

# Growing in FAITH

Discovering hope and joy in the Catholic faith.

November 2008

## One Minute Meditations

### The end matters

Refuse to do wrong for any reason, even if good will come from it. The ends do not justify the means. Remember, no good can ever come from sin.

### All you need is God

As long as you live, you will need food, rest, medicine, companionship, etc. Don't forget that what you need more than all these things is God. Place all your needs before him and ask for his help. If you hope in God and look to him for all your needs, you will not be disappointed. He will not fail to provide what is truly best for you.

### Hear God's voice

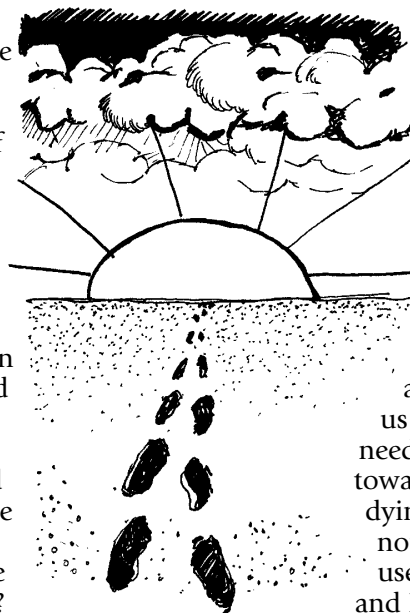
Do you pray and pray but never hear God's voice telling you what you need to know? Try meditating on the Scriptures every day. When you do, you will understand what God wants for you. After all, the Scriptures are God's Word to us.



## The road to Heaven made clear

So many people have made it to Heaven that the Church can offer hundreds of examples of saints and martyrs for us to follow. Yet, we may forget about them because we think they lived in simpler times and had easier challenges than ours or they lived too long ago to be helpful. What difference can the saints make now?

**As role models.** St. Monica was a devout and gentle Christian who shed many tears over her son's bad behavior. She prayed for Augustine for years and never lost faith in God's power to work miracles.



Slowly, Augustine changed, was baptized, and became one of the great saints of the Church. St. Monica's gentle perseverance is an example for all mothers who want the best for their children.

**As active friends.**

Because they are with God, the saints' prayers and intervention can help us obtain the extra grace we need to stay on the path toward Heaven. As he lay dying, St. Dominic said, "Do not weep, for I shall be more useful to you after my death and I shall help you then more effectively than during my life."

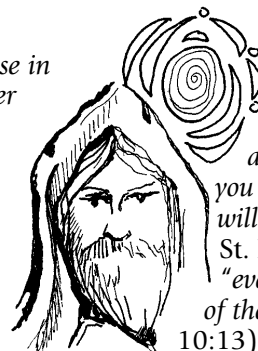
**As advisors.** No matter what your interests, background, or profession, there is a saint who shares them. Maybe learning about his or her journey will help you in your own.

## Why Do Catholics Do That?

*"That at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, of those in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,"* (Philippians 2:10-11).

When we invoke Jesus' name, we are asking for his divine and powerful assistance. Jesus went a

## Why do Catholics regard Jesus' name as holy?

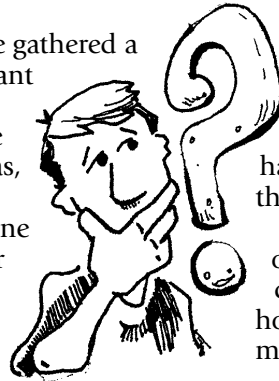


step further and promised that when we use his name in faith, God will act on our behalf, "... Amen, amen, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in my name he will give you" (John 16:23-24). St. Paul echoed this teaching, "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved" (Romans 10:13).

## Do you know everything?

By the time we become adults we have gathered a good deal of life experience and often want to share it with others – whether they want to hear it not. Or, we may think we don't need to ponder other people's ideas, even if considering them can strengthen our own. We sometimes forget that no one has all the answers except God. Consider this:

**Listen up.** If you do all the talking, you won't learn much that you didn't



already know. A good way to learn is to listen.

**Quiet down.** Even when we are right, it isn't necessary to offer advice or point out others' minor mistakes. Opinions are like fingerprints; everyone has a unique set. Yours may be no better or worse than the next one.

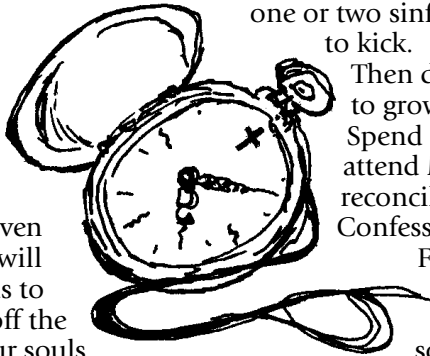
**Think first.** People aren't always receptive to other opinions. There is no harm in keeping silent when we disagree on unimportant matters. Do speak up, however, in matters that contradict God's teachings or may endanger someone's life or soul.

### from Scripture

#### Matthew 24:37-44, "Is he here yet?"

Next month we celebrate Jesus' coming at Christmas. St. Mark quoted the parable of the master's mysterious return to remind us that Jesus will come when we least expect it. We have no way of knowing when the Second Coming will be, or even when our own lives will end. Jesus reminds us to be watchful, sweep off the layer of dust from our souls and be ready to welcome him when he comes for us.

With Advent starting at the end of the month, this is a good time to



prepare for our imminent visitor. Start by resolving to change your life. Examine your conscience and pick one or two sinful practices you want to kick.

Then do whatever you can to grow closer to God. Spend more time in prayer, attend Mass faithfully, reconcile through Confession.

Finally, give a few minutes in prayer each day for someone else who may

be struggling.

Then when your Master comes, you know you will be ready to greet him with joy.

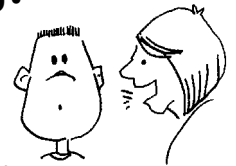
### Q & A How can I stop people from gossiping?

It is part of human nature to want to talk about each other. There are even times when it can be helpful. But detraction – exposing someone's faults or misdeeds without an objective reason other than to tarnish his or her reputation – is always wrong. It's another serious sin, called calumny, when false information is intentionally spread. You may not be able to stop gossip, but you can stop yourself from becoming one.

**Don't listen.** Giving a gossiper an audience encourages continuation of the practice. Either say, "I try not to get involved in other people's business," or simply walk away.

**Don't add to it.** No one has the right to anyone else's private information. Passing on information you may have only keeps the gossip alive.

**Squash false reports.** If you hear something you know to be false, contradict it immediately. "If you blow upon a spark, it quickens into flame, if you spit on it, it dies out; yet both you do with your mouth!" (Sirach 28:12).



### Feasts & Celebrations

In November we celebrate the saints on **All Saints Day (Nov. 1)** and pray for our loved ones and souls in Purgatory on **All Souls Day (Nov. 2)**. Note: this year, All Saints Day is not a Holy Day of Obligation in many dioceses because it falls on a Saturday. Check with your parish to be sure.

Plus, the **first day of Advent falls on Nov. 30th** this year. The Advent wreath is lit in households all over the world as we anticipate the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

**Nov. 11 - St. Martin of Tours**

(397). The patron of soldiers, St. Martin was forced to join the army at the age of 15 in what is now Hungary but left to become a priest. He founded a monastery near Poitiers, France, and later became bishop of Tours.

**Nov. 22 – St. Cecilia (230).** A native of Rome, St. Cecilia was forced to marry although she wanted to consecrate herself to God. She eventually converted her husband and both were martyred for the faith. She is the patron of musicians.



#### Our Mission

To provide practical ideas that promote faithful Catholic living

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