

# Single Parent Networker

Ascension, Cathedral of the Holy Spirit,  
Corpus Christi, St. Anne, St. Mary, St. Joseph,  
Christ the King, and Spirit of Life

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## Methods You Can Use to Avoid a Power Struggle!

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A power struggle occurs when two people each want a situation to work out their way at the exclusion of the other person's desires. To put it another way, it is a situation in which each person attempts to exert power and control over the other person in order to get what they want. This is a situation in which you lock horns with your child over some issue. For instance, you want Jill to go to bed right now, but Jill doesn't want to. She wants to keep playing. But you need her to go to bed now or your nightly routine will be thrown off and you were hoping to get a little extra sleep. So you tell Jill again that it is time to go to bed and Jill becomes more defiant and refuses. What we have here is the making of a power struggle.

Power struggles can be very detrimental to relationships when they become a commonplace occurrence. But these situations happen more

often than we would like to admit. So what is a parent to do in order to avoid the pitfalls of these damaging situations? In the normal course of everyday life, power struggles are usually a win-lose proposition. Usually someone wins because the other person backs down or relinquishes his or her control over the situation. One person gains power and one person loses power. Is there a way to make a power struggle a win-win situation?

If we look closely at the above example with Jill and her mother, there are a few different ways to handle this situation so that each person gets what they want. Unfortunately, many parents at this point refuse to recognize they are getting locked into a power struggle and only want to make their will happen now! So this type of parent will resort to doing whatever it

takes to get their child to bed, even if it ends up taking an hour (or longer) and many harsh words and upset emotions to make that happen. This can be avoided in several different ways.

1. If you need your child to do something and he or she is actively engaged in a game or some other task, always give them a time warning. Say something like: Jill, it is time to get ready for bed. You have ten minutes to finish what you are doing. This way you haven't given up control of the situation. In fact you have given Jill the opportunity to control her own behavior. Most often, when a child or teen is given this extra time, they will make the right decision and finish up and go get ready for bed. The mother has only given up ten extra minutes and has avoided a potential fight with Jill.

2. If you find yourself in a power struggle with your child, then simply re-iterate your expectation and walk away. Do not engage in the

verbal bantering. Walk away! Allow your child some time to make a decision without engaging in a war of words and wills. I have found it is extremely rare that the child, given some time to think and cool off, will make a bad decision. They will normally follow your expectations.

3. Offer alternatives, either positive or negative. In the above example, the mother could say: Jill, I need for you to get ready for bed. If you decide not to do that soon, then you will lose that game for a week. At this point the mother has told Jill her expectations and can walk away and allow Jill to decide whether to push this situation further or to keep her game for the coming week.

4. Admit you blew it! In the above example, the mother could say: Jill, I am sorry that I didn't plan your bed time well tonight. I really need for you to get ready for bed soon. I will do my best to give you more warning in the future. This is very hard for a lot of us to do. We don't like to admit that we made a mistake. But your child will hear this a whole lot better than: If you don't go to bed right now, you will be grounded for the rest of your life!

5. Take a moment to decide whether or not this is a situation

that you have to win. Perhaps you are beginning to argue and power struggle over a very trivial matter and your winning is really only about power and control. If this is the case, then just drop it.

As parents, we all make mistakes. It just goes with the territory. But engaging in power struggles is a mistake that can most often be avoided. One has to learn to recognize early that they are getting locked into a power struggle. And then one needs to be able to gracefully get themselves out of that situation without causing harm or damage to the relationship. It is totally unrealistic for us to think that a child or a teen will be able to back down in a power struggle. It is up to the adult to make the right decision in this instance. The above examples work. Be creative and look for alternatives other than the need to simply enforce your will. This helps to build and strengthen the relationship between parent and child.

[http://www.articlecity.com/articles/parenting/article\\_2173.shtml](http://www.articlecity.com/articles/parenting/article_2173.shtml)



Each day of our lives we make deposits in the memory banks of our children.

- Charles Swindoll



## Parenting Pointers

579. July 4: (Independence Day) What does it mean to be "free" in a family? Certainly it doesn't mean being free to avoid chores, make decisions solely on one's own, or do whatever I please. As parents and children we have responsibilities to each other. We don't choose our children or parents. Even in adoption the choice is to an unknown future together. However, we are free to choose to love unconditionally.

580. July 11: Dana Hall McCain offers 10 Life Skills Your Teen Needs Before Leaving Home. The first 3 are: Basic cooking skills, budgeting and money management, and personal healthcare knowledge. Even if your child isn't close to being sprung, start to teach these life skills. (<http://www.lmom.com/parenting/teens/parenting/training/10-life-skills-your-teen-needs-before-leaving-home/>)

581. July 18: "Explain to us the parable of the weeds in the field." (Mt: 13: 36) Jesus talks a lot about seeds and weeds. Children of course are like the seeds that we nurture and hope to see blossom. But life doesn't always work neatly. As parents, we must sometimes carefully weed bad habits out of ourselves and our children without damaging the root and their spirit. Has your child inherited and "bad weeds" from you? Prune yourself first.

582. July 25: The last Sunday in July has been designated as "Parents Day." Why not make it more than a Hallmark kind of day. Reflect on how your children need the talents of both parents to thrive. If you're a solo parent, use this opportunity to seek out a trusted friend to provide some of the skills you lack to round out your child's development.

