

**faith**

FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

A service of Faith Catholic

**April 2020**

**WHAT'S INSIDE:**

- **Tips for success**
- **Make learning fun**
- **Teaching religion at home**
- **Organize your day**
- **Message from schools superintendent Jim Gallagher**

**PLUS!**  
**Online resources**

**SCHOOL-AT-HOME GUIDE  
FOR CATHOLIC FAMILIES**

**Helpful tips for teaching at home  
during the COVID-19 crisis**



## RELAX — you're already a religion teacher!

Without the support of Catholic school religion classes or parish religious education programs, many parents are concerned about how to “teach religion” during the mandated period of social distancing. In fact, for many parents, the idea of holding at-home religion classes makes them feel inadequate, since few Catholics have formal training in theology.

There's good news about teaching the Good News! You don't need a degree in theology. You need only to remember that your family represents a domestic Church, and your role is to lead your flock toward a closer relationship with Jesus Christ. We know that times of crisis often serve as a catalyst to growing in faith. Catholic educators recommend responding to the COVID-19 public health crisis by demonstrating to children the vital role your faith plays in your daily life. You'll be teaching by example, and your lessons may make a lasting impression that could inspire your children for years to come.

While you're at home with your kids, try these ideas to practice and demonstrate the faith:

- **Connect with your parish online for Mass.** If your parish isn't streaming Sunday Mass, visit [watchthemass.com](http://watchthemass.com) for live and taped Masses. As you would on Sunday, gather the family together, sit respectfully as you watch the liturgy, pray along (but no need to stand or kneel), and say a prayer of spiritual Communion in lieu of receiving the Eucharist.
- **Pray together as a family.** Take turns reading the daily Scripture aloud and have an informal Bible study over breakfast, discussing what the readings reveal to you that day.
- During family prayer, include your own version of the **prayers of the faithful** with prayer intentions from each family member. In particular, pray for:
  - The Church, Pope Francis, all the clergy, and especially for our pastor and parish staff
  - Those who are leading nations, states and communities through the COVID-19 crisis
  - Health care workers
  - Those who are sick and suffering, and their families, and those with other health issues whose treatments are being affected by the crisis
  - Those who are dying and who will die alone, and for their families
- **Pray a family rosary** and have each member lead a decade, and everyone shares intentions.
- **Have a crucifix in a prominent place** in the home, and in every bedroom. If your children don't have them, make them as a craft project during school-at-home.
- **Talk freely about the presence of God** during these uncertain days. When reading the news, look for uplifting stories of neighbors helping neighbors, heroic health care workers, and others who demonstrate sacrificial love.
- **Allow your children to witness you in private prayer.** Encourage your children to pray daily on their own, to listen for God's call, and, if heard, to respond. Order a prayer journal online for each family member.
- **For more ideas** on how to build your home as a Domestic Church, visit [www.kofc.org/un/en/resources/programs/family-fully-alive/10162-family-fully-alive-booklet.pdf](http://www.kofc.org/un/en/resources/programs/family-fully-alive/10162-family-fully-alive-booklet.pdf) sponsored by the Knights of Columbus. †



Siblings Aubrianna and Tyler Isaac, students at St. John Paul II Elementary in Hermitage, enjoyed their first day of remote learning.

Contributed photo

## ORGANIZE THE DAY FOR SCHOOL-AT-HOME

When you're teaching at home, you'll be more successful if you abandon the idea of replicating a regular school day. Instead, try to create an easy-to-learn routine.

Imagine the day in blocks, divided by mealtimes that create natural breaks. Meals could be the anchors attached to the clock, since setting a designated breakfast, lunch and dinner time can help manage childrens' expectations.

Activities in between can be fluid to reflect that varying amount of time children need to accomplish the day's goals. (Note: experienced homeschoolers say the kitchen should be "closed" between meals, to keep from daylong grazing that isn't healthy and can get expensive.)

