

Growing in FAITH™

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

November 2009

One Minute Meditations

All Saints Day

In the early Church, each saint and martyr had a feast day. Later persecution of Christians created so many martyrs that there weren't enough days on the calendar for individual commemorations. Eventually Pope Gregory IV designated Nov. 1 as All Saints Day.

All Souls Day

Names of those who died were posted in the early days of the Church so that they could be remembered in prayer. In the 11th century, the Cluniac monasteries, the Benedictines and Carthusians all started commemorating the Feast of All Souls on Nov. 2, the day after All Saints Day. Now the entire Church remembers all the dead on this day, especially our loved ones and souls in Purgatory.

Advent is coming

On November 29th, we start a new liturgical year and begin the season of Advent. We get ready by going to Confession, trying for greater holiness, and counting down the days until our Savior comes.



Be not afraid

When someone we love is dying, our emotions collide. We want to help, but don't know what to do. We want to offer comfort, but can be overwhelmed with grief. Yet, helping others transition from this life to the next is so important, the Church made visiting the sick and burying the dead two Corporal Works of Mercy.

Here is what you can bring to a loved one who is dying:

Bring love. Jesus never turned away from the sick and dying. He always had a loving hand to comfort them and their families. Sometimes even just holding a hand or stroking a shoulder says more about love than words.

Bring attention. Ask him stories

about his life and listen carefully. Let him know how much he has inspired you. You'll treasure these moments after he is gone.

Bring comfort. Remind her how much God loves her and is waiting to

welcome her. He is kind, merciful, and forgiving.

Encourage her to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation or Anointing of the Sick.

Bring peace. Although someone may lose his ability to speak, he can still

hear. Pray out loud, read from scripture, or sing a favorite hymn.

Bring strength. When someone is leaving this world to enter the next, fear can be overwhelming. Remind her of Jesus' words, "Be not afraid."



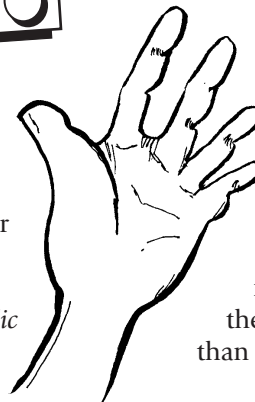
Why Do Catholics Do That?

When we die in God's friendship we know that we'll eventually go to Heaven. However, if we haven't properly atoned for certain sins, we have to be purified in Purgatory first. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* calls it, "a final

Why do we pray for souls in Purgatory?

cleansing of human imperfection before one is able to enter the joy of heaven."

We pray for the souls in Purgatory, especially during the month of November, to help them pass through to Heaven faster than they would on their own.



What's so great about being Catholic?

Our Mother. Mary, the mother of God, is also our mother. **It's dependable.** Our religion hasn't changed since Jesus started it.

You can sing badly and no one cares. All voices are welcome in the Church.

We have a shepherd. Jesus knew we would need looking after. Pope Benedict XVI can trace his spiritual ancestry straight back to the first pope, St. Peter, who was appointed by Jesus.

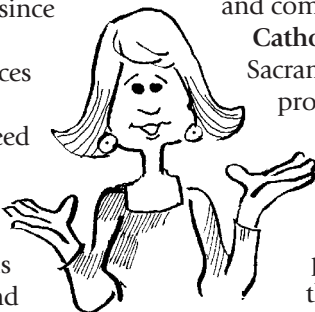
The ceremonies can't be beat. Through rituals we express devotion, hope, love, and respect. And

because we repeat them often, they bring a sense of stability and comfort.

Catholics know when our sins are forgiven. In the Sacrament of Reconciliation, we get to hear the priest pronounce Jesus' words of absolution and forgiveness.

We have friends in high places. The saints intercede for us and help us to get to Heaven.

Where else can you meet Jesus in the flesh? In the Eucharist Jesus is literally and wholly present—body and blood, soul and divinity—under the appearances of bread and wine.

