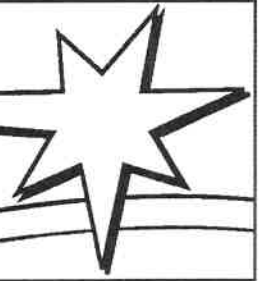


Partners in FAITH™



Helping our children grow in their Catholic faith.

April 2026

St. Joseph School, Amherst
Mrs. Amy Makruski, Principal



Thoughtful Moments

St. Anselm of Canterbury

Familial pressures and a comfortable life led St. Anselm to ignore his vocation until he met the Benedictines in Normandy, France. Afterwards, he entered the Benedictine Order and eventually became abbot. Called to England to assist the current Archbishop of Canterbury, St. Anselm was noted for his intelligence and piety, and nominated the next Archbishop. St. Anselm reluctantly agreed. He bridged the tensions between the Church and the state, clarified Church doctrine, and reformed his diocese.



Why Easter Matters

The Resurrection confirms that Jesus is truly God. It opens the way to Heaven and decisively breaks the power of sin, evil, and death. The victory has been won; what remains is our daily choice of whether we will choose to follow.

"Jesus said to him, 'Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe'"
(John 20:29).



Simple ways to make faith real

The greatest gift we can give our children is a real relationship with Jesus – not just knowledge about Him, but confidence that He is present and near. The road to Emmaus in Luke 24 models ways to live this out at home.

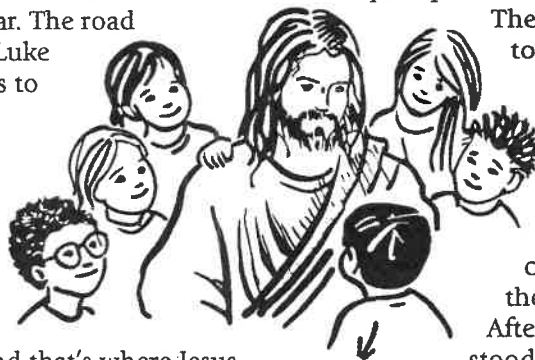
Jesus meets us anywhere. The disciples walking toward Emmaus were discouraged, and that's where Jesus found them. Encourage your child to share about his or her day. You might ask, "Was there a moment today that felt tough, but you made it through?" Then connect it for them: "That's a moment where God was with you."

God is hidden, but never absent. We don't always recognize Jesus in our daily lives. At dinner or bedtime,

invite everyone to name something for which they are grateful. This creates the habit of noticing God's quiet presence.

The Mass reveals Jesus to us. It was in the breaking of the bread that the disciples realized Jesus' presence. Prepare for Mass by talking with children about what they'll hear and see. Afterward, ask what stood out. Over time, they'll begin to recognize that something real is happening in the Eucharist.

Encounters with Jesus change us. When the disciples encountered Jesus, they rushed to share the news. Show children that knowing Jesus isn't something we just believe, it's to be lived and shared.



Why Do Catholics Do That?

Why do Catholics light candles at the Easter Vigil?

Catholic worship often uses visible signs to express spiritual realities. Fire, a source of light, warmth, and purification, points to God's life-giving and transforming presence. At the Easter Vigil, the Paschal candle, representing Christ, is lit from the new fire and



carried into a darkened church, where its flame is shared among the faithful. This growing light signifies the spread of Christ's risen life through the Church, as believers are called to bear His light through faith, witness, and charity.

Extend the joy of Easter Sunday

The death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ transformed the world, and the effects continue to shape our lives today. Try these ideas to extend the joy of Easter in your home.

Joy: The Risen Christ is the source of our joy. Mark that joy in tangible ways: set the table with care, add flowers, and share a special dessert. Invite each family member to name a blessing from the day. These small celebrations remind us that the promise of eternal life is cause for rejoicing.

Mercy: After His Resurrection, Jesus forgave His



Apostles and entrusted them with the gift of forgiveness (John 20:22-23). Receive that mercy in the Sacrament of Confession, and show mercy by choosing patience, forgiveness, and understanding toward others.

Renewal: Encountering the Risen Christ deepens our faith (John 20:28). As a family, consider renewing your baptismal promises at home.

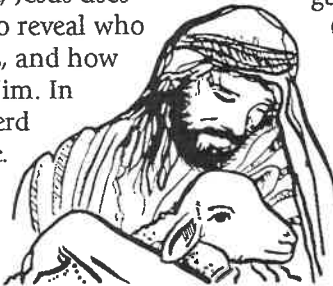
Carry forward a meaningful Lenten practice into the Easter season, such as daily prayer or intentional kindness. In doing so, the joy of Easter lasts beyond a day.

Scripture LESSON

John 10:1-10, The Good Shepherd leads us Home

In this Scripture passage, Jesus uses the image of a shepherd to reveal who He is, how He cares for us, and how He wants us to relate to Him. In Jesus' time, a good shepherd knew each sheep by name. He remained with the flock, even at night. He tended the wounded, searched for the lost, and even risked his life to protect them. This is how Jesus, the Good Shepherd, cares for us.

Following the Good Shepherd means hearing His voice and staying close to Him. We learn to recognize His voice in prayer and in the Scriptures. He



guides us through the Church's teachings. He nourishes and heals us in the Sacraments, especially the Eucharist and Confession. If we follow Him faithfully, He will lead us Home.

What can a parent do? Tell children that knowing and following Jesus is the best thing they can do to be truly happy. Help them become attuned to Jesus' voice in prayer, the Scriptures, and in the Sacraments. If we follow Him and Him alone, we will be truly safe.

Feasts & Celebrations

April 2 – Holy Thursday. Today, we celebrate Jesus' institution of the Holy Eucharist and the Priesthood to perpetuate it. Find time today to say "thank you" to Jesus, who remains really present to us in the Eucharist. Pray for priests.

April 5 – St. Vincent Ferrer (1419). Against his parents' wishes, St. Vincent Ferrer joined the Dominican Order. He preached through much of Europe. He was called the Angel of Judgment because his sermons aimed to prepare his listeners for judgment.

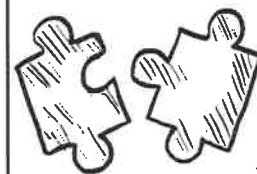
April 23 – St. George (c. 303). Although many legends surround St. George, we know he was a soldier under Emperor Diocletian during the Christian persecutions, and that he died a martyr in Palestine. He is a patron of England, Portugal, Germany, Spain, and Italy.

April 25 – St. Mark the Evangelist (First Century). St. Mark wrote the second Gospel based on St. Peter's perspective and accompanied Saints Paul and Barnabas on their missionary journey in Cyprus. He is credited with founding the Church of Alexandria, Egypt.



Parent TALK

For more than a week, Tessa came home upset about the environment in her classroom. From her description, the teacher seemed to struggle with maintaining order.



She said it was noisy and chaotic, and she was having trouble completing her schoolwork. When the concerns persisted, I decided to reach out.

As I began drafting an email expressing my frustration, I paused. I realized I didn't have the full picture and that a critical tone would not be helpful. The teacher probably had already gotten parent calls and emails, and didn't need another critic. Instead, I asked to meet.

The teacher responded promptly. During our meeting, she acknowledged the problems but also outlined the creative steps she was taking to address them. She offered practical ways I could reinforce those efforts at home.

That conversation shifted my perspective. Rather than approaching as a critic, I recognized the value of working in partnership.

Our Mission

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