

# Growing in FAITH™

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

May 2012

**St. Bartholomew's Church**

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## One Minute Meditations

### How about you?

Jesus used 12 unremarkable men to change the world. Their effect is still felt 2,000 years later. Imagine what he can do with you.

Don't be satisfied with making him an afterthought before meals and bedtime. Give Jesus your whole heart. Perhaps you can be his instrument of change, too.

### Why religion?

Religion is the bond which unites us to God. To neglect our Catholic faith is like refusing food or rest that keep your body healthy and functioning. Nurturing our Catholic faith is necessary for the eternal life of our souls..

### Easy evangelization

Each of us is required to "Go into the whole world and proclaim the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). Our very presence at Mass on Sunday is an easy way to tell others we think the gospel message is important. Plus, by following the requirement to attend Mass each Sunday, we encourage others to do the same.



## "Lord, give me patience. Now."

Followers of Jesus are called to treat everyone with love. Yet many of us find that it is hard to be patient with others, but patience is a key ingredient necessary to showing love. To acquire it, practice makes patience:

**Exercise.** Patience is like a muscle. We need to exercise it every day, but in a society of instant everything, we are losing opportunities. Find ways to practice such as reading a book all the way through without skipping to the end. Plant a seed and care for it until it blooms. Cook from scratch. Then patience will be available when you need it.

**Learn your warning signs.** Take note of events that make your heart race,

your palms sweat, or your breath quicken so that you can identify and anticipate challenges to your patience before they happen.

### Flip it around.

Impatience with others often comes from imposing our ideas on them. What if you were expected to live or act according to someone else's ideas or opinions?

You probably wouldn't like it. Try practicing acceptance of others instead.

**Step out of it.** Often we get annoyed because we assume what others do is meant to offend. In fact, it is unlikely that others' actions are intended to be personal. Give people the benefit of the doubt from the first.



## Why Do Catholics Do That?

Priests serve a special function in the Church. Non-ordained people – called lay people or laity – take Christ into the world. We bring him into the workplace, our schools, the neighborhood. That comes from "the common priesthood" of all the

## Why do Catholics need priests?

faithful through Baptism and Confirmation.

The Sacrament of Holy Orders consecrates the clergy "to feed the Church by the word and grace of God." (*Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1535*) Specifically, the clergy administer the sacraments, something lay people can't do.

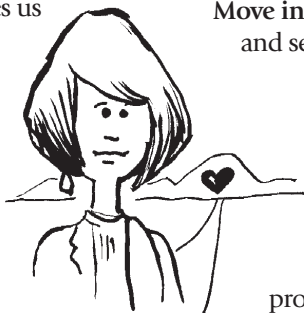


## Follow the way of love

As Christians, our experience of Lent and Easter gives us an idea of the incredible love Jesus has for us. He wants us to live in love and share it with others. You follow the way of love when you ...

**Believe in God and that God cares about you.** It is God to whom you turn in times of trouble. It is God to whom you give thanks when all goes well.

**Acknowledge human dignity.** Each person has been crafted in the image and likeness of God and, as a result, has an inherent dignity that must be respected.



**Move in love.** Live and act in accord with Gospel values and set an example of Christian living.

**Pray with others.** As a community, you thank God for his blessings, reach for strength, asking for guidance.

**Serve others.** You often sacrifice your own wants and desires for the best interests of others.

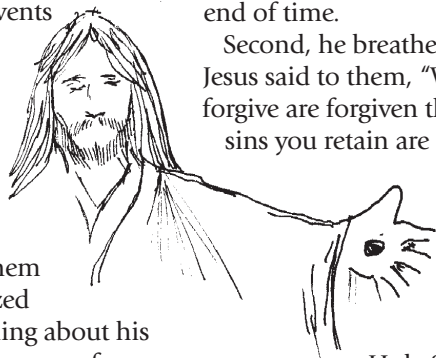
**Forgive easily and seek reconciliation.** You promote peace and forgiveness in the relationships of others around you.

### from Scripture

#### John 20:19-23, Jesus Gives Us the Holy Spirit

In this Gospel, St. John tells of Jesus' appearances to his apostles after the Resurrection. These events were the beginnings of the birth of the Church.

First, the apostles were in the upper room with the door and windows closed and locked. Yet Jesus appeared in their midst. After he showed them his wounds they recognized him. That tells us something about his resurrected body. After Jesus rose from the dead he had a glorified body. He wasn't limited by the physical world and he wasn't immediately recognized even by those to whom he was close. That's a



foretaste of what we can expect when we receive our glorified bodies at the end of time.

Second, he breathed on the apostles. Jesus said to them, "Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained." In

Scripture the breath of God was symbolic of his Spirit. Jesus was giving them the

Holy Spirit. After receiving the Holy Spirit, the apostles were given the authority to forgive sins. That was the establishment of the Sacrament of Penance.

### Q & A Why is suicide wrong?

Someone who commits suicide is generally experiencing psychological illness, or fear of hardship, suffering, or torture. However, suicide is contrary to the God-given gift of life.



It's natural to preserve and perpetuate our lives. "We are obliged to accept life gratefully and preserve it for

[God's] honor and the salvation of our souls. We are stewards, not owners, of the life God has entrusted to us. It is not ours to dispose of." (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2280)

Accordingly, helping someone to commit suicide is a grave sin. It may seem noble to free a person from suffering. However, it's still the taking of an innocent life which constitutes an act of murder, whether by a doctor or another person.

For physicians, it's even more serious. The Hippocratic Oath that doctors take stresses "...do no harm." Killing the patient is the ultimate harm.

If we take upon ourselves decisions that belong to God, who can be trusted to exercise such an office? Because humans can't have the wisdom and mind of God, we are incapable of judging as he does.

### Feasts & Celebrations

**May 12 – Sts. Nereus and Achilles (d.c. 100).** Sts. Nereus and Achilles were Roman soldiers of the elite Praetorian Guard serving under the Emperor Trajan. After they became Christians, they refused to serve the Emperor. They were exiled to the island of Terracina and brutally martyred.

**May 25 – St. Mary Magdalen de Pazzi (1607).** Born to a distinguished Florentine family, Catherine de Pazzi was expected to be a woman of high society but became a Carmelite. Shortly after professing her vows, she began experiencing ecstasies. She became a

mystic and healer. Her ecstasies were recorded in three large volumes.

**May 31 – Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary.** Following the visit from the angel, who told her that she was to become the Mother of God, Mary visited her cousin Elizabeth, who was six months into her own pregnancy. Upon Mary's arrival, John the Baptist leapt for joy in St. Elizabeth's womb. Mary visited Elizabeth to share her joy at God's great goodness.



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