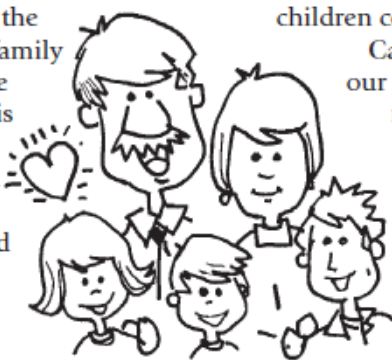


Catholic families shine with love

Pope Benedict recently said that just like the Catholic Church as a whole, the Catholic family is called to "welcome, radiate and show the world the love and presence of Christ." This love is evident when we:

Care for and educate our children. And studies have shown that youth who feel loved and cared for are more likely to avoid risky behavior like indulging in drugs, alcohol, and sexual activity.

Care for the poor. Families that make a regular practice of helping the poor teach



children compassion, empathy, and love of neighbor.

Care for our local parish. Without each of us, our parishes can't pay bills, perform necessary ministries or do God's work. Becoming active in and supporting the parish at a young age helps build a child's Catholic identity, and that helps to "radiate" the presence of Christ as an adult.

Strike a balance between work and play. Work is important, but it is often during the family time when we make loving memories that will last a lifetime.

Scripture LESSON

Mark 1:21-28, My Buddy or My God?

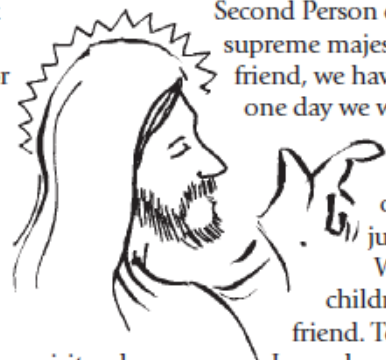
This Gospel describes Jesus and his apostles entering the synagogue at Capernaum. Jesus taught those gathered for the Sabbath. Most teachers or prophets would have said, "Thus says the Lord..." But Jesus said something like, "I tell you..." He taught as one who had the authority of God and that astonished his listeners. Even the unclean spirits who tortured a man at the synagogue recognized who Jesus was.

As a kind and gentle soul, it is easy to

treat Jesus as a buddy and he wants us to trust and rely on him. But as the Second Person of the Trinity, Jesus has supreme majesty. While he is our friend, we have to remember that one day we will appear

before him on bended knee. He is our divine savior, not just our buddy.

We can explain to our children that Jesus is our friend. Teach children to talk to Jesus about anything that happens, good or bad. At the same time, stress that Jesus is God and deserves to be worshipped and adored.



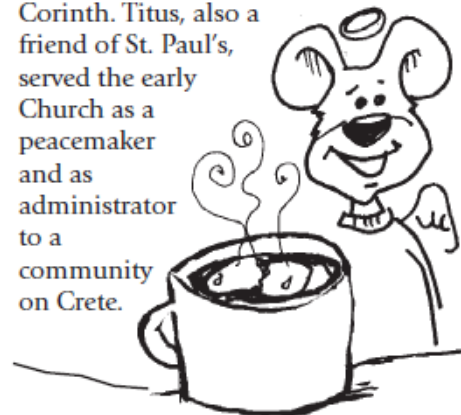
Feasts & Celebrations

In January we celebrate the Holy Name of Jesus. "...At the name of Jesus every knee should bend, of those in heaven and on earth and under the earth" (Philippians 2:10).

January 1 - Solemnity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God. When we celebrate this feast, we honor Mary, but also Jesus as God.

January 24 - St. Francis de Sales (1622). As bishop of Geneva, St. Francis bolstered the faith of others by his writings and works. For the laity, St. Francis wrote Introduction to the Devout Life, which is as applicable today as it was in his day.

January 26 - Sts. Timothy and Titus (1st century) Timothy was converted by St. Paul and later became his trusted friend joining him in apostolic work. He was with Paul at the founding of the Church in Corinth. Titus, also a friend of St. Paul's, served the early Church as a peacemaker and as administrator to a community on Crete.



Parent TALK

Jeff's job was in jeopardy and we were both worried. We thought we were hiding our concern until I got a call from our third-grader's teacher.



Mrs. Conboy said that Leslie was becoming argumentative, bossing other students around, and even told Mrs.

