



ST. GERTRUDE
CHURCH

Going Deeper: Genuine Affirmation

A Catholic psychologist named Conrad Baars wrote an insightful little book in the 1960s called *Born Only Once*. In the book, he describes genuine, authentic affirmation as a pure gift given to us that allows us to stand firm in an identity. Really, it allows us to stand firm in ourselves because we're standing firm in someone else, or in the gift of another person. We need the other.

Psychologists and Sociologists find over and over again that the genuine love and affection of parents is critical for the health and well-being of children. We know this to be true. We also know that sometimes we struggle to affirm our children – and the constant distraction of technology along with the fast pace of life doesn't help.

This month, consider offering the gift of genuine affirmation to each of your children. Genuine affirmation is freely given and it affirms the very *being* of the child. Baars says it basically works like this: (1) one is aware of the goodness of the other; (2) one is attracted to that goodness; and (3) one lets the other know of one's awareness and attraction to the goodness of the other through a word or gesture like letting your child know that you love him/her just because he/she is your child or giving your kid a hug "for no apparent reason." Consider offering intentional authentic affirmation this month to each of your children whether or not you came from the most perfectly affirming of situations.

Family Faith - February
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