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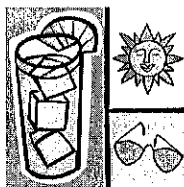


## July 26, Feast of St. Joachim and Ann

Joachim and Anne were Mary's parents and thus Jesus' grandparents. Grandparents connect us to our past. Jesus probably asked his grandparents many questions about the history of his family.

What questions do you want to ask your grandparents? What stories do you remember them telling you?

Take some time today to think of your own grandparents and the special effect they have had on your life. Surprise them with a phone call or a visit. Make sure you have a picture of them in your family album. Say a prayer for them as a family.



## Family Fun Ideas

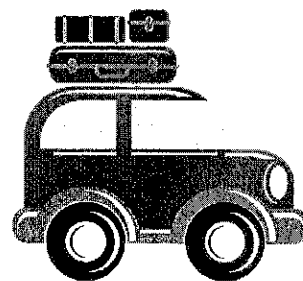
Celebrate the summer by doing things as a family. Let each person pick an activity to do.

1. Play miniature golf
2. Catch fireflies at night
3. Play a childhood game i.e., tag, hopscotch
4. Pick berries or fruit at a farm
5. Buy ice-cream from the neighborhood ice-cream truck
6. Roast marshmallows over a fire and make s'mores
7. Make lemonade from scratch
8. Go to the farmers market
9. Walk in a summer rain
10. Go to a baseball game
11. Take turns swinging in a hammock
12. Have a picnic in the park
13. Stargaze while lying in the grass
14. Watch the sun set
15. Take in an outdoor concert & fireworks
16. Go fishing
17. Pick wildflowers
18. Play tennis
19. Go for a hike
20. Take a family bike ride

***"What we have once enjoyed  
we can never lose.***

***All that we love deeply  
Becomes a part of us."***

***-Helen Keller***



## Prayer About Going on Vacation

Father, all good things come from you, and we thank you that we are able to take a vacation.

We thank you for these days ahead when we will enjoy new places and new people and new fun.

Please help us to be kind and thoughtful of each other, so we can all relax and get to know each other better.

Keep us safe, Father, and protect our home and those we love.

Please take special care of the people who must work while we celebrate on our vacation

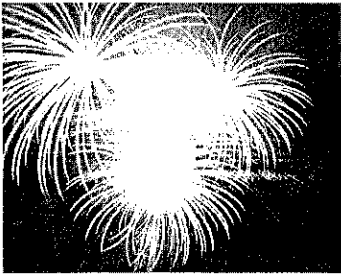
Amen

## 4th of July Trifle Dessert

Angel Food Cake  
Strawberries  
Blueberries  
Vanilla Pudding



In a trifle dish, layer the angel food cake, followed by a layer of vanilla pudding, continue with a layer of strawberries and blueberries. Repeat until all the ingredients have been used. Refrigerate for 2 hours before serving.



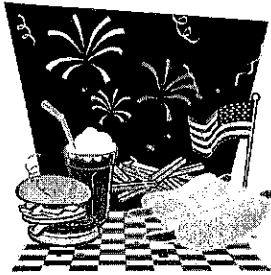
## PRAYER ON THE FOURTH OF JULY

Father,  
We celebrate  
Our freedom today.

We celebrate  
living in this country  
where we are free  
to be the best  
we can be.

Thank you for all your blessings  
on America

Please teach us  
how to use  
our freedom  
to make all your people happy.  
Amen



### **Beginning Experience:**

Separated, Divorced, Widow  
Tara at 701-426-8303

Level I—Charity Lutheran

Level II—Faith Lutheran

Level III—Good Shepherd

Each level is 10 weeks. All levels run  
concurrently. See website below.

### **Children's Beginning Experience:**

Susan at 1-701-258-3152

Free Preschool for 3&4 year olds for  
eligible families, contact **BECEP** at 701-  
323-4400 for school year.

**Caring for Children Program**—health  
coverage to uninsured children. 1-800-  
342-4718. [www.ndcaring.org](http://www.ndcaring.org)

### **Single File Newsletter**

For information  
[www.bismarcksinglefile.com](http://www.bismarcksinglefile.com)

### **Parish Information:**

Cathedral—222-2259  
St. Anne—223-1549  
Ascension—223-3606  
St. Mary- 223-5562  
Corpus Christi—255-4600  
Spirit of Life-663-1660  
Christ the King -663-8842  
St. Joseph -663-9562

### **Office of Family Ministry—Diocese of Bismarck—**

Joyce McDowall 701-204-7209  
Toll Free 1-877-405-7435  
[www.bismarckdiocese.com](http://www.bismarckdiocese.com)  
[jmcdowall@bismarckdiocese.com](mailto:jmcdowall@bismarckdiocese.com)

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**If you would like your name removed  
from the mailing list, please call your  
parish coordinator**

**Parents Forever-Education for Families in divorce Transition**, call NDSU Parent Resource Center, 667-3342 or 667-3340

### **WEBSITES THAT MAY BE OF INTEREST:**

- [www.celebratesimply.com](http://www.celebratesimply.com)
- [www.bereavementmag.com](http://www.bereavementmag.com)
- [www.beginningexperienceofwesternnorthdakota.org](http://www.beginningexperienceofwesternnorthdakota.org)
- [www.vibrantfaithathome.org](http://www.vibrantfaithathome.org)
- [www.usccb.org](http://www.usccb.org)

[www.fambooks.com/moms.htm](http://www.fambooks.com/moms.htm)  
[www.singleparents.about.com](http://www.singleparents.about.com)  
[www.bridgetobenefits.org](http://www.bridgetobenefits.org)