

RAISING FAITH-FILLED KIDS

a parent page

Focus on Faith

Saint Thomas Aquinas and the Eucharist

Saint Thomas Aquinas was born to a noble family in Italy. His parents wanted Thomas to become the abbot for a great Benedictine monastery. Instead, Thomas ran away to become a Dominican. A brilliant teacher and scholar, he helped define the meaning of the Real Presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist. Late in his life, while celebrating Mass, Thomas had a vision of Jesus. He realized then that any words he could use were like straw compared with the great mystery of God's love for us.

Dinnertime Conversation Starter



Ask your child what he or she hopes to be and do as an adult. Discuss how a person's dreams can help shape his or her life.



St. Thomas Aquinas, Carlo Crivelli

Our Catholic Heritage

Hymns and songs are important parts of our Catholic tradition. One of the most ancient and beautiful hymns of praise is the *Te Deum*. Some people say that it was written by Saint Ambrose (339–397), who baptized Saint Augustine. It begins with the words *Te Deum laudamus* ("You are God: we praise you").



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Spirituality in Action

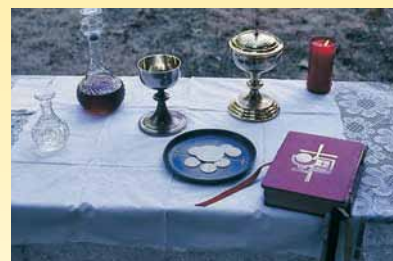
To show the importance of Jesus in the Eucharist in your lives, plan to visit the Blessed Sacrament together as a family at some time other than a Sunday and spend at least 15 minutes in prayer and meditation.

Focus on Prayer

Your child has reflected on the eucharistic hymn

Tantum Ergo, written by Saint Thomas Aquinas.

It speaks of how faith enables us to see what our senses cannot: the bread and wine as the Body and Blood of Christ. Talk with your child about what he or she remembers about this hymn and about how faith



often brings us beyond what we can see and understand.