

Issue 2 • Autumn 2012

CathCom Reach

Enjoy your time

As parents of young children, one thing that unites almost all of us is a huge demand on our time. Even if we can say we have done everything that needs to be done – there is always a list of jobs, ideas, activities and days out that we would like to do if we had the time.

So often work and money can concern us the most – not because they are the most important things in life but because they help us provide the very best for our children. However, can we be in danger of spending too much time doing and providing, and not enough time simply being with our children, with our family or with God? What if our children could send us a final demand because

we hadn't given them enough time? They are certainly pretty good at issuing reminders!

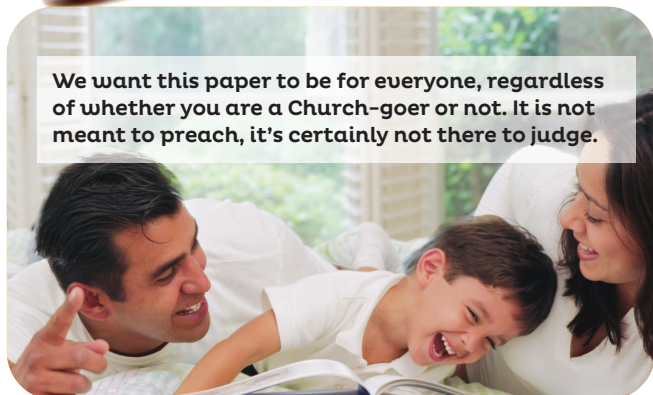
Equally, it is easy to think that the time we spend with our children hasn't been appreciated. We've all had the experience when we bend over backwards to give our children the world and they still get grumpy when they don't get that little bit more. But it is good to reassure ourselves that even when that happens, time spent with our children gives them the chance to soak up the attitudes we hold and the examples our lives show. Not only do we lay the foundation on which our children's lives are built but each day more building blocks are being laid that will mould their future.

Spending time with our children can also hold up a mirror to our lives. Sometimes when we step back we can see aspects of our children's behaviour – both good and bad – that they have picked up from us.

When we run out of time parts of our lives don't get the attention they deserve. It is good to take this step back from time to time and look at our lives. Putting together this edition of CathCom Reach has certainly given us food for thought, raising awkward questions about how we spend our time with those closest to us – which is a good thing. Hopefully, it will do the same for you – even if it doesn't always feel comfortable.

We'd like to thank you for your time in reading CathCom Reach. The first issue had a circulation of 40,000 copies and this issue has already exceeded that. We hope that it offers a number of opportunities to do something more than just read it. There are parts of the children's paper where they will need your help as some of the answers are in your paper. You'll not only have the opportunity to write in and ask questions but you can also send in your answers. Most importantly we hope that the paper will give you an opportunity to take some space in your busy life.

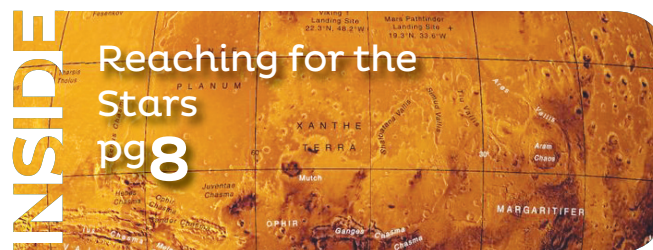
One of the most valuable things we have in life is our time. How will you use yours this week?



We want this paper to be for everyone, regardless of whether you are a Church-goer or not. It is not meant to preach, it's certainly not there to judge.

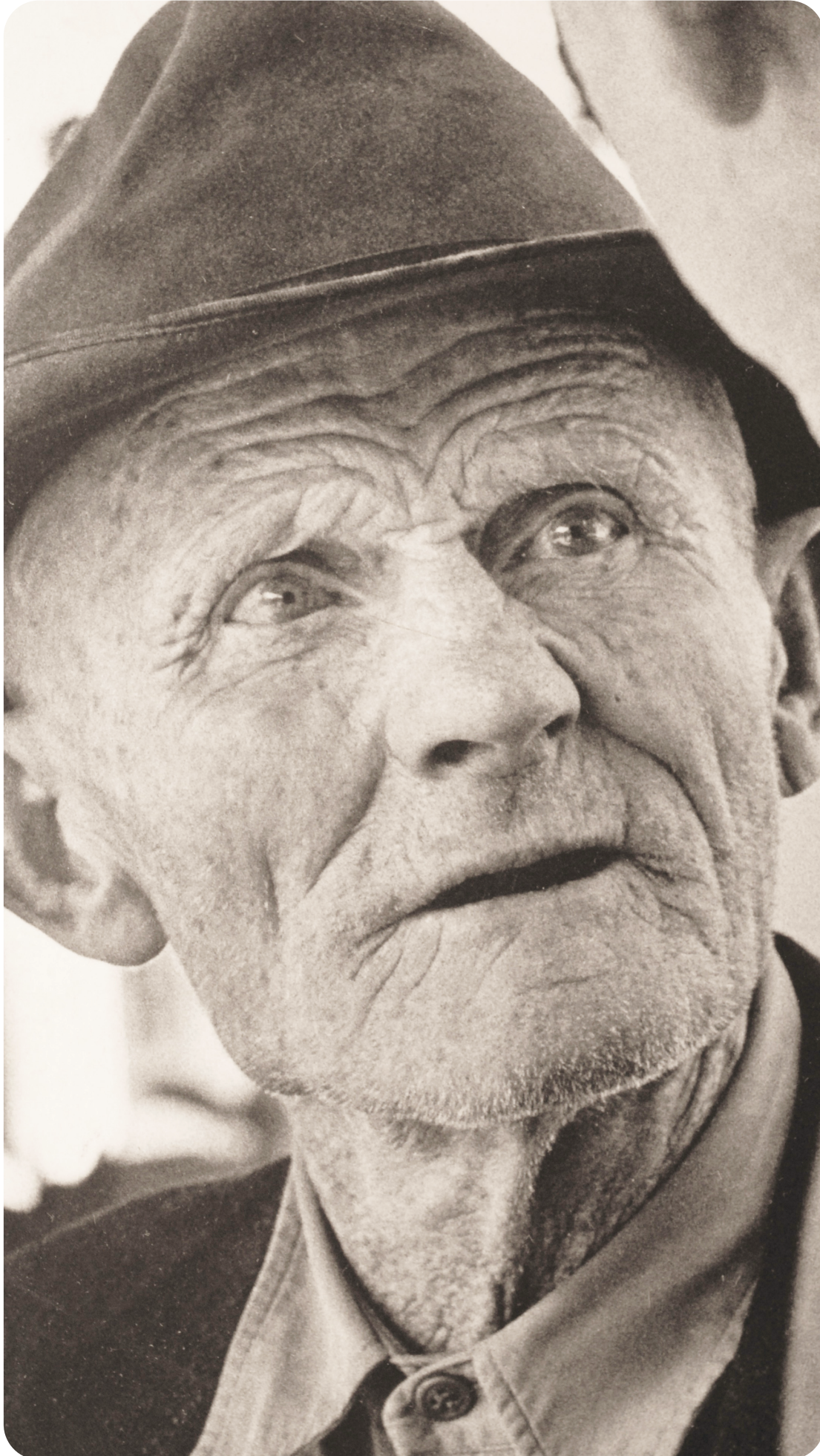
Dear Head Teacher

Inside is a dedicated newspaper for children and this month we are running a competition for the children. We are looking for a name for the children's newspaper section and a logo. So, teachers and parents please encourage your children to get involved. Details of how to enter and where to send entries can be found on page 1 of the children's newspaper inside. There will be prizes for the winning entries and a 'launch party'!





