



BUILDING THE DOMESTIC CHURCH



The Family Fully Alive



KNIGHTS
OF COLUMBUS®

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Pope Paul VI, in his great encyclical on evangelization, *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, quotes the Second Vatican Council's description of the Christian family as the domestic church. For Pope Paul VI, this means that to truly become a domestic church "there should be found in every Christian family the various aspects of the entire Church."

The Second Vatican Council also taught that every Catholic is called to holiness. And since the great majority of Catholics live out their lives in families, it is clear that the family should be a place in which each family member can grow in holiness.

As the saints have shown throughout history, holiness in life leads inevitably to witness in our daily lives. In our time, the work of evangelization is not reserved only for an elite few, but is the responsibility of all baptized Christians.

In a very real sense, we are all called to be missionaries. We are all called to "proclaim" the Gospel to those around us through our lives each day, and the privileged place for most of us to do this is within our own families.

The Christian family is essentially missionary in character because of this reality. In the words of St. John Paul II, "The family has the mission to guard, reveal and communicate love" (*Familiaris Consortio*, 17). In fulfilling this mission, the Christian family is itself called to be an image of the loving communion that exists among the three Persons of the Trinity.

The Catholic family is able to reveal and communicate this love in a special way because it is founded upon sacramental marriage. Christian spouses first receive this love as a divine gift, but they also receive this love as a task. The task of Christian spouses to live and communicate this love first to each other and their children and then to others is at the center of the family's mission in the world.

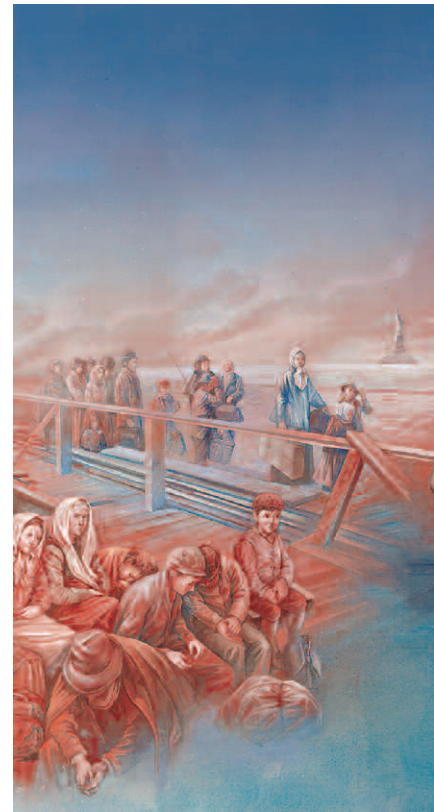
For this reason, when the Christian family takes up the task "to become what it is" — a living icon in our world of God's own communion — the family stands at the heart of the Church's mission of evangelization. And when the family responds in this way to the design of the Creator, it truly becomes a "domestic church."

Recently, Pope Francis reminded us that Christian families "are the domestic church where Jesus grows in the love of a married couple, in the lives of their children."

To help our families better become what they are called to be, the Knights of Columbus has launched this initiative entitled: "Building the Domestic Church: The Family Fully Alive."

Through this program, our families can realize more fully their mission to be an authentic domestic church through daily prayer, catechesis and Scripture reading, as well as through monthly charitable and volunteer projects they can do as a family. Please visit kofc.org/familyfullyalive to view the materials sent directly to local councils.

As we all know in our modern society, marriage difficulties can be a source of great suffering as well as a time for reconciliation and true inward renewal. As Pope Francis has stated, "The Church is called to be the house of the Father, with doors always wide open, [...] where there is a place for everyone, with all their problems" (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 47). Separated or divorced persons who remain faithful to their marriage vows call for the Church's attention in their situation, which is often lived in loneliness and poverty. People in canonically irregular marriages should not consider themselves as "separated from the Church, for as baptized persons they can, and indeed must, share in her life" (*Familiaris Consortio*, 84).





"Pastoral charity impels the Church to assist people who have suffered the breakdown of their marriage and are living with their situation relying on the grace of Christ. A more painful wound results when these people remarry and enter a state of life which does not allow them to receive Holy Communion. Clearly, in these cases, the Church must not assume an attitude of a judge who condemns (cf. Pope Francis, *Homily*, 28 February 2014), but that of a mother who always receives her children and nurses their wounds so they may heal (cf. *Evangelii Gaudium*, 139-141). With great mercy, the Church is called to find forms of 'accompaniment' which can support her children on the path of reconciliation. With patience and understanding, she must explain to these people that their not being able to celebrate the sacraments does not mean that they are excluded from the Christian life and a relationship with God" (Synod of Bishops, *The Pastoral Challenges of the Family in the Context of Evangelization: Instrumentum Laboris*, 103).

This initiative can help all families, whatever their difficulties, deepen their relationship with

the Lord. It can especially help divorced parents meet their obligation to raise their children in the Catholic faith and reassure them that their communion with the Lord is not severed, but rather can continue to grow stronger through prayer, scripture reading, participation in the parish community, service to others, and evangelization. In these ways, they too can be a part of our initiative and grow in their faith.

In this initiative, the Knights of Columbus turns in a special way to the Holy Family and makes our own the prayer of St. John Paul II that "every family may generously make its own contribution to the coming of his kingdom in the world," and "through the intercession of the Holy Family of Nazareth, the Church may fruitfully carry out her worldwide mission in the family and through the family."

In this way, the Order will undertake a yearlong preparation for the 8th World Meeting of Families to be held from September 22-27, 2015, in Philadelphia.

In founding the Knights of Columbus, the Venerable Servant of God Father Michael J. McGivney sought to respond in both a temporal and spiritual way to the crisis in family life affecting Catholics in 19th-century America. As a young man he witnessed firsthand the challenges his mother faced as a single parent raising a family after the tragic death of his father. Later, as a priest he confronted on a daily basis the problems affecting the families of his parish community arising from poverty, violence, substance abuse, prejudice and discrimination. With creative genius and determination, Father McGivney responded to this situation with a variety of pastoral initiatives within his parish and most importantly by empowering generations of Catholic laymen to support the practical Catholic life of their families in founding the Knights of Columbus. By advancing this new program, the Knights of Columbus continues to advance Father McGivney's mission and remains true to his vision.

I would also like to express a word of thanks to Father Luis Granados, DCJM, and to St. Mary Catholic Parish in Littleton, Colo., whose "Toward a Family Friendly Parish" program inspired this initiative and without whose help our program would not have been possible.

Carl A. Anderson
Supreme Knight Carl Anderson

GETTING STARTED

For Families

Since this program is rooted in prayer, the first step is to set aside a space in your home as a prayer corner. This area should be the focus of the home prayer portion of the program. The icon for this initiative is "Holy Family," a drawing by Giovanni Balestra, based on a painting by Sassoferrato. Copies of this image (8x10 and 5x7) suitable for framing are included in this booklet. Also, two prayer cards featuring this image ("A Family Prayer" card, #10086) are included in this booklet. Additional copies of the icon and the prayer card may be ordered from the Supply Department.



"A Family Prayer" card #10086

The prayer associated with the program is "A Family Prayer," composed by Supreme Chaplain Archbishop William Lori. Your family should include this prayer in your daily prayers.

The photo below shows how simple yet sacred this prayer corner can be. Families are free to make it as personal or elaborate as they wish.

Along with this prayer, you will find in the pages of this booklet monthly themes, projects, songs and psalms for your family to undertake together as a way to strengthen the faith of your family and each member's individual faith.



A Family Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank you for the gift of our family.
Enlighten our hearts and minds that we may live
more fully this vocation of love.

In our daily life and work,
may we reflect the self-giving love which you,
O Father, eternally show with your Son
and the Holy Spirit.

Let your love be evident in the peace that reigns
in our home and in the faith we profess and live.
May our family always be a place of generosity,
understanding, forgiveness and joy.

Kindly give us the wisdom and courage
to be witnesses to your eternal design for the family;
and grant that the Holy Family of Nazareth
may always guide our path
to holiness as a family.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ,
your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the
unity of the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever.

Amen.

For Councils

Participating in this initiative can be as simple as providing this booklet to your council and interested parish families. For councils that wish to do more to help strengthen their council families in faith and in turn strengthen their parishes, they can undertake these other items.

Start your program by asking your chaplains or another attending clergy member to bless the Holy Family icons that families have brought to the event. Then offer families the chance to share their monthly project and also what spending time together on the project has meant to them.

Family Movie Nights (once a month)

Invite all your council and parish families to gather as a family of families and share fun and fellowship while watching a free family movie. Have a special area for the kids, set up chairs in the back for parents/guardians, and provide free refreshments. Council leaders will find suggested movies for each month as well as simple steps in setting up a movie night.

Your council will need to obtain a special license to be able to show these movies in public. To cover this, your council can obtain a yearly paid subscription from the Motion Picture Licensing Corporation (MPLC). Information on this service can be found at mplc.org.

Here are some tips on hosting the movie night.

Send out flyers (via email and by hand) to your council families. Also, consider distributing to parish families as well. Include the date, time, location, movie title, information on what charity contributions are being collected for, as well as an invitation for children to bring sleeping bags, blankets and pillows. You should also note that free refreshments will be available.

Open the doors for people to come in and settle a half hour before the movie begins.

Have free popcorn, lemonade, water, coffee or other refreshments available for attendees.

Set up a container to accept voluntary donations for either an ongoing charitable cause (possibly one associated with your parish) or a different charity each month.

Consider having an intermission halfway through the movie to allow for bathroom breaks and time to stretch.

After the movie, have a short discussion on the film (how it portrayed families, what were the good things that the characters did together, and what lessons they learned).



Family-Oriented Volunteer Projects (once a month)

Invite council families and other interested families to volunteer at a council service program each month. Council leaders will find suggested volunteer activities in this booklet to serve as a guide, but they may substitute programs or activities that the council already has planned for each month.

Note: An online pdf version of this booklet and other resources are available at kofc.org/familyfullyalive.

There is no greater priority within the Knights of Columbus than ensuring the safety, security, and protection of the children and young people who participate in our youth programs. The Knights of Columbus requires that members selected to be youth leaders fulfill all local diocesan safe environment/youth protection requirements for persons working with children and young people in the diocese. The Order is asking all youth leaders, and those who supervise youth leaders, to provide a copy of the certificate of completion they received (e.g., VIRTUS® training) as evidence that they have completed the required diocesan training. All youth leaders, and those who supervise youth leaders, must scan and e-mail a copy of the diocesan certificate to youthleader@kofc.org. Any questions regarding this request should be directed to (203) 752-4571 or fraternalservices@kofc.org.

MONTHLY THEMES



October

8-9

Because the Lord is the God of our ancestors, we want to strengthen the relationships between our family's generations.



November

10-11

Because God rested on the seventh day, we want to celebrate Sunday as a family.



December

12-13

Because the family that prays together stays together, we want to learn to pray as a family.



January

14-15

Because God is the Lord of mercy, we want to help heal our family wounds and promote forgiveness.



February

16-17

Because love is filled with hope when it is communicated, our family wants to promote the life-giving spirit of our families.

18-19

March

Because the joy of all parents is to teach their children the art of living, as parents we want to be the primary educators of our children.



