

ST. ALPHONSUS RELIGIOUS EDUCATION



Help Kids Use Positive Language

As the Bible describes in James 3, the tongue may be small, but it can do an awful lot of damage. Unfortunately, name-calling, cursing, bickering, whining, and putdowns find their way into most homes. Yet our words also have the power to heal, mend rifts, encourage other people, and praise God. Proverbs 25:11 (NIV) compares well-chosen and well-timed words to "apples of gold in settings of silver."

This Lenten newsletter explores ways to get your children talking in positive, God-pleasing ways. Use these tips to get started:

Walk the walk, talk the talk. Kids are listening, so watch your own language and model appropriate talk—even when you think little ears aren't listening.

Teach children how to apologize. Hurtful words can't be "unsaid," but people can offer heartfelt apologies and change their ways. Offer examples of how to say sorry, and remember to seek children's forgiveness when you mess up.

Listen up! Proverbs 10:19 contains valuable advice that often goes unheeded: "Be sensible and keep your mouth shut." Help children understand the importance of stopping to think before you speak. When in doubt, it's always better to seal your lips rather than say something you may regret.

Praise God throughout the day. Talk frequently about how good God is and thank him for his many blessings. Share favorite Bible passages, pray with one another, and brainstorm ways you can serve God and other people. When we focus on God and good words, our mouths and lives will bear good fruit.

Say What?!

The use of profanity among young children is on the rise, according to researcher Timothy Jay. Kids no longer learn curse words from peers at school; instead, they hear them at home. Nearly two-thirds of surveyed adults said that despite prohibiting their children from swearing at home, they break their own rules regularly. This double standard confuses and irritates kids, most of whom say they're frightened when their parents curse.

(www.livescience.com, www.findarticles.com)

LENT 2011



To view photos of our Confirmation celebration, go to <http://stalphonsussacramentcelebrations.shutterfly.com/>

Vacation Bible School

Join our planning team on April 18th at 6:30pm in the RE Building
VBS week will be determined.

Parenting Insights

These guidelines from *Children's Ministry Magazine* describe how profanity affects children:

Ages 2 to 5

Preschoolers simply repeat what they hear, so try to limit media exposure. Don't react to foul language with shock or anger; calmly explain that those words hurt people's feelings.

Ages 6 to 9

Explain that words are "bad" when they're used to hurt others. Also explain that misusing God's name is disrespectful. Tell children we can use God's name to praise him or pray to him.

Ages 10 to 12

Preteens use profanity to get a reaction from adults and to impress friends. Let them know that obscene language and gestures aren't acceptable, and teach them discernment to censor their own language.



Catholic Parenting 101

Tips for Building Strong Catholic Families

By TIM HOGAN, PsyD, LP, CIRT

Confronting the Challenges of Bullying

While some conflict between children is normal, *bullying* is an increasingly common and destructive problem that requires wise and skillful intervention from adults.

The American Medical Association defines bullying as "repeated negative acts committed by one or more children against another" with a deliberate intent to harm or disturb a victim, despite the victim's apparent distress. While bullying can happen "in-person," it can also occur online through social networks, websites and text messages. This is called cyber-bullying.

Adults can help reduce or eradicate bullying by teaching and encouraging their communities on how to graciously confront injustice, defend those who are injured, and empower those who are oppressed.

Here are three basic steps on how to confront bullying:

Step 1: LEARN: Find out if bullying is a problem for the children you know.

This may not be as easy as it sounds. Children who are bullied often do not tell trusted adults or their parents unless asked. When children show signs of inner distress (i.e. stomachaches, headaches, problems sleeping, loss of appetite, general distress or sadness), you should consider the possibility of bullying being the cause.

Sometimes children will simply report hating or refusing to go to school. Bullies, on the other hand, are often confident kids with little empathy for others and often have oppositional attitudes towards adults. Children who bully others often display rude, sarcastic, or disrespectful behavior in other situations.

Step 2: ACT: Take action to help a child who is bullied by following these simple strategies:

1. Prayerfully confront the problem.

Gently allow the child who is bullied to feel sad and grieve; being bullied often involves a loss of safety and self-confidence. Teach them to pray for themselves and the bully. Pray for the strength to speak-up in the face of injustice. If necessary, prayerfully consider sitting down with the child who is bullying and his or her parents to further confront the issue.

