

2020-2021



The Lord's Prayer

OUR FATHER, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

The Hail Mary

HAIL MARY, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

The Prayer to My Guardian Angel

ANGEL OF GOD, my Guardian dear, to whom God's love commits me here, ever this day be at my side, to light and guard, to rule and guide. Amen.

The Apostles' Creed • I BELIEVE IN GOD, the Father almighty, . Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, • . who was conceived by the Holy Spirit born of the Virgin Mary, . suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended into hell: . on the third day he rose again . from the dead; he ascended into heaven. . and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty; . from there he will come to judge . the living and the dead. • I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

The Morning Offering

O JESUS, through the Immaculate Heart of Mary, I offer you all my prayers, works, joys, and sufferings of this day, for all the intentions of your Sacred Heart, in union with the holy sacrifice of the Mass throughout the world, in reparation for my sins, for the intentions of all our associates, and for the general intention recommended this month. Amen.

The Memorare

REMEMBER, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to your protection, implored your help, or sought your intercession was left unaided. Inspired by this confidence, I fly unto you, O Virgin of virgins, my Mother. To you do I come, before you I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petition, but in your mercy hear and answer me. Amen.

The Act of Contrition

My Gob, I am sorry for my sins with all my heart. In choosing to do wrong and failing to do good, I have sinned against you whom I should love above all things. I firmly intend, with your help, to do penance, to sin no more, and to avoid whatever leads me to sin. Our Savior Jesus Christ suffered and died for us. In his name, my God, have mercy. Amen.

The Hail, Holy Queen

HAIL, HOLY QUEEN, Mother of Mercy, our life, our sweetness and our hope. To you do we cry, poor banished children of Eve. To you do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn then, Most Gracious Advocate, your eyes of mercy toward us, and after this our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of your womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary! Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God, That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

For every CREATIVE CATECHIST Highlights for the 2020-2021 Good News™ Creative Catechist Planner

TH)

- Thoughts and discussion starters
- A journal exercise (In Christ, I Can) allows Catechists to help students continue their faith journey
- A weekly challenge helps put the Gospel into practice
- A saint's faith story each week
- Ideas for weekly classroom prayer
- Monthly calendars (August 2020-July 2021)
- Space to record student information, important dates and attendance

First Things First: Prepare Yourself

The material in this book will enrich your own faith and knowledge of Jesus and the Church.

- Take a few minutes to read each week's background material on the Gospel and other Scriptures, life of a saint, question, fact, etc.
- Decide which material you might want to share with the class to help them learn more about Jesus and the Gospels.
- Then, share whatever you want or need to share with your students as a supplement to the information in their text books.

Because the Gospel Is Essential, we recommend:

- Use the questions and exercises to help you review the Gospel from the <u>PREVIOUS</u> Sunday AND introduce a passage from <u>NEXT</u> Sunday's Gospel.
- To help students understand the context of the Gospel stories, read the ENTIRE PASSAGE.
- Open or close your class using the Gospel as a Prayer. If you feel the story is too long, tell it in your own words.
- Discuss the story to help students understand it.

You will need at least one of the following to find the Gospels:

• A Bible or Lectionary (For younger students, you may want to use a Children's Lectionary.); Missalette from your parish; **Reading God's Word—Daily Readings for the Church Year (RGW20 and/or RGW21)** from Creative Communications for the Parish. For additional information, visit our website: www.goodnewsplanners.com

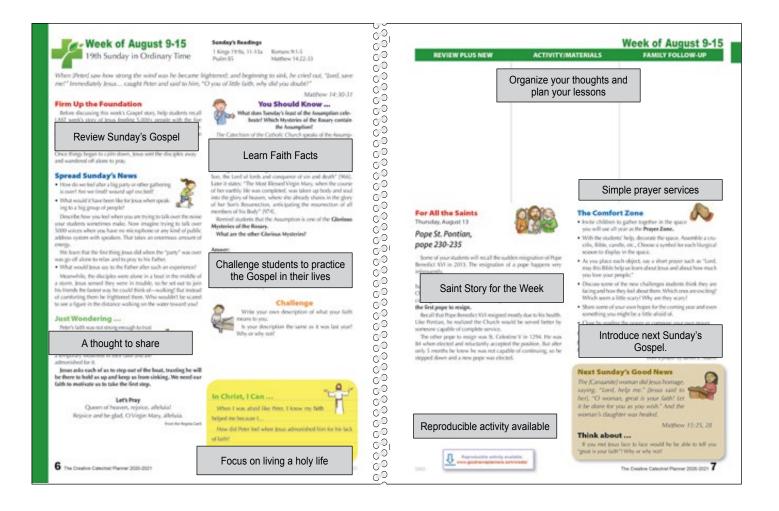
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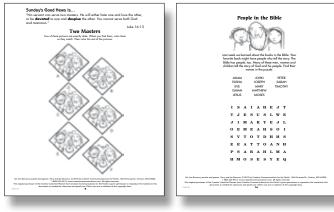
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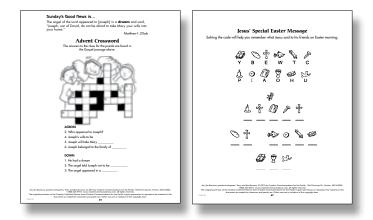
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SPECIAL downloadable section full of background information and lots of activities

Reproducible Puzzles and Games



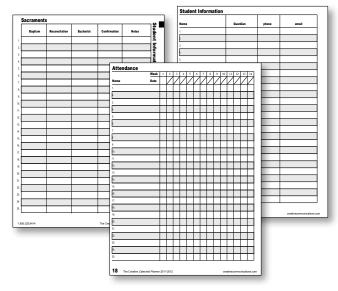
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Monthly Calendars

(August 2020-July 2021) plus

- PLAN AHEAD: Space to record important events
- **REMEMBER:** Sunday and weekday feasts and saint days
- **RECOGNIZE** and **CELEBRATE** student Baptism Birthdays each month



Keep track of student information, sacramental data and attendance.

