

## A Learning Companion to FAITH Magazine

### Discussion: How Do We Respond to Children?

The recent act of terrorism on our country has shaken us to the core. How we respond to the questions and fears of children is paramount in helping them feel safe and secure.

#### 1. Don't Hide Your Emotions

We worry that the way we respond to tragedy, such as the terrorist attacks in New York, will frighten or traumatize our children. Is it okay for youngsters to see us cry, sadly shake our heads or hear our gasps of concern as we watch the news or read the paper? Should we turn off the T.V. and only speak of this atrocity when the kids are in the other room? Experts in child psychiatry and sociology have offered this advice:

- *If a parent cries with confidence, no problem. It displays a healthy range of emotion and teaches children how to cope with their own feelings.* — J.T. Walkup, MD, of John Hopkins Childs Center
- *One of the things we want to help children do is externalize rather than internalize their feelings. We give them permission to do so when they see adults weep openly.* — Stu Cohen, MEd, EdS

Both experts agreed that the way adults control and maintain their emotions is important. Children need to see grown-ups express and share their fears and concerns and then watch them go ahead and function and refocus their energies on the tasks of daily life. This sense of normalcy will help the children feel safer and more secure.

#### 2. Be Sensitive with Information

At what age should adults broach the topic of war with children? Stu Cohen, a counselor for traumatized children, suggests:

- *With young children we need to be much more active in protecting them. Under the age of 4...when they see something on TV that is terrifying and potentially injurious to themselves or others, they are not going to assume that it happened hundreds of miles away; it could occur right here for them. We must protect by not allowing them to see all the things that are presented.*
- *Older children, adolescents included, need to have the information filtered. Giving too much data can become overwhelming and confusing.*

All children need to feel a sense of security within their own home. It is important to maintain a daily routine. Eating and bed-times should remain consistent. A true feeling of comfort can be found when a family draws upon their religious beliefs. Prayer can be a powerful source of reassurance.



## Dealing With Tragedy

a guide for parents,  
teachers, and  
pastoral ministers

### Lesson: Turn to the Cross

In ancient times, Romans used crucifixion as a means of death reserved only for the lowest of humanity. Death by the cross was the most barbaric and torturous death thought possible. Only those guilty of the most heinous crimes should be crucified. Alas, look what our awesome God has done; He took an abjectly evil symbol, the cross, and turned it into the mark of salvation, triumph and resurrection! A symbol that brings such a sense of hope that we wear it around our necks and hang it on our walls to be forever reminded of the perfect love His Son had for us.

On September 11, 2001, a few misguided individuals performed an evil, barbaric act of terrorism killing thousands of innocent people who were simply going about their work-a-day lives. Alas, look what our awesome God has done! Through the death, destruction and pain of this senseless act men and women of all races, creeds and religions are working side by side. Hundreds of thousands are praying, worshipping and calling on the Lord for strength. Many who have been away from church have returned. A United States that was made up of many individuals has become one nation under God once more. An evil symbol turned to triumph.

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#### Activity: Pray and Fast

##### Pray as a family

This may sound simple and contrite but there is real power and great comfort in prayers such as the Rosary. Read the Scripture passages that correspond to the Sorrowful Mysteries (see right). Meditating on the sufferings of Christ can provide deep insight into suffering today. Other prayers may include having every family member share:

- 1) *what they are thankful to God for*
- 2) *what they are fearful of*
- 3) *what they hope for*

You may want to write down things you are thankful for, fearful of, and hopeful for, to remind you to pray about them daily.

##### Fast between meals

This self-sacrifice is pleasing to God. We can offer our discomfort for the sins of the terrorists. Why should we atone for the sins of such scoundrels? Jesus **died** for our **sins**. Fasting also puts us in a spiritual space of recognizing that our most important need is God. By giving up something and donating it, to Catholic Charities for example, we can help others and help ourselves become spiritually stronger.

#### How to Pray the Rosary

*Start by making*

##### The Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

*Then pray*

##### The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day He rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. He will come again to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and life everlasting. Amen.

*Then say 1 "Our Father", 3 "Hail Mary's" for the virtues of Faith, Hope and Charity; and then 1 "Glory Be":*

**Our Father**, Who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy Will be done, On earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day, our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.



**Hail Mary**, Full of Grace, The Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now, and at the hour of death. Amen.

**Glory Be** to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

##### The Mysteries of the Rosary

The Rosary is divided into three parts, each having five mysteries. While reciting each mystery, one says one "Our Father", 10 "Hail Mary's" and 1 "Glory Be" (which makes up one decade):

##### The Joyful Mysteries

*(Mondays, Thursdays. Also during the season of Advent they are recited on Sundays):*

1. The Annunciation (Luke 1:26-38)
2. The Visitation (Luke 1:39-56)
3. The Nativity (Luke 2:1-20)
4. The Presentation (Luke 2:22-39)
5. The Finding of Jesus in the Temple (Luke 2:42-52)

##### The Sorrowful Mysteries

*(Tuesdays, Fridays. Also during the season of Lent they are recited on Sundays):*

1. The Agony in the Garden (Luke 22:39-44)
2. The Scourging at the Pillar (Matt. 27:26)
3. The Crowning with Thorns (Matt. 27:28-31)
4. The Carrying of the Cross (Luke 23:26-32)
5. The Crucifixion (Matt. 27:33-50)

##### The Glorious Mysteries

*(Wednesday, Saturdays. Also Sundays they are recited from Easter until the season of Advent):*

1. The Resurrection (Matt. 28:1-7)
2. The Ascension (Luke 24:50-51)
3. The Descent of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1-4)
4. The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Rev. 12:1-6)
5. The Coronation of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Rev. 12:1-6)

*After each Mystery the "Fatima Prayer" is said:*

**O my Jesus**, forgive us our sins, save us from the fire of hell, lead all souls to heaven, especially those who are in most need of Thy mercy.

*The "Hail Holy Queen" is said after the completion of the five mysteries:*

**Hail, holy Queen**, mother of mercy, our life, our sweetness, and our hope. To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve. To thee do we send up our sighs mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn then, most gracious advocate, thine eyes of mercy toward us, and after this our exile show us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.