

# CONNECTIONS

Your Resource for Building a Strong Catholic Family

## Guardian Angels



There is a feast day coming up on October 2nd named The Feast of the Holy Guardian Angels. But what are guardian angels? Do they exist? How do we explain them?

The belief regarding angels in human form, not animal form, can be traced throughout the history of the Holy Bible. Pagan societies stole the belief of angels from God's chosen people: the Jews. They made animal statues with wings and human heads to represent their interpretation of guardian angels, or messengers that were found in the Holy Scriptures.

So, where does the origin of "guardian" angels come from? It comes from the Gospel of Matthew where Jesus said, "Take care that you do not despise one of these little ones; for, I tell you, in heaven their angels continually see the face of my Father in heaven."

Jesus revealed to mankind that everyone has a guardian angel.

Saint Jerome expanded on this matter in his commentary when he said, "The dignity of a soul is so great that each has a guardian angel from its birth."

In the Catechism of the Catholic Church, we read, "From infancy to death, human life is surrounded by their watchful care and intercession. Beside each believer stands an angel as protector and shepherd leading him through life. Already here on earth, the Christian life shares by faith in the blessed company of angels and men united in God."

In honor of this feast day, the following is a prayer that families can use to their assigned guardian angels, especially at the beginning of another school year:

*Angel of God, my Guardian dear, to whom God's love commits me here, ever this day be at my side, to light and guard, to rule and guide. Amen.*

## As Our Summer Ends



As our summer ends, and we start to get ready for fall, do you remember that feeling of anticipation and awareness as we began a new school year and looked forward to seeing our friends again? Remember that moment when you walked into your classroom for the first time, trying to contain your nervous energy as well as a sense of wonder at the new sights? Imagine if we could transfer that into our Mass? How different would the Church and mass appear if we looked at it through the eyes of a "new student"?

As we look around the Church, do we notice the subtle changes? Maybe there is a new arrangement in front of the

altar, or new faces next to us at Mass? Do we greet them as excitedly as we did new students in our classroom? If we reached out to those around us in Mass with the same enthusiasm we did new classmates, we could help newcomers feel welcomed. We could create an environment in our Church that helped invite people to attend.

Part of our Catholic faith is evangelization. We often don't associate this as one of our focuses. However, without growth, a church fails to thrive. We need to continue to be aware of this aspect of our faith. How this relates to each of us varies. We need to ask ourselves, how are we being called to demonstrate our faith. Some of us will lead

by example, others may feel a call to vocalize their faith and 'spread the Good News'. All of us are blessed with different gifts. It is important to look within ourselves and listen to what God is asking us to do. He may be asking us to provide our talent, or possibly our treasure. We all can find more ways to give of our time, including a private moment for prayer or reading of the scripture. Or even with simple acts of kindness throughout our day. The choice is up to you...how will your new beginning look?

### Symbol Key



#### Formation

Fills in the holes of faith knowledge that may have been missed growing up and highlights what makes Catholics distinct.



#### Prayer and Worship

Understanding what happens at Mass and incorporating prayer into family life.



#### Family (The Domestic Church)

Incorporating Catholic customs and traditions into family life.



#### Charity and Service

Highlights charity and service opportunities for the family within St. Francis Parish and the greater community.

# Charity and Service



With fall fast approaching, families across the country are gearing up for the start of school and the hectic schedules of sports and after school activities. All of the busyness is necessary as we prepare our families for another year of learning, growth and challenges. Through these activities, we hope our children will learn valuable skills and education to become active Catholics and contributing members of society.

With such packed schedules, families may overlook one of the most important parts of our faith as well as a valuable building block of moral development: service. Modern Catholic Social Teaching, rooted in Scripture and articulated through written documents, has changed over time in response to the differing challenges that arise in society. However, all teachings emphasize serving others: those who are hungry, homeless, isolated, oppressed, unborn, elderly, sick and poor.

Service is a wonderful way for families to instill Catholic values in the younger generation and teach the importance of giving back to others. Kids love active learning and nothing is more active than participating in a service project as a family. Adults leading by example and exposing children to a variety of new situations help create children who are not only compassionate, contributing members of society, but also help develop flexible problem solving skills and adaptability so needed in today's fast paced world.

