

Growing in FAITH

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

June 2003

One Minute Meditations

God's love is free

Ever notice when reading the Gospels that Jesus doesn't get mad at sinners, he only gets mad at people who don't think they're sinners? There's nothing we can do that will keep God from loving us. We can't earn his love and we can't lose it. It's free for our taking. We just need to love him back.

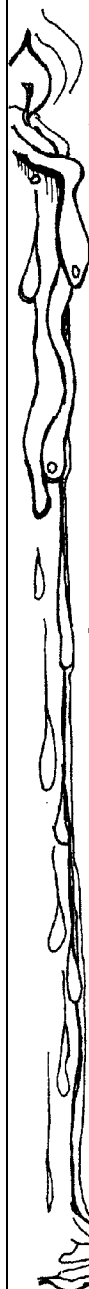
The beauty of speech

Those of us who know and love God must be his voice in our world. We

need to speak a language of love that will bring hope and inspire others to live according to God's plan.

Another reason to forgive

Forgiving makes the forgiver feel better. Peace and healing replace jangled nerves and angry feelings. It takes a lot out of a person to keep a grudge going. So it's only practical to make a practice of forgiveness. That energy can be used for more pleasant purposes.



Can you find the face of God?

Philosopher and theologian C.S. Lewis said to God, "So it was you all along. Everyone I ever loved, it was you. Everything decent or fine that ever happened to me, everything that made me reach out and try to be better, it was you." The face of God can be seen a hundred times every day if we look for it.

Who feeds you and quenches your thirst? When your spirits most need nourishment, God sends you a kind glance or a friendly word. Look for his face in the person who gives it.

Who clothes you? God surrounds us with beauty to help us think of him

and his love for us. Don't miss the chance to appreciate a lovely garden or a mighty tree. They come from him.

Who visits you in prison?

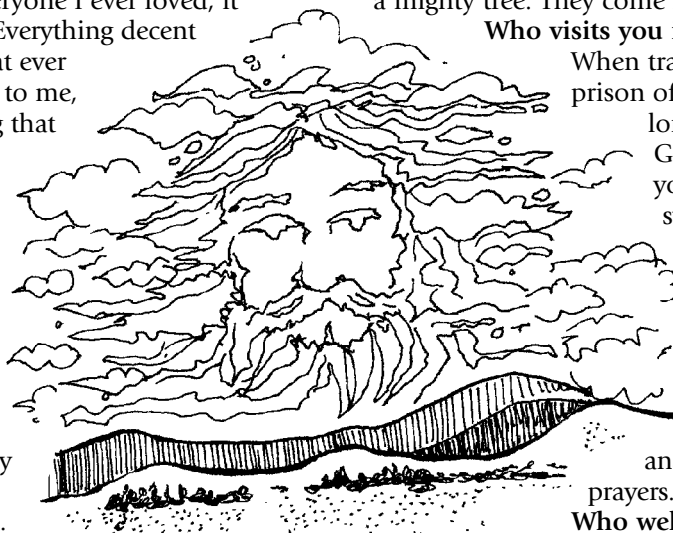
When trapped in a prison of anxiety or loneliness, God comes to you in the sympathetic friend who soothes you, or the stranger who smiles at you.

They are answers to your prayers.

Who welcomes you?

When we are on unfamiliar ground, God sends us a colleague to make us feel comfortable at work or a neighbor to help us feel more at home. That's one way he reaches out.

When you take the time to look for God's face you'll find it everywhere you are.

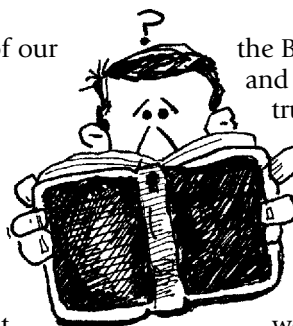


Why Do Catholics Do That ?

As a matter of fact, all of our beliefs are rooted in Scripture and we reject doctrines that aren't. However, some truths in Scripture are less obvious than others. So the Church interprets them for us.

Catholics are taught that

Why do Catholics believe things that aren't in the Bible?



