

Growing in FAITH™

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

October 2008

Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Parish

(410) 686-4972

One Minute Meditations

God is with us

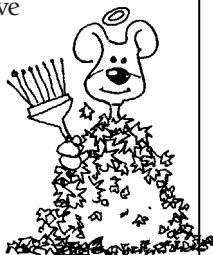
Remember that God is the creator of the universe, the one who made everything from nothing. Still, he is not a remote, uninvolved God. Nor is he an unforgiving judge waiting for us to make a misstep. Rather, God is our Father who loves us more than we could ask to be loved. He is with us and near us always.

God's temple

St. Paul teaches that "your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own." We know that it is bad for our bodies if we overeat or abuse drugs or alcohol. Yet, we don't always realize the harm that comes from watching movies and television shows with bad language or sexual humor, or listening to music with profane lyrics. God's temple deserves better than that. "Therefore, glorify God in your body" (1 Corinthians 6:19-20).

Bring Christ's love

All of Jesus' disciples have the ability to act on his behalf to bring his love and peace to others. Look for the chance to act on Jesus' behalf each day.



Forgive yourself. God does.

It can be easier to forgive others than it is to forgive ourselves when we sin. Unless we do, however, we get stuck in the past. Moving on means believing in God's forgiveness. Here's how:

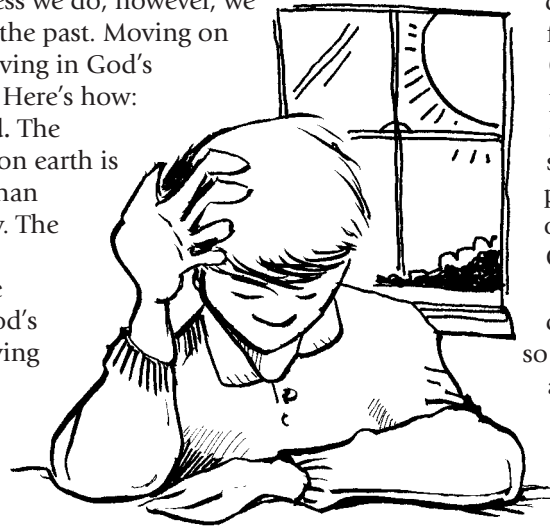
Trust God. The greatest sin on earth is not bigger than God's mercy. The more mercy required the greater is God's glory. Forgiving ourselves means believing that God's promise of forgiveness is true. "Your faith has saved you; go in peace" (Luke 7:48). If God forgives us, we should forgive ourselves.

Confess. No matter what you have done, a priest is ready to extend God's forgiveness to you in the Sacrament of

Reconciliation. Don't worry that you may shock the priest with your confession. After a few years of hearing Confessions, your priest has heard it all. Confess your sins, do your penance, and then open yourself up to God's grace.

Accept. Nothing can change the past, so we have to learn to accept what we did and move on.

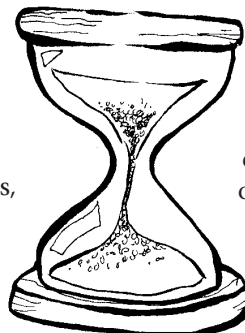
Acceptance purifies the soul, and brings relief to the wounded spirit. "The forgiven penitent is reconciled with himself in his inmost being, where he regains his own true identity...he is reconciled with the Church, with himself, and with all creation," (Pope John Paul II, RP 31, 5).



Why Do Catholics Do That?

Why do Catholics pray the Liturgy of the Hours?

The Liturgy of the Hours is a cycle of prayer spread over the entire day. This prayer form began in monasteries and was later adopted by diocesan priests, deacons, and members of other religious communities. Now, many lay people pray



the Liturgy of the Hours. The Bible's 150 psalms, together with Old Testament and New Testament canticles, are complemented by other Scripture readings, reflections, and periods of silence. It is one way of affirming that all time belongs to God.

Love your neighbor AND yourself

"You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Matthew 22:39) commands us to treat other people with love. In truth, we can only love our neighbor to the extent that we love ourselves. Do you have trouble believing that you deserve love? Consider this:

God doesn't make mistakes. By nature he is perfect and can't make anything bad. God created each of us and *"looked at everything he had made, and he found it very good"* (Genesis 1:31). That means you, too.



