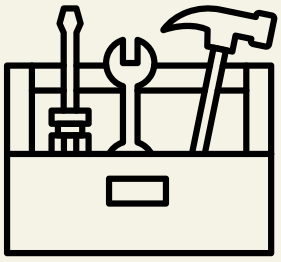
Faith Formation Family Tool Box

Jan 21st - Feb 3rd Discipleship

www.st-patricks.org

About the Tool Box



St Patrick's Faith Formation provides these resources to support your family, and to make living your Catholic faith together as a family simple and effective.

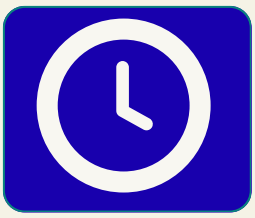
We know that fitting everything into an already busy schedule is complicated. So, we aren't asking you to do it all. Instead we invite your family to take on these resources as a challenge. Ask yourselves "What can we do?"

We have intentionally planned and crafted a variety of options to choose from with all families in mind. Look through the options provided and pick a few that work well for your family. Choose an afternoon to do several activities, or sprinkle them throughout your week.

This is your toolbox! Use the tools that are most helpful in building your family's faith together.

What You'll Find in This Tool Box

- **Practical Faith Tools** — Simple prayer practice, Bible readings, saint stories, conversation starters, fun videos, and Sunday Mass support
- **Lived Faith Ideas** — Crafts, recipes, games, pop culture, service projects, faith and science, and more
- **Deeper Learning** — Optional resources for parents wanting to learn more about that session's topic.



A Faith-Filled Afternoon/Evening

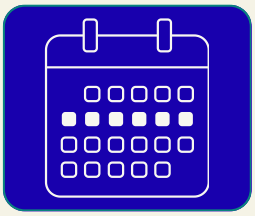
Some families might find it easiest to choose three or four ideas in this packet and make them into an afternoon or evening of faith-focused fun.

- Start your time in prayer or conversation by using one or two of the options in the "Practical Faith Tools." For example:
  - Begin with one of the suggested Prayer Habits
  - Use the suggested Conversation starters
  - Watch one of the recommended video resources.
- Then spend some time together working on one or two of the "Lived Faith Ideas"
  - Choose a craft or recipe to do together
  - Play a game or watch a pop-culture option
  - Complete a faith and science or service project
- Conclude using one of the prayer ideas provided.
  - Read the Gospel for the upcoming Sunday together
  - Learn about this session's Saint and ask for their prayers.

An Intentional Lord's Day

Perhaps it will work well for your family to integrate these resources into the rest of your Sunday before and after Mass.

- Read the Mass Readings as a family before Mass, or have a passenger read them on the drive to Church.
- Utilize the Conversation starters on the drive home from Mass, and practice a recommended prayer habit or Lord's Day idea.
- Integrate a recipe idea into lunch or dinner.
- Utilize a game, pop-culture, faith and science, or service project idea as part of your family time in the afternoon.
- Utilize the saint or art resources to conclude your day as a family in prayer.



Sprinkled Throughout the Week

For some, it might just be most practical to identify your favorite ideas from these materials and plug them in to different opportunities throughout the week, whenever time allows.

- Choose a day to add a recipe idea to dinner.
- Use conversation ideas when driving together in the car.
- Start your weekend with a service or faith and science project
- Read the Mass readings together Saturday evening in preparation for Mass the next day.
- The options are limitless!

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Find easy to use links to all resources on the St Patrick's Family Formation webpage

Practical Faith Tools

Student Workbooks

Your Child's work that they use during Wednesday Sessions with their catechist provides quality resources on the session's topic. We encourage parents to utilize these as a way to debrief the Wednesday session as well as carry the Wednesday session into the rest of the week. Below we have outlined the most helpful parts of each chapter as well as the specific chapter your child worked on with their catechist during our most recent Wednesday session.

- The last page in every chapter is an at home "with my family" page with scripture, activity, and discussion options.
- Each chapter introduces the example of a saint that demonstrates the topic through their lived faith.
- Throughout each chapter, there are a variety of simple Prayer options that you can integrate into other prayer times throughout your week.

