

# Growing in FAITH™

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

April 2008

## One Minute Meditations

### Lord's Prayer

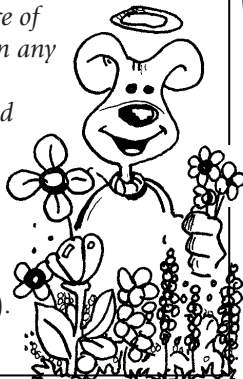
When Jesus taught the disciples to pray, he gave them a prayer that contains seven petitions. The first three praise God and his glory. The last four contain requests for us: to be fed, forgiving and forgiven, protected from temptation and delivered from evil. The Our Father is an all-purpose prayer.

### Pray for leaders

Remember to pray for our elected leaders and those in authority. *"First of all, then, I ask that supplications, prayers, petitions, and thanksgivings be offered for everyone, for kings and for all in authority, that we may lead a quiet and tranquil life in all devotion and dignity"* (1 Timothy 2:1-2).

### In the moment

Don't miss a moment of the life God has given you by fretting over things you can't change. *"Do not worry about tomorrow; tomorrow will take care of itself ... Can any of you by worrying add a single moment to your life-span?"* (Matthew 6:34, 27).

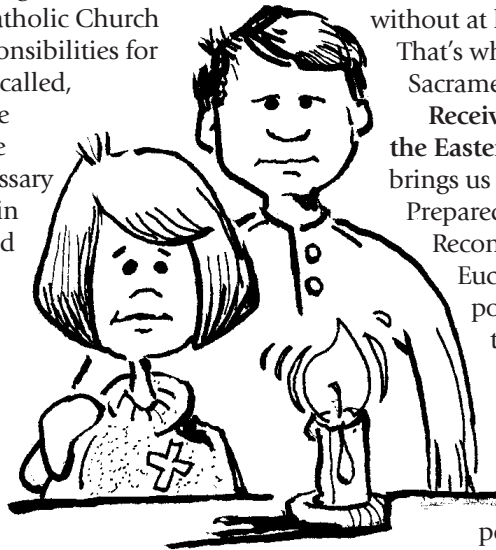


## What every Catholic needs to know

It's a sad fact of human nature that we don't always give God our best. To help, the Catholic Church identified responsibilities for every Catholic called, "Precepts of the Church." These duties are necessary for us to grow in love of God and each other.

### Keep every Sunday holy.

"The Sunday celebration of the Lord's Day and his Eucharist is at the heart of the Church's life" (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2177). Catholics are called to worship God at Mass each Sunday and Holy Day of Obligation (unless prevented by something unavoidable). We are also to rest from work on Sunday.



Confess at least once a year. Few humans can go an entire year without at least one serious sin.

That's why Jesus created the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

**Receive Communion during the Easter season.** The Eucharist brings us closer to Jesus.

Prepared by the Sacrament of Reconciliation, receive the Eucharist as often as possible, particularly during the Easter season.

**Fast and abstain.** To help us control appetites of all kinds, the Church established times of penance when fasting and abstinence help us focus on God.

**Care for the Church.** As followers of Jesus, it falls to us to care for and contribute to the Church he established. To keep the Church healthy and strong, we each must do our part.

## Why Do Catholics Do That?

## Why do Catholics live the Beatitudes?

The Beatitudes are blessings

Jesus gives in the Gospels of Matthew (5:3-12) and Luke (6:20-23). To follow the

Beatitudes is to live a life the way Jesus instructed.

They don't promise earthly pleasures but eternal reward.



Just as the Ten

Commandments summarize the law of the Old Testament, the Beatitudes are the heart and soul of

Jesus' teaching in the

New Testament. They capture the moral obligations of the Christian.

## God said, "Live with joy!"

Try these tips from Scripture to add more joy to your life.

**Give three compliments every day.** "Like golden apples in silver settings are words spoken at the proper time" (Proverbs 25:11).

**Look for the silver lining in every dark cloud.** "Even though you meant harm to me, God meant it for good, to achieve his present end, the survival of many people" (Genesis 50:20).

