

Growing in FAITH

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

October 2003

One Minute Meditations

The "real presence" at Mass

Jesus is present in the Eucharist at Mass. He is present in the priest who offers the Mass. He is present in the readings, since he is the one who speaks to us through Scripture. And he is in the assembly, for "where two or three are gathered together in my name there am I in the midst of them" (Mt 8:20).

St. Paul counsels patience

"Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience, bearing with one another and forgiving one another, if one has a grievance against another; as the Lord has forgiven you, so must you also do" (Colossians 3:12-13).

Silence of the heart

"In the silence of the heart God speaks. If you face God in prayer and silence, God will speak to you. Souls of prayer are souls of great silence." Mother Teresa of Calcutta



Good habits bring peace and joy

Bad habits come between us and God and rob us of the peace and joy he wants us to have. The best way to overcome bad habits is to trade them for good ones. Consider these ideas for overcoming behaviors that keep us from God.

Worry. When things don't go your way, trust in God's will and ask for help to bear it patiently. True peace only comes to those who don't waste time or effort on things they can't change.

Criticism. The only acceptable reason to point out another's faults is to help the guilty party grow in holiness. Don't encourage back-biting

by joining in or listening to it. Instead, change the subject as tactfully as possible.

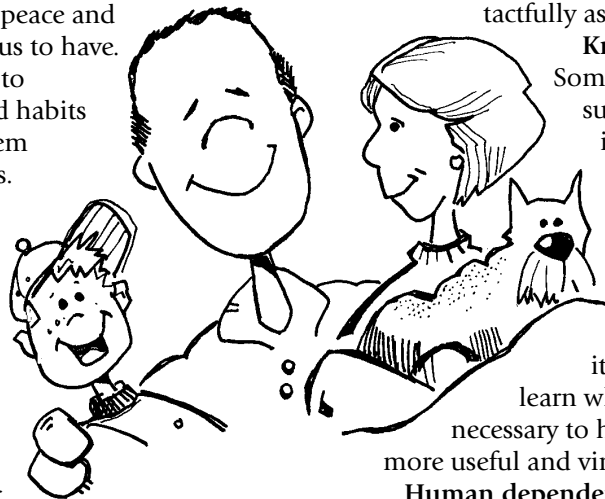
Knowing-it-all.

Some people have such a desire to impress others that they try to have all the answers. But God doesn't intend for us to know it all. Rather,

learn whatever is necessary to help you live a more useful and virtuous life.

Human dependence. Depending too much on other people will lead to disappointment. Only God can answer all your needs. Make God your first stop when you need help, instead of your last resort.

Our daily lives are witnesses of just how much we love Jesus. A constant, genuine effort toward holiness can prove our love for Christ.



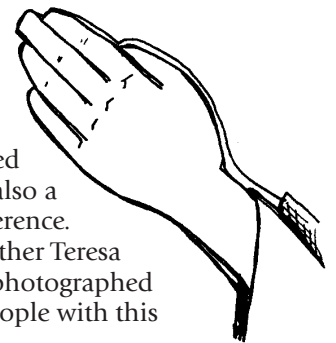
Why Do Catholics Do That?

The custom of folding our hands comes from ninth century Europe where folded hands symbolized obedience by those subordinate to the lord or king. This gesture was also used by priests to show respect to bishops. The faithful adopted it to signify obedience to God's will.

In some cultures today, such as India

Why do we fold our hands when we pray?

and other parts of Asia, clasped hands are also a sign of reverence. In fact, Mother Teresa was often photographed greeting people with this gesture.



God thinks we're way cool

Teenagers aren't the only ones who care whether they are liked. Many of us still worry about how we come across to other people. While it is only human to want to be liked, it's important to remember that God always thinks we're cool.

His love never changes. Standards set by humans change over time. Someone considered "in" today, can be "out" in no time. God's love is unchanging and unending.



Friends come and go. Sooner or later, you have to leave your friends or they leave you. But Jesus said, "... *behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age*" (Matthew 28:20). God never leaves.

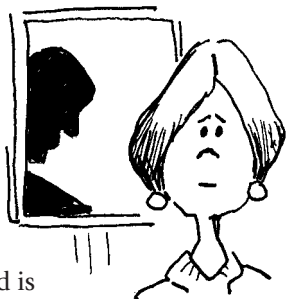
He loves us for who we really are.

There's nothing God doesn't know about us, and he adores us anyway. Go figure.

If God likes you, others will, too. To please God we have to fill ourselves with love for him and other people, and that makes us even nicer to be around. Pass it on.

Q Why do I have to confess my sins to a priest? & Can't I just go straight to God? A

Admitting to sin is hard - especially when admitting it to someone else. Certainly God knows when we are sorry for our sins and is eager to forgive us. But it's not that simple.



So it is important that we acknowledge our faults, change our behavior, and try to make amends. The benefit of confessing to a priest in the Sacrament of Reconciliation is that we are forgiven by those we hurt. Jesus has empowered the priest to convey God's forgiveness (see John 20:22b-23). And by helping us perform penance, the priest helps us reconcile with our Church community.

Sin is not a private act. In fact, sin occurs when we put ourselves first - before God or anyone else. Sometimes we are the victims of our sins, but very often someone else gets hurt. And that weakens the entire Body of Christ.

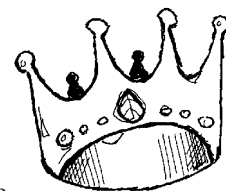
But the best part of confessing to a priest is that while we may know that God forgives us, hearing the priest say it helps it really hit home.

from Scripture

Mark 10:35-45;
James and John miss the point.

The disciples understood that once they arrived in Jerusalem, Jesus would come into glory. They assumed that meant he would become king. James and John wanted to make sure that their places were secure beforehand. It was customary for a king to seat the most prominent citizen on his right and the one who ranked just below on his left. That's what the brothers asked from Jesus.

Instead, Jesus taught them that greatness in the kingdom of God doesn't mean a life of privilege but one



of service. While other leaders lord it over their subjects, Jesus' followers must serve theirs. Jesus uses himself - his giving of his life for others - as the model for service. And he let the brothers know that the kind of glory they crave comes at a great cost - one which they will have to share.

As modern disciples, we are also called to serve and to put others' needs before our own. That's one way we can secure our own share of Jesus' glory.

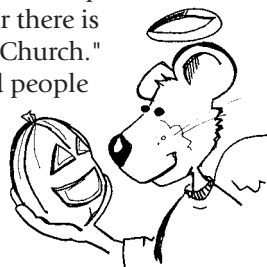
Feasts & Celebrations

October 7 - Our Lady of the Rosary (1571). Pope Pius V created this feast in thanksgiving to Our Lady of Victory who helped the Christians defeat the Ottoman Turks. Since it was believed that they won after praying the Rosary, the feast was renamed Our Lady of the Rosary by Pope Gregory XIII.

October 15 - St. Teresa of Avila (1583). A lively, outgoing girl seems an unlikely foundress of a strict order whose nuns wore rough brown habits and sandals instead of shoes. Yet St. Teresa overcame her natural fondness

for society and founded more than 17 convents of Discalced Carmelites and helped reform the Carmelite friars.

October 17 - St. Ignatius of Antioch (1st century). Successor to St. Peter as the second bishop of Antioch, St. Ignatius encouraged obedience to bishops all over the world saying, "Wherever the bishop is, there let the people be, for there is the Catholic Church." He reminded people that Jesus is present in the Church and in one another.



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