

# Growing in FAITH™

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

May 2011

St. Martin of Tours Catholic Church

Fr. John Hall

## One Minute Meditations

### A human heart

Although we can't see his face, Jesus isn't remote or distant "For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has similarly been tested in every way, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15-16). Knowing this can give us confidence to approach him in prayer.

### Look different

No one wants to be taken advantage of or to appear weak. Yet as Christians, we have to be the ones to make peace. "Do not repay anyone evil for evil ... If possible, on your part, live at peace with all" (Romans 12:17-18). Our solutions must be biblical, not societal.

### Be happy

Instead of worrying, trust God. "Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God. Then the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:6-7).



## Mary brings us to her Son

Mary's life on Earth was dedicated to bringing the Savior to humanity. Now that she is in Heaven, she continues to bring our concerns to her Son. Praying the "Hail Mary" is a wonderful way to honor our Heavenly Mother.

**Hail Mary, full of grace:** Conceived without Original Sin, Mary's will and intellect were predisposed to holiness. Grace helped her to live a difficult life without sinning.

**The Lord is with thee. Blessed are thou among women:** Mary was honored to be chosen as Jesus' mother.

**Blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.** Mary knew how great Jesus would be but she also knew what the prophets wrote about how he would suffer and

die. As his mother, she wanted to share his joy and his sorrow.

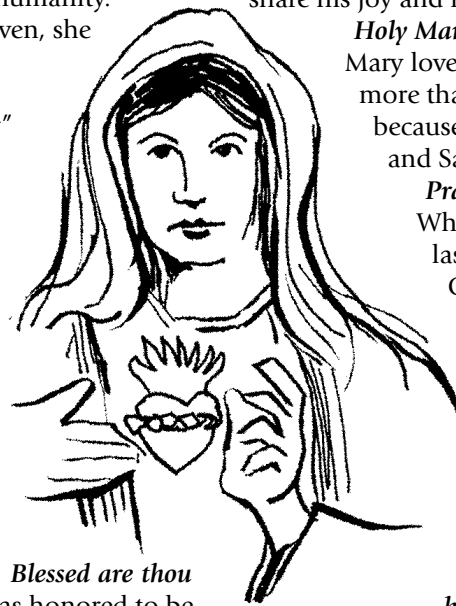
**Holy Mary, Mother of God.** Mary loved her child even more than most parents because he was her Lord and Savior, too.

**Pray for us sinners.** When Jesus took his last breaths on the Cross, Mary's job of being Mother of the Savior broadened to becoming Mother of the world. Now she cares for us.

**Now and at the hour of death.** On

Earth, Mary brought her Son to us. Now she brings us to the heart of her Son. She prays for us always because that's what a mother does.

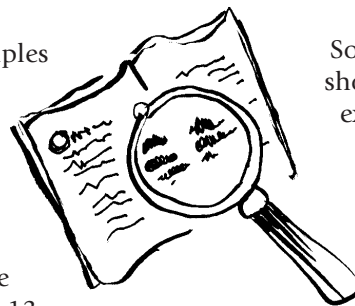
**Amen.**



## Why Do Catholics Do That?

## Why is our "Our Father" different than the Protestant version?

In teaching the disciples to pray, Jesus used the basic wording that became the prayer we pray during Mass and in other devotions. Two very similar versions can be found in Matthew 6:9-13 and Luke 11:2-4.



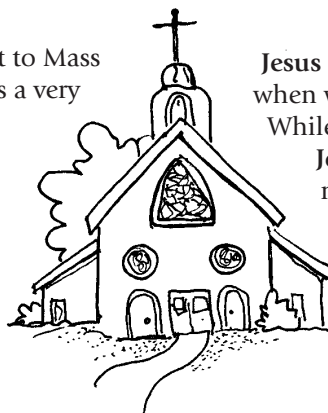
Some Protestants add a short, hymn-like verse which exalts the glory of God, "For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory now and forever." Such a verse is called a doxology. However, it isn't found in Scripture

so we don't use it.