22-25

April

Because our children may be called to become spouses and parents, we want to help them to explore the vocation to marriage and family life.



26-27

May

Because in the beginning of creation God gave the commandments of work, we want to harmonize work and family life.



28-29

June

Because the family is the subject of the New Evangelization, we want to share our faith with other families.



30-31

July

Because God is the Father of orphans and widows, we want to reach out to all those who are lonely and abandoned.



32-33

August

Because no one should be isolated, we want to live parish life as a family of families.



34-35

September

Because the family is the root of society, we want our family to fulfill its vocation to build the common good.



OCTOBER

Because the Lord is the God of our ancestors, we want to strengthen the relationships between our family's generations.

For Families

For Meditations on this month's theme see page 36

Our family defines each and every one of us. Because our parents, grandparents and great-grandparents chose life, we are here today. Take this month as an opportunity to celebrate your family history and learn more about it, all while thanking God.

Family Projects

Making a family tree is a great way to learn where you came from and celebrate your ancestry. During this month, make time to sit down as a family to build your family tree. See how far back you can trace. You can decorate your tree with copies of old photos and era-related items.

Bring some joy to your grandparents or some other relative who does not live nearby, or may be alone, by sending a "Thinking of You" card signed by your whole family. You can also send a video of your family to this relative, or call them to pray the rosary so they can join in.

Set aside time to regularly visit the graves of deceased relatives and to pray for them.



Bring Song Into Your Home

Sing grace before meals with your whole family.

Ubi Caritas (Taize chant)

*Ubi caritas et amor,
Ubi caritas,
Deus ibi est.*

(Where there are charity and love,
God is there.)

Psalm of the Month (*Psalm 105*)

Pray the Psalm of the Month during every Sunday of the month at your family prayer space.

O give thanks to the Lord, call on his name,
make known his deeds among the peoples!
Sing to him, sing praises to him,
tell of all his wonderful works!
Glory in his holy name;
let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice!
Seek the Lord and his strength,
seek his presence continually!
Remember the wonderful works that he has done,
his miracles, and the judgments he uttered,
O offspring of Abraham his servant,
sons of Jacob, his chosen ones!
He is the Lord our God;

his judgments are in all the earth.
He is mindful of his covenant for ever,
of the word that he commanded, for a thousand
generations,
the covenant which he made with Abraham,
his sworn promise to Isaac,
which he confirmed to Jacob as a statute,
to Israel as an everlasting covenant,
saying, "To you I will give the land of Canaan
as your portion for an inheritance."

On the last Sunday of the month, discuss as a family which verse stood out most for each member.

Movie Night “Up”

OCTOBER

Before the movie, offer families the chance to share the family trees they made and talk a bit about their ancestors and relatives, and also what spending the time together on the project meant to them.

Council-Wide Event

Volunteering Together Project – Food for Families

Invite families to participate in your Food for Families collection.

Contact a local food pantry or soup kitchen to ask what their needs are and to ensure they will be able to receive the food.

Obtain permission (either from the appropriate business owner, a government department or your pastor) to set up the drive at a local store or church entryway/foyer. Also, consider collecting food donations at your monthly Movie Night event.

Display posters/flyers promoting the event around your parish, community and stores.

Ask stores for empty boxes that can be used for collecting donations.

If you're running the event at your parish, the weekend prior to the collection, hand out flyers and ask the pastor to make an announcement about the coming drive. Also, ask that a notice for parishioners to bring nonperishable food items to the following weekend's Masses be included in the parish bulletin.

Utilize family volunteers to help on the day of the collection and when delivering the food.

For more information on the Food for Families program, please visit kofc.org/food.



NOVEMBER

Because God rested on the seventh day, we want to celebrate Sunday as a family.

For Families

For Meditations on this month's theme see pages 36-37

Sunday is the Day of the Lord (*Dies Domini*) in which we remember and give thanks for the work of creation, his gift of the Holy Spirit, and the joy of our faith.

All this happens in the family, and so Sunday is also the Day of the Family. Celebrating as a family the sacredness of this holy day each week strengthens us in our vocation to holiness.

Family Projects

Sunday is a special day, the day of the Resurrection and the day of Christians. Each Sunday, Easter returns and we celebrate Christ's victory over sin and death. Sharing a special meal as a family is one way to celebrate together and honor this day.

Have each family member help make the meal special by:

- Preparing a tasty dessert
- Using a special tablecloth and good dishes
- Lighting candles
- Composing a toast to share

Also, consider planning a Sunday trip to visit an adoration chapel in a nearby parish and spend time together as a family adoring God, truly present to us in the Eucharist. Use Psalm 128 as a guide to meditate on the blessings he has bestowed on your family.



Bring Song Into Your Home

Laudate omnes gentes (Taize chant)

Laudate omnes gentes, laudate Dominum.

Laudate omnes gentes, laudate Dominum.

(Sing praise, all you people, sing praise to the Lord.)

Psalm of the Month (Psalm 128)

Pray the Psalm of the Month during every Sunday of the month at your family prayer space.

Blessed is every one who fears the Lord,
who walks in his ways!
You shall eat the fruit of the labor of your hands;
you shall be happy, and it shall be well with you.
Your wife will be like a fruitful vine
within your house;
your children will be like olive shoots
around your table.
Lo, thus shall the man be blessed

who fears the Lord.
The Lord bless you from Zion!
May you see the prosperity of Jerusalem
all the days of your life!
May you see your children's children!
Peace be upon Israel.

*On the last Sunday of the month, discuss as a family
which verse stood out most for each member.*

Movie Night **NOVEMBER**

“It’s a Wonderful Life”

Prior to the movie, offer families the opportunity to share how they have spent their Sundays and what that means to them as a family.

Council-Wide Event

Volunteering Together Project – Coats for Kids

Invite families to participate in your Coats for Kids distribution.

Contact local schools, services and agencies, and other organizations serving people in need to determine the number of coats that will be needed.

Find a location (one central to the community and easily accessed via public transportation) such as a parish hall, school auditorium or community center for the distribution and set the date.

Advertise the distribution through your parish, schools, community services and local media.

Order the coats by utilizing information available at kofc.org/coats.

Utilize your council families as volunteers to set up the distribution and allow easiest access for the recipients by sorting coats by boy-girl and sizes, setting up rows of tables, etc. On the day of your distribution, ask them to help youngsters with trying coats on, restocking tables and any other tasks that need to be done.

Councils in warm-weather climates may want to substitute a clothing drive or donate funds to purchase coats for children in need in colder climates.

For more information and to order coats, visit kofc.org/coats.



DECEMBER

Because the family that prays together stays together, we want to learn to pray as a family.

For Families

For Meditations on this month's theme see page 37

There is something very powerful about praying together as a family. Jesus reminded us that where two or three are gathered together in his name, there he is in the midst of them (see Mt 18:20). Most importantly, Jesus also revealed to us that when we pray with our children, their guardian angels always look upon the face of the Father (see Mt 18:10). Thus when a family prays together, an ocean of grace comes into the world.

Prayer needs to become a regular habit in the daily life of our families. Prayer is very rich: thanksgiving, praise of God, asking for forgiveness, praying for the needs of others, invocation. The prayer of the family is the prayer of the child for his/her grandparents, the prayer of the widow for her spouse, the prayer of the father and mother for their children, the prayer of the sister for her siblings, and that of the uncle for his nieces and nephews. Even when children, grandchildren, siblings, parents and grandparents are far away, they can still pray for each other. "In prayer everyone should be present: the living and those who have died, and also those yet to come into the world. Families should pray for all of their members" (St. John Paul II, *Letter to Families*).

Special Christmas Project

Bring the miracle of Christ's birth into your home by making a special Nativity set. As a family, design a manger scene set in Bethlehem. Throughout Advent, have family members place a different figure in the manger and meditate on the meaning of this humble place where God became man.



Prayer Project

Praying together as a family is a great way to experience the presence of God in the midst of our everyday lives. While there are many ways to pray, using the Bible as the center and focus of family prayer time can be fruitful and instructive for everyone.

- Place a Bible in your family prayer corner.
- Gather as a family and begin with a prayer to the Holy Spirit, asking for guidance and understanding of God's Word.
- Read the Sunday Gospel aloud.
- The father or mother should say some words about the passage.
- End with a prayer of thanksgiving for the gift of God's Living Word.

Bring Song Into Your Home

Immaculate Mary

Immaculate Mary, your praises we sing.
You reign now in Heaven, with Jesus our king.
Ave, Ave, Ave Maria. Ave, Ave, Ave Maria.
In Heaven the blessed your glory proclaim;
On Earth we your children invoke your sweet name.
Ave, Ave, Ave Maria. Ave, Ave, Ave Maria.

Psalm of the Month (Psalm 84)

Pray the Psalm of the Month during every Sunday of the month at your family prayer space.

How lovely is thy dwelling place,
O Lord of hosts!
My soul longs, yea, faints
for the courts of the Lord;
my heart and flesh sing for joy
to the living God.

Even the sparrow finds a home,
and the swallow a nest for herself,

where she may lay her young,
at thy altars, O Lord of hosts,
my King and my God.
Blessed are those who dwell in thy house,
ever singing thy praise!

On the last Sunday of the month, discuss as a family which verse stood out most for each member.

Movie Night

DECEMBER

“The Muppet Christmas Carol”

Before the movie begins, ask your families to share images of their Nativity scenes.

Council-Wide Event

A Christmas Celebration

With the start of Advent and the anticipation of Christmas, what better way to observe the birth of our Saviour than by holding a Christmas Celebration. Councils throughout the Order regularly conduct such celebrations based on the tradition of the Posada.

The Posada is a traditional Christmas celebration that Franciscan missionaries developed in America with the goal of introducing the faith. It continues to be popular throughout the southwestern United States and all of Latin America and is a rich tradition for Knights and their families to share.

This celebration expresses perfectly the suspense and surprises of the season. It is a prayer, a play, a party and a gathering for families, parishes and whole communities. It is a celebration that children and adults can enjoy together, as well as those from different cultural backgrounds.

Even if your council and parish's families are not familiar with the Christmas Posada, invite them to join in your council's celebration of this ancient observance that will open for them the deeper meaning of a joyful season. To help you understand the tradition and conduct a Christmas Celebration event in your community, order the booklet *An Advent & Christmas Celebration* (#9898-E,S). This booklet provides all that is needed to conduct a Christmas Celebration with your parish and council families. Copies of the booklet can be viewed in digital format or downloaded at kofc.org/posada, or ordered from the Supply Department.



Your council can also benefit those in need in your community this Christmas season by asking participants in your celebration to bring a nonperishable food item or an unwrapped toy to the event. These items can then be donated to people in need.



JANUARY

Because God is the Lord of mercy, we want to help heal our family wounds and promote forgiveness.

For Families

For Meditations on this month's theme see page 38

As we look forward to a new year, full of hopes and promises — but also fears and challenges — we ask what God has prepared for us.

The family is our first school of forgiveness. The family prepares us to understand the meaning of God's forgiveness. "God proves his love for us in that, while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom 5:8). To be Christian is to encounter Christ and to receive his forgiveness. As Catholics we first receive this forgiveness on the day of our baptism, and we renew it through the treasure of the sacrament of reconciliation.

