

Growing in FAITH™

Discovering **hope and joy** in the Catholic faith.

July 2010

One Minute Meditations

Dress for Mass

Warmer weather in many parts of the country means wearing lighter, more casual clothing. Still, something that could be worn to play a sport, clean the garage, or work in the yard may not be appropriate for Mass. God deserves your "Sunday best" even in the Summer.

Rest

Jesus knows that we become weary as we work and when his disciples came back from their first missionary trips, he took them to a quiet place to rest. The same is true for us. When Jesus sees us grow weary from work, he invites us to rest in his company.

Pray for priests

"God wants us, as priests, in one tiny moment of history, to share his concern about people. As priests, we want to be persons who share his concern for men and women, who take care of them and provide them with a concrete experience of God's concern." Pope Benedict XVI



Help inactive Catholics claim their prize

Would you quietly watch while a friend threw away a winning lottery ticket without claiming his prize? In a way, seeing a baptized Catholic neglect his faith is similar. Catholics who don't attend Mass each week, don't partake of the Sacraments, and don't grow in their faith are throwing away the riches Christ has offered. Instead, encourage all Catholics to claim their promised prize.

Listen. Perhaps a painful past episode associated with the Church or a sin that seems unforgivable is keeping your friend from coming to church. Offering gentle attention and comfort makes you an instrument of grace.

Invite. Some Catholics don't practice

their faith because they haven't found a parish home where they feel welcome. Inviting your friend to attend Mass with you is a first step.

Encourage. Through the Sacrament of Reconciliation, we are freed from our sins and reminded of God's forgiveness. Encourage your friend to go to Confession and receive the peace of Christ.

Share. Your friend may know about God but he may not know God's love. Sharing the ways in which God has blessed you can help him to start noticing God's love in his own life.

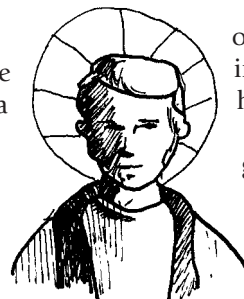
Show. When you live a joyfully Catholic life, your joy becomes contagious. Continue to grow in your own faith and others will want to share it.



Why Do Catholics Do That?

Why does the Church canonize saints?

Canonization is a solemn declaration by the Pope that a person lived a life of heroic virtue on Earth or remained faithful to God through martyrdom, and has received eternal life. Such a person is worthy



of imitation and can act as an intercessor for us as we try for holiness.

Proposing saints as models gives us hope and help to achieve the same reward.

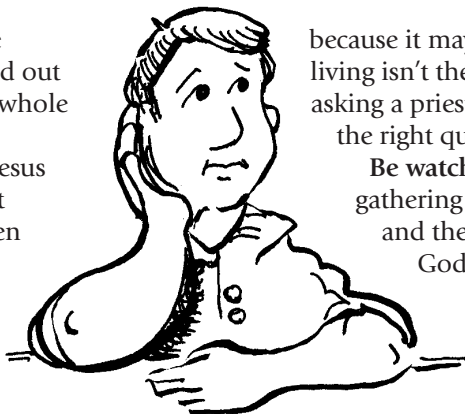
Offering us holy people to inspire us is another gift from the Church to her people.

Give me a sign, Lord!

We can only be truly happy when we live according to God's will, but how do we find out what that is? Instead of trying to guess the whole plan, try letting him lead a step at a time.

Quiet down. Listening in silence is key. Jesus often went off alone to pray. Set aside quiet time every day just to listen to God. Even ten minutes a day helps.

Question. Don't be afraid to ask tough questions. "What is my heart's desire?" can be a frightening question to ask



because it may mean accepting that the life you are living isn't the right answer. For extra help, consider asking a priest or other religious to guide you in asking the right questions.

Be watchful. Learning God's will involves gathering information. Learn about your choices and then watch for signs to indicate which ones God wants you to choose.

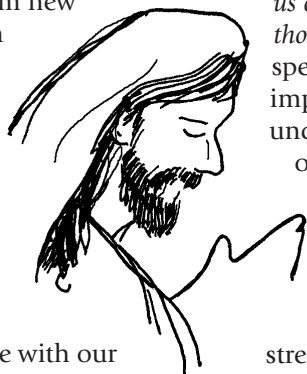
Don't worry. If you make a mistake, God can redeem even bad choices. Let him pick you up and try again.

from Scripture

Luke 11:1-13, Our Father

The disciples were used to formal Old Testament prayer rituals, and expected that Jesus would teach them new ones when they asked him how to pray. He surprised them by introducing the "Our Father," a very warm and informal prayer.

In teaching this prayer, Jesus made a strong point to the disciples that God is our Father and we should be as intimate and familiar with him as we are with our dads on earth. Knowing how much God loves each of us gives the confidence that he will always provide for us.



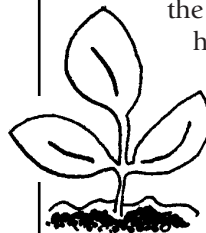
There was another stunning point in the prayer Jesus taught them. "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us," speaks volumes about how important it is for us to unconditionally forgive each other. As we forgive, so will we be forgiven.

Finally, we ask God not to give us more than we can endure.

Of course God knows our strength better than we do. But we pray this way to remind ourselves that he will always be with us throughout all of our trials.

Q & A What does stewardship mean?

Remember the parable of the three servants who looked after the master's money while he was gone? The first two servants invested the money wisely, but the third was punished for having done nothing with what was given him. (See Matthew 25:14-30.) He was a poor steward of his master's goods.



A steward is someone trusted to manage an employer's affairs and possessions. We have each been trusted with talents and strengths to use in God's service and to further his mission. He expects us to use these gifts to help others know him, love him, serve him, and be happy with him in Heaven.

Today, stewardship means committing the best portion of our time, talent, and treasure to the mission of the Church. Generous sharing of resources, including money, is central to caring for God's Church and his people. When you realize that everything you have and everything you do is from God, then you want to give back to God in thanksgiving. That's modern day stewardship in action.

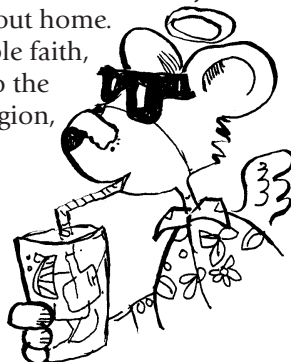
Feasts & Celebrations

July 3 - St. Thomas (1st century). Known as "doubting Thomas" for requesting proof of the Resurrection, he made a beautiful profession of faith when he received that proof, "My Lord and My God" (John 11:16). Tradition says that Thomas evangelized the Parthians, Medes, and Persians and ultimately reached India. He was martyred at Calamine.

July 22 - St. Mary Magdalene (1st century). Mary Magdalene was the woman from whom Jesus expelled seven demons in St. Luke's gospel (Luke 8:2). She helped to financially

support Jesus' ministry out of her own money and stood with Jesus' mother at the foot of the Cross. And, she was the one who first informed the Apostles of Jesus' Resurrection.

July 26 - St. Joachim and St. Anne (?). Little is known about Jesus' grandparents, but we know Mary was raised in a devout home. Her unshakeable faith, her devotion to the laws of her religion, and her steadiness in moments of crisis indicate the values with which she was raised.



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