August 2020

Baptism	August 2020		
	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
Name	Lord God, Heaven, because of them. In to act in my life. I als	re my faith will grow this year beca ly Father, be with me as I strive to meet of crease my faith as I learn more about m so ask you to send the Spirit to be my as citing knowledge to all the students you the name of your Son, Jesus. Am	all your challenges and grow yself and how you are waiting sistant as I endeavor to impart entrust to my care. I ask this in
Date	2 18th Sunday in Ordinary Time	3	4 St. John Vianney
Name	2	5	
Date			
Name			
Date	9 19th Sunday in Ordinary Time	10 St. Lawrence	11 St. Clare of Assisi
Name			
Date			
Name	16 20th Sunday in Ordinary Time	17	18
Date			
Name			
Date			
Name	23 21st Sunday in Ordinary Time	24 St. Bartholomew	25 St. Louis St. Joseph Calasanz
Date	30 22nd Sunday in	31	
	Ordinary Time		
Name			
Date			

Notes:

August 2020

WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 St. Alphonsus Liguori
5 The Dedication of the Basilica of Saint Mary Major		and His Companions, martyrs St. Cajetan	8 St. Dominic
12 St. Jane Frances de Chanta	1 13 Pope St. Pontian; St. Hippolytus	14 St. Maximilian Mary Kolbe	15 The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary
19 St. John Eudes	20 St. Bernard of Clairvaux	21 Pope St. Pius X	22 The Queenship of the Blessed Virgin Mary
26	27 St. Monica	28 St. Augustine	29 The Passion of St. John the Baptist
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MARCH 2021	APRIL 2021	MAY 2021	JUNE 2021	JULY 2021	AUGUST 2021
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Sunday's Readings

1 Kings 19:9a, 11-13a Psalm 85 Romans 9:1-5 Matthew 14:22-33

When [Peter] saw how strong the wind was he became frightened; and beginning to sink, he cried out, "Lord, save me!" Immediately Jesus... caught Peter and said to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?"

Firm Up the Foundation

Before discussing this week's Gospel story, help students recall LAST week's story of Jesus feeding 5,000+ people with the five loaves and two fish. Imagine the excitement, confusion and commotion as the crowd began to realize what had happened. Picture Jesus in the midst of all this.

Week of August 9-15

19th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Once things began to calm down, Jesus sent the disciples away and wandered off alone to pray.

Spread Sunday's News

• How do we feel after a big party or other gathering is over? Are we tired? wound up? excited?



• What would it have been like for Jesus when speaking to a big group of people?

Describe how you feel when you are trying to talk over the noise your students sometimes make. Now imagine trying to talk over 5000 voices when you have no microphone or any kind of public address system with speakers. That takes an enormous amount of energy.

We learn that the first thing Jesus did when the "party" was over was go off alone to relax and to pray to his Father.

• What would Jesus say to the Father after such an experience?

Meanwhile, the disciples were alone in a boat in the middle of a storm. Jesus sensed they were in trouble, so he set out to join his friends the fastest way he could think of—walking! But instead of comforting them he frightened them. Who wouldn't be scared to see a figure in the distance walking on the water toward you?

Just Wondering ...

Peter's faith was not strong enough to trust that Jesus would keep him from sinking in the water. Here is another instance where even the closest friends of Jesus demonstrate a temporary weakness in their faith and are admonished for it.

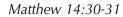


Jesus asks each of us to step out of the boat, trusting he will be there to hold us up and keep us from sinking. We need our faith to motivate us to take the first step.

Let's Pray

Queen of heaven, rejoice, alleluia! Rejoice and be glad, O Virgin Mary, alleluia.

From the Regina Caeli



You Should Know ...



What does Tuesday's feast of the Assumption celebrate? Which Mysteries of the Rosary contain the Assumption?

The Catechism of the Catholic Church speaks of the Assumption by referring to *Lumen gentium*, from Vatican II: "The Immaculate Virgin, preserved free from all stain of original sin, when the course of her earthly life was finished, was taken up body and soul into heavenly glory, and exalted by the Lord as Queen over all things, so that she might be the more fully conformed to her Son, the Lord of lords and conqueror of sin and death" [966]. Later it states: "The Most Blessed Virgin Mary, when the course of her earthly life was completed, was taken up body and soul into the glory of heaven, where she already shares in the glory of her Son's Resurrection, anticipating the resurrection of all members of his Body" [974].

Remind students that the Assumption is one of the **Glorious Mysteries of the Rosary.**

What are the other Glorious Mysteries?

Answer:

The Resurrection of Jesus The Ascension of Jesus The Descent of the Holy Spirit The Assumption of Mary into Heaven The Coronation of Mary



Challenge

Write your own description of what your faith means to you.

Is your description the same as it was last year? Why or why not?

In Christ, I Can ...

When I was afraid like Peter, I know my faith helped me because I...

How did Peter feel when Jesus admonished him for his lack of faith?

ACTIVITY/MATERIALS

Week of August 9-15

FAMILY FOLLOW-UP



For All the Saints

Thursday, August 13



Pope St. Pontian, pope 230-235

Some of your students will recall the sudden resignation of Pope Benedict XVI in 2013. The resignation of a pope happens very infrequently.

Pontian was exiled from the community which meant the Church had no leader. Pontian realized this was not the best thing for the Church, so he decided to resign, leaving room for a new pope, who could govern the Church more actively, could be elected. **He was the first pope to resign.**

Recall that Pope Benedict XVI resigned mostly due to his health. Like Pontian, he realized the Church would be served better by someone capable of complete service.

The other pope to resign was St. Celestine V in 1294. He was 84 when elected and reluctantly accepted the position. But after only 5 months he knew he was not capable of continuing, so he stepped down and a new pope was elected.

The Comfort Zone



- Invite children to gather together in the space you will use all year as the **Prayer Zone.**
- With the students' help, decorate the space. Assemble a crucifix, Bible, candle, etc., Choose a symbol for each liturgical season to display in the space.
- As you place each object, say a short prayer such as "Lord, may this Bible help us learn about Jesus and about how much you love your people."
- Discuss some of the new challenges students think they are facing and how they feel about them. Which ones are exciting? Which seem a little scary? Why are they scary?
- Share some of your own hopes for the coming year and even something you might be a little afraid of.
- Close by reading the prayer or compose your own prayer.

