

## St. Aloysius Religious Education 2018-2019

### 4<sup>th</sup> Grade

- 4:00pm Welcome (*To ensure accuracy, class attendance must be accurately recorded by a catechist and not another student - class attendance is an official document retained by the parish and the diocese*)
- 4:05pm *We Gather* - in Prayer at the prayer table  
(*use colored table covering for appropriate liturgical season*)  
Use the Gospel Reading “Hearing the Word” from the previous Sunday in Celebrating Sunday for Catholic Families book in the prayer box
- 4:10pm Read about a Saint from the “Patrons and Protectors” series (*Occupations, More Occupations and In Times of Need*) by Brother Michel (Mickey) McGrath and show the artwork – Brother Mickey puts the Holy Spirit (*symbolized by a white dove*) somewhere in each painting ... see if you can find Him☺
- 4:15pm Review previous lesson using Sharing Faith (*use chapter test in book*)

4:20pm **Chapter #9 “The 1<sup>st</sup> Commandment”**  
***“I, the Lord, am your God. You shall not have strange gods before me”***

We should appreciate the meaning of God’s covenant to us and choose to put God 1st in our lives. We often think that the Ten Commandments are just a list of do’s and don’ts. They are seldom seen as more than specific (and very rigid) rules. However, *God also intended them to be guidelines that can help Christians make decisions about things that appear to be outside the intention of the explicit command and therefore useful for every step and decision in their lives.* Trust God - you cannot serve two masters. You will love one and hate the other. God asks for all your love and when you give your love to God he fills you with more love so you can give love to more and more people. *Discuss statues and icons as reminders of God in our life.*

**Chapter #11 “The 3<sup>rd</sup> Commandment”**

***“Remember to keep holy The Lord’s Day***

The Lord’s Day provides us with an opportunity to worship God, set time aside for our families, and renew and refresh our bodies, spirits and hearts.

*St. Thomas reminds us that the habits we form become part of us. Striving in virtue enables us to form our will with the right habits. As we perform Acts of Mercy we grow in Grace, by following Jesus’ example, and become more merciful.*

• *We Believe –*

**Prayer** – listening and talking to god with our minds and hearts.

**Worship** – giving god thanks and praise.

**Idolatry** – giving worship to a creature or thing instead of god.

**Covenant** – a special agreement between god and his people

**Psalm** – a song of praise to honor the Lord.

**Bless** – to dedicate someone or something to God or to make holy in God’s name.

**Reverence** – honor, love and respect.

**Sacred** – another word for holy.

**Sabbath** – the day of rest set apart to honor God in a special way.

**Synagogue** – the gathering place where Jewish people pray and learn about God.

**Holy Day of Obligation** – a day that is set apart to celebrate a special event in the life of Jesus, Mary or the saints.

**Corporal Works of Mercy** – things we do to care for the physical needs of others.

**Spiritual Works of Mercy** – things we do to care for the minds, hearts, and souls of others.

- *We Respond – 1<sup>st</sup> Commandment Treasure Hunt* (see below)

4:50pm      Closing Prayer

Ask the children to say a petition aloud for someone or something they would like to pray for.

***”How can you use God’s name in a more prayerful and worthy manner?”***  
***”How can you make God a greater priority in your life this week?”***

## *1<sup>st</sup> Commandment Treasure Hunt*

The First Commandment, *“I, the Lord, am your God. You shall not have strange gods before me”* is very important in teaching loyalty to God, even when we are called upon to make sacrifices or tough choices. Children like rules and the Ten Commandments are quite telling about the nature of goodness!

Tell the children that they are starting class with a treasure hunt. There are gold coins hidden all over the room. There are also four bigger silver treasures (balled up pieces of aluminum foil) hidden in the room.

