


## February 2008

Sunday 3rd

Ordinary Time 4  
True Happiness


Mt 5:1-12

Tuesday 5th

 Shrove Tuesday


*Make the most of Mardi Gras (Fat Tuesday) before beginning the fast of Lent.*

Wednesday 6th

 Ash Wednesday

*Mark the beginning of Lent with the ashes of your Lenten commitment.*

Fridays in Lent

 Stations of the Cross

*Children love the candles in this family ritual of hope in the darkness.*

Sunday 10

Lent 1  
Temptation!

Mt 4:1-11

Sunday 17

Lent 2  
The Glory of God

Mt 17:1-9

Sunday 24

Lent 3  
Living Water

Jn 4:5-42

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# Family Rituals

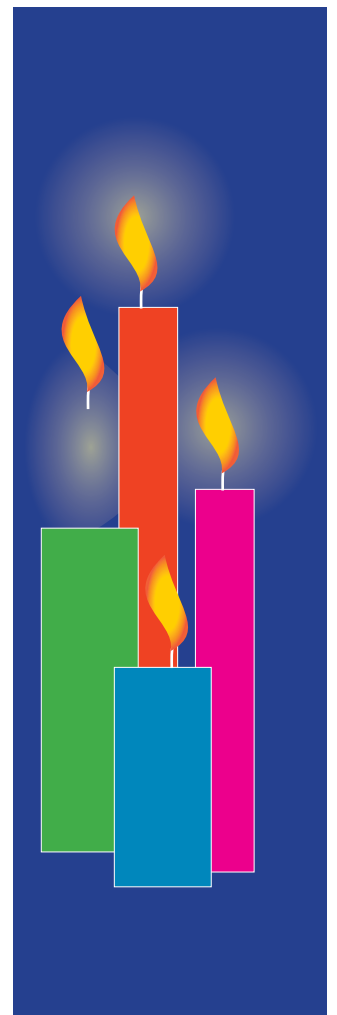
Rituals are tremendously important in family life. Many of our fondest memories of our childhood relate to family rituals, like long Christmas lunches, Sunday walks on the beach, buying ice-creams after Mass, praying the Rosary or reading bedtime stories together.

Rituals nurture the emotional and spiritual health of the family. They promote belonging and intimacy in our family relationships. They punctuate our lives with purposeful and memorable encounters with each other. Faith rituals in particular play an integral role in forming our children in their faith. Every family will develop its own unique expression but you might like to consider these ideas to enliven your family's faith life.

## Everyday Prayer Rituals

Children benefit from predictable routines so establish some simple prayer rituals that you can use everyday.

- **Grace before meals** is a simple way to bring God and his blessings into our awareness
- **Family prayer-time** is a wonderful way for family members to bond and reflect on their day
- If you're not in the habit of praying the **Rosary**, try 'The Rosary Keychain': a simple adaptation of this traditional prayer which works well with children
- A wonderful way to settle young children for sleep is with a **bedtime blessing**. Given by the parent, a bedtime blessing is calming affirmation of the child's goodness and value.



Create a Family  
Prayer Space.



## Special Occasion Rituals

Deepen your family's faith by marking special occasions with some more elaborate rituals. For example:

- **Ash Wednesday.** Mark the beginning of Lent by making your own ashes
- **Stations of the Cross.** Kids love candles. Start with twelve lit candles and blow one out with each station
- **Passover.** Get in touch with the Jewish roots of the Mass
- **Saint Days.** We celebrate birthdays, but why not celebrate your child's Saint day? Look up the saint with a name that corresponds to one your child's names and mark it with a special prayers and celebrations
- **Sacrament Celebrations.** Don't leave the preparation of your child for the sacraments for the school to do all the work! There are many ways that you can contribute to their formation for these important events
- **Advent.** Don't let the frenzy of Christmas consumerism dominate your family. Make Advent a time of prayerful anticipation of Jesus' birthday.