

Growing in FAITH™

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

September 2011

St. Martin of Tours Catholic Church

Fr. John Hall

One Minute Meditations

Mysteries of faith

Legend says that St. Augustine was walking along a beach puzzling the mystery of the Holy Trinity when he spotted a boy filling a bucket from the ocean and emptying it into a hole. The boy said he was trying to fit the ocean into the hole. St. Augustine cried, "But you can never do that!" The boy replied, "And neither can you understand the Holy Trinity," and vanished.

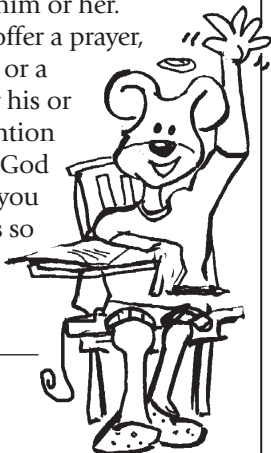
Some things we just have to take on faith.

Another reason to attend Sunday Mass

Masses have intentions for which the Mass is offered. By attending Mass, we help those people or causes - including the priest who offers the Mass.

Bless, don't curse

When you are angry at someone else, don't judge or criticize him or her. Instead offer a prayer, a Rosary or a Mass for his or her intention and ask God to bless you both. It's so much more effective.



Welcome, don't fear death

Death can be a fearful unknown but Christians know that it is a doorway that leads to something wonderful. Still, the idea of dying and being judged can produce anxiety in even the strongest Christian, but consider taking steps like these to stay out of trouble and reduce that anxiety.

Pray daily. Talking to God each day, reading Scripture, and spending time in prayer is the best way to nurture a personal relationship with him. When we know God intimately and personally, we trust him and know to rely on his justice.

Go to Confession weekly. The Precepts of the Catholic Church require Catholics to attend the Sacrament of Reconciliation

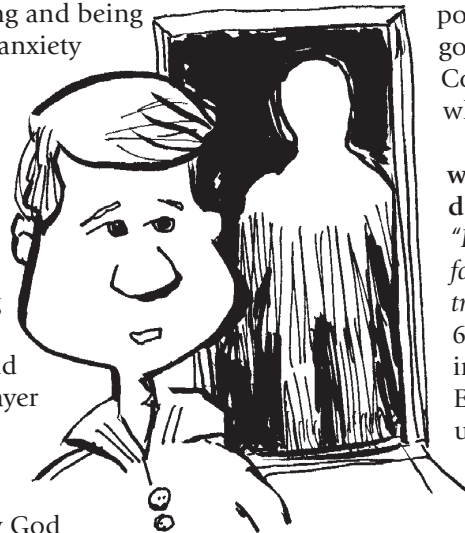
(Confession) at least once a year or when aware of serious sin. However, to stay as close to a state of grace as possible, consider going weekly.

Confess all sins of which you are aware.

Attend Mass weekly or even daily, if possible.

"For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink" (John 6:55). Jesus initiated the Eucharist to fortify us against the temptations and sin of this world.

Show love. Do as Jesus asked to show love for others and care for the poor and needy. *"Above all, let your love for one another be intense, because love covers a multitude of sins"* (1 Peter 4:8).



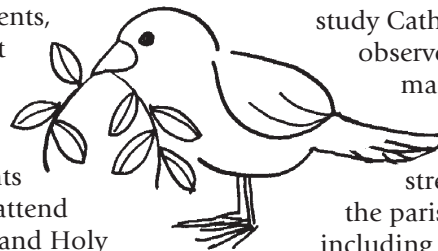
Why Do Catholics Do That?

The Catholic Church has issued commandments, called Precepts, that act as the principal obligations of every Catholic.

These requirements direct Catholics to attend Mass every Sunday and Holy Day, to receive Communion annually, to attend

What are the Precepts of the Church?

Confession at least once annually, to study Catholic teaching, to observe the Church's marriage laws, to give children religious training, to strengthen and support the parish community, including parish priests and the Pope, to do penance and to join in the missionary spirit of the Church.