The Wooden Bowl



A frail old man went to live with his son, daughter-in-law, and their four-year old grandson. The old man's hands trembled, his eyesight was blurred, and his step faltered.

The family ate together nightly at the dinner table. But the elderly grandfather's shaky hands and failing sight made eating rather difficult. Often his food would be knocked off his plate and fall off his fork, and when he tried to pick up his glass he would often knock it over spilling the contents over the tablecloth.

Both the son and daughter-in-law became more and more irritated with grandfather and the constant mess and finally decided to do something about the spilled milk, noisy eating, and food on the floor. The husband and wife set a small table in the corner, and that was where grandfather ate alone while the rest of the family enjoyed dinner at the dinner table. Since grandfather had broken a dish or two, his food was now served in a wooden bowl. Sometimes when the family glanced in grandfather's direction, he had a tear in his eye as he ate alone, but still, the only words the couple had for him were sharp when he dropped a fork or spilled food. The four-year-old watched it all in silence.

One evening before supper, the father noticed his son playing intently with wooden blocks on the table with a distinct purpose in mind. He asked his son what he was making; sweetly, the boy replied, I am making the bowls for you and mummy to eat from when you get old like grandfather, the four-year-old smiled and went back to his work. The words so struck the parents that they were speechless and tears started to stream down their cheeks. Though no word was spoken, both realised in an instant error of their actions and knew what must be done. That evening the husband and daughter-in-law took grandfather's hand and gently led him to the family table.

For the remainder of his days grandfather ate every meal together with the family, and never again did either the son or daughter-in-law care any longer when a fork was dropped, drink spilled, or the tablecloth soiled, indeed they were there to help and comfort their ageing father.

The spiritual path that our children will walk along is influenced by their first educators, which are us, their parents and guardians of their faith. Children are remarkably perceptive, their eyes ever observe, their ears ever listen and their minds ever process the messages they absorb. If they see us patiently provide a happy home atmosphere for family members, they will imitate that attitude in their lives. The wise parent realises that they lay the foundation and the cornerstone on which their children's life will be built, and that thereafter each day building blocks are being laid that will mold their children's future. Let us all be wise builders and role models. Take care of yourself ... and those you love ... today, and every day!

What are you looking for?

Recently I have been working with a Catholic Theatre company in Schools around the country. Working with young people and being with them as they face life's questions is one of the joys of my life. A question we have been posing is simply 'What are you looking for?' It is a stark question and one that will accompany us through life.

When we come with a child for baptism we are asked simple yet demanding questions. The first question is "What name do you give your child?" To name someone is a beautiful responsibility. A name expresses something of our hope for the child's future. When meeting someone we share our names, we give away an indication of who we are. When we add our family name, we tell something of the story of our culture, where we come from and what will shape us. Later in life this becomes a deeper question. 'Who are you?'

The next question follows on from this. 'What do you ask for your child?' we respond 'Baptism.' This one word becomes a summary of our desire for our children. We all want the best for those we love. In bringing our children for baptism we live out the desire that the child has the fullness of life, the gift of faith, the support of the community, brothers and sisters amongst whom they will grow and mature. Faith is a precious gift that we give to our child. There is an African saying that states it takes a village to raise a child. Bringing a child to baptism, giving them the life of faith and seeking the support of the family and community that gathers around the font is a pledge to the child that we will do our best for them and their future, and a promise of support from the local church community to be a support in that adventure. Later in life that question is addressed to the maturing person. What do you seek? What are you looking for?

Then we come to a part of the celebration of baptism that I find deeply moving. The minister welcomes the child to be baptised

and traces the sign of the cross on the baby's forehead saying, 'The Christian community welcomes you with great joy. In its name I claim you for Christ our Saviour by the sign of his cross.' I find this simple gesture very profound. Throughout life we will experience partings. I am sure the first day that your child went to school was such a parting. Even though you would meet them again at the school gates later in the day, there was probably a realisation that life would be different now. Each stage of life, each change, is a letting go. More will follow, secondary school, first dates, university, moving out, falling in love, getting married, having children, all these things require a letting go. We begin this life of faith with such a letting go. In a delightful way we give the gift back to the giver, knowing that by letting go we allow others to be who they are.

The sign of the cross on the baby's forehead has an echo in the ancient world, where those who were servants received a branding on the visible part of the body, a sign of ownership. The early Christian community took this sign of great injustice and brought a new reality to the gesture. We belong to God. In God we will be fulfilled and have life to the full. We are marked with the cross to show that we belong to God, and amazingly, that God belongs to us. Maybe the question, "What are you looking for?" is affirmed by the fact that the one we are looking for has actually found us!

Maybe we can ponder some questions

- Why did you want your child to be baptised?
- Why was it important?
- Have you found strength in being part of a community?
- How is life changing as your child grows older?
- How can/ does being part of the Church help?

Next time: Listening to God and Living Water.

Fr. Damian



St. Mary's Catholic High School

An 11-18 Specialist Mathematics and Computing College

Manchester Road, Astley, Tyldesley, Manchester, M29 7EE

The pupils, staff and Governors of St. Mary's Catholic High School would like to invite you to attend their

OPEN DAY

Saturday 29th September 2012
9.30am – 12.00 noon

For intake of pupils in September 2013

The purpose of the Open Day is to provide an opportunity for Year 6 students and their parents to see for themselves why St. Mary's has such an outstanding reputation in the local community for its academic performance and pastoral care.

The day will begin at 9.30am with a talk from the Headteacher, Mr. Dawson, who will explain St. Mary's Mission. The talk will be repeated at 10.30am.

During the day there will be an opportunity to tour the school and to meet students and staff. Please arrive early if you wish to tour the whole school.

For further information please contact the school on 01942 884144.



Dear Reader

Welcome to CathCom Reach, a new national Catholic newspaper specially produced by CathCom for:

- Parents and teachers of children in primary school
- Primary school children themselves.

The Paper which is 16 pages in length is produced 4 times a year. Twelve of the pages will be devoted to adult readership and four pages dedicated to the children.

Distributed to all Catholic Primary Schools in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland the Paper is on its way to a circulation of over half a million copies.

The Paper seeks to inform and explain aspects of the Catholic Faith. We will publish articles on the Catholic Faith, education, parenting, health and well being and the environment as well as covering current news. We want to actively engage with parents, children and teachers and we therefore welcome your ideas for developing the Paper. If you would like to contribute stories for the Paper or if you have any comments or questions you would like to raise with us please email the editor@CathComReach.com

Whilst we would like to be able to report on the wide range of activities that take place in school this will not be possible and therefore schools should continue to send contributions concerning their local activities to their own diocesan papers.

With best wishes
Edwina Gillett, Editor

Contact us

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Please send articles for publication by email supplying photos separate to the text (i.e. in jpeg format).



Stand Up for Jesus!

There has been much to celebrate in the UK this summer with the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II and a successful Olympic Games and Para Olympics .

