

*TLC—Total Lifelong Catechesis*  
**Home Kit**  
**The Battle of Prayer—WEEK 2**

***Before you Begin:***

Set table with a religious article (a crucifix, statue of Jesus or Mary, and/or a candle are examples). Be prepared with Bible, Catechism, Children's Folders (Textbook and Assignments), and supplies of pencil, or pen.

Start with Family Prayer

Prayer is important in having a personal relationship with God. And, prayer may seem easy. However, there is a battle going on. This is called the battle of prayer and it is real.

Two of the most common difficulties in prayer are Distraction and Dryness.

Distractions in prayer are similar to what happens when you try to carry on a conversation and keep getting interrupted.

\*Examples are: phone ringing, ideas and thoughts coming in your mind.

Dryness in prayer is experienced as feeling separated from God. When this happens, the strength, joy, and peace of prayer runs dry and nothing you do seems to change the situation.

\*Reasons for dryness might be: lack of devotion, not practicing the faith (receiving the sacraments), feeling like God has let you down.

Discussion with your Family:

You want to pray. You try to pray. But other things keep flooding your brain. Worries, a happy time, hurt feelings, your dog barking! One thing you can do is bring those thoughts into your prayers.

What are your concerns, thoughts and needs that you can share with God?

***Everybody needs a little TLC!***

# **+ ON THE SHOULDERS OF GIANTS +**

## **Lessons in holiness from the pro's who have gone before us**

### **Saint Mark**

*Feast Day: April 25*

St. Mark was an evangelist, or Gospel writer. In fact, he was the pioneer in Gospel writing. His is the shortest and the oldest of the Gospels. Little is known of Mark except from the New Testament. He was not one of the twelve apostles, but was a member of the first Christian community. Mark had firsthand experience of the early Church and apostolic life. He was a traveling companion and assistant of Paul and Barnabas on the first missionary journey. Something happened to Mark on that journey, perhaps homesickness, so he returned to Jerusalem. The incident caused a quarrel between Paul and Barnabas. Barnabas, Mark's cousin, was sympathetic toward Mark, but Paul would not hear of Mark accompanying them again. Later Paul and Mark must have been reconciled, because when Paul wrote to Timothy during his final imprisonment, he asked for Mark's help.

Mark's Gospel was a great contribution to the Church. It included oral and written tradition concerning the words and deeds of Jesus. Mark probably secured some of his material from St. Peter. He shows Jesus as the suffering Son of God. Mark knew that to accept the Risen Jesus meant to come to terms with the cross. Jesus was glorified because he willingly allowed himself to suffer death for our salvation. Mark writes that anyone who wishes to follow Jesus must accept the cross.

Mark wrote to proclaim the Good News to a community of both Jewish and Gentile Christians. His Gospel is direct and simple to read. He speaks to Christians about Jesus, who understands their difficulties and sufferings and will one day bring them to share with him eternal joy and glory.

Traditionally Mark is thought to have been founder and bishop of the church of Alexandria, Egypt, where he was martyred.

Over the years artists have given a symbol to each of the evangelists. Mark's symbol is a winged lion because his Gospel begins with the story of John the Baptist who, like a roaring lion, called people to repent.



<http://www.loyolapress.com/our-catholic-faith/saints/saints-stories-for-all-ages/saint-mark>

**GOSPEL READING**  
**Fourth Sunday of Lent**  
**March 26, 2017**

John 9:1, 6-9, 13-17, 34-38

As Jesus passed by he saw a man blind from birth. He spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva, and smeared the clay on his eyes, and said to him, "Go wash in the Pool of Siloam" — which means Sent —. So he went and washed, and came back able to see.

His neighbors and those who had seen him earlier as a beggar said, "Isn't this the one who used to sit and beg?" Some said, "It is," but others said, "No, he just looks like him." He said, "I am."

They brought the one who was once blind to the Pharisees. Now Jesus had made clay and opened his eyes on a sabbath. So then the Pharisees also asked him how he was able to see. He said to them, "He put clay on my eyes, and I washed, and now I can see." So some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, because he does not keep the sabbath." But others said, "How can a sinful man do such signs?" And there was a division among them. So they said to the blind man again, "What do you have to say about him, since he opened your eyes?" He said, "He is a prophet."

They answered and said to him, "You were born totally in sin, and are you trying to teach us?" Then they threw him out.

When Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, he found him and said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" He answered and said, "Who is he, sir, that I may believe in him?" Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he." He said, "I do believe, Lord," and he worshiped him.

*<http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings/032617.cfm>*

## **Family Connection**

When infants are baptized, parents, with the help of the godparents, assume responsibility for raising the child as a follower of Jesus. The process of maturation in the faith is much like the example found in the story of the man born blind. The man is cured of his blindness, a symbol of his sin. Each time he meets someone after the healing, the man comes to a deeper awareness of who Jesus is. In a similar way, we who are baptized continue to mature in faith as our relationship with and knowledge about Jesus grows.

Invite each member of your family to draw a timeline of his or her life. On the timelines, ask family members to identify significant moments in their lives, especially their life of faith. Invite each person to reflect upon who Jesus was to him or her at each significant moment. How has each person's relationship with Jesus changed or matured? Then read together today's Gospel, John 9:1-41. Note how the relationship between Jesus and the man born blind changes and grows throughout the Gospel. Pray together that your relationship with Jesus will continue to grow and develop, becoming ever deeper. Conclude by praying together the Lord's Prayer.

*<http://www.loyolapress.com/our-catholic-faith/liturgical-year/sunday-connection/fourth-sunday-of-lent-cycle-a-sunday-connection>*