O God, you have blessed me with the gift of faith, a priceless gift that fills my life with meaning and purpose. Help me today to be grateful for this gift... Amen.

from a prayer by James E. Adams

Next Sunday's Good News

The [Canaanite] woman did Jesus homage, saying, "Lord, help me." [Jesus said to her], "O woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish." And the woman's daughter was healed.



Matthew 15:25, 28

Think about ...

If you met Jesus face to face would he be able to tell you "great is your faith"? Why or why not?

Week of August 16-22 20th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Sunday's Readings Isaiah 56:1, 6-7 Psalm 67

Romans 11:13-15, 29-32 Matthew 15:21-28

The [Canaanite] woman did Jesus homage, saying, "Lord, help me." [Jesus said to her], "O woman, great is your faith!Let it be done for you as you wish." And the woman's daughter was healed.Matthew 15:25, 28

Firm Up the Foundation

In last Sunday's Gospel, Peter wanted proof that the man walking on the water was really Jesus and not a ghost. Just to be sure he accepted the invitation to go out onto the water to meet the figure.

But Peter faltered because he failed to trust that Jesus would protect him from harm. Jesus said, **"O you of little faith,** why did you doubt?"

Spread Sunday's News

sons.

In contrast to last week's Gospel, this week's story was about a stranger, a non-Jewish woman, being praised for

her deep faith: "O woman, great is your faith!"

The story itself is unusual for a couple of rea-



- 1. Canaanites were considered outsiders by the
- Jewish community. Usually Canaanites and Jews had very little to do with one another.
- 2. Also out of the ordinary is the fact that in a time when women were not allowed to speak to men, a woman walked up to Jesus and spoke to him.

For these reasons it took a lot of courage for the woman to approach Jesus and ask him to help her daughter. When her request was ignored, she did not give up, going straight to the source! Jesus realized the sincerity of her faith, and eventually granted her request.

The woman in Sunday's Gospel story is a **model of faith** for all of us.

Just Wondering ...

We must also remember Jesus was being rejected by many of the Jews, his own people.

Nevertheless, here was a Gentile woman (not a Jew) who was totally convinced that Jesus was the Messiah, who had the power to heal her daughter.



- What drew some to believe in Jesus and others to reject him?
- Being cast aside and made fun of by our own friends is a very difficult thing to have to endure and try to rise above.
- Sometimes being rejected is a clue that we are on the right track. Remember, some rejected Jesus because he was good, holy and truthful. When these are not already part of our lives we can become angry and jealous.



Friday, August 21 (feast) Pope St. Pius X, pope 1903–1914

Giuseppe Melchiorre Sarto was born into a large family. Although his father worked hard to support them, the family struggled in poverty. Because of this, St. Pius always had the needs of the poor on his mind.

He served for many years as a parish priest who was known for his pastoral sensitivity and love for the liturgy. Pius wanted to restore Gregorian Chant to its former place of pride in the Church, and made this a priority in his life. Pius was also responsible for directing the organization of the Code of Canon Law.

Pius' motto was "To renew all things in Christ."

He was elected pope on August 4, 1903, and his coronation took place on August 9. Eleven years later, World War I broke out on the anniversary of his coronation. Pius knew the world was in for a very sad and destructive period. It is said that knowledge



of this saddened him so much that he became sick. He died three weeks later.

Prior to Pius' papacy, individuals did not feel worthy, nor did they feel the need to receive the Eucharist very often. Pius strongly encouraged

everyone to receive Communion, recognizing that through the reception of the Eucharist we grow in faith and strengthen our love for Christ.

He also issued the directive that children "above the age of reason," considered to be age seven, should receive Communion.

Pope Pius X was declared a saint on May 29,1954. He was the last pope to be canonized until the April 2014 canonization of two 20th-21st century popes: Pope St. John XXIII and Pope St. John Paul II.

Challenge

If you know of someone who is suffering because he or she has been rejected or made fun of by others, call/visit/text that person and start a conversation to let him or her know you understand how he or she feels.

In Christ, I Can ...

When I am in trouble, like the woman in the Gospel, how do I ask Jesus for help?

I know Jesus hears me because...

I know my faith should motivate me to always do the right thing even if others reject me. Why am I afraid to share my faith with others?

Week of August 16-22

FAMILY FOLLOW-UP

For All the Saints

Wednesday, August 19



St. John Eudes, 1601-1680

St. John Eudes was responsible for the establishment of two very important religious orders. An extremely gifted preacher, he went from place to place preaching parish missions. Wherever he went he promoted devotion to both the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

John became concerned with the spirituality and education of the clergy and was granted permission to begin a seminary. From this endeavor, the Congregation of Jesus and Mary (Eudists) began.

Later, John became aware of a number of houses for women who were trying to escape from their lives as prostitutes. No one else wanted to help these women, so John began another religious order, the Sisters of Charity of the Refuge. Today, this order assists women who are trying to escape from lives of crime.

The Comfort Zone



- Gather in the Prayer Zone. Some of these are repeats from last week.
- Discuss some of the new challenges facing your students this year. How do they feel about them? Which ones are exciting? Which seem a little scary? Tell them about a few fun things you plan on doing with them during the year.
- Stress the importance of listening—students need to listen to you and you promise to listen to them, too. And most important, all of you will learn to listen to Jesus' words.
- Let them make up their own prayers to share with the class. Invite parents and other family members to make up a family prayer.
- Say a traditional prayer together or use one or several of the students' pravers.

Next Sunday's Good News

[Jesus said], "Blessed are you, Simon, son of Jonah. For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my heavenly Father. You are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church...I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven" Matthew 16:17-19a



Think about ...

How does it feel when someone trusts you enough to give you the keys to a house, garage, etc.?

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Sunday's Readings Isaiah 22:19-23 Psalm 138

Romans 11:33-36 Matthew 16:13-20

[Jesus said], "Blessed are you, Simon, son of Jonah. For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my heavenly Father. You are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church...I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven." Matthew 16:17-19a

Firm Up the Foundation

This week's Gospel is the first of many references to the kingdom included in this year's reading cycles (A and B).