One of the overwhelming images of both celebrations has been the enthusiasm of thousands of spectators who jumped with joy, punched the air, shouted and sang at the tops of their voices and smiled throughout.

So what is it about our national heritage and sport that generates this response. We see this fervour in evidence too at football matches, rock concerts and even with Strictly Come Dancing.

But when it comes to our Faith there is a tendency to 'play it down'; perhaps to avoid conflict, perhaps because we are unsure, perhaps because we don't know how we might be perceived by our friends, our family, our colleagues. How often do we witness the joyful and enthusiastic witness of our Faith in the same way we greet an Olympic gold medal or the winning of the Champions League? And yet through our Baptism we are each called to proclaim the Good News.

In October Pope Benedict will formally open a 'Year of Faith'. Pope Benedict has set aside a special year

for Catholics throughout the world to rediscover, and share with others, the precious gift of Faith entrusted to the Church and the personal gift of faith that we have each received.

The Holy Father wants us to rediscover the journey of faith so as to shed ever clearer light on the joy and renewed enthusiasm of the encounter with Christ. To profess our faith in the Risen Lord in our cathedrals and in the churches of the whole world; in our homes and among our families, so that everyone may feel a strong need to know better and to transmit to future generations the faith of all times.

The organisers of the Olympic Games have been keen to ensure a lasting legacy that will ensure future success in the sporting arena; but, what of the legacy of our Faith? Who is responsible for ensuring our children and our children's children will grow up in the knowledge and understanding of the Catholic Faith.

"Catholic tradition teaches that God has bestowed on the family its own specific and unique educational mission. . . The educational task of the family and that of the school complement one another in many concrete areas." (Congregation for Catholic Education)

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Catholic Social Teaching

In the last edition we introduced the subject of Catholic social teaching and said that we would look at the various facets of it in later editions. Here we look at three elements, Human Dignity, Life and Work and Peace

“Peace is the harmony God wants in creation, it comes when people thirst for justice”

(Gaudium et Spes 1965)

Human Dignity



“Our sense of dignity is affirmed when our uniqueness is recognized, and valued by those around us, as we all

become global citizens. Catholic social teaching believes that human beings, created in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:26-27), have by their very existence an inherent value, worth, and distinction. This means that God is present in every person, regardless of his or her race, nation, sex, origin, orientation, culture, or economic

standing. Catholic social teaching asserts that all human beings must see within every person both a reflection of God and a mirror of themselves, and must honour and respect this dignity as a divine gift” (*Daniel Groody - Globalization, Spirituality and Justice*)

Care for Creation

The Natural world provides us with food, medicines, industrial resources and clothing. But it also allows us to be more fully human in every other aspect of life

“Before I flew I was already aware of how small and vulnerable our planet is, but only when I saw it from space, in all its ineffable beauty and fragility, did I realize that humankind’s most urgent task is to cherish and preserve it for future generations” (*Sigmund Jahn, Astronaut*)



Life and Work

Getting the right life work balance is essential for a healthy approach to living life to full. Finding conscience in our actions in life and work can benefit those in poverty.

Only mankind is capable of work, at the same time by work occupying his or her existence on earth. Thus work bears a particular mark of mankind and of humanity, the mark of a person operating within a community of persons. And this mark decides its interior characteristics; in a sense it constitutes its very nature. (*Laborem Exercens - ‘On Human Work’ 1981*)





St Augustine's Priory



Hillcrest Road, Ealing, London, W5 2JL

A School out of the Ordinary

Catholic Independent Day School for girls aged 4 to 18 with a purpose-built nursery for boys and girls between 3 and 4 years of age

Open days

Tuesday 9th October 10.15 to 11.45 am

Wednesday 21st November 1.30 to 2.45 pm

Nursery tours – Thursday mornings by appointment

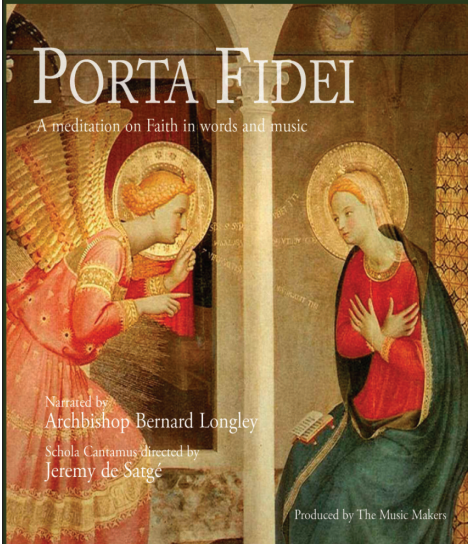
For further information or to book a tour please contact the Registrar on 020 8997 2022 or email: registrar@staugustinespriory.org.uk

www.saintaugustinespriory.org.uk



CathCom Reach Readers' Offer

In response to and support of Pope Benedict's call for a Year of Faith, CathCom Reach is delighted to offer its readers *Porta Fidei*, the latest compact disc from The Music Makers



A Meditation on Faith in words and music

Narrated by Archbishop Bernard Longley

Sung by Schola Cantamus directed by Jeremy de Satgé



To coincide with the start of the Year of Faith **'Heart Gives Unto Heart Catholic Internet Radio'** plans to hit the airwaves in October.

www.hguh.co.uk

Please complete and return the tear-off order form

Please send me copies of **Porta Fidei** at £13.95 per CD (including p&p)

I enclose a cheque made payable to "The Music Makers CR Offer" for £.....

Name.....

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Please complete and send to **The Music Makers**
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Brain Foods

The brain is truly amazing and although we don't know all its secrets yet, there is plenty of evidence to suggest that what we feed our children has a direct impact on their well-being, health and intelligence.

Children who eat a steady diet of fast or processed food from an early age may find it difficult to concentrate, have poor retention skills and suffer from behavioural problems. These children may have high cholesterol levels and blood fats by the age of 8, 9 and 10, which increases the risk of obesity and other health disorders.

Processed foods such as biscuits, crisps, chips and snack foods contain trans-fats, which can form thick, hard plaque deposits that clog arteries and reduce oxygen flow to the muscles, heart and brain. Trans-fats also deprive the brain of the omega-3 and omega-6 that it needs to work efficiently.

Many high-fat carbohydrate and high sugar foods contain monosodium glutamate (MSG), which makes them taste better. However, early exposure to MSG damages brain cells in the hypothalamus, which regulates the hormones for growth, reproduction and sleep. White flour foods may also contain cysteine, which has a similar effect. Even a short period of exposure can affect brain development thus increasing the risk of learning difficulties and behavioural disorders. This is one reason why snack food and drinks require parental caution.

Vitamins – Deficiency can lead to tiredness, apathy, memory loss, depression, irritability, confusion and reduced resistance to infection. Prolonged deficiency can lead to nerve degeneration and irreversible brain damage.

Minerals – Deficiency leads to

small red blood cells that contain less haemoglobin. In children, iron deficiency increases the risk of infection, lethargy, poor concentration, short attention span and behavioural problems.

Essential fatty acids – brain cell efficiency depends on omega-3 and omega-6. Omega-3 is a vital component of the insulating fatty myelin sheath that covers the brain and nerve cells. Without sufficient quantities the brain cells will become stiff and brittle leading to slow thinking speed and problems with accuracy.

