

Dear Parents:

As we get further from war it's harder to appreciate the sacrifice others made for our freedom. Please take a moment with your family this weekend to pray for those who gave up their life so that we may be free. Remember that praying for the dead is a spiritual work of mercy. I hope you have a blessed Memorial Day Wknd!

God bless,

Tony

Discipleship

Last Fall I introduced the concept of the Year of Mercy convoked by Pope Francis. He called for this special moment of grace because he believes that we, the Church and society need to be more open to mercy and that we need to share this aspect of faith with others.

<https://youtu.be/ZcXX9A2W3jQ>

Two 3 minute videos on the Jubilee Year of Mercy

<https://youtu.be/IYv4BUwytA0>

In order to bring to your child more of an awareness of the importance of the daily practice of mercy we will give each child a wrist band this Sunday that will say on it “Random Acts of Mercy” – in other words this will serve as a reminder that they should be merciful towards others at various times of the day, week and month and throughout this special Jubilee Year.

Above is a list of the traditional Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy. Obviously some are more accessible than others for your children. Try and encourage what seems reasonable. They don't have to do all of them. We are just trying to raise the consciousness in our Parish family in this area of faith development!

God bless,

Tony MacDonnell

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Areas of Interest and Upcoming Events

<http://www.pewforum.org/2016/04/12/religion-in-everyday-life/>

“highly religious people are more engaged with their extended families, more likely to volunteer, more involved in their communities and generally happier with the way things are going in their lives”

The Holy Spirit walked into a BAR and this is what he asked for: That each individual person: (BAR) Believe, Accept and Respond to his promptings.

1. First we need to believe that God exists by professing our faith in the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
2. Second we need to accept that this Spirit lives and acts inside of us at all times – not just at Church on Sunday or in the midst of a personal crisis.

3. Third we need to pay attention to the promptings of the Spirit that arise from within us and act upon them by loving our neighbor, living with internal joy, peace, compassion, moral clarity and by living with a sense of service – these things show us and the world that the Holy Spirit is proud to hang out inside of us and in our family!! See Galatians 5:22
<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Galatians+5%3A22-23&version=NASB>

The link to the full text of the Pope's new document (The Joy of Love) is found here in English "[On Love in the Family](#)"

[Katrina Fernandez](#)

- See more at: <http://aleteia.org/2016/04/26/making-prayer-fun-for-kids-um-no/#sthash.k8N5yjQf.dpuf>

Article on making prayer fun for kids?

<http://www.catholiceducation.org/en/marriage-and-family/other-topics/bishop-barron-q-a-on-amoris-laetitia-the-joy-of-love.html>

<http://www.cnn.com/2016/04/08/europe/vatican-pope-family/index.html>

2 minute video overview of Pope Francis brand new document – “Love in the Family”

<http://aleteia.org/2016/03/30/watch-pope-francis-if-you-fall-get-up-get-up/>

Pope Francis' 44 second video – If you fall get up, get up!!

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=liWjpDmpAgM&ebc=ANyPxKr8ouO7he22d83ZyvIRJoeKQDCzq9op63gs1oKO4cePdzySiC71n366lwgSKXhx-Zrn_DVSxTVckPHQZBG-PjkERXIFCg

Divine Mercy is always celebrated the first Sunday after Easter. Here is a short explanation of this new devotion that has grown dramatically in the Church in recent times!

<http://petersboat.net/2016/03/17/march-madness-spiritual-and-religious-2/>

Short 3 minute video by a young New York priest on how spirituality and religion work together

- Here is a good Lenten reflection link from a friend of mine who is a seminarian in the Archdiocese of New York: Eric Wandrey: <http://godlights.me/2016/02/04/an-idea-for-lent-more-leisure/>

Video about Lent in two minutes <http://bustedhalo.com/video/ash-wednesday-in-two-minutes>

<http://godlights.me/2016/01/13/david-bowie-shakespeare-death-and-hope/>.

