

Tender Tidings

A Magazine for INTENTIONAL CATHOLIC PARENTS

WINTER
2014

THE SLEEP
ISSUE

MAKE:
A KING CAKE for
Epiphany
(gorgeous but easy!)

REFLECT:
Parenting tips from
the HOLY FAMILY

WINTER 2014

Tender Tidings

A Magazine for INTENTIONAL CATHOLIC PARENTS



This Issue:

4 WINTER GREETINGS

6 CONTRIBUTORS

8 OUR PARENTING MODEL

14 PARENTING Rx

Dr. Greg answers hard questions from real parents!

19 THE SLEEP ISSUE

Sleep Stories

Sleep stories from real parents who meet their children's night time needs in culturally defying ways.

Gentle Tips for a Good Night's Sleep BY CHARISSE TIERNEY

Why Co-Sleep? BY MARCIA MATTERN

Science and night-time sleep.

30 FAMILY OF FAITH

Gladsome Light BY MARCIA MATTERN

What the Holy Family can teach you about leading your own family.



Live Like a Saint BY CHARISSE TIERNEY

The Feast of the Holy Family

36 NOURISH

King Cake for Epiphany BY CHRISTINA KOLB

A simplified version of a very elegant French galette des rois!



Tender Tidings

Spring 2015

Spring Cleaning: Home & Heart

COMING early March





WINTER GREETINGS from *Kim*



We hope you enjoy this **SLEEP ISSUE** of Tender Tidings! I think we parents are concerned about sleep at least occasionally, perhaps frequently. In my own circle of friends, parents read and talk to each other about sleep issues as much as discipline issues. Why isn't my child sleeping? Why is she sleeping *there*? Why can't she sleep when I want her to sleep? I'M SO TIRED! I'm glad we are asking questions and talking, because how we handle sleep issues — especially in those moments when we are nearing the limits of our physical and emotional capacity — has the power to shape our child's sense of safety and well-being.

I think our concerns about sleep mostly originate in two struggles: either we aren't getting enough sleep to be productive and healthy or our child wants to sleep in places and at times that cause us to worry that she is plain weird. Or, quite frankly, we worry other people might think we are weird or even bad parents. I hope after reading our sleep stories you will find some relief. These stories emerged from our contributors without any communication during the drafting and writing stages. We had no idea what the other parents were thinking and writing, yet the bottom line is similar in each: trust your children and trust yourself, because caving to cultural pressures about how and where you put your child to sleep may harm your child and your relationship with her.

There's more in this issue to enjoy. **CHARISSE TIERNEY** and **MARCIA MATTERN** inspire us to look to the Holy Family for clues to living out the parenting vocation with greater joy and trust. Not to be missed: **CHRISTINA KOLB'S** exquisite (but easy) recipe for a genuine French king cake to help you observe the Feast of the Epiphany (January 6) with your family. And **DR. GREG** gives some cracking advice to a couple of parents in his column.

Pray for us, as we will for you, and visit us at intentionalcatholicparenting.com and catholicap.com!

Kim Cameron-Smith



Claire Cameron-Smith (age 11), December 2014

CONTRIBUTORS



Kim Cameron-Smith, Editor

Kim lives in Northern California where she homeschools her 4 children. Kim believes that Catholic theology perfects what is already just and beautiful in secular insights about how children thrive. She is a regular contributor on the topic of “intentional Catholic parenting” on Greg & Lisa Popcak’s radio program *More2Life*. Kim is a licensed attorney and a member of the California State Bar. She holds a B.A. in English from Wellesley College, an M.Phil. in Medieval Literature from Oxford University, a Master of Theological Studies from Harvard University, and a J.D. from U.C. Berkeley.



Charisse Tierney, Assistant Editor

Charisse lives in Kansas with her husband, Rob, and their five children. Charisse and Rob teach Natural Family Planning for the Couple to Couple League, and previously taught Theology of the Body for Teens to high school and middle school students. Charisse holds a Bachelor of Music Performance degree in clarinet from Wichita State University and a Master of Music Performance degree in clarinet from the New England Conservatory of Music. Charisse blogs at pavingthepathtopurity.wordpress.com and CatholicMom.com. She can also be found on Facebook at www.facebook.com/pavingthepathtopurity.



Angela Piazza, Copy Editor

Angela resides in Northern California with her husband Danielo and their eight children. She serves on the Board of Directors of San Jose Youth Shakespeare, a non-profit organization which produces full-length Shakespearean plays in original language. Before focusing full-time on raising her children, Angela provided rehabilitative therapy in both pediatric and adult clinical settings. She holds a B.S. degree in therapeutic recreation, with graduate studies in speech and language pathology.



Dr. Gregory Popcak, Contributing Expert

Dr. Greg is the author of many books including *Parenting with Grace*. He directs the Pastoral Solutions Institute which conducts Catholic marriage, family, and personal counseling by telephone. With his wife Lisa he hosts the popular radio program *More2Life*, produced by Ave Maria Radio.



Melanie Jean Juneau

Melanie Jean Juneau is a wife, writer and mother of nine children who blogs at *Joy of Nine9* (melaniejeanjuneau.wordpress.com). The very existence of a joyful mother of nine children seems to confound people. Her writing is humorous and heart warming; thoughtful and thought provoking with a strong current of spirituality running through it. Part of her call and her witness is to write the truth about children, family, marriage and the sacredness of life, especially a life lived in God.



Christina Kolb

Christina Kolb lives in Chicago, IL with her wonderful husband, Kevin, and their two children. She holds a degree in English and Sociology from the University of Illinois, and worked for a Catholic organization as a Translation Coordinator before deciding to become a stay-at-home mom. She also trained professionally as a pastry chef, and loves to cook, bake, and write, and combines all of these while blogging at www.butimhungry.com.