Exercise – physical activity generates new brain cells in the hippocampus, the part of the brain that deals with memory. Studies show that exercise also increases chemical signalling between the hippocampus and the forefront of the brain, which deals with cognitive skills such as thinking, reasoning, perception, problem-solving, calculation and argument.

Water – water plays a key role in the prevention of disease and other ailments that can affect learning, memory and overall health. A two percent drop can trigger short-term memory loss, difficulties in problem-solving and fatigue. However, drinking high amounts of water can increase cognitive ability, concentration, mood and behaviour by as much as twenty-five percent.

Sleep – to maintain optimum performance, good quality sleep is crucial. Lack of sleep can lead to impaired thinking and decision-making and to an increased risk of accidents. Studies show that IQ

declines cumulatively by 3 percent on each successive day of sleep loss. After 5 nights, IQ can be lowered by up to 15 points (average IQ is 100 points).

Natural sunlight – natural sunlight stimulates the synthesis of vitamin D necessary for bone formation. It is also known for its effect on alertness, responsiveness, mood and behaviour.

Fresh air – to think clearly and creatively, children need fresh air, which contains an average of 4,000 negative ions per cubic centimetre. Negative ions can

produce hormone and chemical reactions in the body and brain, which give rise to feelings of well-being and good health.

To keep brain cells at optimum performance, steer clear of processed foods that reduce brain power and affect overall health. Keep to foods that positively influence brain growth and function. Equip children with brain boosting exercise, sleep, fresh air and natural sunlight. By following these simple suggestions, parents can bring the lives of their children into balance.

(Expert article by Dr. Lin Day)





This is your very own newspaper. But it still has not got a name!
We would like you to think of a name for the paper and design a logo.

Dear Children

Just think the winning name and logo will be seen by children around the country! And there will be prizes for the winners which will be presented at a special launch party!

So now is the time to get busy and send your entries in.

You can send your entry by e mail or through the post but please remember to provide your name, address, school

and age

Send your entry by e mail to editor@cathcomreach.com OR send your entry by post to CathCom Reach, N2 Blois Meadow Business Centre, Steeple Bumpstead, Haverhill, Suffolk CB9 7BN – the closing date will be in the New Year.

Good luck to everyone and we look and forward to seeing your ideas

Back to School!

The summer holiday is over and it is time to go back to school.

It is a time to make a new start!
A time to make new friends!
A time to say whatever happens I will always try my best.

Dear God

Help me to always try my best
Help me to always get along with my teacher and classmates
Help me to always be the first to say sorry when I fall out with anyone
Help me with the work I have to do
Help me to be patient when things don't go my way
Help me to always remember that you are there for me

Here are some word puzzles all connected with going back to school, see how many you can solve. (Answers at the foot of the page, no peeking though)

Example:

echtaer = teacher

- | | |
|----------------|--------------|
| 1. morolacss = | 6. uicsm = |
| 2. gnidrea = | 7. blyasme = |
| 3. ignwrda = | 8. sselnso = |
| 4. miteyapl = | 9. muinrof = |
| 5. krowmeoh = | 10. ecscine |



ANSWERS: 1 classroom; 2 reading; 3 drawing; 4 playtime; 5 homework; 6 music; 7 assembly; 8 lessons; 9 uniform; 10 science

Believing in God, the creator

We believe that God is the creator. The world, with everything that lives in it, exists because he wanted it to. We believe men and women exist because God wanted them to live on the earth and learn to love each other.



God created man in his own image,

of heaven and earth

Lord,
you have shared
a wonderful secret with us:
to find happiness,
all we need to do is
love each other.

man and woman

he created them.



Let's Pray

... The Hail Mary together

Hail Mary, full of grace the Lord is with thee. God sent the Angel Gabriel to Mary to tell her that she was good and that He wanted her to be the mother of Jesus.

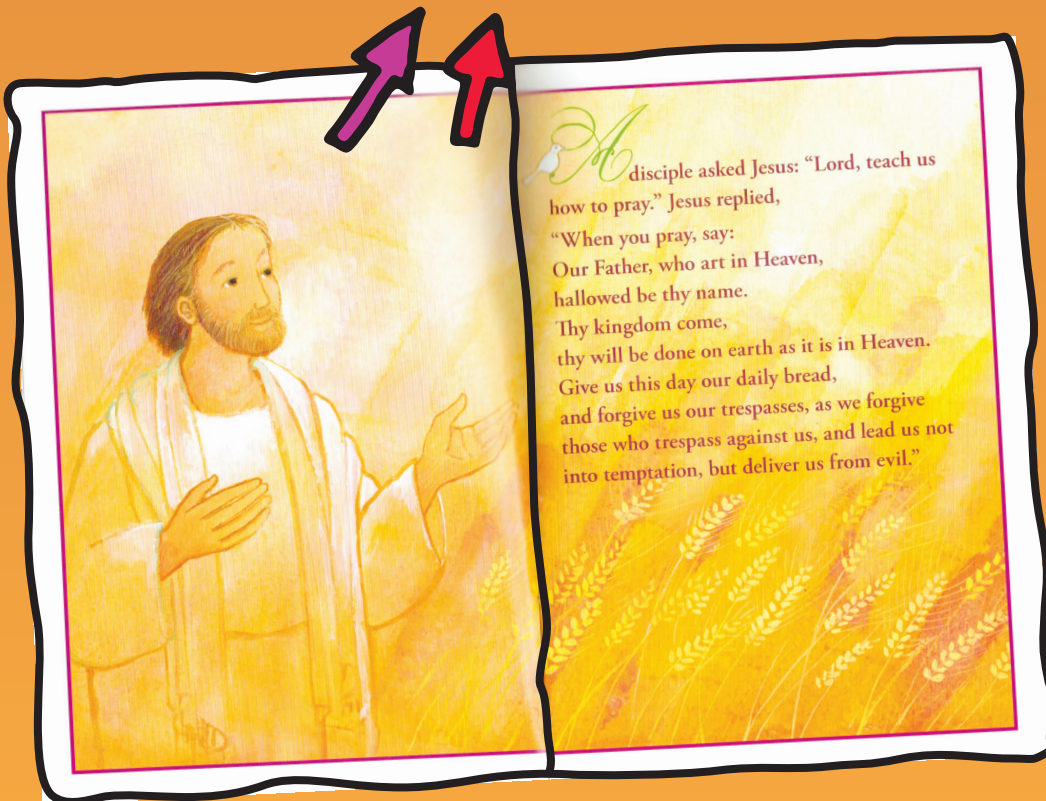
Blessed art though amongst women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

When the Angel Gabriel went back to heaven, Mary went to see her cousin, Elizabeth. Elizabeth knew that Mary was good and that God had chosen her to be the mother of Jesus.

Holy Mary mother of God pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. Amen

Because Mary is the mother of Jesus and close to God we can always be sure that she is there when we pray to her. Mary will stay close to us throughout our lives if we stay close to her by saying the Hail Mary each day.

Praying the Our Father



Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name.

When we say this prayer we are speaking to our Father in heaven. He knows each one of us and wants us to love Him and those around us.

Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

We ask our Father in heaven to help us to live as He would want us to.

Give us this day our daily bread.

We all need food and water to live but lots of children around the world suffer dreadful famine. We pray that we will always be prepared to share what we have with others.

And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.

