



# NEWSLETTER



## Welcome, CFAC Families!

Greetings to all!

We are turning the page to the second month of the year after a beautiful wrap of the Christmas season.

Despite the chilly weather, there are plenty of fun activities planned for this last full month of winter!

In this newsletter, you can check out:

- CFAC events for February, ready to add to your calendar
- An in-depth look at the rewards and requirements to start homesteading for your family
- a garden guide, complete with resources you and your family can use to begin right away

Don't miss this month of liturgical living and learning opportunities. We are so blessed to have each other; let's grow together in faith and in homeschool adventures!

-Emily Harris

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# Reflecting on January

We kicked off the new year with a bang, celebrating the feast of the Epiphany together, exploring outer space at the planetarium where we watched the fascinating film "Space, The Ultimate Frontier" while also enjoying some fun in the lab. To beat the winter blues, we also took a spontaneous trip to iJump, where families had a blast jumping and tackling the ninja course. Moms had a chance to get together for an evening of idea sharing, and our Voyages group got to venerate more than 200 First Class Relics with Ms. Dee, The Relic Lady, and have a movie night.





## Upcoming CFAC Events

Check out the exciting events planned for February

**First Friday Mass :** Start your month off right with First Friday Mass, then stick around for a relaxed Park & Play—fun for all ages.

**Tiny Tot Tuesday:** Little ones, big fun! Bring your kiddos for a joyful morning at the park filled with fresh air, laughter, and friendship.

**Community Business Meeting:** This is a chance to connect, collaborate, and plan for the future of our group.

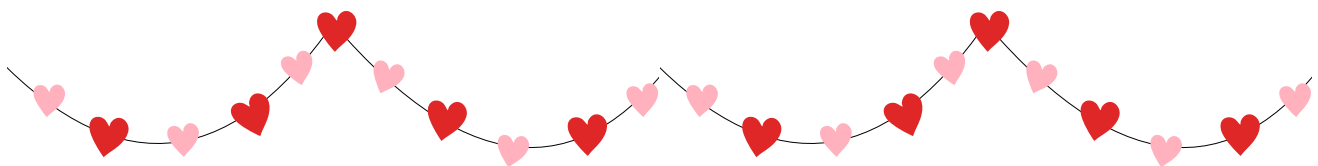
**St. Valentine's Day Celebration:** Let's celebrate St. Valentine as a family! Join us for a potluck and card exchange, plus fun activities for the kids.

**Quest:** All youth 10-14 will continue their Quest to a deeper relationship with God through a better understanding of the sacraments. This month we will play games, watch video clips, and chat in small groups.

**Teen Dinner:** Teens, this one is for you! Gather for a BBQ rib dinner with Father Smith, who will join us for a Q&A session. If time permits, enjoy games and quality time together.

**Voyages:** Youth 14-18 will meet a young married couple who, through a journey of sacrifice and healing, chose to convert to Catholicism.

**Camp Tyler:** Step back in time with a day of hands-on learning at Camp Tyler! Experience Texas history through engaging demonstrations and activities. We'll divide into small groups to rotate through stations, so everyone gets the full experience.



*Members can view more details, RSVP for events, and see the full calendar in the member portal.*

# Spring Into Homesteading: Tips, Tricks, and Seeds for Success



**There is nothing simpler, nor more beautiful, than a kitchen garden. It is not enough to cultivate vegetables with care. You have the duty to arrange them according to their colors, and to frame them with flowers, so they appear like a well laid table.”– St. Ignatius**

A well-laid out garden, or, if you're very fortunate, a homestead, is a reflection of God's plan for His creation. It nurtures and sustains our families and allows us to remain focused on what really matters. There are few pasttimes as pleasurable in such a short timeframe. We raise our children, but certainly know from experience that it can take years to see the fruit of our labor when it comes to habits, physical nourishment, and education.