Michaelyn Hein

Michaelyn Hein lives in New Jersey with her husband and two children. After earning a B.A. in English, and M.A.T. in Secondary Education, she taught high school English for seven years. She left her career when her son was born in order to raise her family. She blogs at www.thepewinback.wordpress.com.



Marcia Mattern

Marcia and her husband Steve live in Central Illinois where they homeschool their six children. They first met attachment parenting when teaching and promoting NFP for the Couple to Couple League in 1997. Marcia is a Registered Dietitian, a Doula, and Catechist for Catechesis of the Good Shepherd. She embraced the Catholic Faith in 1997 after a childhood of Protestantism.

Tender Tidings

Editor: Kim Cameron-Smith

Assistant Editor: Charisse Tierney

Copy Editor: Angela Piazza

Concept, design, layout: Kim Cameron-Smith

Advertising: Contact Kim Cameron-Smith at kim@catholicap.com.

Author submissions: We are delighted to receive proposals for articles and short sidebar pieces. Drop a line with your idea to Kim Cameron-Smith at kim@catholicap.com.



OUR PARENTING MODEL

7 Building Blocks to a Joyful Catholic Home™



1. LOVE

- ♥ Children need unconditional love in order to thrive, but we can send them conflicting signals about how we feel about them. Our words, actions, and countenance can send them the message that they need to do the right thing or achieve the highest awards in order to earn our deepest held love.
- ♥ Loving our children intentionally and unconditionally requires 1) emotional openness, 2) a recognition and affirmation of their unique, unrepeatable value, and 3) our willingness to be changed by our children.

2. EMPATHY

- ♥ Get to know each child as a unique human being.
- ♥ Understand what's behind your child's eyes and in her heart at each developmental stage.
- ♥ Recognize any of your old wounds so that you can parent your child appropriately and with awareness, and not from a place of fear or anger unrelated to your child or her behavior.

3. PLAY

- ♥ All human beings need play in order to thrive, parents and kids alike. Children need plenty of uninterrupted time for free play both alone and with other children.
- ♥ Play is one of the most important ways children connect to us, work through their fears and frustrations, and build their self-confidence.
- ♥ Enter a child's play world on their terms. Be willing to be silly and goofy on occasion!

4. RADIANT FAITH

- ♥ Every family can enjoy a shared faith life that's alive and downright fun! Such faith is a tremendous witness to other families, Catholic and non-Catholic alike.
- ♥ Allow your home to reflect the abundant joy and hope of our Catholic Faith. Explore and celebrate Feast Days and Saints Days with crafts, special parties and teas, and sharing books together. Develop a family prayer plan and pray together regularly.
- ♥ Children, especially young ones, will absorb our attitudes about attending Mass and growing in the Faith. If we're excited and enthusiastic, it'll be contagious! The heart of our Faith is love and hope, and the opportunity for transformation and renewal — not a list of obligations we need to fulfill to be “good”.

5. GENTLE DISCIPLINE

- ♥ The *heart* of gentle discipline is the connection between parent and child. Without a secure connection,

discipline will be a frustrating power struggle.

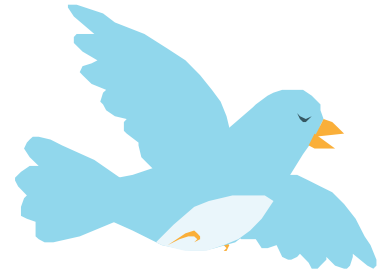
- ♥ The *goal* of gentle discipline is for the child to build a conscience and self-control, not to break the child's will or to coerce obedience through threats. In an empathic, nurturing home a child is never humiliated and parents don't use their superior size and authority to intimidate children into compliance.
- ♥ Growing up can be confusing and frustrating. Try to see situations from your child's perspective, even if it seems irrational to you. We can't expect a 3 year-old to have the self-control of a 6 year-old. Each developmental age comes with its struggles and joys. If we educate ourselves about child development we can understand our child's feelings and needs better, so the balance tips towards joy!

6. BALANCE

- ♥ Balance work, play, and prayer in your home. Do all these things as a family. Each family member contributes to the upkeep of the home as is appropriate for their developmental age. Even very young children enjoy being included in the routine with small jobs, like helping unload the dishwasher, mopping, or dusting.
- ♥ Every parent needs a little time alone to refuel. How much time you can spend alone and how frequently depends on various factors in your home, including the availability of your spouse or a babysitter and how young your children are, but remember that you will be parenting for many years. Don't run out of gas early on!
- ♥ Take time to exercise and eat well. This can involve the kids! Children love to ride their bikes with parents who might be running or biking. Make a hiking plan and explore different hiking trails in your region. Children love to help with food preparations, like making salads and kneading bread dough.

7. A STRONG MARRIAGE

- ♥ If you treat your child with respect and affection, but fail to model such respect and affection with your spouse, your child may still enter adulthood with a relationship handicap. Your marriage models for your children how to treat others in close, intimate relationships.
- ♥ Speak about and to your spouse with deep regard and love; perform little acts of kindness to make his or her life easier. Be willing to *serve* even in small ways.
- ♥ You and your spouse are called to help one another on your paths to heaven. See your spouse the way Christ does, as a precious and priceless soul on a journey to a Divine Destination.



Coming

in 2015

from Pauline Books

**INTENTIONAL CATHOLIC
PARENTING**

THE BOOK

by Tender Tidings editor
Kim Cameron-Smith



By reason of their state in life and of their order, Christian spouses have their own special gifts in the People of God. This grace proper to the sacrament of Matrimony is intended to perfect the couple's love and to strengthen their indissoluble unity. By this grace they help one another to attain holiness in their married life and in welcoming and educating their children.

— Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1641



NEED MARRIAGE SUPPORT?

Trained counselors sensitive to our Faith are available for phone counseling through

Pastoral Solutions Institute

www.exceptionalmarriages.com

740-266-6461



Christ Comes to Us through **Our Children**

It is part of God’s plan for us that Christ shall come to us in everyone; it is in their particular role that we must learn to know him. He may come as a little child, making enormous demands, giving enormous consolation . . .

If we see everyone in our life as “another Christ” we shall treat everyone with the reverence and objectivity that must grow into love and, as a matter of sheer logic, we shall accept whatever they bring to us, in the way of joy or sorrow or responsibility, as coming from the hand of Christ; and because nothing comes from his hand that is not given for our ultimate happiness, we shall gradually learn that the things they do, the demands they make, are all part of God’s plan for us.

— Caryll Houselander, *The Risen Christ*

INTENTIONAL CATHOLIC PARENTING

Day to Day

“There is not a moment in which
God does not present Himself under
the cover of some pain to be endured, of
some consolation to be enjoyed, or of
some duty to be performed.
All that takes place within us, around us,
or through us, contains and conceals
His divine action.”

— Jean-Pierre de Caussade, *Abandonment to Divine Providence*



*Real parents ask Dr. Greg
their toughest questions!*

Parenting Rx

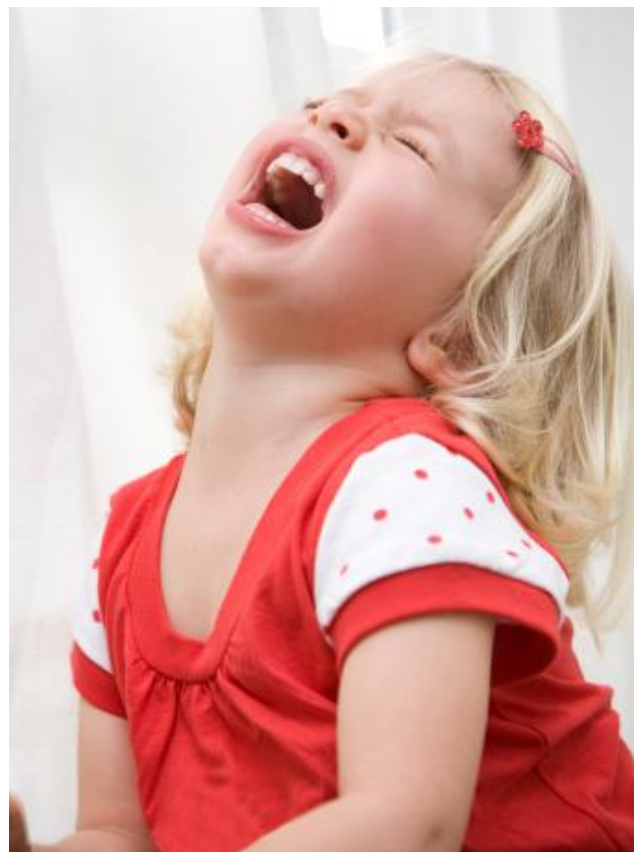
with
DR. GREG



Dear Dr. Greg,

My five-year-old daughter occasionally still throws temper tantrums, which are usually triggered by not getting her way with something that seems rather trivial to us. Sometimes we have no idea what caused the tantrum, and we have a hard time getting her to tell us what happened. What is the best way to help her calm down and talk to us when she is in the midst of screaming, crying, and writhing in a heap on the floor? She does sometimes let me pick her up and hold her until she calms down enough to think and speak rationally, and other times we have just left her alone in her room until she calms down a bit. Once she calms down, how can we teach her to control her response better the next time something upsets her?

— Tired of Tantrums



Dear Tired of Tantrums,

Between the ages of four and six, brain changes are occurring that enable a child to engage in self-talk -- that inner dialog that we all have that creates and sustains emotional states. Before this age, parents could deal with tantrums with distraction and calming techniques alone. Now, however, these techniques aren't enough, because the child is able to keep the emotional fires burning by keeping up a conversation in his or her head that says, "You're mean!" "This isn't fair!" and "I don't LIKE this!"

It is ultimately the child's job to learn how to get control of this inner-dialog, because there is little you can do from the outside to directly change it. But you can provide a structure that makes it easier for the child to learn to get control of the negative, tantrum-sustaining self-talk.

1. Begin with comfort and empathy.

Start by letting your child know you understand that he or she is hurting and upset. Simple statements like, "You are so upset. I'm sorry you seem so frustrated right now" and the like can go a long way to helping your child feel understood and, ultimately, calm down. If your child is receptive to your attempts to help and begins quieting down a bit, coach your child to use her words to tell you what she is upset about. Help your child state the problem and begin proposing ideas to address whatever that issue is. Assuming this works, skip step two below and proceed to step three.

2. Give the child some space.

If your child fights you and is refusing your help as described above, say to your child, "I am trying to help you, but you don't seem to want my help. You will need to sit here until you are ready to tell me what's wrong in your nice voice or are ready to let me help you." Place the child in a quiet place and leave the room. This isn't a time-out so much as it is some time to let your child cool



NEW FROM DR. GREG AND LISA POPCAK!

Then Comes Baby: The Catholic Guide to Surviving and Thriving in the First Three Years of Parenthood

Revealed: the rituals, routines, and tips to manage feeding, fatigue, and finances. How to prioritize marital bonding and your faith life, plus much more! All from a Catholic perspective!

down. Check back in after a few minutes and ask if your child is ready to speak to you respectfully about the problem or receive your help calming down. Repeat step 2 until the child is receptive. Return to step one.