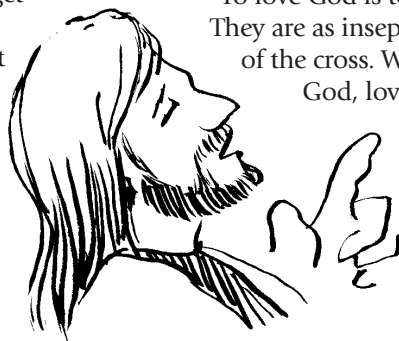
Look with God's eyes. Don't chase after other people's approval. Too much of how we see ourselves depends upon how others see us. God loves us as we are and considers us precious. *"See, upon the palms of my hands I have written your name"* (Isaiah 49:16).

Love with God's heart. Spend time with Jesus by praying, reading Scripture, and attending Mass. When you let yourself be filled up with Jesus' love, you will find yourself so full that love will overflow to those around you – just like he commanded.

from Scripture

Matthew 22:34-40. Jesus has the right answers.

In their first meeting with Jesus, the Pharisees wanted to get him to say something illegal, something against Jewish law. Then he could be arrested and silenced. The lawyer they sent knew that there were 613 commands in the Jewish law and generations of Jews had debated fruitlessly about which was the most important.



He was pretending to ask Jesus' opinion. Jesus silenced them all by saying everything starts and ends with love – love of God and love of each other. Even

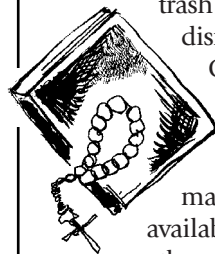
the Pharisees couldn't argue with that. To love God is to love one another. They are as inseparable as the beams of the cross. While it is easy to love God, loving others is more difficult.

But true love of neighbor is measured by how we treat those who are neither family nor friends. It means including people when the natural inclination is to exclude or avoid them. Jesus loved prostitutes, thieves, lepers, even his political enemies. This is how God loves and he calls us to do no less.

Q & A

What is the proper way to dispose of blessed objects that are no longer needed?

Rosaries, bibles, religious medals, and other items that have been blessed have been consecrated for God's use. As such, they must be treated with reverence. Simply throwing a blessed object in the trash makes it susceptible to disrespect or mistreatment.



Consider these suggestions for reverently disposing of blessed objects.

Try recycling. Consider making unneeded items available to someone who can use them. There may be someone in your parish who gives gently used rosaries to people in nursing homes or sends them to members of the armed forces serving overseas, for example. Many parishes have ministries that repair and recycle broken rosaries. Check with your rectory or parish office to find out.

Is it a Bible or other religious book? Consider donating it to your parish or local Catholic gift shop. Someone else may be able to use it.

If the religious item is broken and no longer usable, a common reverent practice is to burn or bury it. That keeps something sacred from being misused or treated with disrespect.

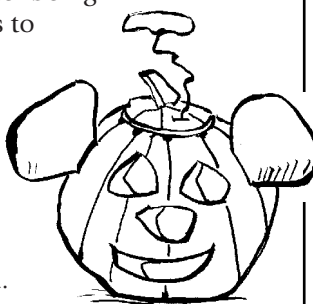
Feasts & Celebrations

Oct. 15 - St. Teresa of Avila (1583). Founder of a strict religious order whose nuns wore rough brown habits and sandals instead of shoes. St. Teresa founded more than 17 convents of Discalced Carmelites and helped reform the Carmelite friars.

Oct. 19 - Saint John de Brébeuf and Saint Isaac Jogues and their companions (1652). Six Jesuits and two laymen became missionaries to Native American tribes in North America. Unwelcome and distrusted, they spent more than 20 years in a difficult ministry. St. John de Brébeuf

won the Iroquois' respect by his valor in death. St. Isaac Jogues escaped only to return to his ministry but was also murdered.

Oct. 28 - Saint Simon and Saint Jude (1st century). St. Simon was a Zealot – Jews who believed that the Messiah would free them from political oppression. St. Jude was a fisherman. After being called by Jesus to be apostles, they ended up in Persia where they evangelized until they were martyred.



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