We say sorry to God for the times we have misbehaved and ask Him to help us to make up with anyone we have fallen out with

And lead us not into temptation.

We ask God to help us to be good and the help to say No if we are tempted to do something that we know is wrong

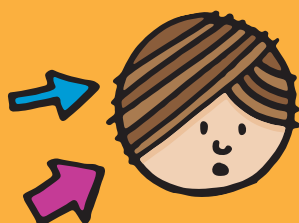
But deliver us from evil.

We ask God to always protect us from anything that is bad and to help us grow in His love for us.

Amen

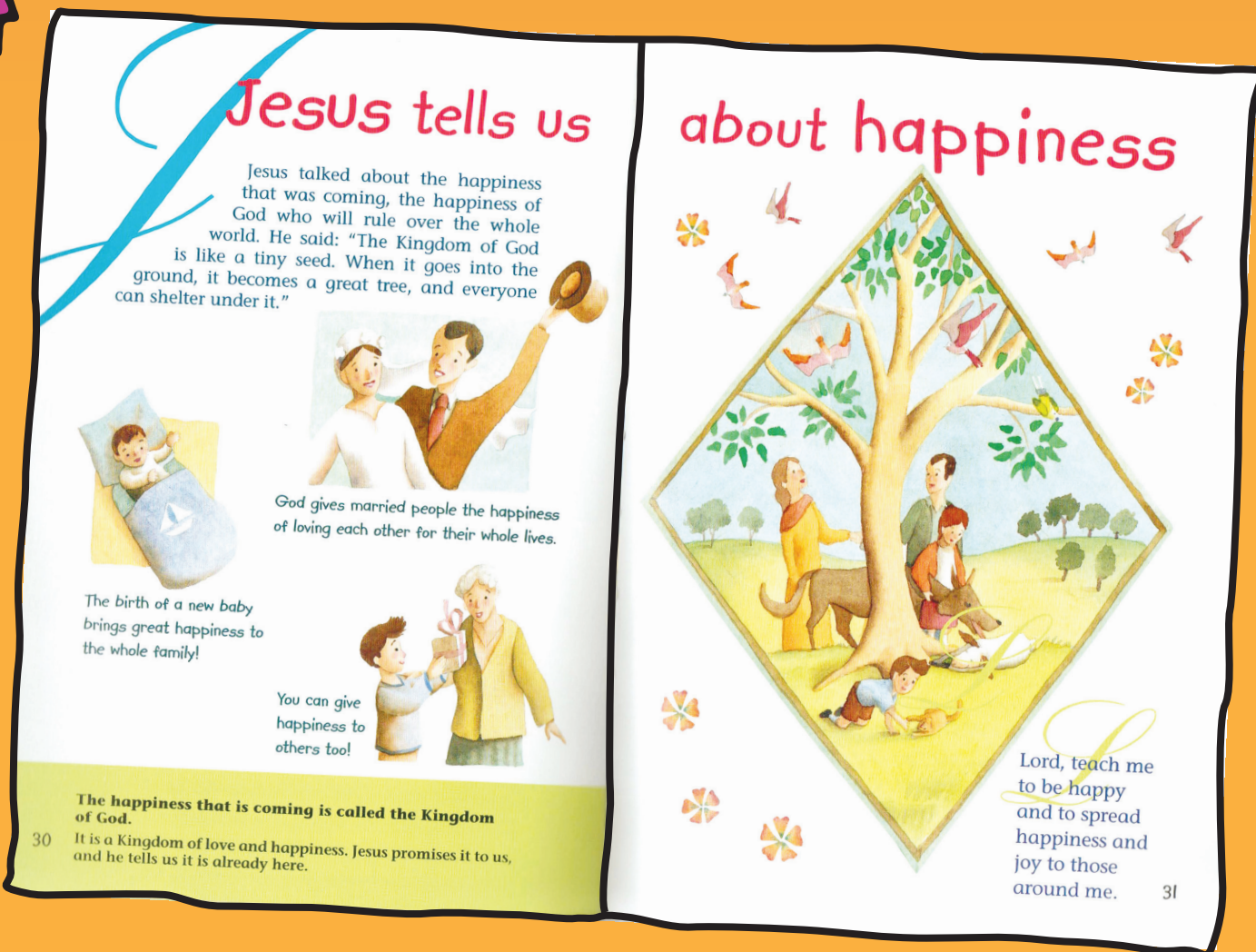
Courtesy of The Beautiful Story of the Bible by Maïte Roche.

Available from the Catholic Truth Society



Courtesy of Getting to know God by Christine Pedotti.

Available from the Catholic Truth Society





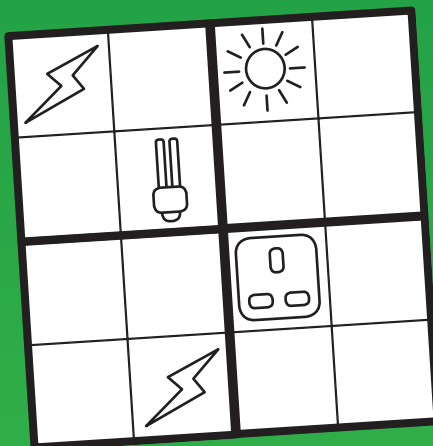
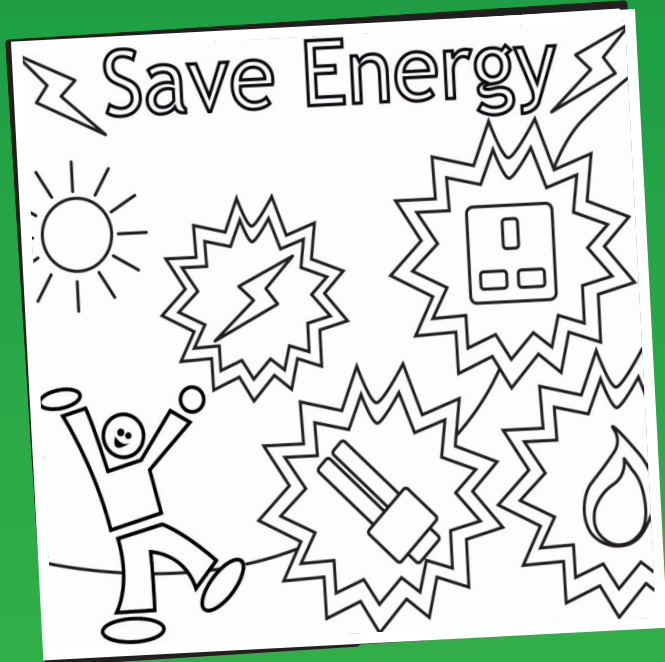
Teaser Time



Have a go at our Energy Sudoku using symbols instead of numbers. Every row, column and mini-grid must contain the same symbols but only once in each.

Don't guess - use logic!

1. What part of your body has the most rhythm?
2. What did the beach say when the tide came in?
3. How do rabbits fly?
4. Forward I am heavy, backwards I am not. What am I?
5. What object has keys that open no locks, space but no room, and you can enter but not go in?
6. What can run but never walks; Has a mouth but never talks; Has a head but never weeps; Has a bed but never sleeps?



Wordsearch

See how many of the following energy words you can find. Words can be forwards, backwards, up, down and even diagonal!