January 21st, 2026 – Discipleship	
K: Unit 3, Session 12	1: Unit 3, Session 13
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Conversation Starters

One of the most consistent indicators of a child who will continue to live their faith into adulthood is growing up in a family that simply talks openly and actively about their faith. Consider using some of the provided conversation starters to discuss your faith as a family this week.

"When Jesus says, 'Come, follow me,'
he is inviting us to become his disciples.
When we respond to this call,
we leave behind our own plans
*and enter into an **adventure***
not of our own making."
~ The Adventure of Discipleship, p1

Have you ever been on an adventure? What was it like? Who did you go with? Did any part of it seem too hard or alarming?

What are the things holding me back more fully following Jesus? How can I start to let go of those things?

Following Jesus includes serving others as well as sometimes sacrificing your time, money, or even your will. **What little acts of love and sacrifice do you do?** What ones could you do?

Memory Verse

The Word of God is important in our faith journey, and memorizing short, simple scripture verses can prove to be beneficial to us at all ages to allow God to more consistently speak to us throughout our daily life.

Luke 14:27 “Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple.”

OR

John 13:34-5 “I give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved you, so you also should love one another. This is how all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

Mass Readings

Reading scripture together as a family before you hear the Word of God proclaimed at Mass is a great way to improve comprehension and impact among people young and old. Spend just a few minutes together reading the assigned readings for Mass from your Bible or by using the link provided. You can even do this together in the car, or as a time of prayer on Saturday evening before bed. You can also listen to the readings using the links provided. If needing to shorten this option, try just reading the Gospel.

Sunday, January 25th
Third Sunday in Ordinary Time
First Reading: Isaiah 8:23-9:3
Psalm 27:1,4,13-4
Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:10-3,17
Gospel: Matthew 4:12-23 or 4:12-17

Sunday, February 1st
Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time
First reading: Zephaniah 2:3, 3:12-3
Psalm 146:6-10
Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:26-31
Gospel: Matthew 5:1-12

Daily Readings
bible.USCCB.org

Lord’s Day Ideas

One way to celebrate the Lord’s Day is to have a traditional meal Saturday night or Sunday. Some ideas for this are below.

- If you are a family who goes to 9 AM Mass, perhaps a **hearty brunch** afterwards is a perfect tradition for you.
- If you need more beauty in your life, you might focus on that instead of the food. Makes Sundays your day for having **flowers and candles** with dinner.
- If you enjoy creating food for your family, have a **mini feast and dessert** Saturday or Sunday evenings.
- If you need more rest, **keep dinner simple** - put some root veggies and a roast in the crockpot Sunday mornings.
- If your family needs more time together, consider having **a protein-rich appetizer (or even sliced cheese!), apple slices, and popcorn with a movie**.

Prayer Habits

January 22nd is the Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children. To spiritually support this endeavor, consider one or more of these options:

- Going to daily Mass that day
- Attend St. Patrick's Holy Hour, 9:30-10:30, that morning
- Offering a simple fast (food, screens, or something else) or abstain from meat
- Praying the Divine Mercy Chaplet or a decade of the Rosary for mothers and their unborn children
- Sacrifice some of your free time and offer up a small act of service
- Setting aside a quiet half-hour on this day for Scripture reading, reflection, and journaling (consider Psalm 139, Luke 1, or 1 John 3 for your Scripture readings)
- Praying one of these:

  Option 1: Lord of life, look with love on every mother and child. Grant courage and support to families, wisdom to those who govern, and compassion to our communities. May we defend the vulnerable and bring your mercy to those who suffer, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

  Option 2: Most precious Lord, you dwelt within the womb of your dear mother, sanctifying the womb, and elevating the dignity of all human life. I pray today for the full legal protection of every unborn child. I also pray that every heart that supports abortion will be changed so as to experience the freedom that comes from living in the Truth. I offer to You, this day, all my sufferings and sacrifices to help atone for every violation against human dignity committed through acts of abortion. Please bring healing, hope, and freedom to all. Mother Mary, pray for us. Jesus, I trust in You.

