

Growing in FAITH™

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

July 2007

One Minute Meditations

Room for God

"Make room therefore for Christ, and refuse entrance to all others.

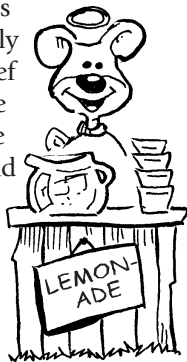
When you have Christ, you are rich and have need of (nothing) else."
Thomas A Kempis.

Give love

One way to give thanks to God for all the gifts he has bestowed on you is to work for the poor and vulnerable. Sharing your gifts with those less fortunate is how God intends you to use what he gives you. "Much will be required of the person entrusted with much, and still more will be demanded of the person entrusted with more" (Luke 12:48).

Say, "Amen!"

The proper form when receiving Communion is to reply "Amen" when the Eucharistic minister raises the bread or wine and pronounces it, "The Body (or Blood) of Christ." By responding this way, you openly state your belief in the presence of Christ in the Eucharistic bread and wine, as well as in his Body, the Church.



Use the Bible well

There's a saying, "Bibles that are falling apart usually belong to people who aren't." The Church wants us to read the Bible daily because it contains everything we need to know to live a full, Christian life. Try these ideas to use your Bible well.

Choose the right version. We hear the New American Bible during Mass but any of the approved Catholic translations will do. Most important is having a modern edition that you can understand. If you need advice, ask your pastor or priest.

Use the aids. The Bible contains customs and terms that are foreign to us. Read the introductions and footnotes for

helpful explanations.

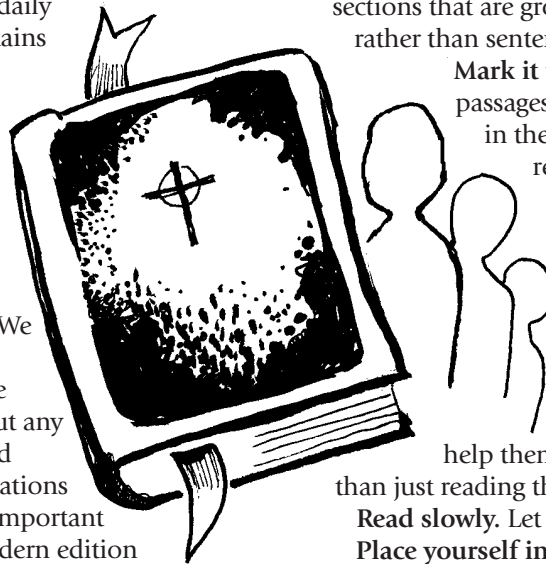
Focus on passages. The Bible will make more sense if you read the sections that are grouped together rather than sentence by sentence.

Mark it up. Underline passages and make notes in the margins as you read to make your book more useful.

Read aloud. The Bible began as an oral tradition. Hearing the passages may help them become clearer than just reading them.

Read slowly. Let the words sink in. **Place yourself in the scene.** What would you do? How would you react?

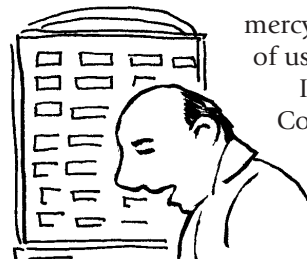
Put it to use. What you read in the Bible will help you find strength to meet the challenges of life. Don't just read it. Live it.



Why Do Catholics Do That?

Why do Catholics have to go to Confession?

The Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession) is a personal encounter with Jesus through the priest. The Church's precept to receive the sacrament at least once a year is a reminder to us of the infinite



mercy God makes available to each of us.

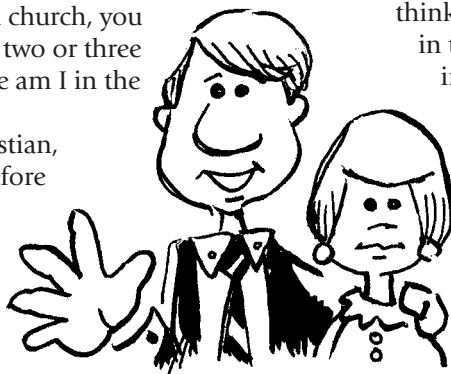
If no grave sin is committed, Confession is not required. But even venial sin strains our relationship with God. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is a joyful reunion with Christ that the Church wants for us.

