

Growing in FAITH™

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

October 2016

St. Clement Mary Hofbauer Parish

Conventual Franciscan Friars

One Minute Meditations

St. Francis of Assisi

St. Francis was born in Assisi, Italy, in 1182 to a rich cloth merchant.

He enjoyed good food, fine clothes, and a busy social life. All that changed when he fell seriously ill on his way to a battle. St. Francis took the Gospel message literally and devoted his life to living in poverty. Followers gathered around him, wanting to imitate his way of life, and in 1210, he received approval to found the Franciscan Order.

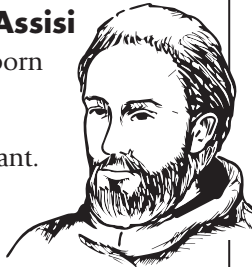
Ignore

Ever notice how good it feels to walk away from a fight? That's why Jesus said, "When someone strikes you on (your) right cheek, turn the other one to him as well" (Matthew 5:39). Next time someone picks a fight, walk peacefully away.

"Receive Communion often, very often...there you have the sole remedy, if you want to be cured.

Jesus has not put this attraction in your heart for nothing..."

St. Therese of Lisieux



Love the Rosary during the month of the Rosary

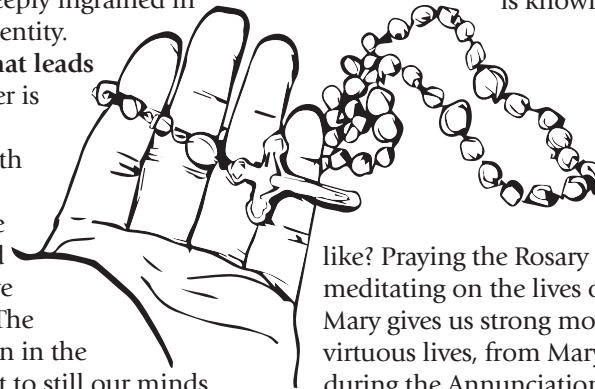
The Rosary is a powerful prayer to which popes, saints, and Catholics over the centuries have turned for miraculous help in seemingly impossible situations. As a devotion, the Rosary is deeply ingrained in our Catholic identity.

The prayer that leads to prayer. Prayer is key to a close relationship with God but it's difficult to raise heart and mind to him when we are distracted. The gentle repetition in the Rosary is meant to still our minds and direct our hearts to communion with God. This meditative prayer places our focus on God and takes it out of the world.

A connection to the Gospels. The mysteries of the Rosary describe the

events of Jesus' life, death and resurrection. By praying the Rosary, we visit these events as they are told in Scripture. To invert St. Jerome's famous quote, knowledge of Scripture is knowledge of Christ.

The prayer of virtue. We are called to be holy and virtuous, but what does that look



like? Praying the Rosary and meditating on the lives of Jesus and Mary gives us strong models of virtuous lives, from Mary's obedience during the Annunciation and her fortitude during the crucifixion, to Jesus' entire life of virtue – justice, temperance, and courage, in particular. Regular Rosary meditation opens us to the graces needed to acquire those very virtues.

Why Do Catholics Do That?

Why do Catholics light prayer candles?

Ancient Jews kept a light perpetually burning near the Ark of the Covenant to show reverence for the presence of God. In a similar way, the lit candle symbolizes for us Christ's presence, recalling that he said, "I am the light of the



world" (John 8:12).

Votive candles in church also symbolize prayer intentions others have offered to God. Lighting a candle is a way of expressing our desire to remain present to God after we have left the church.

Love your neighbor AND yourself

"You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Matthew 22:39) commands us to treat other people with love. In truth, we can only love our neighbor to the extent that we love ourselves. Do you have trouble believing that you deserve love? Consider this:

God doesn't make mistakes. By nature he is perfect and can't make anything bad. God created each of us and *"looked at everything he had made, and he found it very good"*



(Genesis 1:31). That means you, too.

