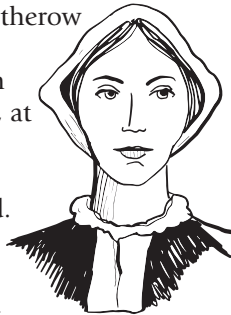




Thoughtful Moments

St. Margaret Clitherow

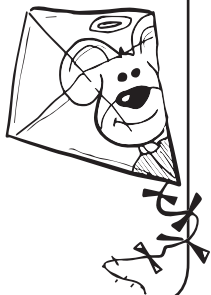
St. Margaret Clitherow converted to Catholicism soon after she married, at a time when Catholicism was illegal in England. Yet, St. Margaret continued to practice her faith. Her husband was not Catholic, but allowed her to hide Catholic priests in their home so they could say Mass secretly. Margaret was arrested when royal officials found a cupboard filled with vessels used for Mass. Her peaceful, joyful attitude during her imprisonment, trial, and execution inspired those around her.



Don't rush fixes

It is said that good teachers show students where to look but don't tell them what to see. Good parents, too, give youngsters a chance to find solutions to their own problems. Coaching without fixing for them teaches children confidence, self-reliance and resilience.

"For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it?"
(Luke 14:28).



How to be the perfect parent

Imperfection is a sad consequence of our human condition. It is deeply unrealistic to expect to be a perfect parent, but we can strive to be the best parent for the children we have.

Consider these ideas:

Fill them with faith. Think ahead to the day your children are on their own. What role do you hope faith will play in their lives? Decide how prepared you are to achieve this and identify the resources you may need to shore up your own faith and skills.

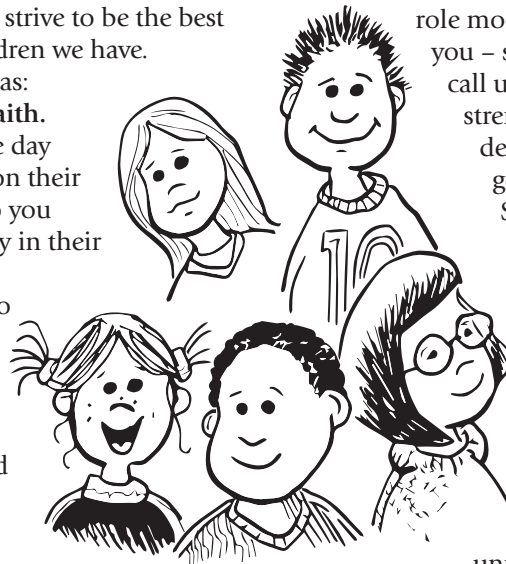
Choose good company. If you don't live what you believe, you will come to believe what you live. Therefore, surround yourself with solid companions who share your values. These are the people who will help

influence your family.

Stand on strong shoulders. Do you have a relative, friend, or other role model who inspires you – someone you can call up as a model of strength, determination, generosity, devotion? Such people can act as concrete examples of faith lived for both us and our children.

Look for progress, not perfection. Parenting is a long-haul job and it is

unrealistic to think we will never blunder or our children err. When we or our children lose our way, it is best to admit mistakes, ask for forgiveness, get back on the right track and keep moving.



Why Do Catholics Do That ?

Why do Catholics give up meat on Fridays in Lent?

The practice of giving up meat on Fridays in Lent is a reverential offering honoring Jesus' sacrifice on Good Friday. We abstain from eating meat as a reminder that Jesus gave up his flesh for us.



Fasting from certain foods during Lent can be a form of prayer. It helps us to focus on Christ. Fasting is also an outward sign of our faith. The Church asks that we observe all Fridays as penitential days of abstinence, even outside of Lent.

Symbols of the season

Christian cultures all over the world share symbols of the Lenten season:

Ashes. In the early Church, sinners were marked with ashes and isolated from the community on Ash Wednesday. During Lent, they lived apart for serious wrongs such as adultery, theft, murder, heresy. On Holy Thursday, they were absolved and welcomed back. Today, a cross is traced on our foreheads from ashes of last year's palms signaling the start of Lent.



