

SUMMER 2019



THE ASCENT

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION





IN THIS ISSUE:

LETTER FROM FATHER TOM	PAGE 3
PRAIRIE STAR RANCH	PAGE 4
CAMP KATERI TEKAKWITHA - A SUMMER CAMP FOR KIDS	PAGE 5
RCIA EASTER VIGIL	PAGE 6
PENTECOST	PAGE 7
RESPECT LIFE MINISTRY	PAGE 8
A CALL TO SHARE MINISTRY	PAGE 10
RELIGIOUS FREEDOM	PAGE 11
PENTECOST WORD SEARCH	PAGE 12
SUMMER FAMILY ACTIVITY PACKET	PAGE 13

LETTER FROM THE PASTOR

By Fr. Tom Tank



May 2019

Dear Ascension Parishioners,

Summer is such a wonderful time of the year. School is out, the winter is over, the swimming pools are open, life takes on a new pace! Summer is a time of wholesome RECREATION!

That word RECREATION is an interesting one because it has many meanings to different people. However, the original meaning is RE-CREATION. This is a time of re-creating ourselves and our lives. It is an opportunity to refocus on what is really important in our lives and to be renewed in spirit. It is unfortunate that this time of re-creation becomes just another time of busyness as we run from one event to another. As faithful followers of Christ we know that God never takes a vacation from us and we don't take one from Him as well.

For fifty days we celebrate the Resurrection of the Lord in our Easter Season. Then with Pentecost we spend more than triple that amount of time welcoming the Holy Spirit and His action in our lives. With Pentecost we pray COME, HOLY SPIRIT, RENEW THE HEARTS OF YOUR FAITHFUL! We have received the Holy Spirit in Baptism and Confirmation, Baptism to make us adopted children of God, disciples of Jesus, and Confirmation to strengthen us to be adult witnesses to Christ. The Holy Spirit is the power of God bringing forth new life in Christ within us if we but open ourselves to His daily working in our lives.

In the midst of this time of physical and emotional recreation, we are called to be open to the Holy Spirit who brings about re-creation in our hearts and minds. I encourage you to take some time this summer to be open to the Holy Spirit working within you, calling you to greater holiness of life. Don't become so busy with summer that you miss its deeper purpose and meaning....RE-CREATION IN CHRIST JESUS! Come, Holy Spirit, renew my heart and fill me with the truth and love of Jesus Christ!

God's blessings for a wonderful re-creative summer!

Father Tom

PRAIRIE STAR RANCH

FAITH, FAMILY AND FUN YEAR-ROUND AT PRAIRIE STAR RANCH

One hour south of Overland Park, in Williamsburg, Kansas, sits the beautiful Prairie Star Ranch, a 290- acre property owned and operated by the Archdiocese in Kansas City, Kansas. The ranch offers endless opportunities for families and groups to experience a quiet, relaxing weekend in the beauty of the woods or an explosive, energetic, fun-filled, activity-packed week they will never forget. Which will it be? Either way you choose, the ranch provides its guests a way to grow in the love of Christ and assists in the challenging life-long pursuit of Christian discipleship.

For the past 16 years families and youth have enjoyed personal or business retreats, family days, rallies, saddle clubs and summer camps. The buildings on the grounds include a main lodge with kitchen that will entertain 300 guests, another lodge for groups up to 100, and a huge hanger as large as an indoor gymnasium for sports or concerts. There are four cabins with 36-40 beds, a cabin with suites, lounges and meeting space, a bunkhouse with 74 beds and a 3- bedroom ranch style home with eight beds. Guests can join one of the many scheduled yearly events, such as a family camp, Prairie Star Under the Stars for high schoolers, a junior high youth rally, a women's retreat, and spring and fall saddle clubs.....or customize their own occasion for weekend getaways, anniversary celebrations, meetings, family reunions, or just some quiet trail walks and a bonfire before bed time.

Activities that are available for events include: archery, canoeing, horseback riding, trail hiking, climbing tower, giant inflatables, tent camping, fishing and more. Or, if a more relaxed, faith-filled time is desired, individuals can attend Mass or worship in the sacred Saint Kateri Tekakwitha chapel or meditate in one of the several areas that were built for quiet reflective prayer time in the outdoors or in the evening under the stars.

