Growing in FAITH™

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

November 2020

One Minute Meditations

We never lose God's love

Have you ever had someone end a relationship with you because of a mistake you made or something you did wrong? It's a terrible feeling to lose someone's love, especially if it is your fault. Fortunately, God's love doesn't depend on how good we are. Remember the parable Jesus told of the prodigal son (Luke 15)? No matter what the son's transgressions, the father received him in complete love. That's how God feels about us.

God's timing

Sometimes it seems like no matter how much we pray, God doesn't hear us. It can be tempting to give up hope, but remember, God always answers prayer in His time. Each day, decide to trust God; His timing is perfect.

"But God, who is rich in mercy, because of the great love He had for us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, brought us to life with Christ" (Ephesians 2:4-5).

Turn to God during Advent

It may be hard to look forward to the holidays this year. Instead, use the time during Advent *to "Turn to me and be saved, all the ends of the earth! For I am God and there is no other ..."* (Isaiah 45:22).

Turn to God for strength. *"When you pass through the waters I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you"* (Isaiah 43:2). When outside events make you feel low, remember that God will always send the strength we need to overcome difficulties.

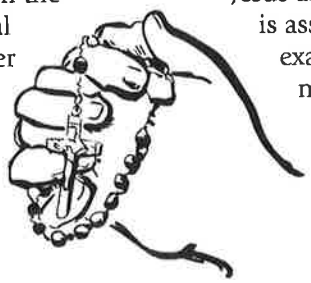
Turn to God for Faith. *"For our knowledge is imperfect and our prophecy is imperfect; but when the perfect comes, the imperfect will pass away"* (1 Corinthians 13:9-10). During difficult times, it can be hard to be hopeful. Turn to God with the faith that He is with us now and has glorious plans for our future.

Turn to God to for love. *"I came to cast fire upon the earth; and would that it were already kindled!"* (Luke 12:49). Jesus wants to fill our hearts with a fiery love like His. As we decorate our homes for Christmas, we can ask Jesus to fill our hearts with the warmth of His love.

Why Do Catholics Do That?

Why do Catholics pray the Rosary?

The Rosary is adapted from the complex prayers of medieval monks. It's a powerful prayer because in it, we ask Mary—whose prayers are never refused—to pray for us. In addition, the mysteries of the Rosary introduce us to the lives of Jesus and Mary. Each mystery is associated with a fruit. For example, the fruit of the mystery of the Annunciation is humility. Praying the Rosary opens us to the graces so we can be more like Christ.



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Does your tongue bless or curse?

"No human being can tame the tongue ... With it we bless the Lord and Father, and with it we curse human beings who are made in the likeness of God" (James 3:8-9). How can we ensure that our tongues will bless and not curse?

Offer words in service. What we say out loud can reveal our true motives. Sometimes we just want to hear our own opinions or have others admire our insight and wisdom. We truly speak with love when we honestly intend to serve others rather than our own interests.

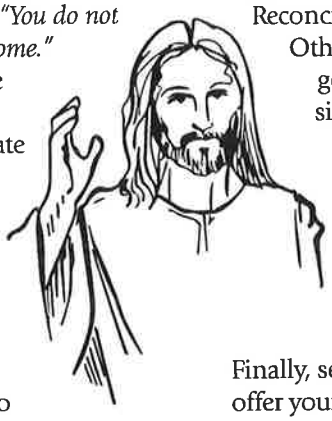
Lift up. Criticizing and pointing out another's faults is easy. It is an act of love to notice someone's positive attributes and possibly uncover previously unnoticed strengths.

Unify, don't divide. Our goal is always to build others up and bring them to God. If what we want to say is loving, instructive, and healing, it may be okay to speak. Otherwise, if it will cause unnecessary conflict or make someone else look bad, it's better left unsaid.

from Scripture

Mark 13:33-37, Keep watch!

In this reading, Jesus urges us to always be ready because *"You do not know when the time will come."* He wants us to be on the watch for Him.



Next month we celebrate Jesus' arrival at Christmas. He will come twice more for certain: at our death and at the end of time. Advent is the time to ask, "What do I need to do to be ready to greet the Lord?"

Start by doing your best to remain in a state of grace. When aware of having committed mortal sin, immediately seek forgiveness in the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession).

Otherwise make a practice of going regularly – every four to six weeks, if possible. Consider examining your conscience and picking one or two sinful practices you want to eliminate.

Then attend or watch Mass weekly and try to spend more time in prayer. Finally, see if there are ways you can offer yourself in service to others.

Keeping watch means fixing our eyes on God at all times. Then, when Christmas comes, you can greet the Lord with joy.

Q & A

What is the stealthy, Deadly Sin?

If you were asked to name one of the deadliest sins, what would you reply? Murder? Adultery? Lust? In fact, one of the deadliest – yet stealthiest – of the Seven Deadly Sins is sloth or acedia. It's stealth because it is easy to overlook that we are committing it.

Laziness. "Acedia or spiritual sloth goes so far as to refuse the joy that comes from God and to be repelled by divine goodness" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 2094). It means the sinner finds the attractions of this world more compelling than the glories of the next.

Ingratitude. The Creator of the universe loves us personally and showers us with blessings. Yet, we can "fail or refuse to acknowledge divine charity and to return Him love for love." Shopping for gifts, scrolling through social media, running errands – the spiritual sloth gives anything and everything priority over the love of God.

Feasts & Celebrations

November 1 – All Saints Day. The early Church celebrated the saints and martyrs throughout the year. However, Christian persecution became so intense, there weren't enough days in the calendar for individual commemorations. Pope Gregory IV designated Nov. 1 as All Saints Day.

November 4 – St. Charles Borromeo (1584). After earning doctorates in civil and canon law by the age of 21, he was named cardinal and bishop of Milan by Pope Pius IV. He worked to reform his diocese and cared for the poor and sick.

November 22 – Solemnity of Christ the King. God promised His people a king who will be triumphant over their enemies. Jesus is our King. In Baptism and Confirmation, we are brought under his kingship.

November 29 - 1st Sunday of Advent. During this four-week season, we anticipate the Messiah's birth, and look forward to Christ's reign and his coming on the last day. Catholics light candles in Advent wreaths each night to signal the coming of the true light of Christ.

Our Mission
To provide practical ideas that promote faithful Catholic living.
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(540)662-7844 (540)662-7847 fax
http://www.growinginfaith.com
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