

Growing in FAITH™

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

September 2019

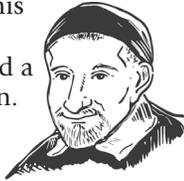
St. Thomas the Apostle Church

Rev. John K. Sheaffer

One Minute Meditations

St. Vincent de Paul

Born in France in 1580, St. Vincent was born to peasant farmers, but his father, seeing his potential, made sure he received a good education. Vincent was ordained a priest, and served as chaplain to the countess of Gondi. Seeing the poor were spiritually neglected, he founded the Ladies of Charity and the Sisters of Charity to help. To reform the priesthood, he founded the Lazarites to train priests. He is the patron of charitable institutions.



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. 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.



Build up your trust in God

Are you afraid to trust God with your life? Do you give him your problems but take them back when he doesn't do what you want? It is only when we have complete trust in God that our lives work well.

God is trustworthy. A trustworthy person has high moral integrity and character. We have thousands of years of history in the Bible that prove God means what he says and says what he means. He always does what he promises.

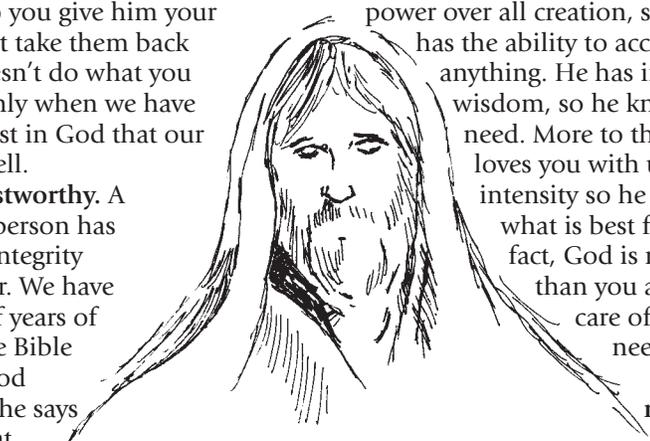
God is capable. Certainly God took excellent care of King David, Job, Moses and even Jesus and his family. He is certainly capable and

interested in taking care of you. God has power over all creation, so he clearly has the ability to accomplish anything. He has infinite wisdom, so he knows what you need. More to the point, God loves you with unimaginable intensity so he always wants what is best for you. In fact, God is more qualified than you are to take care of what you need.

Are you ready to really trust God?

Start by thanking him no matter what. Everything that he allows to happen to us is for our good. Then remind yourself that God is fully in charge.

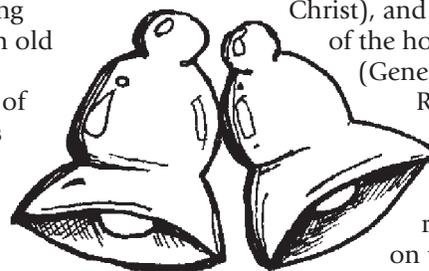
Finally, ask him what you should do next and do it.



Why Do Catholics Do That?

Why do Catholics use bells during Mass?

The practice of ringing bells during Mass is an old tradition. It is used to mark the crucial parts of the Mass: the Epiclesis (the prayer invoking the Holy Spirit to transform the bread and wine into the body and blood of



Christ), and after the elevations of the host and the chalice (General Instruction of the Roman Missal, #150). Today, the ringing of bells invites us to make a sacred response and reflect on the mysteries of God's presence.

No need to fear death

Death can be a fearful unknown but Christians know that it is a doorway that leads to something wonderful. Still, the idea can produce anxiety in even the strongest Christian. Consider taking steps to 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.

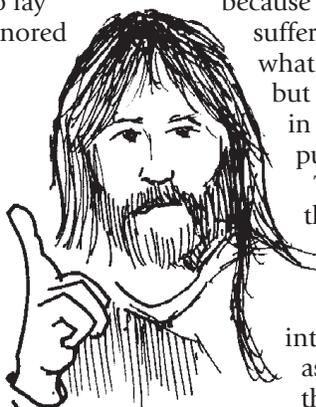
Attend Mass weekly or even daily, if possible. *“For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink”* (John 6:55). Jesus initiated the Eucharist to fortify us against the temptations and sin of this world.

from Scripture

Luke 16:19-31, Our brother’s keeper

This is one of the clearest and most direct parables Jesus told. It starts with Lazarus, a beggar who lay suffering, miserable and ignored outside the home of a rich man. By contrast, the rich man had a wonderful and comfortable life on earth, oblivious to what was happening outside his very door. In the afterlife, however, there is a reversal of fortunes. It is the rich man who suffers torment and begs for relief.

The rich man wasn’t a bad man. The parable didn’t say he had gotten his wealth



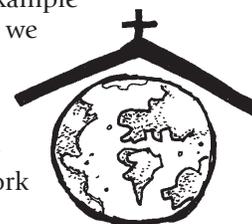
through dishonest means or had done anything evil. He was condemned because he’d become blind to the suffering of others. He knew what God expected of him, but didn’t do it. His suffering in the afterlife was a just punishment.

The Bible makes it plain that Jesus wants us to love each other as he loves us.

When we live our faith, we transform our prayers into deeds of love as Jesus asked. As he demonstrates in this parable, the reward for doing what Jesus asked will be eternal joy.

Q Why does Scripture & A say God “rested” on the sabbath?

God didn’t rest because he was tired; he was setting an example for us. He rested so we would do the same (Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC), #2172). We weren’t made to work non-stop, but for a balance of work and rest.



God rested to enjoy the goodness of creation (Genesis 1:31). We can get so focused on work we lose perspective. God knew the world wouldn’t always be perfect but still made sure to appreciate goodness when he saw it.

Lastly, God rested to make the sabbath holy—a day for prayer and worship. God doesn’t need our acts of worship, but we do. At every Mass we affirm his goodness, power, wisdom, and mercy to us. We receive our Lord, with countless graces, into our hearts.

“No one is father like God is Father” (CCC, #239). He knows we need time off, so he requires us to rest. He knows we need to know we’re loved, so he commands us to visit him every Sunday so he can remind us.

Feasts & Celebrations

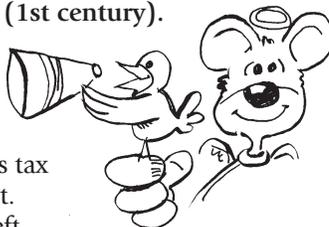
September 1 – St. Giles (8th Century). A saint shrouded in mystery, he was a hermit who lived near the Rhône River in France. He was also known as a miracle worker and his fame drew crowds and disciples to his side and even attracted the attention of King Charles. The king offered to fund a monastery if St. Giles agreed to be its first abbot, which he did. St. Giles is patron of the poor, cripples, beggars, and the disabled.

September 14 - The Exaltation of the Holy Cross (326). St. Helena (mother of Emperor Constantine) discovered

three crosses while on pilgrimage in Jerusalem. One of them was thought to be the Cross on which Jesus died. On the site Constantine built the Basilica of the Holy Sepulcher.

September 21 – St. Matthew the Evangelist (1st century).

Also known as Levi, he was a notorious tax collector. St. Matthew left everything when Jesus called him to spread the Gospel. He wrote the Gospel According to Matthew.



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To provide practical ideas that promote faithful Catholic living.

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(Unless noted Bible quotes and references are from the Revised Standard Version and the New American Bible - Revised)