Service projects need not be overwhelming. As long as families choose and participate in a project together and find time to discuss their experiences afterwards, any area of interest can provide wonderful growing experiences for adults and kids alike. In fact, smaller but more frequent volunteering teaches kids that service is not something we do every once in a while, but rather it is part of our everyday lives as Catholics.

This school year, be sure to set aside some time to serve together. Family serving is time well spent and will impact our kids for years to come.



### Mission Statement

The Strong Catholic Families initiative at St. Francis will provide support to help families pass on the traditions of the faith and share the love of Christ.

For more information visit: <http://www.stfrancissherwood.org/>  
(Go to: Faith Formation then Strong Catholic Families)

# Enter The Journey



*"Enter the journey. Come to the song.  
By God you are chosen, by name you are called  
to follow the vision, carry the cross.*

*Enter the journey of faith as the family of God."*

As the lyrics of this hymn resound during Mass, one is reminded that we are journeying into Fall and the changes this season brings. Some "travelers" slow and enjoy the change in colors with less watering and less yard work. Some gear up for the journey of a new school year. Some share the loss of someone close. Some have graduating students, which forever changes the landscape of a family. It matters not where we are in our lives, our God asks us to enter the journey as a family of God.

It is very difficult not to let the pressures of the world distract us from the real priorities of life. The schedules imposed by activities in families not only take away quality time together, it makes worshiping and giving thanks to our God and creator very difficult to fit in every week. This year, when you receive your activities/sports schedules, write in the time each weekend your family will attend Mass. Make

it first in your planning. St. Anthony, Tigard has Mass at 7:30 am on Sunday. Resurrection Parish in Tualatin has a 4:30 pm mass on Saturday and our own St. Francis parish has a 5:30pm Saturday and 5:00pm Sunday evening Mass that helps families navigate their journey of faith. The Eucharist is our food for the journey. It is Thanksgiving.

Mass time changes for Sunday morning will allow Religious Education teachers more time to share their faith with the elementary students. Don't waste the opportunity to let your children know what you value most, by insuring their attendance in as many classes as possible or asking the RE staff what they missed so you can fill in the blanks. Prayer keeps all of us grounded and brings peace and comfort to hectic and busy lives. As parents, it is vital that we do all we can to equip our children with every opportunity possible so they can follow the vision, carry their cross, and continue their journey of faith in this family of God.



## WORD SEARCH FIND THE HIDDEN WORDS

Search to find the words for items found in the Church

P	Y	K	S	U	B	N	T	F	A	K	R	T	P	N
O	R	B	L	K	B	M	A	E	N	M	P	E	W	S
H	T	T	L	Q	V	F	B	E	H	K	Z	P	E	C
S	S	T	E	E	P	L	E	Q	W	E	Y	E	T	W
I	E	A	B	Y	A	L	R	E	T	S	I	N	I	M
B	V	U	U	L	I	S	N	N	O	M	R	E	S	M
K	Y	X	I	N	I	Z	A	S	O	I	X	R	V	U
L	X	T	G	Y	V	S	C	Y	A	R	P	E	J	S
T	I	J	L	S	P	Y	L	Z	W	W	R	A	O	I
B	F	H	E	I	R	D	E	K	N	T	M	D	L	C
R	I	Y	P	N	I	X	O	R	G	A	N	I	S	T
I	C	M	S	G	E	E	L	B	I	B	A	N	D	K
O	U	N	O	I	S	R	O	B	E	S	J	G	W	C
H	R	S	G	N	T	L	H	K	M	M	O	S	Z	H
C	C	C	W	G	S	C	R	O	S	S	A	Y	H	M

Bells  
Bible  
Bishop  
Choir  
Cross  
Crucifix  
Gospel  
Hymns  
Kneeling  
Minister  
Music  
Organist  
Pews  
Pray  
Priest  
Readings  
Robes  
Sermon  
Singing  
Steeple  
Tabernacle  
Vestry