3. Rehearse.

Now that you have helped your child get back under control, identified the problem and how you can address the problem, have your child rehearse a better way to address this problem in future. Have your child imagine that he or she is experiencing the problem again, but this time have your child practice saying the respectful words and tone and doing the more appropriate thing to address the concern. It's ok if your child has to repeat this two or three times to get it right (any more than that and you'll need to go back to step two). Once your child completes this successfully, praise your little one for the good effort and get him to promise that he will do this new behavior instead the next time this problem comes up.

After a week or two at most, the tantrums should mostly stop altogether. If not, contact the Pastoral Solutions Institute for additional support.

— Dr. Greg

Dear Dr. Greg,

My four-year-old daughter has a hard time sitting still during Mass, so I let her look at books and color. Up to this point I have felt this is reasonable given her age and maturity. At what age, though, do you think I should require her to focus on the Liturgy (with my support) instead of playing and reading?

— A Mom Trying to Raise Saints

Dear Mom Trying to Raise Saints,

Every child will come into this in their own time, but every child needs help to get there. Whatever age your child is, begin by at least requiring your child to put down her book or toy and attend to elevation, when the bread and wine becomes the Body and Blood of Jesus. Say to your child, "The bread and wine is becoming Jesus! Look at the miracle! Say, 'I love you, Jesus.'"

As your child matures, take away the activities during the Liturgy of the Eucharist, particularly during the acclamation (this is the Sanctus or Holy, Holy, Holy prayer) and the concluding doxology (The Great Amen). Help your child sing or say the prayers.

Also, make sure that you have read the readings before Mass. Pick a "magic word" for each reading. Tell your child to listen for that word during the readings and the Gospel. When your child hears the

word, tell them to give you a quiet signal (tugging your sleeve, for instance) to let you know that he heard it. Praise him and give him a big hug for paying attention.

The key is to use little tricks like this to teach your child to attend to as much of the Mass as possible. Don't set him up with toys and books from the start. Help him attend to Mass as much as you can and use the activity books and quiet toys to fill in the gaps. Over time, try to find little ways to encourage your child to delay bringing out the activities, remembering that, at every age, these things should be put away--or at least set aside--during the consecration/elevation.

— Dr. Greg



DR. GREG POPCAK is the author of many books, including *Parenting with Grace* and *Then Comes Baby*. He directs the *Pastoral Solutions Institute* which conducts Catholic marriage, family, and personal counseling by telephone. He invites you to contact him at www.CatholicCounselors.com or by calling 740-266-6461.

****PARENTING RX SUBMISSIONS:** If you have a parenting conundrum you've been dying to ask Dr. Greg, you're in luck! Submit your questions for Dr. Greg to Kim Cameron-Smith at kcameronsmith@yahoo.com. Include your question and your "signature" as you'd like it to appear in *Tender Tidings*.



GREAT WEBSITES for *Intentional Catholic Parents*

Intentional Catholic Parenting

www.intentionalcatholicparenting.com

The home of *Tender Tidings* magazine, ICP explores intentional Catholic parenting through the 7 Building Blocks to a Joyful Catholic Home: love, empathy, play, radiant faith, gentle discipline, balance, and a strong marriage.

Catholic Attachment Parenting Corner

www.catholicap.com

Catholic Attachment Parenting Corner (CAPC) offers resources and support for Catholic parents interested in gentle, intentional, or attachment-based parenting. CAPC hosts a Facebook page and yahoo support group.

Couple to Couple League

www.ccli.org

The Couple to Couple League (CCL) is an international, Catholic, non-profit organization dedicated to promoting and teaching fertility awareness (natural family planning) to married and engaged couples.

Positive Discipline

www.positivediscipline.com

Positive Discipline is a program designed to teach young people to become responsible, respectful and resourceful members of their communities. Recent research tells us that children are “hardwired” from birth to connect with others, and that children who feel a sense of connection to their community, family, and school are less likely to misbehave. Taking this into account, Positive Discipline has as its core tools mutual respect, identifying the belief behind the behavior, effective communication, discipline that teaches, and encouragement.

Parenting Science

www.parentingscience.com

Founded by a biological anthropologist, Parenting Science “is dedicated to families who want information based on the scientific evidence.” Not Catholic, but important and fascinating as we seek to parent prudently and intentionally.

SLEEP STORIES



SLEEP STORIES

Conversations from Real Parents

by Charisse Tierney

“When children do things like move out of our bed, we tend to think of those changes as *graduations*. I think it’s better to imagine them as *conversations*. In other words, kids grow best when we can focus on what they need now instead of trying to make them into something they’re not or something they’re supposed to be.”

— Dr. Greg Popcak

Maybe you bed share, room share, nurse your baby to sleep, or drive your toddler to sleep. Maybe you’re adjusting to a newborn, trying to transition a pre-schooler into his own bed, or have an eight-year-old who suddenly can’t fall asleep without a long back rub. Whatever night time phase you are in with your family, you have come to realize that intentional parenting is an around-the-clock job. And while we love our children dearly, we all wonder at times if we are crazy for handling bed time the way we do. Do our children *really* need us that much at night? Why not just follow the cultural norm and put more emphasis on sleep training than on “indulging” our children’s sleep time requests?

Here you will find real sleep stories from our Tender Tidings contributors. Stories that don’t dismiss the challenges of meeting our children’s night time needs, but stories that also highlight the indescribable rewards that accompany focusing on what our kids need *now*.

After all, this is what it means to have a real conversation--to be in tune with another, to listen, to seek the words that lie in the depths of another’s heart even if those words aren’t being spoken. A conversation meets the needs of the present moment and, by doing so, creates a firm foundation to propel that moment forward. Enjoy the stories and know that you are in good company as you nurse, console, and cuddle your children through each and every night!



