

Teacher Quick Guide Card



HOLY HABITS CHALLENGE



SIMPLIFY SUNDAYS



ATTEND MASS EVERY SUNDAY AND HOLY DAY.



EAT ONE MEAL TOGETHER AS A FAMILY EVERY SUNDAY.



LIMIT SHOPPING TO NECESSITIES AND EMERGENCIES ONLY EVERY SUNDAY.

The Background

The Book of Genesis teaches us that God rested on the seventh day of creation (Gen. 2:2). One topic that the Old Testament is intensely focused on throughout is that of authentic worship of God. In the Decalogue (the 10 Commandments), the Third Commandment is dedicated to observing the Lord's Day for worship and rest from labor. At the heart of the history of the Jewish people is the place of the Temple and its sacrifices, as well as the ongoing purification from meaningless worship that ignores justice.

Christians maintain the same Old Testament heritage of observing a weekly day of worship, one that is a renewal of the promise of the new life of grace made manifest in the Resurrection of Christ. Sunday became, early on, the Christian day of the week that is different from all other days. It is the day of the Lord, the day of the Eucharist, and the day of the new creation in grace.

True to the ancient Commandment, and in honor of the day of the Resurrection, the Church made a precept, or a Church commandment, obligating all Catholics to worship on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation. Catholics are also to rest from labors that would prevent us from making the day truly holy, or from making it a day dedicated to faith and family.

This commandment is very difficult to observe in countries or societies that are not explicitly Christian and lack civil laws that reinforce a Christian understanding of Sunday. The United States has gradually moved away from the civil protections that used to keep Sunday set aside as a sacred day, making this habit especially challenging for individual families and Christians. Real effort is required to be sure.

Also difficult for young people is the reality that in many areas where getting to Mass on Sundays requires something other than walking to church, they have to rely on the habits of their parents, and getting to Mass is outside of the control of the youth. This reality has to be handled with sensitivity.

Useful texts:

The Apostles, Creed:

"I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; He descended into hell; on the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty; from there He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen."

If students are in family situations where parents do not observe the Sunday commandment to worship, they can be encouraged to pray the Apostles' Creed on their own on Sunday. This is a text they should have memorized.

Holy Habit Pledge:

"I pledge, together with my brothers and sisters in Christ, to make the Holy Habits Challenge, and to run so as to win the crown of righteousness."

A Saint for the Habit:

- **Saint Pius X:** *The pope who encouraged frequent reception of Communion, including for the young.*
Feast Day: August 21st

Classroom Tips:

- Incorporate the Habit and Logo on a classroom board.
- Talk about how the early Christians used to gather on Sundays to listen to the Scriptures and Break the Bread, just as they are doing today.
- Teach the students the Apostles' Creed and have them memorize it.
- Encourage the students to come to class on Monday with something they learned at Mass the day prior; do a Monday Mass sharing time as a routine.
- Talk about ways that students can decrease their activities on Sundays and about the challenges of doing this in our busy world.
- Talk about the comparison between our loyalty to watching Sunday sporting events and our loyalty to attending Mass on Sundays.

Catechism Connection:

- See *Catechism of the Catholic Church* sections 2042 and 2043 on the Precepts of the Church regarding the Sunday obligation and the reception of the Eucharist.
- See *Catechism of the Catholic Church* sections 2172 and 2184-2188 on the nature of Sunday rest.

