

Growing in FAITH™

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

May 2021

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

One Minute Meditations

God is our strength

Life can be exhausting and we can become overwhelmed by what it takes to be good. It is important to remember that we don't struggle alone. "If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, will he not also give us all things with him?" (Romans 8:31-32).

A new approach

St. Paul said the whole law is summed up in love. While he was talking about Mosaic law, laws are given to preserve order. Jesus presented a new fresh approach. Out of love, He came not to abolish the Law, but to bring it to perfection. The relationship between heaven and earth is love.

"Whatever you ask in my name, I will do it, that the Father may be glorified in the Son; if you ask anything in my name, I will do it" (John 14:13-14).



Who do you say that Jesus is?

Jesus said to his Apostles, "But who do you say that I am?" (Matthew 16:15). In *Mere Christianity*, C.S.

Lewis wrote that there are three ways to answer this question.

Perhaps Jesus was a liar, deliberately misleading others by claiming to be God. Or, was He insane, deluded into thinking He was God? Finally, perhaps He is what He said He is – God.

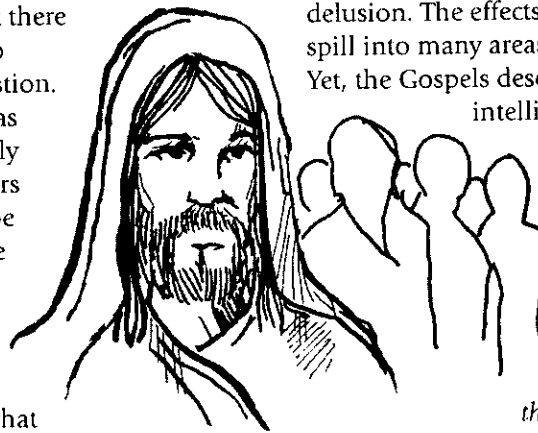
Liar: If Jesus deliberately misled others, He would have been evil. Yet, his friends wrote that He did incredible acts of good, was honest, kind, and compassionate. No one experienced Jesus as a bad man.

Lunatic: What if Jesus were insane

and deluded when believing He was God? Being out of touch with reality wouldn't have been confined to one delusion. The effects of mental illness spill into many areas of a person's life. Yet, the Gospels describe Jesus' wisdom, intelligence, and practical good sense. He had an ability to attract people who respected His authority.

Lord: When Jesus asked, "But who do YOU say that I am?", Peter responded, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." It's the only answer that makes sense.

Ultimately, we each have to answer the question of who Jesus is for ourselves. We can pray for the faith of Peter to declare Jesus our Lord and our God.



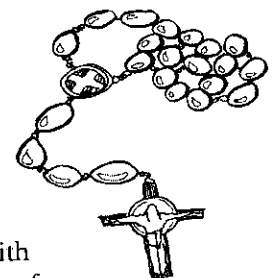
Why Do Catholics Do That?

Popes, saints, and Catholics over the centuries have turned to the Rosary for miraculous help in seemingly impossible situations. The mysteries of the Rosary describe the events of Jesus' life, death and Resurrection. As we pray the Rosary, we revisit these events.

The Rosary is deeply ingrained in our Catholic identity. The rhythm of

Why do Catholics pray the Rosary?

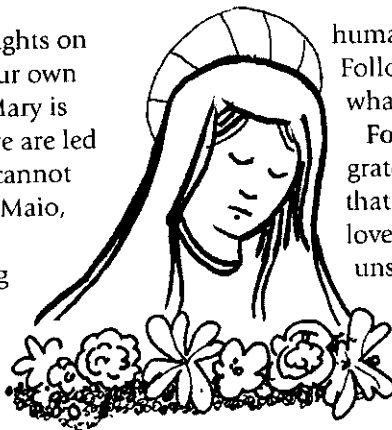
the Rosary is meant to still our minds and direct our hearts to communion with God, placing our focus on God and not on the world.



Mary brings us to the heart of her Son

Jesus so loved his mother that his last thoughts on the Cross were of her. He gave her to us as our own mother, and wants us to honor her. "Since Mary is rightly to be regarded as the way by which we are led to Christ, the person who encounters Mary cannot help but encounter Christ likewise" (Mense Maio, Blessed Pope Paul VI).