Forgiveness starts with those who are close to us: our spouses, children, parents, siblings, neighbors, co-workers and friends. The wounds made by our beloved are usually the most hurtful, but the love of spouses and parents has the capacity to heal these wounds. To forgive is something divine, the most perfect gift. When we forgive someone, we offer that person the possibility of starting again.



Family Project

Go to confession together as a family and then share a special meal or dessert to celebrate your new beginning as a family. Confession is not something to fear. While waiting in line it's normal to feel some shame, but after receiving the sacrament of confession, the person emerges free, forgiven, beautiful and happy.

Have a "Meal of Forgiveness" with your spouse (with no children around) in which you can offer a new beginning in your relationship by asking each other for forgiveness for the small offenses that often hold couples back from the fullness of their relationship.

Bring Song Into Your Home

Totus Tuus (Marco Frisina)

<i>Totus tuus sum, Maria,</i>	(I am all yours, Mary,
<i>Mater nostri Redemptoris.</i>	Mother of our Redeemer.
<i>Virgo Dei, Virgo pia,</i>	Virgin of God, lowly Virgin,
<i>Mater mundi Salvatoris.</i>	Mother of the Savior of the world.)

Psalm of the Month (Psalm 51)

Pray the Psalm of the Month during every Sunday of the month at your family prayer space.

Have mercy on me, O God, according to thy steadfast love;
according to thy abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.

Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,
and cleanse me from my sin!

For I know my transgressions,
and my sin is ever before me.

Against thee, thee only, have I sinned,
and done that which is evil in thy sight,
so that thou art justified in thy sentence
and blameless in thy judgment.

Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity,
and in sin did my mother conceive me.
Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward being;
therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart.
Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;
wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.
Fill me with joy and gladness; let the bones which
thou hast broken rejoice.

On the last Sunday of the month, discuss as a family which verse stood out most for each member.

Movie Night

"The Lion King"

JANUARY

Before the movie begins, ask your families to share their experiences in attending confession together.

Council-Wide Event

Volunteering Together Project – "Culture of Life Baby Shower"

Invite families to participate in your "Culture of Life Baby Shower" to collect funds and supplies for local organizations helping expecting mothers and new mothers, and their children in need.

- Ask council members if they have an old crib that is in good condition or a portable playpen that is not being used and get your pastor's permission to set up the crib in the church's entryway or foyer.
- Ask your pastor to make an announcement about the initiative, or get permission to have a council officer make an announcement before or after each Mass. Also, request that a written announcement be placed in the parish bulletin, asking parishioners to donate new or used baby or maternity clothing, baby and pregnancy supplies, diapers, bottles, formula, etc.
- TIP: Place some nice baby/maternity items and supplies in the collection receptacle after setting it up so people can see what types of items are needed. Put a sign on the collection receptacle so people who miss the announcement will know what it is for.
- Utilize family volunteers to help collect the items after Mass each weekend.



FEBRUARY

Because love is filled with hope when it is communicated, our family wants to promote the life-giving spirit of our families.

For Families

For Meditations on this month's theme see page 38

We see the fruit of our lives in our children. But our vocation to fruitfulness is greater than this. Even if we cannot have children, our love is called to be fruitful in our work and rest, our family life, our adoration and mission. Everything is called to generate new life in others and to proclaim the great hope of our Lord Jesus Christ. Other unique signs of fruitfulness are religious and priestly vocations. All of us, whatever our state in life, are called to spiritual parenthood.

Bring Song Into Your Home

Magnificat

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God my Savior
for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant.
From this day all generations will call me blessed:
the Almighty has done great things for me,
and holy is his Name.
He has mercy on those who fear him
in every generation.
He has shown the strength of his arm,
he has scattered the proud in their conceit.
He has cast down the mighty from their thrones,
and has lifted up the lowly.
He has filled the hungry with good things,
and the rich he has sent away empty.
He has come to the help of his servant Israel
for he remembered his promise of mercy,
the promise he made to our fathers,
to Abraham and his children forever.



Family Project

To celebrate the life-giving spirit of your family, prepare a slideshow to enjoy with your family that illustrates the ways your family is fruitful. In the slideshow, include pictures of:

- Parents' courtship and engagement
- Parents' wedding celebration
- Birth of each child
- Sacramental celebrations of each child
- Friends, service projects, fun times
- Vocations in the family

Psalm of the Month (Psalm 139)

Pray the Psalm of the Month during every Sunday of the month at your family prayer space.

O Lord, thou hast searched me and known me!
Thou knowest when I sit down and when I rise up;
thou discernest my thoughts from afar.
Thou searchest out my path and my lying down,
and art acquainted with all my ways.
Even before a word is on my tongue,
lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether.
Thou dost beset me behind and before,
and layest thy hand upon me.
Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;
it is high, I cannot attain it.
Whither shall I go from thy Spirit?
Or whither shall I flee from thy presence?

*On the last Sunday of the month,
discuss as a family which verse stood out most
for each member.*

Movie Night

“The Incredibles”

FEBRUARY

Before the movie begins, ask your families to share their family slideshows.

Council–Wide Event

Volunteering Together Project – Global Wheelchair Mission

Invite families to participate in efforts to raise funds to help provide wheelchairs to those in need through the Global Wheelchair Mission. The Knights of Columbus and the Global Wheelchair Mission work together to provide wheelchairs that help bring the gift of mobility to people with physical disabilities.

First, determine what the council’s annual contribution to the mission will be, setting a specific dollar amount, a specific number of wheelchairs, etc. Then schedule and ask your volunteer families to work at events to raise money and help promote the goal to council and parish members to encourage individual contributions.

Work with other parish groups and civic organizations in your community to organize joint efforts to support the mission. Then determine a country/location to support the distribution of wheelchairs (possibly have this discussion prior to one of your movie nights).

For more information, visit kofc.org/wheelchair.



MARCH

Because the joy of all parents is to teach their children the art of living, as parents we want to be the primary educators of our children.

For Families

For Meditations on this month's theme see pages 39

To educate is to teach the very art of life, the art of humanity. It is a new birth not simply to life, but to the personal life. A child is called to something greater than himself or herself and will realize this through his or her relationship with others. To educate means to help a child to become a good son or daughter, a good brother or sister, a good friend and student until he or she becomes a good husband or

Psalm of the Month (*Psalm 78*)

Pray the Psalm of the Month during every Sunday of the month at your family prayer space.

Give ear, O my people, to my teaching;
incline your ears to the words of my mouth!
I will open my mouth in a parable;
things that we have heard and known,
that our fathers have told us.
We will not hide them from their children,
but tell to the coming generation
the glorious deeds of the Lord, and his might,
and the wonders which he has wrought.
He established a testimony in Jacob,
and appointed a law in Israel,
which he commanded our fathers
to teach to their children;
that the next generation might know them,
the children yet unborn,
and arise and tell them to their children,
so that they should set their hope in God,
and not forget the works of God,
but keep his commandments.

*On the last Sunday of the month, discuss as a family
which verse stood out most for each member.*



wife and a good father or mother, or a good priest or religious sister.

Parents are the primary educators of their children. We — the whole of society, the school, the parish and other families — are called to collaborate in this great mission.

“What will this child be? For surely the hand of the Lord is with him” (Lk 1:66). In Nazareth, Jesus grew and advanced “in wisdom, age and favor before God and man” (Lk 2:52).

Family Project

Invite the families of your children's friends to join you in a pilgrimage to a religious site. A pilgrimage is a journey a person or a group makes to a sacred place for the purpose of venerating it or to ask for heavenly aid, and to ultimately come to know God better. During the journey to the destination, consider:

- Praying for the family to grow closer to God through the journey
- Discussing how the destination is important to the faith of each participant
- Exploring how any suffering experienced helps a pilgrim to know God

Bring Song Into Your Home

Jesus, Remember Me (Taize chant)

Jesus, remember me,

When you come into your Kingdom.

Movie Night “Pinocchio”

MARCH

Before the movie begins, ask your families to share their experiences as pilgrims to a sacred place.

Council-Wide Event

Volunteering Together Project – Special Olympics

One of the most inspiring examples of the Knights of Columbus’ commitment to serving those in need is the service its members and their families provide to people with intellectual disabilities. Beginning with support for the very first Special Olympics games in 1968, efforts in this area have steadily grown.

The Knights of Columbus believes that the Special Olympics are nearly unparalleled in their ability to show the intrinsic worth and dignity of every single human being. These games don’t just build strength and character for the athletes and participants; it only takes a few moments with the competitors to be inspired by the force of their determination and the true sense of God’s love.

Although the Special Olympics have grown in recent years, they still need continued support.

Your family can become involved in assisting Special Olympics in a variety of ways:

- Work with council and local fundraisers to help collect needed funds to support Special Olympics athletes and programs.
- Volunteer as a family for Special Olympics. The best way to start is to find the Special Olympics office nearest to you.
- Share your athletic expertise and passion for sports by getting involved as a coach or official. You can learn more by visiting specialolympics.org.



- If you or someone in your family have specialized training as a health care professional, Special Olympics can use your help in ensuring athletes remain healthy and safe.
- Along with these volunteer opportunities, Special Olympics also has unique opportunities for high school and college students.

For more information on how to volunteer with Special Olympics, visit specialolympics.org and click the “Get Involved” tab.

APRIL

Because our children may be called to become spouses and parents, we want to help them to explore the vocation to marriage and family life.

For Families

For Meditations on this month's theme see pages 39-40

Understanding the nature of self-giving love that we are called to in all our relationships can be difficult, especially for teenagers and young adults just coming to terms with this part of their lives.

Romantic love — such as a teen's first crush — shows love in an emotional stage. It can be fleeting and fickle, but it can also evolve into the more important element of love in friendship. In this latter stage, each person wants the best for the other and for themselves in the hope of becoming unified. With this should come the understanding of just how important abstinence is for relationships outside of marriage. The move from "I" to "we" in a relationship is often the final step to betrothed love or marriage. This self-surrender and personal commitment is the basis for married love and the start of the family.

Helping others to navigate and come to understand these deep emotions can be one of the greatest challenges and rewards a family can face.

Family Project

Plan a special meal together and speak about your first date with your children.

- Tell them about what first made you notice each other.
- Describe where you went on your first date.
- Talk about how this initial attraction grew into a deeper friendship and then authentic love.

Next, tell your children about your marriage, the ceremony, making the adjustment from being single to being a couple, having children and the changes that it brought, and how you dealt with hard times and celebrated good times. Afterward, look through old photos and put together a slideshow tracing your relationship from when you first met to today.

Bring Song Into Your Home

Regina Caeli

*Regina caeli, laetare, alleluia.
Quia quem meruisti portare, alleluia.
Resurrexit sicut dixit, alleluia.
Ora pro nobis Deum, alleluia.*

(Queen of Heaven, rejoice, alleluia.
For He whom you did merit to bear, alleluia.
Has risen as he said, alleluia.
Pray for us to God, alleluia.)

Use during Easter time. Return to "Jesus, Remember Me" during Lent.