Bring the silver balls to the front of the room. Open the silver balls and find four pieces of paper hidden inside. Put them in this order: **What is a god?**

Ask the children, *“What is a god? Answers will range from someone you worship to someone who answers prayers. **“A god is something that you want so badly or love so much that you can’t remember your love for God the Father.”***

God’s intentions are deeper than preventing us from following another religion. He wants us to put Him first all of the time. We are to love the Lord supremely, and keep obedience to God foremost in our hearts. Not because He is an egotistical, self-centered bully but because He loves us so much He wants us to love Him in the same way. He knows that the only way we can be fulfilled is through His love. When God says, “You shall have no other gods before me,” it means you can love your stuff, but not to the point where you’re almost worshipping your stuff. Ask – *“**What stuff they can think of that could become a god or idol?**”* When kids put too much emphasis on winning the game, having the latest electronics and wearing the trendiest clothes, they’re putting material possessions before God. *Ask yourself: **Where are my priorities?*** (Material things, activities, etc... = each represents a gold coin). *For each answer a child puts a gold coin into the class basket.* This will be their introduction to sacrifices and tough choices. **Children should learn at an early age that a god is anything we love so much that it clouds our love for the Father, or more importantly, His love for us.**

God would like for us to help those less fortunate. Ask about sharing. Can they give something they really want for themselves to another who may have less than they do? *For homework ask the children to practice living this commandment and next week tell the class how they were able to put God 1<sup>st</sup> in their daily life – they will receive a gold coin for each occasion they followed the 1<sup>st</sup> Commandment.*

**What**

**is a**

**god?**

**1. What is God's name?**

- In the Hebrew, there are four consonants used to spell God's name. In English we see them as YHWH. We pronounce them as Jehovah or Yahweh.
- The name Jehovah comes from the Hebrew verb to be.
- In Exodus, Moses was at the burning bush and he asked God what His name was. God replied, "I AM WHO I AM"; and He said, "Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'"
- 1. God is the infinite being. He is the one who inhabits eternity. Psalm 90:2 says, "Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God."
- 2. God is the one who inhabits eternity. He is the eternal being.
- 3. He didn't say His name was Frank, or Bob.
- 4. He did not say his name was Baal, Krishna, or Allah, which are all names given to false god's by people.
- 5. His name is the transcendent, the eternal, the continuously present and holy pronouncement of "I AM"
- 6. We see this as Yahweh, or Jehovah.
- The exact pronunciation of God's name has been lost, but when you call upon His name, you are calling upon Him.
- Using His name in any form should be taken with great seriousness.

**2. The name of God is Holy because it is self given.**

- It comes from God's own mouth and God is holy. Therefore, the name is holy.
- God did not adopt the name that some group of people gave to Him.
- 1. He disclosed His own name.
- When you are born, your parents give you a name.
- 1. This is because they are over you, because there was a time when you did not exist and your parents needed something to call you. So they named you.
- 2. Adam was given dominion over the animals and He was given the right to name them.
- But no one has dominion over God. No one has the right to name God.
- God has always existed and He knows who He is.
- 1. He is the eternal one. He is the creator. He is the one who has always been. He is the one who was existing before the creation of the universe and before time existed. He is the great, "I AM."
- Out of God's own nature, out of His own heart, He disclosed His holy name to us. It is self given. His name is Holy and is not to be used in a vain way.

**3. God commands us not to use His name in vain.**

- The word vain is the Hebrew word shav. It has a variety of translations including emptiness, vanity, falsehood, nothingness, emptiness of speech, lying, and worthlessness.
- 1. To misuse God's name means literally, "to lift it up to or attach it to emptiness."**
- 2. No one is to use the Lord's name in this manner.
- Perhaps you've heard unbelievers use God's name in vain.
- 1. They might say, "Oh G-d!" Or "J-sus!" or "J-sus Chri-st!" "GD-it."
- We Christians can easily see how wrong this is.
- Unfortunately, I have heard many Christians use God's name in vain and think nothing of it.
- 1. God wants you to guard your words and make sure you are not using God's name in vain even in normal conversation.**
- 2. Check yourself to make sure you don't use God's name as an expression of surprise, anger, casual mention, or something in jest.
- God's name is too holy for that.

