

Growing in FAITH™

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

March 2010

One Minute Meditations

Tough stuff

When you feel overwhelmed by your challenges, remember that God never allows us to be tested beyond our ability to cope. *"God is faithful and will not let you be tried beyond your strength; but with the trial he will also provide a way out, so that you may be able to bear it"* (1 Corinthians 10:13).

Trust

When caring for the poor, Blessed (Mother) Teresa of Calcutta refused to accept donations beyond the current needs of her community. Accepting such help would mean she was no longer trusting God to provide for her needs each day. When we trust God with our needs, we demonstrate our faith that he will care for us as his children, just as Mother Teresa did.

Year for Priests

Remember to pray for our priests each day. St. John Vianney said, "The priest is not a priest for himself; he is not for himself, he is for you."



A good warm up makes for a great Eucharistic workout

Experts recommend warming up before exercising to adequately prepare the body and get the most benefit from the workout. The same applies to our participation in Mass.

When our hearts and minds are properly prepared, our experience is richer. Try these ideas to have a great Eucharistic workout:

Prepare for exertion.

We come to Mass not as spectators but as participants. Prepare to join with other members of the Body of Christ in prayer, worship, thanksgiving, and communion.

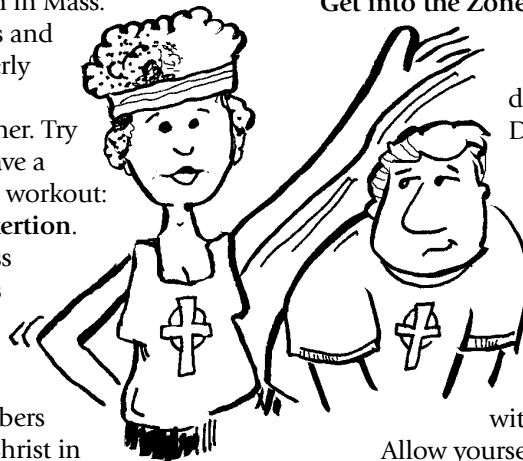
Stretch out. Is something holding you back from giving your whole love and attention to God? If you are carrying worry, anger, resentment, or guilt, spend a few moments letting it go.

Start slowly. Arrive early to review the readings. Ask what God is trying to tell you, personally, in the words of Scripture.

Get into the Zone. Something amazing happens every moment during the Mass. Don't miss a single one. Think about what you are saying as you recite the prayers. Enthusiastically speak the responses. Sing with your whole heart.

Allow yourself to be awed by receiving the Body and Blood of Christ in the Eucharist.

Cool down. After the celebrant leaves the church, spend a few moments figuring out what God wants you to do for the next week as a result of what you just heard and said.



Why Do Catholics Do That?

God created each of us to love and serve him in a particular way. This calling or destiny is our vocation. Faithfully fulfilling our vocation will lead to eternal happiness. Catholics can fulfill their vocations through the priesthood, the diaconate,

Why do Catholics believe in vocations?

consecrated life, or in marriage.

God has a unique plan for each of us and we all fit into his greater plan of salvation.

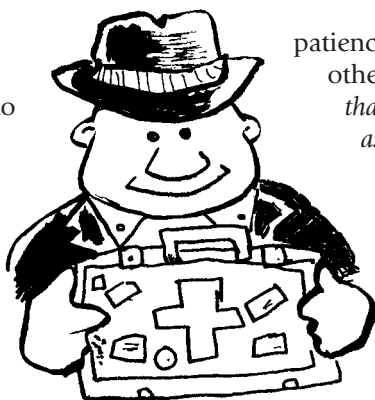
Discerning our vocation, understanding the place we have in God's plan, can only come through continual prayer.



Carry your Catholic faith with you

One challenge of our Catholic faith is to take it from Mass on Sunday to real life on Monday. One way we can carry it with us is to look at the way we treat other people. For example:

Think only the best of people. St. Ignatius said, "Every good Christian ought to be more ready to give a favorable interpretation to another's statement than to condemn it." Assume everyone is good.
Practice patience. God has infinite



patience with us and expects us do the same with each other. "But for that reason I was mercifully treated, so that in me ... Christ Jesus might display all his patience as an example for those who would come to believe in him for everlasting life" (1 Timothy 1:16).

Respect the interests of others even if you don't agree with them. "Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others" (Philippians 2:4).

Problems arise when we only look out for ourselves.

from Scripture

Luke 22:14-23:56, the Passion

It is important to recall the events of Jesus' Passion, but it is more important that we share in it, that we join with his suffering and with his love.

St. Paul said, "Continually we carry about in our bodies the dying of Jesus, so that in our bodies the life of Jesus may also be revealed" (2

Corinthians 4:10-11). He means that everything in our lives, the negative and positive, is part of our relationship with Jesus. Our frustrations, our fears, our loneliness,

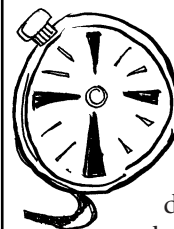


our temptations, all are ways of sharing in the suffering and death of Christ. So, too, our joys, our good health, our family, our friends; all are important ways to share in the joy of his Resurrection. Everything we are, everything we have, is joined to the life and experience of Christ.

St. Alphonsus wrote, "We should consider not so much the sorrows Jesus suffered as the love with which he bore them." Disciples of Jesus can have the same attitude toward suffering as he did, so that we can share in the joy of Resurrection.

Q & A What is the Liturgy of the Hours?

In Jesus' day, Jews recited prayers at certain hours of the day or night, a custom which Christians have borrowed. The Liturgy of the Hours is the official prayer of the Church



and is prayed as many as six times throughout the day to sanctify it. It begins in the morning and has particular parts that are prayed at different times throughout the day.

As official representatives of the Church, clergy and religious are obliged to pray the Liturgy of the Hours daily. However, many lay people are beginning to pray it too. The prayer, also called the Divine Office or Breviary, can be found in approved liturgical books. It is considered the perfect prayer with Christ and to Christ.

Principally a prayer of praise and petition, the Liturgy of the Hours consists of Psalms, meditation of the Word of God, canticles, and blessings. The prayer is considered a faithful way to make holy the whole course of the day by the praising of God.

Feasts & Celebrations

March is the month in which we honor St. Joseph, Jesus' earthly father and husband to the Blessed Mother. As head of the Holy Family, he has become a model of fatherhood and protector of families.

March 3 – St. Katharine Drexel (1955) Katharine Drexel gave up the family fortune (estimated at \$7 million at the time) to enter a convent and established schools and missions for Native Americans and African Americans. She founded Xavier University of New Orleans, the first university for African Americans

in the country.

March 17 – St. Patrick (493). Born in Scotland, St. Patrick was kidnapped and brought to Ireland as a slave. Although he escaped, he later returned to become the bishop of Ireland and is credited with establishing the Church there.

March 25 – The Annunciation. The angel Gabriel visited the Blessed Virgin Mary with the extraordinary news of her role as the mother of God. Even at her young age, she had complete confidence in God's grace and trusted in his wisdom.



Our Mission

To provide practical ideas that promote faithful Catholic living.

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