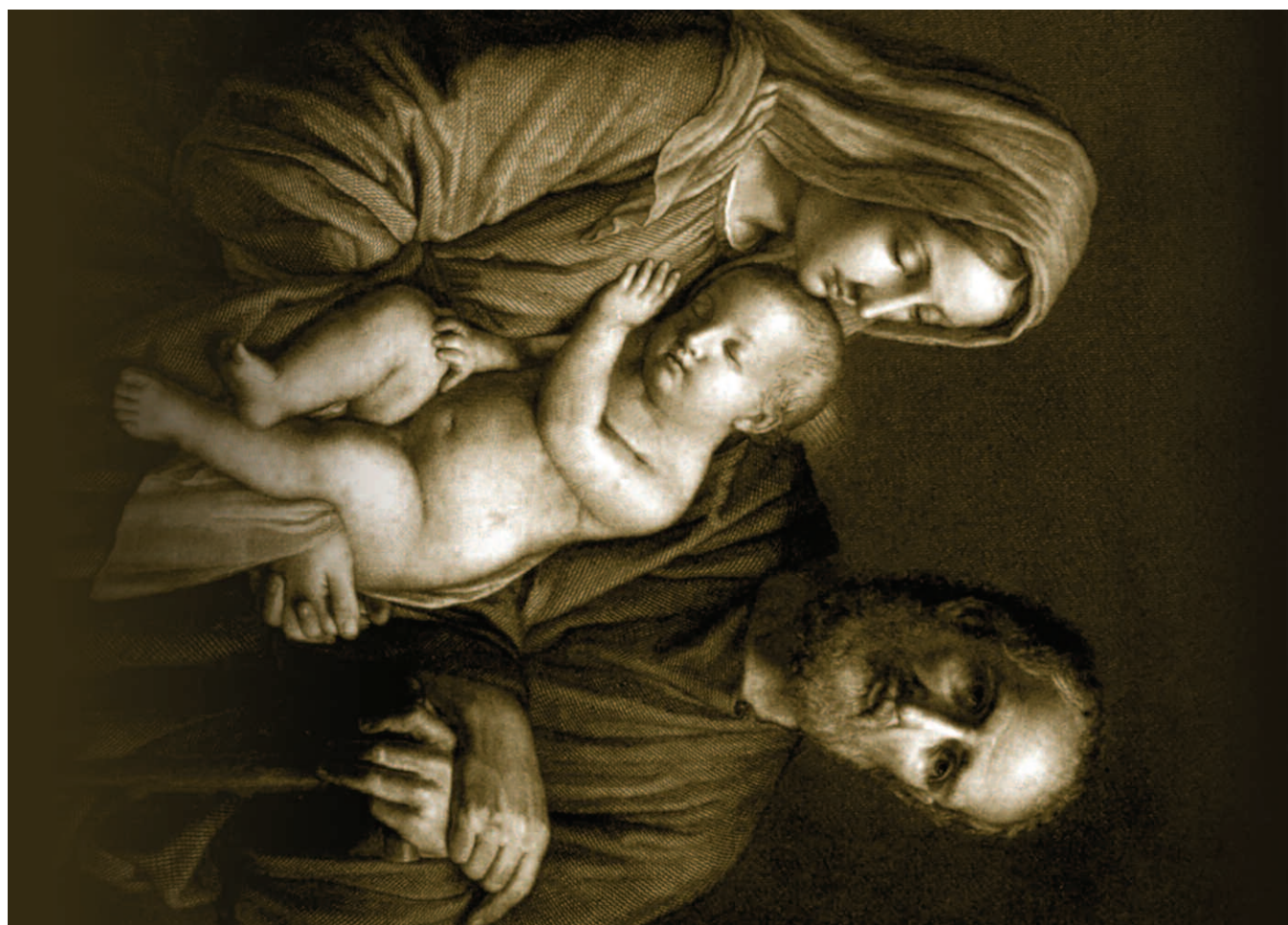
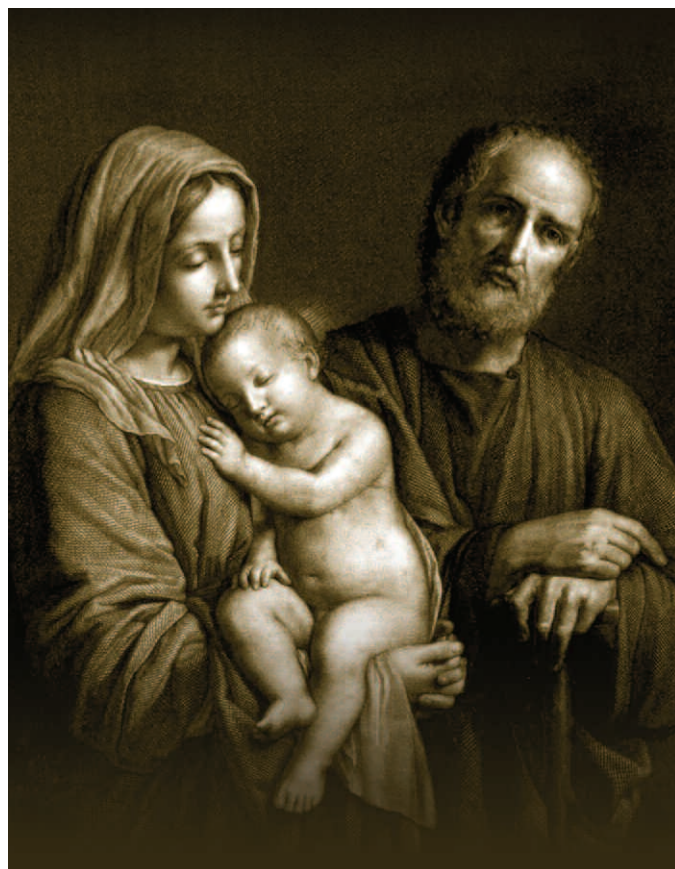
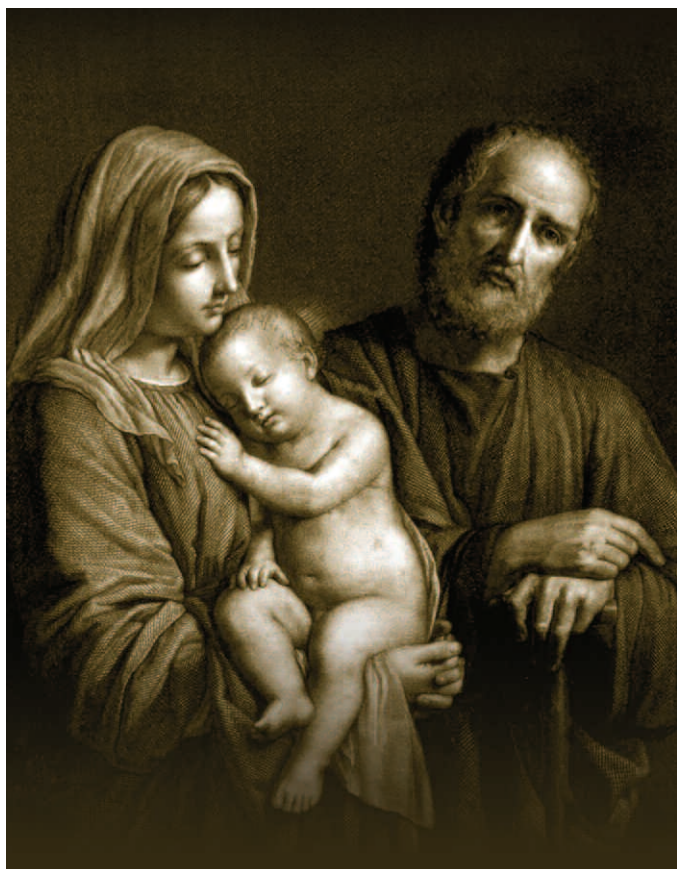
Psalm of the Month (Psalm 16)

Pray the Psalm of the Month during every Sunday of the month at your family prayer space.

Preserve me, O God, for in thee I take refuge.
I say to the Lord, "Thou art my Lord;
I have no good apart from thee."
As for the saints in the land, they are the noble,
in whom is all my delight.
Those who choose another god multiply their
sorrows;
their libations of blood I will not pour out
or take their names upon my lips.
The Lord is my chosen portion and my cup;
thou holdest my lot.
The lines have fallen for me in pleasant places;
yea, I have a goodly heritage.
I bless the Lord who gives me counsel;

in the night also my heart instructs me.
I keep the Lord always before me;
because he is at my right hand, I shall not be
moved.
Therefore my heart is glad, and my soul rejoices;
my body also dwells secure.
For thou dost not give me up to Sheol,
or let thy godly one see the pit.
Thou dost show me the path of life;
in thy presence there is fulness of joy,
in thy right hand are pleasures for evermore.

On the last Sunday of the month, discuss as a family which verse stood out most for each member.



A FAMILY PRAYER

Heavenly Father, thank you for the gift of our family. Enlighten our hearts and minds that we may live more fully this vocation to love.

In our daily life and work,
may we reflect the self-giving love which you,
O Father, eternally show with your Son
and the Holy Spirit.

Let your love be evident in the peace that reigns
in our home and in the faith we profess and live.
May our family always be a place of generosity,
understanding, forgiveness and joy.

Kindly give us the wisdom and courage
to be witnesses to your eternal design for
the family; and grant that the Holy Family
of Nazareth may always guide our path
to holiness as a family.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ,
your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the
unity of the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever.
Amen.



Prayer composed by Archbishop William E. Lori of Baltimore, Supreme Chaplain.
The cover image of the Holy Family is a drawing by Giovanni Balestra, based on a
painting by Sassoferrato. The original print is housed at the Pontifical John Paul II
Institute for Studies on Marriage and Family in Rome. Used with permission.

