

You were buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead.

— Colossians 2:12

MISSION APPEAL SUNDAY TODAY — We welcome Fr. Camillus Thibault, A.A., of the Assumptionists (Augustinians of the Assumption.) The order presently numbers some 1000 priests and brothers working in 30 countries—apostolates in education at the secondary and college levels, Byzantine and Augustinian studies, journalism (Bayard, a publishing house, as well as a daily newspaper in France, La Croix) pilgrimages, ecumenism, parish ministry and missions. Proceeds from the Mission Appeals are applied to the needs of Assumptionists in Mexico, Ecuador, and East Africa. Please give generously!

LORD TEACH US TO PRAY — Abraham prays to the Lord for a few good and just men. Jesus teaches his followers the proper form for prayer: address God as “Our Father;” recall the great works of God in the past and our desires now; draw all through God’s Son Jesus back to the principal source of all, God the Father. Today the Apostle Paul reminds us we have been “buried with the Christ in baptism” and raised up from sin by his resurrection. Will you take the plunge and rise with him?

18TH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME — AUGUST 1

First Reading: Ecclesiastes 1:2; 2:21-23

Second Reading: Colossians 3:1-5, 9-11

Gospel: Luke 12:13-21

PASSING ON THE IMPORTANCE OF CHURCH to our children —By Anne Hansen, The Tidings
Keeping children connected to church can be a challenge. My children have sometimes resisted the idea of church. They complained that church was boring and questioned why they had to go every week. There were times when one or another of them sat through Mass with a less than enthusiastic attitude --- usually in their teenage years --- slumped in the seat with crossed arms avoiding eye contact with anyone, especially their parents. Other times they fooled around, whispering and giggling until “the look” was sent their way. While understanding this behavior was normal, it was still a source of frustration. →

When the church attendance discussions came up, my husband and I explained that church was something our family believed was important and we expected them to go as long as they lived under our roof. In retrospect we probably should have explained our reasons in a more theologically correct manner, but the words never came easily, possibly because we, ourselves, were struggling to understand what church really meant.

The answer may be in the diversity of our beliefs and visions of church and our willingness to listen to each other concerning these beliefs and visions. I have come to understand, partially thanks to my children, many definitions and experiences of church.

Church is about the way we live with the people we interact with on a regular and not so regular basis. Church is sometimes about being courteous and polite to people we really do not care for or want to be around. Church is also about the discussions we engage in at work over current events and the way we treat people in the mall, on the freeway and in the grocery store.

The way we teach our children about church evolves and changes. The strict memorization of prayers, facts and dates thankfully gave way to the gentler and more meaningful methods of finding God in everyday life. Even today those methods evolve into experiences that let children interact with the parish as a whole and learn the basics of their faith from their parents, rather than from a teacher in a classroom setting.

Regardless of how we do it, the important thing is to keep our children connected to and interested in the church. If that means creating Sesame Street type graphics, using current movies to teach and focusing on what some see as social more than spiritual experiences, then so be it. Different personalities and learning styles require diversity in teaching styles. The goal is to bring the truths of Jesus to each other.

Adults sometimes resist change, especially when it comes to religious practices and ways of teaching about religion. We figure that if something worked for us it can work for our children. That may be true, but it may also be true that a “new way” reaches our children deeper and more meaningfully.

The next few years will see changes in the way we approach the faith formation of our children --- and ourselves --- and it will be up to us to stretch and help facilitate the changes and learn from them. In the process there is a good chance our faith will grow.

Anne Hansen is a parent education consultant and a parishioner at Blessed Junipero Serra Church, Camarillo. Her e-mail address is familymail@aol.com.



Marilyn Brain
Viki Sparks