This week Jesus gave Peter jurisdiction/power over the kingdom using "keys" to symbolize his authority.

Spread Sunday's News

rather NOT hear.

The first passage in Sunday's Gospel described what a lot of us do at some point: Ask others what people are saying about us. Sometimes this turns out to be a not-so-good idea because we hear things we'd



• Was Jesus testing the disciples to find out if they were listening to what people were saying or were they paying attention to their surroundings?

Next, Jesus wonders what the apostles have to say about all this. Will they simply repeat the "gossip," or will they somehow come to their own conclusions?

 Recall that two weeks ago it was Peter who demonstrated that his faith was not yet total when invited to walk on the water with Jesus.

Jesus reacts to Peter's inspired reply much like you might do when students finally GET what you're trying to teach them!

Now that Peter had some understanding of the situation, Jesus was ready to give him a serious life-changing responsibility-the keys to the kingdom of heaven.

When someone has keys, whether to a gate or a door, that person has authority and control over the territory. Adults have keys to cars, workplaces, etc.

Just Wondering ...

• Do your students carry a house key? key to a locker?



• How does that make them feel about the territory?

When we have keys, we also have a responsibility to use them prudently. It also means we are trusted by the person who gave them to us. Jesus placed an enormous amount of trust in Peter, and that same trust is passed to the pope, the leader of the Catholic Church.

Besides giving Peter the keys to the kingdom of heaven, Jesus forbid the disciples to tell anyone that he is the Christ. Here is another way of showing that he trusts these men.

- Do we usually tell our "secrets" to people whom we don't trust?
- How hard would it be to keep a secret like that?



You Should Know ...

Peter received the keys to the kingdom of heaven. What does that mean?

- Who has those keys today?
- Ask students to think about their idea of what God's kingdom might look like.
- Complete this week's exercise by writing about or drawing what the kingdom looks like. Save the papers for prayer time.



Challenge

Spend a few minutes alone and write down at least three things you want to accomplish during this year. Place the paper in one of your drawers and save it until the end of the year.

In Christ, I Can ...

During the year we will listen to Jesus telling us about the kingdom of heaven.

I think the kingdom of heaven is...

ACTIVITY/MATERIALS

Week of Aug. 23-28

FAMILY FOLLOW-UP



For All the Saints

Tuesday, August 25

St. Louis IX, King of France 1214-1270

Louis became King at the age of 12 after his father's death. From the beginning of his monarchy, Louis was determined to be a just and fair king, putting the welfare of his subjects first, even if they were poor. Although he was very much a member of the Church, he did not hesitate to admonish anyone, including the pope, if he felt he or she was not following Jesus' laws of love and respect for the dignity of human persons.

He was responsible for reforming laws and the system of court justice by making sure laws were written down for fairness, and at times he even held "court" himself, acting as the judge. A man of constant prayer, he was known for inviting the poor to eat at his castle. At times, he even served the meals himself and sent the leftovers home with his guests.

Louis joined the pope on two separate crusades, the latter of which claimed his life.



The Comfort Zone



- Find the pattern of a key in the reproducible art 4 on the Internet.
- Duplicate it and have students cut the key out or cut out some key outlines yourself. Or have students make their own keys with the paper.
- Have students think of something they want to "unlock" about Jesus and his kingdom during this year.
- Draw/write it on the key.
- Poke a hole in each key and attach string or yarn.
- Encourage students to take their keys home and hang them in a place where they can see and remember them all year.

OR

- Create a mobile by attaching pieces of string to each key.
- Hang the key mobile in the classroom or hallway, or use it to decorate the Prayer Zone all year.

Lord, open my ears and heart as I listen to you describe the kingdom. May I always be ready to respond to your invitations to live in that kingdom. Amen.

Next Sunday's Good News

Peter took Jesus aside and began to rebuke him, "God forbid, Lord! No such thing shall ever happen to you." [Jesus] said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are an obstacle to me. You are thinking not as God does, but as human beings do." Matthew 16:22-23

Think about ...

Am I an obstacle to Jesus' presence in my life? What is the biggest obstacle I face in faithfully responding to Jesus' call to become his disciple?

Baptism	September 2020		
	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
Birthdays			1
Name			
Date	6 23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time	7 Labor Day	The Mathida of the Discond Product Marce
Name	C 23KD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME	Laton Day	8 The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary
Date			
Name			
Date	13 24th Sunday in Ordinary Time	14 The Exaltation of the Holy Cross	15 Our Lady of Sorrows
Name			
Date			
Name	20 25th Sunday in Ordinary Time	21 St. Matthew	22
Date			
Name			
Date			
Name	27 26TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME	28 St. Wenceslaus, St. Lawrence Ruiz and Companion Martyrs	29 St. Michael, St. Gabriel St. Raphael, archangels
Date			
Name			
Date			

Notes:

September 2020

	WEDNESDAY		THURSDAY	FRIDA	Y		SATURDAY
2		3	Pope St. Gregory the Great	4		5	St. Teresa of Calcutta
9	St. Peter Claver	10		11	Patriot Day	12	The Most Holy Name of Mary
16	Sts. Cornelius and Cyprian	17	St. Robert Bellarmine	18		19	St. Januarius
23	St. Pius of Pietrelcina	24		25		26	St. Cosmas and St. Damian
30	St. Jerome						
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Sunday's Readings

Jeremiah 20:7-9 Psalm 63 Romans 12:1-2 Matthew 16:21-27

Peter took Jesus aside and began to rebuke him, "God forbid, Lord! No such thing shall ever happen to you." [Jesus] said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are an obstacle to me. You are thinking not as God does, but as human beings do." Matthew 16:22-23

Firm Up the Foundation

When Matthew was writing his Gospel, many followers of Jesus were being killed for their beliefs. Matthew wanted them to realize that by surrendering/forfeiting their lives on earth, they would gain life in heaven (*kingdom*) forever.

