



[If you haven't already, begin your meal with meal prayer, then take turns reading these boxes aloud, following the directions where applicable]

Feast of St. Patrick

On March 17th, we celebrate St. Patrick. St. Patrick was raised Christian but he didn't really grow a deep relationship with God until he was captured from Britain and became a slave in Ireland. While spending time as a shepherd, St. Patrick spent his many lonely and hungry hours each day recalling the scriptures he had been taught. He began speaking to God and came to know him as the Good Shepherd. Eventually, God showed Patrick a path to freedom and he was able to return to his family. However, Patrick used his freedom to become a priest and even asked to return to Ireland to bring Christ to those whom he had met, who did not know God. Legend has it he drove away the snakes of Ireland and used the shamrock to explain the Holy Trinity. Just like the shamrock is three leaves in one plant, God is three persons (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) yet only one God. This year, make your family celebrations of St. Patrick's Day about the man and the beauty of the Catholic faith, instead of leprechauns and rainbows.

Solemnity of St. Joseph

On March 19 each year Catholics celebrate the Solemnity of St. Joseph, protector of the family and patron of the universal Church and of workers. A table overflowing with good Italian food honoring St. Joseph is a traditional Sicilian custom. The feast of San Giuseppe began in the Middle Ages when Sicily was suffering from a severe drought and the desperate people begged St. Joseph for rain. When they received rainy weather in response, they held a huge "feste" in Saint Joseph's honor. Symbols associated with Joseph include the carpenter's square and lily. The carpenter's square not only symbolizes Joseph's trade but also the concept of truth. The lily represents purity and Joseph's celibate marriage to the Virgin Mary. Joseph is often referred to as the father in the shadows. In fact, none of Joseph's words are written in the gospels and little was recorded about his life. However, his actions speak volumes and he remains an essential patron for us in his strength, purity, and quick obedience to the Lord.

Discussion

[These questions are a spark for conversation, not a strict outline.]

- How has the last week of Lent been? What has been challenging? How has your relationship with God grown?
- St. Patrick talked to the Irish people about God. Who could you talk to about God in the next week? What talents, passions, or gifts do you have that could be used to tell people about Jesus... St. Patrick used the shamrock, what could you use?
- How could you practice silence and obedience like St. Joseph this week? How might they help you grow closer to God?

Activity & Prayer

[For this activity section, you will need the additional resource provided by the parish. If you don't have it, you can download it on our website]

Choose a few activities from the handout pages to celebrate St. Patrick and St. Joseph - you can complete them now or plan ahead to do them on their actual feast days later this week. End your time tonight glorifying the trinity by praying the sign of the cross, the glory be, and/or the breastplate prayer below:

The Breastplate Of St. Patrick Prayer

*Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me,
Christ in me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ on my right, Christ on my left,
Christ when I lie down, Christ when I sit down,
Christ in the heart of every man who thinks of me,
Christ in the mouth of every man who speaks of me,
Christ in the eye that sees me,
Christ in the ear that hears me.*

Extras

Epic audio drama of the life of St. Patrick for Adults & Teens - some parts may be scary for small children:

<https://watch.formed.org/video/s/the-trials-of-saint-patrick-1>

St. Patrick Cartoon:

<https://watch.formed.org/video/s/patrick-brave-shepherd-of-the-emerald-isle>

Animated video about St. Patrick for Elementary+:

<https://watch.formed.org/video/s/the-story-of-saint-patrick>

Children's e- book about an encounter with St. Patrick:

<https://watch.formed.org/st-patrick-s-summer-a-children-s-adventure-catechism-by-marigold-hunt>

St. Patrick Crafts, Food, Etc.:

<https://www.catholicicing.com/catholic-st-patricks-day-ideas/>

St. Joseph Crafts, Food Etc.:

<https://thekennedyadventures.com/celebrate-saint-joseph/>

St. Joseph Cartoon:

<https://watch.formed.org/video/s/lukas-storyteller-saint-joseph>

Sacramental Life

This week's journal prompt for first reconciliation/communion: What are you most looking forward to about the sacrament of the Eucharist? What questions do you have about the sacrament of the Eucharist?

This week's confirmation work is: **Interview Your Confirmation Sponsor.**

Look at the questions listed on the website. Meet with your sponsor and discuss the questions and record your thoughts in your journal.

Consecration to St. Joseph: The Wonders of Our Spiritual Father

Book by Donald Calloway

Talk on St. Joseph

<https://watch.formed.org/video/s/st-joseph-patron-of-the-universal-church-by-mark-miravalle>

Looking Ahead

For Next Week, March 22:

- See the parish or website for additional handouts and coloring pages

Upcoming:

- Confirmation AND First Reconciliation/Communion Students - your whole family should plan to attend on April 12 6-7:30 pm at St. Augustine for a formation night.