Hotel Happiness

by Charisse Tierney

The early morning sun was just reaching through the slit in the hotel drapes when the whispering and giggling started. I snuggled down in bed for a few more moments, relishing the warmth of the snoozing toddler next to me. I wasn't even sure who ended up in bed with whom the night before, and I barely remembered dozing off as my heroic husband walked our restless one-year-old about.

Sure, the night from which I was awakening was a bit of a blur. Our two connected hotel rooms served our older four children well, as it gave them a quiet, dark space in which to sleep while my husband and I wrestled a wakeful toddler. Of course, our eight-year-old was still in and out of our room, but we were accustomed to the phase he was going through. A few extra back rubs and assurances finally seemed to ease his worries that loom so large at night. Then, all was quiet . . . except for the toddler whose adrenaline was still pumping from swimming too late in the evening. I nursed her, and my husband walked her, over and over and over again. Finally, she fell asleep and everyone made their way to a bed.

I know it sounds hard, but any parent will tell you that attempting to get five kids to sleep in a hotel room is no picnic, regardless of your parenting style. But, once we were all asleep, *we slept*. As usual, I didn't have to get out of bed once during the night. My toddler was next to me to nurse as needed, and any other child could join us in bed if they needed the physical proximity.

With some careful planning of nap times and active times, traveling with children as co-sleeping parents is really a breeze. No pack-n-plays to set up, no special requests for a crib, and no special snugglies to keep track of and pray you don't lose. My husband and I are their binkies, their blankies, their teddy bears, their *home*.

That morning in the hotel room, I listened to my happy children chattering through the doorway, snuggled a bit closer to my toddler and smiled. The nights are a little rough sometimes, but these moments of family love and closeness are the moments that will be forever magnified in my memory.



When Your
Baby Loves . . .
THE
CAGE

by Kim Cameron-Smith



With each of my pregnancies, I imagined how I would handle baby's sleep, especially during the night. Every last one of those babies taught me a thing or two once he or she arrived – full of their spectacular Selves. The biggest lessons have come from my third child, Dominic.

By the time Dominic came along I was pretty confident about the benefits of co-sleeping with my babies. I did erect a crib before he arrived to serve as 1) a napping spot when I couldn't carry him in a sling and 2) a decoy for concerned relatives and friends who might think the sky was falling because Philip and I chose to sleep with our babies. After all, I wouldn't want to cause any coronaries or gossip.

I imagined months and even years of cuddly nights with my chubby-cheeked cherub of a babe. Well, Dominic had different ideas. As soon as he could crawl with confidence (which seemed like about four weeks, but I guess it was closer to ten months), he slipped out of our bed after nursing, crawled over to his crib, pulled himself up, and grunted to be assisted into . . . The Cage.

For some attachment parenting gurus, cribs are kind of an anathema. They equate cribs to, yup, cages and query why any sensible parent would want to put her child in one like a prisoner or . . . gulp . . . a zoo animal. I had already broken the cage rule by even having one in my home for napping. And now here my child thought it was an awesome spot to catch a snooze away from his parents.

Away. From. His. Parents.

For several weeks I tried to correct this poor, wayward soul by putting him back in our bed. Again and again he would slip out, crawl over to The Cage and pull himself up wanting to get IN it. So finally, after analyzing the data, we accepted that — no matter what the big wigs said — this boy wanted to sleep by himself. So we let him.

Go figure. Kids have opinions.

The lesson for me: Parenting books are very useful tools, but they can't replace the information my child can give me about who he is and what he needs. As long as my children are thriving, I can trust what I read in them as much as what I read in a book.





The
House of
Musical
Beds

by Melanie Jean Juneau

Bedtime in a family of eleven is not an easy endeavor if you want to nurture each child and meet his or her emotional and spiritual needs. For decades, bedtime took hours every night in our home, because it included story time, sharing, prayers and back rubs. I did anything and everything to make sure bedtime was as peaceful and as loving as possible.

Happy, secure kids fall asleep quicker, sleep through the night (occasionally) and don't wake up as early (sometimes). So to execute my outrageous mission, I hung quilts over windows in the summer and used fans in bedrooms to create white noise. This tactic blocked out any household noise that could disturb a younger child who needed more sleep.

If someone was sick or couldn't fall asleep, I would always lie down beside them. Soon, another couple of bodies would sneak in, sandwiching me between them. When I was sure that everyone was in a deep sleep, I moved away in comical slow motion, careful not to wake up anyone.

Another strategy that helped soothe kids to sleep was to tuck them in beside an older sibling who was reading in bed. Any fears or loneliness disappeared with the older sibling's comforting presence.

My husband often lamented that our house should be called *the house of musical beds* because it seemed everybody changed places so many times. He was never sure who would end up where by the morning.

If there was a new baby in the house, he or she transformed bedtime into something magical. Kids couldn't wait to climb under the covers because I would wrap the baby up tightly in a soft blanket and gently place the newborn beside them. I can still see my children's' delight as they gazed at the baby, and the content, satisfied expression on their faces as they fell asleep cuddled beside them. During those months, no one clamored for mum or a teddy bear, because they had a teddy baby.

After putting children to bed for many years, I am confident that we parents can trust our nurturing instincts as we soothe our children to sleep. My advice may not be the cultural norm, but I believe it's common sense.





Trading Places

by Michaelyn Hein

A few nights after discovering I was pregnant with our second child, I peered over at my husband from my side of the bed. "We'll do it differently next time," I told him over our five-year-old son, who was asleep between us as usual. You see, I thought I had wearied of co-sleeping. I thought that, after five years of my son kicking around in my bed and pretty regularly kneeing me in the back, I would do it differently with my second child. After all, this co-sleeping wasn't supposed to be a permanent thing. Early in the process, I'd promised my husband that our son would naturally be out of our bed by the time he turned five, and, well, that day came and went months ago.