Look with God's eyes. Don't chase after other people's approval. Too much of how we see ourselves depends upon how others see us. God loves us as we are and considers us precious. *"See, upon the palms of my hands I have written your name"* (Isaiah 49:16).

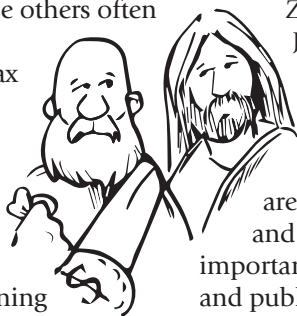
Love with God's heart. Spend time with Jesus by praying, reading Scripture, and attending Mass. When you let yourself be filled up with Jesus' love, you will find yourself so full that love will overflow to those around you – just like he commanded.

from Scripture

Luke 19:1-10, Jesus is the friend we want to be

Jesus didn't evaluate people the way others did. Instead of gravitating to the best of society, Jesus included in his inner circle of friends those others often excluded. Consider the example of Zacchaeus, a tax collector.

As the chief tax collector in Jericho, Zacchaeus was not a popular man. He probably took more in taxes than was required and became wealthy. Learning Jesus was passing through, Zacchaeus climbed a tree to get a better view of Jesus. Imagine the crowd's reaction when Jesus spotted Zacchaeus and invited himself to dinner at the tax collector's home. Jesus wasn't dissuaded



by the fact that Zacchaeus was unpopular and dishonest but saw him as a child of God. In return, Zacchaeus' eagerness for Jesus' friendship changed his life forever. He was inspired to make generous amends for his past sins.

As followers of Jesus, we are called to be open, forgiving, and accepting of others. It is important to look beyond the gossip and public perception. Try to adopt Jesus' habit of being quick to forgive and welcoming in your relationships with others. Perhaps a friendship with you can change someone else's life, just as friendship with Jesus changed Zacchaeus for the good.

Q & A How can I get more out of going to Mass?

Start by getting into the right frame of mind. You can do this by reviewing the readings before Mass to really absorb their message.



Next, notice and greet the people near you. A nod and a smile is a start but a handshake and "hello" is the right spirit. That tells

others you're happy to be there and happy to see them, too.

Change your spot. If you normally sit in the back, move to the front. If you sit on the side, move to the center. Sometimes just a change of scene helps you take on a fresh perspective.

Sing every song. Pray every prayer. Mass is not a spectator sport.

Take with you a small pad. Then you can jot down prayer requests, intercessions, or thoughts from the homily to review later. Take the Mass home with you and live it all week long.

Receive Communion if your soul is in the proper disposition. (Go to Confession if you aren't sure.) That's the main point of attending Mass.

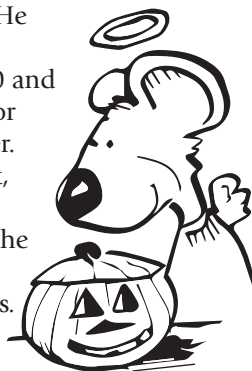
Feasts & Celebrations

Oct. 1 – St. Thérèse of Lisieux (1897). At the age of 15, Thérèse Martin became a Carmelite nun in Lisieux, France, and served others with "quiet acts of love." Her autobiography, *The Story of a Soul*, is an easy read for older children.

Oct. 10 – St. Francis Borgia (1572). St. Francis was a nobleman who served in the Spanish imperial court. After the death of his wife, he gave away all his possessions and joined the Jesuits. He proved to be a good administrator, and

as superior general of the Jesuits, he helped to spread their presence all over Spain and Portugal.

Oct. 20 – St. Paul of the Cross (1775). Born in Italy to a poor, pious family, Paul felt called to start a religious order dedicated to the Passion of Christ. He founded the Passionists in 1720 and was elected superior general of the order. He became a priest, lived a penitential life, and cared for the poor and sick. He also worked miracles.



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