

Family Page

Background Reflection

Easter approaches—but first the Church encourages us to journey through the season of preparation we call Lent. Lent is the time when we, together as an entire Church, root ourselves more deeply in the salvation we have in Christ. Traditionally a time of fasting, prayer, and almsgiving, the forty days of Lent are also a personal time of spiritual growth, rooted in our Baptism.

Just as Moses led God's people to freedom through water, our Baptism leads us to the freedom of being God's sons and daughters. This gift of Baptism is renewed in Lent, as we especially remember and pray for the catechumens who are preparing for the Sacraments of Christian Initiation (Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist) at the Easter Vigil. The renewing of our own baptismal promises is our best response to the new life begun in Christ in the Sacrament of Baptism. Encourage your child to see his or her Baptism as a wonderful beginning to a new life of grace—a new life of joy, peace, and love.

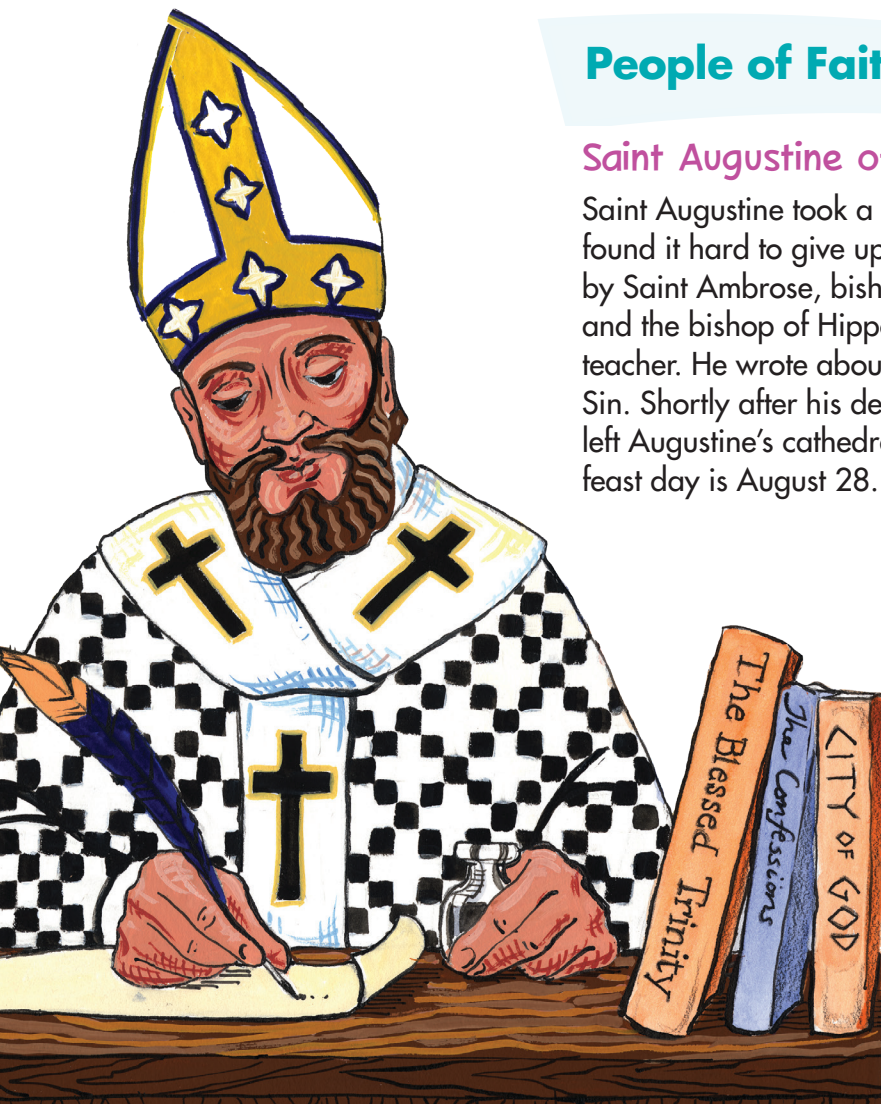
Family Activities

- Count your blessings as a family. Each day this week, gather as a family and write down the blessings your family sees. Each Sunday morning this Lent, take time to read this list of your family's blessings, and thank God.
- Obtain a list of the RCIA candidates who will join the Church at your parish this Easter. Each evening this week, invite your child to pray for the candidates by name.
- Watch the video "2016 Lent Calendar—Kids talk about Lent" (YouTube, 2:57). Discuss some of the ideas suggested by the children in the video. Then brainstorm how your child can make Lent a holy time as you journey with the Church to Easter.

People of Faith

Saint Augustine of Hippo (354-430)

Saint Augustine took a long time to become a Christian because he found it hard to give up his sinful habits. He was baptized as an adult by Saint Ambrose, bishop of Milan. Augustine later became a priest and the bishop of Hippo, in North Africa. Augustine was a writer and teacher. He wrote about grace, forgiveness, the Trinity, and Original Sin. Shortly after his death, invaders came to destroy Hippo, but they left Augustine's cathedral and library untouched. Saint Augustine's feast day is August 28.



Prayer

Pray this prayer together as a family, beginning and ending with the Sign of the Cross.

Jesus, walk with our family as we prepare to celebrate your Resurrection at Easter. Help us through our fasting, prayer, and good works to come closer to you and to grow in compassion for those in need. Amen.