

RAISING FAITH-FILLED KIDS

a parent page



Focus on Faith

God Is With Us Always

The man who became the Buddha, founder of the Buddhist religious tradition, was sheltered as a youth. His father kept him secluded in a walled house so that he would not see the evils in the world. One day the Buddha went out and saw a man who was starving. He began to ask questions about suffering, and his life was changed. It is probably the hope of all parents to protect our children from all that is wrong in the world, but we have no secluded gardens in which to shield them. The effects of original sin are universal, and we witness their consequences every day. As these effects hit home, it is our task to face the issues in faith. God has not left us alone. Jesus has come to save us, and the Holy Spirit is his abiding presence with us.

Dinnertime Conversation Starter

On days when news of the world has an impact on the whole family, have an open discussion in which everyone's opinion is heard and valued. Discuss ways you can pray as a family for the needs of the world.

Spirituality in Action

With your child decide on a community action to perform. It can be as simple as baking cookies for a new or elderly neighbor, taking food to the local food pantry, or collecting clothing for a local charity. Try to arrange to talk with someone at the organization about the concrete ways in which the charity helps people in the community.



Our Catholic Heritage

The Catholic Church has developed an important body of social teaching. The basic teachings can be found in papal encyclicals (letters) and statements from meetings of bishops. Pope Leo XIII's encyclical "Rerum Novarum" of 1891 affirmed the role of the Church to teach social principles. Here are two principles of Catholic social teaching:

- All people have a fundamental right to life, food, shelter, health care, education, and employment.
- The moral test of a society is how it treats its most vulnerable members, especially poor people.

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Focus on Prayer

In silent prayer your child has reflected on sin and how Jesus calls us to do good. At a specific time, perhaps when saying grace before a meal or when saying bedtime prayers, help your child to reflect by suggesting that he or she complete the following sentences privately: I say no to God when I . . . , I say yes to God when I