- Light Bulb
- Save
- Energy
- Turn Off
- Resource
- Heat
- Unplug
- Switch
- Stand By
- Oil
- Gas
- Start
- Earth
- Power
- Circuit
- Battery
- Fuel
- Solar
- Waste



Answers: 1. Eardrums 2. Long time no sea 3. By hareplane! 4. TONI When spelled backwards it does become NOT 5. A keyboard 6. A river



Make space for God and stay fully charged!

The start of the new school year brings with it a host of new challenges. For some going to school for the first time can be traumatic, and parents too can worry as they let go of tiny hands at the school gate. However, there are lots of things to look forward to, lots of new things to learn, lots of new friends to make and lots of new activities to get involved with. Our children suddenly become 'busy' just like mum and dad!

Sometimes we can get so caught up in the 'busyness' of daily life that we forget to pray and if we, as adults, forget our children are likely to forget too.

Through prayer we get to know God, we thank him for the many blessings he bestows on us, we praise him, we seek his forgiveness and we ask for his help. We get to know him as our loving Father in heaven. But like most things in life prayer does not always come easy and we have to work at it.

The greatest prayer we have is the Mass. Here we come together as God's family to praise him, thank him, ask for his forgiveness and pray for those in need. But probably we only get to Mass on a Sunday so what about the rest of the week? Think about it like a spiritual battery, we get fully charged on Sunday but as the week wears on and the many challenges, conflicts, excitements and activities take their toll our battery starts to run down and we reach the point where we just don't know where

to turn....Or do we?

Setting aside a few minutes each day to talk and listen to God is a good and sure way of keeping our spiritual battery fully charged; it helps us to know that we are not alone, especially when the going gets tough.

Taking a few minutes to pray with our children will teach them to trust God and encourage them to develop their own personal relationship with God.

Talk to God in your own words and encourage your children to do the same. Tell him what has gone well and what has not gone so well, what you are worried about and who you would like to pray for; above all thank him for all the good things in your life. Allow a little bit of time between each prayer for silent reflectionPrayer is as much about listening to God as it is speaking to him.

Don't worry if you struggle at first or are a bit nervous putting prayers into your own words. Instead say the 'Our Father' together or read a short passage from scripture. The important thing is to make a start and nurture your prayer life so that your spiritual battery stays fully charged!

So make some space for God today.....



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Bless my computer

"Listen just a second while I explain to you Lord"

Every single evening
As I'm lying in bed,
This tiny little prayer
Keeps running through my head:

God bless all my family
Wherever they may be,
Keep them warm
And safe from harm
For they're so close to me.

And God there is one more thing
I wish that you could do;
Hope you don't mind me asking,
Please bless my computer too.

Now I know that it's unusual
To bless a motherboard,
But listen just a second
While I explain it to you Lord.

You see, that little metal box
Holds more than my odds and ends;
Inside those small compartments

Rest so many of my friends.
I know so much about them
By the kindness that they give,
And this little scrap of metal
Takes me into where they live.

By faith is how I know them
Much the same as you.
We share in what life brings us
And from that our friendship grew.

Please take an extra minute
From your duties up above,
To bless those in my address book
That's filled with so much love.

Wherever this prayer may reach
To each and every friend,
Bless each e-mail inbox
And each person who hits 'send'.

When you update your Heavenly list
On your own great mother board
Bless everyone who says this prayer
Sent up to you O Lord.
Anon



Reaching for the Stars!

- Church is deeply committed to scientific research



The Mars science rover **Curiosity** landed on the Martian surface Monday 6 August morning - shortly after 0530 GMT - to begin a two-year mission seeking evidence the Red Planet once hosted ingredients for life. Mission controllers at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California received signals relayed by a Martian orbiter confirming that the rover had survived a make-or-break descent and landing attempt to touch down as planned inside a vast impact crater.

The Curiosity rover is the first fully-fledged mobile science laboratory to be landed on the surface of the planet Mars. Curiosity is designed to hunt for soil-based signatures of life and send back data to prepare for a future human mission. The head of the Vatican Observatory, Fr. José Gabriel Funes SJ, told Vatican Radio that he welcomes the achievement. "I think

everybody should be happy with the success of the start of this mission," he said, adding, "we now have to wait for results, to see if we can learn more about Mars and the possibility of organic elements on the surface of Mars."

Asked whether Catholics and believers in general have anything to fear - whether from the search for extraterrestrial life in particular or from scientific exploration generally, Fr. Funes SJ responded, "No, of course not - we are not afraid of science, we are not afraid of new results, new discoveries." **The Director of the Vatican Observatory went on to explain that the Church is deeply committed to scientific research.** "That's the reason why the Holy See has an observatory," he said. "Whatever the truth might be, we are open to new results, once they are confirmed by the scientific community."

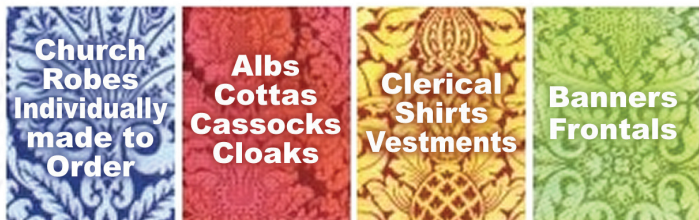


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Facing Death in Solidarity and Hope



Father Tadeusz Pacholczyk, PH.D.

When I make presentations on end-of-life decision making, I sometimes have audience members' approach me afterwards with comments like, "You know, Father, when my mum died 6 years ago, and I look back on it, I'm not sure my brothers and I made the right decisions about her care."

Remarks like these serve to remind us how the circumstances surrounding death are important not only for the person who passes on but also for those who remain behind.

A "good death" generally involves the confluence of many elements and events: dying surrounded by our loved ones, preferably in surroundings like a home or hospice setting; receiving proper pain management; making use of reasonable medical treatments (and avoiding unduly burdensome treatments); making peace with family and friends; making peace with God (and receiving the last sacraments); and uniting ourselves with Christ in his hour of suffering.

As we take care of those who are sick and suffering, we face the dual challenge of making ethical treatment decisions for them and ensuring a supportive and humanly enriching environment as they approach their last days and hours.

By providing a supportive and nurturing environment for those who are dying, we aid them in powerful ways to overcome their sense of isolation. Sister Diana Bader, O.P. has perceptively described this modern health care challenge:

"In the past, death was a community event. Those closest to the patient ministered in a variety of ways: watching and praying with the patient, listening and talking, laughing and weeping. In solidarity, a close community bore the painful experience together. Today, because of the medicalisation of the healthcare setting, death is more often regarded as a failure of medical science. The dying find themselves isolated from human warmth and compassion in institutions, cut off from access to human presence by technology which dominates the institutional setting in which most details

occur."

Fostering a humanly enriching environment for those facing death often means giving explicit attention to human presence and human contact, even in the midst of a plethora of technology that may surround a patient. For example, thanks to the remarkable development of feeding tubes, it has become a relatively simple matter to nourish and hydrate someone who is having trouble swallowing. Such a tube, particularly when inserted directly into the stomach, is a highly effective means of providing nutrition and hydration in various institutional settings. But the ease of injecting food and liquids through a so-called PEG tube into the stomach means that medical staff can quickly and efficiently move on to the next patient after a feeding, perhaps neglecting to meet the very real human need for companionship. Staff members may prefer the efficiency that such a tube affords, but human contact may be diminished in the process.