Hymn

Hymns are sung to lift the soul and draw our hearts closer to God. Many are based on Scripture, giving us another avenue to understanding and reflecting on the Sacred Word. Some hymns teach doctrine and express beliefs, reinforcing Catholic teachings and traditions. Below is a hymn about the Church that your family can listen to, learn, or sing during the next few weeks.

Here I Am Lord

I, the Lord of sea and sky,
I have heard My people cry.
All who dwell in dark and sin,
My hand will save.
I who made the stars of night,
I will make their darkness bright.
Who will bear My light to them?
Whom shall I send?

Refrain
Here I Am, Lord. Is it I Lord?
I have heard You calling in the night.
I will go Lord, if you lead me.
I will hold your people in my heart.

I, the Lord of wind and flame,
I will tend the poor and lame.
I will set a feast for them,
My hand will save.
Finest bread I will provide,
Till their hearrts be satisfied.
I will give My life to them,
Whom shall I send?
(Refrain)

Praying with Art

Christ Washing the Disciples' Feet
by Benvenuto Tisi "Il Garofalo," c1520-5

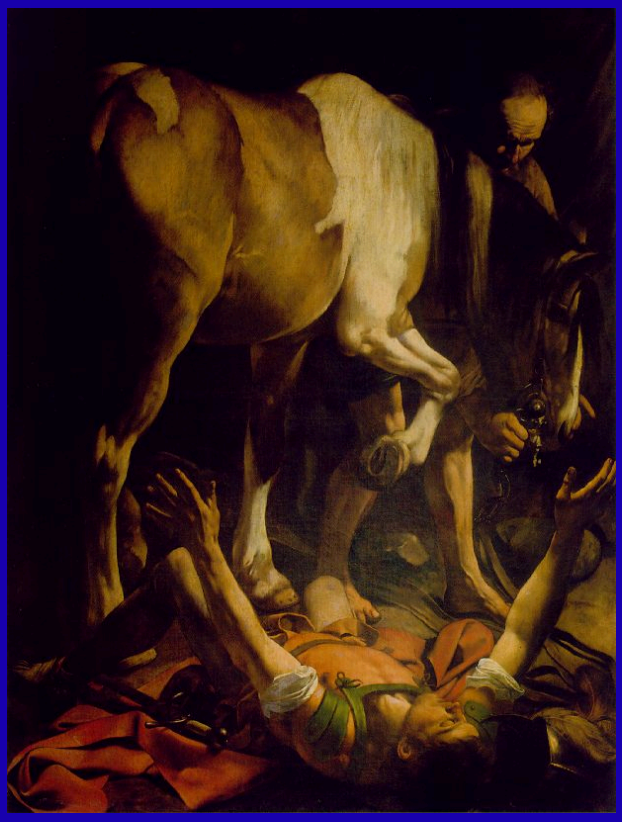
Each session, your family will receive a print out of a work of sacred art related to that session's topic. Over the Church's history, it was known — long before anyone had heard of multiple intelligences — that some people learned better through visuals and images can also be helpful for prayer experiences.

For this reason, the Church has a tradition known as visio divina ("divine seeing" or prayer in which we invite God to speak to our hearts as we look at an image).

Experience visio divina or lead others by following these steps:

1. Choose a comfortable, quiet place where you will not be distracted. Quiet yourself and relax by focusing on your breathing.
2. Begin by paying attention to the details, including shapes, colors, lighting, and facial expressions/body language of characters in the image. Identify the parts of the image that stand out to you and share them with your family.
3. Take a moment to prayerfully consider how God is speaking to your heart and why you think God has drawn your attention to this specific part of the image. Pay attention to your feelings, and allow God to speak to you through the image.
4. Respond to God, expressing your thoughts, feelings, desires, or yearnings. This can be done silently or together as a family.
5. Conclude by taking a few moments of silence to rest and savor the beauty of the image.

The Witness of the Saints



Conversion of St. Paul by Caravaggio

This session's saint is St. Paul, the Apostle - in particular the feast day of his conversion, January 25th
Born: 5 AD in Tarsus
Patron saint of missionaries, evangelists, writers, public workers, ropemakers, saddle makers, and tent makers.

