

Growing in FAITH™

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

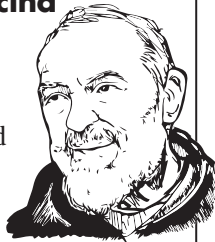
September 2016

St. Clement Mary Hofbauer Parish
Conventual Franciscan Friars

One Minute Meditations

St. Pio of Pietrelcina

Born to farmers in southern Italy, Francesco



Forgione joined the Capuchin Friars in 1902 at the age of 15, and took the name "Pio." In September 1918, St. Pio had a vision of Jesus and the five wounds of Our Lord's Passion (stigmata) appeared on his body. Padre Pio was known for his holiness, charity, and preaching. Penitents who confessed to him said he knew details of their lives even before they told him.

Start with grace

Starting your day with prayer begins the day with grace. Set your alarm for 15 minutes earlier and get up the first time it goes off. Make a morning offering, ask for a safe commute, a productive day, for patience. It's a small mortification that "strengthens your will and does no harm to your body" (St. Josemaría Escrivá).

"Even the hairs on your head have all been counted. Do not be afraid" (Luke 12:7).



What to do about loneliness?

"The Lord God said, 'It is not good that the man should be alone'" (Genesis 2:18). God intends for us to share our lives with others. Despite this, everyone experiences loneliness. It is tempting to avoid the painful feelings but try these ideas instead.

When in need of love, give it yourself. Loneliness makes us turn inward, focusing on our own pain. To help relieve that pain, think instead of others. Our own pain can help us recognize others in pain and inspires us to reach out.

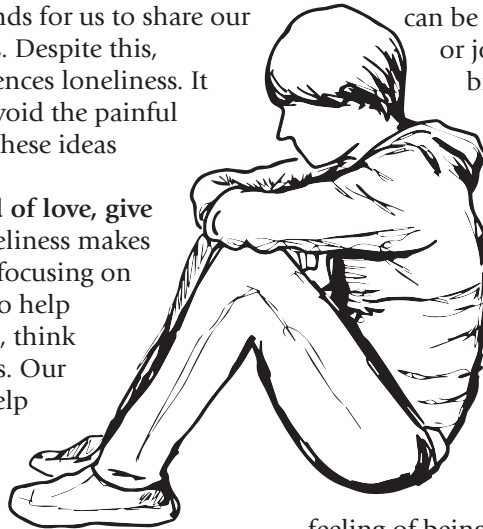
Become a loving presence in lonely places. Jesus said, *"I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, ..."* (Matthew 25:35-36).

Homeless shelters, soup kitchens, hospitals, and nursing homes can be lonely places. Take up or join a ministry that brings God's presence to people there whenever you can.

Be active in your parish. If you don't have a church home, join the parish where you attend Mass. If you already belong, volunteer for a parish ministry.

Tell God all about it. The

feeling of being alone is disheartening but followers of Christ know we are never alone. Spend time each day with Scripture to get to know God well. Then talk to him as your closest friend.



Why Do Catholics Do That?

Why do Catholics make the Sign of the Cross?

The Sign of the Cross is a short, powerful prayer that serves many purposes. At Baptism, Christ claimed us as his own with the Cross. After baptism, we make the Sign of the Cross over the newly baptized to reaffirm our hope in God and to ask his blessing.



We also sign ourselves in times of danger or temptation. "The Christian begins his day, his prayers, and his activities with the Sign of the Cross" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #2157).

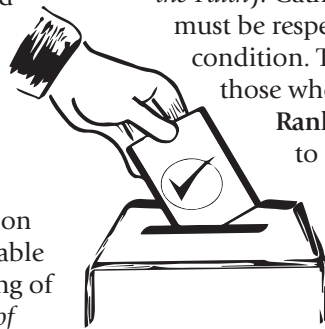
How should I vote in November?

While some of us can find common ground with one political party or candidate, many of us may agree with only parts of the platforms of each. That makes our task of choosing candidates in November's election challenging. Here is some guidance from a Catholic perspective.

Set priorities. "Democracy must be based on the true and solid foundation of non-negotiable ethical principles, which are the underpinning of life in society" (*Congregation of the Doctrine of*

the Faith). Catholics believe that the life and dignity of all people must be respected and protected at every stage and in every condition. This is non-negotiable. As far as possible, vote for those who promote respect for all human life.

Rank candidates. Determine how well candidates profess to adhere to your Catholic principles and your goals for the country, your state, community, and family. Give preference to the candidates who most closely align with your priorities and don't contradict your non-negotiables. Based on past records, choose a candidate who could make a solid leader.

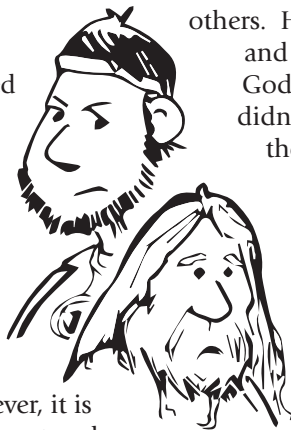


from Scripture

Luke 16:19-31, Our brother's keeper

This is one of the clearest and most direct parables Jesus told. It begins with Lazarus, a beggar who lay miserable and ignored outside the home of a rich man. By contrast, the rich man had a wonderful and comfortable life, sharing nothing with Lazarus. It would have taken little effort for the rich man to relieve Lazarus' suffering yet he ignored the man's cries for help. In the afterlife, however, it is the rich man who suffers torment and begs for relief.

The rich man was condemned not because he was wealthy, but because he



had become blind to the suffering of others. He knew what Scripture and the prophets said that God expected of him but he didn't do it. His suffering in the afterlife was just punishment.

The Bible makes it plain that Jesus wants us to love each other as he does. When we live our faith, we transform our prayers into deeds of love just as

Jesus asked. As he demonstrates in this parable, the reward for doing what Jesus asked will be eternal joy.

Q & A Is the Mass in the Bible?

The first Mass is the Last Supper, which is recorded in all four Gospels. In keeping with what Jesus commanded

his apostles: "Do this in memory of me" (Luke 22:19), the Mass continued to be offered after Jesus' Resurrection and Ascension—before the New Testament



was written. In his letter to the Corinthians, St. Paul describes the correct way to offer the Mass. He reminds them, "For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you will proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes" (1 Corinthians 11:26).

In the more literal sense, virtually all the prayers and responses are based on verses found in the Bible. For example: "The Lord be with you" (Ruth 2:4); "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests" (Luke 2:14); "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord" (Mark 11:9-10). The Mass is a re-presentation of the sacrifice of the Cross (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #1366).

Feasts & Celebrations

Sept. 5 – St. Teresa of Kolkata (1997). From a young age, Gonxha Agnes Bojaxhiu felt a call to be a missionary. At the age of 18, she joined the Loreto nuns, chose the name Teresa and moved to India where she taught privileged girls. Shocked by the poverty and profound suffering around her, she founded the Missionaries of Charity to help her "serve [Christ] in the poorest of the poor."

Sept. 8 – Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Mary's birth brought her

parents joy. We share their joy because through Mary came salvation to all of us from her son, Jesus.

Sept. 10 – St. Nicholas of Tolentino (1305). St. Nicholas was born in answer to the prayers of his parents at the shrine of St. Nicholas of Myra. He became an Augustinian friar when he was eighteen. He had a reputation as a preacher, confessor, and wonderworker. Miraculous healings were attributed to eating bread that he had blessed. He died after a long illness.



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