Hearts Like His

A Family & Faith Connection from the Catholic Schools of the Diocese of Metuchen

Year of the Sacred Heart of Jesus • Forming Hearts Like Christ

Teach - Witness - Evangelize - Hope

NOVEMBER | Saint Martin de Porres — Compassion | Answering Unkindness with Mercy

Family & Faith Connection

November opens with the Feast of All Saints and All Souls, turning our hearts toward gratitude and toward those who have gone before us. As the year winds down and days grow shorter, it's a season for slowing down and noticing who around us is hurting.

This month, let's practice compassion — not just feeling for someone, but moving toward them with comfort and care, the way Christ moves toward us.

Saint Spotlight

St. Martin de Porres (1579–1639) was born in Lima, Peru, the son of a Spanish nobleman and a freed woman of African descent. Rejected by his father because of his race, he grew up poor and often unwelcome.

As a Dominican brother, he cared tenderly for the sick, the poor, and even stray animals, refusing to see anyone as beneath his love. His feast day is November 3rd.

For children: "St. Martin was treated unkindly, but he chose to answer with compassion for everyone he met."

Scripture Connection

"Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you."

— Ephesians 4:32

Compassion and forgiveness are linked — we can only be gentle with others' faults when we remember how gently God treats our own. St. Martin lived this daily, meeting unkindness with mercy instead of resentment.

Ask: Is there someone in our family who needs our forgiveness or compassion this week?

Living the Virtue: Compassion

This month's virtue is compassion — noticing someone's suffering and choosing to enter into it with them, rather than looking away.

- Ask a family member how they're really doing and listen without rushing.
- Comfort someone who is sad or struggling, even in a small way.
- Speak gently to someone who has made a mistake.

Dinner Table Conversation

Set aside a few minutes this week — at dinner, in the car, or before bed — to talk together as a family:

- Who is someone you know who might be lonely or struggling right now?
- When has someone shown you compassion, and how did it feel?
- What are three things we're grateful for this November?
- How did St. Martin choose love even when he was treated unfairly?

Family Challenge

This month, choose one way to bring comfort to someone who is hurting:

- Visit or call a family member who is sick, elderly, or alone.
- Donate food, coats, or blankets to a local shelter or pantry.
- Sit with someone who is left out and simply keep them company.

Talk together about how compassion changed both the giver and the receiver.

Family Prayer

Lord Jesus, You see every person's suffering
and You never look away.
Give us hearts like Yours —
gentle, patient, and quick to comfort.
Help us bring Your compassion to everyone we meet. Amen.

Sacred Heart Moment

Gather as a family for one quiet minute. Think of someone who is struggling right now, even if they haven't said so.

Silently ask Jesus to comfort them and ask Him to show you how you might help.

Close by making the Sign of the Cross together.

Growing Hearts Like Christ — A Family Habit for November

This month's family habit, inspired by St. Martin de Porres:

"Be kind and compassionate to one another."

"Sacred Heart of Jesus, make our hearts like Yours"