"God did this so that Paul might learn who it was he was fighting against - a God whom he could not withstand, not only in punishments, but even in kindnesses. For darkness did not blind Paul, but the superabundance of light cast him into darkness."
~ Saint John Chrysostom on the Conversion of St. Paul

"...this man is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before Gentiles, kings, and Israelites," (Acts 9:15)

Saint Paul's entire life can be explained in terms of one experience — his meeting with Jesus on the road to Damascus. In an instant, he saw that all the zeal of his dynamic personality was being wasted, like the strength of a boxer swinging wildly. Perhaps he had never seen Jesus, who was only a few years older. But he had acquired a zealot's hatred of all Jesus stood for, as he began to harass the Church: "...entering house after house and dragging out men and women, he handed them over for imprisonment" (Acts 8:3b).

Now he himself was "entered," possessed, all his energy harnessed to one goal — being a slave of Christ in the ministry of reconciliation, an instrument to help others experience the one Savior.

The Witness of the Saints

One sentence determined his theology: “I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting” (Acts 9:5b). Jesus was mysteriously identified with people — the loving group of people Saul had been running down like criminals. Jesus, he saw, was the mysterious fulfillment of all he had been blindly pursuing.

Saint Paul’s life became a tireless proclaiming and living out of the message of the cross: Christians die baptismally to sin and are buried with Christ; they are dead to all that is sinful and unredeemed in the world. They are made into a new creation, already sharing Christ’s victory and someday to rise from the dead like him. Through this risen Christ the Father pours out the Spirit on them, making them completely new.

So Saint Paul’s great message to the world was: You are saved entirely by God, not by anything you can do. Saving faith is the gift of total, free, personal and loving commitment to Christ, a commitment that then bears fruit in more “works” than the Law could ever contemplate. The conversion of Saint Paul shows that God is always willing to find us.

Once a Christian-hater who became a phenomenal Christian leader, Paul, through his letters and travels, guided and strengthened an unfolding Church, helping believers keep their new faith growing, alive, and true.

His radical transformation is demonstrative of the extraordinary redemptive power of the Gospel. As a zealous Jewish scholar, he had persecuted countless Christians. After his encounter with Christ, however, he became an unstoppable force for the kingdom of God, **traveling more than 9000 miles** for the Lord.

“Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, I passed a night and a day on the deep; on frequent journeys, in dangers from rivers, dangers from robbers, dangers from my own race, dangers from Gentiles, dangers in the city, dangers in the wilderness, dangers at sea, dangers among false brothers; in toil and hardship, through many sleepless nights, through hunger and thirst, through frequent fastings, through cold and exposure.” (2 Corinthians 11:25-27)

Video Resources

For younger children:

1. Let Your Light Shine | Formed: sometimes what we don't do hides our light.
2. Big Changes for Saul | Formed: tells the story of Paul's conversion from an enemy of the new Church to an evangelist for God.

For older youth:

1. Temple of Love | Formed: Join Nicholas, a young man growing up in Corinth during the ministry of the Apostle Paul, as he struggles to understand and live his faith. Based on St. Paul's Epistle to the Corinthians.