## **Conclusion**

- The unbeliever can call upon God's name in their hour of need.
- The unbeliever can discuss the nature and existence of God and in so doing mention His name.
- But it is only the Christian, who truly has the right to use God's name.
- This is because of the Cross.
- Because of the Cross we have access to the throne.
- Because of the Cross we can pronounce the name of Yahweh without fear.
- Because of the Cross we can know that the Lord hears us.
- Because of the Cross you have the right, the privilege, and the responsibility even more so than anyone else in the world, to use God's name in reverence and fear.
- The Great I AM hears you at all times. Do not use the name of the Lord in vain.

## The Works of Mercy

Mercy is a virtue. It compels us to alleviate the suffering of another. The Church presents us with 7 spiritual and 7 corporal works of mercy. These are ways in which we can practice charity to others and thus bring about tremendous good in the world. The practice of these works is required of all of us. These works are binding. Though it may not always be possible to practice them, as the situation does not present itself to perform these works at all times, we should always take the opportunities to live by these works when possible.

### The 7 Spiritual Works of Mercy:

- To instruct the ignorant;
- To counsel the doubtful;
- To admonish sinners;
- To bear wrongs patiently;
- To forgive offenses willingly;
- To comfort the afflicted;
- To pray for the living and the dead.

The first work is to **instruct the ignorant**. By this we are called to instruct others in the faith. We must therefore, be informed about our faith so that we may properly teach it to those who do not yet know the fullness of the truth.

When we encounter those who are **unsure of their faith, we must affirm** them in it and help them grow. Everyone's faith is tested, as that is the only way it can grow. Untested faith is a house of cards, waiting to collapse. Our faith must be tested in fire so that it may be strong. There are times, however, when that fire causes the faith to be soft and malleable on its way to solidifying. During these times when our loved ones are suffering loss, persecution, or anger, and their faith is in doubt, we must stand by them and offer show them the way. We must show them the ultimate source of strength, Jesus.

The third of these works of mercy is to **admonish the sinner**. This can be the most difficult to carry out. We know that sinfulness is a very secretive and explosive matter. The sinner frequently recognizes his sins, but is defensive about them. Neglect of this particular work of mercy has led to our society being so morally relativistic. If the truth is not made known, it will be forgotten. Though it may cause strife at times, we must bear this cross and carry on. We must tell people when they are sinning. They will likely counter with the line "Stop judging me!" Of course we should not judge others, but sins are committed in plain sight, and so they must be addressed.

We must **bear wrongs patiently**. This is also a very difficult task. Our pride gets in the way. We must not be taken advantage of, says our ego. Truly, when others offend us, injure us, attack us, or undermine us, we are called to "Turn the other cheek". We can do no better than to imitate Christ, the silent victim, who by His patient, courageous endurance of all forms of bodily and mental torture. He was beaten, insulted and killed, yet in His acceptance, He purchased our redemption.

Inseparably bound with the **patient endurance of offenses, is the forgiveness** of them. When our heart is filled with bitterness and grudges, we find no room for the love of Christ within it. Forgiveness requires heroic virtue at times. Mercy dictates that we forgive others' faults and wrongs, even when it pains us greatly and gives us no temporal satisfaction. Heroism requires sacrifice. Sometimes the greatest heroism stems from the sacrifice of pride. Forgiveness is an eternal virtue, as we will find forgiveness after death to the degree that we showed it to others in this life.

There are times when all we can do is to give a thoughtful word to someone in pain or sorrow. We must **comfort the afflicted**. In doing so, we help others cope with difficulties. We build up the dignity of our brothers and sisters in Christ when we give them our time and comfort, for those who suffer, sometimes suffer the most painful of ordeals when they find no one who is willing to help them in their struggles. They find their dignity and self-worth crushed. Let us never leave a friend in misery without some heart-felt words or a loving embrace to lift them out of their affliction.

