

Saint John Paul II Catholic Parish  
Barbara Manley, Director of Faith Formation



## Thoughtful Moments

### St. Gertrude the Great

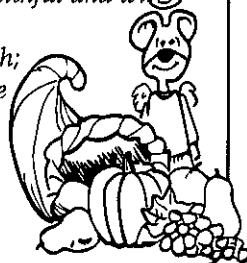
Born in thirteenth-century Germany, St. Gertrude was raised and educated by the Benedictine nuns. Nothing is known of her parents and she is thought to have been orphaned. She loved learning, especially languages. Eventually St. Gertrude became a nun. When she was about twenty-five, she began having visions of Jesus, which continued until her death. She was known for her holiness, her kindness to the rich and poor, and her prayers for the souls in Purgatory.



### Kindness always

Jesus asked that we always be kind, no matter how we are treated. *"Children, let us love not in word or speech but in deed and truth"* (1 John 3:18).

*"No trial has come to you but what is human. God is faithful and will not let you be tried beyond your strength; but with the trial he will also provide a way out, so that you may be able to bear it"*



## Are you raising a future saint?

If your child's halo hasn't yet appeared, don't give up hope that you have a saint-in-the-making. In fact, some of the saints were distinctly un-saintly in their early lives, too. Helping children get to know the saints presents models of holiness they can follow. For example:

**St. Augustine** drove his mother crazy. A devout Christian, St. Monica agonized over her son's partying, paganism, and lack of respect for holiness. She prayed for him for years and kept faith in God's power to work miracles. Slowly, Augustine straightened up, was baptized, and became one of the great saints of the Church.

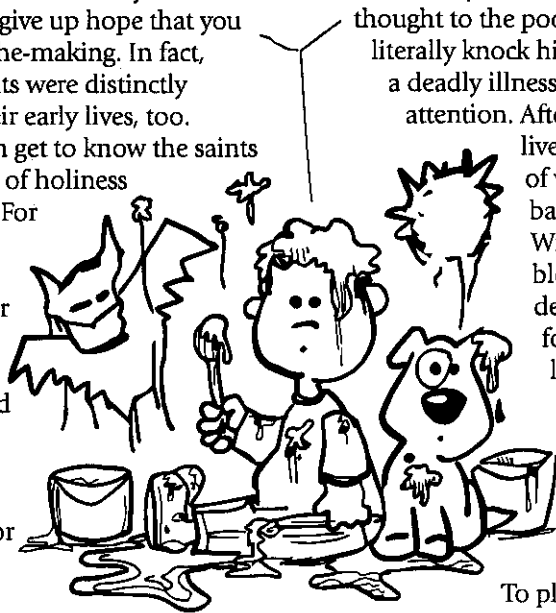
**St. Francis of Assisi** loved his carefree

life of luxury and barely gave a thought to the poor. God had to literally knock him off his feet with a deadly illness to get his attention. After that, he even lived without many of what we consider basic necessities. With his mother's blessing, Francis denied God nothing for the rest of his life.

**St. Thomas Becket** enjoyed power and riches as a close friend of England's King Henry II.

To please the king, he almost forgot his love for the Church. Thomas came to his senses and gave up his power and position to protect the Church. He was martyred for it.

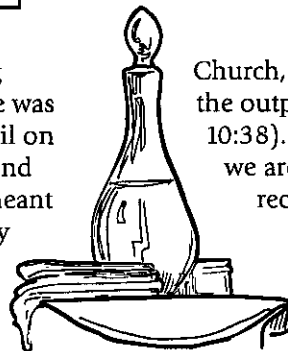
If they can do it, our youngsters can, too.



## Why Do Catholics Do That?

### Why do Catholics use oil in Sacraments?

In the Bible, dedicating someone to God's service was symbolized by pouring oil on them: priests, prophets, and kings were anointed. It meant that they were set apart by God for an important mission. For the early



Church, this anointing also symbolized the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (Acts 10:38). In Confirmation, for example, we are dedicated to God's service and receive an increase of the Spirit's gifts, which are symbolized by the oil (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #1303).

