

KNOWING: CSI – Catholics in Search of Identity: PRACTICE MAKES CATHOLIC

Imagine that you’ve been called in as a creative consultant by a Hollywood director who tells you that the film he is working on needs to be more “Catholic.” In other words, he needs the set (the home of a married Catholic couple) to look more Catholic and the characters to act more Catholic (i.e. to do things or say things that would be uniquely Catholic). Together with your group, brainstorm your suggestions for making the set (i.e. the home) look more Catholic and the characters act more Catholic.



Ideas for making the set (the home) look more Catholic	Ideas for making the characters act more Catholic

KNOWING: CSI – Catholics in Search of Identity (page 2)

15 Ways to Make Your Class More Catholic

Catholicism is defined by so much more than outward appearances. We do not create a sense of Catholic identity simply by increasing the number of statues and crucifixes in a given location. Catholicism is a way of life. This way of life is generally characterized by the following: a sense of sacramentality, a commitment to community, respect for the dignity of human life and commitment to justice, a reverence for Tradition, and a disposition to faith and hope, and not despair (as outlined by Joe Paprocki, DMin, in his book, *Practice Makes Catholic: Moving from a Learned Faith to a Lived Faith*, Loyola Press). Here are 15 simple ideas (3 for each characteristic) for making your class more Catholic.

1. A Sense of Sacramentality

- a. Set a prayer table with sacramentals
- b. Observe the liturgical calendar
- c. Incorporate gestures, rituals, devotions

2. A Commitment to Community

- a. Focus on the Communion of Saints (pray for the souls in Purgatory)
- b. Acknowledge saints' feast days
- c. Invite prayers for family members and friends in need (Book of Intentions)

3. Respect for the Dignity of Human Life and Commitment to Justice

- a. Participate in the work of Catholic Relief Services, Catholic Charities, Holy Childhood Association, Operation Rice Bowl, etc.
- b. Emphasize the Corporal Works of Mercy – provide opportunities to practice them
- c. Emphasize the Ten Commandments – love of God and love of neighbor

4. A Reverence for Tradition

- a. Enthroned the Bible and read from it
- b. Teach and use traditional prayers
- c. Tell stories of the lives of the saints

5. A Disposition to Faith and Hope and Not Despair

- a. Incorporate music and singing (especially hymns)
- b. Invite prayers of thanksgiving
- c. Celebrate whenever possible!