So, when our newborn daughter arched her back in seeming annoyance as I lay in bed with her, and as she practically released a sigh of relief when I placed her in her bassinet, you would think I'd have been happy. You would think I would have felt my own sense of relief. Instead, I felt rejected. To be honest, I felt bummed. Why didn't my daughter want to sleep beside me? And what would this mean for our relationship if at a mere few months old, she needed her space? Come on, I thought, the teenage years are far away!

Co-sleeping arouses funny feelings. On the one hand, I've spent many a night struggling to convince my son that the awesome super-hero bedecked bed in his room was way cooler than my king-sized monstrosity. On the other hand, the few

times my son actually took me up on my attempt to entice him away from my bed, I felt unsettled. Ironically, I couldn't sleep. I checked on him all night and longed for the peace of mind brought by having him next to me.

The paradigm finally shifted quite recently. Weeks ago, we moved into a new home, and with it, new routines emerged. My son, suddenly and surprisingly to my husband and me, began to sleep in his new room, in his own full-sized bed. Sure, my husband or I still lay with him to read books before bed. But, now, we sneak out once he's asleep, and generally don't hear from him until morning.

My daughter, however, has slowly given up her love of her crib and, with it, her space. She gradually requested in ways that only babies can (cue crying) to sleep in our room, taking her brother's place between her parents. And I couldn't be happier about it.

But, don't let my husband know that.



GENTLE TIPS FOR A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP

Who couldn't use a few extra hours of sleep? Here are some gentle ways to help your whole family sleep longer and better!

The Basics

Observe your child's sleep patterns.

- Does he struggle to fall asleep at night if he naps too late in the day?
- Is there a certain time he needs to wake in the morning to ensure he naps early enough in the day?
- How does physical activity affect your child's sleep patterns?

Use what you know.

- Learn more about infants and children and what "normal" sleep behavior looks like at various stages.
- Combine this knowledge with what you have observed about your child's personal sleep patterns to create a general routine to your day that allows for optimal sleep.

Tips for Parents of Infants

Make night sleeping different from daytime naps.

- When your baby wakes at night, do not talk other than perhaps whispering "s-h-h-h" or "night-night".
- Do not turn on bright lights at night.
- Keep your movements slow and quiet.

To transition baby from the family bed (at whatever age you choose to do so), place mattress pad on floor next to your bed, comfort baby to sleep there, then move up into your bed once baby is asleep. Gradually move baby's bed into his own room as he gets used to sleeping alone.

Tips for Parents of Toddlers and Older Kids

- Create a sibling bed. Many co-sleeping children love to transition to sleeping with their siblings!
- To encourage a child to fall asleep on his own, wean from your old routine gradually. Sit or lie next to him in bed for a few moments, then say, "I'll be right back." Leave the room for a few moments. Come back for a minute, then repeat. If your child is calmer with you in the room, stay there. Sit on another bed or in a nearby chair, or hang up a few clothes; you are simply gradually getting your child used to settling down without you right next to him.

These tips and much more can be found in *The No-Cry Sleep Solution* and *The No-Cry Sleep Solution For Toddlers and Preschoolers* by Elizabeth Pantley, or find out more at Pantley's website www.pantley.com/elizabeth/.

Why Co-Sleep?

BY MARCIA MATTERN

Co-sleeping is when parents and children remain in close contact throughout the night so that comfort, nourishment, warmth, and protection can be provided. In order for this to happen, most parents are only an arm's reach away from their children. For other parents, bed sharing makes the commitment to night parenting easier. But why co-sleep? Is it safe? What are the benefits? And who really does this, anyway? In the book *Sleeping With Your Baby*, James McKenna outlines ways that people all over the world care for their children at night.

McKenna explains that babies who co-sleep nurse more often and for longer periods of time. They are more quickly attended to during the night hours, which increases their safety. A baby's temperature and stress levels are regulated better when sleeping with a parent. Studies have shown there is a decreased risk of SIDS when babies co-sleep.

Mothers who co-sleep also have lower stress levels and better sleep. A co-sleeping mother has better milk supply, more rapid weight loss, and increased cancer-protective effects. When a mother sleeps near her child, she and her baby both benefit.

The positive effects of sleeping with your baby are clear from research. For example, breastfeeding is linked to a 21% lower rate of infant mortality, and co-sleeping can reduce the risk of SIDS due to the increased suckling during the night. Dr. McKenna's book also lists resources, books, and responses to the American Academy of Pediatrics Sudden Infant Death Policy (SIDS) of 2005.

Dr. McKenna provides guidelines for Safe Bed Sharing:

- Choose a smoke-free environment.
- Choose a firm, non-quilted surface with no entrapment possibilities. Use only one pillow per parent.
- Place baby on his/her back to sleep.
- No alcohol or conscious altering substances.
- Don't bed share when the parent is obese.
- Don't overdress the baby. Use only lightweight, thin blankets.

Personally, I would have found Dr. McKenna's book very helpful before my first child was born. My husband and I co-slept with our infants, but mostly so that I could get some sleep! The research provided in *Sleeping With Your Baby* that backs up our family's choices gives me added confidence in the way we choose to parent at night.





BOY, n.: a noise with dirt on it.

— *Not Your Average Dictionary*



THE MYSTERY OF Christmas

Jesus was born in a humble stable, into a poor family. Simple shepherds were the first witnesses to this event. In this poverty heaven's glory was made manifest. The Church never tires of singing the glory of this night:

*The Virgin today brings into the world the Eternal
And the earth offers a cave to the Inaccessible.
The angels and shepherds praise him
And the magi advance with the star,
For you are born for us,
Little Child, God eternal!*

To become a child in relation to God is the condition for entering the kingdom. For this, we must humble ourselves and become little. Even more: to become “children of God” we must be “born from above” or “born of God.” Only when Christ is formed in us will the mystery of Christmas be fulfilled in us.