Whatever happens at Prairie Star Ranch takes place in some of the most stunning landscape in the state of Kansas. The woods are full of trails, the lakes are clear and inviting, the huge deck on the lodge is relaxing and quiet and the glory of God is present in every detail. Check it out...it is amazing.

Prairie Star's website is: www.archkck.org/ranch



CAMP KATERI TEKAKWITHA - A SUMMER CAMP FOR KIDS

Summers at Prairie Star Ranch are packed from June to August with summer camp (Camp Kateri Tekakwitha) for kids of all ages. Campers can attend camp at the beginning of their fifth grade year and remain through high school. The ONLY mission of the Camp Kateri Tekakwitha (besides having fun) is to teach your children about God.

The grounds of the ranch fill with hundreds of kids, counselors and staff each week during the summer and the kids play and pray and never stop learning about Jesus. There are 3-day camps for beginners, week long camps for middle ages and longer extreme camps for high schoolers. Days are filled with riding horses, canoeing or swimming in the lakes, zip lines, water slides, and bonding with new friends. They might experience a bible study in a treehouse or walk the trail of the Stations of the Cross or attend a Mass in the woods. The camps are designed to be a transformative experience of wild adventures, all culminating in a meaningful, fun but religious learning experience.

Camp Directors, Deacon Dana and Debbie Nearmyer are the lifeblood of the camp and the ones who ignite the spirit that drives this camp and make it so vital to the teachings of the Catholic Church. When summer arrives, the Nearmyers pack up their own three children and move to Williamsburg, where each one of them has a roll in the daily activities of meshing the fun with learning about Jesus.

There is no typecasting here. Every child has the chance to reframe his life and be who he wants to be. There is no take away peer pressure....everyone is equal. They build community where a child can go from knowing no one to knowing everyone within the hour.....and there are no cell phones or video games.

If a family is looking for a way to keep the faith alive in their children during the summer months, there is nothing like camp fun. And there is truly nothing like the experience of Camp Tekakwitha, where time is built in the rhythm of a kid and the Nearmyers make sure that religious formation is happening every day.





Welcome to Our New Catholics!



At this year's Easter Vigil, we welcomed 28 Men and Women into the Catholic faith. These individuals have been meeting each Monday evening to learn more about the Catholic faith and to strengthen their relationship with Jesus Christ.

Please pray for our newest members, that they may continue to find grace in their journey!

If you or someone you know is interested in learning more about the process of becoming Catholic, please contact Liz Willman, RCIA Director at (913) 681-3348 ext. 139 or lwillman@kcascension.org.

PENTECOST

The holy day of Pentecost, which is celebrated on the seventh Sunday after Easter, commemorates the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles and other followers of Jesus Christ. This occurred while they were in Jerusalem celebrating the Feast of Weeks or Harvest, as described in the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 2:1–31). In Christian tradition, this event represents the birth of the early Church. Jesus had promised the Holy Spirit, who would be a helper, the Advocate, to His people (John 14:26) “But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.” This New Testament event is significant because it fulfills and Old Testament prophesy: (Joel 2:28-29) “And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days.”

The account in Acts 2 reports that, after Jesus ascended into heaven, Jesus’ followers were gathered together for the Feast of Harvest (aka Pentecost), and the Holy Spirit “filled the whole house where they were sitting.” All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them”. Through this baptism of the Holy Spirit and fire, the apostles became more knowing, and had a greater understanding of the mysteries of the Gospel, and were more qualified to preach it to people of all nations and languages.” This strange occurrence drew a large crowd, and Peter stood up to speak to them about repentance and the gospel of Christ . By the end of the day that the Holy Spirit came, the Church grew by 3,000 people (Acts 2:41). This is why Christians still celebrate Pentecost.



Speaking in tongues, or the many languages of the multitude of villages in the area, allowed the Apostles to reach everyone that wanted to hear what they were telling them about Jesus. The message of Jesus Christ is for everyone, people of all countries and origins. Church of the Ascension itself is made up of faithful people from many different countries in the world, all joined together as one family in Christ. To celebrate this beautiful diversity while embracing the unity we share as a church family, we join together in a Pentecost Multi-Cultural luncheon. June 9, will be our second annual luncheon. Please join us:

PLEASE JOIN US
When: Sunday, June 9, 2019
Where: Church of the Ascension - Gym
Time: Following 11:45AM Mass
Enjoy our very own Peruvian Dancers!!

