighten Your Corner

By William Arthur Ward

*During the Fall season of bright colors— oranges, reds, yellows and golds, why not try to brighten our lives as well!!*

Brighten your corner with Gratitude;

It is the candle of contentment.

Brighten your corner with Kindness;

It is the flame of friendship.

Brighten your corner with Cheerfulness;

It is the light of good will.

Brighten your corner with Joy;

It is the window to health.

Brighten your corner with Humor;

It is the sunshine of the soul.

Brighten your corner with Faith;

It is the door to discovery.

Brighten your corner with Generosity;

It is the portrait of character.

Brighten your corner with Enthusiasm;

It is the torch of achievement.

Brighten your corner with Work;

It is the lantern of success.

Brighten your corner with Patience;

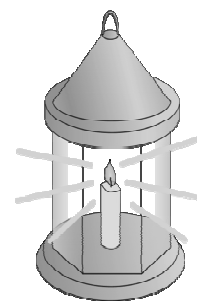
It is the reflection of maturity.

Brighten your corner with Love;

It is the power of Brotherhood.

Brighten your corner with Prayer;

It is the lamp of understanding.



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Appleseeds

Fr. Brian Cavanaugh, T.O.R.

*Can a mother forget her infant,  
be without tenderness for the child of her womb?  
Even if she would forget you, says the Lord,  
I will never forget you. Is:49:15*

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## Coping with Loneliness

The dictionary tells us that to be lonely is to be without companions...to be empty of people...aware of being alone and feeling dejected because of it.

Following the loss of a loved one, bereaved persons often speak about the experience of loneliness as very painful. They miss the loved one's presence in their life; they may experience an ending of other relationships. As a result, they may simply feel like they "don't want to be around others" which increases their sense of isolation and emptiness.



What can be done to cope with this normal loneliness? First, it is important to recognize the difference between loneliness and aloneness. Every human person has the need to deal with being alone at times. We all need to plan for

some time alone for reading, walking, resting and praying. Time alone helps one to rebuild our own personal inner resources that are often depleted in our interactions with others. Fear of loneliness often deters us from spending time alone. It is important to view solitude as a gift to treasure. It can enable us to become more aware of our "real" self. We are never really alone! Never!! We know that God never leaves us on our own. God is always present.

Second, loneliness is a common human experience. Although a person may feel that no one else could feel "as bad as me," that is probably not true. Persons who are lonely can find companions who not only share a similar experience but who are willing to enter into a mutually satisfying relationship that could counteract feelings of loneliness. In order to benefit from such new relationships, individuals have to give up the mistaken notion that "no one feels the grief that I do." Invite a new friend for lunch and examine what happens to a previous lonely meal time.

Third, it's helpful for persons who are lonely to become involved in various activities which can lessen loneliness. Enroll in a course, volunteer, become active in a parish, taking up an old or new hobby or pastime are a few examples of methods of coping with loneliness.

Finally, invite God into your life to share those times that are the most difficult. God is there with us whether or not we are aware of it. We can become more appreciative of God's presence only by our intention or desire. God is never far away.

Reprinted from the booklet published by the Family Life Office entitled *A JOURNEY THROUGH GRIEF - Out of the Darkness... Into the Dawn.*

## ←Questions for discussion or reflections:

- \* When are the times you experience loneliness?
- \* What are the feelings you associate with being lonely?
- \* Who has been helpful to you when you are lonely?
- \* What do you need from God during times of loneliness? How can you tell God what you need?

## *Families and the Gospel*

**October 2**

**Luke 17:5-10**

Faith is one of those things we just can't get enough of! In today's gospel the apostles asked Jesus to "Increase our faith." It is faith in ourselves, our spouse, our children and our parents which equips us to overlook annoyances. It helps us to forgive and urges us to ask forgiveness. "Lord, increase our faith."

**October 9**

**Luke 17:11-19**

Everyone needs "A Round Tuit." The lepers in today's gospel probably meant to thank Jesus. Excited about being cured they didn't get 'around to it.' We get caught up in our own interests and fail to appreciate what we have or to say what is in our hearts. This week get yourself a "Round Tuit."

**October 16**

**Luke 18:1-8**

The widow in today's gospel is praised for her perseverance. In our homes perseverance is a critical ingredient to resolving differences and teaching lessons and skills to children. Perseverance is always an act of faith in the goodness of the other person.

**October 23**

**Luke 18:9-14**

Listen to Jesus in today's gospel: "who humbles himself will be exalted." It is not the occasional big events, but the daily humble routine of family life which creates bonds and relationships which last a lifetime.

**October 30**

**Luke 19:1-10**

Jesus is saying to you what he said to Zacchaeus, "I must stay at your house today." It doesn't matter if Jesus "intended to pass through Jericho to another town." In families we sometimes stop at the wrong places. It is wisdom to "pass through" annoying family situations so we can enjoy the goodness of each other.



A Family Perspective by Bud Ozar