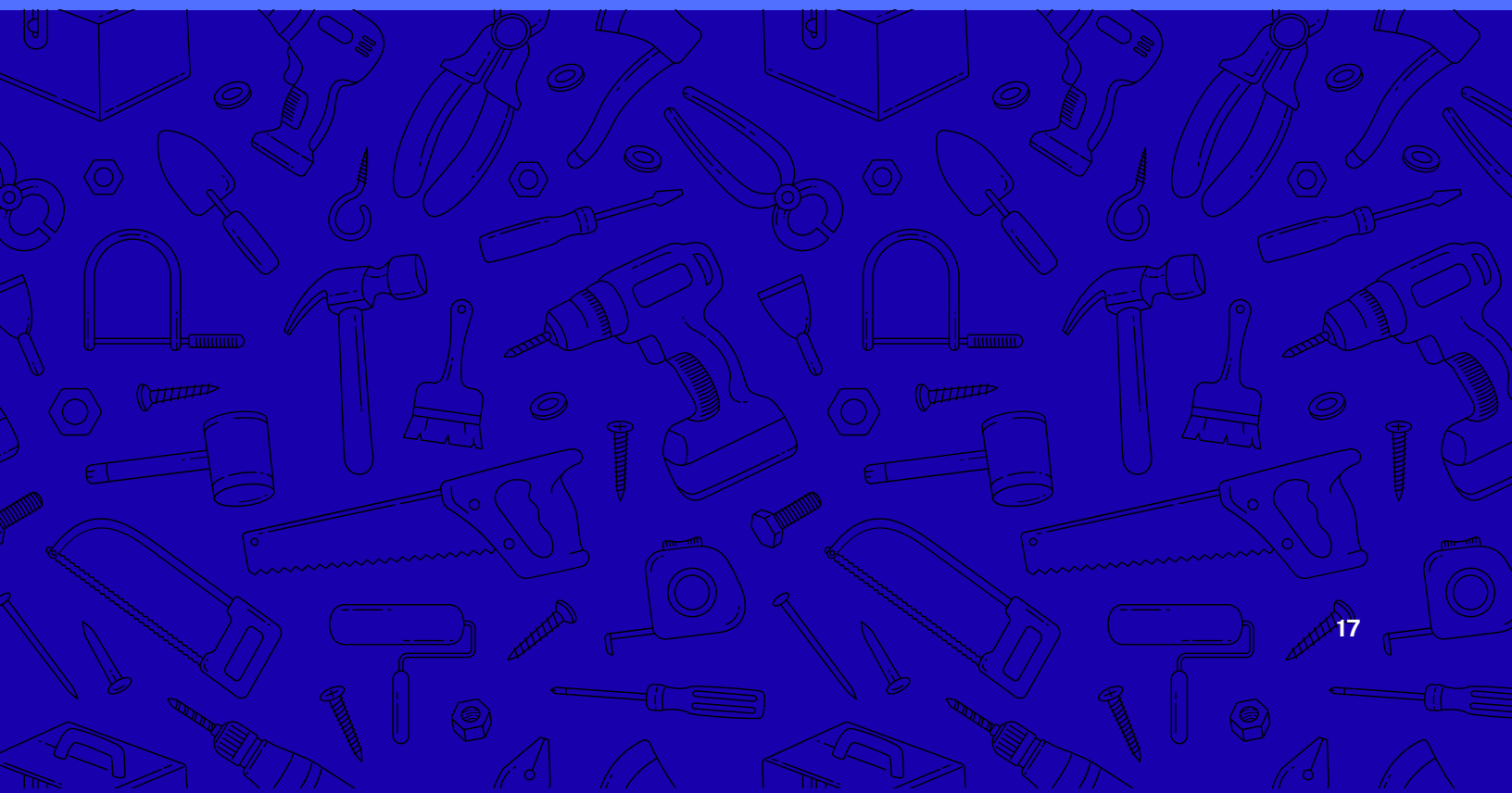
How Do I Use Formed?

1. Go to formed.org/signup
2. Select your parish by entering name, city and/or zip code
3. Enter your name and email address
4. Check that email account for a link to begin using FORMED.

Find easy to use links to these video resources on the St Patrick's Family Formation webpage

www.st-patricks.org/formation/youth/family-formation

Lived Faith Ideas



Food and Recipes

Consider making a Pre-Lent meal this session. An old tradition, before refrigeration, was to use up all the meat, dairy, and other perishable food items before Lent began. While we no longer have to do this to prevent loss of food, it could certainly be a new tradition to embrace before the days of fasting and abstinence! Here's one possibility for this tradition that might warm you up in the midst of our winter months: **Italian Chili.**

Ingredients

2 tsp olive oil
ground beef
mild or hot Italian sausage, casings removed
tsp chili powder
tsp dried oregano
tsp dried basil
tsp dried cumin
pinch crushed red pepper flakes
salt and pepper to taste
yellow onion, chopped
red bell pepper, diced
6 cloves of garlic, minced
2 -15 oz cans of diced tomatoes
2 -10 oz cans of tomato sauce
15 oz can of kidney beans, rinsed and drained
fresh parmesan cheese, shredded