Week of Aug. 29–Sept. 5

22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Jesus often used opposites to get his point across to his listeners. Place these words on the board and discuss their meanings. Then read the Gospel story for Sunday.

save/lose; lose/find; profit/gain/forfeit

Spread Sunday's News

Last week Peter was the "classroom genius" because he knew

the correct answer to Jesus' question—"Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" Jesus knew that Peter could only have learned his profound answer directly from the Father.

This week, the genius has turned into a dunce.

Peter thought he was doing Jesus a favor by taking him aside, assuring Jesus that he was wrong about the scenario he had described. Instead, Peter managed to make Jesus angry.

Just Wondering ...

Losing a game or another contest is not fun. Obviously we all

would rather win. Even harder is having to give up (forfeit) because we don't meet a requirement (*enough team members*, breaking a rule, etc.). If this happens we are not even given a chance to begin the game.

Forfeiting is a form of giving up.

- Think about Jesus' words, "What profit would there be for one to gain the whole world and forfeit his life?"
- WHY would we want to give up our lives?
- In Sunday's Gospel Jesus is asking if we would really want to win a game but lose our lives in the process. Make sure everyone understands that Jesus wants us to save our "eternal" lives, even if it means giving up our physical ones.



You Should Know ...

Another passage from Sunday's Gospel says, "Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me."

Taking up our own cross is very hard to do. There are obstacles in our own lives that keep us from following Jesus.

Make a special effort to (take up your cross) try something difficult for Jesus. Do this all week and at the end evaluate what you did.



Challenge

Jesus wants us to invite people who cannot repay us. Figure out who some of these people are and do everything you can to make them feel comfortable with you and good about themselves.

In Christ, I Can ...

I think Peter was an **obstacle** to Jesus in the following ways...

The biggest obstacle in the way of my following Jesus is...

ACTIVITY/MATERIALS

FAMILY FOLLOW-UP

Week of Aug. 29–Sept. 5



For All the Saints

Tuesday, September 3

St. Teresa of Calcutta, d. 1997

Mother Teresa died in 1997, not very long ago, and her public faith and humility were witnessed around the world. Being declared a saint is very rare. The process usually takes a great many years after a person's death before he/she meets the strict requirements for sainthood. The world celebrated Mother Teresa's canonization on September 4, 2016.

Try and share/recall St. Teresa's story with your class. There are magazine stories, videos and countless books about her. She is someone we can look to who is REAL to us, not just a beautiful story in a book. Help students understand that St. Teresa was a person who learned to listen to Jesus' call in her life. She put her complete faith and trust in God, which resulted in her being able to do great things in the world.

The Comfort Zone

• Gather in the **Prayer Zone.**



- Talk about the lives of St. Monica and her son, St. Augustine.
- Help children understand how much St. Monica loved her son, even when he acted in less-than-loving ways.
- Augustine became one of the great Doctors of the Church.
- Discuss how parents, teachers and other adults, try their best to help your students learn about God, and about other things in life. When we listen to them, good things usually happen.
- Pray for parents, that God grant them the love and patience to stand by their children no matter what, that they always forgive and encourage their children to be the best they can be.
- Allow a little silence so children can recall their obstacles to following Jesus and what they want to do to get rid of them.
- Read this Prayer.

Lord Jesus, I put obstacles on my own path to following you. Help me learn to clear them away so I can follow the right path to your kingdom. Amen.

Next Sunday's Good News

[Jesus said,] "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."



Matthew 18:20

Think about ...

Look around while you are in church, at home, at school or meeting your friends. Are you able to picture Jesus in your midst?



Week of September 6-12

23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Sunday's Readings Ezekiel 33:7-9

Psalm 95

Romans 13:8-10 Matthew 18:15-20

[Jesus said,] "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

Matthew 18:20

Firm Up the Foundation

Sunday's First Reading tells us:

- 1. IT IS OUR DUTY TO HELP OTHERS CHANGE.
- 2. If we are with someone or know someone who wants to take something without paying, WE MUST SPEAK OUT AGAINST IT.
- 3. If we don't at least try to stop him or her, in God's eyes we may be as guilty as he or she is.

If this is difficult for adults to do, it may seem impossible to children. These mature convictions can only be put into practice with the strong support of the adults in their lives.

Spread Sunday's News

Many hurts between people begin with simple misunderstandings. In Sunday's Gospel, Jesus is giving advice about how to resolve disputes with fairness and dignity. We can learn a lot from his suggestions.



Most of us try to avoid resolving conflicts, especially if we are personally involved. Usually when someone hurts us or commits what we perceive as an injustice towards us, our reaction is likely wanting to get back at him or her in some way. But revenge is not part of Jesus' plan.

Plan A

Sometimes this first step is the most difficult, for it is not usually comfortable facing someone we are angry with one-on-one. But if we are able to keep things at this private stage, chances are very good that the hurt feelings can be quietly put to rest.

Plan B

If a private discussion does not work, we must try again but the next step is to try to work it out in the presence of one or two others who act as mediators. Doing it this way still saves everyone from public humiliation.

Plan C

If those first two sincere efforts fail to solve the problem, Jesus directs us to treat the uncooperative individual as a Gentile or tax collector, meaning he or she is not welcome in the community.



Anyone who has ever been ousted by a group knows it really feels like a punishment. Yet when we have tried and failed to correct a wrong, this may be the only way to solve the problem.



Just Wondering ...

Sad but true, most of us have to admit to shunning individuals sometime in our lives. Unfortunately children seem to learn early how to hurt people by excluding them for no good reason.

Could there be legitimate reasons why we might choose to leave someone out of our group of friends?

• Certainly a valid reason for shunning someone or leaving him or her out is the potential that he or she will lead us into trouble, especially when he or she does not believe in our Christian values.

With the focus on the long-term effects of bullying, we need to help children, and adults, too, learn to understand that pure "meanness" towards another is never justified. The effects are devastating not just to the person, but potentially to society as well.

Let's Pray

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Use this prayer every time you pray and you will be doing what Jesus asks in this week's Gospel.

Challenge

Jesus is with you when you invite him to a family gathering, perhaps when you eat together. How will his presence change you?

In Christ, I Can ...

I am aware of Jesus' presence when I am in... The people I know who help me feel Jesus'

presence are...

