



LIFE 2.0: Celebrating the Reformation

This month marks the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation--how could we not celebrate such a momentous time in our church's history? The reforming movement started by Martin Luther brought us ideas like hearing and reading the Word of God in our own language (not Latin), and that through faith in God alone we are saved. Inspired by these revolutionary changes in Germany, religious leaders in England joined Henry VIII in deciding to break away from the Roman Catholic Church as well, starting the Church of England, or the Anglican Church, from which our own Episcopal Church emerged following the Revolutionary War.



Key of Faith #1: Caring Conversations

"Therefore encourage one another and build up each other as indeed you are doing."

1 Thessalonians 5:11

One of the first steps to effective faith formation in the home is a simple willingness to talk about it! Martin Luther wrote that the Gospel is provided in several ways. One is 'the mutual consolation and conversation of brothers and sisters.' Here are some ideas for starting some conversations in your home this month:

Share "highs and lows"--the good things and the bad things that happen in each family member's day.

Talk about family and friends who have a different religion. What are some of the differences between our faith and theirs? How are they the same?

Reformation is a process of renewal and change--it is also to transform. Talk about ways in which God continues work of reformation in your life, and in the parish life of St. Peter's.



Key of Faith # 2: Rituals & Traditions

"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God--"

Ephesians 2:8

Family rituals and traditions speak to what the family values and believes. Some rituals are daily, and some are infrequent. Some are part of the church calendar, and some are in our home lives. All of the events we celebrate are from God! Martin Luther enjoyed tradition but was careful not to usurp Scripture's primacy with "the way it's always been done." Traditions, however, can provide a way for all of us to express our faith, especially when we approach them intentionally.

When you eat a meal as a family, think about using one of our faith's traditional table prayers this month. Try Luther's:

Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest, and let these gifts to us be blessed. Amen.

or try a traditional Anglican prayer:

Bless, O Father, Thy gifts to our use and us to Thy service for Christ's sake. Amen.

Halloween is coming up! This holiday comes from All Hallows' Eve, from which a custom emerged to dress up in costume to ridicule Satan because he has lost the battle with Jesus and he no longer has power over us. Some historians suggest that Luther deliberately chose All Hallows' Eve to nail his 95 theses to the door in Wittenberg, Germany--the protest that began the Protestant Reformation. Both Halloween and Reformation Day now call us to remember Jesus's victory over Satan and death, but also to give thanks to God for the Scriptures and reforms begun by saints of the church like Luther and Cranmer and others. So, dress up and mock the devil, who hates to be scorned!

Advent and Christmas are also coming up. Such traditions as Advent Calendars and even Christmas trees can be traced back to the early days of the Protestant Reformation in Germany. This year when you engage in these traditions in your home, remember and give thanks for the Reformation!



Key of Faith #3: Worship & Devotions

"For God alone my soul waits in silence; from him comes my salvation. He alone is my rock and salvation, my fortress; I shall never be shaken." Psalm 62:1-2

Family was very important to Martin Luther, who broke with the Roman Catholic Church's ban on priests marrying--he married (a former nun!) and had six children. The Reformation changed faith-at-home as much as faith-at-church! Luther frequently gathered his family around to tell stories, sing songs of praise, and pray together.

Read some favorite Bible stories, and celebrate that you read and understand them in your own language--a gift of the Reformation! Try the Daily Devotions for Individuals and Families, starting on page 136 in the Book of Common Prayer. There are prayers for morning, noon, early evening, and bedtime--pick one! Martin Luther also wrote prayers for families to use in the morning and the evening.

Here is his morning prayer:

I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that You would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

and his evening prayer:

I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have graciously kept me this day; and I pray that You would forgive me all my sins where I have done wrong, and graciously keep me this night. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.



Key of Faith #4: Serving Others

"He said to him, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."
Matthew 22:37-40

One of the hallmarks of the Reformation is the idea that faith alone, NOT good works, gets us to heaven. However, we should serve others as part of living an active faith, as we are the body of Christ. Luther articulated a doctrine of vocation, in which we are all called (as spouses, parents, children, friends, church members, citizens, workers) to love and serve our neighbors as we live out our

faith in different ways. He said that although God does not need our good works, our neighbor does! How do our tasks at church (as ushers, singers, servers, worshippers, etc.) express our love for each other? How do our roles at home (as parents, children, spouses, neighbors) express our love for each other? How do our roles in our community (as students, teachers, workers, neighbors, citizens) express our love for each other?

For more ideas:

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