5 reasons to go to Mass every Sunday

Increase the power of your prayers. In church, you get to pray directly to Jesus. "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matthew 18:20).

Claim your right. As a baptized Christian, you have the right to put your needs before Jesus and to offer your gifts to the Creator.

Find something new. You can always find at least one idea within the Mass that makes sense, seems possible, practical, intriguing, or worth



thinking about in terms of your own life. Look for it in the readings, the Gospel, the homily, the intercessions, or the Eucharistic prayers.

It's easy evangelization. Your presence in church tells others that you consider your faith important.

Pray like the best. Most of the words of the Mass address God in tones and phrases that are more beautiful than we could come up with on our own.

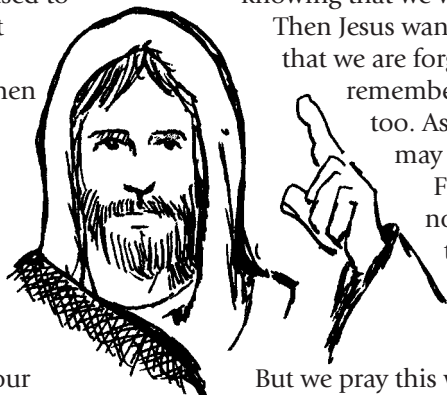
Tune in to the words, especially the Eucharistic prayer, and make them your own.

from Scripture

Luke 11:1-13, Our Father

The disciples were used to formal Old Testament prayer rituals, and expected new ones when they asked Jesus to teach them to pray. He surprised them by introducing the "Our Father," a very intimate and informal prayer.

Jesus showed the disciples that God is our Father and we should talk to him as intimately as we would our own fathers. When we remember that God knows us and loves us, we can confidently ask for what we need



knowing that we will get it.

Then Jesus wanted us to be mindful that we are forgiven so that we remember to forgive others, too. As we forgive, so we may be forgiven.

Finally, we ask God not to give us more than we can endure.

Of course God knows our strength better than we do.

But we pray this way to remind us that he will always be with us in our trials. Jesus showed us that it's not enough to say, "God knows what I need, I don't have to pray." We are the ones who benefit from prayer.

Q & A I have been diagnosed with a serious illness. Is there a special prayer for healing?

Jesus knew that sickness can bring misery and isolation, and he dedicated much of his ministry to healing every kind of illness – physical or spiritual.

He wanted us to see in his healing ministry God's saving power and concern for his children.



The Church continues Jesus' concern for the sick in the Sacrament of the

Anointing of the Sick. It is administered by a priest to a baptized person who may be in danger of death because of illness or old age, through prayer and the anointing of the body with special oil. The effects of the sacrament include a special grace of healing and comfort, and the forgiving of the person's sins.

Anyone baptized Catholic, regardless of age, can receive the sacrament if his or her health is seriously impaired. It can also be administered before surgery and can be received more than once if the original illness gets worse or if another serious sickness is diagnosed. Please see your pastor or parish priest to receive this important Sacrament.

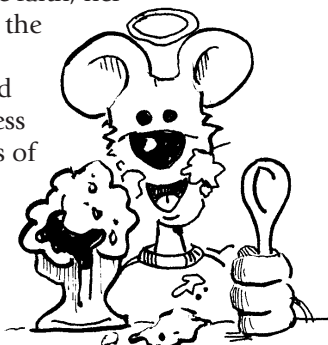
Feasts & Celebrations

July 2 - St. Thomas (1st century). Known as "doubting Thomas" for requesting proof of the Resurrection, he made a beautiful profession of faith when he received proof, "My Lord and My God" (John 20:28). Tradition says that Thomas evangelized the Parthians, Medes, and Persians and ultimately reached India. He was martyred at Calamine.

July 25 - St. James (42). When Jesus called, St. James and his brother left their father in a fishing boat on the Sea of Galilee and followed. St. James was one of three apostles to witness Jesus'

transfiguration, the raising of Jairus' daughter, and the agony in Gethsemane. St. James was the first apostle to be martyred.

July 26 - St. Joachim and St. Anne (?). Little is known about Jesus' grandparents, but we know Mary was raised in a devout home. Her unshakeable faith, her devotion to the laws of her religion, and her steadiness in moments of crisis indicate the values with which she was raised.



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