

Growing in FAITH™

Discovering hope and joy in the Catholic faith.

March 2020

The Catholic Communities of Stapleton, Arnold and Callaway
Fr. Thomas Gudipalli

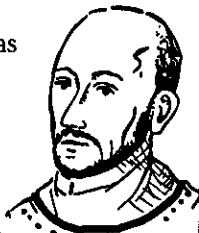
One Minute Meditations

St. Toribio de Mogrovejo

Born in Mayorga, Spain, St. Toribio was educated in law

and became the Professor of Law at Salamanca University. His work and his holiness earned him the notice of the king, who named him to be the next Archbishop of Lima.

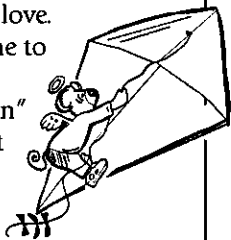
Despite his arguments, Toribio was ordained a priest, consecrated, and sent to Peru. He spent his office reforming the then-corrupt diocese, catechizing the native Peruvians, and defending them from the abuses of the Spanish conquistadors.



Sunday rest

Rather than a day to catch up on errands and chores, God intends Sunday to be a day of contemplation and of rest. Sunday is the day we set aside for God and moments of praise and worship.

"I would like everyone to feel loved by the God who gave his Son for us and showed us his boundless love. I want everyone to feel the joy of being Christian" (Pope Benedict XVI).



Dealing with difficult people Jesus' way

People who argue, fight, or refuse to cooperate can make our lives downright miserable. Yet, Jesus was masterful at dealing with difficult people. Following his example can save our sanity and our relationships.

Know when to ignore. When Jesus made his Nazareth friends and neighbors so mad that they wanted to throw him off a cliff, he knew there was no reasoning with them.

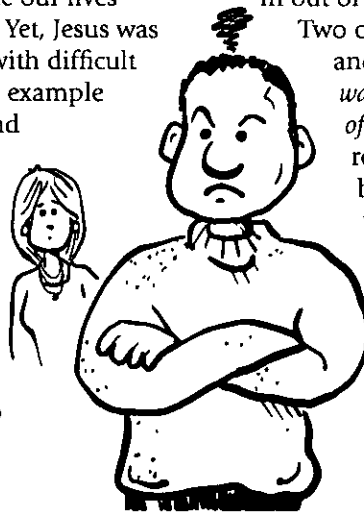
"Passing through the midst of them he went away" (Luke 4:30). When people speak harshly or offensively, the best response can be to disengage and walk away.

Know when to say "no." Sometimes others demand more from us than we

are able or willing to give, yet we give in out of guilt or fear of displeasure.

Two of his best friends, James and John, said to Jesus, *"we want you to do whatever we ask of you"* (Mark 10:35). In response to this stunning breach of boundaries, Jesus was calm and firm. He said "no" and didn't second-guess himself when he didn't make his loved ones happy.

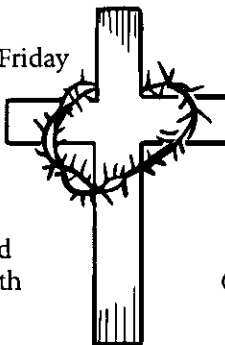
Know when to stay calm. When Jesus took a Sabbath stroll with his friends (Matthew 12), Pharisees barged in and accused him of breaking the Sabbath. He remained calm and answered them peacefully. He wasn't afraid of being tripped up or trapped because he was unconcerned about others' opinions.



Why Do Catholics Do That?

Why do Catholics call Good Friday "good"?

Although a sad day, Good Friday actually is "good" because it is the day when Jesus saved us from our sins, reconciled us with God, and reopened Heaven. Out of what seemed like defeat, God brought a greater victory. With



his sacrifice, Jesus conquered sin and death. On Good Friday, we see more clearly God's goodness, justice, wisdom, power, and love. *"God proves his love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us"* (Romans 5:8).

3 ingredients for powerful prayer

A close, loving relationship with God depends on a rich prayer life. It is through prayer that God guides, consoles, strengthens, challenges, and transforms us. Ingredients of a strong prayer life can include a Scripture reading, quiet meditation, and expectation.

Meditate on Scripture each day: The Bible contains everything God wants us to know. Start each morning with a verse, a chapter, or a phrase that speaks to you and carry it with you



throughout the day.

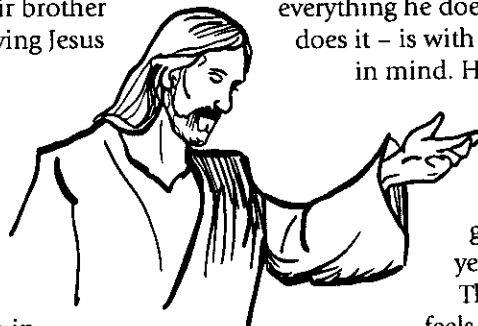
Listen in silence: Listening is as important as talking. Spend 15 minutes in silence each day to listen to what God wants your heart to know.

