

REMAINING POSITIVE DURING COVID 19

Staying positive and optimistic during times of crisis can be challenging. As parents, we need to focus on the positives that such events can bring. We need to look for opportunities that are hope filled to help our children understand that in every crisis we grow stronger for the experience. Look at the bushfires we experienced earlier on in the year. Australia has bounced back and we have heard so many stories of love, care and mateship which fills us with hope for the future. We will again bounce back from COVID 19 and learn new things for the future.

So how do we stay positive at this time? Our faith can help do this. As Christians (followers of Christ), we are called to be people of hope. We can bring hope and joy to others by sharing our faith through our words and actions, especially in such times. Jesus teaches us to love one another in the same way he loves us.

Right now, we know that social distancing is key to slowing the rate and spread of the Coronavirus. A downside to social distancing can be feelings of isolation and loneliness, especially for those who may be facing employment uncertainty, who are at-risk, or who may be older or immobile. We can show love and care for these people and communities by living out Jesus' command "That you love one another, as I have loved you."

Pope Francis speaks of the 'art of accompaniment' as one way we can show love and care for others. He encourages us to walk alongside those in our community and parish who may be isolated and offer them the support they need at this time. The pope calls us to listen to others, especially, to the ones sometimes forgotten by our society.

The art of accompaniment invites us to love and care for each other as Jesus taught. By loving each other in this way, we not only act more like Jesus, but we also become closer to him and deepen our friendship with Him. Jesus is the source, of our strength and it is through this strength that we are able to bring a sense of hope in times when life is difficult.

FAMILY PRAYER

Throughout his earthly ministry, Jesus set a perfect example of kindness and love. Jesus showed love for others by blessing and serving the poor, the sick, and the distressed. He told his disciples, "This is my commandment, that you love one another, as I have loved you" [John 13: 34-35].

At mealtime chat with your child/ren about the following:

- What it means to love as Jesus loves.
- How Jesus showed his love towards others.
- The importance of loving and caring for one another.
- Ways in which this pandemic is asking us to follow Jesus' example of love.
- Ways your family can make loving for others a bigger part of life during this pandemic.

With your child/ren discuss ways the family can live this commandment during this time of the COVID 19 pandemic. Use the ideas in Family Activities.

Invite the family to pray for strength and courage to be loving and caring like Jesus in this time of the COVID 19 pandemic.

Loving Lord,
Jesus taught us to love one another, as he loves us.
During this time of the COVID 19 pandemic
help us to bring hope to all people by
loving as Jesus loved,
serving as Jesus served,
caring for others as Jesus showed us to care.

Open our eyes to those who need extra care at this time.
And let us bring them comfort and peace,

Give us the courage to reach out
so that we may be the face of Jesus
to all who are affected by COVID 19.

We make our prayer in Jesus' name.
Amen.

FAMILY ACTIVITIES

Choose one (or more) of these activities to help family members live the love commandment in this time of the COVID 19 pandemic.

- As a family make time to pray and eat together as there are no extracurricular activities to rush to every night.
- As a family pray daily for those who are sick from the CV19 virus.
- Encourage your child/ren to write thank-you notes to health care workers at the local hospital.
- Invite your child/ren to help you make meals for at-risk members of your parish or neighbourhood.
- Reach out to friends and family via phone or video call.
- As a family participate in online parish liturgies to pray as a community.
- Older members of the parish community may be confused and fearful about using technology. Encourage your adolescents to connect with older members of the parish to help set up the tools to keep them connected.

Family Faith

This resource is designed to assist parents in the task of sharing your faith with your children. The resource contains

- Information for parents in child friendly language
- Family activities which help to integrate faith with life
- Scripture readings to discuss with your children
- Prayer moments
- Hints on how to pray with children, highlighting different ways of praying as a family.