

Growing in FAITH

Discovering hope and joy in the Catholic faith.

June 2008

One Minute Meditations

Prayer tip from St. Simeon

"Sit down alone and in silence. Lower your head, shut your eyes, breathe gently, and imagine yourself looking into your own heart. As you breathe in say, "Lord Jesus Christ," and as you breathe out say, 'have mercy on me.'"

Make anger work

It isn't healthy to pretend you're not angry when you are. Instead of giving in to your anger though, work on a solution to the problem. "*In your anger do not sin*" (Psalm 4:4).

Take it on faith

Legend says that St. Augustine was walking along a beach pondering the mystery of the Holy Trinity when he spotted a boy filling a bucket from the ocean and emptying it into a hole. The boy said he was trying to fit the ocean into the hole. St. Augustine cried, "But you can never do that!" The boy replied, "And neither can you ever figure out the Holy Trinity," and vanished. Some things we just have to take on faith.



Take a new look at the Mass

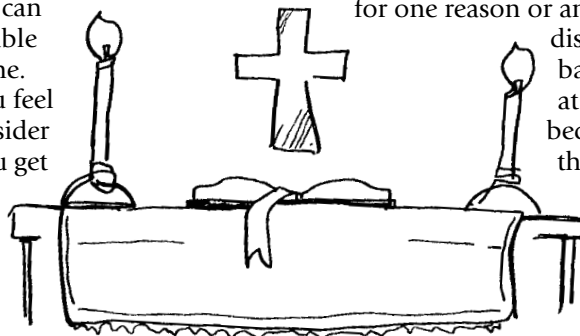
"Mass is the same every week. I don't always get something out of going." Sound familiar? Something we know so well can seem predictable or even routine. Next time you feel this way, consider these gifts you get from attending Mass:

It gives you something to talk about with God. Within the Mass are lots of intriguing, mysterious, or just plain interesting ideas. Listen during the Scripture readings, the responsorial psalm, the homily, or the Eucharistic prayer for something that strikes you and talk with God about it. He'll help open your mind to something new.

You get to help others who are

very far away – without leaving your seat. We all know people we'd like to contact or help in some way but can't for one reason or another. But distances and barriers disappear at Mass. When Jesus becomes present in the Eucharist, the entire Body of Christ is present. So you can pray for anyone and everyone you would like to support in some way and the entire Body prays with you.

Mass is a great place to make a change. Find at least one idea within the Mass that makes sense and seems possible and put it into practice. Whether it's increasing time in daily prayer, visiting the sick, extending forgiveness – one simple idea can change your life.



Why Do Catholics Do That?

Even the most prayerful person gets distracted while praying on occasion. Praying in front of a candle gives us a tool to help us focus and avoid distraction.

A similar principle applies to candles in

Why do Catholics light prayer candles?

church.

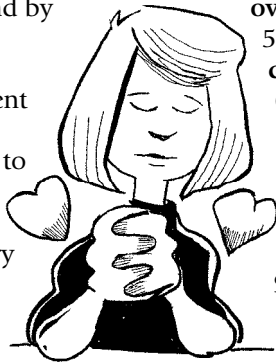
When we light prayer candles in church, our intentions remain present even when we are gone. Next time you pass a candle rack, help prolong others' prayers by offering one for the intentions of the people who lit them.



10 easy ways to be kind

Perhaps we can inspire others to be more kind by showing kindness ourselves. Consider these suggestions:

1. **Talk to strangers**, especially people different from you. You may become a friend.
2. **Fast from unkind words**. Use your words to bless, heal, or bring peace.
3. **Let cars go in front of you in traffic**. Let someone go in front of you in line at the grocery store.
4. **If someone makes you mad**, leave her a flower anonymously each day until you are

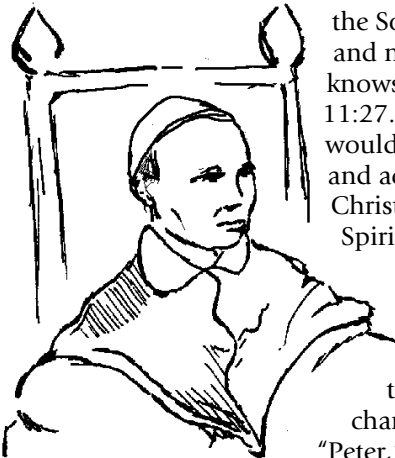


- over it.
5. **Light a candle every Sunday and pray for someone different each time.**
 6. **Pick up every penny you see and put it in the Poor Box in your church.** (You'll be surprised at how it adds up.)
 7. **Open the door for someone.**
 8. **Choose a picture or an article from the newspaper and pray for the people involved.**
 9. **Put a quarter in an expired parking meter.**
 10. **Take someone with whom you disagree to coffee and listen more than you talk.**

from Scripture

Matthew 16:13-19 The "Rock" for the ages

The events in this passage lay the foundations for the Catholic Church. In it, Jesus asked his disciples who people say he was. Then he asked them, "Who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter answered for the group and identified Jesus as the Son of God. This highlighted Peter's role as spokesperson for the disciples.



the Son knows the Father, and no one but the Father knows the Son," Matthew 11:27.) Divine inspiration would lead Peter to speak and act in truth as head of Christ's Church. The Holy Spirit guides the pope to speak and act in truth today. The Church has to last until the end of time. When Jesus changed Simon's name to "Peter," he signaled that he was building his Church on "rock," a solid foundation upon which a wise man will build his home (Matthew 7:24).

Jesus pointed out that it was only by inspiration from the Father that Peter was able to recognize the truth about Jesus. ("No one but

Q & A What is the difference between mortal and venial sin?

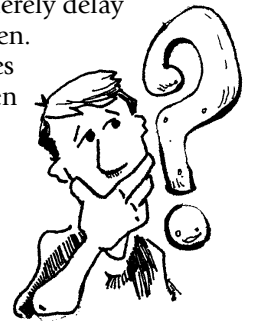
Think of it this way ... all illnesses make your body sick. Some can kill you, while others just make you miserable for a while. All need healing.

The same can be said of sin. Some sins can cause us to lose our eternal lives while others merely delay our entry into Heaven.

The Church makes a distinction between mortal and venial sins. Mortal sin is a deliberate turning away from God and his laws. To be considered a mortal sin, it must be a grave or serious choice against God, and the sinner must be aware of how bad it is but choose to do it anyway.

On the other hand, venial sin is falling short of our obligations to God and each other without completely turning from God. It's like loitering on the road to Heaven versus taking one that leads away from it.

The good news is that no matter how lost we get, God will always take us back through the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession).



Feasts & Celebrations

June is dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The image of Jesus with his flaming heart exposed is a reminder of his intense and eternal love for us.

June 5 - St. Boniface (754). Called the Apostle of Germany, St. Boniface was a monk dedicated to spreading the Gospel in Germany. He converted many to Christianity and was instrumental in restoring dioceses in Bavaria, Thuringia, and Franconia.

June 11 - St. Barnabas (1st Century). The Apostles changed his

name from Joseph to Barnabas, which means "son of encouragement" because he sold his property and gave the much needed funds to the Jerusalem community. He accompanied St. Paul on his first evangelical journey.

June 24 - Nativity of St. John the Baptist. The only saint whose birth and death we observe, St. John was Jesus' cousin. He baptized and prepared the people for Jesus' saving mission. He even baptized Jesus and was later executed for denouncing Herod's marriage to his sister-in-law.



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To provide practical ideas that promote faithful Catholic living

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