The Holy Doors associated with the Jubilee Year of Mercy officially opened in our Archdiocese on Sunday Dec. 13th at St Patrick's Cathedral and at Old St. Patrick's Cathedral in Lower East Manhattan. <http://archny.org/mercy>

<https://youtu.be/ZcXX9A2W3jQ>

Two 3 minute videos on the Jubilee Year of Mercy

<https://youtu.be/IYv4BUwytA0>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UtBs13j0YRQ>

David Steindl-Rast: Want to be happy? Be grateful

Published on Nov 27, 2013

The one thing all humans have in common is that each of us wants to be happy, says Brother David Steindl-Rast, a monk and interfaith scholar. And happiness, he suggests, is born from gratitude.

An inspiring lesson in slowing down, looking where you're going, and above all, being grateful.

Catholic Underground in Manhattan, <http://catholicunderground.net/> (First Saturday of month)

Children's Choir sign up - please reach out to me if you have any questions (amacdonnell@arcol.org) meets at 8:50 am in the choir loft.

Pflaum Publishing is the main program our teachers use for your child's Sunday lesson.

The two exceptions are the classes on the Sacraments: First Communion and Confirmation.

All parents, no matter the grade will find that the link below is a complimentary resource for

the work we do with all of the parish children.

http://www.pflaumweeklies.com/new_page/parent_guide.php

http://www.pflaumweeklies.com/new_page/index.php

This part of the Pflaum website also gives you access to more resources to reinforce the weekly lessons done by the Catechist.

<https://youtu.be/ZcXX9A2W3jQ>

Two 3 minute videos on the Jubilee Year of Mercy

<https://youtu.be/IYv4BUwytA0>

<http://chicago.cbslocal.com/2015/11/05/kids-technology-addiction/>

Short Article: My kid, the Ipad Junkie

<http://whispersintheloggia.blogspot.com/>

All of Pope Francis' US talks are found on this website with YouTube channel links

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jx447QYpwF8>

(4 minute video about how to be aware of the reality that God is acting in your life... so that you can hear his voice)

Fr. Albert Haase's short video link will give you some insight about how we can become aware of God's presence in our daily life.

<http://www.aleteia.org/en/religion/article/afraid-to-celebrate-halloween-dont-worry-its-very-christian-5862367938215936>

Short article on some Christian links with Halloween

<http://www.aleteia.org/en/religion/video/video-jesuit-priest-talks-about-real-life-exorcism-5832751722790912>

A Jesuit priest reflects (3minutes & 45 seconds) on the actual person possessed in the movie the Exorcist

Reminder about a basic "God Plan" for the New Year:

So what's your plan for the New Year? It's that time of year when we make new diet plans, exercise plans, spring vacation plans and maybe a new house budget. How about a God plan? I know you are intentional about all of the areas above, otherwise nothing new would ever happen in your family. I would like to invite you to consider putting some New Year's energy into a God plan. God waits patiently for us to take steps towards Him in response to the many graces he presents to us in our daily lives. Grace is all around us; assuring us that one of the characteristics of God is his omnipresence(He is everywhere). In other words we are never not in the presence of God. The challenge to each of us is to recognize these ongoing daily encounters and their meaning for our lives and families!

Here are a few simple steps I personally use each day. They may help you and your children become

more aware of God's presence in your daily life:

1. Morning: when you get up encourage yourself and your children to say hello to God and to be grateful for something or someone! Encourage yourself and children to say something complimentary to others before they go to school – build up a habit of thinking positively of others!

2. Gospel for the day: Usccb.org it takes a minute to read the daily Gospel. Here's an online link. <http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings/011716.cfm>

3. At night thank God again for your day, food, good results at work, a moment of fellowship etc. Review your various encounters with others and any insights you had during the day. Take a look at the next day's Gospel passage (will just take a minute). This could be done on your own and/or with your children.

4. Next day – Repeat.

5. Bonus points: consider reading a Catholic book (a little at a time) or joining or beginning a discussion group focused on some aspect of the faith or spirituality. I am happy to offer suggestions for resources. I am just an email away: amacdonnell@arcol.org

The fruit of regular daily reflection is: “love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, and faithfulness” **Galatians 5:22**