ACTIVITY/MATERIALS

FAMILY FOLLOW-UP

Week of September 6-12



For All the Saints

Wednesday, September 9

St. Peter Claver, c. 1581-1654

Peter spent his life as a Jesuit priest in Cartegena, Colombia, ministering to slaves brought from Africa. The conditions on the ships that brought hundreds of thousands of slaves to the Americas were so bad that many of them died before they reached land.

Peter was always there to meet the ships, bringing food, medicine, scented water and other delicacies to try to make the captives feel welcomed. Even though there were many language barriers, his love transcended all limitations of human speech. His message to the people was simple: God loves you and so do I.

Peter went down into the bowels of the ships to minister to the slaves. He went alone because no one could bear the stench and the sight of dead and sick bodies everywhere. Sometimes almost half of the slaves died during the trips.

While the slaves awaited further travel, Peter took care of their physical and spiritual needs. He managed to convert and baptize more than 300,000 to Christianity. During the time between the arrival of ships, Peter traveled and visited with many of his converts.

Peter and other missionaries wanted to change the laws in order to prevent such inhumane treatment, but the need for slaves was far too profitable for the Establishment. Although he may have been powerless to change the law, he found limitless power to help those whose lives were deemed worthless realize how much God did indeed love them.

Firm Up the Foundation for next week's feast: The Exaltation of the Holy Cross

The symbol of the Cross, which we treat with dignity and often wear proudly, was never displayed by early Christians. In Christ's time the cross was a symbol of execution and death. Victims of crucifixion were left hanging as examples to the rest of the city.

This former sign of shame has become a symbol of honor. We display it with dignity to remind ourselves of who we are as Christians, and of the complete selfless gift Jesus gave to us when he died for our sins.

Make sure students know what the words exalt and $\mathit{exaltation}$ mean. $_{\rm ZSB20}$

The Comfort Zone

• Give each child a blank paper circle or faceshaped oval between 4" and 6". (*Pattern available in the reproducible section on the internet.*)



- Each student will draw his or her own face on the shape. Have colored yarn or other textured material available for hair, and colored pencils for eyes.
- When all have finished, go to the **Prayer Zone.** (*Note, children should sit in a circle and you will need a picture or a symbol of Jesus (cross, chi-rho) to put in the middle of the circle.*)
- Begin with the Sign of the Cross and ask children again what it means to be gathered In Christ, I Can. (*Place the Jesus symbol in the circle.*)
- Talk about how each of them is different because God creates all of us to be unique and wonderful.
- One by one, each child should place his/her "face" around the symbol for Jesus. Read Sunday's Gospel passage or only Matthew 18:20.
- Close with silence followed by the Sign of the Cross. (Children should take their "faces" home.)

Next Sunday's Good News

"The servant fell down, did [his master] homage, and said, 'Be patient with me, and I will pay you back in full.' Moved with compassion the master of that servant let him go and forgave him the loan."



Matthew 18:26-27

Think about ...

What does the servant want his master to do for him in next Sunday's Gospel?

Week of September 13-19 Sunday's Readings

Sirach 27:30—28:7 Psalm 103 Romans 14:7-9 Matthew 18:21-35

"The servant fell down, did [his master] homage, and said, 'Be patient with me, and I will pay you back in full.' Moved with compassion the master of that servant let him go and forgave him the loan." Matthew 18:26-27

Firm Up the Foundation

All of Sunday's Readings continue the theme of forgiveness from last week. Sometimes we are hurt by others, and at other times we hurt others. Sin is present in the world and as human beings we constantly struggle trying to overcome it in ourselves.

24th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Anger and vengeance are dangerous not just for us, but as we have heard too many times in the recent past, for everyone. We all get angry and we are all tempted to seek revenge; it is only after we learn to forgive that we can begin to let go of these things.

Just Wondering ...

When we cannot overcome our anger, we often suffer inner turmoil, which can sometimes even lead to violence.



Ask students these questions:

- How does it feel when you realize someone has hurt you?
- What should you do about it? (Recall last week's Gospel.)
- What happens when people hold their anger inside, looking for ways to get back at someone?
- Is it ever really possible to get back at others?
- Can revenge really solve the problem or stop the hurt?



You Should Know ...

Wednesday, September 16 (feast) Pope St. Cornelius, pope 251-253 and St. Cyprian, d. 258, martyrs

Cornelius was pope during the troubling time in the Church when Christians were being persecuted for their faith. After the death of his predecessor, St. Fabian, there was a period of 14 months when the Church had no official leader. During this time becoming the pope was almost certainly a death sentence, so not too many men wanted the job!

Cornelius was chosen pope when the people participated in the election process along with bishops and other clergy members. He was an overwhelming choice over his competitor Novatian; however, Novatian declared himself pope, too, becoming the first of many antipopes in the history of the Church.

At the center of the controversy was whether Christians who had abandoned their faith rather than be killed for it (*lapsi*) should be permitted to return to the Church.

Cornelius (and his North African friend Cyprian) **believed these people should be allowed back into the Church after an appropriate period of penance.** Novatian and his followers did not want them to return. Soon the persecutions began again and Cornelius was exiled.

But Cyprian continued his ministry in Africa for several more years. During this time a severe plague broke out, and Cyprian encouraged all the people to care for one another, no matter what their religious beliefs were. Christians voluntarily helped even those who had been their persecutors. Eventually, the emperor demanded that Cyprian perform sacrifices to the pagan gods. When he refused, he was beheaded. It is significant that the date of his martyrdom was September 14, the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross.

Challenge

Memorize this traditional prayer before Good Friday. Say it often.

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

In Christ, I Can ...

Which of the following is the MOST difficult for you:

- ASKING someone to forgive you?
- ACCEPTING forgiveness from someone?
- FORGIVING another person?