There will be foods from all the amazing cultures that our parishioners represent: Peru, Venezuela, Russia, China, Mexico, Vietnam, India, Poland, France and more! See our website for more information: www.kcascension.org.





RESPECT LIFE

Bridges of Mercy for Healing after Abortion

Maria* was going back to Church after her second-grader enrolled in First Communion classes. She didn't know what to say to her daughter after being asked why she didn't go to Communion. Maria had an abortion in her teens and felt that she couldn't go to confession because she had committed an "unforgivable sin."

Li* and his wife, Vanessa*, were attending counseling to address problems in their marriage. Li decided to finally tell Vanessa that, while in college, he had taken his former girlfriend to get an abortion. Vanessa was devastated.

Jennifer* comes from a large, pro-life family that is active in their parish. At the funeral of her devout, beloved mother, Jennifer was despondent beyond the grief of her loss. Jennifer couldn't stop thinking that her mother in heaven would now discover the secret she had kept for thirty years: the existence of a granddaughter, whom Jennifer had aborted in college because she was too ashamed to tell her parents about her pregnancy.

When Darryl* started attending a parish men's prayer group, he began to feel more connected than ever to his faith. But with his increasing engagement, he began to wonder whether God would really forgive him for encouraging and paying for the abortion of his only child.

Maria, Vanessa, Li, Jennifer, and Darryl are among the tens of millions of Americans whose lives have been directly touched by abortion. Like so many others, they have experienced shame, regret, guilt, and grief. But, as they have also experienced, God's healing love and mercy are always possible.

While many Catholics want to help women and men heal from past abortions, most don't know how to begin. Here are a few ways that Catholics of different backgrounds can assist friends, family members, fellow parishioners, clients—or perhaps even themselves:

- ◆ If you are like Jennifer, who had an abortion, read the words of St. John Paul II to women who have had abortions.** Be assured that it is never too late to seek God's forgiveness in the Sacrament of Reconciliation and that "you can with sure hope entrust your child" to the Father and His mercy (*EV* 99).
- ◆ If someone like Maria reveals an abortion, express your sympathy for her loss. Assure her of God's unconditional love, and encourage her to seek healing and forgiveness. Explain that the U.S. Church's Project Rachel Ministry for healing after abortion offers confidential, compassionate help (www.HopeAfterAbortion.org).
- ◆ If you are a priest who fears alienating parishioners, be confident that you can preach on pro-life issues with sensitivity as long as your message reminds the congregation that no matter how serious the sin, God longs to forgive every repentant heart. Many who have participated in abortion like Maria, Li, Jennifer, or Darryl believe they have committed the "unforgivable sin." Your preaching can be a unique channel of God's mercy for them, inviting them to the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

RESPECT LIFE MINISTRY (CONTINUED)

- ♦ If you are a parish faith formation leader, become aware of the potential pastoral encounters with those hurting from past abortions like Maria or Darryl. Work with your pastor to include catechesis on forgiveness and reconciliation.
- ♦ If you are a member of your parish pro-life committee, remember those who may be suffering like Jennifer or Li. Regularly highlight information about Project Rachel Ministry and healing after abortion using bulletins, bulletin boards, literature racks, parish webpages and e-newsletters, and any other appropriate means of communication.
- ♦ If you are actively involved in public pro-life advocacy which people like Jennifer may encounter, remember to communicate with messages that are respectful, non-judgmental, and compassionate.
- ♦ If you are a mental health professional who works with couples like Vanessa and Li, strive to learn more about abortion trauma and how those you are serving may be affected.
- ♦ If you are trying to be a devout parent like Jennifer's mother was, remind your children frequently that you love them unconditionally. Promise they can always come to you when they are troubled or have done something wrong.
- ♦ If you belong to a religious community, you can help people like Maria, Vanessa, Li, Jennifer, Darryl, and others by regularly praying for all who suffer from involvement in an abortion.
- ♦ If you don't specifically know anyone in circumstances similar to those of the people mentioned, you still have an important mission. Keep all who suffer after abortion in your prayers, and commit yourself to being an instrument of mercy. Show by your example what it means to ask for and extend forgiveness.