Finally, the greatest and most powerful form of mercy is **prayer**, for though we can provide physical and emotional aid to our neighbors, the Lord God can provide the greatest aid, which is spiritual. Our prayers are the most important form of mercy we can give. It shows our ultimate dedication to the alleviation of the burdens of others. Our private intercession for our neighbors and for the departed brings us little fame or admiration from others, but in the end, when we stand before God, we will be able to give an account of our prayerful mercy to others, and so Jesus will in turn show us mercy.

These works are not optional. We are called to be merciful. The opportunities are frequent and urgent. Let us not pass by the afflicted in their times of trial. Let us love others through these spiritual works so that through our sacrifice, we may bring others to the greatest joy, which is the vision of God in all His splendor in Heaven.

"And the crowds asked him, "What then should we do?" He said to them in reply, "Whoever has two cloaks should share with the person who has none. And whoever has food should do likewise." - Luke 3:10-11

### **The 7 Corporal Works of Mercy are:**

- To feed the hungry;
- To give drink to the thirsty;
- To clothe the naked;
- To harbor the harborless;
- To visit the sick;
- To ransom the captive;
- To bury the dead.

Faith calls us to practice charity for our neighbors when they are in need. While we know that faith is essential for our salvation, we also know that we cannot be saved by faith alone.

"You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by the works. Thus the scripture was fulfilled that says, 'Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness,' and he was called 'the friend of God.' See how a person is justified by works and not by faith alone." - James 2:22-24

These works of Mercy are the practical and visible ways to exercise our faith to those in need. The first and second of these works are closely related. In contemplating them, we ask ourselves, how often do we help provide for the needs of those who are **hungry and thirsty**? Do we help out at food pantries; do we donate food or money to buy food for the hungry? Our witness can be extremely powerful by giving "our daily bread" to those who so desperately need it.

We are called to give **clothing to the naked**. This thought should compel us to consider the excess of clothing that many of us have. How many pairs of shoes do we need? How many pairs of pants and shirts are really necessary for us? Is it possible for us to donate these excesses of ours in order to bring hope to those who need it?

The issue of **homelessness** is very prominent in our world. Imagine the pain of those who truly have nowhere to go. Do we give money to the many Catholic shelters that provide such crucial aid to those who are unable to provide for themselves?

We must **visit the sick**. In doing so, we uphold the dignity of the human person. Consider the feelings of those who spend so much time in hospitals and nursing homes without the comfort of those they love. How many of our elderly are permanently confined to with little love or attention paid to them? We should freely choose to visit the shut-ins, the sick, and the lonely. We can be a great source of hope in their lives.

Now the sixth work of mercy will undoubtedly perplex many. How many captives do we know? Do we know someone who is held captive by having an unforgiving heart? Consider those in places without the right to freely practice religion. The mere act of going to mass likely brings the threat of **imprisonment**. Do we offer any help to these destitute faithful? Do we offer or even investigate the options available to us in providing help to them? Do we even pray for them? Consider also the possibilities of visiting the imprisoned. Do we care for those in jail? Let us not forget those who are imprisoned, especially those who are held captive because of their love for God.

Finally, the last of the works of the corporal works of mercy urges us to **bury the dead**. Fortunately, in our society, burying the dead is normally done with the necessary respect. There are situations, however, where this respect is forgotten and we treat the dead with neglect. Let us always show due respect for the bodies of those who have gone before us.

In practicing these corporal works of mercy, just as with the spiritual works of mercy, we build up the dignity of the human person. These are opportunities for grace in our daily lives. In exercising the Works of Mercy, we truly follow the commands that Christ gave us:

"Then the king will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father. Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me.' Then the righteous will answer him and say, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? When did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? When did we see you ill or in prison, and visit you?' And the king will say to them in reply, 'Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.'" - Matthew 25:34-40