ACTIVITY/MATERIALS

FAMILY FOLLOW-UP

Week of September 13-19



For All the Saints

Thursday, September 17

St. Robert Bellarmine, 1542-1621

Robert was a member of the Jesuits whose mission was primarily teaching. He accepted a teaching assignment in Louvain. His students loved his teaching methods because he had a gift for bringing complicated, if sometimes "boring," information down to levels understood by his students. His gift for preaching was so well known that people came from as far away as England to hear him. Even when he became a Cardinal and had access to living quarters in the Vatican, he remained dedicated to the poor, living in a room without any extra comforts. He traveled extensively in order to get to know the people whom he served.

Saturday, September 19 St Januarius, died c. 305

Although we do not know much about St. Januarius, we know he became a bishop in Benevento, Italy, and is the patron saint of the city of Naples. During times when the volcano known as Mt. Vesuvius, located just outside Naples, threatens to erupt, the people pray for Januarius' intercession to keep them safe.



The Comfort Zone

- Gather in the **Prayer Zone.**
- Read this passage from Sunday's **First Reading** [Sirach] to your students.
- Have a brief discussion about each idea.
- Allow a few minutes of silence for students to examine their consciences.
- Allow a few more minutes of silence, asking students to picture themselves as the *forgiver* and then the *forgiven*.
- Pray the Lord's Prayer and/or the Act of Contrition (reproducible copies available on the Internet).
- Close with a sign of peace.

Next Sunday's Good News

The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner... The landowner said to the worker, "Are you envious because I am generous? Thus the last will be first, and the first will be last."



Matthew 20:1a, 15-16

Think about ...

Is there something in my life that keeps me from serving God? What will I do about it?



Week of September 20-26 Sunday's Readings

Isaiah 55:6-9 Psalm 145 Philippians 1:20c-24, 27a Matthew 20:1-16a

The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner...The landowner said to the worker, "Are you envious because I am
generous? Thus the last will be first, and the first will be last."Matthew 20:1a, 15-16

Firm Up the Foundation

Try this experiment:

• Give an assignment, test or chore to the class, making very clear that those who do well or complete the task will get a special reward or privilege.

25th Sunday in Ordinary Time

- When the task is completed (surely there will be some who did not do it!), announce that EVERYONE is going to receive the same reward or grade.
- When the students are finished grumbling, begin discussing Sunday's Parable of the Workers and the Vineyard.

Spread Sunday's News

This parable is quite thought-provoking. Yes, the landowner has the right be generous, to do whatever he wants with his money. But those who worked the entire day were understandably angry and envious of those who worked only a few hours.



Most of us will struggle our entire lives trying to overcome occasional feelings of jealousy. It is normal for us now and then to want things others have. We ask, "Why can't I have that? I need to have it." Perhaps one way to help overcome it is to work at recognizing and being thankful for everything we DO have.

The words of Isaiah **(Sunday's First Reading)** say, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my way, says the LORD. As high as the heavens are above the earth, so high are my ways above your ways and my thoughts above your thoughts" (Isaiah 55:8-9).

God sees beyond what we see, and his knowledge and generosity are far beyond ours. God watches out for all people, and sometimes that means we cannot have what we THINK we need.

In the 2003 movie *Bruce Almighty,* God temporarily gives Bruce all "godly" authority and responsibility. At first Bruce is exhilarated with his new powers, using them for his own benefit. When he real-

izes he also must listen to millions of prayers, he decides to make it easy on himself by just saying yes to everyone. That should make the world happy, right? As a result, there is chaos all over the world because what is good for one person may not be good for all.



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Who Knew?

The word sanctify means "to make holy."

Through the Sacraments, Christ's sanctifying grace allows us to share in his divine life by strengthening our souls.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church [CCC] tells us this:

"Sanctifying grace is the gratuitous gift of his life that God makes to us; it is infused by the Holy Spirit into the soul to heal it of sin and to sanctify it. Sanctifying grace makes us 'pleasing to God'" [CCC 2023-24].

Discuss these related words, especially if students are not familiar with the meaning of sanctifying grace:

sanctuary—that part of the church building that contains the altar, the place of sacrifice (Eucharist)

Sanctus—what we say/sing during the Eucharist that "announces" the holiness of the Lord God (Holy, Holy, Holy), which in Latin was proclaimed as Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus.

Just Wondering ...

- Remind students that it was the steward's job to watch over and care for his master's money and property)
- Ask students to silently choose one thing they promise to care for, especially during the next month.
- Pray that all people will be responsible citizens, doing their part to protect the earth's natural resources.
- Pray for the gift of trust, and for the wisdom to learn which people deserve our trust and which people we need to stay away from.
- Remind students that Jesus has given us the gift of faith and trusts us to be his disciples. He will always be there to help us. Jesus is someone we can ALWAYS trust!



Challenge

Whenever you feel envious, stop and consider whether what you want is <u>really</u> better than what you already have!

In Christ, I Can ...

The last time I remember feeling envious was because...

When I think about it now I realize ...

What an awesome task God has!

ACTIVITY/MATERIALS

FAMILY FOLLOW-UP

Week of September 20-26



For All the Saints

Saturday, September 26

St. Cosmas and St. Damian, died c. 303

If you have twins in your class, these two saints will be special because traditions tell us they were twins. In ancient times, twins were viewed to be a curse from God rather than the blessing we think about today.

What is known about these two saints is based mostly on word of mouth, but like many early saints such as Nicholas, Cecilia, and Lucy, the traditions are credible enough for us to believe they really existed.

Cosmas and Damian were doctors who treated sick people without charging anything, while at the same time they spread the message of Christ. When severe persecutions broke out, they were easy targets because their lives were so prominent in the community. Although they suffered torture, they did not give up their faith.

Today we hear their names in the First Eucharistic Prayer along with other early saints and the apostles.



• Gather in the Prayer Zone. Read Sunday's Gospel and ask for thoughts about the different groups of workers.

The Comfort Zone

- Envy happens when we forget the good things about ourselves, the things that belong only to us. Each of us has unique gifts, parts of ourselves no one else has.
- Recall the week of September 7 when children made pictures of their own faces, all unique and beautiful.

Although it's difficult, when we find ourselves feeling envious or jealous, we should learn to stop and think with gratitude about what we have that no one else has. We also need to learn to look at what others have not as something to want for ourselves, but with appreciation for what God has given to them.