— Catechism of the Catholic Church 525 & 526



“The Holy Family” by Signorelli, 1490

The
HIDDEN
FEAST

Hidden within the Octave of Christmas is the Feast of the Holy Family. It falls on the Sunday after Christmas, so this year on December 28. Perhaps this feast can help us to reevaluate the meaning of family in the coming year.

The Holy Family, consisting of Joseph the head, Mary the mother, and Jesus the child in his humanity, are the model family. They teach us how to behave in each status within our family. Joseph, the father, always leading the way, took the role in following the traditions of the Jewish practice of his day. He listened to the leading of God in his life and took heed to the angel who spoke to him in a dream. Mary, the mother, provided for the family and was supportive of her husband. Her quiet and constant virtue without many spoken words is an example for mothers. Jesus, the child, was the model of obedience within his divinity.

We know that when Jesus was found again, after being “lost” in Jerusalem, he grew in “wisdom and stature”. (Luke 2:52) It was Joseph and Mary’s role to help him grow both spiritually and physically. How does this knowledge help us to foster wisdom and growth in our own children?

Joseph and Mary offered Jesus a very simple life. Perhaps we in the modern world can learn much from this example. These parents didn’t require a palace or modern facilities to offer the divine a place to grow. His wisdom and stature was nourished in simplicity. It was in Nazareth, in a carpenter’s home, that Jesus learned to work with his hands like his parents.

How can we live out the Feast of the Holy Family?

The Church sets aside a whole day to contemplate the mystery of love and fidelity within the Holy Family. The divine and human elements of the family — of my own family — are bathed in the light of this celebration and are given depth of meaning. I probably romanticize the Holy Family on this feast day as I think of those hidden years in Nazareth, and especially the virtues of St. Joseph and Mary the Mother of God.

Still, I contemplate the fragility and vulnerability of their family experience and I find encouragement.



They experienced the ordinariness of cleaning, working with their hands, preparing meals. They were able to encounter the Lord in the moments of the day as His Word rested in their faithful hearts.

I think of the holiness of this family and each person within it, and it seems like an invitation to transformation in grace to be the better version of myself, in loving my family. Ultimately, this celebration invites me into a position of gratitude for being and experiencing myself as God’s beloved so that I can teach, cook, clean, nurture and respond to others — one encounter at a time — as a channel of God’s love. This *is* a holy family: a place of encounter, peace and joy where nothing is “wasted” of the day or night. God invites me into it, into HIS plan. He wants to order it, to divinize it, and to be “everywhere present, filling all things.”

As I get older, I experience the frailty and fragility of my own family, especially as my loved ones age and experience health challenges. This experience opens me up to deeper gratitude for my family and for the Lord whose merciful covenant love is steadfast. Mary and Joseph aged. Jesus and Mary must have suffered with the loss of Joseph.

**Joseph and Mary offered Jesus
a very simple life. Perhaps we in the modern
world can learn much from this.
These parents didn’t require a palace or modern
facilities to offer the divine a place to grow.
His wisdom and stature was nourished
in simplicity.**

What can help us to be more mindful of the Holy Family and how can we allow this feast to impact us? Here are a few things to consider:

- Adore the Blessed Sacrament and consecrate your family to the Lord via the hands of Mary, the Mother of God. You may wish to make a local pilgrimage to a church named under the patronage of the Holy Family. Or perhaps a virtual visit to the National Shrine (www.hfsgretna.org) dedicated to the Holy Family would encourage your family.
- Identify a few key texts from the Vatican website (search “family”) which spark your interest. Here is one that impacts me. From his Apostolic Exhortation, *Familiaris Consortio*, 60, Pope John Paul said, “Do you teach your children the Christian prayers? Do you prepare them, in conjunction with the priests, for the sacraments that they receive when they are young – Confession, Communion and Confirmation? Do you encourage them, when they are sick, to think of Christ suffering, to invoke the aid of the Blessed Virgin and the saints? Do you say the family Rosary together...? Do you pray with your children, with the whole domestic community, at least sometimes? Your example of honesty in thought and action, joined to some common prayer, is a lesson for life and an act of worship of singular value. In this way you bring peace to your homes: Pax huic domui. Remember, it is thus that you build up the Church.”
- Identify a habit which increases connection within your family and try it out for a month. Maybe it’s praying one decade of the rosary together after dinner. Consider reading the Mass reading aloud during breakfast. Do you have a family play night? Could a fifteen-minute board or card game one night a week allow for relationship building between you and your children? Can you turn off the television during meals to encourage more communication?
- Decorate your family prayer corner in a new way. Or if you haven’t already, establish a prominent prayer corner in a central room in your home. Does the Holy Family have an image in your prayer area?
- Pray Compline or Night Prayer from the Liturgy of Hours with your husband each night for a week and assess how it impacts your spiritual life. Does it bring you closer to living the vocation of a mother or father?

If you are encouraged to be a family following in the footsteps of the Holy Family, you might consider the World Meeting of Families which will be held in Philadelphia next September 2015. It looks to be a spiritually encouraging conference and Pope Francis plans to attend! You can find more at www.worldmeeting2015.org.



Prayer for the Family

Jesus, our most loving redeemer,
You came to enlighten the world
with your teaching and example.
You willed to spend the greater part of Your life
in humble obedience to Mary and Joseph
in the poor home of Nazareth.
In this way, You sanctified that family,
which was to be an example for all Christian families.

Graciously accept our family,
which we dedicate and consecrate to You this day.
Be pleased to protect, guard, and keep it
in holy fear, in peace,
and in the harmony of Christian charity.
By conforming ourselves to the Divine model
of Your family,
may we attain to eternal happiness.