## Calm down and parent with love

Do you find yourself yelling more than you would like? When your child does something wrong, is anger your first response? In fact, anger is damaging to the parent-child relationship because it can cloud our judgment. It causes us to act impulsively rather than with love. It takes only a split-second to lose control and say or do something you will regret.

Watch for it. Anger is difficult to control under certain circumstances. When you are depressed, afraid, unwell, or tired, you are



particularly vulnerable to a rush of anger.

**Stay close to God.** When you don't take enough time to nurture your spiritual life, your anger can be quick to flare. Try to remain conscious of these conditions and protect yourself with daily prayer and frequent Sacraments.

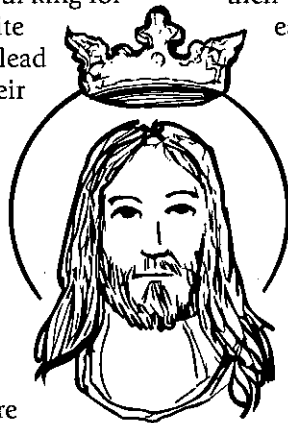
**Care for yourself.** Keeping yourself healthy mentally, emotionally, physically, and spiritually is something you do for yourself AND your family. If anger is a problem for you, figure out what is needed to stem your anger and get help right away.

### Scripture LESSON

### John 18:33b-37; Christ the King.

God promised a powerful king for his people who would unite them, fight for them, and lead them to victory against their enemies. This image of a triumphant Messiah-King kept God's people going. When Jesus entered Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, hopes ran high: was he the one?

On Good Friday, the image of Jesus, bound, seemingly powerless before the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate, was not what they had in mind. They didn't want a leader who talked of love, suffering, and service. They wanted someone who would wipe



their enemies off the face of the earth.

Jesus is King—not just of Israel, but of us and the whole universe. He told Pilate that his Kingdom is not of this world, not bound by the limits of an earthly kingdom.

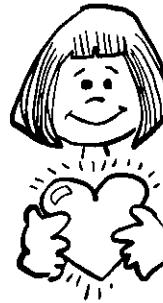
#### What can a parent do?

Jesus' kingship is about peace and justice, concern for the poor, the needy and the marginalized in society. Teach children to serve Christ by showing their love, patience, and kindness to all, at home and at school. Their actions will tell others who their King is.

### Parent TALK

#### Not about the money.

It was time to do the Christmas shopping and I was dreading it. Money was tight but all the kids talked about were gifts. When they presented their foot-long gift lists, I decided to teach them about giving, instead.



When we went Christmas shopping, I assigned each child a relative for whom to buy a gift and gave them a budget of \$10. They soon figured out that there wasn't much they could buy with \$10.

Still, they made a game of shopping resourcefully. Kara found a purse that was half off for Aunt Dayna. Tessa found a "World's Best Grandma" coffee mug for my mother. And our youngest, Toby, found a funny necktie for Uncle Tobin at the Goodwill store.

The children had lots of fun, but most importantly, they learned it wasn't about the gifts, but the love and thought we give each other.

### Feasts & Celebrations

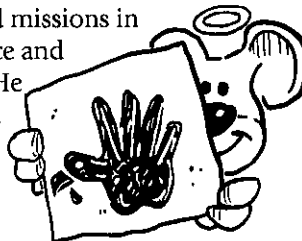
Nov. 1 - All Saints Day. The early Church honored the martyrs by assigning each a feast day. However, the persecutions were so horrible, there were more martyrs than days to commemorate them, so Pope Gregory IV designated Nov. 1 as All Saints Day.

Nov. 17 - St. Elizabeth of Hungary (1231). St. Elizabeth was married at the age of 14 to Louis IV of Thuringia. Renowned for her generosity to the poor, she joined the Secular Franciscan Order upon her husband's death, where she spent the rest of her life caring for

the poor.

Nov. 25 - Solemnity of Christ the King. God promised his people a king who would triumph over their enemies. Jesus is our King. In Baptism and Confirmation, we are brought under his kingship.

Nov. 30 - St. Andrew (1st Century). The son of a Galilean fisherman and brother of Simon Peter, he introduced Jesus to Peter. After the Resurrection, he conducted missions in Turkey, Greece and Macedonia. He was martyred on a X-shaped cross.



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