



## Thoughtful Moments

### St. Paul of the Cross

Born in seventeenth-century Ovada, Italy, to a noble Catholic family, Paul Francis Danei had a great devotion to the Cross of Christ since he was young. He devoted the rest of his life to prayer, penance, preaching, and charitable works. In 1720, he experienced a vision, calling him to found the Passionist Order. After many difficulties, the Order received papal approval in 1741. St. Paul served as their superior general until his death in 1775.



### Bring your needs to God

The Pharisee in this month's Gospel spent his whole prayer praising himself. Maybe he thought he had to earn God's love. He neglected his real need: mercy. God is always offering us His unconditional love and mercy. Do we accept it?

"Each of us is the result of a thought of God. Each of us is willed, each of us is loved, each of us is necessary." Pope Benedict XVI



## Finding Grace in chaos

We all wish family life came with less stress, but it's often through struggle that God calls us to rely more deeply on His grace. These challenges aren't just to be endured—they're opportunities to grow in holiness, patience, and strength together.

**Tone sets the atmosphere.** Speaking with kindness, patience, and firmness helps shape the emotional climate of your home. Make it a place where respectful dialogue is the norm, even when correcting or confronting.

**Distinguish needs from wants.** Much stress comes from confusing what's necessary with what's simply desired. Teach children that not every want must be met. Model generosity, self-control, and service. These habits reduce entitlement and build responsibility.

**Ask for—and offer—forgiveness quickly.** Let forgiveness flow freely in your home. Admit when you're wrong.

Forgive when others fail. Humility and mercy help children learn how to resolve conflict in healthy, lasting ways.

**Pray with and for one another.** When life gets overwhelming, teach your family to turn to God first. Make prayer a regular habit, and stay close to the sacraments—especially the Mass. In Christ, we find the "peace... which surpasses all understanding" (Philippians 4:7).

**Prioritize meaningful time together.** Busyness is the enemy of connection. Block out regular time for family connection. Do something you all enjoy. Shared experiences build strong bonds—and lasting joy.

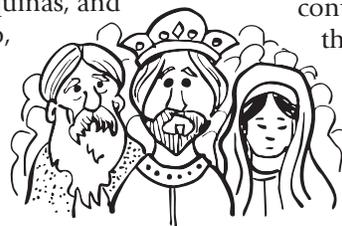


## Why Do Catholics Do That ?

## What is a "Doctor of the Church?"

There are thirty-seven Doctors of the Church, including St. Thérèse of Lisieux, St. Thomas Aquinas, and St. Augustine of Hippo, plus the recently nominated St. John Henry Newman. While this does not mean that the works

themselves are completely free from error, the Church considers their contributions to be good guides for the spiritual life. To be declared a Doctor of the Church, one must possess great learning and holiness, and be officially proclaimed as such by the Church.



## When a joke crosses the line

Laughter is a great way for children to bond, but not every joke lands the way it was intended. What's funny to one person might feel hurtful to another. Teaching youngsters how to handle such awkward moments helps to build empathy, confidence, and social awareness.

If someone makes a joke that crosses the line, encourage your child to respond calmly and clearly: "Please stop. That wasn't funny." Staying composed sends a strong message without escalating the situation.



Another option is to deflect with humor—not to tease back, but to show the joke didn't work. Phrases like "And your point is?" or "Let me know when you get to the funny part" can take the sting out of teasing.

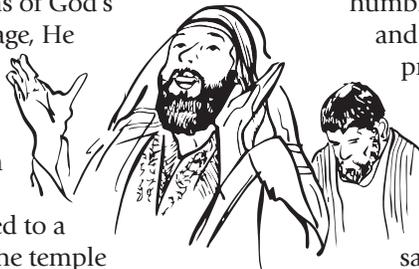
If your child is the one making the joke, help him or her understand that good intentions don't erase hurt feelings. If someone looks upset or speaks up, he or she should stop right away and say, "I'm sorry." The best jokes bring people together—not make someone feel left out.

### Scripture LESSON

### Luke 18:9-14, Humility praises God's mercy

Jesus frequently used parables to reveal the deeper truths of God's kingdom. In this passage, He contrasts a Pharisee and a tax collector to illustrate the heart posture God desires in prayer.

The Pharisee marched to a position of honor in the temple to pray, presumably to be seen and admired while he prayed. The Pharisee focused his prayer on himself and offered thanks that he was superior in holiness to all around him. He listed his many good (but largely meaningless) deeds and looked with disgust upon the tax collector.



By contrast, the tax collector humbled himself before God and offered only a simple prayer casting himself on God's mercy. He was aware of God's graciousness in loving him despite his sinfulness. Jesus said that only the tax collector went home in a right relationship with God.

**What can a parent do?** Help children remember that God wants our love more than anything else. No matter what we do, He'll always love us and want us back in His friendship. He will always forgive us if we're truly sorry.

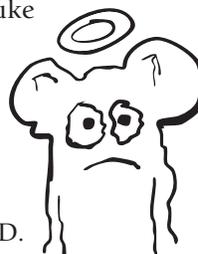
### Feasts & Celebrations

**October 2 – Feast of the Guardian Angels.** All of us have a guardian angel, in charge of protecting us and watching over us. Remember to thank the Guardian Angels for the work they have done in helping us.

**October 4 – St. Francis of Assisi (1226).** Born to a rich family in Assisi, St. Francis was traveling to fight in a battle when he fell ill. He had a vision, calling him to rebuild the Church. He devoted the rest of his life to poverty and preaching. Soon, others followed him, becoming the Franciscan Order.

**October 17 – St. Richard Gwyn (1584).** Originally raised Protestant, St. Richard converted to Catholicism when it was outlawed in Wales. He remained faithful, resulting in his arrest and persecution. After being brought to court several times, he was martyred in 1584.

**Oct. 18 – St. Luke the Evangelist (1st century).** St. Luke was a Christian physician from Antioch. His Gospel and Acts of the Apostles were probably written between 70 and 85 AD.



### Parent TALK

Halloween was originally a Christian holiday — the Eve of All Saints Day.

Each year, I encourage my children to keep to the spirit of the Christian roots, so we look through *Butler's Illustrated Lives of the Saints* for costume ideas.



This year, Joey picked St. Michael the Archangel, "because he has a sword and fought a dragon." Kara picked St. Joan of Arc, because she followed her calling to lead the French in battle, even when no one believed her. Since St. Joan got the call while out in the fields, Kara chose the "peasant look" — a denim skirt, a shawl, and French braids — and a shield.

My youngest, Tessa, picked St. Teresa of Ávila because she was funny, levitated, had visions, and a bit of an attitude. Apparently, "sass" can lead to sanctification.

Each Halloween, I enjoy watching my children get to know and be inspired by the saints.

### Our Mission

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