

Growing in FAITH™

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

July 2026

One Minute Meditations

St. Lawrence of Brindisi

Born in Brindisi, Naples, Cesare de Rossi entered the Capuchin Order when he was sixteen, taking the name Lawrence. In addition to Italian, he was fluent in many languages. His knowledge of Latin, Greek, and Hebrew made him a great Biblical scholar, but his knowledge of German, French, and Spanish made Him a good preacher and diplomat. As minister general of the Capuchins, he spread the influence of the Order, establishing monasteries in Germany, Austria, and Spain.

The indispensability of prayer

St. Martha is often criticized for her busyness while her sister Mary is praised for sitting at Jesus' feet. Yet Martha's fault was not her service itself, but for allowing productivity to take precedence over prayerful attentiveness to the Lord. Scripture does not call us to perpetual activity; God commands us to rest (Exodus 20:10-11) and to "pray without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5:17), while still fulfilling our responsibilities. Prayer enables us to live out our vocations, especially our fundamental vocation to love.

"That [Precious] blood inebriates the soul. It clothes her in the fire of divine charity. It gives her the food of the sacrament that I have set up for you in the hostel of the mystic body of holy Church, the body and the blood of my Son..." – God to St. Catherine of Siena

Your summer soul-care checklist

Summer brings a welcome change of pace. While routines may take a break, our faith doesn't have to. Here are seven simple ways to stay rooted in God's presence and make this summer spiritually fruitful:

1. **Begin every journey with prayer.** Before heading out, take a moment to entrust your plans to God. Pray the Guardian Angel prayer and ask for protection, wisdom, and peace throughout your travels and activities.
2. **Wear reminders of your faith.** A crucifix, Miraculous Medal, scapular, or Rosary bracelet can do more than complete an outfit. These sacramentals serve as quiet reminders of who you belong to and what you value.
3. **Adopt a saint for summer.** Choose a saint to be your spiritual companion for the season. You may discover that the saint you choose has something to teach you exactly when you need it.
4. **Let creation lead you to the Creator.** A brilliant sunset, a mountain view, or even flowers blooming in a neighbor's garden can become moments of prayer. When beauty captures your attention, let it lift your heart and mind to God, the source of all

beauty and goodness.

5. **Look for opportunities to serve.** Summer may offer additional flexibility. Use it to love your neighbor in practical ways. Help with yardwork, spend time with someone who appears lonely, offer encouragement to a colleague.

"The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims his handiwork. Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night declares knowledge" (Psalm 19:1-2).

6. **Keep your soul in training.** Athletes know that strength comes through discipline. Spiritual strength is no different. Choose a sacrifice or habit that challenges you. Limit social media, wake up earlier for prayer, or attend an extra Mass during the week. Even small acts build up the heart for greater things.

7. **Remember the 1-1-1 Rule.** A simple rhythm can keep you faithful throughout the summer: *Pray (at least) once a day. Attend Mass once a week. Go to Confession once a month.* These three practices provide a steady anchor, even amidst the looser structure of summer.

Why Do Catholics Do That?

Throughout the Gospels, Peter takes up a leadership role among the Apostles – a role Jesus confirmed when, in Matthew 16, He names Peter "the Rock" upon which Jesus would build His Church (Matthew 16:17-18). After the Ascension, St. Peter traveled to Rome with the Gospel and became the bishop

Why do Catholics call Rome "home?"

of the Christian community there. He was martyred and buried in Rome, and his successors became the next popes. Historically, the church in Rome became a source of unity, strength, and faithfulness in adversity. Today, Catholics everywhere call Rome – the resting place of St. Peter – "home."

The secret to balance isn't to do more

Do you struggle to find balance in life? As founder and abbot of an entire Order, St. Benedict of Nursia knew the challenge of balancing prayer, work, community, and service. His wisdom for cultivating balance, order, and peace remains remarkably practical today:

Keep a daily rhythm: Few of us are called to a monk's strict schedule, but we can establish healthy routines, make time for rest and meals, and safeguard time for prayer. Structure creates freedom by helping us focus on what matters most rather than constantly reacting to demands. You, and those around you, will benefit.