### Up and at 'em!

While you don't have to set the alarm for an early start as you would for a typical school day, establish a routine by choosing a regular time to start the day. Student athletes might begin with a short workout. Morning chores include making beds, picking up clothes, brushing teeth and getting dressed for the day. Children also can help the household by folding laundry, emptying the dishwasher and walking the dog.

### Breakfast and Planning

Whether breakfast is a communal meal fixed by mom or another family member or everyone prepares their own, begin the routine by sitting down together to pray, eat and map out the day. Imagine this as a "team meeting" where the game plan is chalked out. Each child should leave the table with a list of tasks that need to be accomplished during the day, as well as a review of longer-term assignments that might be worked on, but not completed. When the dishes are cleared and the table is clean, it's time to start school.

### Flexible schoolwork in the morning

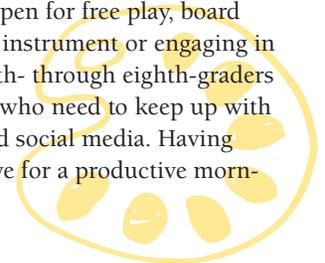
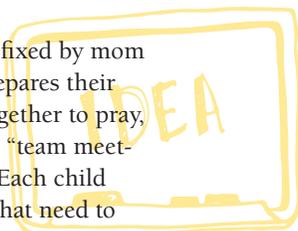
Students in grades five through eight are capable of a fair amount of self-directed learning, especially in literature-based courses. For assignments that involve reading from textbooks or novels, they may only need a few minutes with a parent for direction. Depending on the number of children engaged in school-at-home, parents can decide to spend blocks of time with each one individually throughout the day, working on several subjects during their one-on-one time. In addition, since several children at home may be sharing a computer, the day may look different for each child – one may be working on schoolwork for the morning while another enjoys playtime until the laptop is free.

### Participate in online learning

During this unprecedented public health crisis, schools have rallied to offer continuity of learning plans and online learning opportunities for students. Many teachers are sending daily emails with assignments that are due online. Whether they're joining a Facebook Live class or watching a lesson previously recorded and posted to YouTube, students will likely be engaged with technology for big chunks of the day. For this reason, it's even more important that children enjoy tech-free recreation when their schoolwork is done.

### Playtime, exercise, games, music, and more

The school-from-home day ends much sooner than a typical school day, since working independently on assignments takes less time without the elements of structure that a school day requires. The result? You may announce, "Class dismissed!" just in time for lunch, leaving the afternoon open for free play, board games, exercise, practicing an instrument or engaging in a hobby. Keep in mind that fifth- through eighth-graders are extremely social creatures who need to keep up with friends through texts, calls and social media. Having time for this is a great incentive for a productive morning of school work. †



# Make school-at-home memorable and fun for Kindergarten – fourth graders

Years from now, younger children may not remember everything about the 2020 school year, when coronavirus disrupted the world and sent them home for weeks of remote learning. But they may recall the memorable things their parents did to make the experience both educational and fun. Use these tips to harness the energy and curiosity of early-grade students:



GETTY IMAGES/LIGHTFIELDSTUDIOS

## GET MOVING!

### If weather allows:

- Go outside and use nature to help you learn
- Create a scavenger hunt
- Take a walk and talk about God's creation
- Work on gross motor skills by setting up a mini obstacle course, hopscotch, throw/kick a ball
- Use sidewalk chalk to practice name writing, numbers and/or drawing

### If weather is not ideal, adapt to the indoor environment:

- Play tennis with paper plates and a balloon
- Jump rope in the basement
- Sort/build with Legos
- Do science experiments in the kitchen
- Watch GoNoodle Movement and mindfulness videos at [www.gonoodle.com](http://www.gonoodle.com)

## TAKE BRAIN BREAKS.

- Play music and freeze dance
- Do an online exercise class
- Play Sparkle with counting or spelling words
- Cook or bake together
- Play board games, do a puzzle, paint or draw