Directions

1. Heat oil in large pot over medium heat.
2. Add ground beef and sausage, breaking it up into crumbles.
3. Stir in all the seasonings.
4. Add garlic, onion, and bell pepper. Stir and cook until they are soft.
5. Add tomatoes (undrained), tomato sauce, and beans. Stir.
6. Cover and lower the heat to low. Let simmer 2-3 hours, stirring occasionally.
7. Serve with fresh parmesan.

Faith and Science

"One way to learn the mind of the Creator is to study His creation.
We must pay God the compliment of studying His work of art and this should apply to all realms of human thought.
A refusal to use our intelligence honestly is an act of contempt for Him who gave us that intelligence."
~ Ernest Walton, winner of the 1951 Nobel Prize in Physics
and the first person in history to split the atom.

This might be a hard concept to embrace! But learning about God in this way isn't like going to school or studying for tests. Instead, ponder these questions and then act on your answers!

- What aspects of God's works do you enjoy learning about or even just observing?
- How can you expand that to learn or observe more?
- What can you do this week or month to embrace this idea of Walton's?

Games

Pathway to Change Game

Life can feel like an obstacle course sometimes. There are moments when we fall, get lost, or hit walls we did not expect. The Pathway to Change game reminds us that faith - and discipleship - is not about being perfect. It is about getting back up, learning from mistakes, and trusting that God walks with us through every twist and turn.

Materials Needed

- large open space (indoors or out)
- tape, chalk, or other means to mark start and finish lines
- cones, ropes, chairs, or other items to create obstacles
- index cards with reflection questions and actions (see p21 for ideas)
- optional items: small ball, blindfold, flameless candle

Setup Instructions

1. Clear away anything in your open space that might cause tripping.
2. Mark the start and finish lines so they are easy to see.
3. Arrange cones, ropes, chairs, etc. to create an obstacle course. Ideas: crawling under ropes, jumping over cones, or balancing on one foot.
4. Place the index cards at different spots along the course. Each card should have a question or short action related to change, forgiveness, or faith.
5. Test the course. 🙂

How to Play

1. The goal is to complete the course while thinking about how God invites each of us to change and grow.
2. One at a time, complete the course. Timing is optional.

Variation: walking the course blindfolded and guided by another person, much as when we trust God to guide us on life's course.

Games, continued

Pathway to Change Game: Example Questions and Actions

These provide a variety of possibilities and ideas, but you are certainly free to adjust or add different questions/actions.

- Name one thing you would like to change about your approach to challenges.
- Perform a gesture of letting go of a bad habit and then jump over the hurdle.
- Before passing this point, share a belief you hold strongly about kindness.
- Reflect on a time you showed forgiveness. Mimic a gesture of forgiveness, then proceed.
- Identify a virtue you wish to cultivate more deeply in your life. Share it, then balance on one foot for 10 seconds as a symbol of stability.
- Think of a moment when you felt close to God. Share your experience, then quietly walk to the next station, contemplating that closeness.
- Recall a situation where you needed patience. Describe it briefly, then crawl under a rope as a reminder of the humility and patience required in life.
- Share a personal challenge and how you intend to overcome it with God's help. After sharing, leap over a small gap to symbolize the leap of faith needed.
- Consider a time you were a peacemaker. Navigate through a series of cones, symbolizing the path of peace.
- Name a fear you want to overcome with faith. Announce it, then walk blindfolded for a short distance, guided by a teammate, to symbolize trust in God.
- Reflect on a scripture that inspires you to change. Share it, then pass a ball to each team member, symbolizing the sharing of God's Word.
- Think of a way you can show more love to others. Share your idea, then give a team member a supportive pat on the back as a sign of encouragement.
- Choose a saint you admire for their transformation in Christ. Share why, then carry a flameless candle to the next station, representing carrying their example with you.