Conboy that she wished she would be "more proactive," something I had said to Jeff just a few nights before. Mrs. Conboy chuckled, but I didn't find it funny. We obviously weren't doing a good job of hiding our tension and Leslie was mimicking my behavior.

Before dinner that night, we prayed a family Rosary and talked with the children. We also acknowledged that we have been worried about Jeff's job but also said we knew that God would take care of us. We promised to pray more and worry less.

The atmosphere in the house got lighter and I didn't get any more phone calls from school.

Our Mission

To help parents raise faithful Catholic children
Success Publishing & Media, LLC
Publishers of Growing in Faith™ and Partners in Faith™
(540)662-7844 (540)662-7847 fax
<http://www.growinginfaith.com>
(Unless noted Bible quotes and references are from the Revised Standard Version and the New American Bible.)

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PSR Communiqué

INFORMATION FOR THE ST. PETER PARISH SCHOOL OF RELIGION

JANUARY 2012

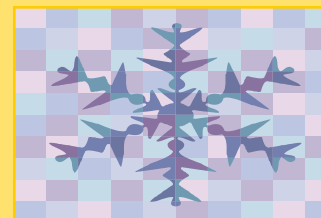
KEY DATES (JANUARY 2012)

Wednesday, Jan. 4
6:15—7:30 p.m.: PSR

Wednesday, Jan. 11
6:15—7:30 p.m.: PSR

Wednesday, Jan. 18
6:15—7:30 p.m.: PSR

Wednesday, Jan. 25
6:15—7:30 p.m.: PSR



PSR Snow Policy:

If school is cancelled or dismissed early on Wednesday due to snow or ice, PSR is cancelled as well. If inclement weather (i.e., very heavy snow or icing) begins after school, we will try to reach you via e-mail or phone. To this end, if your contact information has changed recently, please let Mrs. Kristin George know.

Ties to Faith

Dear Parents:

The picture will remain in my heart forever:



As Christmas approached, 6-year-old Benjamin - a ring-leading, tussled-haired blond with a sharp mind and a love for ice hockey and *anything* Star Wars - approached his Mother with one request: He wanted a dress-up shirt and a grown-up tie to wear to Christmas Mass.

With childhood simplicity and wonder, Bennie *knew* that Christmas had special meaning that goes far beyond the trappings of decorations, parties and gifts. If he were going to celebrate Jesus' birthday, he wanted to look his best.

And so my daughter E-mailed me a photo of my oldest grandchild smiling shyly into the camera in his new striped dress shirt and a carefully knotted tie, on his way to Christmas Mass.

Cherishing the picture and the sentiment, I wonder how often young children "get it" in ways that we as adults, in our desire for conformity and our contrived sophistication, *cannot*? I wonder how many embers of reverence and faith are extinguished because we fail to respond to and encourage the most innocent expressions of belief?

As we begin a new year, let us pray for the eyes and the hearts to recognize and cultivate the shoots of faith we are planting - even if it means buying a young boy a grown-up tie.

Wishes to you for a Blessed New Year.

—Martha Rapp, PSR Director, 222-3155, m.rapp@cospq.org



Congratulations to Second Grade PSR Students who received the Sacrament of Reconciliation for the first time on November 30: Adrian Blattner, Blake Degitz, James Hermens, Courtney Johnson, Madison Kent, Logan Mast, Casey McVey, Luke Mettemeyer, Aiden Perry, Abbey Rhodes, Ethan Sparrow, Kyle Taylor, Kate-lynn Walker, Kristin Zanger

**Scenes from Christmas Past:
PSR Christmas Baby Shower Benefits Care Net**



Thanks to PSR Families for their donations to our Care Net Baby Shower before Christmas. Mrs. Kristin George writes: "When I delivered them Friday, I was able to meet a young woman and her new baby boy who was four days old. She was waiting at the agency until I arrived, hoping I might have a pacifier in the stack of donations from the PSR kids. She was relieved and thankful when we did have what she was seeking. It really touched my heart to meet this mother and child who seemed to have little but each other. I plan to keep them in my prayers."