For her "yes." Without fully understanding what God intended, she unhesitatingly agreed to become his mother. Her "yes" made it possible for God to become



human and be crucified for our salvation. Following her example means saying "yes" to whatever God asks.

For her sacrifice. Wouldn't you be forever grateful to someone who gave up her child so that you and your loved ones might live? Mary loved her amazing child and she experienced unspeakable heartache as he was sacrificed for us.

Praying the Rosary regularly reminds us of the life of Jesus and the desire of his Mother to bring us close to his heart.

from Scripture

Matthew 28:16-20, The Holy Trinity

Jesus appeared to the Apostles on the mountain top in Galilee, so they could receive their final instructions. They were to go forth, baptize, make disciples, and to teach what they had been taught.

These are our instructions, too. Once we meet Jesus and experience his love for us, we can't keep him to ourselves. We must share him.

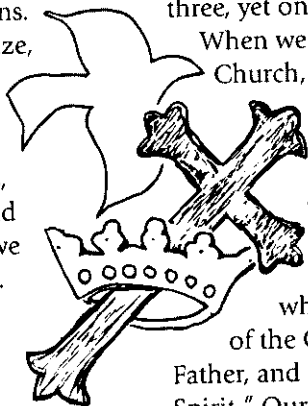
Jesus also revealed to the Apostles, and to the crowd gathered with them, that God is a Trinity —Father, Son, and

Holy Spirit – three Divine Persons united in love. The belief that God is three, yet one, is distinct to Christianity.

When we became members of the Church, we were baptized in the name of the Trinity.

The Trinity is a mystery we may not fully understand, but we can still live in its love and power.

We proclaim our faith in it whenever we make the Sign of the Cross: "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." Our ultimate goal is to follow Christ into the eternal life of the Trinity.



Q & A

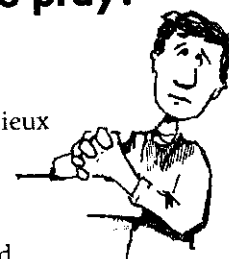
Why are Catholics urged to pray?

St. Therese of Lisieux said, "For me, prayer is a surge of the heart; it is a simple look turned toward heaven, it is a cry of recognition and of love, embracing both trial and joy." Practically speaking, prayer is how we connect with God.

Prayer helps us to hear God's voice. By praying, we learn about Him, come to understand what He wants for us, and how we reap the blessings He wants to give us. The more we pray, the closer to Him we become. "Christian prayer is a covenant relationship between God and man in Christ" (Catechism of the Catholic Church, #2564).

Through our Baptism, we are united with Jesus. When we pray often and regularly, we create the habit of being in His presence and in communion with Him. And, we tap into our Baptismal connection. Through a healthy prayer life, we enjoy a personal and living relationship with God.

God seeks to draw us each to Himself. Prayer is our answer to Him.



Feasts & Celebrations

May 1 – St. Joseph the Worker. Entrusted with the care of the Blessed Mother and Jesus, Joseph was a carpenter dedicated to his family and obedient to God.

May 13 – Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord (1st Century). This solemnity marks the completion of Jesus' mission of salvation and his triumphant entry into Heaven. Note: In many dioceses, observance of Ascension has been moved to the following Sunday.

May 18 – St. Felix of Cantalice

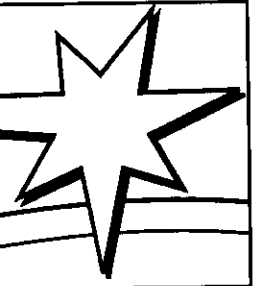
(1587). Born to poor, pious parents in Italy, St. Felix was called "Brother Deogratias" because he was always thanking God. As a young man, he joined the Capuchins, who sent him to Rome to be the friary's official beggar. He was also friends with Saints Philip Neri and Charles Borromeo.

May 23 – Pentecost (1st century). After the Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus, the Holy Spirit was given to the Church at the first Pentecost. When the apostles received the Holy Spirit, the "new age" of the Church was born.