Service Projects

“When we pick up our cross, we often discover that sacrifice brings us joy. It may seem contradictory, but as we let go of ourselves and reach out to serve others, we experience a deeper sense of fulfillment. Jesus demonstrated this perfect love and selflessness by sacrificing Himself for our sake. Embracing our responsibilities and challenges allows us to be equipped with God’s grace to walk in love. In picking up our cross, we build relationships and serve others, enriching our hearts and spirits in ways we may have never imagined.”

“As we consider the importance of picking up our cross, let’s remember that it is not just about carrying burdens but also about embracing the love and sacrifice that come with following Christ. Each day offers us chances to grow in our faith, to find strength in Him, to experience the joy of serving others, and to trust in His promises. Together, we can lift each other up and encourage one another to continue picking up our crosses, knowing that our journey may be difficult but is always filled with purpose and hope. In picking up our crosses, we find true fulfillment in our commitment to love God and serve others.”

Find ways to serve others, just by picking up your cross daily. Here are some ideas:

- Cheerfully do your chores, preferably without being reminded to do them. (If not cheerfully, then at least do them without scowls, eye rolls, or grumbling. 😊)
- Listen to a younger sibling or a friend when they are sad or frustrated about something.
- Try to help others with little acts of kindness. Help a sibling with their chores or getting ready in the mornings. Look at cashiers, smile, and say thank you. Read or sing to a younger sibling when your parents are preparing dinner or signing permission slips. Offer to help Mom or Dad with a bigger chore, such as cleaning the basement or garage.
- Help plan a family adventure – go on a snowshoe adventure in a local park, plan a visit to the Basilica or Cathedral if you haven’t been there, try a recipe or restaurant from another country’s cuisine … how can you prepare? Discuss how it went after.

Deeper Learning

Parent Videos

God Doesn't Call the Equipped (an Archdiocesan video)
Archbishop Hebda reminds us that we are often called before we feel ready for certain changes or journeys in our lives. However, God will equip us if He's calling us!

How to Pick Up Your Cross
Father Mike: discusses Jesus' condition for discipleship, the trap of thinking harder is holier, active and passive purification, and the power of embracing your cross.

How to Say Yes to God
Sometimes God calls us at seemingly inconvenient moments. Father Mark-Mary and Brother Malachy share their thoughts and experiences when God barges into their lives every day to remind them that their initial yes implies a daily yes to do his will, even when they'd rather be sleeping!

Scripture and Catechism

Read and reflect on Luke chapter 10:1-12.
Spend some time reading and reflecting on discipleship and mission. Optionally, listen to Father Mike Schmitz on the Bible in a Year podcast to learn and pray more about this scripture reading.

The Bible in a Year
with Fr. Mike Schmitz
Day 316: Absolute Surrender

Consider Reading the Catechism of the Catholic Church
The Catechism of the Catholic Church is an outstanding explanation of all the teachings of the Catholic Church. You can read about this sessions topic online for free, or you can pick up a copy of the Catechism from the St Patrick's bookstore.

Read paragraphs 849-56 - Mission

Day 119: The Church's Missionary Mandate w/Fr. Mike

Additional Reading Options

Following Christ: A Call to Radical Discipleship
"To follow Christ is the essence of the Christian vocation. It is an invitation to embark on a transformative journey…Scripture, the teachings of the Church, and the writings of various pope's and various saint's provide to each of us, very profound insights into what it means to answer this call."

Transformative Discipleship
When you feel called to step up much higher as a disciple, this is a good place to start. The Focus site has an entire series of articles, called Foundations for Discipleship to help you on the journey.

Below are three short articles from the Archdiocesan's Catholic Spirit, each briefly exploring an aspect of discipleship that might be helpful as you ponder this role in your life.

Wanting What Jesus is Doing

The Church Needs Missionary Disciples

The Stakes of Discipleship

Notes...

We are Here to Help!

We want your feedback!

These resources are designed for your family, and we want to continue to improve them to better meet your needs.
Share with us your favorite activities, standout options that work well, as well as the resources that might have missed the mark.

Send us photos from your family working on these activities at home! We want to see your family's faith in action!

Contact Us

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