Be punctual: "On hearing the signal for an hour of the

divine office, the monk will immediately set aside what he has in hand and go with utmost speed" (Rule of St. Benedict, Ch. 43). A balanced life depends on moving promptly to what is most important at the proper time. Punctuality is not merely efficiency; it is a way of honoring both our commitments and the people around us.

Make peace before sunset: Peace of mind requires letting go of anger and forgiving quickly. When a busy day leads to conflict, St. Benedict urges us to "make peace before the setting of the sun." Resentment drains our energy and disrupts our relationships, while reconciliation restores the peace needed to live and work well.

from Scripture

Matthew 13:44-52, The value of the Kingdom

Jesus used the parables in this Gospel passage to emphasize the life-changing value of the Kingdom. In the first parable, a man discovers – seemingly by accident – a treasure buried in a field. Recognizing its value, he sells everything he has to buy the field. In the second scenario, a merchant finds a valuable pearl after diligent searching. He also sells everything to possess the precious pearl.

By these parables, Jesus taught that being part of God's Kingdom – accepting His love for us and loving others as He loves – is the only thing

that completely fulfills our hearts. God's unconditional love is the only thing that is worthy of everything we have. If we accept His invitation (He forces no one), our lives will change as our hearts change.

Finally, Jesus compared the separation between the evil and righteous to the sifting that happens when a large catch of fish is brought ashore. When we put our whole life in service to God's love, then the individual pieces fall into place around that love, and anything contrary to it falls away.

Q & A

Who are the incorrupt Saints?

"Incorrupt" saints are those whose bodies have been found to resist normal decomposition, either wholly or in part, without deliberate human preservation. Some, such as St. Bernadette Soubirous, appear remarkably well preserved, while in other cases only certain parts of the body, such as St. Vincent de Paul's heart, remain incorrupt.

The Church regards incorruptibility not as proof of sainthood, but as a possible sign of a person's holiness. These extraordinary cases also serve as reminders of the future glory promised to all believers. The human body possesses a unique dignity and is destined to share in God's glory through the resurrection of the dead (CCC 997). Mary's bodily Assumption into heaven offers a glimpse of the destiny to which all the faithful are called.

For this reason, the Church has long venerated the bodies and relics of the saints. Such veneration, including that of incorrupt bodies, is intended to be reverent and prayerful. By encountering these remarkable witnesses of faith, we are inspired to imitate their virtue and draw closer to Christ. When we honor the saints, we ultimately honor the God whose grace transformed their lives.

Feasts & Celebrations

July 6 – St. Maria Goretti (1902). Twelve-year-old Maria was attacked by a neighbor who tried to assault her. When she fought rather than submit, he stabbed her repeatedly. She forgave him before dying shortly after. Her attacker dreamed of Maria while in prison and his first act when released 27 years later was to beg Maria's mother's forgiveness. He wept tears of joy when he attended Maria's canonization.

July 22 – St. Mary Magdalene (1st century). Jesus expelled seven demons from Mary (Luke 8:2) and she financially supported His ministry. She stood by His Cross with His mother and was the one who informed the

Apostles of His Resurrection.

July 26 – Saints Joachim and Ann (1st century). Little is known about Jesus' grandparents, but Mary's unshakeable faith, her devotion to the laws of her religion, and her steadiness in crises indicate the values with which she was raised. Today, pray for your grandparents.

July 30 – St. Peter Chrysologus (c.450). Born in Imola around the year 400, St. Peter converted to Christianity and was ordained deacon. For a while he lived ascetically as a monk. He was ordained Bishop of Ravenna and spent his office defending his see against heresies. His preaching style was so impactful and articulate he was given the title of "golden-tongued." He produced about one hundred seventy-six homilies.

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