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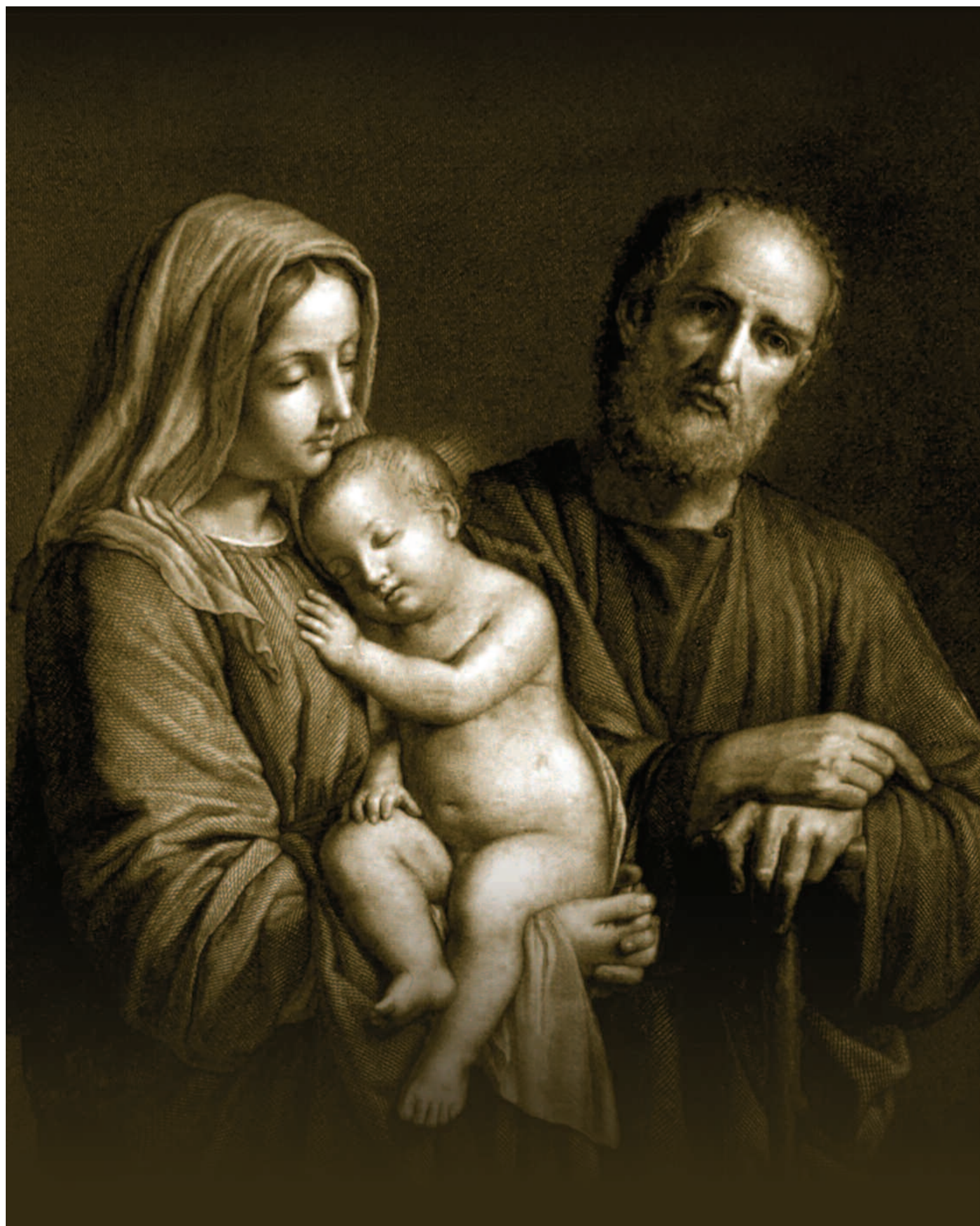
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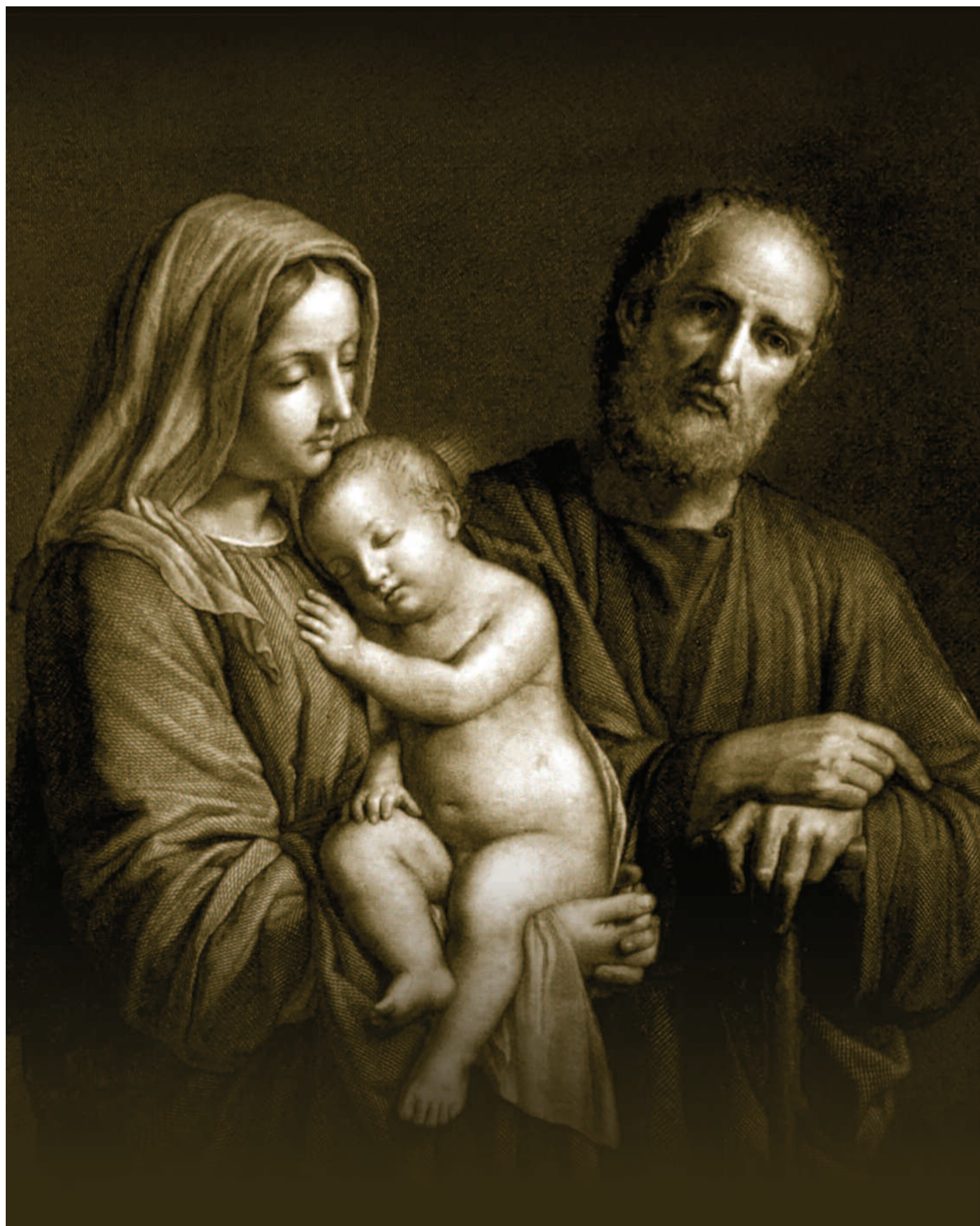


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APRIL

Movie Night “Beauty and the Beast”

Before the movie begins, ask your families to share their slideshows tracing the parents’ courtship and marriage.

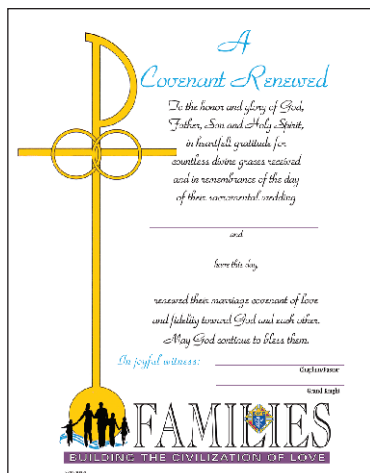
Council-Wide Event for April

Volunteering Together Project – Renewal of Marriage Vows

Families are the base on which the Knights of Columbus rests, and the vow of marriage exchanged between a man and a woman in love is the foundation for each family. In light of this, consider holding a marriage vow renewal ceremony to offer couples a chance to remind themselves of their sacred commitment to each other and their place in God's plan.

Ask your council chaplain to help plan a marriage vow renewal program for your council or perhaps the entire parish. It can take the form of a Mass or prayer service that offers married couples a chance to renew their vows. Councils and assemblies might also consider sponsoring an annual or semiannual spiritual retreat for married couples.

The Supreme Council Supply Department offers “A Covenant Renewed” certificate (#2745) to couples renewing their marriage vows. This certificate, suitable for framing, makes a nice commemorative gift and is available for 25 cents from the Supply Department.



MAY

Because in the beginning of creation God gave the commandments of work, we want to harmonize work and family life.

For Families

For Meditations on this month's theme see page 40

Through work, parents help to meet their needs and the needs of their children. They fulfill their roles as guardians and providers. While the need to work does take away from time spent as a family, it also offers the opportunity for parents to set an example of commitment to support the family and of working together with others to get a job accomplished.

Children can also learn from work through the simple responsibilities of performing chores — feeding the pets, taking out the garbage, washing dishes, etc. They learn they are responsible for their own actions, how to be a part of a team and the satisfaction that comes with labor well done.

Family Project

Develop teamwork among your family members by working together to complete a project in your parish or community.

Create a garden for Mary or a special statue location, visit local cemeteries in spring to assist with a clean up, or schedule a time to pray the rosary together as a family.



Bring Song Into Your Home

Immaculate Mary

Immaculate Mary, your praises we sing.

You reign now in Heaven, with Jesus our King.

Ave, Ave, Ave Maria. Ave, Ave, Ave Maria.

In Heaven the blessed your glory proclaim;

On Earth we your children invoke your sweet name.

Ave, Ave, Ave Maria. Ave, Ave, Ave Maria.

Psalm of the Month (*Psalm 127*)

Pray the Psalm of the Month during every Sunday of the month at your family prayer space.

Unless the Lord builds the house,
those who build it labor in vain.

Unless the Lord watches over the city,
the watchman stays awake in vain.

It is in vain that you rise up early and go late to rest,
eating the bread of anxious toil;
for he gives to his beloved sleep.

Lo, sons are a heritage from the Lord,
the fruit of the womb a reward.

Like arrows in the hand of a warrior

are the sons of one's youth.

Happy is the man who has
his quiver full of them!

He shall not be put to shame

when he speaks with his enemies in the gate.

On the last Sunday of the month, discuss as a family which verse stood out most for each member.

Movie Night “Monsters Inc.”

MAY

Before the movie begins, ask your families to share the photos of their garden and the experiences of working on it.

Council-Wide Event

Volunteering Together Project – Parish Spring Cleaning

Just as individuals form a family, families form a parish. Support your council’s parish family by organizing your families and interested parish families to help clean up your parish. Contact your pastor and ask what needs to be done in the way of:

- Sweeping out the church, parish hall and office
- Painting interior walls
- Simple roof repairs
- Landscaping and planting
- Painting exterior walls
- Other minor repairs

After the work is done, gather everyone together for a cookout or potluck dinner.



JUNE

Because the family is the subject of the New Evangelization, we want to share our faith with other families.

For Families

For Meditations on this month's theme see page 41

Every Catholic is called to holiness, and every Catholic is called to reflect this holiness in his or her state of life, whether as a priest or religious, a husband or wife, a father or mother, or an employer, employee, consumer, neighbor, parishioner or citizen.

As the saints have shown so well throughout history, holiness in life leads inevitably to witness in our daily lives. This witness is the primary way to evangelize in our time.

It is through living our lives as Catholic families, devoted to our faith, to each other and to helping those in need, that we best evangelize in a world that often seems reluctant to hear this good news.

Family Project

Prepare a bowl at home with cards with ideas for small sacrifices/offerings written on them. Every day, each member of the



family takes one of the cards and presents the offering for a relative or a friend in need. At the end of the month, each family member will write a letter (or email) to the person they made the offering for, telling him or her that for the month they were remembered and that the family offered its sacrifices for him or her.

Bring Song Into Your Home

Laudate Omnes Gentes (Taize chant)

Laudate omnes gentes, laudate Dominum.

Laudate omnes gentes, laudate Dominum.

(Sing praise, all you people, sing praise to the Lord.)

Psalm of the Month (Psalm 148)

Pray the Psalm of the Month during every Sunday of the month at your family prayer space.

