

# Partners in FAITH™



Helping our children grow in their Catholic faith.

March 2024

## St. Helen Catholic School

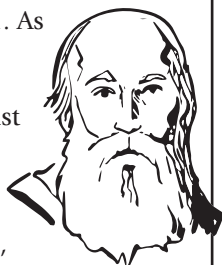
Educating the whole person to see with Christ's eyes.



### Thoughtful Moments

#### Pope St. Zachary

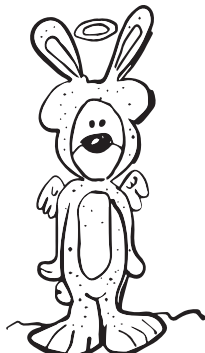
St. Zachary was a deacon before he became pope in 741. As pope, St. Zachary skillfully negotiated peace for Italy against the usually violent Lombard clan and befriended the Frankish king Pepin, the Short, the father of King Charlemagne. He was a patron of restoring churches and saving priceless treasures from Byzantium from being destroyed. Also known for his charity, St. Zachary ransomed slaves being sold in Venice and supported St. Boniface's mission in Germany.



#### See with your heart

Scripture says that God wants to be intimate with us but it can be challenging to feel close to someone we can't see in human form. Remember that God said, *"Call to me and I will answer you, and will tell you great and hidden things which you have not known"* (Jeremiah 33:3).

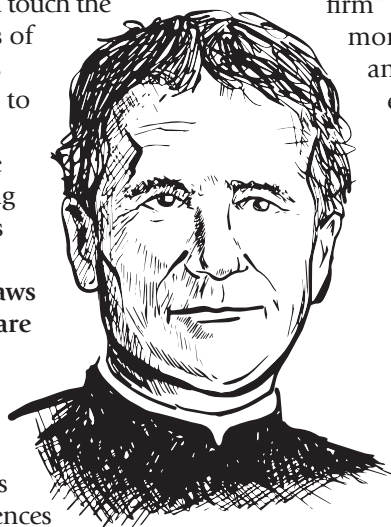
*"Do not worry about tomorrow; tomorrow will take care of itself. Sufficient for a day is its own evil"* (Matthew 6:34).



## Invoke Don Bosco's special charism

As an educator and father-figure, St. John "Don" Bosco had a special charism. He could touch the hearts and minds of rebellious youths and inspire them to follow Christ. Follow his advice for forming young hearts and minds for Christ:

**"See that the laws of discipline ... are made known."** Children of all ages benefit from understanding clear expectations and the consequences for deviation. He knew that children thrive on routine and well-defined boundaries. And, Don Bosco believed that placing youths in safe surroundings with good influences removes the likelihood of their committing sin. That encourages responsible independence.



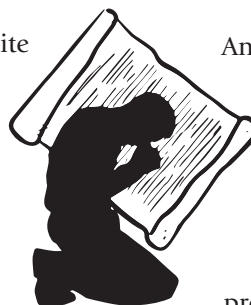
**"Always gentle and prudent."** It was his experience that "gentle but firm" or "quiet but stern" were more effective in discipline than anger or violence. The educator must strive to make himself loved by his pupils, if he wishes to obtain their respect and obedience.

**"Never ... correct in public."** To Don Bosco, punishments were a last resort and done in private when it is more likely to have the child's full attention. Never humiliate a youngster. **"A humble prayer to God is much more useful..."** Don Bosco encouraged drawing on God's grace. The Holy Spirit speaks to our children's hearts in ways we can't. Inviting God into our challenges might turn what could have been a fall-out into a breakthrough.

## Why Do Catholics Do That?

During Sunday Mass, we recite the Nicene Creed, and bow when we proclaim the miracle and mystery of the Incarnation. It is such a central tenet of our faith that we genuflect when proclaiming it on Christmas and the Feast of the

## Why do Catholics bow during the Creed?



Annunciation (April 8). Whether we bow or genuflect during the Creed, the extra gesture helps us to recall with gratitude and reverence that God became man "for us ... and our salvation," when we proclaim our Catholic beliefs.

## Help children “tune in” to the Holy Spirit

Holiness results when we honor God and follow His ways. Try these suggestions to develop children’s “God-radar” that allows the Holy Spirit to work in their lives.

**5-minute check-in:** Encourage children to make “5-minute check-ins” with God throughout the day. They can thank Him for blessings, offer intentions, confide worries, offer apologies – whatever they want to tell God.

**Form faith-filled consciences:** Make sure children know the Ten Commandments and understand them as God’s laws to guide their behavior. For example, if your child thinks

“white lies” are okay to spare hurt feelings, explain the Eighth Commandment forbids lying, and brainstorm charitable alternatives.

**Twelve Fruits raffle:** A heart where God is known, honored, and obeyed will “grow” the Twelve Fruits of the Holy Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, generosity, gentleness, faithfulness, modesty, self-control, and chastity (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #1832). Write each fruit down on a slip of paper and put them in a jar. Each of you can draw one from the jar weekly and practice it.



### Scripture LESSON

#### John 20:1-9, “People who have hope live differently”

The Resurrection is the keystone of our Faith, making a claim unique to Christianity. When Mary Magdalene arrived at the tomb, she expected to find a corpse. Instead, she found the stone rolled back, the grave clothes left behind, and the tomb empty. She thought thieves had taken the Lord’s body and ran to tell Peter and John.

When the Apostles arrived at the tomb, Peter went in first and also saw that the grave clothes had been left behind, not left in a heap, but neatly arranged. No grave robber would take a body and leave the shroud. John

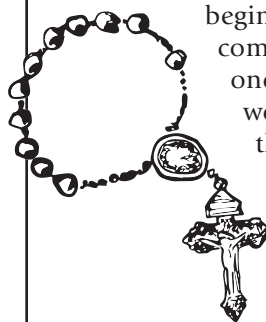


followed Peter and saw the cloth covering Christ’s face was neatly folded in a separate place, perhaps by Jesus Himself. John saw and believed.

**What can a parent do?** Pope Benedict XVI wrote, “People who have hope live differently.” We know death is not the end and we hope for eternal life. As Christians, we’re called to live differently. We do this when we put God first and listen to Him. Then we can point others to this hope.

### Parent TALK

We had such a fruitful Lent this year, we wanted to keep up our good habits as “Easter resolutions.” At the beginning of Lent, we committed to doing one good family deed weekly. We discussed the good deeds over dinner, which gave the children a chance to pat each other on the back.



We also committed to praying a decade of the Rosary as a family every night to help us have a good Lent. At first, it was difficult to make the time, but the family decade became a favorite part of our bedtime routine. We still do good deeds every week, but instead of discussing them, we talk about ways others have been kind and discuss how to imitate them.

Continuing our Lenten practices of doing good deeds and praying nightly helps us to be more patient and caring, and brought us closer together as a family.

### Feasts & Celebrations

**March 12 – St. Seraphina (1253):** Born to a poor family in San Gimignano, Italy, she suffered from a mysterious paralyzing illness. Her family abandoned her, but she found comfort in Christ’s Passion and the prayers of St. Gregory the Great. She suffered with extraordinary patience until her death.

**March 14 – St. Matilda (968).** The daughter of the Count of Westphalia, St. Matilda married Prince Henry the Fowler and had five children, including Otto I, the Holy Roman Emperor. She was known for her charitable works and

generosity to the poor.

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

**March 24 – Palm Sunday of the Lord’s Passion (1st Century).** The start of Holy Week. Today, we recall Jesus’ triumphant entry into Jerusalem, when He was greeted by cheering crowds waving palms.



### Our Mission

To help parents raise faithful Catholic children  
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