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Helping our children grow in their Catholic faith.

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Thoughtful Moments

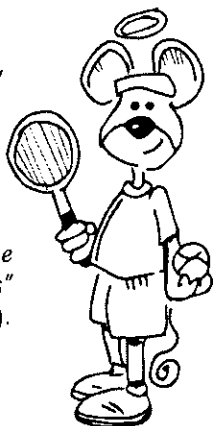
Do as I do

Are you the kind of Catholic you want your children to be? Setting a good example must include not only what you say, but what you do. For example, model respect and love for the Mass by attending every weekend. Frequent the Sacrament of Reconciliation and rely on Scripture to help you hear the voice of God. Your children will want to do the same.

The company we keep

When we see someone doing good, we are inspired to do good, too. The opposite is also true. Children whose consciences are still being formed can be easily led into sin by the bad examples of their friends. Be watchful about the company children keep and encourage friendships with those who do good.

"Turn thou to me, and be gracious to me; for I am lonely and afflicted. Relieve the troubles of my heart, and bring me out of my distresses" (Psalm 25:16-17).



Make your home a safe place

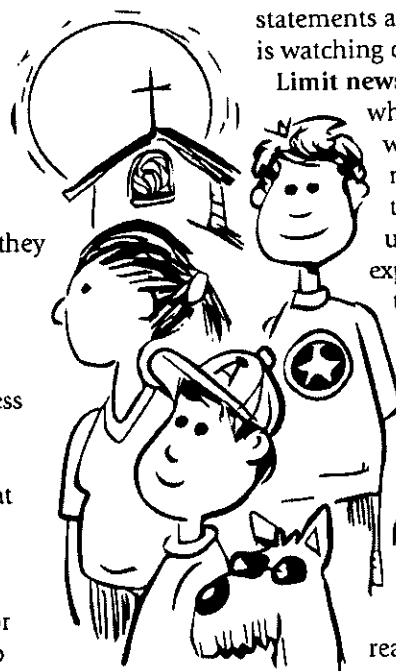
Many of us feel helpless and anxious as the global pandemic drags on. Imagine how children feel, especially when they aren't able to fully understand current events or adequately express their anxiety and fears. Even young children can absorb tension and stress from conversations they overhear.

Exercise patience. Remember that children grappling with underlying stress may act out in new and different ways. Daily challenges that wouldn't normally rattle youngsters can be the trigger for bouts of anger or bad behavior. Try to remember the context in which children are operating and be

extra patient in reacting.

Answer questions. When they have questions, give them age-appropriate answers. Answer using simple statements and reassure them that God is watching out for each of His children.

Limit news. It's not possible to hide what is going on in the world, but children don't need a steady diet of news they may not be able to understand. No need to expose youngsters to reports that may only fuel their fears. Be sure to check their understanding of news they do hear or see. **Make family time a priority.** To counter stress from the world, it helps to surround children with an atmosphere of love and comfort. Spend more time playing games, reading together, talking, and cuddling. Make your home their safe place.



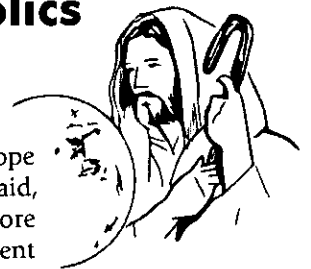
Why Do Catholics Do That?

"The earth is the Lord's and all it holds" (Psalm 24:1). The natural world is one way in which God reveals Himself to us. Therefore, we not only honor God for the gift of life but to honor His gift of creation.

When we treat the natural world with respect, we preserve resources for future

Why do Catholics respect creation?

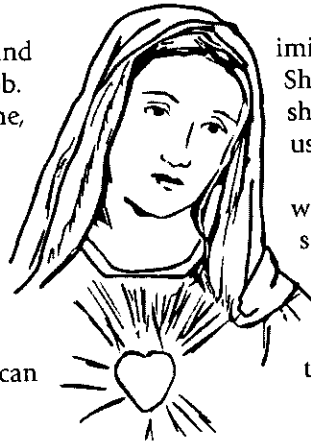
generations. Pope Benedict XVI said, "It becomes more and more evident that there is an inseparable link between peace with creation and peace among men."



