



St. Francis of Assisi Church

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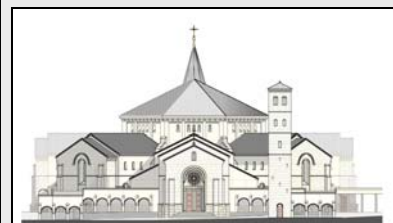
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Eternally We Build:
God's Home, God's Family...

Children's Ministry Faith Formation

Kindergarten thru Fifth Grade

April 2008

On the third Sunday of Easter (April 6) we will hear in the readings of the two disciples mourning Jesus' death as they walked to Emmaus. A stranger joined them on their travels. Only when they stopped for the night and shared a meal, did they recognize that they were in the presence of Jesus.

This reading reminds us that Jesus, always present in the Eucharist, may not always be easy to recognize when he is with us. Talk to your family about how Jesus is present to each of you. Is he present in the strangers you meet? In your friends at school? In the people you share meals with? How are each of you present as a Light of Christ to the world around you? As your family engages in Spring Cleaning, clean out your pantry as well, donating extra food those in need...sharing food with Christ.

This May, 387 children will receive First Communion at St. Francis of Assisi. Please remember these children in your prayers as they continue their journey of mind, heart and spirit, preparing to receive Jesus Christ in the Eucharist; the source and summit of our faith.

Customs and Traditions

We are called to be stewards of everything God gives us, and nature is a wonderful starting point to talk about God's grandeur. Get your children involved in planting a small vegetable or flower garden. Working with the soil can teach much about relying on God, who always provides for our needs. A garden basket filled with flowers and herbs is a fun way to bring the discovery of nature indoors. It makes a particularly special gift, to place on a kitchen windowsill.



Ingredients

- A basket
- A plastic plant dish
- Potting soil
- Sheet moss
- Gravel
- 3-inch containers of plants or herbs
- Small stakes or smooth rocks for labeling
- Recipe cards

Directions

1. To begin, line a basket with a plastic plant dish, cake pan, or aluminum foil. Make sure the sides are lined as well.
2. Add a thin layer of gravel for drainage.
3. Choose plants in two or three-inch containers. Look for plants with a variety in height, color, and texture. It is fun to sprinkle in a few seeds as well. Remember to start small and leave room for the plants to grow.
4. If planting herbs, try lemon balm, basil, rosemary, oregano, dill, parsley, peppermint, or lavender. They are all easy to grow.
5. Leave the plants in their plastic nursery containers. Arrange them in the basket. Cover the surface with potting soil, and then a layer of sheet moss. Let some of the plantings spill over the edge of the basket. Keep it moist with a spray bottle and watch your garden grow.
6. Label the plants and add recipe cards that include the ingredients in your basket.

Important Upcoming Dates:

4/1: Vacation Bible School Registration opens

4/12: 1st Communion Workshop for 2nd grade classes

4/20: 1st Communion Workshop for Special Sacraments students

4/29: 1st Communion Practice

4/30: 1st Communion Practice

5/1: Registration begins for 2008-2009 Faith Formation classes

5/1: 1st Communion Practice

5/6: 1st Communion Practice

5/8: 1st Communion Practice

Saint of the Month: St. Clare of Assisi

***There will be many Saints depicted in our new church, through various works of art. This portion of the monthly Faith Formation newsletter will begin to introduce your family to those saints.*



With 387 children in our parish preparing to receive Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament for the first time at First Communion, this is the perfect time to learn about St. Clare of Assisi and how the Blessed Sacrament saved her and her sisters.

Clare was a beautiful Italian noblewoman who became the Foundress of an order of nuns now called "Poor Clares." When she heard St. Francis of Assisi preach, her heart burned with a great desire to imitate Francis and to live a poor humble life for Jesus. So one evening, she ran away from home, and in a little chapel outside Assisi, gave herself to God. St. Francis cut off her hair and gave her a rough brown habit to wear, tied with a plain cord around her waist. Her parents tried in every way to make her return home, but Clare would not. Soon her sister, St. Agnes joined her, as well as other young women who wanted to be brides of Jesus, and live without any money. St. Clare and her sisters wore no shoes, ate no meat, lived in a poor house, and kept silent most of the time. Yet they were very happy, because Our Lord was close to them all the time. Once, He saved them from a great danger in answer to St. Clare's prayer. An army of rough soldiers came to attack Assisi and they planned to raid the convent first. Although very sick, St. Clare had herself carried to the wall and right there, where the enemies could see it, she had the Blessed Sacrament placed. Then on her knees, she begged God to save the Sisters. "O Lord, protect these Sisters whom I cannot protect now," she prayed. A voice seemed to answer: "I will keep them always in My care." At the same time a sudden fright struck the attackers and they fled as fast as they could. St. Clare was sick and suffered great pains for many years, but she said that no pain could trouble her. So great was her joy in serving the Lord that she once exclaimed: "They say that we are too poor, but can a heart which possesses the infinite God be truly called poor?" We should remember this miracle of the Blessed Sacrament when in Church. Then we will pray with great Faith to Jesus in the Holy Eucharist: "Save me, O Lord, from every evil - of soul and body." Her feast day is August 11.

St. Francis of Assisi Outreach Commission Cookbook

The Outreach Commission still has cookbooks with recipes from many of the wonderful cooks in our parish. The cookbooks are \$10 each. The proceeds from the sale of these cookbooks will go directly to the Outreach Commission. Half will go toward general benevolence to help out local families in need, and half will be split between AIDS Supper Club and the Divorce Support program for families. These cookbooks make wonderful Mother's Day gifts. If you would like one of these wonderful parish cookbooks, visit the main office to purchase your copy.