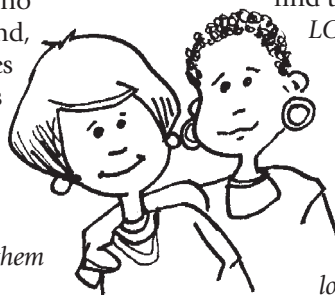


What does it take to be a good friend?

It has been said that a good friend is someone who knows you well and likes you anyway. A good friend, however, is also a good person. The Church teaches that there are four virtues – called Cardinal Virtues – necessary in order to live a moral life. These virtues are necessary in order to be a good friend, too.

Fairness. Being fair means treating friends with respect. *“Do to others whatever you would have them do to you”* (Matthew 7:12).

Wisdom. When they disagree, friends work together to



find the right solution. *“Straight are the paths of the LORD, in them the just walk”* (Hosea 14:10).

Courage. Standing up for what is right is difficult, but standing up to a friend is harder still. *“Be on your guard, stand firm in the faith, be courageous, be strong”* (1 Corinthians 16:13).

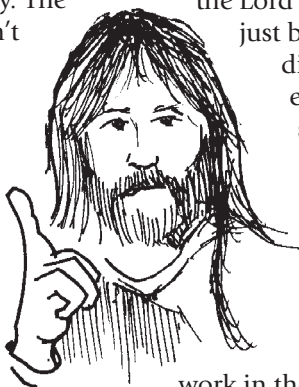
Self-Control. Greed and selfishness can destroy relationships. Self-control helps overcome these temptations. *“Love is patient, love is kind. It is not jealous ... it does not seek its own interests”* (1 Corinthians 13:4-5).

from Scripture

Matthew 21:28-32, How can I gain salvation?

Jesus tells of the man who sent two sons to the vineyard to work. The first said, “No,” but went anyway. The second said, “Yes,” but didn’t go. Jesus asked which son did as the father asked.

The father in the parable is God. The first son represents the Jewish religious leaders. They heard God but chose to follow rules rather than change their hearts. The second son represents the outcasts of society. They said no to God by their life styles, but then repented of their sins.



If I say, “Yes, God, I believe in you,” that’s not enough. If I presume that the Lord will take me into heaven just because I say that, I’ll be disappointed. Words are not enough. True obedience is shown through actions. When we realize we are in a state of sin, we have two options. We can say we’re sorry, or we can show we’re sorry.

How can we show God we repent? We can go to work in the vineyard, at least figuratively. Our work involves living as Jesus taught us.

Q & A What happened to meatless Fridays?

In 1966, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) published Complementary Norms on Penance and Abstinence which released U.S. Catholics from a strict abstinence from meat on Fridays outside of Lent. But the bishops asked that Friday be a day of penance throughout the year.



“Friday should be in each week something of what Lent is in the entire year. For this reason we urge all to prepare for that weekly Easter that comes with each Sunday by freely making of every Friday a day of self-denial and mortification in prayerful remembrance of the passion of Jesus Christ.”

The bishops went on to say that, among these freely chosen penitential practices, “we give first place to abstinence from flesh meat. We do so in the hope that the Catholic community will ordinarily continue to abstain from meat by free choice as formerly we did in obedience to Church law.”

Feasts & Celebrations

This month we honor Our Lady of Sorrows and celebrate her birthday (Sept. 8). Despite her own suffering, Mary always accepted the will of God. She is a model for faith and trust.

Sept. 13 - St. John Chrysostom (407). A powerful public speaker, he was a brutal critic of clergy who abused their office and royals who turned a blind eye to the suffering of the poor. He died in exile as a result.

Sept. 27 - St. Vincent de Paul (1660). St. Vincent de Paul, was devoted to the spiritual and physical relief of the poor and sick. He

founded several hospitals, and ransomed over 1,200 galley slaves from North Africa.

Sept. 29 - St. Michael, St. Gabriel, and St. Raphael, the Archangels. Members of the third hierarchy of angels around the throne of God, archangels are entrusted with important missions to mankind such as St. Gabriel’s visit to the Blessed Mother to tell her she had been chosen as the mother of God.



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