Not so with gardening! A little effort, a little water and love, and you can feed your family the fruit of your labors within mere weeks. As St. Ignatius points out, framing your gardens with particular beauty is our duty. Certainly he means more than flowers themselves; but rather the surrounding of the gardening tasks and gardening chores with the impression of gratefulness and happiness. Our families, and especially our children, are drawn to the things that we frame as lovely. Creation of beauty among nourishment is satisfying to our souls who yearn for the beauty of Heaven.

Our family is self-taught homesteaders who began with potted tomatoes and illegal HOA chickens and have worked our way up to more animals than is probably wise. We have a full cemetery. Our garden fails more than it thrives. I am certain we do not actually save any money.

But, the lessons learned will remain with our children forever, and we are grateful as we count the days down until Spring. Enjoy these tips and tricks from our green-thumbed members as you join me in dreaming of green pastures and honeysuckle!



- Brynn Turner



# Tips for Starting a Spring Garden

“Always we begin again”- St. Benedict  
(probably not referring to gardens, but wise, and often applicable, nevertheless)



## East Texas Growing Guide

for popular plants

### Direct Sow

Crop	Spring Planting Date	Distance to plant apart	Days until harvest
Carrots	Feb. 20	2"	21
Lettuce	March 1	2-3"	21
Radishes	March 1	1"	7
Squash	March 1-15	18-36"	40
Potatoes	Feb. 1-15	10-15"	When tops start browning



### Seeds to Start

Crop	Spring Planting Date back this up 2 months-ish for seed starting	Distance to plant apart	Days until harvest
Watermelon	March 15	36-96"	90
Tomatoes	March 1-15	18-36"	40
Peppers	April 1	18-24"	90

Tip: Many plants that thrive in Northeast Texas as direct sow can also be started as seed, and vice versa. If you have an appropriate space to start seeds, they can give you a jump start to harvest, and you can always direct sow your next set. When attempting to feed a family from a garden, it is always wise to continuously plant in order to ensure a full season of harvest. Planting from quality seed will always be more cost effective (and better quality) than using most store-bought starts.

# Homestead Success Stories and Lessons Learned

From Catholic Family Adventure Club Members

## Space Constraints and Homesteading

With proper stewardship, even small acreage properties can grow some of their own meat! Joel Salatin with [Polyface Farms](#) is a premier source of information on animal rotation to maximize pasture health, and he recently accepted a role as an advisor to the White House! Electric fencing such as that found at [Premier 1](#) can allow for expanded use of limited acreage at a fraction of the cost! Bonus: the batteries for solar chargers are the same as kids' battery car toys, so you can have multiple on hand at any moment for your crazy animal... and actual animal... demands.



## Hatching your own eggs

The process of hatching your own eggs can be exceptionally educational for children. Did you know you can watch the developmental process of the baby chick through a special light on a basic incubator? If you want to experience this for your own family, without the commitment to the fluffy butts that emerge, notify the group and secure a farm home in advance. Many of us are also happy to provide fertilized eggs for your Springtime science lessons!



## Children's Chore: Collect Eggs!

Eggs not collected can yield unpleasant surprises! It is wise to crack the egg into a separate dish to ensure it is usable before adding it to batter, etc. Clean-appearing eggs typically last 2 to 3 months on the counter due to their helpful and protective "bloom", while super dirty eggs needing washing should be refrigerated after their scrub.



It isn't all about the producers! Special shout-out to the barn cats and Livestock Guardian Dogs who keep our farms safe to raise foods of all sorts. If you are in the market for the canine-kind, look no further than the Jodoin Pyr-Poodle-Shepherd pups and be sure to shop Catholic/local whenever possible!



