

Growing in FAITH™

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

September 2009

One Minute Meditations

Pass on the gift

In the encyclical, *Caritas in Veritate*, Pope Benedict XVI said, "Love is God's greatest gift to humanity; it is his promise and our hope." As Catholics, we convey God's love to others through charity. To find more ways to practice charity, visit the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' website: www.usccb.org/jphd.

Why a Catholic Bible?

Choosing a Catholic Bible ensures that you get the whole story. A Catholic edition includes all the Church's sacred books, plus there are introductions and notes to help understand what is read. And it carries assurance that it is free of errors in Catholic doctrine. So you get nothing but the truth.

Our "Call"

When God calls, his children respond. The Father called a chosen people, prophets, and kings to service. They responded. Jesus called his apostles and disciples. They responded. God calls each of us. Have you responded? Are you where he wants you to be?



The most important thing

When Jesus promised to be with us always, he wasn't just talking symbolically. He meant that he would stay with us – body, blood, soul, and divinity. In fact, when we go to Mass, we meet Jesus himself "truly, really, and substantially contained" in Holy Communion (*Catechism of the Catholic Church, sec. 1374*). He is there every time.

We meet the one and only Jesus. The Jesus we meet in Holy Communion is the same person who now sits at the right hand of the Father. How this happens is a mystery but we know it through faith – a faith deepened by Holy Communion.

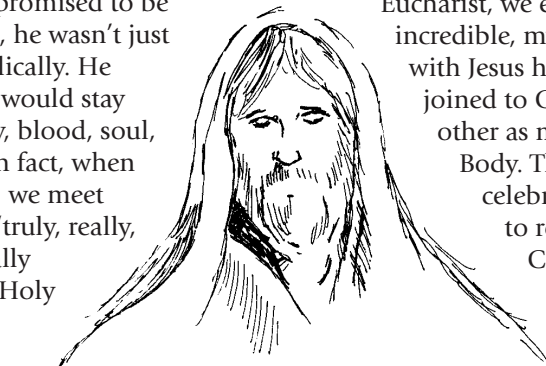
We are joined to Jesus. At Mass, we aren't just spectators. By celebrating the

Eucharist, we enter into an incredible, mystical relationship with Jesus himself. We are joined to Christ and to each other as members of his Body. The best way to celebrate the Eucharist is to receive Holy Communion devoutly and frequently.

We believe in Jesus. After we hear the words, "The Body of Christ," and "The Blood of Christ," we say, "Amen" derived from the Hebrew word meaning

"confirm." Saying "Amen" means that we believe what we are about to receive is truly the Body of Christ and the Blood of Christ.

That makes receiving Holy Communion the most important thing we do.



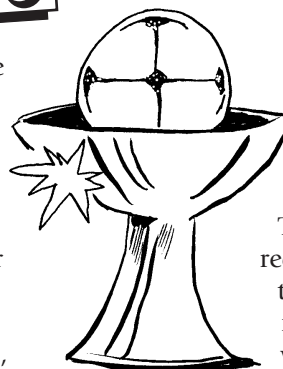
Why Do Catholics Do That?

First, ensure that you are free from grave sin. If in doubt, receive the Sacrament of Penance first.

Then, fast from food or drink for at least one hour prior to receiving the Eucharist.

When the priest, deacon,

What is the right way to receive Holy Communion?

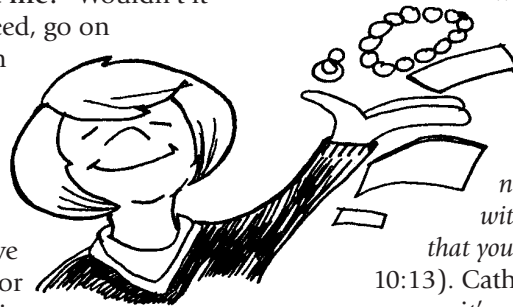


or extraordinary minister of Holy Communion says, "The Body of Christ" and "The Blood of Christ," answer, "Amen." Then put out your hands to receive the host or extend your tongue to receive it by mouth, and grasp the cup with two hands.

Let go of the good life

Who doesn't want to live the "good life?" Wouldn't it be great to have all the money you need, go on exotic vacations, and own your dream home? Yet, ask people who have all the world can offer and most will say they still don't have everything they want. This is because the good life doesn't exist here on Earth.

This world isn't perfect and can't give us true happiness despite the money or comfort we may have here. As Catholics,



we know that the good life is only possible when we are with God. Trying for anything else will cause us to lose our way.

St. Paul said, "No trial has come to you but what is human. 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). Catholics know that the good life isn't where we are, it's where we are going.

from Scripture

Mark 9:38-48, Be ruthless with sin

The disciples were jealous of an unfamiliar man who healed in Jesus' name. It seemed that they were more concerned about losing the spotlight than in healing. Yet, we do the same thing when we refuse to participate in good works because the people are unfamiliar, those in charge don't do things the way we'd like, or we fear our efforts won't get recognized. Competitiveness and ego have no place in the Christian community.

Jesus was very clear; we must be ruthless in removing sin from our

lives. Giving up a relationship, job, or habit that keeps us from God may seem just as painful as cutting off a hand, but the consequences of our choices last forever.



Being lukewarm toward Jesus is not possible. "For whoever is not against us is for us." Not all of Jesus'

followers resemble each other or belong to the same groups. But all who are on Jesus' side have the same goal to build up the kingdom of God. Our differences should never interfere with the work of the kingdom.

Q & A What is RCIA?

Every year thousands of adults choose to join the 1.13 billion Catholics in the world today. They embark on this journey of conversion through RCIA, the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults.

Started in 1972 by Pope Paul VI, the process has four stages, beginning with a Period of Inquiry. This step is the personal reflection of one's own life and their journey into a life of Catholic Christian faith.

The Catechumenate phase, for those never baptized, concentrates on the spiritual formation of the individual. It allows them to explore the Catholic Church and decide how they can grow as part of the Catholic community.

The Election phase prepares individuals for the sacraments. It begins with the Rite of Election on the first Sunday of Lent and leads to Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Communion.

Additional education continues into the Mystagogy or final stage. It focuses on the liturgy, sacraments and Catholic teachings. It is also the time where new Catholics review their lifelong mission to love and serve the Lord.



Feasts & Celebrations

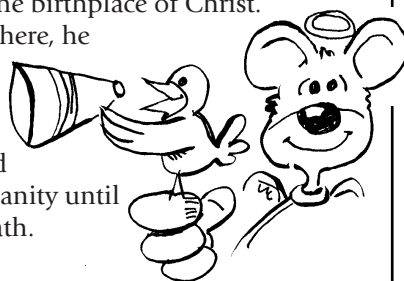
Sept. 8 – The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin. The birth of Mary marks the approach of salvation. She was born pure and holy with the privilege of becoming the Mother of God.

Sept. 9 – St. Peter Claver (1654). St. Peter was a Jesuit who left his native Spain to become a missionary in the West Indies. He focused his work on providing care and showing God's love to the thousands who were brought there to be sold as slaves. It is said that Claver instructed and baptized about

300,000 slaves during his 40 years of service.

Sept. 29 – St. Jerome (420). St. Jerome, known for his intellect, was called by God and given the task of going to Rome and revising the Latin Bible. Upon completion, Jerome spent his life visiting each spot significant to Christ's life. He eventually settled in Bethlehem, living in the cave believed to be the birthplace of Christ.

From there, he used his pen to uphold Christianity until his death.



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