## ENCOURAGE SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING.

- Set up devoted spaces in your home for hands-on learning
- Set out sensory bins, blocks, Play Doh, coloring sheets, etc. for free play
- Let your child help to determine the schedule for the day
- Post a checklist on the fridge for your child to track his or her own progress on assignments
- Create Catholic crosswords and word search games online at [wordmint.com](http://wordmint.com)



GETTY IMAGES/PEOPLEIMAGES

## USE TECHNOLOGY PRODUCTIVELY.

- Use online resources like ABCya, BrainPOP, ABC Mouse or Catholic Brain
- Use FaceTime, Facebook Live or Zoom to connect with teachers and school friends
- Since screen time use will go up for online learning, try to limit recreational screen time

## GO ON A VIRTUAL FIELD TRIP!

- Lunch Doodles with Mo Willems — Kennedy Center [www.kennedy-center.org/education/mo-willems](http://www.kennedy-center.org/education/mo-willems)
- Daily animal visits and crafts from the Cincinnati Zoo and St. Louis Aquarium
- Live webcams and STEM activities from NASA
- Virtual museum tours, such as the White House or the Vatican! †



GETTY IMAGES/PHOTOINC

# Dos & Don'ts

# for high-school-at-home

**Do make a schedule.** Without the threat of tardies and detention, high-schoolers studying at home might not start their day until 11 a.m., but they can still have a schedule to help them feel secure. Set specific times for breakfast (or brunch!), lunch and dinner. Include times for online learning, homework, chores and socializing.

**Do encourage your teen to get dressed,** even if it's switching from PJs to sweatpants. It might feel like an extended weekend, but online learning often includes video conferencing and virtual classrooms with students looking at each other and their teacher. Putting on an outfit that might normally be worn to hang out with friends, or go to practice, lets their brain know it's time to wake up.

**Do let your student talk to their friends.** Whether through phone calls, FaceTime, a video conference, or interactive video games, find a way you are comfortable with for them to communicate with other students their age. Remember, most students are used to being with friends anywhere from seven to 12 hours a day (including after school activities and practice times). Letting them blow off some steam with friends suffering through the same circumstances can boost their mood and make them feel less isolated.

**Do make sure you are connecting as a family during this time.** It's easy for everyone to be on their individual electronic devices, talking online to friends and doing their homework in isolation. Gather together at least once a day without electronics in a relaxed setting to eat, joke, share concerns, pray and express gratitude. You have a captive audience, it's a great time for family movie nights and to share your favorite cookie recipes. When you make the cookies, eat them together!

**Do pray for guidance.** When you catch yourself being caught up in the stress of work and school and everything that usually happens in separate places, all going on at your kitchen island or dining room table, take a deep breath and ask the Holy Spirit to show you the *next right thing* you can do to keep your family moving in the right direction in this uncharted territory.

**Don't be too hard on yourself if your kids don't keep their schedule.** There will be another day to get yourself, and your teenager, back on track. With the uncertainty and anxiety over the coronavirus pandemic, you are teaching your child that it is OK to take a moment, or the day, to let yourself relax, be still, and find peace by just being together.

**Don't do the hard work for them.** High school teachers and administrators often set up situations that are designed to encourage the students to be independent and responsible for their own work. Make sure that you are doing the same.

**Don't expect perfection, from yourself or your teen.** Don't put too much pressure on yourself to become a teacher or expert overnight on the subjects your teen is learning. Many teachers are offering online office hours and encourage students to ask them questions and discuss potential learning difficulties. If your child is struggling, encourage him or her to contact the teacher and seek out online educational resources.

**Don't forget to have compassion.** Our students are critically aware of the unprecedented times they are living through. Many are mourning the loss of abandoned sports seasons, prom dates, daily interaction with friends and favorite teachers and maybe even their high school graduation. Now is the time to pray for patience, wisdom and the ability to understand there could be a real reason for all that teenage angst. †



# **'I'm with you every step of the way'**

**EDITOR'S NOTE: Jim Gallagher, superintendent of Catholics Schools of the Diocese of Erie, offers these thoughts during the pandemic.**

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic will undoubtedly be felt for quite some time.

