

Growing in FAITH™

Discovering hope and joy in the Catholic faith.

April 2020

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

One Minute Meditations

St. Catherine of Siena

Born in Siena, Italy, St. Catherine was a doctor of the Church. A mystic from a young age, she had regular conversations with Jesus. At age sixteen, she joined the Third Order of St. Dominic and served the sick and the poor. For her reputation for holiness and wisdom, she was called on to be a peacemaker and counselor, even by popes! She is credited with coaxing Pope Gregory XI back to Rome from Avignon, France.



Necessary choice

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.

"He said to them, 'Do not be amazed! You seek Jesus of Nazareth, the crucified. He has been raised; he is not here'" (Mark 16:6).



4 reasons to be hopeful right now

It's hard not to worry these days with reports of viruses and financial concerns. Yet we in God's family have more reasons to be hopeful no matter how uncertain the world ...

God, our Father, knows what we need. *"If you then, who are wicked, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give good things to those who ask him"* (Matthew 7:11). He will take care of us when we trust him.

He can work miracles when we ask. *"Know that the Lord works wonders for the faithful; the Lord hears when I call out"* (Psalm 4:4). *"Be strong and of*

good courage, do not fear ... for it is the Lord your God who goes with you; he will not fail you or forsake you"

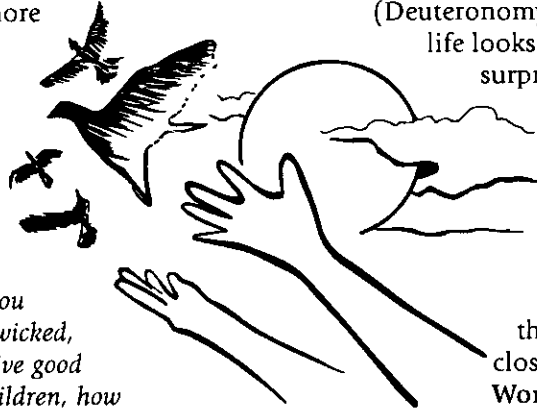
(Deuteronomy 31:6). Just when life looks bleak, God can surprise us.

He will never abandon us.

"You, Lord, are near to all who call upon you ..." (Psalm 145:18). Know that he is always close.

Worrying won't do any good. *"Can any of you by worrying add a moment to your lifespan? If even the smallest things are beyond your control, why are you anxious about the rest?"*

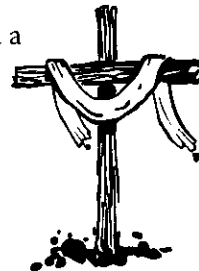
(Luke 12:25). Don't waste energy on worrying about what is beyond your control. Enjoy your blessings.



Why Do Catholics Do That?

Why do Catholics celebrate Easter on different dates?

Although celebrating Easter on a different day every year isn't strictly a Catholic practice, the reason why we do this has its roots in the Church's history. There was a dispute in the second century about the date of Easter: should it be celebrated



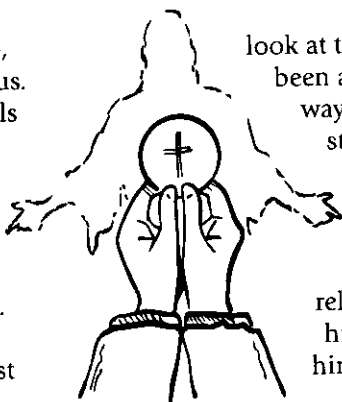
on the exact date or on the nearest Sunday? At the Council of Nicaea (325 A.D.), it was decided that Easter Sunday would be celebrated the Sunday after the first full moon after the Vernal (Spring) equinox.

Get personal with Jesus

The Easter season is a perfect time to develop, strengthen and deepen our friendship with Jesus. During this time of celebration, we can set goals that aim to deepen our knowledge and love of our Lord.

The Eucharist is the source. The best way to get close to Jesus is in the Holy Mass and by receiving Holy Communion. It is God's way of bringing us into communion with him.

Visit the confessional. Confession is a Sacrament that encourages us to take an honest



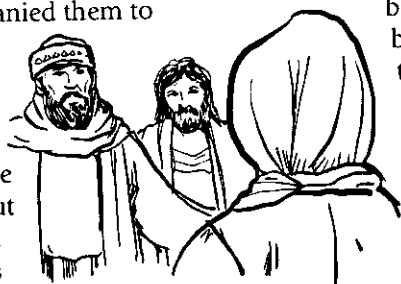
look at the way we are living. Even Catholics who have been away from Confession will find that the best way to get a new beginning with Jesus off to a great start is to visit the confessional. Clean that slate! Begin anew.