Wait in positive expectation. When we have faith that God personally loves us and wants what is best, we eagerly await the plans he has for us. "... faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1). The conviction that God hears and answers us makes our prayer truly powerful.

from Scripture

John 11:1-45, Trust, and you shall be rewarded

God's ways can be puzzling. In this Gospel passage, Martha and Mary sent word to Jesus that their brother was seriously ill, believing Jesus could help. Yet, Jesus delayed in coming to them and Lazarus died. Despite this, Martha showed great faith: *"Even now I know that whatever you ask of God he will give you."* For her firm faith in God, she was rewarded generously.



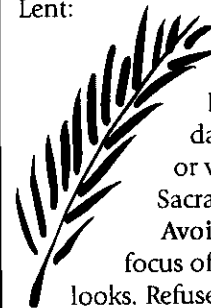
he wasn't insensitive to their pain. God's timing is not ours, yet everything he does – even when he does it – is with our best interests in mind. He was not too late for Lazarus, but right on time and worked his greatest miracle yet.

God never leaves us in our troubles but draws closer to us. When the situation was at its bleakest for his friends, Jesus was with them. He wept;

The next time it feels like God isn't listening, remember Jesus' own words: *"Father I thank you for hearing me. I know that you always hear me."* We can trust his response, while perhaps not what we want, will work for good.

Q & A Can you suggest a meaningful sacrifice for Lent?

The point of Lent is not to greet Easter a few pounds lighter but to be transformed. Try something new this Lent:



Make extra time for him each day.

Read the Bible, attend daily Mass, pray a Rosary, or visit Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

Avoid the mirror. Take the focus off your appearance or looks. Refuse to compare yourself to others or accept others' view of you. Remember, your worth isn't in how others see you, but in God's infinite, unchanging love for you.

Give up one thing at every meal. Offer up a little something every time you eat – forego sugar in coffee, honey on cereal - to keep the idea, "it's Lent," in the forefront.

Offer the heroic minute. St. Josemaría Escrivá suggested jumping out of bed – no snooze button - as soon as the alarm goes off, "without granting a single minute to laziness. If, with the help of God, you conquer yourself in that moment, you'll have accomplished a great deal for the rest of the day."

Feasts & Celebrations

March 3 – St. Katharine Drexel (1955). A Philadelphia heiress, Katharine Drexel became a nun and used her inheritance to establish the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament for African and Native American peoples. She founded missions for Native Americans and Xavier University in New Orleans, the first to admit African American students.

March 4 – St. Casimir of Poland (1483). When his father sent him to conquer Hungary, Casimir assessed the odds against winning the war and

turned back out of concern for his troops. He resolved never to be involved in war again.

March 19 – St. Joseph, husband of Mary (1st Century). Jesus' earthly father and husband to the Blessed Mother, St. Joseph is a model of fatherhood and a protector of families.

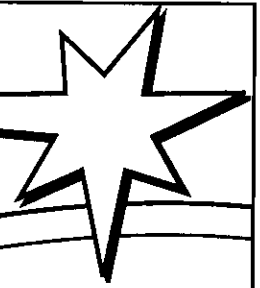
March 27 – St. John of Egypt (c.394). Born in modern Assiut, Egypt, St. John became a hermit when he was twenty. He lived an ascetic life but preached publicly on weekends. Also a prophet, he made two accurate predictions for Emperor Theodosius I.



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Partners in FAITH™



Helping our children grow in their Catholic faith.

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Thoughtful Moments

St. Toribio of Mogrovejo

Born in Mayorga, Spain, Toribio was a Professor of Law at Salamanca University when the king, noting his integrity, named him the next Archbishop of Lima, even though Toribio wasn't a priest! He was ordained, consecrated, and sent to Peru. He visited every parish in his diocese and learned the native languages so he could preach without an interpreter and they could more easily learn their faith. He also founded schools, churches, hospitals, and a seminary.



Servanthood

According to Jesus, the greatest are those who give themselves to God and others. Teach children to serve by assigning age-appropriate chores, asking them for help, or encouraging thoughtful acts. Children learn from doing.

"So, no matter how much time you spend fasting, no matter how much you sleep on a hard floor and eat ashes and sigh continually, if you do no good to others, you do nothing great" (St. John Chrysostom).



Plant the seeds of faith

Helping children to grow in faith is like tending a garden. To become healthy, plants need regular attention, the right ingredients and help from an expert gardener. To be strong, children's faith needs regular attention, the right ingredients, and God's continual help.

Cultivate the soil. Before planting, the soil must be prepared. It has to be made moist, perhaps have fertilizer mixed in, be positioned to get lots of sunlight, and any weeds must be cleared. Baptism cultivates our children's souls in a similar way. The weeds of original sin are removed, hearts are turned toward God, and the conditions are made right for God's

planting.

