

RECOMMENDED PRACTICE

Recommendation by Steve Petty

In its rich tradition, the Church has dedicated a theme for each month of the liturgical year. As an example, May is the month that is dedicated to the Virgin Mary. February is no exception. The month of February is dedicated to the Holy Family. It is important to remember that in His earthly life, Jesus was born into a real family. We certainly honor the Holy family, but we also try to imitate their examples of love and self sacrifice.

Families today face great challenges. Relationships within our families may become strained for a variety of different reasons. **This month, make strengthening family relationships a top priority.** Here are a few suggestions that may help you:

— Say “I love you” —

You certainly show your love through your actions, but it’s also nice to hear someone say “I love you.” Don’t wait for a family member to say it to you. Be the first to initiate.

— Say “Thank you” —

Go out of your way to thank a member of your family for something they’ve done for you.

— Worship Together —

Go to Church together.

— Be Humble —

You don’t need to be the center of attention. Make someone else the center.

— Pray together —

Walk up to a family member and ask them to hold out their hands. Take their hands in yours and simply ask God to bless them.

— Pray for each other —

Say a Hail Mary for each family member.

— Be Present to Each Other —

Make communication a priority. Put down your phone and have a good conversation with a family member. Look them in the eye and talk to them about their day.

— Be Complimentary —

Make it a point to think about each member of your family and tell them what you admire most about them.

— Reach out —

Call a family member who doesn’t live with you. You can do a great deal to lift spirits simply through a phone call or a visit, especially if they live alone.

— Say “I’m sorry” —

Think of ways you may have hurt a family member and apologize.

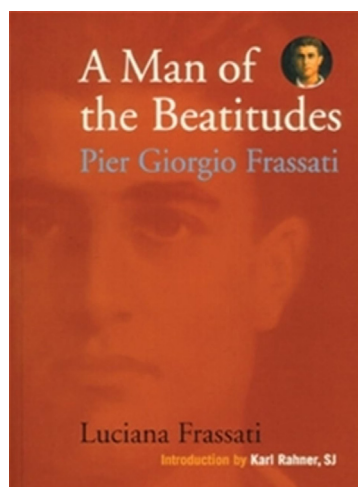
— Be Charitable —

Go out of your way to be charitable for no particular reason.

RECOMMENDED READ:

A MAN OF THE BEATITUDES: PIER GIORGIO FRASSATI

Recommendation by Tim McCormick



“A Man of the Beatitudes: Pier Giorgio Frassati” is a book I read almost twenty years ago when I was involved in campus and young adult ministry in the Archdiocese of Detroit. Pier Giorgio, who lived during the first quarter of the 20th Century in Turin, Italy, was a man who came from a wealthy and non-religious family, but who had a deep love of the Eucharist and the poor. Written by his sister Luciana, this book highlights the short yet extraordinary life of this man, who will be declared a Saint of the Church later this year by Pope Francis. An avid mountain climber and athlete, one of my favorite quotes from him is **“The higher we go, the better we will hear the voice of Christ.”** If you google him, you find a bunch of photos from his life that exhibit the joy and love of Christ which he had and shared with others. **During this Jubilee Year of Hope, I can’t think of a better modern saint who exemplified the theological virtue of hope! Verso l’alto!**

RECOMMENDED WATCH:

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO

Recommendation by Ken Pullis

The movie *The Count of Monte Cristo* is based on the classic novel of the same name by Alexandre Dumas. It is a thrilling story of man’s search for justice while he wrestles with the desire for revenge and contemplates the meaning of mercy. Edmund Dantes is blinded by rage and the insatiable desire for vengeance. He has suffered a great injustice and lost 20 years in prison for a crime that he did not commit. It is in prison that he befriends a priest who not only helps him escape but also teaches him the depth of God’s love for him. In a moving scene just before the priest dies, the priest reveals to Edmund the location of an enormous hidden treasure and makes him promise to use the money for good since that is what God wants him to do. Edmund responds, “But I do not believe in God.” “It does not matter because God believes in you,” is the response of the priest. **What a beautiful truth!** God believes in each of us and He has created us to love, by love, and for love. He has a purpose for each of us. In good times and bad we should place our trust in God. **May we ask God for a stronger faith in Him!** God always believes in each of us even when our faith in Him may not be the strongest.

