

# Partners in FAITH™



Helping our children grow in their Catholic faith.

January 2020

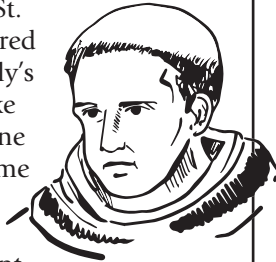
Father Andrew White, S.J. School



## Thoughtful Moments

### St. Thomas Aquinas

Born in Italy, St. Thomas persevered against his family's attempts to make him a Benedictine monk and became a Dominican instead. He was a brilliant student, but his humble, quiet manner earned him the nickname "the dumb ox." His mentor, St. Albertus Magnus, rightly predicted he would be a famous scholar. Thomas later taught in several universities, wrote many treatises about the faith, and even advised popes and kings. He is the patron of students and schools.



### Self-esteem

When children understand they are "fearfully and wonderfully" made by God with a purpose for their lives, their self-esteem is not derived from society. It comes from knowing how much God loves them.

*"Even youths shall faint and be weary ... but they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint" (Isaiah 40:30-31).*



## Raising faithful Catholic disciples

All parents want their children to be successful, hardworking, happy adults. The best way to ensure true happiness and lasting success, however, is to raise children to be disciples of Christ. And the best time to begin creating faithful disciples is now.

**Connect.** Discipleship is a relationship. It begins with responding to Jesus' call to know and love him. When our children connect with Jesus personally, they learn how valuable they are to God. Their identities are complete in him.

**Listen.** Scripture is God's direct message to us. It tells us who God is, what he thinks, and his will for us – all we need to know to be best friends. Regularly reading the Bible with children helps us to know God better

and better.

**Serve.** St. Teresa of Avila said, "Christ has no body but yours, no hands but yours, no feet but yours. Yours are the eyes through which Christ's compassion must look out into the world." Disciples of Christ know that we must put others' needs before our own – the poor, the lonely, the most vulnerable.

### Encounter.

Sacraments are opportunities to directly encounter Christ. Ensuring that children receive their Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Eucharist, Confirmation), attend Mass weekly, Confession frequently, marry in the Catholic Church, are all ways they connect directly with Jesus – soul to Creator.



## Why Do Catholics Do That?

## Why do Catholics practice Works of Mercy?

Catholics are called to show their love for God by their love of neighbor. "The works of mercy are charitable actions by which we come to the aid of our neighbor" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) #2447*). Our Lord considers



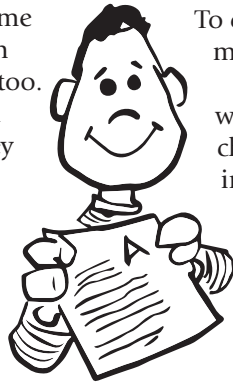
any kindness done for love a personal favor. Once, when asked the reason for her charitable work, Mother Teresa answered, "You did it to me" (Matthew 25:40), quoting Christ. In caring for others, we communicate God's love for them.

## Making parent - and child-friendly resolutions

Making New Year's resolutions helps us to become better people each year. Consider helping children choose appropriate resolutions for the New Year, too.

**Share kindness.** Encourage children to perform one random act of kindness each week. When they look for ways to be kind, kindness becomes a mindset.

**Develop better habits.** Taking small steps to improve will help new positive habits last. If you want to eat healthier, try, "I'm going to drink milk and water today instead of soda or juice."



To cut down on screen time, consider reading for 30 minutes instead of watching TV or playing on devices.

**Achieve milestones.** Children love setting goals as a way of measuring progress and growth. Encourage children to pick an age-appropriate goal – getting an A in the hardest subject at school, learning to tie shoes, master swimming underwater – and focus on steps to achieve it.

**Encourage prayer.** Try choosing one prayer to say together as a family each day. Let children add a favorite prayer to their personal prayer time.

### Scripture LESSON

#### Matthew 4:12-23, Follow the Leader

Almost every child has played some version of "Follow the Leader." In the game, players follow a "leader" wherever he goes and do whatever he does. We stomp through puddles, climb over fences and swing from trees, all to stay in the game.

We follow leaders in real life, too: at school, in sports, and at church. Our parents are also our leaders until we leave home. Some leaders have more authority over us than others. In cases where we can choose our leaders, it's important to choose the one who will



lead us safely in the right direction.

Jesus chose twelve men to be his closest followers and he became their leader. They went where he told them and did what he asked. They followed his example. Those who stayed with him to the end became great saints.

**What can a parent do?** Explain to children that Jesus is our true leader, meaning that we follow him before anyone else. If we stay close to him, he will lead us safely to Heaven. The prize is always worth it.

### Parent TALK

My family had stopped listening to me. The more I talked to (at) them, the more obvious it was that they were tuning me out. I tried talking louder and repeating myself but the problem only got worse. Finally, I heard how I was talking to them. I was so stressed by our busy pace that I barked constantly. "Hurry up, we are late!" "Stop talking with your mouth full." "Clean up that nasty bedroom." "What? You forgot your homework?!" For every kind remark I made, I snarled five negative ones.

That very moment, I changed my tune. I called a family meeting and apologized. Then I gave each child just five tasks on which to focus. I let the rest go. The change in the atmosphere of our home was immediately noticeable. I continue to monitor the way I communicate and everyone pays more attention to what I say.

**Our Mission**  
To help parents raise faithful Catholic children  
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### Feasts & Celebrations

**Jan. 2 – St. Basil the Great (379).** St. Basil founded the first monastery in Turkey. He fought passionately against the Arianism threatening the Church and worked to protect the faith and religious freedom. He is best known for his skill as an orator and for being tireless in his pastoral care.

**Jan. 3 – Feast of the Most Holy Name of Jesus.** Today, we celebrate the Holy Name of Jesus. "...At the name of Jesus every knee should bend, of those in heaven and on earth and under the earth" (Philippians 2:10).

#### Jan. 5 – Epiphany of the Lord.

Epiphany is Greek for "manifestation." When they honored the infant Jesus, the three wise men bore witness to the fulfillment of God's promise of a savior.

**Jan. 21 – St. Agnes (c.304).** At a young age, St. Agnes consecrated herself to God.

Reportedly she was turned in for being a Christian by a suitor whom she refused to marry. She maintained her faith and was executed as a result.