Plant the seed. Some ways to plant seeds of faith include sending children to Catholic school or religion classes in your parish, reading Scripture together, and practicing faith at home.

Feed and water. Plants grow best with the right amount of water and fertilizer or food. Prayer, weekly Mass, Sacraments, and religious study give our children's souls the food they need to grow a healthy faith.

Constant tending. Weeds can steal the food and resources plants need to grow. Sin can also choke our faith so that it becomes thin or weak. Taking our children to the Sacrament of Reconciliation regularly is a great way to keep weeds of sin out of their gardens.

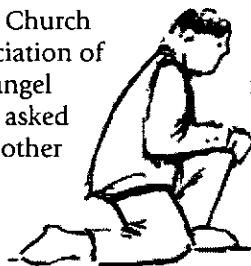


Why Do Catholics Do That?

Why do Catholics genuflect during the Creed on March 25?

On March 25th, the Church celebrates the Annunciation of the Lord - when the angel appeared to Mary. He asked if she would be the Mother of God and she said, "Yes."

Usually at Mass, we bow when we



proclaim our belief that God's Son was "born of the virgin Mary and became man."

However, for the Annunciation and Christmas, we genuflect in deep reverence and gratitude for the mystery that made our salvation possible (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #461).

Consecrating daily life to God

Blessing objects and items that we use each day turns ordinary items into holy objects dedicated to God. Such blessings can help children see that pets, homes, cars, and bedrooms can become holy things and holy places that remind us God's love is all around.

Why bless? Dedicating everyday things to God's use is one way to teach children that they themselves have the power to bless. Then they can make their own little corners of the world holy.



What to bless? Bless people, events, places, and objects – and especially that which is important to you and your family. For example, a new car, a favorite toy, a family pet, or even special rooms in your home can be blessed and dedicated to God's use.

Prayers to use. A blessing does not have to involve books or formula prayers. In fact, families can design their own blessings using intentions or prayers that are special to them. For ideas and guidance, refer to *Catholic*

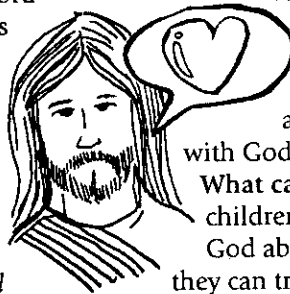
Household Blessings and Prayers (store.usccb.org, 800-235-8722).

Scripture LESSON

John 11:1-45, Great faith, marvelous answers

God always answers prayer, sometimes in unexpected ways. Martha and Mary had sent word to Jesus that their brother was dying, believing he could help. They may have been disappointed when he took his time coming to them and Lazarus died. Still, Martha demonstrated great faith: "Even now I know that whatever you ask of God he will give you."

Jesus intentionally delayed so that rather than just heal Lazarus, he gave him new life. Martha didn't know what would happen, but she knew



Jesus and she trusted his wisdom. His response was a marvelous one: for her faith, he worked his greatest miracle yet. Martha was right: Jesus cared, he could help, and all things are possible with God.

What can a parent do? Tell children that they can talk to God about anything and that they can trust him completely. He always hears our prayers. Sometimes God doesn't give us what we want but he always gives us what we need, right when we need it. We can trust that his answer to us will be marvelous, too.

Feasts & Celebrations

March 7 – Sts. Perpetua and Felicity (203). Perpetua was a young mother and Carthaginian noblewoman who refused to renounce her faith. Felicity was a slave and expectant mother who also refused to deny her Christianity. Both were martyred.

March 17 – St. Patrick of Ireland (c. 461). Born in Scotland, St. Patrick was kidnapped by pirates and brought to Ireland as a slave. He escaped several years later and became a priest. Ordained the bishop of Ireland, he is credited for having established the Church there.

March 20 – St. Cuthbert (687). St. Cuthbert joined the Benedictines at the Melrose Abbey. For his holiness, fervor and charity, he was made abbot of the Lindisfame Abbey. He retired to be a hermit.

March 25 – The Annunciation of the Lord (1st century). The angel Gabriel visited the Blessed Virgin Mary with the extraordinary news of her role as the Mother of God. Even at her young age, she had complete confidence in God's grace and trusted in his wisdom.



Parent TALK

Our children were often so disruptive during Mass that my husband and I attended separate Masses to avoid bringing them. After a while, I missed attending Mass as a family. So I asked our pastor for suggestions.

The first thing Fr. Stan said was to sit up front. He said children pay closer attention when they can see what is happening.

Then he suggested arriving 15 minutes early to pray a decade of the Rosary as a family. When children pray in a quiet church, they understand that church is for prayer and not for play.

And lastly, Father suggested we go out for a treat, like ice cream or donuts, after Mass. Not only was it a reward for good behavior, it helped to make Sunday feel special.

His advice worked better than I could have hoped. I still have to issue the occasional "shush," but now we get to attend Mass together as a family. And that's the most important benefit of all.



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