

# Growing in FAITH™

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

April 2011

**St. Martin of Tours Catholic Church**

Fr. John Hall

## One Minute Meditations

### Happy hope

Newspapers, television, even events in our own lives can reduce or eliminate hope. It's

important to remember to stay in touch with hope.

*"Happy is he whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the Lord his God"* (Psalm 146:5). Staying in touch with hope is staying in touch with the God who promises a brighter future.

### Necessary choice

Being a follower of Christ sometimes means standing apart from friends and neighbors when we would rather blend in. When the Israelites wanted to blend in with their neighbors and followers of Baal, Elijah said, "How long will you straddle the issue? If the Lord is God, follow him; if Baal, follow him" (1 Kings 18:21). The Israelites chose God. We must do the same.

*"He said to them, 'Do not be amazed! You seek Jesus of Nazareth, the crucified. He has been raised; he is not here'"* (Mark 16:6).



## The perfect love waits for you

It is said that in order to attract the perfect love, we have to become the perfect lover. In fact, Easter proves that God is the perfect love. All we have to do to claim this perfect love is to become better lovers ourselves.

### Be alone together.

*"Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you"* (James 4:8).

Two people in love need to be alone together so love can grow. Make time to be alone with God every day.

**Meet for frequent dinner dates.** Can you get enough of your beloved by just having dinner together on Sundays? Try to make Mass more than once a week.

**Reread his love letter.** *"I will never*

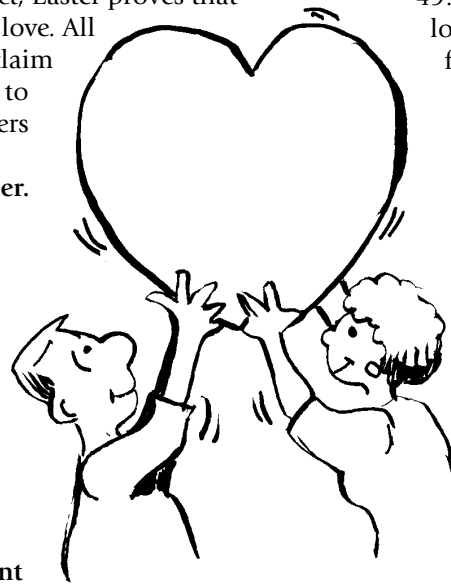
*forget you. See, upon the palms of my hands I have written your name"* (Isaiah

49:15-16). Re-reading love letters rekindles feelings of warmth between lovers. The Bible is the longest, most passionate love letter there is. Read it to find out how God really feels about you.

### Prove your love.

*"Whoever has my commandments and observes them is the one who loves me. And whoever loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and reveal*

*myself to him"* (John 14:21). Following his Commandments is the surest way we can show God how very much we want to be with him forever.



## Why Do Catholics Do That?

## Why do Catholics believe in the Devil?

Jesus spoke of the Devil, calling him a murderer, a liar, and the father of lies (John 8:44). In fact, the Devil was once the angel Lucifer.

Revelation 12:3-9 tells of a great battle in which Lucifer, who opposed the will of God,

was defeated by the archangel Michael. Lucifer and his angel-followers were cast into hell and became known as devils or demons. The two thirds of the angels who supported St. Michael went to Heaven and remained angels.



# What will you keep beyond Easter?

A benefit of Lent is that helps us to look at our lives, jettison what is bad, and keep what is good beyond the celebration of Easter. What will you keep beyond Easter?

**Fasting?** Skipping a meal and spending the time in prayer is a great way to prepare for an important decision or a critical task we are about to take on. It's a way of saying, "God's will be done."

**Doing more with less?** The simplicity of Lent reminds us of how much we have and how little



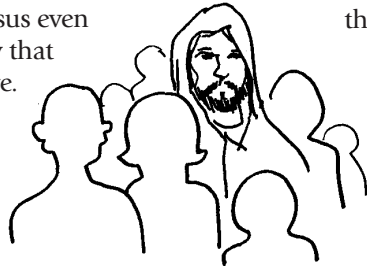
we really need. Keep going through the closets and bookshelves of your life and give away what you don't absolutely need.

**Thinking of others?** American Catholics have more than any Catholics in the world today. When we feel hunger or can't buy everything we want, we can think of our brothers and sisters around the world who are hungry or needy all the time. Being Catholic unites us to the one Body of Christ no matter where we are.

## from Scripture

### Luke 24:13-35, Jesus hides in plain sight

Jesus was so close to Cleopas and his companion on the road to Emmaus, he could have tripped them. Yet neither man recognized him. Jesus even gave clues to his identity that he quoted from Scripture. The men were too caught up in the pain and disappointment of the crucifixion. Only when he broke bread with them did they see Jesus for who he was. Then he was gone from their sight.



Both Cleopas and his friend had formed such clear ideas of what they wanted Jesus to be that they failed to see

him for who he was. They expected a warrior king and almost missed the universal savior. Aren't we like that, too? Don't we have such expectations of what we want God to be that we miss who he really is?

Christ's presence in our lives isn't revealed so much by the song of angels as the whisper of a prayer. Taking the time to be alone with God, to read Scripture, and seek him in the people around us will help us uncover Christ's presence everywhere.

## Q & A Is it a sin to be angry?

Anger in itself isn't a sin, but if we're not careful, anger can lead to sin.



Actions that we take when we are angry can be sinful. We can act in anger to be hurtful, violent, or impulsive, for example. In fact, it can be hard to know the right action to take when we are angry.

*"Know this, my dear brothers: everyone should be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath, for the wrath of a man does not accomplish the righteousness of God"* (James 1:19-21).

There are very few Gospel accounts of Jesus getting angry. More often than not, he thought before he spoke and kept his cool. On one occasion, however, Jesus got angry when he saw people misusing the temple in Jerusalem for buying and selling instead of for worship. In that case, Jesus became angry because of the disrespect shown to his Father and to his Father's house. His anger did not prevent him from taking proper action to "accomplish the righteousness of God."

## Feasts & Celebrations

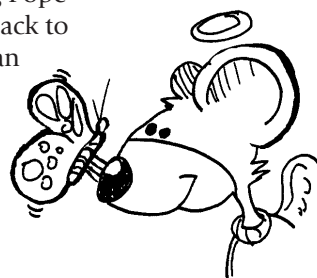
**April 21 - St. Anselm (1109).** A native of Italy, St. Anselm became a monk in France and reluctantly became bishop of Canterbury, England. He was exiled for rebuffing the king's interference in Church matters.

**April 25 - St. Mark (1st century).** St. Mark wrote the second Gospel largely based on St. Peter's perspective. Mark accompanied Sts. Paul and Barnabas (Mark's cousin) on their missionary journey through the island of Cyprus and is credited with founding the Church of Alexandria.

**April 24 - Easter.** The feasts of feasts

when we commemorate Christ's Resurrection from the dead.

**April 29 - St. Catherine of Siena (1380).** A mystic from a young age, St. Catherine had regular conversations with Jesus. At sixteen years old, she joined the Third Order of St. Dominic and served the poor. Although uneducated, she dictated many books on the Catholic faith. She is credited with coaxing Pope Gregory XI back to Rome from an easy life in France. This month we celebrate the Holy Eucharist.



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