2. Role-play strategies to stop the bullying.

Affirm what the bullied child is already doing well and build on that. Brainstorm possible responses, such as humor ("Sweet!" or "I love you too!"), wit ("Your point is...?"; "So being mean to me is, what, cool?"), a compliment ("I don't think you mean that because deep down you are better than that."), or calm assertion ("Okay, that's enough. Keep going and I'll get someone else involved.")

3. Intervene, when necessary.

Help the bullied child to privately and quietly report the bullying to the appropriate school or church leader. Be clear about exactly what was said, what started it and who else was present. Do not expect the child to solve this or control another's behavior. Deal personally with the child who is bullying. If you see the behavior, take that child aside and tell them specifically what you saw them do or say. Clarify for them that you would never allow anyone else to treat them the same way because it is not okay to treat people like that.

4. Strengthen the social network and self-confidence of children.

Create healthy and holy opportunities for children to interact with one another. Encourage children to take a class that will develop physical strength and confidence, such as dance, gymnastics, or a martial art.

Step 3: PREVENT: Initiate community prevention measures

Even when there is no apparent sign of bullying in your community, children should know what bullying is and why it is not acceptable. Children should also know that most bullying can be stopped by the creative intervention of a bystander, or by simply encouraging the reporting of bullying to trusted adults and/or parents. If bystanders do report bullying, this should be done privately. If a child's peers learn of such reporting, the peers will likely tell the child who is bullying, which often makes the situation worse.

When children live in a community where people use power to dominate others, bullying will always be a problem. As adults, we are called to set an example for our children. Every unjust use of power, by teachers, administrators, coaches, pastors, parents and children, should be confronted and eradicated. Bullying will only stop when we empower our children to choose to live the Gospel in our communities. Remember that Christ calls each of us to love one another as he loves us.

Dr. Tim Hogan is a writer, psychologist and certified Imago Relationship Therapist who directs two counseling centers in the city of Detroit. He has consulted and taught workshops for the Archdiocese of Detroit and contributed to the RCL Benziger Family Life series. Tim lives with his wife and three children in Plymouth, Michigan.

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OpenTheBook

"Don't use foul or abusive language. Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them."
Ephesians 4:29

Words are powerful. God tells us to use language to build people up, not tear them down.

Teachable Moments

1. **"Cheer"ful Words**—As a family, come up with catchy cheers for praising God. Also create a personalized, encouraging cheer for each family member.
2. **It's All in the Delivery**—When speaking, watch your tone and delivery. Say some words short, or staccato, and draw out others. You can also vary the volume. These changes will keep your words interesting to children and just plain fun.
3. **Sign Up**—Children love to learn sign language, so use motions to reinforce Bible lessons. Check out a library book or video about sign language. Learn how to sign phrases such as "Jesus loves me" or "Jesus is our healer."



4. **Out-of-This-World Names**—Help children come up with creative names for God that describe what he's done for us, such as heart-fixer-upper, happily-dappily-loveful, sunny-joy-rageous.



"So commit yourselves wholeheartedly to these words of mine. Tie them to your hands and wear them on your forehead as reminders. Teach them to your children. Talk about them when you are at home and when you are **ON THE ROAD**, when you are going to bed and when you are getting up." *Deuteronomy 11:18-19, NLT*

SAL SOLO TO SPEAK TO NEWLY CONFIRMED AND CONFIRMATION CANDIDATES



A former lead singer of a British rock band in the 1980's that toured the world, Sal Solo had a powerful religious conversion that lead him to focus on Christian music and running youth retreats worldwide. We are fortunate to have him based in Bolingbrook and have a break in his schedule to bring his multi-media message to our newly confirmed young people and to our 7th Graders, who have begun their preparation for the sacrament... that they have received a call to live out their faith. It takes place on **Monday, April 11th at 4:30 PM in the Church.**

Confirmation Class Of 2011



Share The Spirit

A celebratory dinner sponsored by the Youth Ministry Program.
April 10, 2011 at 6:00 p.m.
St. Patrick's Parish Center
Please R.S.V.P. Mike Lundberg by April 6, 2011
lemontyouthm@sbcglobal.net
630-257-2414

This page is designed to help educate parents and isn't meant to endorse any movie, music, or product. Our prayer is that you'll make informed decisions about what your children watch, listen to, and wear.