Spend time with him. We can spend time reading inspirational books and blogs, and chatting on Catholic sites, but to develop a relationship with Jesus, we need face time with him. Adoration is one of the best ways to keep him company.

from Scripture

Luke 24:13-35, Jesus accompanies us

Imagine what it would be like to have a Bible study with Jesus! This was exactly what Cleopas and his friend experienced when Jesus accompanied them to Emmaus. Failing to recognize Jesus and still grieving his death, they unknowingly told the risen Christ all about it. In an unexpected turn of events, Jesus explained to them how his death and resurrection was part of God's saving plan.



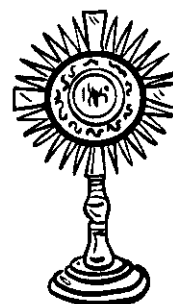
The disciples invited Jesus to stay with them, even though they still didn't recognize him. Jesus took the bread,

blessed it, broke it, and gave it to the disciples. Suddenly, they recognized him. He vanished, but their hearts burned with joy. They raced back to Jerusalem to share the Good News with their fellow disciples.

Cleopas and his friend's story is ours too. At every Mass, God speaks to our hearts through Scriptures. In the Eucharist blessed, broken and given to us, we encounter Jesus and receive him into our hearts. With the final blessing, we are sent to spread the Good News: Christ rose from the dead and reopened heaven for us.

Q & A What is a monstrance?

In practicing or learning Catholicism, one can find some funny sounding words. "Monstrance" is one of them. It's



an upright container for the Blessed Sacrament (a consecrated Host), usually made of gold or silver and often shaped like a sunburst. The rays are meant to evoke the power and grace radiating from the Host. They also draw the eye

to the window (luna) at the center where the Host is. By means of it, Christ and the viewers can literally be face to face.

The monstrance is used to display the Blessed Sacrament for Adoration. Adoration of the Eucharist outside of Mass developed to satisfy the devotion of the faithful. When you love someone deeply, you want to see him – in person – and spend time with him frequently. God doesn't just want to hear our prayers; he wants to be with us always (Matthew 28:20). Jesus longs for us to visit him in our churches. He remains in the Blessed Sacrament so that anyone who seeks him can find him.

Feasts & Celebrations

April 19 – Divine Mercy Sunday. In 1931, Jesus appeared to St. Faustina and asked that the Sunday after Easter become the "Feast of Mercy." Jesus promised those who honor him as the King of Mercy and pray the Chaplet of Divine Mercy would receive special graces and great mercy.

April 21 – St. Anselm (1109). St. Anselm left a rich court life to become a monk in France and reluctantly became bishop of Canterbury, England. He was exiled for rebuffing the king's interference in Church matters.

April 25 – St. Mark the Evangelist (1st century). St. Mark wrote the second Gospel largely based on St. Peter's perspective. Mark travelled with SS. Paul and Barnabas (Mark's cousin) through the island of Cyprus and is credited with founding the Church of Alexandria.

April 28 – St. Louis de Montfort (1716). A French priest with a passion for preaching the Gospel, St. Louis had a special devotion to the Blessed Mother, and his *True Devotion to Mary* is widely popular today.



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Partners in FAITH™

Helping our children grow in their Catholic faith.

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Thoughtful Moments

St. Catherine of Siena

Born in Siena, Italy, St. Catherine was a Doctor of the Church and a mystic. From a young age, she had regular conversations with Jesus. She resisted her parents' efforts to have her marry by cutting off her hair! Instead she joined the Third Order of St. Dominic and served the poor. She successfully coaxed Pope Gregory XI back to Rome from Avignon, France. She also mediated disputes and wrote *The Dialogue* concerning the spiritual life.



Reminder

Each of us was made by a loving Creator who knows and calls us by name. No matter your child's IQ, athletic abilities, or the condition of his bedroom, he has great value in God's eyes. Remind him that God loves him for exactly who he is - even more than you do.

We know that all things work for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose (Romans 8:28).



Show children how faith is done

Children read our signals, even when we don't intend to communicate them. When parents are worried or concerned, children can tell. In uncertain times, we can help youngsters live as people of hope by living with hope, ourselves.

Stay calm. To calm a child's fear, let her know that you have confidence in God's love and care for each of us and she can trust him, too.

Question. Asking questions help us feel more confident about our beliefs. Help children find answers to their questions and doubts. Refer to Scripture and the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. If you get

stumped, ask your parish priest for guidance.