## What's so special about Mass this Sunday?

Life gets so busy that it can be hard to get to Mass every Sunday. The good news is that there is a very compelling reason to attend Mass this very weekend. **Jesus is coming to your church.**

**Jesus will be there in the flesh just like he always is whenever Mass is celebrated.** This isn't a symbolic visit. He's not just being represented by the priest or present in those around you. While that is true, there's more.



**Jesus will be there in the flesh.** He's not just remembered when we sing the songs, read Scripture, or pray the prayers. While that is true, there's more.

**Jesus will be there in the flesh.** He wasn't speaking metaphorically when he said, *"Do this in remembrance of me"* (Luke 22:19). That was a direct instruction.

Jesus wants us to go to Mass every weekend without fail. And when Jesus tells us to do something, it's best to do it. His Father said to do it, too (Exodus 20:8). And that's enough.

### from Scripture

**John 14:15-21;  
I will not leave you.**

In this, one of his farewell speeches to his disciples, Jesus was laying the foundation for them to become his Church. He was preparing them to become the people who brought him to the rest of the world.

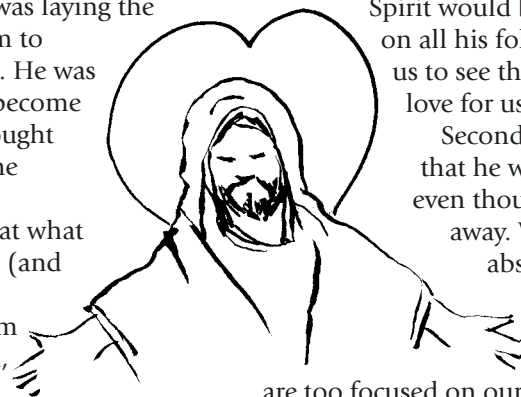
But Jesus knew that what he was asking them (and us) to do would be difficult without him there to guide them, so he made two powerful promises.

First, he promised to send an Advocate – the Holy Spirit – who would always

be with us. The gift of the Holy Spirit would be poured out on all his followers and help us to see the truth of God's love for us.

Second, he promised that he wouldn't leave us even though he was going away. When we are absorbed by the world, we can't "see" Jesus because we

are too focused on ourselves. Yet, when we live our love for God by obeying his commandments and loving others, we show Jesus to the world.



### Q Does Original & Sin mean anything to us?

When God created Adam and Eve, he gave them an inclination to holiness so that they would be suited for life in the Garden of Eden.



When they disobeyed him and ate from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, they committed the first sin (called "Original Sin"). They changed their nature forever and lost that special life of grace. Sin infected their souls and was passed down to their descendants -- us.

Thanks to Original Sin, we wage a battle with our own passions and emotions to keep them under control. It's why we can sometimes have trouble thinking clearly when we are under stress. Or, it's why we can lack resolve or perseverance. *"The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak"* (Matthew 26:41). Chalk it up to concupiscence: "Human appetites or desires which remain disordered due to the temporal consequences of Original Sin, which remain even after Baptism, and which produce an inclination to sin" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*).

If it weren't for Original Sin, we wouldn't have to fight our own natures to achieve holiness.

### Feasts & Celebrations

In May we celebrate our mothers and honor the mother of all, the Blessed Virgin Mary. Three ways to grow closer to Mary include praying to her, honoring her feast days, and praising her to others.

**May 1 – St. Joseph the Worker.** Entrusted with the care of the Blessed Mother and Jesus, Joseph was a carpenter dedicated to his family and obedient to God.

**May 13 – Our Lady of Fatima (1917).** The Blessed Virgin Mary appeared to three children near Fatima, Portugal. Mary asked the

children to pray the rosary for world peace, for the end of World War I, for sinners and for the conversion of Russia.

**May 22 – St. Rita of Cascia (1457).** Unwillingly married off to a cruel husband at the age of twelve, St. Rita spent eighteen unhappy years before being widowed. She became an Augustinian nun and was known for her devotion to prayer and charity.



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