Praise the Lord from the heavens,
praise him in the heights!
Praise him, all his angels,
praise him, all his host!
Praise him, sun and moon,
praise him, all you shining stars!
Praise him, you highest heavens,
and you waters above the heavens!
Let them praise the name of the Lord!
For he commanded and they were created.
And he established them for ever and ever;
he fixed their bounds which cannot be passed.
Praise the Lord from the earth,
you sea monsters and all deeps,
fire and hail, snow and frost,

stormy wind fulfilling his command!
Mountains and all hills,
fruit trees and all cedars!
Beasts and all cattle,
creeping things and flying birds!
Kings of the earth and all peoples,
princes and all rulers of the earth!
Young men and maidens together,
old men and children!
Let them praise the name of the Lord,
for his name alone is exalted;
his glory is above earth and heaven.
He has raised up a horn for his people,
praise for all his saints,
for the people of Israel who are near to him.
Praise the Lord!

On the last Sunday of the month, discuss as a family which verse stood out most for each member.

Movie Night

“Despicable Me”

JUNE

Before the movie begins, ask your families to share their letters on the offerings/sacrifices given in remembrance of a relative or person in need.

Council–Wide Event

Volunteering Together Project – Garden for Those in Need

Hunger knows no season, and there are families in need throughout the year. One way to help these families in need and promote fellowship among your council and parish families is to start a K of C family garden to raise fresh vegetables to donate to food pantries and soup kitchens to help people in need. Find a sizable plot of land that you can utilize for the field, till the soil and put in some basic crops such as potatoes, squash, tomatoes, etc. Set up a daily schedule for families to come in and weed and water the garden. Once the crops are ready, get all your volunteers together to harvest, package and deliver the produce.



For councils in more urban settings, consider having each member and his family set up a smaller garden — or even a pot with some tomato or similar vegetable plants — at home, and donate the combined produce of these mini-gardens.

Otherwise, your council can hold an ongoing summertime food drive to help those in need.



JULY

Because God is the Father of orphans and widows, we want to reach out to all those who are lonely and abandoned.

For Families

For Meditations on this month's theme see page 41

God takes care of us; he is our guardian. In a special way, he is the "Father of orphans and Defender of widows" (Ps 68). In the ancient world, orphans and widows were the weakest elements of society. Without parents or a husband taking care of them, they were defenseless.

God takes care of us by sending us Jesus Christ, his only Son. Like the Good Samaritan, Jesus was especially close to the sick, hungry, lonely and poor. In this way, he gives us the answer to Cain's question: "Am I my brother's keeper?" (Gen 4:9). Every man is his "brother's keeper." God has entrusted us to one another.

Family Project

Like the Good Samaritan, we are called to live out the Corporal Works of Mercy: feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, shelter the homeless, visit the sick and the imprisoned, and bury the dead.

Offer your time, talent and money to help the poor, the lonely and those in need.



Think about a person, family, relative, friend or neighbor who may be alone, needy or new to the parish or school. Invite them to your home for dinner.

Bring Song Into Your Home

Ubi Caritas (Taize chant)

Ubi caritas et amor,

Ubi caritas,

Deus ibi est.

(Where there are charity and love,
God is there.)

Reading of the Month (Isaiah 58)

Share this Reading of the Month during every Sunday of the month at your family prayer space.

Is such the fast that I choose,
a day for a man to humble himself?
Is it to bow down his head like a rush,
and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him?
Will you call this a fast,
and a day acceptable to the Lord?
Is not this the fast that I choose:
to loose the bonds of wickedness,
to undo the thongs of the yoke,
to let the oppressed go free,
and to break every yoke?
Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,

and bring the homeless poor into your house;
when you see the naked, to cover him,
and not to hide yourself from your own flesh?
Then shall your light break forth like the dawn,
and your healing shall spring up speedily;
your righteousness shall go before you,
the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard.
Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer;
you shall cry, and he will say, Here I am.

On the last Sunday of the month, discuss as a family which verse stood out most for each member.

Movie Night “Jungle Book”

JULY

Before the movie begins, ask your families to share their experience with sharing a meal with someone who is lonely or in need.

Council-Wide Event



Volunteering Together Project – Habitat for Humanity

Knights at the local level donate millions of hours of volunteer service and millions of dollars to assist Habitat for Humanity in helping to build or renovate houses for families in need.

Habitat for Humanity is a nonprofit Christian organization founded in 1976 that seeks to eliminate poverty housing and homelessness one family at a time. The organization assists in providing quality-built, affordable homes to needy families by cooperatively involving the future homeowner with community volunteers and suppliers to build or renovate the home. In addition to a down payment, recipients work alongside the construction crew and volunteers, and are then provided an affordable mortgage plan.

Knights look favorably on the mission of Habitat for Humanity, which not only helps people to become homeowners, but actively involves them in the house’s preparation. This teaches them valuable skills, develops confidence and provides experience.

Contact your local Habitat branch and arrange a day for your council families to volunteer and help someone receive the gift of shelter.



AUGUST

Because no one should be isolated,
remember that the parish is a family of
families.

For Families

For Meditations on this month's theme see page 42

Just as we are called upon to be faithful Catholics, we are also called on to be good citizens. Our faith makes us better citizens and our society is a better place for the love and concern we have for our neighbors.

We must show the world that it is love that motivates us to help and protect the poor, the widow, the orphan, people with intellectual disabilities, the cold and the hungry. And it is that same love that motivates us to protect families and individuals in need. The motivation of our service to others is our Lord's call to love of neighbor. Recall the sacrifice and generosity of St. Joseph as a faithful and loving guardian and protector of the Holy Family.

Family Project

Reach out and invite another family member or someone who may be alone to join your family for Mass, a social event, or another activity.

"For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Mt 18:20).



Bring Song Into Your Home

Magnificat

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God my Savior
for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant.
From this day all generations will call me blessed:
the Almighty has done great things for me,
and holy is his Name.
He has mercy on those who fear him
in every generation.
He has shown the strength of his arm,
he has scattered the proud in their conceit.
He has cast down the mighty from their thrones,
and has lifted up the lowly.
He has filled the hungry with good things,
and the rich he has sent away empty.
He has come to the help of his servant Israel
for he remembered his promise of mercy,
the promise he made to our fathers,
to Abraham and his children forever.

Psalm of the Month (Psalm 8)

Pray the Psalm of the Month during every Sunday of the month at your family prayer space.

O Lord, our Lord,
how majestic is thy name in all the earth!
Thou whose glory above the heavens is chanted
by the mouth of babes and infants,
thou hast founded a bulwark because of thy foes,
to still the enemy and the avenger.
When I look at thy heavens, the work of thy fingers,
the moon and the stars which thou hast established;
what is man that thou art mindful of him,
and the son of man that thou dost care for him?
Yet thou hast made him little less than God,
and dost crown him with glory and honor.

Thou hast given him dominion over the works of
thy hands;
thou hast put all things under his feet,
all sheep and oxen,
and also the beasts of the field,
the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea,
whatever passes along the paths of the sea.
O Lord, our Lord,
how majestic is thy name in all the earth!

*On the last Sunday of the month, discuss as a
family which verse stood out most for each member.*

Movie Night “Toy Story”

AUGUST

Before the movie begins, ask your families to share their experiences with other members of the parish.

Council-Wide Event

Volunteering Together Project – Bringing Families Together

Encourage Knights and their families to choose the Holy Family as their model of a community of persons for their family. Celebrate all aspects of the family, which is the foundation of society and of fundamental importance to the Knights of Columbus, by sponsoring council programs that allow families to enjoy each other's company, to talk and to be active together.

- Hold a council and family project to repair, paint or clean the home or yard of an elderly person or person in need.
- Hold a banquet to honor and present certificates to the “Family of the Month” (#1843) or “Family of the Year” (1843A) recipients. Both certificates are available in English, French and Spanish at a cost of 25 cents each from the Supply Department.
- Sponsor a family retreat, rosary or Mass with children participating as altar servers and family members serving as ushers and lectors.
- Sponsor a family picnic featuring a cookout, sack race, egg toss, water balloon toss, three-legged race, obstacle course, face painting and other similar activities.
- Host family sports competitions (tug of war, volleyball, horseshoes, bocce, sailing, swimming, softball, bowling, etc.).
- Hold a family pizza party and social with music, dancing, and karaoke or a sing-a-long for younger children.



SEPTEMBER

Because the family is the root of society, we want our family to fulfill its vocation to build the common good.

For Families

For Meditations on this month's theme see pages 42-43

God is not solitary. He is a communion of persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. And we know that we — as men and women — are created in the image and likeness of God. This means we are called to build a communion of persons ourselves.

Through baptism, God has transformed us into his children and given us entrance into the Church. And the Church is the family of God. All of us are sons and daughters of God. We are called to build a communion of persons by taking care of our relationships, the first of which is our family. And when we seek to make our family an image in this world of the community of persons which is the Trinity, we truly build our family as the domestic church.

Family Project

God calls upon us to be good citizens and to serve our communities. Talk to your family about service members of your community, such as police officers and firefighters, those holding public office, and those serving in the armed forces or similar services. Work with local groups to send care packages and letters to active duty members of the armed forces serving overseas. Visit elderly veterans and spend time with them



talking, reading or playing a game as a way to show appreciation for their past service

Bring Song Into Your Home

Totus Tuus (Marco Frisina)

Totus tuus sum, Maria,

Mater nostri Redemptoris.

Virgo Dei, Virgo pia,

Mater mundi Salvatoris.

(I am all yours, Mary,
Mother of our Redeemer.
Virgin of God, lowly Virgin,
Mother of the Savior of the world.)

Psalm of the Month (Psalm 23)

Pray the Psalm of the Month during every Sunday of the month at your family prayer space.

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want;
he makes me lie down in green pastures.
He leads me beside still waters;
he restores my soul.
He leads me in paths of righteousness
for his name's sake.
Even though I walk through the valley of the
shadow of death,
I fear no evil;
for thou art with me;
thy rod and thy staff,

they comfort me.
Thou preparest a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;
thou anointest my head with oil,
my cup overflows.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life;
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord
forever.

On the last Sunday of the month, discuss as a family which verse stood out most for each member.

Movie Night “Mulan”

SEPTEMBER

Before the movie begins, ask your families to share their experience about the public service of their extended family and/or their visit with veterans.

Council-Wide Event

Volunteering Together Project – Serving Those Who Served

Invite your council families to volunteer for activities on behalf of veterans through a Serving Those Who Served program. Here are some possible activities:

- Organize a drive to collect clothing, coats, gloves, pajamas, robes, toiletries and other items for veterans.
- Provide rosaries, Bibles, Catholic religious literature, and chapel items like Mass bells, Easter candle holders and altar linens.
- Volunteer as eucharistic ministers to take Communion to patients.
- Collect or buy television sets, DVD/BluRay players or stereo equipment to donate for use in medical facility common areas. Collect books, DVDs and CDs for the facility.
- Develop a plan to donate personal computers, computer programs and printers for use by veterans.
- Travel to a VA facility to put on a special program or entertainment for patients.
- Plan and conduct an outing for veterans, such as a picnic or trip to the ball park, or hold a special community event.
- Adopt veterans at a facility and remember them regularly with cards and letters.