All of us are sinners. Yet Pope Francis calls mercy a “bridge that connects God and man, opening our hearts to the hope of being loved forever despite our sinfulness” (*MV* 2). The Holy Father also reminds us, “As the Father loves, so do his children. Just as he is merciful, so we are called to be merciful to each other” (*MV* 9). Life is a gift from God and so is his mercy. May we cherish and promote both!

*All names have been changed to protect the privacy of those mentioned.

**See Pope St. John Paul II, *Evangelium vitae (Gospel of Life)* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1995), no. 99.

If you or someone you know is suffering after abortion, confidential, non-judgmental help is available. Visit www.HopeAfterAbortion.org, or call Project Rachel Ministry's national, toll-free number: 1-888-456-HOPE (4673).

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Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops
View, download, or order the U.S. bishops' pro-life materials! www.usccb.org/respectlife



A CALL TO SHARE MINISTRY

By Mary Jo Doherty



One of the places we have visited in the past couple of years while doing research for our Call to Share speeches is “Christ’s Peace House of Prayer”... one of the over 40 ministries that receives funds from your Call to Share donations. This astonishing “well- kept secret” is a wonderful retreat property located on 120 acres of rolling pastures and timberland, 14 miles west of Leavenworth, near Easton, Kansas.

If you and or your family are looking for a daytrip or a weekend of quiet solitude in the woods to pray and reflect, take the time to visit Christ’s Peace House of Prayer this summer. You will be pleasantly surprised at the possibilities and may want to schedule some time in the future for a longer visit.

It is a great place to retreat just for a day, an overnight, several nights, or even as long as an extended sabbatical. There are six cabins with baths and kitchenettes, all secluded in the woods and each one is out of view of the others. It makes for a quiet place to foster prayer, renewal and spiritual growth. There are also two courtyard rooms and two hermitages. There is a small chapel in the lodge and acres of wooded area for walking trails.

While there are suggested rates for the accommodations, Christ’s Peace House of Prayer operates on free-will donations in some cases. Three meals a day are furnished, breakfast, a vegetarian lunch and a simple soup dinner.

While we refer to this facility as a “retreat center”, it is really much more. It is a place to develop a closer relationship with God in a setting of solitude. Isaiah 56:7 says, “My house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples.” The center offers a chapel for private prayer and adoration, or daily communal prayer three times a day. The morning and evening prayer are based on the Liturgy of the Hours and the noon prayer is The Angelus. Guests are welcome to join in the prayers at whatever level they are comfortable.

The retreat director, Vince Elmer, offers not only private spiritual direction, but also guidance on “how to pray” and how to structure your time with spiritual exercises.

The feelings we had during our visit were that this might be the perfect place to go if you were contemplating a conversion, if you want private rest and relaxation, if you feel like praying while you walk the trail of the Stations of the Cross, if you want adoration time for the Blessed Sacrament, and, especially, if you seek the solitude of one-on-one time with the Lord. Vince said, “The Holy Spirit works here and this is an accessible, easy way to heaven.”

It seemed that way.

Below is the contact information for Christ Peace House of Prayer:

22131 Meagher Road, Easton, KS 66020
Phone: (913) 773-8255

For Reservations and General Information:
Info@ChristsPeace.com

For Prayer Requests or to Email the Director:
DirectorCP@ChristsPeace.com



RELIGIOUS LIBERTY RALLY!

June 30, Beginning with 11:45AM Mass with Archbishop Naumann
Followed by booths and games for kids, information and speakers for adults 1:30PM-3:00PM
Parking Lot and Parish Hall

Religious freedom includes two important aspects – freedom from and freedom for. “Freedom from” is probably familiar and what most of us think of as freedom. It means that we are to be free from coercion. The state is not an all powerful institution that can force people to act against their consciences. The right to be free from coercion limits the power of the state. But this freedom must be paired with a “freedom for,” a positive orientation to seeking and acting in accordance with the truth. People have both a right and a duty to seek religious truth. Freedom from coercion allows the space for the pursuit of religious truth. Religious freedom requires that a society both refrain from preventing people from living out their religion and help to create the conditions for religious expression to flourish. A free society, then, is one where people actively seek religious truth and fully live out that truth in public and private. As Pope Francis recently said in Cuba, the Church must have “the freedom and all the means needed to bring the proclamation of the Kingdom to the existential peripheries of society.”

