

Growing in FAITH™

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

December 2015

One Minute Meditations

St. Thomas Becket

Thomas enjoyed power and riches as a close friend of England's King Henry II, who appointed him chancellor of England. In 1162, King Henry had Thomas named Archbishop of Canterbury. The King tried to pressure Thomas and the other bishops into agreeing to laws allowing the state to regulate Church matters, but Thomas refused. The King exiled Thomas, who fled to France for safety. To protect the Church, Thomas returned to England and was martyred soon after.



Gratitude and Generosity

Gratitude and generosity often go hand in hand. God is generous in his blessings to us, and often gives us more than we need. Our gratitude inspires us to "give back" to God. Gratitude is the attitude of a generous heart.

"Do not let your left hand know what your right is doing, so that your almsgiving may be secret. And your Father who sees in secret will repay you"
(Mathew 6:3-4).



Unwrap the gifts from your Father

God loves to give his children gifts, especially at Christmas. "Thanks be to God for his inexpressible gift" (2Corinthians 9:15). This year, unwrap your heavenly gifts ...

Joy – "Shout, and sing for joy, O inhabitant of Zion, for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel" (Isaiah 12:6). We are joyful because God gave us the gift of himself. Celebrate by talking about God with others. For example, tell how he has blessed you in the last year.

Peace - "Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which

will come to all the people" (Luke 2:10). Is it possible to live in the world and not be afraid? Yet peace is what the angel advised Zechariah, Mary, and the shepherds at the Incarnation. Take the angel's advice and "be not afraid."

Accept the gift of peace; avoid worry and doubt.

Love – When God sent his Son to our rescue, he gave us an incomprehensible gift of love. This gift calls for a response, as he

invites us to share in his love.

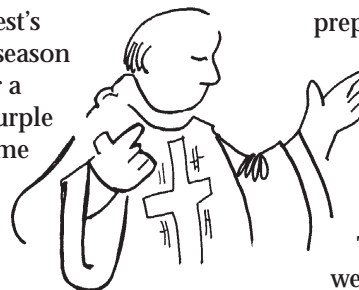
"Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God, and he who loves is born of God and knows God" (1 John 4:7). Share love at Christmas by spending time, not money, on those you love.



Why Do Catholics Do That?

Why does the priest wear purple during Advent?

The colors of the priest's vestments highlight a season of the liturgical year or a mystery of the faith. Purple (violet) represents a time of penance and preparation. During three weeks of Advent, the priest wears violet vestments to remind us to



prepare penitentially for Christ's coming. On the third Sunday of Advent (Gaudete Sunday), he wears rose vestments to signal the halfway point of Advent. This is a happy time when we anticipate the joy in Christ's coming.