The dying find themselves isolated from human warmth and compassion in institutions, cut off from access to human presence by technology which dominates the institutional setting in which most details occur.

If a patient is still able to take small amounts of food orally, it may be preferable to feed him or her by hand, rather than relying on a feeding tube. The rich human contact that occurs whenever one person devotes time, energy and love to hand-feed another should not become a casualty to our efforts to streamline medicine or to save money. This focused effort on our part to be present to those who are dying maintains human solidarity with them, it affirms their dignity as persons, it manifests benevolence towards them, and it maintains the bond of human communication with them. It also goes a long way towards helping to overcome their sense of loneliness and their fear of abandonment.

When we show compassion towards others in their suffering, we do far more than express a detached pity towards them. Rather, we

manifest a willingness to enter into their situation. The word compassion (from Latin and French roots: com - "with" + pati - "to suffer") means, "to suffer with," to suffer alongside, to participate in suffering.

Pope Benedict XVI perhaps stated the importance of compassion most directly in 2007 when he wrote, "A society unable to accept its suffering members and incapable of helping to share their suffering and to bear it inwardly through "com-*passion*" is a cruel and inhuman society. ... Indeed, to accept the "other" who suffers, means that I take up his or her suffering in such a way that it becomes mine also. ... The Latin word *con-solatio*, "consolation", expresses this beautifully. It suggests being with the other in his solitude, so that it ceases to be solitude."

We suffer alongside our loved ones, aware of the abiding inner truth that a part of ourselves suffers and dies whenever another who is near to us suffers and dies. Our communion with them in our shared humanity, and our dedicated solidarity in suffering invariably leads us, and those who pass on ahead of us, to share in the mysterious and enduring graces of a good death.

THE AUTHOR

Father Tadeusz Pacholczyk earned a Ph.D. in Neuroscience from Yale University. Father Tad did post-doctoral research at Massachusetts General Hospital/ Harvard Medical School. He subsequently studied in Rome where he did advanced studies in theology and in bioethics. He is a priest of the diocese of Fall River, MA, and serves as the Director of Education at The National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia. Father Tadeusz Pacholczyk is a member of the advisory board of the Catholic Education Resource Center.

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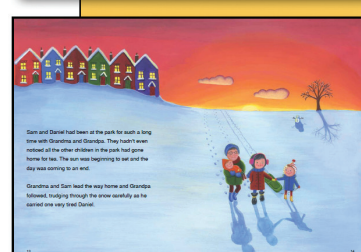
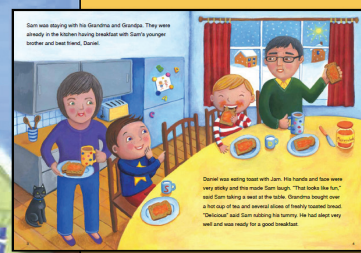
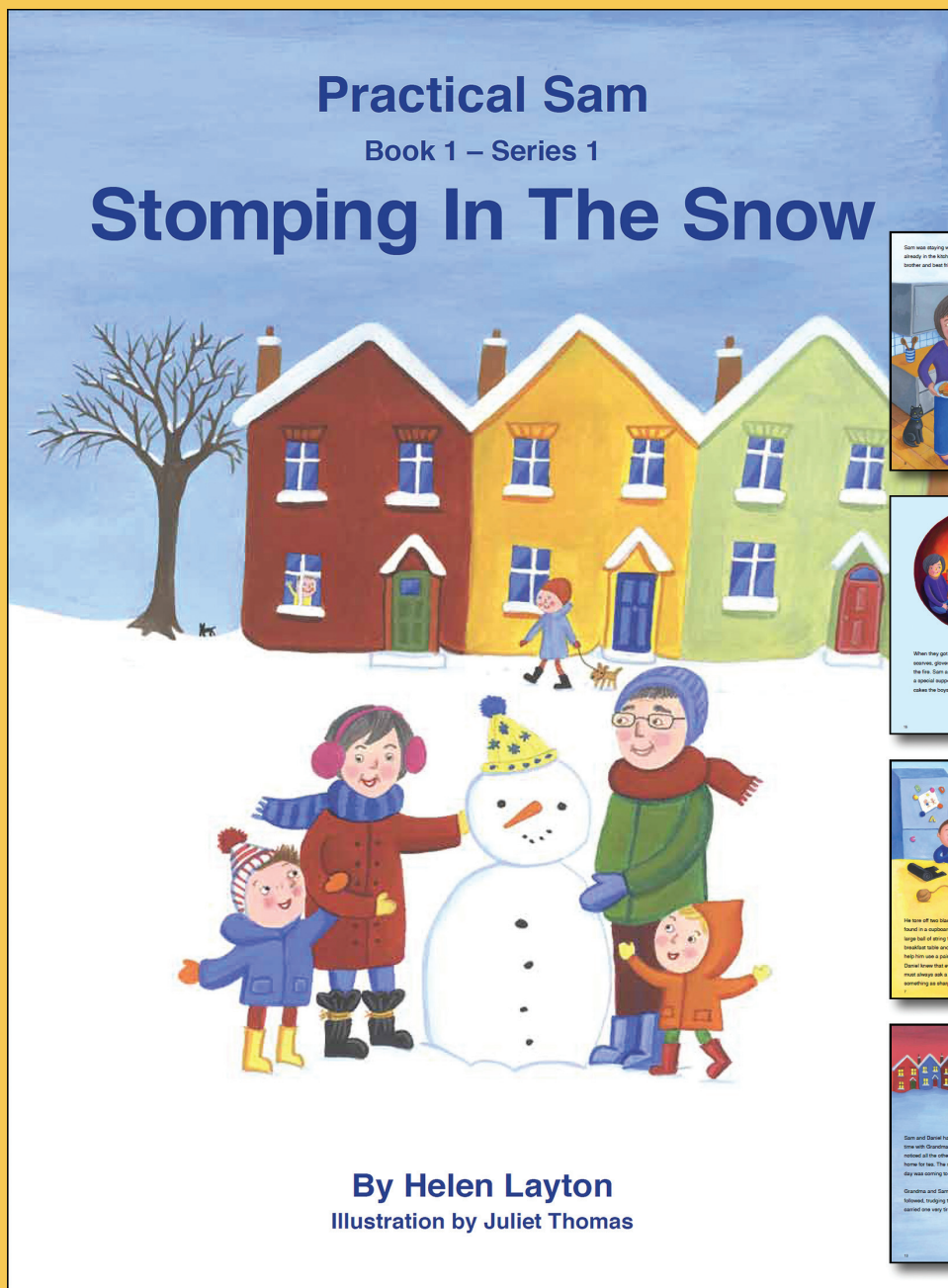
Sam opened his eyes.

As the sunshine crept through the curtains, Sam knew it was going to be another practical day.



The ever cheerful Sam spends much of his time finding practical solutions to everyday problems and creates opportunities to make new things out of what he can find in and around his Grandma and Grandpa's house.

Join Sam and his brother Daniel on their adventure to help Grandma find a solution to her lost wellington boots and follow the story as they have fun stomping in the snow!!