Pray. Pray together before meals, at bedtime and for special intentions like the health of friends and family.

Keep your eyes on Heaven. Hang a crucifix in your home.

When you get overwhelmed by pessimistic news in the media, stand before it to join in family prayer.

Do for others. Place a bowl on a table to collect change for almsgiving. Donate the coins to your parish poor box on Sunday.

Act - Let your children "catch" you living your faith. Attend Mass each week and holy day, and go to Confession. When others are in need, reach out to them and encourage children to help as well.



Why Do Catholics Do That?

Why do Catholics celebrate First Holy Communion?

Any time a sacrament is received, it's cause for celebrating. All the sacraments convey God's grace, but in this one we receive God himself. First Holy Communion is special because it's the first time (of many) when Jesus comes into



our hearts and souls and fill us with graces. First Holy Communion also means that the communicant is one step closer to becoming a full member of the Catholic Church (Confirmation is often the last step). What a lot to celebrate!

Strengthen the affection connection

The best discipline strategies in the world won't work unless your children know you love them. Here are four ways you can use to communicate love:

1. Say, "I love you," until they're sick of hearing it ... and then say it again. Praise them in public like God did, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matthew 3:17).

2. Welcome your children's friends. Try to see that yours is the house in which everyone wants to play. Your children will appreciate your



Christian hospitality to their friends.

3. Let your children serve you. Every family member is called to serve the other members. That means children should have the opportunity to give love as well as receive it.

4. Learn their love language. Each person receives love in a specific way. Some need to hear it said. Others need evidence, such as affectionate notes or small gifts.

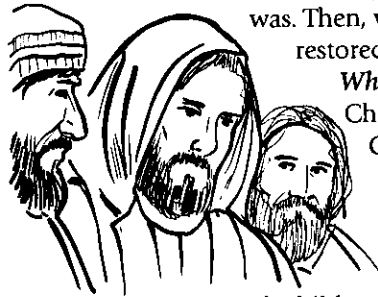
Parents showing love is the best way for children to learn how to experience God's love for them.

Scripture LESSON

Luke 24:13-35, Jesus hides in plain sight

Ever spend minutes searching for something, only realizing it was in front of you the whole time?

Maybe this was how the two disciples felt after Jesus appeared to them. Cleopas and his friend were so blinded by their sorrow and disappointment at Jesus' death, they didn't even recognize Jesus when he joined them on the road!



Jesus gave clues to his identity that he quoted from Scripture, showing how his Death and Resurrection fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies. The disciples were so sure Jesus was still "lost" they

didn't realize they'd "found" him. Only when Jesus broke bread with them did they see him for who he was. Then, with their faith restored, he vanished.

What can a parent do?

Children often want God to reveal himself in spectacular ways that have little to do with who he is. Parents can teach children that the real way to find out who God is requires spending time with him, reading Scripture, and seeking him in the people around them. Then we will truly come to know Jesus as he is.

Parent TALK

I received a note home from Pete's teacher saying that he caught Peter cheating. The teacher reported that he and another boy sent signals to each other to share their



answers on a test. I was stunned because I know Pete had studied. Pete promised he didn't cheat and it was all a misunderstanding.

I agreed to email the teacher to get more information before imposing a consequence.

The teacher said he watched as Pete tapped on his desk and pointed with his pencil to a question with which he needed help. There was no mistake. Frankly, I felt foolish for thinking that he would have accused Pete unless he was sure. I just didn't want to believe it.

Pete lost access to his screens for a month and had to write an essay on the virtue of honesty. And I learned better ways to partner and support our teachers.

Feasts & Celebrations

April 5 - Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion (1st Century). On Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion, we recall Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem, when he was greeted by crowds waving palms and cheering. This Sunday marks the beginning of Holy Week.

April 16 - St. Benedict Joseph Labré (1783). Nicknamed "the poor man of the Forty Hours (Eucharistic) devotion," St. Benedict spent much of his life as a poor pilgrim. He voluntarily lived on the streets continually absorbed in prayer.

April 23 - St. George (c. 300).

Although many legends surround St. George, we know he was a soldier under Emperor Diocletian who persecuted Christians, and that he died a martyr in Palestine. He is a patron of England, Portugal, Germany, Spain, and Italy.

April 28 - St. Peter Chanel (1840). St. Peter Chanel entered the Society of Mary and was sent to evangelize the Marshall Islands. Despite adversities, he baptized a few natives, including the chieftain's son. The entire island converted two years after his martyrdom.



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