The closure of our schools for the last few months of this academic year has been most difficult for families and students alike. As a parent, I, too, have struggled to balance the demands of my job while trying to support my children's learning ... all done remotely at home.

At my house, we have two premium commodities: personal space and WiFi access. Yet, many questions remain:

How do I keep motivated when there are so many unknowns? How do my children stay excited about learning when they miss their friends and teachers, school plays, soccer season, First Communion and Confirmation? How much time do I allow them to interact with their friends on social media and Xbox? What do I tell them when they've asked for the 10th time if they can get together with their cousins but promise to stay six feet apart?

A lot of celebrities on TV say that we're all in this together and "we've got this." While I appreciate the sentiment, at times it seems a bit cliché. The pandemic is affecting all of us, but our experiences, concerns and worries are personal and different.

As superintendent, I want to assure you that I'm behind you every step of the way. I have some thoughts that may help as you wrestle with the realities of our current situation.

First, I am grateful to all parents for their support and commitment

to our Catholic schools. Their financial support directly ensures the livelihood of our teachers and administrators. Parents have been incredibly patient as we figure out what remote learning looks like in each of our schools.

Second, I am proud of our teachers and administrators. I have been so impressed with the speed, creativity and leadership they have demonstrated throughout this time. Prior to schools closing, Catholic educators in the Diocese of Erie decided as a group that no matter what happened, we were going to continue to provide instruction. I have been meeting remotely on a weekly basis with principals and presidents and am privileged to stand with them as they diligently work to sustain education at home. They have demonstrated extraordinary leadership and self-sacrifice. Please take a moment to pray for them and their families.

Third, a lot of information and resources have been sent to students' homes about keeping engaged and staying connected with the Catholic Church and various school organizations. I encourage families to pick and choose the suggestions that work for them and set aside the rest. This is not a one-size-fits-all situation. Be patient with yourself and your children.

Finally, my time of isolation at home has helped me to reflect and reassess my own priorities. I have come to realize that I cannot take my Catholic faith and the sacraments for granted. Since I cannot participate in my parish activities, pray with my colleagues or attend in-school



Jim Gallagher

Masses, I need to make a concerted effort to stay spiritually connected.

Many parents choose Catholic schools because they want their children to be formed in the Catholic faith and given a foundation of values that results in an authentic relationship with God. I promise that the Catholic schools in our diocese will continue to do

that for you, even remotely.

But this requires an effort on your part as well. I encourage families to pray together every day, especially for an end to COVID-19. Pray

for those who have contracted the virus and for those who have been financially impacted by it. Pray for those who are isolated and lonely, especially the elderly.

If you don't know where to start, ask your children. They know because they live a life of prayer at school. That's what makes us special.

May God grant you peace and patience during this time. Thanks for your confidence in us to educate your children. †

**“ I am proud of our teachers and administrators. I have been so impressed with the speed, creativity and leadership they have demonstrated throughout this time. ”**

# ARE YOU SMARTER THAN A CATHOLIC

# 5<sup>TH</sup> grader?

To view the entire placemat series, visit [store.faithcatholic.com](http://store.faithcatholic.com)

