



Thoughtful Moments

St. Rita of Cascia

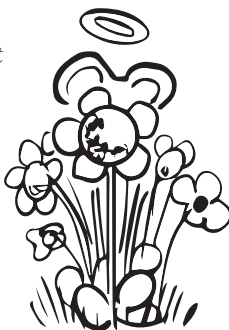
St. Rita always wanted to be a nun but was unwillingly married to a cruel man with a terrible temper. After eighteen years of patience and love, she was widowed. Following the deaths of her sons to illness, she entered the convent. She inspired those around her by her patience, kindness, and devotion. Once, she was graced with a share in Christ's Passion – a mysterious wound to her forehead, as if from a crown of thorns.



Keeping good company

Our friends can build us up or tear us down. In fact, studies show that the people closest to us will be the ones to encourage us to do good or tempt us to sin. Jesus chose his friends very carefully. Teach children to do the same.

"Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God"
(Phillipians 4:6).



Help youngsters FEEL peaceful

Experts report that more than one in eight children suffer from anxiety. During this time of uncertainty, even more children are experiencing heightened worry. As parents, we suffer when our children suffer. Instead, help youngsters to FEEL their way toward peace.

Freeze: When children express worries or show signs of stress, pause and take slow, deep breaths together. Deep breathing can help reverse the body's response to anxiety. During the time it takes for you to pray an Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be together, your child should be visibly calmer.

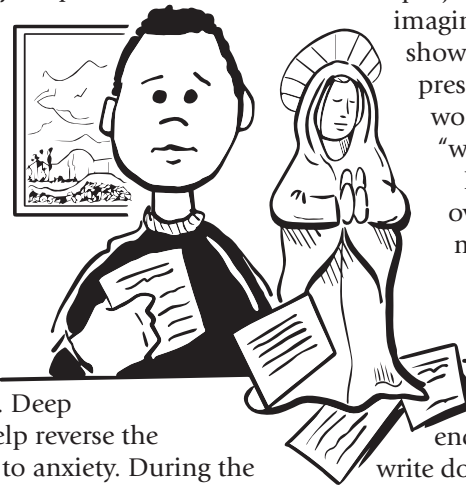
Empathize: Even adults are anxious

right now. Reassure children that worry is indeed a reasonable response to our current situation.

Evaluate: Look at the facts. A worrier tends to project into the future to imagine, "what if?" Research shows that focusing on the present can help. Lead your worrier through a look at "what is."

Let Go: Turn concerns over to God. When so much is out of our control, it's best to let God take over.

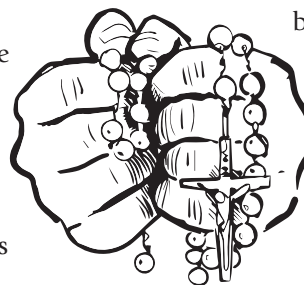
Children often benefit from concrete action, so encourage youngsters to write down their specific concerns. Then place their "worries" under a sacred statue or image you may have in your home. Pray together to ask Our Lord take over from there and have the confidence that it will be done.



Why Do Catholics Do That ?

Why do Catholics pray the Rosary?

The Rosary is a set of prayers that focuses on the Mysteries in the lives of Jesus and Mary. Together, these Mysteries are a summary of the Gospels. By meditating on the example, deeds and virtues of Jesus and Mary, we can

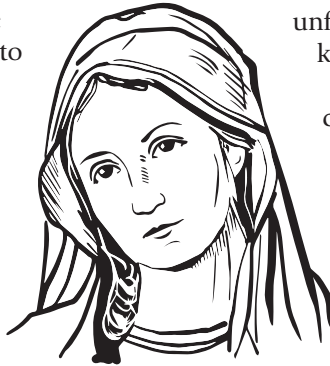


better imitate them in our own lives. Of itself, it's a powerful prayer because in it, we ask Mary—whose prayers are never refused—to pray for us. It opens us to graces that make us more Christ-like.

Turn to Mother Mary in May

Although Mary was the Mother of God, her life wasn't perfect. She suffered greatly, and also had to watch her beloved Son suffer in unimaginable ways. In fact, it is her suffering on Earth that has helped her to understand our struggles and sympathize with our petitions. She is the right advocate for all of her children.

Imagine the fear Mary felt when Herod issued a death sentence for her infant Son (Matthew 2:13-15). Without questioning God's instructions, Mary and Joseph fled to an



unfamiliar country to save their Son. She will help keep your children safe, too, when you ask.

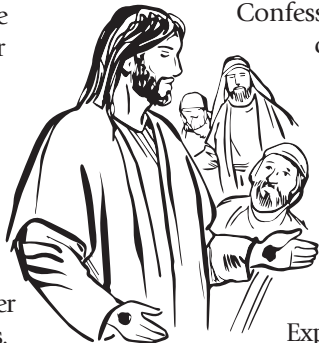
As the mother of the Savior, Mary knew her child would suffer terribly. Watching our children suffer is probably the most difficult aspect of parenting. Being prepared ahead of time didn't make it easier, but Mary had complete trust in God. She knew he would use her suffering for good. Entrust your family to Mary's care and know that she is speaking to her Son on your behalf.

Scripture LESSON

John 20:19-23, Jesus establishes Confession

This Gospel describes Jesus' first appearance to his Apostles after the Resurrection. Although the Apostles were in the upper room with the door and windows locked, Jesus appeared in their midst. He showed them his wounds so they would recognize him. They were the "living proof" of the Resurrection and a reminder of God's endless love for us.

Then Jesus breathed on them, giving them a share in his Spirit. In doing this, the Apostles were given the authority to forgive sins. Jesus said, "*Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins*



you retain are retained" (John 20:23), establishing the Sacrament of Confession. This is why we confess our sins to a priest, who conveys Jesus' forgiveness to us.

What can a parent do? Remind children that God loves them always, but that our sins may keep us from feeling that love.

Explain that Jesus gave us this Sacrament as a gift so we could *know* we're forgiven. God's love stops at nothing, not even our sins. He will *always* take us back if we are truly sorry.

Parent TALK

Eight-year old Anne has a lovely voice. I know it is God-given because neither my husband nor I can sing a note. She is our little song bird.



Last week, I was doing yard work and noticed that Anne was at the end of our driveway singing away. I was

delighted to see several of our neighbors on their porches listening to her and clapping enthusiastically when she finished. Mrs. Muller, our next door neighbor, called out a song title and asked Anne to sing it. So she did!

That night, Anne asked if we could go around the neighborhood and sing to other neighbors. I thought it was a good way to "visit" people who might be alone, so we did. We put our karaoke machine in a wagon to accompany her, and Anne sang away.

The best part is that cheering up our neighbors cheered us up, too.

Feasts & Celebrations

May 13 – Our Lady of Fatima (1917). The Blessed Virgin Mary appeared to three shepherd children near Fatima, Portugal, and asked that they pray the Rosary for peace, for the end of World War I, for sinners and for the conversion of Russia.

May 25 – St. Bede the Venerable (735). Born in Wearmouth, England, St. Bede is called "the Father of English History." He was an extraordinary scholar and writer. He was occupied with learning, writing and teaching. He composed 45 books, including 30 commentaries on books of the Bible.

May 26 – St. Mariana of Quito (1645). Orphaned from a young age, she was raised by her sister and brother-in-law, in whose house she lived as a hermitess. She is attributed with saving Ecuador from an earthquake and epidemic by her prayers.

May 31 – Pentecost (1st century). Today, we celebrate the birthday of the Church, when the Holy Spirit was given to the Apostles in tongues of fire, following the Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus.



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