2 Females Left!  
Call Brandi:  
903-258-8623



# Favorite plants or vegetables to grow with kids

## Jodoin Family

Fowl are a wonderful low effort and low cost way to encourage self-sufficiency. The daily chores are not difficult and are easily done by a middle school child. This allows our children to develop responsibility, a love for animals, an appreciation for farmers and sometimes the real idea of the circle of life. Once we moved south, we chose Ridley bronze & sweetgrass turkeys to raise. Ridley Bronze was a turkey breed developed in Western Canada and had less than 1500 breeding pairs. Sweetgrass is a Montana developed breed. Our egg-laying chicken preference is the English Standard Orpington, a quality dual purpose bird.



## Turner Family

Setting sprinklers on an every-other-day morning watering (45 minutes) completely changed our quality of harvest this summer. Consistency of watering was key to a productive garden- with no extra work on our part! Huge lesson learned, and gratefully, as we have enough to do on the day-to-day!

## Lockman Family

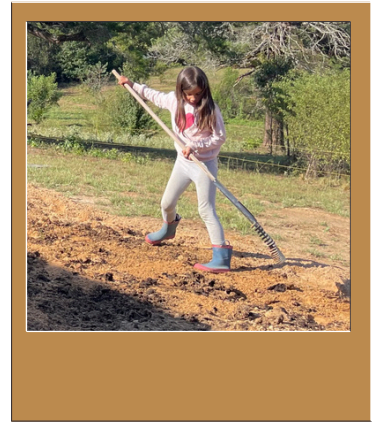
We planted garlic this past November and it looks promising to be ready by this Spring. We ordered Softneck bulbs, broke each bulb into cloves and planted each clove. Each clove should yield its own bulb! We planted in the sunniest part of our garden and covered the soil with leaves to prevent freezing during the winter. They have begun to sprout and hoping they turn out great for the Spring! This is my first time doing this and I do not have a green thumb so if I can do it, anyone can!



## Lopez Family

Getting started in cattle can be very intimidating! These animals are much larger than their smaller farmstead counterparts and they have much higher feed needs. But, a single bovine processed can yield up to 6 months of meat for a family of 6. One dairy cow that is sharing milk between calf and container (looking at you, Ranger!) can still fill four children's bellies. The challenges of large animal farming are more than outweighed by the benefits.

# SEEDS, SHOPS, & SKILLS



## More!

### Shop Catholic with St. Clare Heirloom Seeds



Limited time 50% off sale [here](#).

### Ready to fight for the right... to have backyard chickens?

Learn more about how to do so and many other fascinating tidbits at [Weston A. Price](#).



### Murray McMurray Hatchery

A one-stop-shop for quality chicks of a variety of breeds. A Turner favorite: the Bielefelder

### **Local Meat Chickens:** Windy Meadow Hatchery

The best priced meat chickens and processing in the area!

## Local Classes

Plants of Texas  
17470 FM 2493,  
Flint, TX

- February 1 @ 9:00 am - 11:00 am : [Beginner Beekeeping](#)
- February 8 @ 9:00 am - 11:00 am- [All About Fruit Trees- Hands On Class](#)
- February 15 @ 9:00 am - 11:00 am: [Intermediate Beekeeping](#)
- February 22 @ 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm: [Backyard Veggie Garden Class](#)

Sorelle Farms  
975 County Road 2220  
Mineola, Texas

- [Establishing Soil Health](#)  
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2025, 11
- [Square Foot Gardening](#)  
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2025, 11

<https://bobwellsnursery.com/events/>



**Catholic  
Family**  
ADVENTURE  
CLUB

## COMMUNITY EVENTS

*Save the Dates*

March 22nd  
2nd Annual Young  
Entrepreneur Fair

April 12th  
Planning Retreat

May 10th  
3rd Annual Used Book Sale

# Young Entrepreneur Fair

## 2ND ANNUAL

March 22nd  
10am - 1pm  
Cathedral Center



Registration is open to all Catholic homeschoolers from January 22nd - March 8th  
\$10 for CFAC Members \* \$15 for non-CFAC Members

Sponsored by:



A Homeschool Social Community

To learn more and register:

[www.catholicfamilyadventureclub.com](http://www.catholicfamilyadventureclub.com)

