

## **FAMILY ACTIVITIES**

Sponsoring parish activities for families on a regular basis invites families to make parish friends and gives family members an opportunity to develop a community of peers. The activities should be faith centered and process oriented, but most of all they should be fun. Offering monthly/ seasonal activities gives the parish another opportunity to help families become more comfortable in their Catholic identity, make "church" a positive experience and understand that faith is a part of their everyday lives.

### **WINTER – DECEMBER -JANUARY - FEBRUARY**

A Time for Waiting – Introduce families to the concept of the Liturgical year. Centering on Advent as a time of waiting and preparing. (Ideas: Advent Wreaths (sterling), Jesse Tree, Kris Kringles, A Square Dance)

Christmas Celebrations – An annual Christmas party celebrated during the appropriate season – a time to celebrate various ethnic Christmas customs, food. Etc.(reveal Kris Kringles)

Valentine's Day – Allow families the experience of opening their hearts by being of service to the larger community. (Ideas: tray favors, card making, a "Swap Shop", Parish breakfast)

**Also in Winter: St. Nicholas Day, Three Kings, Kwanzaa, winter Olympics.**

### **SPRING – MARCH – APRIL – MAY**

Lenten Activities- Learn about the traditional Lenten practices of sacrifice, prayer and good works in a workshop setting. (Ideas: pretzel making, Stations of the Cross, an Alleluia banner.)

An Easter Event – Families plan and facilitate an Easter Supper or Alleluia party for the parish.

Celebrate Mary – During the month of May take some time to help families learn more about Jesus' mother and grow closer to Mary. (Ideas: Rosary Launch, the Mysteries in Stations)

**Also in Spring: Agape Meal, Palm Sunday Party, Spring cleaning.**

### **SUMMER – JUNE – JULY – AUGUST**

Vacation Bible School – choose a week to sponsor an evening VBS with sessions, lessons, crafts and music geared to various age groups as well as intergenerational. Begin with supper.

Sun Days, Fun Days – Choose one evening a week for a family day at the parish.

**Also in Summer: Away trips, Camp –Out, Road Rally, Scavenger Hunt, Summer Olympics**

### **FALL – SEPTEMBER – OCTOBER – NOVEMBER**

Back to School Party – Mark the beginning of the school year by gathering school supplies for children in need. End with a special blessing adults give to children and children give to adults.

All God's Saints – Get ready for All Saints Day in October. (Ideas: A festival of saints, lunch with the saints, a "saintly environment")

Share the Bounty – Teach children the gift of giving as they share their Halloween candy and do some gentle evangelizing too.

**Also in the Fall: Feast of St. Francis, Halloween Party.**

*Judith Dunlap 2009*