

Growing in FAITH™

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

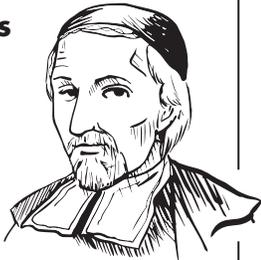
August 2019

St. Raphael Catholic Church
Rev. John M. Connell, Pastor

One Minute Meditations

St. John Eudes

St. John Eudes was born in Normandy to a farmer. Against his parents' wishes, he entered the Congregation of the Oratory when he was twenty-two and was ordained two years later. He worked for the sick and the poor, especially the plague victims. He is best known for beginning the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and for founding the Eudists, a religious order dedicated to reforming the seminaries of his time and to preaching missions.



Judge not

It is tempting to view others' behavior and feel the need to correct it. Remember that criticizing others is a serious business. *"Stop judging and you will not be judged. Stop condemning and you will not be condemned. Forgive and you will be forgiven"* (Luke 6:37). Better to worry about our own behavior and let others do the same.

"Listen to counsel and receive instruction, that you may eventually become wise"

(Proverbs 19:20).



What is in your spiritual toolbox?

Can you imagine trying to build a house with just a hammer? It won't be as effective as using the right set of tools. So, too, we can face life on our own, or we can let God give us the tools we need to thrive. A useful spiritual tool box will include this equipment:

Sacraments:

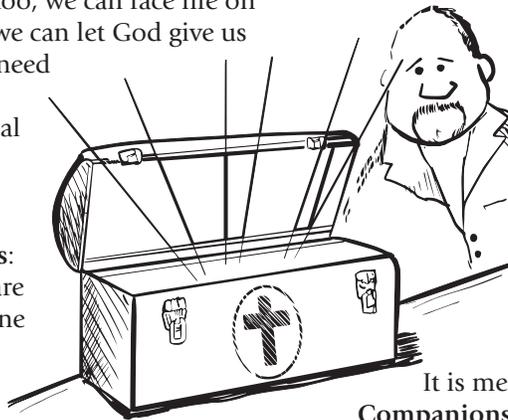
Grace – a share in God's divine life and friendship – comes to us most effectively through the Sacraments. When we frequently receive the Eucharist and regularly participate in the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation, the resulting grace is a key tool that strengthens us to live out our lives in God's friendship.

Scripture: When facing challenges, we often "hear" the voice of a beloved parent, favorite teacher, or wise

friend in our heads providing guidance from conversations past. Scripture helps us to "hear" God's voice. Through the Bible, God has equipped us with all that we need to succeed in this world and live with him eternally in the next.

It is meant to be lived.

Companions: *"Do not be led astray: Bad company corrupts good morals"* (1 Corinthians 15:33). Despite their best intentions, the wrong friends can lead us away from God. Choosing companions who support our faith, hold us accountable, and share our love for God are important elements in our spiritual toolboxes.



Why Do Catholics Do That?

Why do Catholics believe Mary was assumed into Heaven?

Catholics believe that at the end of her life Mary was taken, body and soul, into heavenly glory (Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC), #966). This belief was officially stated by Pope Pius XII in 1950, but it had been



held since the early Church. Mary was "full of grace" (Luke 1:28) and remained sinless throughout her life.

Having carried the Son of God within her, her Assumption into

Heaven preserved her body from the corruption in the grave.

Avoid the Sunday slump

Attending Mass is the most important thing Catholics do each week, but even the most committed can fall into a Sunday slump. So consider these ideas to make the Lord's Day truly special.

Attend Mass somewhere new. Occasionally being in a different environment can help us look at the Mass with fresh eyes and give us a new perspective. We can be reminded that the Catholic faith is universal. There are people in small towns and big cities all over the world who come together at Mass to praise God.



Get away. Plan a day trip around attending Mass. There are churches that have mosaics, relics, and amazing art. Find the closest basilica or cathedral, or a Catholic Church with a history. Attend Mass there and then find other activities in the town to do.

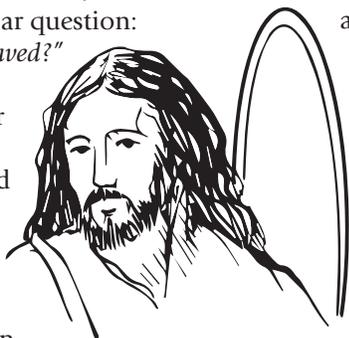
Attend mass in another language. For example, some churches have Masses in Latin, others have Spanish Masses, and so on.

Make it a date. Invite a friend to join you and enjoy a meal afterward.

from Scripture

Luke 13:22-30, The narrow gate

In this Gospel passage, we read Jesus' answer to the million-dollar question: "Will only a few people be saved?" The gate to Heaven is "narrow", open to whoever can "fit through." When an ancient city was threatened the gate was locked. Hidden in part of the wall was a narrow opening so no one could enter with armor or weapons. Even an enemy would have to enter unarmed.



serious sin, unforgiveness, undue attachments to earthly goods, etc.

We may be surprised. People who felt entitled to Heaven in this life will be turned away, while others deemed "unworthy" will be welcomed in. It comes down to

Or, to use modern example, the gate of Heaven is like the gate at the airport, in that we may need to get rid of extra or unsafe baggage before going through it. Here, this may be unconfessed

whether we can part with the extra or unsafe baggage in our hearts. Jesus said, "I am the gate. Whoever enters through me will be saved" (John 10:9). The moral: pack wisely and find the Gate.

Q & A What did Jesus mean by "turn the other cheek"?

To understand Jesus' instruction of "turning the other cheek" (Matthew 5:39), it's necessary to understand some cultural context. Someone striking you



on the right cheek would've used his left hand, which was considered unclean in Jesus' day. Striking with the left was for slaves, children, and

anyone else you considered your social inferior. Turning the other cheek told the aggressor, "I am your equal. You will not treat me that way again."

To "turn the other cheek" is often misinterpreted as an order to do nothing to stop evil. What it really means is, do no evil to stop evil. Instead, we can graciously respond to cruel remarks (if they deserves a response at all), get outside help, work for changes in policies, show kindness to our oppressors. Most of all, pray for the aggressor's change of heart. You don't always know the fruits of your prayers until later on. Resisting the temptation to "get even" is possible with the grace of God, who forgave his persecutors from the Cross.

Feasts & Celebrations

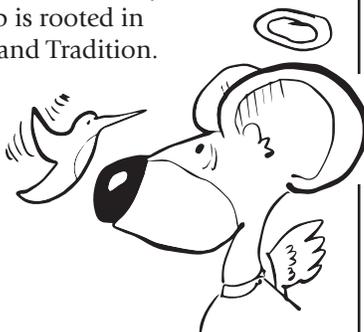
Aug. 6 – The Transfiguration of the Lord. Tradition says that Mt. Tabor was the site of the Transfiguration during which Christ appeared radiant in the company of Moses and Elijah, and a voice was heard to say, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him" (Matthew 17:5).

Aug. 8 – St. Dominic (1221). Born to a noble family in Spain, St. Dominic studied to become a Franciscan canon regular, but left to preach against the widely popular but dangerous Albigensian heresy. He founded the Order of Preachers, or "Dominicans,"

who successfully defeated this heresy. He is also credited with receiving the Rosary from Our Lady and teaching the prayer to others.

Aug. 22 – Queenship of the Blessed Virgin. In 1954, Pope Pius XII established this feast day to celebrate the Coronation of Mary as Queen of Heaven and Earth. Mary's queenship is rooted in Scripture and Tradition.

As the mother of the King, Mary can intercede for us in Heaven.



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