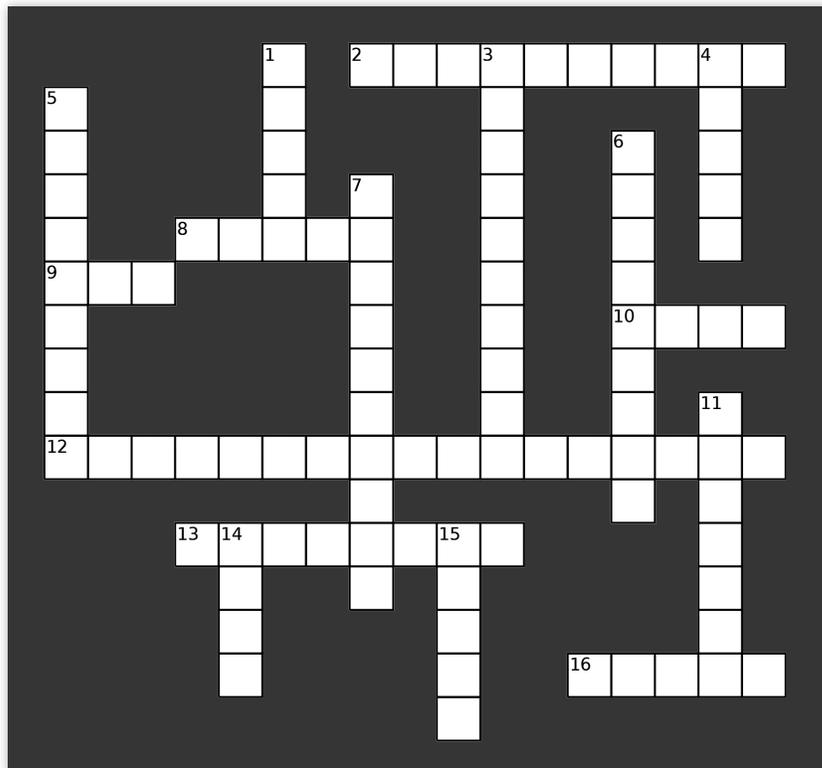


## NAME THAT SAINT

Born the son of Italian sharecroppers and one of 13 children, this saint was elected pope on October 28, 1958, at the age of 77. Because of his age, many expected him to be a “stop gap” pope, but he was very active during his papacy. This saint was known for slipping out of the Vatican late at night to walk the streets of Rome, and he was the first pope in the 20th century to make pastoral visits to prisons and hospitals in the Diocese of Rome.

This saint is best known for convening the Second Vatican Council less than three months after his election to the papacy. He had no detailed plan for the council other than a very general idea of *aggiornamento*, or “bringing up to date,” and a desire to seek Christian unity.

Answer: Pope Saint John XXIII



### ACROSS

- 2** Mary’s, not Jesus’ conception
- 8** This “Poor Lady” was one of St. Francis’ first followers
- 9** Indiana Jones, Evan Almighty, and St. Louis (sort of)
- 10** The Eternal City
- 12** First native-born North American saint
- 13** Unleavened bread, bloody doorposts, death of first-born sons
- 16** United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

### DOWN

- 1** Entire group of organized bodies that help the pope govern
- 3** Body and soul, “up” Mary did go
- 4** From the word meaning “tenth,” one-tenth of something
- 5** Peasant, roses, tilma, basilica

- 6** This longest in Western Asia has a Tigris for a sister
- 7** C’mon you know you want to; it’ll make you feel good
- 11** Reputed as the founder of the inquisition, this saint really could preach it
- 14** Proclamation of the word occurs here
- 15** Suffered 10 plagues



## CATECHISM QUIZ

**Faith, hope** and **charity** are known as ...

- a.** the human virtues
- b.** the theological virtues
- c.** the cardinal virtues
- d.** the ecclesial virtues

Charity. (CCC 1813)

Answer: (b) the theological virtues. The theological virtues are the foundation of Christian moral activity. There are three: faith, hope and charity.



GETTY IMAGES/PEOPLEIMAGES



## **SCHOOL-AT-HOME** can be fun with the help of online resources

Most teachers are providing excellent lesson plans for learning at home, but parents can add to those lessons with resources that encourage learning through games and educational videos. If your school-at-home day needs a boost, try these sites for something new!