Lord Jesus, help me learn to appreciate my own gifts and talents so I won't need to envy what others have. Amen.

Next Sunday's Good News

Jesus said to [the chief priests and the elders], "Amen, I say to you, tax collectors are entering the kingdom of God before you."

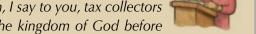


Matthew 21:31b

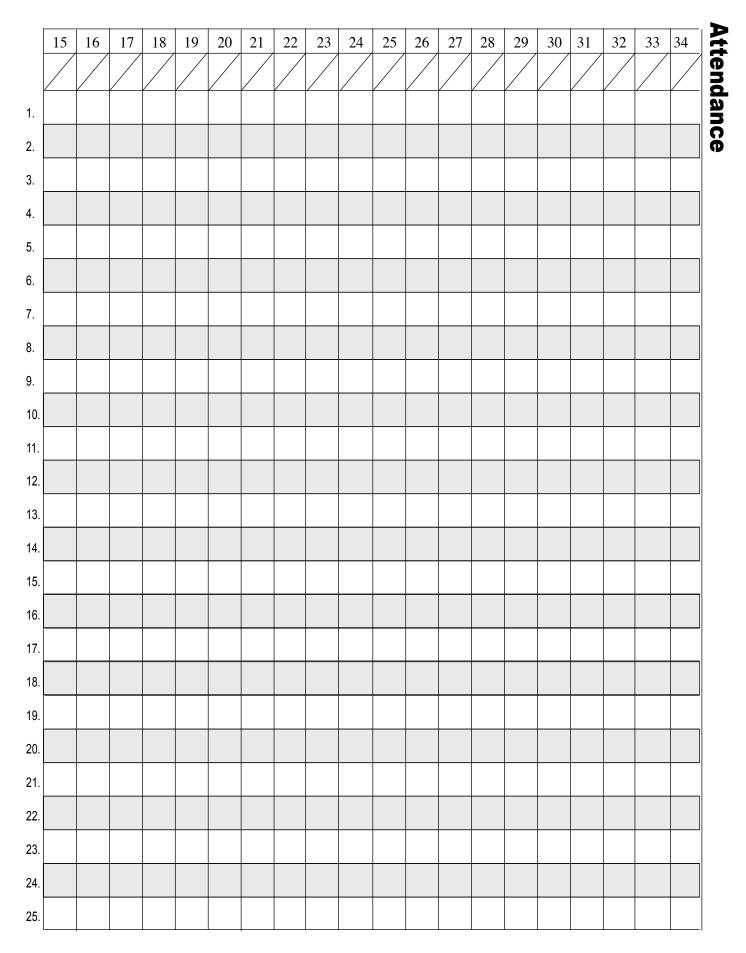
Think about ...

Am I like the chief priests and elders, not ready to enter God's kingdom? Or am I ready like the tax collectors?





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Sacraments

Baptism	Reconciliation	Eucharist	Confirmation	Notes

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Sacraments

Baptism	Reconciliation	Eucharist	Confirmation	Notes

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-APRIL-

—DECEMBER—										
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—JANUARY— SMTWTFS 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 -MAY—

SMTWTFS 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

—SEPTEMBER—									
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-FEBRUARY-SMTWTFS 2 3 4 5 6 1 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28

—JUNE—									
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-OCTOBER-SMTWTFS 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

-MARCH-SMTWTFS 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

—JULY—									
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-NOVEMBER-									
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-AUGUST-SMTWTFS 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

—DECEMBER—						
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Act of Faith

O MY GOD, I firmly believe that you are one God in three divine persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. I believe that your divine Son became man and died for our sins, and that he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe these and all the truths which the holy catholic Church teaches, because in revealing them you can neither deceive nor be deceived. Amen.

Act of Hope

O MY **GOD**, relying on Your almighty power and infinite mercy and promises, I hope to obtain pardon of my sins, the help of Your grace, and life everlasting through the merits of Jesus Christ, my Lord and Redeemer. Amen.

Act of Love

O MY GOD, I love You above all things, with my whole heart and soul, because You are all-good and worthy of all love. I love my neighbor as myself for the love of You. I forgive all who have injured me, and ask pardon of all whom I have injured. Amen.

The Ten Commandments

I am the Lord your God:

You shall not have strange gods before me.

You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain. Remember to keep holy the Lord's day.

Honor your father and your mother.

You shall not kill.

You shall not commit adultery.

You shall not steal.

You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.

You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.

The Corporal Works of Mercy

- 1. Feed the hungry.
- 2. Give drink to the thirsty.
- 3. Clothe the naked.
- 4. Shelter the homeless.
- 5. Visit the sick.
- 6. Comfort the imprisoned.
- 7. Bury the dead.

The Angelus

- V. The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary:
- R. And she conceived of the Holy Spirit. Hail, Mary ...
- V. Behold the handmaid of the Lord:
- R. Be it done to me according to your word. Hail, Mary ...
- V. And the Word was made flesh:
- R. And dwelt among us.

Hail, Mary ...

V. Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God:

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray: Pour forth, we beseech you, O Lord, your grace into our hearts, that we to whom the Incarnation of Christ, your Son, was made known by the message of an angel, may be brought by his Passion and Cross to the glory of the Resurrection, through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Regina Caeli

(replaces The Angelus during Eastertime)

- V. O Queen of heaven, rejoice, Alleluia.
- R. For he whom you were made worthy to bear, Alleluia.
- V. Has risen again as he said, Alleluia.
- R. Pray for us to God, Alleluia.
- V. Rejoice and be glad, O Virgin Mary, Alleluia.
- R. For the Lord has arisen indeed, Alleluia.

Let us pray: O God, who by the Resurrection of your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, saw fit to give joy to the world, grant, we beg you, that through the intercession of his Mother, the Virgin Mary, we may obtain the joys of everlasting life. Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Spiritual Works of Mercy

- 1. Counsel the doubtful.
- 2. Instruct the ignorant.
- 3. Admonish the sinner.
- 4. Comfort the sorrowful.
- 5. Forgive injuries.
- 6. Bear wrongs patiently.
- 7. Pray for the living and the dead.