Eggs. Eggs used to be among the foods that couldn't be eaten during Lent. A staple in many diets, the lack increased their importance. Over time, the egg became a symbol of the tomb. Jesus was laid in a tomb and rose on Easter to bring us new life. New life also comes from an egg. At Easter, we dye eggs and gift them in baskets.

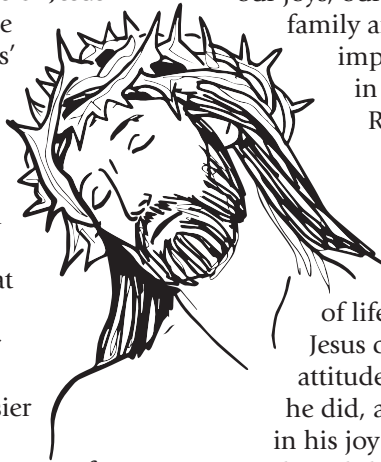
Palms. In pre-Christian days, palms were thought to ward off evil. Palms were laid at Jesus' feet as he rode into Jerusalem. Blessed palms are distributed on Palm Sunday in remembrance.

Scripture LESSON

**Mark 14:1-15:47,
Join our pain with Jesus'**

This Gospel reading tells of Jesus' suffering and death on the Cross. Remembering Jesus' suffering is not just something we do just once a year. The more often we remember, the more it will help us recall that Jesus was human, too, and experienced what we feel – and so much more. If we offer him our suffering and remember his, it makes our pain easier to bear.

Every day our frustrations, our fears, our loneliness and temptations can become ways in which we share in the suffering and death of Christ. Likewise,



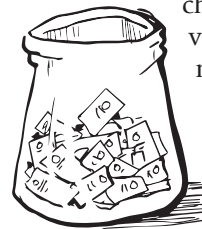
our joys, our good health, our family and friends are all important ways to share in the joy of his Resurrection. The point is to offer everything to Christ.

What can a parent do?

Suffering is part of life. Yet, disciples of Jesus can have the same attitude toward suffering as he did, and we can also share in his joy of the Resurrection. When children are hurt, sad, or scared, help them remember to turn to Jesus because he wants to comfort them with his great love.

Parent TALK

Last year, I felt our family observance of Lent had gotten stale. We have given up everything from chocolate to TV to videogames. We needed a new approach to the season.



What if we "competed" to do good deeds? I

bought a giant roll of tickets and set up an empty jar for each of us. Every time someone performed a good deed, a ticket would go in his or her jar – two if the deed was secret.

To keep up enthusiasm and interest, we totaled the tickets halfway through Lent. The person who earned the most tickets decided where we went for brunch on Laetare Sunday. We made a final count on Easter and celebrated with brunch after Mass.

It was a great success! This was the most observant Lent we ever had. More importantly, the kids learned to look for opportunities to practice kindness, compassion, generosity, and love.

Feasts & Celebrations

March 2 – St. Agnes of Bohemia (1282). Born in Prague to King Ottocar I of Bohemia, St. Agnes renounced court life to become a Poor Clare sister instead. She was known for serving the poor and working miracles.

March 10 – St. John Ogilvie (1615). Born in Scotland and raised a Calvinist, St. John Ogilvie converted to Catholicism and later became a Jesuit priest. Despite intense persecution in Scotland, St. John ministered to Scottish Catholics in secret. Eventually, he was arrested and executed for treason.

March 17 – St. Patrick of Ireland (c.461). Born in Scotland, St. Patrick was kidnapped and brought to Ireland as a slave. He escaped but later returned to become the bishop of Ireland and is credited for having established the Church there.

March 25 – Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion (1st Century). Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion recalls Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem when he was greeted by crowds waving palms and cheering, and it marks the beginning of Holy Week.



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