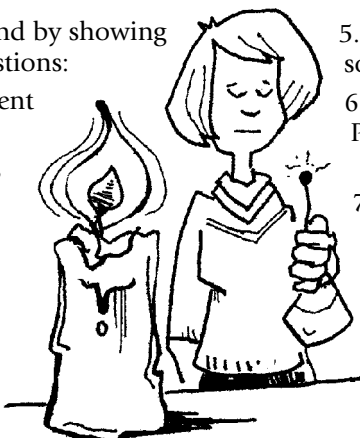
the Bible communicates faithfully and without error the saving truth that God wants us to know.

Over the years the Church - guided by the Holy Spirit - grows in knowledge of Scripture and uncovers for us truths that were previously obscure.

10 easy ways to inspire kindness

Perhaps we can inspire others to be more kind by showing kindness ourselves. Consider these suggestions:

1. **Talk to strangers**, especially people different from you. You may become a friend.
2. **Fast from unkind words**. Use your words to bless, heal, or bring peace.
3. **Let cars go in front of you in traffic**. Let someone go in front of you in line at the grocery store.
4. **If someone makes you mad**, leave her a flower anonymously each day until you are over it.



5. **Light a candle every Sunday** and pray for someone different each time.
6. **Pick up every penny you see** and put it in the Poor Box in your church. (You'll be surprised at how it adds up.)
7. **Open the door for someone**.
8. Choose a picture or an article from the newspaper and **pray for the people involved**.
9. **Put a quarter in an expired parking meter**.
10. Take someone with whom you disagree to coffee and **listen more than you talk**.

Feasts & Celebrations

June is dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The image of Jesus with his flaming heart exposed is a reminder of his intense and eternal love for us.

June 5 - St. Boniface (754). Called the Apostle of Germany, St. Boniface was a monk dedicated to spreading the Gospel in Germany. He converted many to Christianity and was instrumental in restoring dioceses in Bavaria, Thuringia, and Franconia.

June 11 - St. Barnabas (1st Century). The Apostles changed his name from Joseph to Barnabas, which

means "son of encouragement" because he sold his property and gave the much-needed funds to the Jerusalem community. He accompanied St. Paul on his first evangelical journey.

June 24 - Nativity of St. John the Baptist. The only saint whose birth and death we observe, St. John was Jesus' cousin. He baptized and prepared the people for Jesus' saving mission. He even baptized Jesus and was later executed for denouncing Herod's marriage to his sister-in-law.

 A black and white line drawing of St. John the Baptist, wearing a simple tunic and a halo, holding a lamb. The lamb is looking towards the viewer.

Q & A

Are all sins equally bad or are some worse than others?

Think of it this way ... all illnesses make your body sick. Some can kill you, while others just make you miserable for a while. All need healing.

The same can be said of sin. Some sins can cause us to lose our eternal lives while others merely delay our entry into Heaven.

The Church makes a distinction between **mortal and venial sins**. Mortal sin is a deliberate turning away from God and his laws. To be considered a mortal sin, it must be a grave or serious choice against God, and the sinner must be aware of how bad it is but choose to do it anyway.

 A black and white line drawing of a medicine bottle with a cross on the label and the letters 'Rx' on the side.

from Scripture

Matthew 28:16-20, The new evangelicals and the Holy Trinity.

When Jesus appeared to the Eleven on the mountain top in Galilee, it was so the crowd with them could witness his Resurrection and get their marching orders for the next stage of the mission. Now that they had been taught and witnessed Jesus' glory, he wanted them to teach others how to live as God's children. As his followers today, that's our mission, too.

Jesus gave his listeners three

commands: Go, make disciples of all nations, and baptize them. Baptism signifies a renewed relationship with the Father, as revealed through the Son, to be filled with the Holy Spirit - in other words, the Holy Trinity. The Trinity is a mystery most of us will never understand. Yet we don't have to understand it to believe it. And we affirm it each time we make the Sign of the Cross and say the words Jesus said, "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." We are also reminded that the Cross of Jesus is the only means by which we can follow Christ into the eternal life of the Trinity.

 A black and white line drawing of a simple wooden cross with a starburst effect behind it.

On the other hand, venial sin is falling short of our obligations to God and each other without completely turning from God. It's like loitering on the road to Heaven versus taking one that leads away from it.

The good news is that no matter how lost we get, God will always take us back through the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession).

Our Mission

To provide practical ideas that promote faithful Catholic living.

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