

"We remember
how you loved us
to your death"

www.graceinaction.org

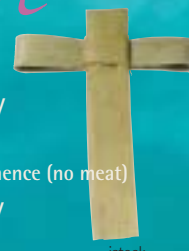
April 2007

GRACE IN Action

LIVING CATHOLIC STEWARDSHIP™

celebrate
April

- 1 Palm Sunday
- 5 Holy Thursday
- 6 Good Friday
Fast and Abstinence (no meat)
- 7 Holy Saturday
- 8 Easter
- 25 St. Mark



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new parables

Pray together; play together; stay together



Here were two young families who lived next door to one another. One family kept a busy schedule. The kids rushed between school, soccer practice and karate lessons, hurrying from dance classes to Scout meetings. After work, the parents disappeared to their own agendas: meetings of the PTA, workouts at the gym, business dinners and board meetings and evenings out with friends. To diminish the guilt of leaving their kids alone so much, they showered their children with gifts: personal electronics, trendy clothes, high-end sporting goods.

And while all the gifts and the activities were good, the family tended to feel bad that they never had any time together. Only infrequently did they eat together; and when they did, the meals were frenzied, fast-food affairs. On holidays, the family always traveled, which only added to their stress and detracted from the sense of home and hearth. And since both parents and children were worn-out from trying to cram too much into their days and nights, when they did find time together, they often bickered and then found it more comfortable to return to the isolation of their personal electronic devices.

There was another family that focused on keeping life simple. The parents understood that the most valuable gift they could give their children is time. The mother and father limited their children's activities, just as they put boundaries on their own daily planners, careful not to schedule every waking moment. This family read books together, watched movies and worked jigsaw puzzles. They shared meals, and the kids helped with easy kitchen tasks. They enjoyed drives to beautiful places for picnics. This family also prayed together and took care to make holidays holy days. And, as a result, the family members enjoyed one another's company in abiding peace.



Pictured at right is the Grogan family, members of Most Precious Blood Parish in Denver, Colo. Steff Grogan, a pianist, writes and records music for children. Visit cdbaby.com for information about her CD titled "Bless This Child" and also "I Want a Friend Over," recorded with her three daughters.



try this

Raise your spirits

Want to add more meaning to Easter this year? Plan to attend the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday, or the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday at your parish. Or make a pilgrimage to your cathedral for the Chrism Mass during Holy Week and witness the priests' renewal of vows and the bishop's blessing upon the sacramental oils for the year. The beauty and grace of these liturgies, which build toward the pinnacle of the Catholic calendar, will help resurrect your spirit.



Render unto God

April is tax time. If you itemize deductions, your tax return will give you a clear picture of your income and your charitable contributions over the last year. To reduce the amount you render unto "Caesar," render more unto God: Donate dollars or goods to your parish or other tax-deductible charities now to improve future tax-return profiles.

CORNERSTONE

"The God of peace
is never glorified
by human violence."

— Thomas Merton

catholickids Sing a new song unto the Lord

A good steward has a sense of joy.
Sing to the tune of "B-I-N-G-O."

"Jesus rose on Easter day
and that makes us so happy.
H-A-P-P-Y, H-A-P-P-Y, H-A-P-P-Y
and that makes us so happy.
Jesus brings new life to us
and that makes us so happy.
H-A-P-P-Y, H-A-P-P-Y, H-A-P-P-Y
and that makes us so happy.
Jesus is with us today
and that makes us so happy.
H-A-P-P-Y, H-A-P-P-Y, H-A-P-P-Y
and that makes us so happy."

Encourage children to make up
new verses for this joy-filled tune.

Source: "Big Book of
Ideas for Children's
Faith Formation,"
published by *Our
Sunday Visitor*.



Visit www.graceinaction.org to find
The Jelly Bean Prayer for children.



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Our Sunday Visitor



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defining moments A stewardship alphabet



Despair: The deliberate and willful abandoning of hope in God and trust in His providence. It offends against hope as well as faith and charity. To despair is an implicit denial of God's goodness and intervention in creation. This vice cripples one's willingness to love God and to serve Him and others, paralyzing any desire to better a given situation. Despair is not the same as fear and anxiety, which may result from illness, trauma, etc.

Detachment: In each person's vocation to holiness, that virtue which frees an individual from any inordinate attachment to another person, object or state of mind. True detachment is not simply a lack of care,

but rather a liberation from any excessive affection that would hinder one's love and worship of God.

Development of Peoples: The notion that society must meet the needs of all peoples if they are to attain the fulfillment intended by God. The Church continues to proclaim the dignity of man; she has championed the rights of all.

Devotion: 1. The desire to dedicate oneself to God's service. Prayer seeks to animate one to abandon himself fully to God's will — the core of sanctity. 2. Consolation experienced at times during prayer; a reverent manner of praying.

Devotions, Private: Pious practices beyond participation in various acts of the

liturgy, often called "popular devotions." Devotions of a liturgical type include Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and recitation of prayer in the Liturgy of the Hours. Examples of paraliturgical devotions are a Bible service or vigil, the Angelus, Rosary, and Stations of the Cross, each with a strong scriptural basis.

Disciple: The general term for any student or follower of a particular teacher. In the New Testament, the disciples are understood as the 72 who received instruction from Jesus (see Lk 10:1-24). After Our Lord's ascension, the apostles added to the number of disciples, with 120 gathered at Jerusalem in Acts 1:15. In modern usage, the term "disciple" is generally applied to all the baptized.

sowing seeds God's challenge

"The challenge, then, is to understand our role — our vocation — and to respond generously to this call from God. Christian vocation entails the practice of stewardship."

— *Stewardship: A Disciple's Response*
U.S. Catholic bishops' stewardship pastoral

Our tradition holds that Jesus calls us individually, by name, to our personal vocation. Each of us has a calling, a particular role to play in carrying out God's divine plan. Whether you are a parent or a priest, a senior citizen or a teenager, whether you are married or single, a musician or a mapmaker, you have in your heart the ability to serve God's plan. Stewardship extends far beyond Sunday Mass. Fully lived, the spirit of stewardship enters into all our thoughts, words, deeds and decisions.

What do you understand to be your personal vocation?
If you placed all your trust in God, how might you challenge yourself to more generously live your personal vocation?

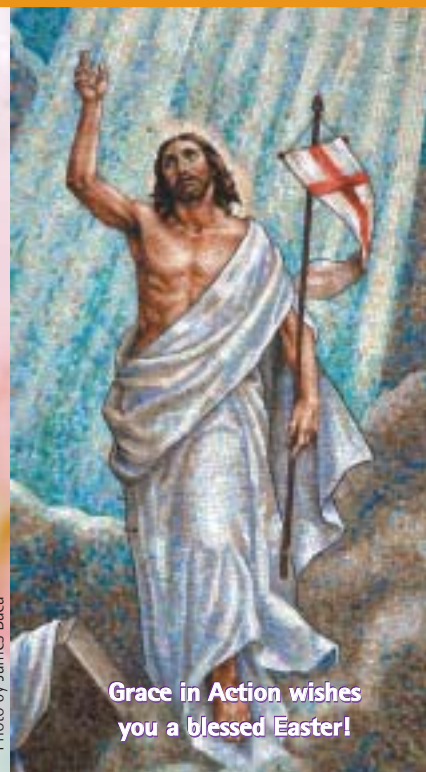


Photo by James Baca

Grace in Action wishes
you a blessed Easter!