-New St. Joseph People's Prayer Book





BY CHARISSE TIERNEY

FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY

First Sunday following Christmas (December 28 this year)

It is difficult to find information about the Holy Family during the years before Jesus began His public ministry. By studying the culture and lifestyles of the people of early Nazareth, we can conclude that the Holy Family most likely lived a life of simplicity and diligence, focused on glorifying God through hard work and obedience to the laws of their Jewish faith.

It has been said that when the Magi offered to build her family a palace, Mary refused, choosing instead to remain in their humble, three-room dwelling. The Holy Family lived in this world, but the way they lived always pointed to God.

1. Oil Lamp

A wayward traveler seeking shelter during Jesus' time would have looked for a house with the flicker of lamp light within. Light was a literal sign of life in the days before electricity, and remains a symbolic sign of a life baptized in Christ. Light a candle or oil lamp on a prayer table or near sacred art to remind your family to let their light shine!

2. Bread

Bread was a principal food for the Holy Family's community, giving weight to Jesus' words "I am the Bread of Life." (Jn 6:35) Make some homemade bread with your family. Enjoy the work of kneading the dough by hand, and fill your home with the scent of love as it bakes.

3. Bible or Magnificat

Jesus' family would have kept faithful prayer and worship practices. One of their rituals would have been to read, chant, or sing the Psalms together. Read some Psalms together as a family from your Bible or a publication like the Magnificat. Rejoice in God's great love and mercy!

4. Notepad

A pious, Catholic practice is to write the monogram "J.M.J." for "Jesus, Mary, and Joseph" at the top of personal notes or cards. Encourage your family to incorporate this practice to remind themselves and the note recipient who we are all striving to emulate.



NOURISH



Photos by Christina Kolb. All rights reserved.

Galette *des* Rois

HOW TO MAKE AN EASY BUT TRADITIONAL “KING CAKE” FOR EPIPHANY

by Christina Kolb

Just because December 25th (and a load of Christmas cookies) has come and gone doesn't mean that the fun of baking in the kitchen with your kids has to end! Baking a galette des rois (or “king cake”) for the Feast of the Epiphany is fun, easy, and might just become a new family tradition!

In the United States, many of us know the king cake as the yeasted confection topped with frosting and colored sugar that we enjoy on Fat Tuesday before Lent begins. However, the tradition of king cakes began in France hundreds of years ago to celebrate the Epiphany. It is called a king cake because it was meant to “draw the Kings” to the Baby Jesus. Traditionally, a fève (a broad bean) was placed in the middle of the cake to symbolize the baby Jesus, and whoever found the fève in their piece was made “king”! Some bakeries in France still sell the cakes complete with a paper crown for the lucky king.

The following recipe uses pre-made puff pastry and a simple almond filling, making it a fun, easy recipe to try with your kids. While you're putting it in the oven, set them to work making a crown for your family's king. Not only is this a fun activity and a great way to talk to your kids about why we celebrate the Epiphany as a feast day, but you'll also have a delicious cake to show for it!

Ingredients

1/2 cup almond flour	1 pound (450g) puff pastry, divided in two pieces, chilled
1/4 cup (100g) sugar	a whole almond or piece of candied fruit to be the fève
pinch salt	1 egg yolk
zest of 1/2 orange (unsprayed or organic)	1 teaspoon milk
4 tablespoons unsalted butter, cubed, at room temperature	
1 large egg, at room temperature	
4-5 drops almond extract	

Instructions

To make the almond filling, combine the almond flour, sugar, salt, and orange zest in a medium bowl. Beat in the butter until it's completely incorporated. Mix in the egg, then the almond extract. Cover and chill in the fridge until you need it.

Line a baking sheet with parchment paper or silicone baking mat. On a lightly-floured surface, roll one piece of puff pastry into a circle about 10" round. Using a pot lid, plate, or bottom of a spring form pan as a template, trim the dough into a neat circle. Place the dough on the baking sheet. Repeat with the other piece of pastry, so you have two circles on the baking sheet. Chill the dough for thirty minutes.

Remove the dough and almond filling from the refrigerator. Spread the almond filling over the center of one of the dough circles, leaving a 1-inch exposed border. Place an almond to act as the fève somewhere in the almond filling, if you wish.

Brush water generously around the exposed perimeter of the dough with the filling, then place the other circle of dough on top of the galette and press down gently to seal the edges. (It can be refrigerated for a few hours or overnight at this point, if you'd like.)

Preheat the oven to 375°F. Flute the sides of the dough, like you would a pie, or scallop the edges using a paring knife. Stir together the egg yolk with the milk and brush it evenly over the top – avoid getting the glaze on the sides, which will inhibit the pastry from rising at the edges. Use a paring knife to lightly score designs on top of the tart, without actually cutting through the dough.

Bake for 30 minutes, or until the galette is browned on top and up the sides. Remove from the oven, let cool 10 minutes, then slide the galette off the baking sheet and onto a cooling rack. Serve warm or at room temperature.



ICP

Intentional Catholic Parenting

Finding Joy in the Sacredness of Family

Photo Credits:

Cover: baby sleeping on moon, Katrina Elena, thinkstockphotos.com

Page 14: kicking and screaming, James Tutor, Getty Images

Page 19: baby sleeping in crib, Fuse, thinkstockphotos.com

Page 27: co-sleeping family, Purestock, thinkstockphotos.com

Page 28: muddy boy, Mandy Min, thinkstockphotos.com

CONTACT:

Kim Cameron-Smith, Founder and Editor

Tender Tidings Magazine

www.intentionalcatholicparenting.com

kcameronsmith@yahoo.com