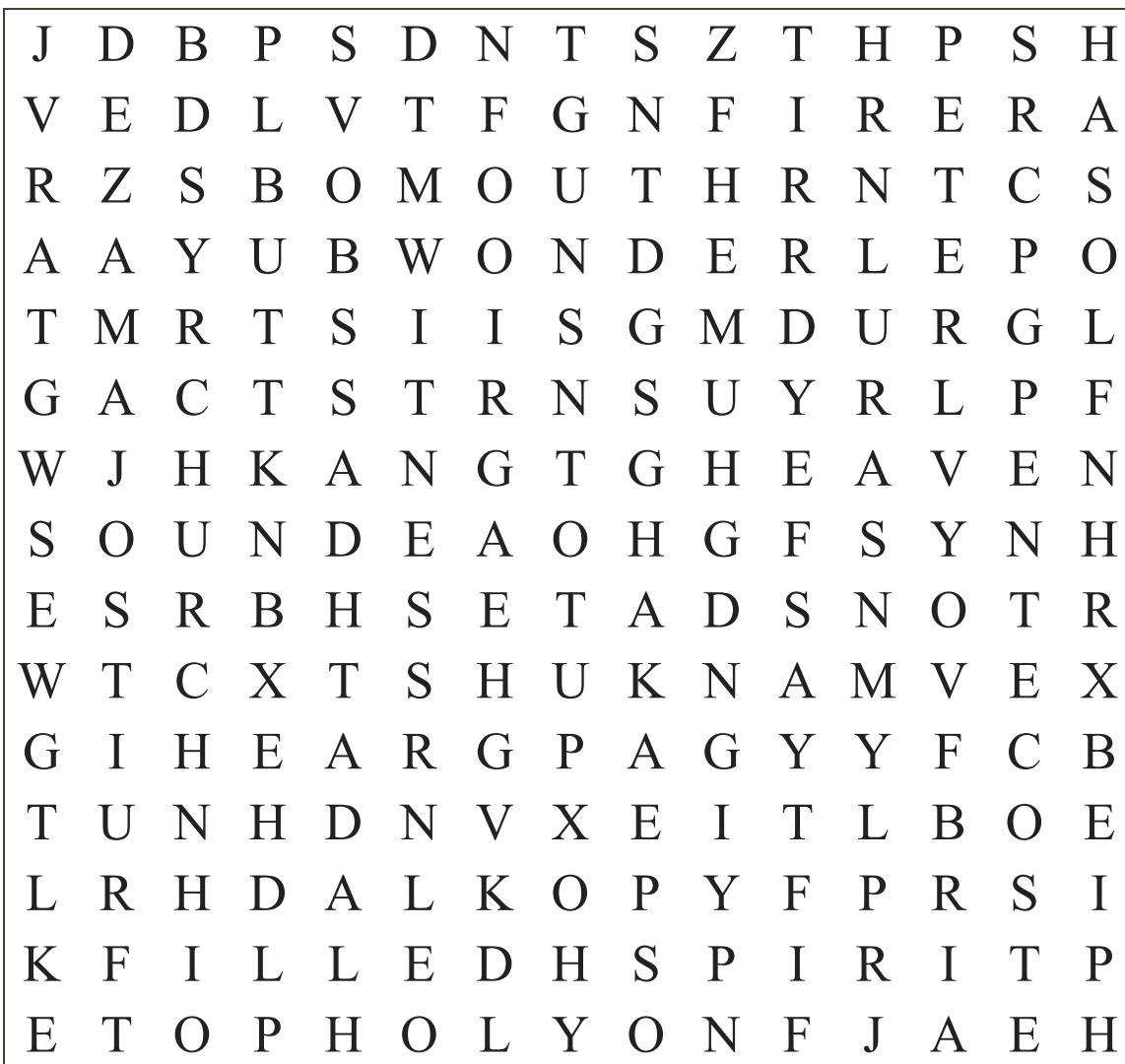
Human beings are social creatures. Religious freedom means that not only individuals but also families, communities, and institutions enjoy the space to live out religious convictions. Parents have a fundamental right to teach their children their faith. Companies that seek to contribute to the common good by their responsible business practices should be encouraged. Religious freedom belongs to groups as well as individuals. This social dimension of religious freedom entails that religious freedom includes the freedom to practice our faith in public. In our culture, some tend to think that religious liberty means only that individuals can worship without interference from the government. This understanding is inadequate. Religious schools, hospitals, and charities should be able to operate in accordance with their faith. Indeed, the work of these organizations is part and parcel of their faith. They are expressions of religious mission, and religions must have the space to live out their missions. A most precious aspect of being human is the two-fold capacity to exercise reason and to respond to found truth. It is natural to ask, “How do I live a good life? Who created this wonderful world, and how should I respond to this Creator? Why is there suffering, and how should I alleviate it?” Religious traditions offer answers to these deeply human questions. It is imperative for the sake of human dignity that people are free to pursue these questions. The pursuit of truth involves an ability to listen, for God has made us with a capacity to hear his Word. Religious freedom is the cornerstone of a society that promotes human dignity. It is a fundamental human right, for it follows on the duty of all people to seek the truth about God. Catholics face challenges both in our current political climate of polarization and within the Church.



