



**David J. Conrad**

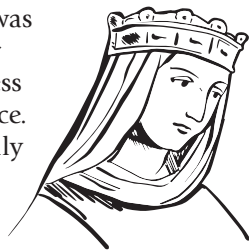
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## Thoughtful Moments

### St. Matilda

St. Matilda was known for her beauty, holiness and intelligence. She was happily married to Henry the Fowler and had five children. Beloved by her subjects, she was known for donating generously to the poor. When Henry died, his two oldest sons fought over the crown. They persecuted Matilda for her generosity and took control of her money. Later, they apologized, but she chose to spend the rest of her life in simplicity and prayer in the convent.



### Modeling

If we keep our cool when everything else around us is out of control, we model self-control and patience for our children. These valuable skills will help them to avoid temptation and sinful impulses long after they are no longer under our watchful protection.

*"Remember your father and mother when you sit among great men; lest you be forgetful in their presence, and be deemed a fool on account of your habits"* (Sirach 23:14).



## Become someone new this Lent

March 6th begins Lent - the chance to become the person God intends us to be. The desert of Lent allows us time and space to take back control of our environment, become more present to our families, and revise the messages we send to others.

**Take control.** What can be shed? Sort through and declutter drawers, toy closets or living spaces with the goal of dumping unwanted and unneeded possessions. Choose one area a week during Lent. The end result can be clear space to store newer, more useful goods or the perspective to appreciate what is left.

**Become intentional.** Family life can



become a treadmill of work, school, sports, clubs, and activities. Yet, the ability to say "no" allows us to be intentional about how we choose to spend our time. Our primary need is for our family to connect with God and each other. These connections are from where our strength flows. A "no" to others may be a "yes" to God and family.

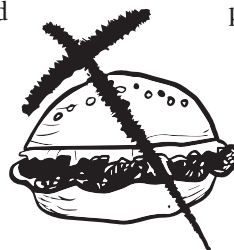
### Reform speech.

How we speak is the primary way we build connection - with coworkers, neighbors, friends, family. This Lent, resolve to use speech only to build up others with positive words and phrases. Promise to reject swears or curses, and use God's name only reverently and prayerfully. The benefits will be immediate and eternal.

## Why Do Catholics Do That?

## Why do Catholics give up meat during Lent?

Beginning in the second century, Christians have traditionally given up eating meat as a sacrifice. Meat was considered a luxury the Church asked the faithful to do without during certain days and seasons. The Church isn't



promoting vegetarianism but is encouraging mindful sacrifice.

Today, we are still asked to make the small sacrifice on Fridays by giving up meat - especially during Lent - to recall the incredible sacrifice of Christ giving his life on the Cross for our salvation.

## Raise a player for God's team

Playing on a baseball or soccer team, for example, may teach children how to be good soccer or baseball team players, but few adults still play baseball or soccer. Children need life-team skills that are best taught in the family.

**Team players work for a common goal.** One way to teach this is to give children chores and let them know that their contribution is important and necessary to the wellbeing of the family.

**Team players obey the rules.** Build these skills by setting family rules for behavior and performance, and enforcing them.

**Team players follow instructions.** Give children age-appropriate instructions for doing homework, helping around the house, or working on extra projects to help.

**Team players share resources.** Cheerfully sharing common resources like those in the kitchen or bathroom, for example, helps youngsters learn planning and cooperation.

**Team players do their part.** Skilled team players know that teams work best when everyone plays their part. After all, the most

important team is God's team where everyone works together to win.



## Scripture LESSON

**Luke 15:1-3, 11-32. We can always go home again.**

The scribes and the Pharisees were furious when Jesus welcomed tax collectors and sinners into his company. They didn't approve of Jesus befriending such people, especially when he was harsh with the scribes and Pharisees. In response, Jesus told the story of the Prodigal Son.

The younger son asked his father for his share in the family estate and squandered it in a country far from home. With his money gone and his situation desperate, he returned to his father, humbled, and asked for mercy. Overjoyed by his son's return, the father

gave him a princely reception. This is the spirit in which God receives us when we come home to him.

Convinced he was the "good" son, however, the older brother resented the warm welcome his younger brother got. Like the Pharisees and scribes, he was miffed at the prospect of sinners becoming acceptable to God.

**What can a parent do?** Help your child to understand that no matter what we have done, we can always come home to God. He is always waiting to joyfully welcome us back.



## Parent TALK

Tessa had a best friend in middle school named, Vicky. One day, Vicky stopped talking to her, and Tessa had no idea why. When she asked, Vicky wouldn't answer. Tessa was very upset and asked my advice.



Together, we read from St. Matthew's gospel, chapter 18. In it, Jesus suggests always talking directly to one another when difficult situations arise. If that doesn't work, bring along a friend or two to see if they can mediate. If that doesn't work, go to an authority. Tessa thought that was a great idea, and asked her friend Sarah to help.

As it turns out, Vicky was having a rough time at home. A relative living with the family was unkind to her and Vicky felt alone. The girls went together to a teacher to get help.

Through this situation, Tessa learned that that Bible has all kinds of practical and useful advice.

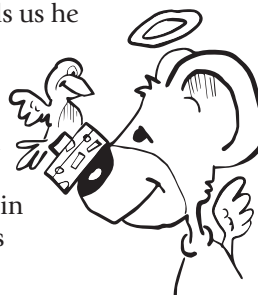
## Feasts & Celebrations

**March 12 – St. Seraphina (1253):** Born to a poor family in San Gimignano, Italy, she suffered from a mysterious paralyzing illness. Once beautiful, she was disfigured and in constant pain. Abandoned, she found comfort in the sufferings of Jesus crucified and in the prayers of St. Gregory the Great. She bore her sufferings with extraordinary patience until her death.

**March 17 – St. Patrick of Ireland (c.461).** Born in Scotland, St. Patrick was kidnapped by pirates and brought

to Ireland as a slave. He escaped but later returned to become the bishop of Ireland. He is credited for having established the Church there.

**March 19 – St. Joseph (1st century).** Jesus' earthly father and husband to the Blessed Mother, St. Joseph is a model of fatherhood and a protector of families. We know little about him, but the Bible tells us he was a "righteous man" (Matthew 1:19). He is the patron saint of a happy death, because he died in the arms of Jesus and Mary.



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