Monthly Meditations on Family Life

**October — Because the Lord is the God of our ancestors,
we want to strengthen the relationships between our family's generations.**

For the Christian community the family is far more than a “theme”: it is life, it is the daily fabric of life, it is the journey of generations who pass on the faith together with love and with the basic moral values. It is concrete solidarity, effort, patience, and also a project, hope, a future. All this which the Christian community lives out in the light of faith, hope and charity, should never be kept to oneself but must become, every day, the leaven in the dough of the whole of society for its greater common good.

Hope and a future presuppose memory. The memory of our elderly people sustains us as we journey on. The future of society ... is rooted in the elderly and in the young: the latter, because they have the strength and are of the age to carry history ahead; the former, because they are a living memory. A people that does not take care of its elderly, its children and its youth has no future, because it abuses both memory and promise.

Pope Francis

Message to Participants in the 47th Social Week of Italian Catholics

1. *Who is one person in my family whose faith shaped my own faith?*
2. *What are some ways our family tries to live out belief in God and his Church?*
3. *Which virtue seems to be particularly strong in our family — faith, hope or charity?*
4. *Why is memory important to the future?*
5. *What strengths do the children in our family have?*

**November — Because God rested on the seventh day,
we want to celebrate Sunday as a family.**

In the Gospel we do not find discourses on the family but an event which is worth more than any words: *God wanted to be born and to grow up in a human family.* In this way he consecrated the family as the first and ordinary means of his encounter with humanity.

In his life spent at Nazareth, Jesus honored the Virgin Mary and the righteous Joseph, remaining under their authority throughout the period of his childhood and his adolescence. In this way he shed light on the primary value of the family in the education of the person.

Jesus was introduced by Mary and Joseph into the religious community and frequented the synagogue of Nazareth. With them, he learned to make the pilgrimage to Jerusalem, as the Gospel passage offered for our meditation by today's liturgy tells us.

When he was 12 years old, he stayed behind in the Temple and it took his parents all of three days to find him. With this act he made them understand that he “had to see to his Father's affairs,” in other words, to the mission that God had entrusted to him.

This Gospel episode reveals the most authentic and profound vocation of the family: that is, to accompany each of its members on the path of the discovery of God and of the plan that he has prepared for him or her.

Mary and Joseph taught Jesus primarily by their example: in his parents he came to know the full beauty of faith, of love for God and for his Law, as well as the demands of justice, which is totally fulfilled in love.

From them he learned that it is necessary first of all to do God's will, and that the spiritual bond is worth more than the bond of kinship.

The Holy Family of Nazareth is truly the “prototype” of every Christian family which, united in the sacrament of marriage and nourished by the Word and the Eucharist, is called to carry out the wonderful vocation and mission of being the living cell not only of society but also of the Church, a sign and instrument of unity for the entire human race.

Let us now invoke for every family, especially families in difficulty, the protection of Mary Most Holy and of St. Joseph. May they sustain such families so that they can resist the disintegrating forces of a certain contemporary culture which undermines the very foundations of the family institution.

May they help Christian families to be, in every part of the world, living images of God’s love.

Pope Benedict XVI
Angelus Address, Dec 31, 2006

1. *What does it mean to me to see the rest of the family pray or attend Mass with me?*
2. *Why might God want me to be a part of this particular family, giving me these people to love and care for?*
3. *What is one thing about Mary or Joseph that I admire?*
4. *How can I allow others to help me discover God’s plan for me? How can I encourage others to be open to God’s plan for them?*

**December — Because the family that prays together stays together,
we want to learn to pray as a family.**

Payer needs to become a regular habit in the daily life of each family. Prayer is thanksgiving, praise of God, asking for forgiveness, supplication and invocation. In all of these forms the prayer of the family has much to say to God.

St. John Paul II
Letter to Families, §10

Mary appears therefore as the supreme model of personal participation in the divine mysteries. She guides the Church in meditating on the mystery celebrated and in participating in the saving event, by encouraging the faithful to desire an intimate, personal relationship with Christ in order to cooperate with the gift of their own life in the salvation of all....

We could add that for the People of God, Mary represents the model of every expression of their prayer life. In particular, she teaches Christians how to turn to God to ask for his help and support in the various circumstances of life.

Her motherly intercession at the wedding in Cana and her presence in the Upper Room at the Apostles’ side as they prayed in expectation of Pentecost suggest that the prayer of petition is an essential form of cooperation in furthering the work of salvation in the world. By following her model, the Church learns to be bold in her asking, to persevere in her intercessions and, above all, to implore the gift of the Holy Spirit.

St. John Paul II
Audience, Sept. 10, 1997, §4-5

1. *During my day, what are some times when I could take a minute to “touch base” with God through prayer, perhaps asking his help or simply thanking him for his love and his presence?*
2. *Just as talking can build a relationship, the different kinds of prayer mentioned are all ways to grow closer to God. What type makes me most aware that God is near and a part of this life he has given me?*
3. *How is our family touched and shaped by the prayers of all of its members?*

**January — Because God is the Lord of mercy,
we want to help heal our family wounds and promote forgiveness.**

Family communion can only be preserved and perfected through a great spirit of sacrifice. It requires, in fact, a ready and generous openness of each and all to understanding, to forbearance, to pardon, to reconciliation. There is no family that does not know how selfishness, discord, tension and conflict violently attack and at times mortally wound its own communion: hence there arise the many and varied forms of division in family life. But, at the same time, every family is called by the God of peace to have the joyous and renewing experience of “reconciliation,” that is, communion reestablished, unity restored.

St. John Paul II
Familiaris Consortio, §21

1. *What is one moment I felt truly forgiven and reconciled with another person? How did I know that person had forgiven me?*
2. *Remembering that going to confession not only reconciles us with God but also gives us grace to be better, how often should our family try to go?*
3. *When there is a rift between me and another person, what does it take to reconcile? How can I forgive when someone isn't sorry?*
4. *Does reconciling mean I have to believe that what was done is right?*
5. *Remembering that the fruit of God's forgiveness is that we become closer to him again, how can I make those I forgive — or those I wrong — know I want to grow closer to them again as well?*

**February — Because love is filled with hope when it is communicated,
our family wants to promote the life-giving spirit of our families.**

Whoever is moved by love begins to perceive what “life” really is. He begins to perceive the meaning of the word of hope that we encountered in the Baptismal Rite: from faith I await “eternal life” — the true life which, whole and unthreatened, in all its fullness, is simply life. Jesus, who said that he had come so that we might have life and have it in its fullness, in abundance, has also explained to us what “life” means: “this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent” (John 17:3). Life in its true sense is not something we have exclusively in or from ourselves: it is a relationship. And life in its totality is a relationship with him who is the source of life. If we are in relation with him who does not die, who is Life itself and Love itself, then we are in life. Then we “live.”

Pope Benedict XVI
Spe Salvi, §7

1. *How would our family life be different if we did not love at all?*
2. *In what areas has the faith and God's love shown me how to love?*
3. *Why is living in relationship with God so important to really “living”?*

March — Because the joy of all parents is to teach their children the art of living, as parents we want to be the primary educators of our children.

The Christian family constitutes a specific revelation and realization of ecclesial communion, and for this reason too it can and should be called “the domestic church.”

All members of the family, each according to his or her own gift, have the grace and responsibility of building, day by day, the communion of persons, making the family “a school of deeper humanity”: this happens where there is care and love for the little ones, the sick, the aged; where there is mutual service every day; when there is a sharing of goods, of joys and of sorrows.

A fundamental opportunity for building such a communion is constituted by the educational exchange between parents and children in which each gives and receives. By means of love, respect and obedience towards their parents, children offer their specific and irreplaceable contribution to the construction of an authentically human and Christian family. They will be aided in this if parents exercise their unrenounceable authority as a true and proper “ministry,” that is, as a service to the human and Christian well-being of their children, and in particular as a service aimed at helping them acquire a truly responsible freedom, and if parents maintain a living awareness of the “gift” they continually receive from their children.

St. John Paul II

Familiaris Consortio, §21

1. *What are some similarities between how we learn to live in the family and how we learn to live in the Church?*
2. *What are some differences between what we learn to live shallowly and what we learn to live in a more deeply human way?*
3. *Realizing that God has not only given me my life, but also particular parent-child relationships, how do we each give and receive from each other?*
4. *What are some of the “graces and responsibilities” I think I have to contribute to making our family more Christian and more human?*

April — Because our children may be called to become spouses and parents, we want to help them to explore the vocation to marriage and family life.

Analyzing the nature of marriage, both St. Augustine and St. Thomas [Aquinas] always identify it with an “indivisible union of souls,” a “union of hearts,” with “consent.” These elements are found in an exemplary manner in the marriage of Mary and Joseph. At the culmination of the history of salvation, when God reveals his love for humanity through the gift of the Word, it is precisely the marriage of Mary and Joseph that brings to realization in full “freedom” the “spousal gift of self” in receiving and expressing such a love. “In this great undertaking which is the renewal of all things in Christ, marriage — it too purified and renewed — becomes a new reality, a sacrament of the New Covenant. ... The Savior began the work of salvation by this virginal and holy union, wherein is manifested his all-powerful will to purify and sanctify the family — that sanctuary of love and cradle of life.”

How much the family of today can learn from this! “The essence and role of the family are in the final analysis specified by love. Hence the family has the mission to guard, reveal and communicate love, and this is a living reflection of and a real sharing in God’s love for humanity and the love of Christ the Lord for the Church his bride.” This being the case, it is in the Holy Family, the original “Church in miniature (*Ecclesia domestica*)” that every Christian family must be reflected. “Through God’s mysterious design, it was in that family that the Son of God spent long years of a hidden life. It is therefore the prototype and example for all Christian families.”

St. John Paul II

Familiaris Consortio, §17

God calls you to make definitive choices, and he has a plan for each of you: to discover that plan and to respond to your vocation is to move toward personal fulfillment. God calls each of us to be holy, to live his life, but he has a particular path for each one of us. Some are called to holiness through family life in the sacrament of marriage. Today, there are those who say that marriage is out of fashion. Is it out of fashion? In a culture of relativism and the ephemeral, many preach the importance of “enjoying” the moment. They say that it is not worth making a life-long commitment, making a definitive decision “forever,” because we do not know what tomorrow will bring. I ask you, instead, to be revolutionaries, I ask you to swim against the tide; yes, I am asking you to rebel against this culture that sees everything as temporary and that ultimately believes you are incapable of responsibility, that believes you are incapable of true love. I have confidence in you and I pray for you. Have the courage “to swim against the tide.”

Pope Francis

Meeting with volunteers, 28th World Youth Day

1. *What is one virtue I think I would need to grow in, in order to give myself to another as a loving spouse and loving parent? What is one strength I think I have that would be helpful as a loving spouse and loving parent?*
2. *Do I share Pope Francis’ confidence in me, that I am capable of true love and responsibility?*
3. *How does our family complete its “mission” to guard love, reveal love or communicate love?*
4. *What is an “ephemeral love,” and how is it different from a lasting and life-long committed love? How does lasting love affect other members of a family?*

May — Because in the beginning of creation God gave the commandments of work, we want to harmonize work and family life.