We need to encourage Catholics to persist in the struggle to participate in the advancement of the kingdom of God by finding hope in Jesus Christ. Religious Liberty encompasses a number of areas- affecting the entire Church- and not just our church, but all people of faith who seek to live out their faith in daily life, in the public square. Through prayer, education and public action, we will promote the essential right of religious freedom for Catholics and for those of all faiths.

Adapted from USCCB website

PENTECOST WORD SEARCH



ACTS

FRUITS

PETER

AMAZED

HEAR

SOUND

BIRTHDAY

HEAVEN

SPEAK

BLOWING

HOLY

SPIRIT

CHURCH

JESUS

TONGUES

FIFTY

LANGUAGE

WIND

FILLED

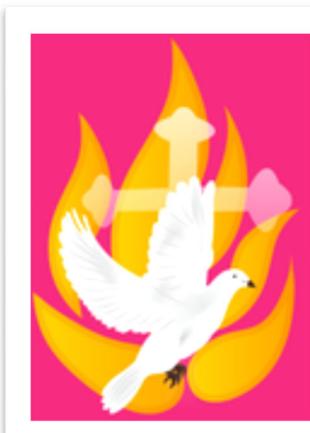
MOUTH

WITNESS

FIRE

PENTECOST

WONDER



Summer Family Activity Packet

MORE THAN FUN IN THE SUN: BUILDING A FAMILY CULTURE

Summertime offers an excellent opportunity for families to connect. Meaningful and memorable family activities are not just clever ways to entertain your children — they are opportunities to create a positive, collaborative, and joyful family culture.

Set aside time for a family brainstorming session, and make a list of possible summer activities. You can use the ideas from this packet as a starting point, or you can look to friends or online resources. For some families, simple plans work best; for other families, big adventures build memories. Be creative and try new things, but be realistic considering what works for your family.

FAMILY FUN “PRO TIPS”

- **PLAN AHEAD:** Sometimes looking forward to an event is as exciting as actually doing it.
- **FRIENDING:** Spending time with peers is important for children, but family outings are not always ideal for bringing friends along. Consider these dynamics carefully as you plan.
- **NEW NORMAL:** Break out of familiar ruts by trying something new each week. Try a new restaurant, park, library, podcast, activity, or even grocery store. Explore KC with fresh eyes.
- **MEMBERSHIPS:** Try rotating memberships (Zoo, Science City, etc.) annually. Taking a year “off” of a family favorite will make “on” years more enjoyable (and easier on your budget!).

CLOSE TO HOME: SUMMER IN YOUR HOME AND NEIGHBORHOOD

- **INDIAN CREEK TRAIL:** You are probably already aware that this 26-mile trail weaves through most of Johnson county. Find new ways to use this resource with your family. Parents might run together with teens, with younger siblings on bikes or scooters, or with littles in strollers. Explore nature along the trail; make interesting stops; count bunny sightings or flower varieties.
- **GEOCACHING:** first, get the app. Second, enjoy the excitement of finding geocached treasure!
- **GAME NIGHT:** Sometimes the classics are the best. Share a game that you played as a child.
- **CRAFTS:** Craft ideas can be simple, quick, and inexpensive ... or elaborate and involved! For older kids, venture beyond glue and paper. Make slime, jewelry, bath bombs, complicated origami, or a canvas painting. Checkout online tutorials or library books to gather ideas and information.