TEACHER & STAFF CONTACT INFORMATION

If your child will be absent or for classroom questions, please contact the teacher directly:

1st grade (Room 1W): Mrs. Anne Gibleon
228-2883 from 4:30 to 8:30 p.m.;
cagibleon@comcast.net

2nd grade (Room 2W): Cindy Stupavsky
228-1126, tommycin@comcast.net

3rd grade (Room 3E): Mrs. Sandy Gallaher
223-1120 (day); 228-8661 (4-9 p.m.)
s.gallaher@cospq.org

4th grade (Room 4W): Mrs. Mary Talken
224-2896; lamart@adams.net

5th grade (Room 4E): Mrs. Liz Lowenberg
653-8807; ebergman40@hotmail.com

6th grade (Room 5W): Mrs. Julia Maas
885-3301; juliamaas@att.net

7th grade (Room 6E): Mrs. Gina Bergman
430-6080 (cell); ginabergman@comcast.net

8th grade (Room 6W): Mr. Jim and Mrs. Kathy Citro
224-6381; kcitro@gmail.com

PSR STAFF CONTACT INFORMATION

PSR Coordinator—Mrs. Kristin George:
222-3178; klgeorge1@comcast.net

PSR Nurse/Office Manager—Mrs. Leslie Koettters
653-5010; lesliekoettters@hotmail.com

Pastoral Associate /PSR Director—Mrs. Martha Rapp
222-3155, Ext. 228; m.rapp@cospq.org

Partners in **FAITH**TM 

Helping our children grow in their Catholic faith.

January 2012

 **Thoughtful Moments**

Resolutions

The New Year is a good time to set resolutions that will help us grow in character. Even young children can form resolutions that will help them improve. The key is to pick age-appropriate resolutions they can actually accomplish. A good rule of thumb is, the younger the child the fewer the resolutions.



Make it last

Don't take the Christmas tree down just yet. The retail Christmas season starts so early that by the time December 25th comes, we are ready to stuff the decorations away for another year. But for the Church, the Christmas season starts on the 25th and goes until January 9th, the feast of the Baptism of Our Lord, the true end of the Christmas Season.

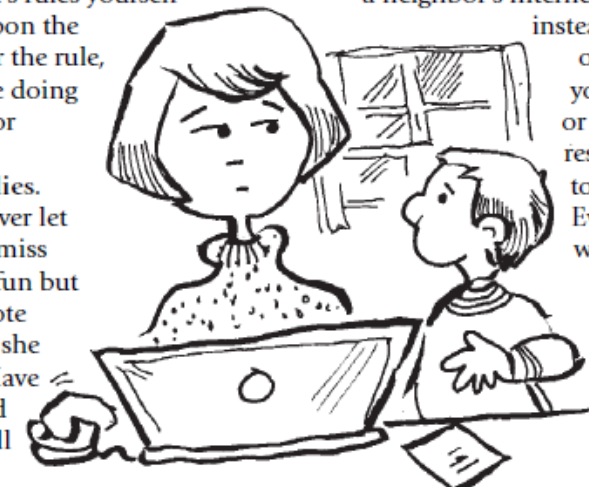
Parents' advice

"Hear, my son, your father's instruction, and reject not your mother's teaching; graceful diadem will they be for your head; a pendant for your neck" (Proverbs 1:8-9).



Are you teaching your children to sin?

Sounds like a silly question, doesn't it? No Christian parent would teach a child to sin. But, if whether or not you follow God's rules yourself depends upon the situation or the rule, you may be doing just that. For example: "White" lies. Have you ever let your child miss school for fun but sent in a note saying that she was sick? Have you dodged a phone call by saying, "tell him I'm not home!"? Have you snuck extra items on the express grocery line? If so, you demonstrated that it's okay to break God's law about telling the truth. How can children tell when to stop?



"Thou shall steal?" Do you download copyrighted movies and music without paying? Do you tap into a neighbor's internet or cable service instead of buying your own? Do you help yourself to napkins or silverware from restaurants or take towels from hotels? Even if the victim is wealthy, you are breaking God's law against stealing. Do as I do. To our children, what we do is more powerful than what we say. "Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea" (Matthew 18:6).

Why Do Catholics Do That?

Why are there statues and images in our churches?

In the early days of the Church, many of the faithful couldn't read or write. Images, icons, and statues in our churches served as teaching tools and spiritual aids. Today, images of the Crucifix remind us of Jesus' sacrifice and



Resurrection. Statues of Mary and the saints recall their heroism and remind us of what we can become. These tools call us to better efforts at holiness, and urge us to ask God for the grace to keep trying for saintliness.