Faith in Five- Children
Ordinary Time Week 21

1. **Read Matthew 16:13-20 as a family. What does Jesus ask the disciples?** Jesus asks the disciples two things. First, he asks who people say the Son of Man is and then he asks them who they say he is. **Who answers the second question?** Simon Peter answers with the truth! Despite most people thinking that Jesus is another prophet, Simon Peter declares "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." **How does Jesus respond to Peter?** Jesus entrusts his church on earth to Peter by saying "you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church. I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." **What does it mean to have the keys?** The keys symbolize authority. **What does binding and loosing mean?** To bind means to forbid and to loose means to allow. We can see Jesus has given authority to Peter, our first Pope and the apostles, our first bishops, to carry out his mission on earth! We are privileged to be part of this saving mission for ourselves and those around us. We want to echo Peter's statement of faith in Jesus as Christ and live our lives accordingly!

2. **Who is St. Augustine?** Augustine was born to a christian mother and pagan father in North Africa in the year 354. Early on, Augustin chose a life of sin and worthless pleasures. His mother, St. Monica prayed for him without ceasing, never giving up hope that he would one day repent of his sins and convert. Augustine was a very bright student and scholar. When he went to Rome and Milan as a professor, his mother followed him, pleading with him to change his ways! **When did St. Augustine finally become a christian?** It was in Milan, listening to the sermons of St. Ambrose that Augustine began to read scripture and pray. Eventually he was not only baptized, but became a priest in Hippo (modern day Algeria). St. Augustine was a wonderful priest- he guarded his flock against false teachings, cared for the poor and sick and imprisoned, and taught the faith relentlessly through his sermons and many writings. Because of his years of struggle with sin and darkness, he could help many in similar situations. His love for his people came from his constant growth in his love for God! He famously said " You have made us, O God, for yourself, and our hearts shall find no rest until they rest in you." **What is St. Augustine the patron saint of?** He is the patron saint of brewers, printers and theologians. His feast day is August 28th.

3. **What is the sign of the cross?** The sign of the cross is a prayer ans sacramental. **When do we pray the sign of the cross?** We pray the sign of the cross very frequently! At the beginning of prayers, before entering a pew, before and at the end of

mass, after receiving Holy Communion, when we hear sirens or pass by a church, and many other times! You probably know that we are drawing a cross on our body when we say this payer. **What does this prayer do?** First, we bless ourselves with the sign of the cross, invoking the three Persons of the Blessed Trinity. The blessed Trinity is a core belief our faith! Secondly, the sign of the cross reminds us of Jesus' death for us on the cross and our purpose as a Christians! Finally, it reminds us of our identity as a member of God's family.

4. **How can you get involved in your parish, even if you are a kid?!** Besides registering for Catechism classes and attending those, there are lots of ways to get involved with your family. If you have made your first Holy Communion, you can be an altar server. Your parish may also have a junior legion of Mary or junior St. Vincent dePaul society. Both of these groups have excellent opportunities for youth to evangelize and serve in the community. If your parish has a food pantry, you may be able to volunteer there. Attend parish events and get to know your priest! You can do this by inviting them to your house for dinner or dropping some baked goods off at the rectory. You may also be able to join a children's choir or help with ministry for younger children such as children's liturgy of the world or vacation bible school.

5. **Do you know the Jesus prayer?** The Jesus prayer is: "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner." **Where is it from?** The prayer originates from Egyptian Desert Fathers in the 5th century and has been a tradition ever since. **Why is this prayer so powerful?** This prayer allows us to meditate on who Jesus is and who we are. Jesus IS mercy and we are all in need! This prayer is especially helpful when you feel unable to pray the way you want, or are overwhelmed. It is simple but rich and unites us with our merciful Savior!

REVIEW QUESTION: **Apologetics- Why can't our non-Catholic friends and family receive the Eucharist?** At the Catholic mass we are not re-creating the last supper. We believe Christ is present on the altar, in the form of the host. Hopefully we are all doing our absolute best to receive Jesus in the Eucharist with much reverence and awe. Since non-Catholics do not believe the Eucharist contains the body, blood, soul and divinity of Jesus, they are not properly prepared or to receive Communion. We call this Blessed Sacrament *communion*. The sacrament is for those who are in communion, or unity and oneness, in their Catholic beliefs.

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