

Celebrating the Faith

The suggestions below are simple ways Christian families can recall their faith and rejoice together throughout the year. Try out several, use what works, and modify them to your family's interests and needs.

Highs and Lows

Make a practice of gathering as a family every day. Set a time and place, and be consistent, especially in the beginning. (While mornings, evenings, and mealtimes are natural for many families, use your own rhythms to make it appealing and convenient.) Let each family member share a high and/or low point of his or her day. This is a good way to connect to one another on a daily basis, to offer support and encouragement where it is needed, and to celebrate accomplishments as a family



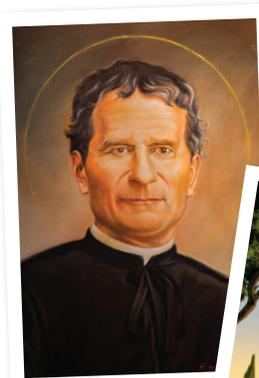
Holidays

Emphasize the Christian roots of major holidays. The Incarnation and resurrection can be far more powerful (and important) images than those of Santa Claus and the Easter Bunny. Incorporate Mass, Bible and devotional reading, and other traditions into your preparations and celebrations. Help children understand why we give gifts and treats: to remember and imitate God's great generosity. Allow your faith to guide the kinds and number of presents you buy, as well as your overall gift and holiday budgets. Gift exchanges, charitable donations, and service is an excellent way to model stewardship:



Saints and Feasts

Just as important is celebrating sacramental moments in your family, such as feast days, baptismal birthdays, and key dates of growth or conversion. Mark them on your calendar. Build a special litany (list) of patron saints using names, important dates, parish and community patrons, and favorites. Learn about these saints as a family, and encourage your children to speak to their patron saint(s), asking for his or her holy intercession.



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