Tear out here ↑ for easy reference later

Kansas City Metro:

"ON THE HOUSE": WHERE TO SPEND FAMILY TIME (NOT CASH)

- **FAMILY FUNDAYS:** Bundle simple activities to create bigger family adventures. Be mindful of your ages and stages; balance activities. For younger children, a quiet morning at the Nelson-Atkins might be followed with a picnic lunch at Loose Park and time to play at the splash pad.
- **LEA McKEIGHAN (SOUTH):** located in Lee's Summit, this "ropes park" is one of the most unique parks in the KC metro area. It offers extensive rope climbing structures, a zip line, bungee cord swings, musical instruments, and shade canopies. This park will be of interest to a variety of ages. Stop by the Miller J. Fields Splash Park (just a 2 mile drive) to cool off afterwards. Tip: try packing a lunch to enjoy at the picnic area of the splash park. For younger kids, the newly renovated Lea McKeighan North combines lower rope structures and a splash pad in 1 location.
- **BEYOND Books:** Check local libraries for events, classes, and offerings; you will find everything from 3-D printer labs to puppet shows. Tip: check out activity books for easy fun around home (i.e. origami, baking, crafting, sewing, gardening, or various "how to" books).
- **FAVORITE PARKS:** Antioch Park | Black Bob Park | Jacob Loose Park (rose gardens) | Penguin Park | Franklin Park | Swope Park | Roe Park | Valley Park | John Anderson Splash Park
- **FREE FOOD:** Seeking out free treats may sound like a trivial endeavor, but children (especially grade school aged) seem to love the adventure! June 7th (National Donut Day): check Lamar's for 1 free glazed donut per guest. July 9th (Cow Appreciation Day): dress like a cow to receive 1 free meal per guest at Chick-Fil-A. July 11th (7/11): free Slurpees at 7-Eleven.
- **CROWN TO MARKET:** Park and start your morning at Crown Center. Walk the sky bridge to Union Station. Catch a cable car to the City Market. Grab farm-fresh produce or interesting spices; try the beignets (a kid-crowd pleasing favorite!). Stop by Central Library on the cable car return.
- **MORE FREE FUN:** Kaleidoscope | Moon Marble Company | The Money Museum | Lakeside Nature Center | Gorman Conservation Center | Deanna Rose (free after 2pm, M-Th) | Nelson-Atkins Art Museum | The Plaza Art Fair | Union Station | OP Farmer's Market | Ernie Miller Nature Center | Kauffman Memorial Garden | Frontier Army Museum | Sprint Family Fun Days

STAYCATION SPLURGES: FOR SOMETHING EXTRA

Breakout KC | Blackbob Bay | Kansas City Zoo | Worlds/Oceans of Fun | Mesner Puppet Theater | Jaegerz Laser Tag | Paradise Park | Negro Leagues Baseball Museum | Mahaffie Farm | Go Ape | Kansas City T-Bones Baseball Game | The Coterie Theater | Royal's Baseball Game | Prairie Star Ranch | Bury the Hatchet | Pinstripes | Family Bowling | Great Wolf Lodge | The Arboretum | Powell Gardens | 5k Fun Run (check KC Running for events calendar) | Sea Life Aquarium | LEGO Land | A Movie Theater Matinée | and last but never least ... KC Barbeque (try a new-to-you spot)

Going the Extra Mile:

PILGRIMAGE DESTINATIONS (THAT DO NOT REQUIRE AIRFARE!)

- **ST. PHILIPPINE DUCHESNE MEMORIAL PARK:** (Centerville, Kansas): If you are willing to drive one hour, you can walk where a canonized saint has walked and worked! Besides learning about how St. Philippine Duchesne served the Potawatomi Indians during their forced "Trail of Death" march in the 1800s, you will learn about an event in U.S. history that should never be forgotten.
- **THE BENEDICTINE SISTERS OF PERPETUAL ADORATION:** (Clyde Missouri): This beautiful pilgrimage destination is just a 2-hour drive from home. The Clyde Monastery chapel and grounds are filled with compelling statues, all nestled in an idyllic country setting. On site, you will find a room of over 500 relics. As a bonus, visit Conception Abbey, only a few miles away from Clyde.
- **VACATION PILGRIMAGE:** You can turn any family vacation into a mini-pilgrimage by visiting shrines, touring religious sites, or attending Mass at historic churches or Basilicas. Rather than simply "fitting Mass in," make Mass a meaningful priority and choose your location with care. Find the perfect Mass for your family adventure at masstimes.org.