Parent like the Mother of God

God chose Mary to be the Mother of his Son, and gave her the preparation she needed to do the job. Jesus thought so highly of the mother she became, that his dying thoughts were of her. During this month for mothers, we can take parenting tips from the Mother of God:

"May it be done to me according to your word" (Luke 1:38). When faced with events beyond her understanding or control, Mary leaned on God. We, too, encounter situations we can't understand or control. That's when we can



imitate Mary's trust in God. She didn't ask or argue. She just trusted. His plan worked out better than she could have dreamed. The same will be true for us.

"Do whatever he tells you" (John 2:5). Mary knew when her son was ready for his first public miracle so she gently nudged him when he hesitated.

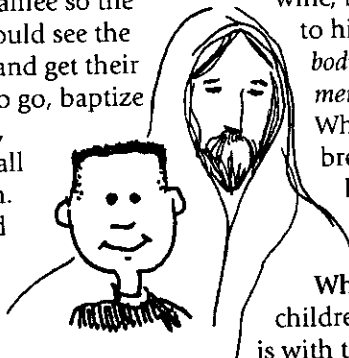
We, too, can show confidence in our children's competence and encourage them to reveal their strengths when they hesitate to believe in themselves.

Scripture LESSON

Matthew 28:16-20, "I will be with you always."

Jesus appeared to the Apostles on the mountain-top in Galilee so the crowd with them could see the Resurrected Christ and get their final instructions: to go, baptize and make disciples, and to teach them all he had taught them. Jesus also promised his disciples, and us, that he will be with us always.

Because Jesus is God, he is present everywhere. However, we encounter him in a special way in the Sacraments, especially in Holy Communion. At



the Last Supper, Jesus took bread and wine, blessed them and gave them to his disciples, saying *"This is my body...this is my blood ... Do this in memory of me"* (Luke 22:19-20). When the priest prays over the bread and wine at Mass, they become Jesus' Body and Blood. This is how Jesus keeps his promise to be with us always.

What can a parent do? Remind children that Jesus loves them and is with them everywhere, especially in the Sacraments. Tell them that in every Catholic church where the Eucharist is kept, Jesus is really present, waiting to spend time with them.

Feasts & Celebrations

May 1 – St. Joseph the Worker (1st century). Entrusted with the care of the Blessed Mother and Jesus, Joseph was a carpenter dedicated to his family and obedient to God.

May 23 – Pentecost (1st century). Today, we celebrate the birthday of the Church, when the Holy Spirit was given to the Apostles, following the Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus.

May 27 – St. Augustine of Canterbury (604). Despite mistakes and failures, Augustine persevered as a missionary in rough and dangerous times in England. Wisely, he purified

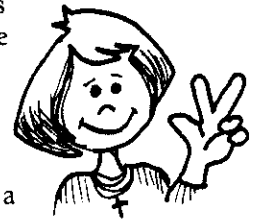
and retained local customs into Christian rites. His efforts would eventually bear fruit in the conversion of England after his death.

May 30 – St. Joan of Arc (1431). The patron saint of France, St. Joan was inspired by God in a vision to lead the French to victory during the Hundred Year's War against England. Her troops successfully freed Orléans from the English. She was captured, sold to the English, and falsely accused of sorcery. She was canonized in 1920.



Parent TALK

My eleven-year-old-daughter, Kara, has two best friends at school whom she has known since first grade. They were all on the same soccer team.



This year there was a new girl in their class. Harlow transferred from another school and didn't know anyone. I suggested that Kara invite her over when she and her friends got together on Saturday.

"But Mom, all she does is read history books," Kara complained. "I'll bet she doesn't even know how to play soccer!" I urged Kara to give her a chance. I asked her to think about how Harlow must feel having left all her other friends behind. Reluctantly, she agreed.

To her surprise, Harlow could play soccer but needed help improving her passing. The girls helped her and played the whole afternoon, alternating between soccer, videogames, and board games. They had a great time! When Harlow left, she promised to invite her new friends to her house next time.

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