### **Safe Search and Tech**

#### **Kiddle**

*Kid-Safe search engine*  
[www.kiddle.co](http://www.kiddle.co)

#### **Zoom**

*Video conferencing with your class!*  
Download the app on your devices  
[zoom.us](http://zoom.us)

### **Catholic**

#### **Beyond the Pew: Catholic Parenting Resource**

*Ablaze Ministries*  
[www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL7ecQyUVRnORQzUqBk\\_3J\\_fv\\_qo-L2M3I](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL7ecQyUVRnORQzUqBk_3J_fv_qo-L2M3I)

#### **Teaching Catholic Kids**

*Catholic parenting resource*  
[teachingcatholickids.com](http://teachingcatholickids.com)

#### **CatholicMom.com**

[catholicmom.com](http://catholicmom.com)

### **Early childhood**

#### **PBS Kids**

*Games, activities*  
[pbskids.org](http://pbskids.org)

#### **ABCmouse (Children preschool-2nd grade)**

*Educational activities*  
[www.abcmouse.com/redeem](http://www.abcmouse.com/redeem)  
Enter School Code

### **LEARN MORE**

Visit [faithmag.com](http://faithmag.com) for more Catholic content.

### **Social Studies and Geography**

#### **Tour the States**

*Tour the States song*  
[www.viewpure.com/\\_E2CNZIIvIg?ref=search](http://www.viewpure.com/_E2CNZIIvIg?ref=search)

#### **TIME for Kids**

*TIME news articles for kids*  
[www.timeforkids.com/g34](http://www.timeforkids.com/g34)

#### **TED Talks for Kids**

*TED Talks to watch with kids*  
[www.ted.com/playlists/86/talks\\_to\\_watch\\_with\\_kids](http://www.ted.com/playlists/86/talks_to_watch_with_kids)

### **General Educational**

#### **Voyages in English**

*Adverbs game*  
[games.loyolapress.com/sos\\_g4\\_Adverbs](http://games.loyolapress.com/sos_g4_Adverbs)

#### **Math Game Time**

*Math game*  
[www.mathgametime.com/grade/4th-grade](http://www.mathgametime.com/grade/4th-grade)

#### **Highlights Magazine**

*Activities, jokes, games*  
[www.highlightskids.com](http://www.highlightskids.com)

#### **Scholastic Activities**

*Activities, games, videos*  
[classroommagazines.scholastic.com/support](http://classroommagazines.scholastic.com/support)

#### **BrainPop**

*Educational videos*  
[go.brainpop.com/COVID19](http://go.brainpop.com/COVID19)  
Click on FREE Family Access, sign up with your email and follow instructions for access.

#### **Amazon Audible**

*Free books for all students, no subscription necessary*  
[stories.audible.com/start-listen](http://stories.audible.com/start-listen)

#### **Exploratorium**

*Experiments, activities, videos on all subjects*  
[www.exploratorium.edu/explore](http://www.exploratorium.edu/explore)

#### **ReadingIQ (Children Preschool-6th grade)**

*Educational activities*  
[www.readingiq.com/redeem](http://www.readingiq.com/redeem)  
Enter School Code

### **Science**

#### **Nat Geo Kids**

*National Geographic games, videos*  
[kids.nationalgeographic.com](http://kids.nationalgeographic.com)

#### **How Stuff Works**

*Watch videos about how stuff works*  
[www.howstuffworks.com](http://www.howstuffworks.com)

#### **Discover Nature Live Cams**

*Photos and videos of nature around Missouri*  
[nature.mdc.mo.gov/discover-nature/photos-live-cams](http://nature.mdc.mo.gov/discover-nature/photos-live-cams)

#### **Google Earth**

*Satellite photos and videos of Earth*  
[www.google.com/earth](http://www.google.com/earth)

#### **NASA Kids Club**

*NASA videos, games, photos, activities*  
[www.nasa.gov/kidsclub/index.html](http://www.nasa.gov/kidsclub/index.html)

#### **Virtual Field Trips**

*Museum, zoo virtual tours*  
[adventuresinfamilyhood.com/20-virtual-field-trips-to-take-with-your-kids.html](http://adventuresinfamilyhood.com/20-virtual-field-trips-to-take-with-your-kids.html)