**Make the best of any situation.** "We know that all



things work for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose" (Romans 8:28).

**Tip generously, give freely to beggars.** "He who confers benefits will be amply enriched, and he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed" (Proverbs 11:25).

**Say, "thank you," often.** "In all circumstances give thanks, for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus" (1 Thessalonians 5:18).

**Sing in the shower.** "But I shall sing of your strength, extol your love at dawn, for you are my fortress, my refuge in time of trouble" (Psalm 59:17).

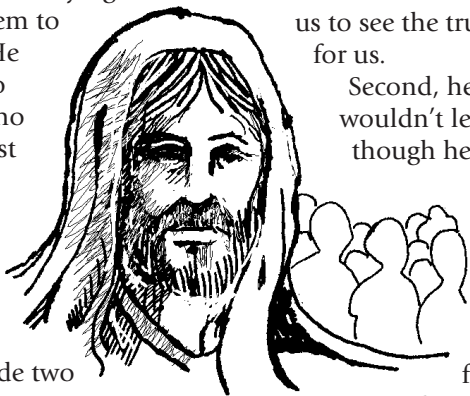
### from Scripture

#### John 14:15-21; I will not leave you.

In this, one of his farewell speeches to his disciples, Jesus was laying the foundation for them to become his Church. He was preparing them to become the people who brought him to the rest of the world.

But Jesus knew that what he was asking them (and us) to do would be difficult without him there to guide them, so he made two powerful promises.

First, he promised to send an Advocate – the Holy Spirit – who would always be with us. The gift of



the Holy Spirit would be poured out on all his followers and help us to see the truth of God's love for us.

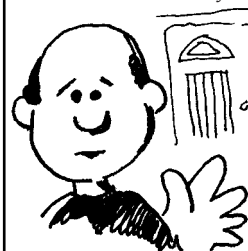
Second, he promised that he wouldn't leave us even though he was going away.

When we are absorbed by the world, we can't "see" Jesus because we are too

focused on ourselves. Yet, when we live our love for God by obeying his commandments and loving others, we show Jesus to the world.

### Q I don't commit mortal & sins. Do I still have to go to Confession?

First, check with a priest to be sure you are properly performing your examination of conscience. "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he



is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1: 8-9). You may, in fact, be free from

serious sin, or your sense of sin may be dulled. Do you participate in or encourage gossip? Do you use hurtful language or turn away from others in need? Those may be serious sins that need to be forgiven through the Sacrament.

According to the Catechism: "Without being strictly necessary, confession of everyday faults (venial sins) is nevertheless strongly recommended by the Church" (CCC, 1458). Participating in the Sacrament regularly sharpens our conscience, fights against evil tendencies, and opens ourselves up to the unique healing grace Jesus grants through the Sacrament.

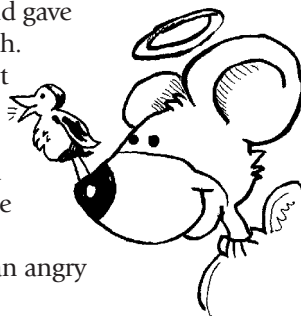
### Feasts & Celebrations

**April 2: St. Francis of Paola (1507).** After making a pilgrimage to Rome and Assisi with his parents, Francis retired to a cave as a hermit at the age of thirteen. Though he loved the contemplative life, he answered God's call to active life as an adult and became a miracle worker and the counselor of kings. He remained humble and penitent through it all.

**April 4 - St. Isidore of Seville (636).** Born to a family of three other saints, St. Isidore succeeded his brother as archbishop of Seville. St. Isidore

established seminaries in every diocese, and founded schools that taught every branch of learning. Some of his writings helped shape the spiritual outlook of the Middle Ages.

**April 24 – St. Fidelis (1622).** In his native Prussia, St. Fidelis became a lawyer and championed the poor and oppressed. Later, he joined the Franciscans and gave away his wealth. During a revolt against the Church, St. Fidelis worked to bring people back. He was murdered by an angry mob.



### Our Mission

To provide practical ideas that promote faithful Catholic living.  
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