Work was the daily expression of love in the life of the Family of Nazareth. The Gospel specifies the kind of work Joseph did in order to support his family: he was a carpenter. This simple word sums up Joseph’s entire life. For Jesus, these were hidden years, the years to which Luke refers after recounting the episode that occurred in the Temple: “And he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them.” This “submission” or obedience of Jesus in the house of Nazareth should be understood as a sharing in the work of Joseph. Having learned the work of his presumed father, he was known as “the carpenter’s son.” If the Family of Nazareth is an example and model for human families, in the order of salvation and holiness, so too, by analogy, is Jesus’ work at the side of Joseph the carpenter. ...

What is crucially important here is the sanctification of daily life, a sanctification which each person must acquire according to his or her own state, and one which can be promoted according to a model accessible to all people: “St. Joseph is the model of those humble ones that Christianity raises up to great destinies; he is the proof that in order to be a good and genuine follower of Christ, there is no need of great things — it is enough to have the common, simple and human virtues, but they need to be true and authentic.”

St. John Paul II

Redemptoris Custos - §22, 24

1. *How is work — whether breadwinning employment, chores or care — a “daily expression of love” in our family? Give an example.*
2. *Why do I work or do things for our family? How can I work more lovingly?*
3. *What are some “common, simple and human virtues”? What makes them “true and authentic,” or false and inauthentic?*
4. *Are there ways that work is a source of tension for our family? How can I resolve the tension and make my work more a source of joy and love for the rest of the family?*
5. *Modeling Jesus’ working with Joseph, how I can help others in our family with the ways they contribute, or let them know that what they do matters?*

**June — Because the family is the subject of the New Evangelization,
we want to share our faith with other families.**

The new evangelization depends largely on the domestic church. In our time, as in times past, the eclipse of God, the spread of ideologies contrary to the family and the degradation of sexual ethics are connected. And just as the eclipse of God and the crisis of the family are linked, so the New Evangelization is inseparable from the Christian family. The family is indeed the way of the Church because it is the “human space” of our encounter with Christ. Spouses “not only receive the love of Christ and become a saved community, but they are also called upon to communicate Christ’s love to their brethren, thus becoming a saving community.” The family founded on the sacrament of marriage is a particular realization of the Church, saved and saving, evangelized and evangelizing community. Just like the Church, it is called to welcome, radiate and show the world the love and presence of Christ. The reception and transmission of divine love are realized in the mutual commitment of the spouses, in generous and responsible procreation, in the care and education of children, work and social relationships, with attention to the needy, in participation in church activities, in commitment to civil society. The Christian Family to the extent it succeeds in living love as communion and service as a reciprocal gift open to all, as a journey of permanent conversion supported by the grace of God, reflects the splendor of Christ in the world and the beauty of the divine Trinity.

Pope Benedict XVI

Address, Pontifical Council for the Family

1. *How can our family be the “saving community” it is by communicating Christ’s love to others in word and action?*
2. *Remembering that the “New Evangelization” is an evangelization which is not new in content but “new in ardor, methods and expression,” what are some ways our family can “evangelize,” and what truths might we express?*
3. *Why is family such an effective voice for things that matter?*

**July — Because God is the Father of orphans and widows,
we want to reach out to all those who are lonely and abandoned.**

Jesus wanted to belong to a family who experienced these hardships, so that no one would feel excluded from the loving closeness of God. The flight into Egypt caused by Herod’s threat shows us that God is present where man is in danger, where man is suffering, where he is fleeing, where he experiences rejection and abandonment; but God is also present where man dreams, where he hopes to return in freedom to his homeland and plans and chooses life for his family and dignity for himself and his loved ones.

Today our gaze on the Holy Family lets us also be drawn into the simplicity of the life they led in Nazareth. It is an example that does our families great good, helping them increasingly to become communities of love and reconciliation, in which tenderness, mutual help, and mutual forgiveness is experienced.

Pope Francis

Angelus Address, Dec. 29, 2013

1. *How is our family rich in companionship?*
2. *Who is one person or family who lacks the love of a close family — perhaps lacking a parent or parents, or a family far away. How can we reach out to help share our family with them?*
3. *Do material things and busy schedules isolate members of our family, perhaps taking people in different directions all the time or excluding a parent, spouse, child or sibling? Is there a way to imitate the Holy Family’s “simplicity of life” to ensure that those in our family do not feel alone?*
4. *Do the elderly in our family feel lonely? What are some ways we could make them feel more included in the family’s love?*

**August — Because no one should be isolated,
we want to live parish life as a family of families.**

Among the fundamental tasks of the Christian family is its ecclesial task: the family is placed at the service of the building up of the Kingdom of God in history by participating in the life and mission of the Church.

In order to understand better the foundations, the contents and the characteristics of this participation, we must examine the many profound bonds linking the Church and the Christian family and establishing the family as a “Church in miniature” (*Ecclesia domestica*) in such a way that in its own way the family is a living image and historical representation of the mystery of the Church.

It is, above all, the Church as Mother that gives birth to, educates and builds up the Christian family, by putting into effect in its regard the saving mission which she has received from her Lord. By proclaiming the word of God, the Church reveals to the Christian family its true identity, what it is and should be according to the Lord’s plan; by celebrating the sacraments, the Church enriches and strengthens the Christian family with the grace of Christ for its sanctification to the glory of the Father; by the continuous proclamation of the new commandment of love, the Church encourages and guides the Christian family to the service of love, so that it may imitate and relive the same self-giving and sacrificial love that the Lord Jesus has for the entire human race.

St. John Paul II
Familiaris Consortio, §49

1. *Pick a sacrament (confession, Eucharist, matrimony, etc.) or program in the parish; how has the parish enriched our family?*
2. *How can our family take advantage of what is offered in the Church, being more open to the graces offered to make our family holy?*
3. *How can our family become more involved in the parish — shaping the parish with our love the way parishes can shape families with Christ’s love?*

**September — Because the family is the root of society,
we want our family to fulfill its vocation to build the common good.**

The civilization of love evokes joy: joy, among other things, for the fact that a man has come into the world (cf. *Jn* 16:21), and consequently because spouses have become parents. The civilization of love means “rejoicing in the right” (cf. *1 Cor* 13:6). But a civilization inspired by a consumerist, anti-birth mentality is not and cannot ever be a civilization of love. If the family is so important for the civilization of love, it is because of the particular *closeness and intensity of the bonds* which come to be between persons and generations within the family.

St. John Paul II
Letter to Families, §13

How does Joseph exercise his role as protector? Discreetly, humbly and silently, but with an unfailing presence and utter fidelity, even when he finds it hard to understand. From the time of his betrothal to Mary until the finding of the twelve-year-old Jesus in the Temple of Jerusalem, he is there at every moment with loving care. As the spouse of Mary, he is at her side in good times and bad, on the journey to Bethlehem for the census and in the anxious and joyful hours when she gave birth; amid the drama of the flight into Egypt and during the frantic search for their child in the Temple; and later in the day-to-day life of the home of Nazareth, in the workshop where he taught his trade to Jesus.

How does Joseph respond to his calling to be the protector of Mary, Jesus, and the Church? By being constantly attentive to God, open to the signs of God’s presence and receptive to God’s plans, and not simply to his own. ... God does not want a house built by men, but faithfulness to his word, to his plan. It is God himself who builds the house, but from living stones sealed by his Spirit. Joseph is a “protector” because he is able to hear God’s voice and be guided by his will; and for this reason he is all the more sensitive to the persons entrusted to his safekeeping. He can look at things realistically, he is in touch with his surroundings, he can make truly wise decisions. In him, dear friends, we learn how to respond to God’s call, readily and willingly, but we also see the core of the Christian vocation, which is Christ! Let us protect Christ in our lives, so that we can protect others, so that we can protect creation!

Pope Francis
Homily at his Papal Inauguration, March 19, 2013

Mary as the model of charity. In what way is Mary a living example of love for the Church? Let us think of the readiness she showed toward her cousin Elizabeth. In visiting her, the Virgin Mary brought not only material help — she brought this too — but she also brought Jesus, who was already alive in her womb. Bringing Jesus into that house meant bringing joy, the fullness of joy. Elizabeth and Zechariah were rejoicing at a pregnancy that had seemed impossible at their age, but it was the young Mary who brought them the fullness of joy, the joy which comes from Jesus and from the Holy Spirit, and is expressed by gratuitous charity, by sharing with, helping, and understanding others.

Our Lady also wants to bring the great gift of Jesus to us, to us all; and with him she brings us his love, his peace, and his joy. In this, the Church is like Mary: the Church is not a shop, she is not a humanitarian agency, the Church is not an NGO. The Church is sent to bring Christ and his Gospel to all. She does not bring herself — whether small or great, strong or weak, the Church carries Jesus and should be like Mary when she went to visit Elizabeth. What did Mary take to her? Jesus. The Church brings Jesus: this is the centre of the Church, to carry Jesus! ... The Church must bring Jesus, the love of Jesus, the charity of Jesus.

Pope Francis

General Audience, Oct. 23, 2013

1. *How is the family the “root” of society? How do families shape society and our communities?*
2. *In our family, each person is welcomed. How can I show that each person is lovable and a reason for happiness?*
3. *Where do I see Christ needing protection in my life? How can I protect him outside the home?*
4. *How can I “bring Jesus” with me in helping others? How do I think Mary would act in my community with its needs?*

For Additional Reading

The Knights of Columbus Catholic Information Service (CIS) continues the Knights’ tradition of evangelization by providing low-cost, Catholic publications for the general public, as well as for parishes, schools, retreat houses, military installations, correctional facilities, legislatures, the medical community and for individuals who request them. The CIS’s New Evangelization Series is a response to Saint John Paul II’s, Pope Benedict XVI’s and Pope Francis’ call for today’s men and women to rediscover the “beauty and contemporary relevance of faith.” As it presents the Catholic understanding of God, the human person, the Church, the Christian’s task in the world, and eternal life in the light of love revealed in Jesus Christ, the series helps readers discover the joy that comes from sharing in God’s life.

There are five new publications available in the New Evangelization series. These booklets on the topics of prayer, Eucharist, John Paul II’s theology of the body, marriage and consecrated life are vitally important for our efforts to strengthen Catholic families on the domestic church.

“We Have Come to Adore Him”: An Introduction to Prayer at the School of Benedict XVI (Item# 405)

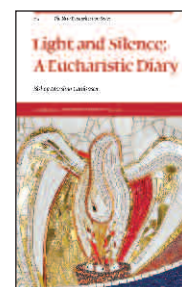
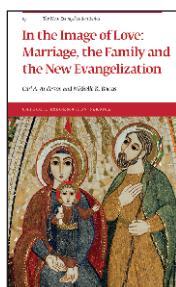
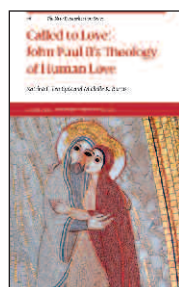
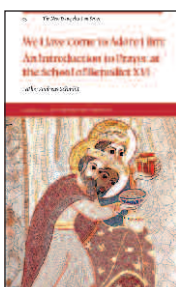
Called to Love: John Paul II’s Theology of Human Love (Item# 406)

In the Image of Love: Marriage, the Family and the New Evangelization. (Item# 407)

Following Love, Poor Chaste and Obedient: The Consecrated Life (Item# 408)

Light and Silence: A Eucharistic Diary (Item# 412)

These and many more are available online at kofc.org/CIS.





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