By Helen Layton
 Illustration by Juliet Thomas

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A light in the wilderness

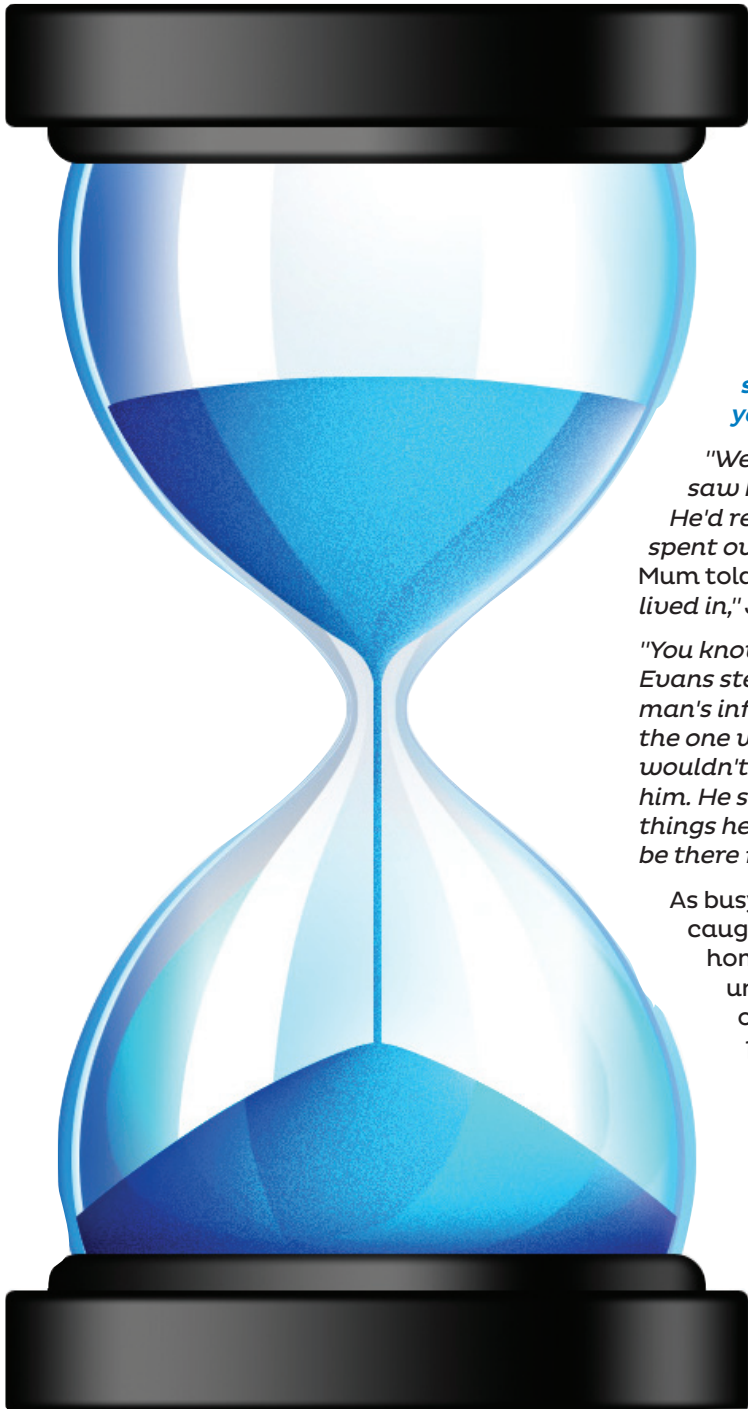
An atheist walking through a forest in wonderment said to himself "What powerful rivers what magnificent mountains and what beautiful animals!" Suddenly he heard something crashing through the bushes behind him. He turned to look and saw a huge grizzly bear charging towards him.

He ran as fast as he could along the path but soon tripped and fell, immediately the bear

was upon him raising his paw to strike. At that instant the atheist cried out... "Oh my God...!" Time stopped.... The bear froze....and the forest was silent...A bright light shone upon the man and a Voice from the heavens said: "You deny my existence for all these years, you teach others I don't exist and even credit creation to some cosmic accident, and now you expect me to help you out of this predicament?"

The atheist answered: "it would be hypocritical of me to suddenly ask you to treat me as a Christian after all these years..... but perhaps you could make the bear a Christian!".....there was a pause..."Very well," said the Voice... the light went out and the sounds of the forest resumed....The bear took a step back and then brought both paws together, bowed his head, and spoke..."Lord, bless this food which I am about to receive.....!"

Thanks for your Time!



A young man learns what's most important in life from the old man next door. Over the phone, his mother told him, "Mr Evans died last night. The funeral is Wednesday."

Memories flashed through his mind as he sat quietly remembering his childhood days. "Jack, did you hear me?" "Oh, sorry, Mum. Yes, I heard you. It's been so long since I thought of him. I'm sorry, but I honestly thought he died years ago," Jack said.

"Well, he didn't forget you. Every time I saw him he'd ask how you were doing. He'd reminisce about the many days you spent over 'his side of the fence' as he put it," Mum told him. "I loved that old house he lived in," Jack said.

"You know, Jack, after your father died, Mr Evans stepped in to make sure you had a man's influence in your life," she said. "He's the one who taught me carpentry," he said. "I wouldn't be in this business if it weren't for him. He spent a lot of time teaching me things he thought were important. Mum, I'll be there for the funeral," Jack said.

As busy as he was, he kept his word. Jack caught the train the day after and went home. Mr Evans funeral was small and uneventful. He had no children of his own, and most of his relatives had passed away. The night before he had to return home; Jack and his Mum stopped by, to see the old house next door, one more time. Standing in the doorway, Jack paused for a moment. It was like crossing over into another dimension, a leap through space and time. The house was exactly as he remembered. Every step held memories - every picture, every piece of furniture. Jack stopped suddenly...

"What's wrong, Jack?" his Mum asked. "The box is gone," he said "What box?" Mum asked. "There was a small gold box that he kept locked on top of his desk. I must have asked him a thousand times what was inside. All he'd ever tell me was 'the thing I value most,'" Jack said. It was gone. Everything about the house was exactly how Jack remembered it, except for the box. He figured someone from the Evans family had taken it. "Now I'll never know what was so valuable to him," Jack said. "I better get some sleep. I have an early train to catch tomorrow, Mum."

It had been about two weeks since Mr Evans died. Returning home from work one day Jack discovered a note through his letterbox. 'Signature required on a package, cannot deliver as no one at home. Please collect from the main post office within the next three days' the note read. Early the next day Jack retrieved the package. The small box was old and looked like it had been posted a hundred years ago. The handwriting was difficult to read, but the return address caught his attention. 'Mr George Evans' it read. Jack took the box out to his car and ripped open the package. There inside was the gold box and an envelope. Jack's hands shook as he read the note inside. 'Upon my death, please forward this box and its contents to Jack Bennett. It's the thing I valued most in my life! A small key was taped to the letter. His heart racing, tears filling his eyes, Jack carefully unlocked the box. There inside he found a beautiful gold pocket watch. Running his fingers slowly over the finely etched casing, he unlatched the cover. Inside he found these words engraved:

"Jack, thanks for your time! - George Evans.

"The thing he valued most was... my time" Jack quietly said to himself.

Jack held the watch for a few minutes, then called his business partner and said he would be taking two days holiday "Why?" Ben asked. "I need some time to spend with my son"

>>>>> Enjoy your TIME <<<<<<

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