DAY TRIP DESTINATIONS BEYOND KC METRO

- **WESTON:** This historic Kansas community is a 50 minute drive from Overland Park. Attractions include Green Dirt Farm and Creamery, O'Malley's Pub, and Pirtle Winery. Celebrate Mass or participate in a self-guided tour at Holy Trinity, a breathtaking and historic Catholic church that is over 100 years old.
- **MIAMI COUNTY:** This Kansas community offers a great escape from city life with only a 30 minute drive. The Louisburg Cider Mill is a favorite local attraction (check their events calendar before planning your trip). Families also enjoy the Cedar Cove Feline Sanctuary (devoted to endangered large cats).
- **INDEPENDENCE, MO:** Visit the home of 33rd President Harry S. Truman, or tour his Presidential Library. Children will love old-fashioned phosphates from Clinton's Soda Fountain or a picnic lunch at Waterfall Park. St. Mary's Catholic Church, which was founded in 1823, is the perfect blend of historic grandeur and cozy-quaintness. An additional 30 minute drive will take you to Missouri Town 1855, where families can explore a living history museum, which includes a functioning blacksmith shop, a mercantile, and an old fashioned church.

PUT YOURSELF IN "TIMEOUT"

For parents with children in the home, summer can offer its own set of challenges. Give yourself permission to take "timeouts." Nurture meaningful friendships, find ways to prioritize your own spiritual growth, or plan a date with your spouse. You will ultimately be a more effective (and happier!) parent if you consider your own needs too. A few ideas: go on a coffee date with a friend; attend early morning Mass or Eucharistic Adoration by yourself; go for evening walks; spend time on enjoyable hobbies (i.e. gardening, baking, golfing, exercise — whatever fills you with life!)

Summer Family Activity Packet

FAMILY FAITH BUILDING IDEAS

- **FAITH AND FUN:** Pair faith-building with fun or recreational activities. Positive attitudes toward religion and practice of faith are often formed early in life. If your family decides to wake up early for morning Mass, consider stopping for a donut or small treat after.
- **PRAIRIE STAR RANCH:** Did you know that there is much more to Prairie Star Ranch than Camp Tekakwitha? Attend PSR Family Day, tent-camp with your family, rent a cabin, or spend a day hiking around the grounds. Check the Prairie Star webpage for availability and options.
- **FACE TO FACE:** Attend Face to Face with your family or spend time in the Eucharistic Adoration Chapel. For younger children, Eucharistic Adoration will probably need to be brief. Consider your child's particular disposition and capabilities. Be firm with your expectations for behavior without being overly forceful. Present Eucharistic Adoration as a privilege, not a chore.
- **CHURCH HOPPING:** Visit historic Catholic churches as parts of larger family adventures, or swap your usual weekend Mass routine. Experiencing the rich history and architectural grandeur of historic churches helps illuminate the mystery and beauty of our faith. Occasionally celebrating Mass with other Catholic communities helps children appreciate the universality of Catholicism.
- **HISTORIC CATHOLIC CHURCHES:** Our Lady of Perpetual Help | The Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception | St. Peter's Cathedral | St. Vincent De Paul | Holy Rosary | Our Lady of Sorrows
- **SUMMER MASS:** Find an "extra" Mass time that works well for your summer schedule. Look beyond your own parish for times that accommodate your schedule.
- **ONLINE RESOURCES:** Check catholic webpages and podcasts for other faith enrichment ideas. Here are a few favorites: Catholic Icing, The Messy Family Project, The Catholic Podcast, Catholic Sprouts, Formed, and School of Faith daily Devotions (audio downloads available).

PARENT-CHILD "DATES"

Find time to spend time with your children one on one. Dedicated parent/child time does not need to involve elaborate activities or extensive amounts of time. Take one child with you on a trip to the grocery store, or take one child out for ice cream or coffee. Challenge yourself to ask questions and give affirmations rather than direction. Give your child time and space to express thoughts that the busyness of daily life might crowd out. Listen attentively; what can you learn about your child?

Tear out here ↑ for easy reference later

NOTES:
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SUBMITTED: May 2

PLEASE RETURN TO US ON OR BEFORE May 17
THANK YOU!!!

PERFORATE PAGES— 13, 14, 15 and 16

If you have any questions, please call Sharon or Maggie at
(913) 681-3348.

THANK YOU!!!

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