# Liturgical Living Corner: February

## The Holy Family

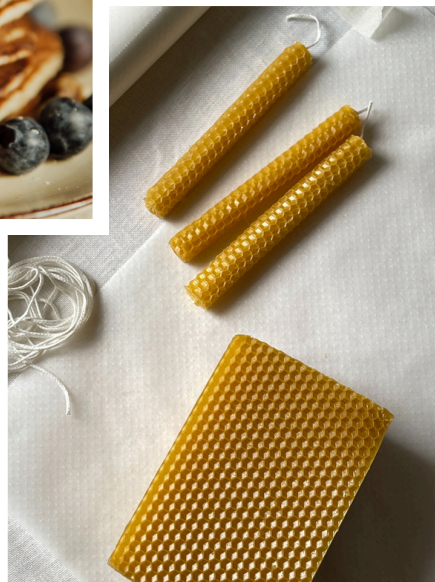
### Presentation of Our Lord (Candlemas)- February 2

It was a Jewish custom to present infants in the Temple in order to dedicate the child to God. When Mary and Joseph brought Jesus to the temple, they were fulfilling their promises to God and stepping into their roles as the earthly parents of Jesus.

### Liturgical Living: Enjoy Pancakes-

It's traditional to eat pancakes on Candlemas. The golden disks of pancakes are reminder of the sun, which represents the Son of God, the true light of the world.

**Craft Idea:**  
Make Candles



## Month of The Holy Family February

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S	M	T	W	R	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	

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- 2 PRESENTATION OF THE LORD
- 3 ST BLAISE
- 5 ST AGATHA
- 10 ST SCHOLASTICA
- 14 STS CYRIL & METHODIUS  
ST VALENTINE
- 21 ST PETER DAMIAN

**Catholic Family**  
ADVENTURE CLUB

[Download phone wallpaper](#)

Liturgical Living Ideas from Be A  
Heart Design





# FEBRUARY

## The Holy Family

**“But the most beautiful thing God made- so the Bible tell us- was the family. He created man and woman. And He gave them everything. He entrusted the world to them: ‘Grow, multiply, culitivate the earth, make it bear fruit, let it grow.’ All the love he put into that marvelous creation, He entrusted to a family.” -Pope Francis**

### **February 2nd: Candlemas/Presentation of the Lord:**

- Attend Mass
- Bring candles to have blessed before/after Mass
- Pray The Litany of The Holy Family
- Plan a family day/family outing

### **February 14: St. Valentine’s Day**

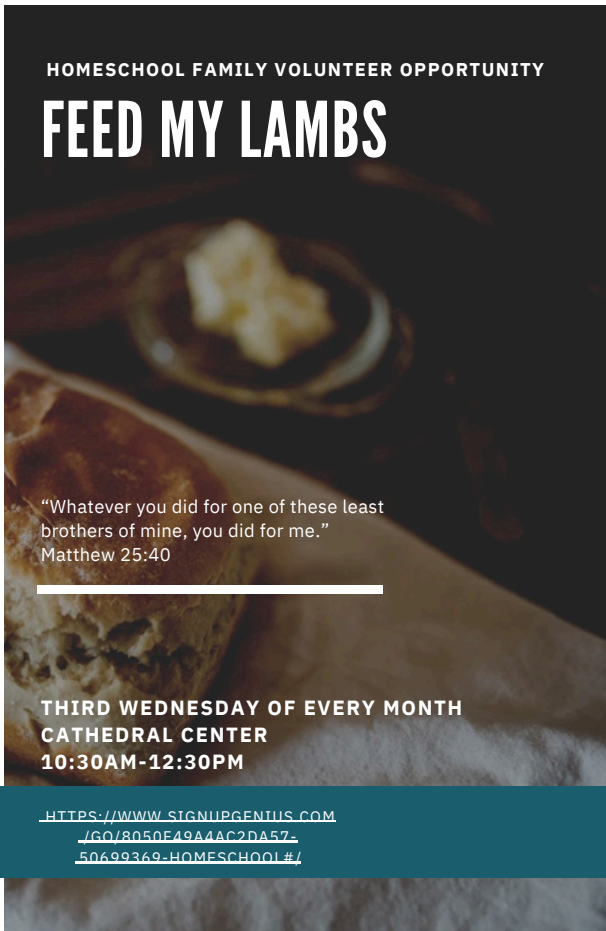
***Catholics celebrate the Feast of Saint Valentine, also known as Valentine's Day***