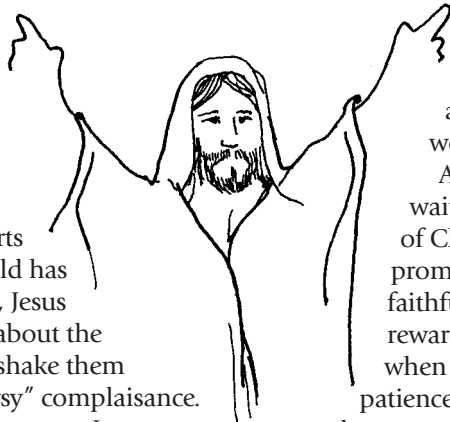


from Scripture

Luke 21:25-28, 34-36, the Advent of hope

The virtues of patience and perseverance aren't strengths for most of us. Often the concerns of daily life overshadow our pursuit of holiness. We can even get lured into sin by the comforts and pleasures the world has to offer. Knowing this, Jesus warned his followers about the end times, hoping to shake them (and us) out of "drowsy" complaisance.

Imagine the terrifying scene Jesus described – the shaking of the earth, sea, and sky and people dying of fright. In the midst of that terror, though,

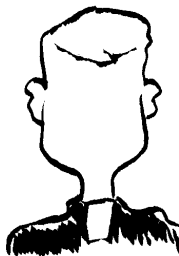


people in God's friendship will have no reason to fear. The key is, he said, to stay on guard against sin and worldly pleasure.

Advent is a time of waiting for the coming of Christ. God has promised us that if we are faithful to him, we will be rewarded. This is a time when we must pray for patience and perseverance to keep us ready for the arrival of our Savior. Then we can hold our heads high and stand confident expecting our promised reward.

Q & A What can I do about the shortage of priests?

In the Catholic Church, the number of priests increases every year. However, in the United States, Canada, and parts of Europe, fewer men are entering discernment and formation for the priesthood.



It's not that God is calling fewer men here than elsewhere. It may be that fewer act on their call due to lack of information or encouragement. Start by praying for more men to recognize their call to the priesthood.

Then, look for a Catholic who has integrity and a strong relationship with God, has an ability to work with a variety of people, and has good friends and healthy relationships. Perhaps you know someone like this who already serves the Church as an altar server, a lector, Eucharistic minister, or a teacher.

Then, tell him why you think he will make a good priest and suggest he contact the vocation director in your diocese. Studies show that nine out of ten priests in the U.S. are happy in their ministry and would choose it again given the chance.

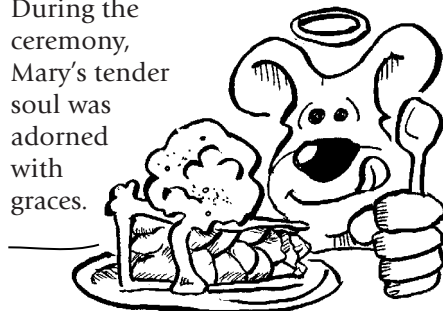
Feasts & Celebrations

November 11 – St. Martin of Tours (397). At 15, Martin became a Roman soldier, but he knew killing was wrong and he wanted to become a Christian. A beggar in France made it so. Martin saw the man cold and hungry and decided to rip in half his cloak to warm him. That night he dreamed the beggar was Jesus, wearing his cloak and surrounded by angels. Martin left the army and became a priest.

November 12 – St. Josaphat (1623). Josaphat, the first Saint of the Eastern Church, is known for his generosity toward the needy and his

instruction and teaching of the faith. He died trying to bring the Orthodox and Catholic churches back together.

November 21 – The Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary. As an infant, Mary was offered to God in the temple. It was Jewish custom to either consecrate a child to divine service or have them offered up by a priest. During the ceremony, Mary's tender soul was adorned with graces.



Our Mission

To provide practical ideas that promote faithful Catholic living.

Success Publishing & Media, LLC
Publishers of Growing in Faith™ and Partners in Faith™
(540)662-7844 (540)662-7847 fax
<http://www.growinginfaith.com>

(Unless noted Bible quotes and references are from the Revised Standard Version and the New American Bible)

© Copyright 2009 Success Publishing & Media, LLC