What's Playing at the Movies

Movie: *Rango* (March 4)

Genre: Animated comedy

Rating: G

Cast: Johnny Depp, Isla Fisher, Abigail Breslin

Synopsis: In this computer-animated film from Industrial Light & Magic, Rango, a pet chameleon, ends up in the Old West town of Dirt. He tries to be the "good guy" hero, although his predecessors have fallen short.

Discussion Questions: How successful are you at being "good"? What gets in the way of your best efforts to follow rules and set a good example? Read aloud Romans 7:19-20. Why can't we be perfect? How does it feel knowing that Jesus was perfect and died in our place?



What Music Is Releasing

Artist: Francesca Battistelli

Album: *Hundred More Years*

Artist Info: The 25-year-old singer-songwriter grew up in a musical family in New York City. Her soulful pop sound includes traces of jazz and R&B. Battistelli is married to percussionist Matthew Goodwin, and the couple became parents last fall.

Summary: In this follow-up to her major-label debut *My Paper Heart*, Battistelli explores friendship, family, and God's faithfulness. In "This Is the Stuff," she explores life's craziness and frustrations. "In the middle of my little mess," Battistelli sings, "I forget how big I'm blessed."

Discussion Questions: When does your life feel crazy or messy? What can make you forget about God and how much he loves you? Read aloud John 1:16. What are some ways God has blessed you? How can you use those blessings to bless other people?



What Games Are Out

Title	Content	Rating & Platform
<i>Angry Birds</i>	In this popular puzzle game, players launch birds, via slingshot, at pigs. It's spreading to more formats and merchandise, with a possible TV series or movie down the road.	E; PlayStation 3, phone app, Windows, Mac (soon coming to Wii and more)
<i>Scripps Spelling Bee</i>	Users practice their spelling words while increasing their vocabularies. A dictionary offers definitions and pronunciations.	E; Nintendo DS
<i>PokePark Wii: Pikachu's Adventure</i>	Players compete in skill games in 14 different levels. Also contains an in-game economy based on berries that players can "cash in."	E; Wii

RATINGS: EC=Early Childhood, E=Everyone (ages 6+), E10+ (ages 10+), T=Teen (ages 13+)



What's happening right now that may affect your children and family:

- Young stutterers are encouraged by the film *The King's Speech*. "I'm not stupid," says an 11 year old who's stuttered since preschool. (AP)
- The popularity of cell-phone cameras has hospitals re-evaluating delivery-room rules. Some expectant parents are fighting restrictions via online petition. (New York Times)



Quick Stats

- One in seven new marriages is between spouses of different races or ethnicities. (Pew Research Center)
- Nearly one in 10 kids who plays video games is at risk of addiction. (Pediatrics)
- A study saying working parents have 90 minutes of free time a day is news to many stressed-out folks. Author Susan Bartell suggests using kids' activities for down time and social time. (moms.today.com)

April 2011 Calendar						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 7:00 Stations	2
3 No Class	4 No Class	5	6 No Class	7	8 7:00 Stations	9
10 Track A 6:00 "Share The Spirit"	11 Track B Sal Solo 7th & 8th	12	13 Track C - Session 19	14	15 7:00 Stations	16
17 Palm Sunday	18 Track B 6:30 VBS Mtg	19 Passover	20 Passover (Cont.)	21 Holy Thursday Passover (Cont.)	22 Earth Day Good Friday	23 Passover (Cont.) 8:30 RCIA prac. 7:00 Easter Vigil
Track A			Track C		Living Stations	
24 Easter Passover (Cont.)	25 Passover (Cont.)	26 Passover (Cont.)	27	28	29	30
Holidays:	US Holidays & Notable	Christian / Catholic Holidays	Jewish Holidays			

TRI-PARISH RECONCILIATION
 Monday, April 18th at Ss. Cyril & Methodius
 1st Session 4:00 - 5:30 PM
 2nd Session 6:30 - 8:00 PM



First Communion

Religious Education Program
Sat, May 7, 2011
Track A: 10 am
Tracks B & C: 12:30 pm

Practices

Track A: Monday, 5/2 from 6:00 pm – 7:30 pm
 Thursday, 5/5 from 6:00 pm – 7:00 pm

Tracks B & C: Wednesday, 5/4 from 6:00 pm – 7:30pm
 Friday, 5/6 from 6:00 pm – 7:00pm