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

# Children's Ministry Faith Formation

## Kindergarten thru Fifth Grade

**October 2009**

October is a very special month at St. Francis of Assisi. October 4, is the Feast Day of our patron saint. October 4 is also the day that the young people of our parish will be receiving their final sacrament of Initiation. Please keep these Confirmandi in your prayers as they unite themselves more firmly with Christ through the sacrament of Confirmation.

There will be no classes the week of October 4. In lieu of attending class we ask that our families attend the 35th Annual Mexican Dinner and Cultural Days on Saturday, October 10, beginning at noon at St. Francis of Assisi parish. As part of the Heroes of Our Faith curriculum, there were be learning activities for the children at the various cultural tents. Please come to this fun, free Catholic family event! Starting at 7:00 p.m. on Sunday there will be a free outdoor concert. Bring your family to listen to the Joe Languell Band, the premier Catholic Praise and Worship band in our area! Parents **must** accompany their children to this event. Child care is not provided.

### Customs and Traditions



#### Blessing of the Animals

This custom is conducted in remembrance of St. Francis of Assisi's love for all creatures.

Francis, whose feast day is October 4th, loved the larks flying about his hilltop town. He and his early brothers, staying in a small hovel, allowed themselves to be displaced by a donkey.

Francis wrote a Canticle of the Creatures, an ode to God's living things. "All praise to you, Oh Lord, for all these brother and sister creatures." And there was testimony in the cause for St. Clare of Assisi's canonization that referred to her little cat!

That there are today over 62 million cats in the U.S. attests to the continuing affection we have for our furry, feathered or finned friends. We've even had a cat called Socks in the White House. Other popular presidential pets range from Abraham Lincoln's Fido to Lyndon Johnson's beagles, named Him and Her and the newest White House pet, Bo the Portuguese Waterdog.

For single householders, a pet can be a true companion. Many people arrive home from work to find a furry friend overjoyed at their return. Many a senior has a lap filled with a purring fellow creature.

The bond between person and pet is like no other relationship, because the communication between fellow creatures is at its most basic. Eye-to-eye, a man and his dog, or a woman and her cat, are two creatures of love.

No wonder people enjoy the opportunity to take their animal companions to church for a special blessing. Church is the place where the bond of creation is celebrated. Join us in the courtyard of our parish at 10:00 a.m. for the Blessing of the Animals on Saturday, October 3. Please have your pet or pets caged or leashed.

#### Important Upcoming Dates:

**10/3:** Blessing of the Animals at 10:00 a.m in the courtyard

**10/4-10/8:** No class this week. Please attend Cultural Day on October 10 in lieu of class.

**10/10:** 35th Annual Mexican Dinner and Cultural Day noon-7:30 p.m.

**10/11:** Youth Rally and Concert—Joe Languell Band 7:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m.

**10/25-29:** No class this week

**11/14:** First Reconciliation Workshop for 2nd graders and Children's Ministry Special Sacraments students.

## Saint of the Month: St. Gerard Majella

*\*\*There will be many Saints depicted in our new church, through various works of art. This portion of the monthly Faith Formation newsletter will introduce your family to some of those saints, as well as other saints and important Catholics .*



October is Pro-Life month and October 16 is the feast day of Saint Gerard Majella. Saint Gerard Majella, the "Patron Saint of Motherhood," was born in 1726 in a small town in the south of Italy called Muro. Gerard was devoted to his widowed mother and he also devoted his life to God and helping others. His selfless help to others in various circumstances endeared him to all sorts of people.

He entered the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer in 1749 and became a lay brother. He was a model of obedience and possessed extraordinary wisdom. He spent his life dedicated to helping the needy and the poor, being poor himself and having an understanding of the sorrows of the needy. He often gave away his earnings and his own food to the poor, and those that came to him never left empty-handed. Sometimes how the food or money came to be there was known only to God and to Gerard. He was also known to have mystical abilities such as powers of prophecy, healing, bi-location, the reading of consciences, and so forth. He even predicted the day and hour of his own death. During his short life he helped many and performed many miracles.

It seems that God had given Gerard in particular, the special power to help mothers in need. In life and since his death, he has helped so many women who have prayed to him during labor that he earned the nickname the "Saint of Happy Deliveries." Many mothers from all over the world have even named their child Gerard after him in gratitude, and have adopted him as their patron in the joys and fears of childbirth.

Saint Gerard had a short stay here on earth dying in 1755 at the age of twenty-nine from tuberculosis, but he left a legacy of hope and faith to God that keeps spreading by word of mouth from those familiar with his life story and by those just discovering his miracles.

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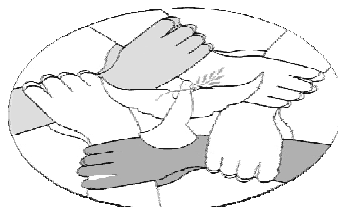
those familiar with his life story and by those just discovering his miracles.

### Children Needed for Cultural Day Rosary

One element of the Cultural Day celebration on October 10 will be an Outdoor Rosary, led by children, which celebrates the cultural diversity of our Catholic faith. Children's Ministry is looking for children who would like to participate by leading a portion of the Hail Mary in English, another language they know or a language they would like to learn to pray in:

Translations of the prayer in various languages can be provided. This Rosary will be broadcast live on Guadalupe Radio....come pray with our parish at this very special event and have your radio debut as well!

If your child would like to participate, office.



please contact the Children's Ministry