- Emphasize the Saint in St. Valentine’s day by reading a book or listening to a podcast about him
- Pray for loved ones and ask for their protection and blessings
- attend CFAC’s St. Valentine’s Day celebration for a card exchange and potluck

# Around the Diocese

HOMESCHOOL FAMILY VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

## FEED MY LAMBS



"Whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me."  
Matthew 25:40

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THIRD WEDNESDAY OF EVERY MONTH  
CATHEDRAL CENTER  
10:30AM-12:30PM

[HTTPS://WWW.SIGNUPGENTIUS.COM/GO/8050F49A4AC2DA57-50699369-HOMESCHOOL#/](https://www.signupgentius.com/go/8050f49a4ac2da57-50699369-homeschool#/)



RED CARPET EVENT

## FATHER DAUGHTER DANCE

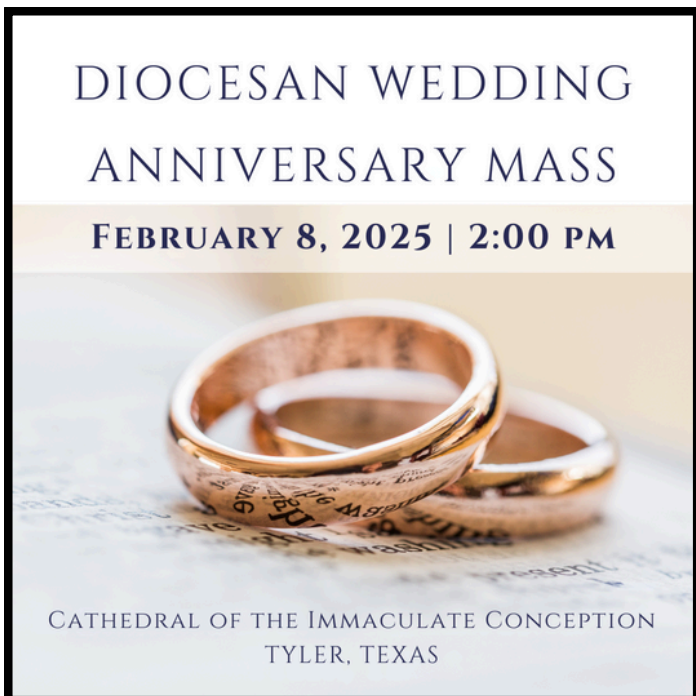
FEBRUARY 15, 2025  
6:30PM - 9:00PM  
CATHEDRAL CENTER

TICKETS \$25/COUPLE  
RAFFLE TICKETS \$1 EACH

DINNER & DANCING

## DIOCESAN WEDDING ANNIVERSARY MASS

FEBRUARY 8, 2025 | 2:00 PM



CATHEDRAL OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION  
TYLER, TEXAS



## Be Light

[witnessstolove.org/belight](https://witnessstolove.org/belight)  
A MARRIAGE MOVEMENT

Join us for five special evenings in deepening your relationship with your beloved and building community with other married couples in our parish  
**Sign Up and Learn More Here**

- Upcoming Dates:
- Mar 22, 2025 6:30pm- 8:30pm
  - May 24, 2025 6:30pm- 8:30pm
  - June 28, 2025 6:30pm- 8:30pm
  - July 26, 2025 6:30pm- 8:30pm