

Spreading the Good News: Love & Respect One Another

In his book, *Educating for Life*, Thomas Groome uses the phrase: “*Here comes everybody!*” as a hallmark of Catholic identity. Over the centuries, the Church has welcomed all manner of people embracing the full dimension of human diversity. It is that diversity the Living Christ uses as the extension of His compassion and mercy in every corner of the world. We are “everybody,” journeying through our time on earth following the footsteps of the One who shines through every good work.

This is spreading the Good News: to proclaim through word and witness who Jesus Christ is – the gift of God’s grace and mercy (EN, 25). The Church tells us that God’s gift of salvation exceeds all limits of human experience in order that we may reach our destiny of communion with God begun in this life and fulfilled completely in eternity (EN 27). We have every reason to hope because our life in Christ is drenched in the water and wine of God’s covenantal love.

St. Augustine wrote: “*We become what we love.*” We should strive to become like God. Thus if our vision of the human person is one drenched in God’s love, then how do we judge one another? How do we treat one another? Is any human being to be less loved by us if they are completely loved by God?

As we experience the February days of life and work, here are some tips to help us and our children to convert our thoughts to what we want to become.

1. Make a list of people, using three categories: the ones I love, acquaintances, and people who challenge me. After each person’s name write one positive attribute for him or her. Remember each person kindly this month.
2. Visit a library or museum with your children. Select trade books that highlight the contributions of African-Americans. Read their stories and discuss the heroism of these people.
3. Find various pictures of yourself growing up. Look at your eyes and your face. Describe the way God’s light shines through you at each stage of your life. How does this make you feel?
4. Thinking about the Church as a welcoming community, choose one February saint that your family does not know. Research the life of this saint. Explain why you think this person is a hero of the Church.
5. Make a February calendar with your students. List one attribute of God for each day of the month. Write the name of someone you know who reflects this attribute: a family member, a friend, a neighbor, a saint, or someone who is helping society. Tell a story about one of these people.

6. Write a psalm prayer about the wonderful attributes of God.
7. Agree on a family project to help poor people who are especially impacted by the winter's cold. How do the faces of the poor help us to see God?

References:

Paul VI, *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 1975.

Thomas Groome, *Educating for Life: A Spiritual Vision for Every Teacher and Parent*, 1998, Thomas More An RCL Company, Allen, TX.

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