

*June
In the Year
of Mercy*

*Your Family's
Door of Mercy*



Teaching the Way of Love

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Summer's Merciful Blessings

Summer is here. This is the time when, many of us scramble to organize care during the day for our kids. This can be perceived as a burden; one that can often frustrate us to the point of looking at our kids as the problem rather than at the schedule as the real problem.

A recent article in the One More Soul newsletter helped me remember that children are really blessings and not burdens – especially during the summer months when there is extra time to actually reconnect with them. Enjoy the read.

Children are treasures.

Jason Adams, a One More Soul author and a friend of mine, once wrote: "Once I worried about what I would have to give up in having children; now I know there is nothing that I would not give up for my children. They are infinitely more valuable to me than anything I own." My own experience confirms this. My children have proven to be more valuable than everything else I have.

Children help us value the future.

Every child helps us look to the future. Once we have a child, we start being concerned about how that child will be doing 5, 10, 20 years from now. We start making plans for the future, and we take steps to fulfill those plans. Children strengthen our hope for a great future.

Children open our hearts.

If we never concerned ourselves with mercy and compassion, or with trust and fidelity, suddenly these virtues become very important to us. Seeing our children grow up opens to us vistas of who we can be, vistas that were hidden before.

Children toughen us.

Maybe I was a whiner; maybe I couldn't bear setbacks or obstacles; maybe I felt that life was too much for me. Now, with children, I have a motivation to just get over those things and press on with life. I have become a more solid citizen and more valuable to myself and to those around me.

Children show us new things.

Children have new eyes and new approaches to life. One of my daughters is an artist and is



- **PLEASE PRAY THAT**
- **Parents will book time this summer to be with their children.**
- **The Sacrament of Reconciliation will be used as a source of grace and forgiveness by more Catholics.**
- **Families can become a places where virtue comes alive and children always feel secure in love.**
- **We will all learn to forgive in love so we can receive forgiveness in love.**
- **Our love for God will grow stronger and be passed on to our children.**
- **Children will witness the love and mercy of God in Sacramental Marriage.**
- **No child (or parent) will ever feel they are beyond God's loves and mercy.**

Because humanity passes by way of the family...

constantly finding new ways to make our home beautiful. One is a great organizer and frequently helps put family events together, to say nothing of organizing events of her own. Each has strengths that we as parents did not have and each contributes something fresh to the family.

Children help us treasure the present moment.

Little children live in the present and mirror to us just how valuable the present is. For them the thing they are doing right now is the most important thing in the world. What a lesson for us all.

Children become adults.

One of the most wonderful things about children is that they grow, and grow and grow. They become as large as we are and often larger and stronger, physically and spiritually as well. We learn to lean on them for many things we never could do, or can no longer do.

Children make wonderful friends.

A friend is glad to see us no matter what, and always glad to do something for us, if at all possible. Children are like that; they love us and are not afraid to show it.

Children teach us discipline.

When it comes to holding our temper, doing a task we really don't want to do, or stretching ourselves a bit more than we would be inclined to, children excel, especially small children. New babies, particularly the first baby, make parents many times more patient, more loving, and more accommodating than they ever were before.

Children reflect God to us.

God's presence shines from the eyes of newborns and radiates from the simplicity of small children. God is shared with us by the wisdom that comes to us from grown-up children, and also the wisdom that we share with them, wisdom that we didn't know we had. God's presence grows in the love that is shared between us and our children.

By Vince Sacksteder III, One More Soul, April 15, 2016

How Children Bless their Parents20160415/www.OneMoreSoul.com

Here is your Summer Challenge

Your challenge this summer is to book time to play with and enjoy your children. Set aside time each and every week to "just be" with your kids.

This time should provide you and your family with a chance to reconnect as a domestic church. Activities might include;

- A picnic in the backyard or a nearby park
- A family bike ride or stroll.
- Star gazing (wear your PJs!)
- Breakfast in bed followed by recalling your favorite family memory
- Reading a book together (pick it out together)
- A water balloon or garden hose fight (for the less ambitious—a run through sprinklers)
- Playing flashlight tag
- Host a family dance off—who can rock the best moves!

Make this a summer your kids will always recall as one of the best!

This challenge is just a small part of good Catholic parenting. Visit www.twl4parents.com for more strategies that will help you become the best parent you can be. And for the best systematic approach to parenting, consider purchasing the Teaching the Way of Love program, which can be found at the same website.

This article series is brought to you by Alice Heinzen and Jeff Arrowood, authors of the Teaching the Way of Love home study series for parents. Find out more at www.twl4parents.com/teaching-the-way-of-love.