

# Partners in FAITH™



Helping our children grow in their Catholic faith.

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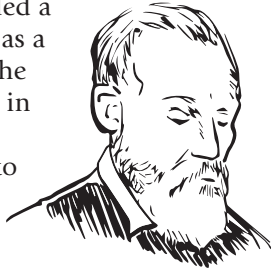
Director of Faith Formation



## Thoughtful Moments

### St. Jerome Emiliani

St. Jerome led a wayward life as a soldier until he was captured in battle and turned back to God. After a miraculous escape, he returned to Venice and studied for the priesthood. After being ordained, he began working for the poor. He was especially devoted to caring for orphans—victims of a recent war. To help, he and some companions founded the Clerks Regulars of Somascha. He is the patron saint of orphanages and abandoned children.



### Through the eyes of a child

Let a child's wonder about the mysteries of God's love awaken your own sense of excitement. In connecting with your children, you may find you are reconnecting with the child in yourself.

*"Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord; and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might"*  
(Deuteronomy 6:4).



## Share what you love about being Catholic

We choose to be Catholic because we know joyful practice helps us to become the people God wants us to be. A good way to help children find the same joy in our Faith is to share what we love about it ourselves:

"My grandmother prayed the Rosary every day of her life," said Lisa. "When I was old enough, she gave me my own Rosary and taught me how to pray it. This prayer has helped me through many tough times in my life and I pray it often with my own children."

"I enjoy celebrating the seasons of the liturgical year and marking the

milestones of our Faith," said Chris. "My children love changing the colors of our displays, singing seasonal hymns, and learning the stories of saints from long ago."

"I fell away from the Church when I was in college," said Erica.

"Then I started dating a man who was a devout Catholic and I went to Mass a few times with him. We fell in love and he asked that I go to Confession so we could receive Communion

together. I did it for him, but felt such a thrill when I heard the words of absolution and realized that Jesus really did forgive me. Now we tell our children that Confession brought us together."



## Why Do Catholics Do That?

## Why do Catholics choose godparents for baptism?

In the early Church, most people who were baptized were adults converting to Christianity. Because of the persecution, sponsors would confirm the integrity of potential converts, called catechumens, to make sure they weren't spies. They



would also instruct the catechumens. When infant baptism became more common, sponsors would make the Profession of Faith for the infants and be responsible for raising them in the Faith if the parents were unable to. This is when the name "godfather/godmother" came into use.

## What gifts will you offer your child?

All loving parents want to give their children gifts. Unfortunately, we know that the gifts we can give won't bring lasting happiness. Instead, we can pray frequently and fervently for gifts that will. Consider making petitions for these gifts a part of your daily prayers for your children:

**Wisdom.** Ask that your child be inspired to avoid poor choices and have the wisdom to lead a Gospel-centered life.

**Courage.** Fortify him to stand for justice and speak out against bigotry, unfairness, and cruelty.

**Strength.** Pray that as she grows she will withstand



negative peer pressure.

**Compassion.** Help him follow Jesus' commandment to love one another.

**Discernment.** Endow them with the skills to select healthy friendships.

**Independence.** Ask that children care less about what others think of them and be more interested in pleasing God.

**Faith.** Give them faith in God, belief in the teachings of Christ, Scripture, and of the Catholic Church. These are the foundation for a healthy life and eternal salvation.

These gifts will make us happy forever.

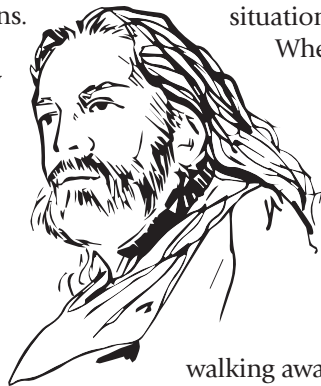
### Scripture LESSON

### Luke 6:27-38; Loving like God

This Gospel passage is all about Christ-like conduct with difficult people or situations. Jesus tells us to "love your enemies...forgive." It's easy to love our friends, but nearly impossible to love those who treat us badly.

Love is acting for the other's good; it's not (just) a feeling. We know our love is authentic when we can pray for our enemies, do a favor for someone who can't repay us, repay an insult with kindness, or return violence with non-violent resistance.

Forgiving others means we stop



accusing them in our hearts. It's choosing not to prolong a bad situation by hoping for revenge.

When we forgive, it sets us free—free to move on with our life.

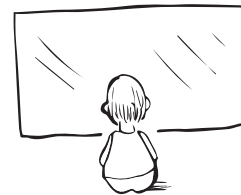
**What can a parent do?** Tell children that truly following Christ means doing the right thing even if it's difficult or unpopular.

Not taking reckless dares, walking away from a fight, and choosing not to "get even" aren't signs of weakness, but require real strength of character. The surest sign of being God's children is if we love others the way he does.

### Parent TALK

#### Limiting the TV time

I was becoming concerned that my children were spending too much time in front of screens. Most of their



conversations revolved around movies and television shows. They wouldn't miss their favorite

programs but they were missing hours of their lives.

My concerns were confirmed one night when we lost power for a few hours during a long thunderstorm. No television, no computers, no iPads. The girls grew bored, cranky, and restless. Finally, I lit candles and pulled out board games. We played Dominoes, Monopoly, Trivial Pursuit. The power came back, but Kara and Dad were tied and wanted to play to the finish.

After that night, I realized we needed to make a change. In order to earn screen time, the children had to spend time reading, playing outside or doing chores. Since then, they have found other ways to have fun and don't need their devices nearly as much.

### Feasts & Celebrations

**Feb. 2 – The Presentation of the Lord.** In accordance with the Law of Moses, Mary and Joseph brought Jesus to the temple to make the required offering forty days after his birth, and Simeon praised God for revealing the long-awaited Savior.

**Feb. 21 – St. Peter Damian (1072).** Childhood deprivation may have created a desire for an austere life. St. Peter Damian became a disciplined monk but was called to serve as a bishop for many years and served as

advisor to seven popes. He retired to monastic life and died in the care of his brother monks.

**Feb. 25 – St. Caesarius of Nazianzus (369).** Brother of St. Gregory of Nazianzus, St. Caesarius served as physician to the emperor Julian the Apostate. Julian tried to convince St. Caesarius to renounce his faith, but the saint refused and later resigned his post. After surviving a terrible earthquake in Nicaea, he decided to be formally baptized (most people back then delayed baptism until later). He died soon after.



#### Our Mission

To help parents raise faithful Catholic children  
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