Growing in FAITH™

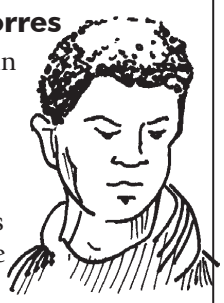
Discovering **hope and joy** in the Catholic faith. November 2015

St. Clement Mary Hofbauer Parish

Conventual Franciscan Friars

One Minute Meditations

St. Martin de Porres

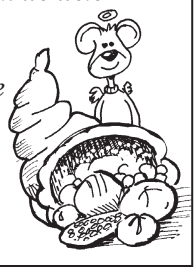


Martin was born in 1579 in Peru to a Spanish knight and a freed Negro slave. He worked as a barber before joining the Dominicans in 1594, in a time when people of African and Indian descent were barred from joining religious orders. Despite this, he founded an orphanage and cared for the poor and sick, regardless of color, race, or social class. He was also a mystic, gifted with miraculous knowledge, instantaneous cures, and flight.

God's timing

Sometimes it seems like no matter how much we pray, God doesn't hear us. It can be tempting to give up hope, but remember, God always answers prayer in his time. Each day, decide to trust God; his timing is perfect.

"But God, who is rich in mercy, because of the great love he had for us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, brought us to life with Christ" (Ephesians 2:4-5).



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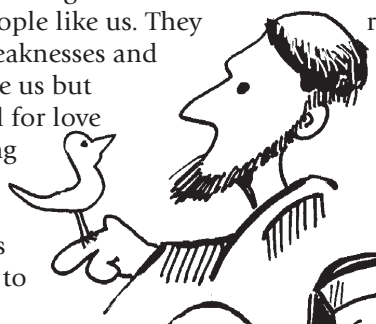
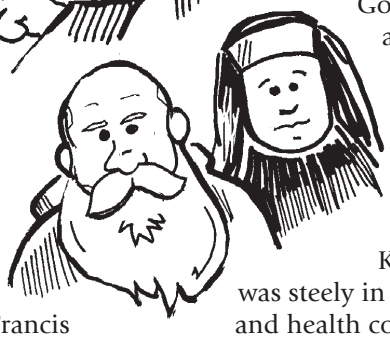
Celebrate the human saints



Sometimes we forget that the saints were people like us. They had similar weaknesses and sinned just like us but overcame it all for love of God. Getting to know them gives us role models we can follow to Heaven. For example:

St. Francis of Assisi didn't start out saintly. He was a spoiled rich boy who loved a party. When God asked him to "repair my Church," Francis literally repaired church buildings by hand. Eventually, he became one of the great reformers of the Church, founding the Franciscan Order that thrives today.

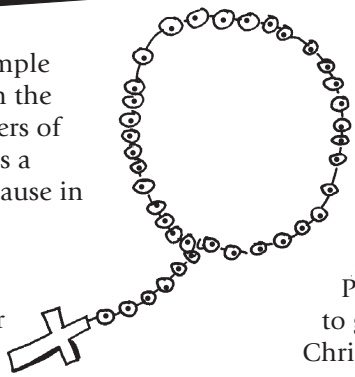


St. Jerome was known for his bad temper. It was probably with some relief that the pope sent Jerome off to the solitary task of translating the Bible into Latin. St. Jerome gave himself up to prayer, penance, and study to produce this labor of love. The result was that the Word of God became accessible to anyone who spoke the common language, not just the educated few.

St. Marianne Cope could seem heartless in her work managing a leper colony in Kalaupapa, Hawaii. She was steely in maintaining sanitary and health conditions for those with Hansen's Disease (Leprosy) to avoid spreading the frightful disease. Yet, Mother Marianne's optimism, serenity, and her considerable abilities brought the love of God to the islands of Hawaii.

Why Do Catholics Do That?

Why do Catholics pray the Rosary?



The Rosary is a simple prayer adapted from the complex set of prayers of medieval monks. It's a powerful prayer because in it, we ask Mary—whose prayers are never refused—to pray for us.

In addition, through the mysteries of the Rosary, we meditate on the life of Jesus which always bears fruit. For example, the fruit of the mystery of the Annunciation is humility. Praying the Rosary opens us to graces that help us be more Christ-like.

Giving thanks for God's bounty

Later this month we will gather with friends or family to give thanks for all the blessings we have received throughout the year. Yet the gifts don't just come once a year, so try these tips for living gratitude all year:

Say it out loud. Saying the words out loud will keep you from taking your blessings for granted. Let words of gratitude be the first ones you speak in the morning and the last ones on your lips at night.

Avoid complaining. How can we be thankful and still gripe when things don't go our way? When you find yourself feeling stressed or depressed, stop and list five blessings instead.

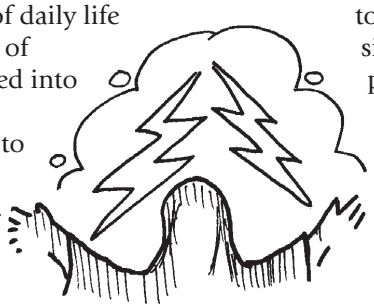
Don't shop or buy. Try putting off what you don't absolutely need. Instead, clean out a closet, drawer, or storage area you have been ignoring and rediscover the good things you already have.

Live thankfully. Each day, look for small blessings and pleasures. Noticing them will help you remember that God makes all things well and deserves our thanks.

from Scripture

Luke 21:25-28, 34-36, the Advent of hope

The virtues of patience and perseverance aren't strengths for most of us. Often the concerns of daily life overshadow our pursuit of holiness. We can get lured into sin by the comforts and pleasures the world has to offer. We can forget our ultimate goal is Heaven. Knowing this, Jesus warned his followers about the end times, hoping to shake them (and us) out of "drowsy" complacency.



Imagine the terrifying scene Jesus described – the shaking of the earth, sea, and sky and people dying of fright. In the midst of that terror, though, people living in God's friendship will have no reason to fear. The key is, he said, to stay on guard against sin and worldly pleasure.

Advent is a time of waiting for the coming of Christ. God has promised us that if we are faithful to him, we will be rewarded. This is a time when we must pray for patience and perseverance to keep us ready for the arrival of our Savior. Then we can hold our heads high and stand confident expecting our promised reward.

Q & A

Is Purgatory a real place?

Purgatory is imagined as a place, but it refers to the state and process by which a soul is purified before going to Heaven. Someone who dies in God's grace, but who still needs purification before he or she can see God is in Purgatory. "All who die in God's grace and friendship, but still imperfectly purified … undergo purification, so as to achieve the holiness necessary to enter the joy of heaven" (*CCC #1030*).

Church tradition has described Purgatory as a purifying fire that purges us of any venial sin on our souls for which we have not repented. *"If someone's work is burned up, that one will suffer loss; the person will be saved, but only as through fire"* (1 Corinthians 3:15). Another comparison can be the pain of St. Peter's repentance after he denied our Lord. When we see God we will experience shame and remorse for having denied him in others. Only after this purifying pain will we be able to see God face to face.

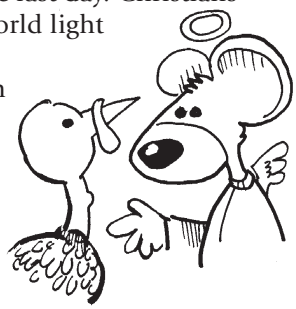
Feasts & Celebrations

Nov. 1 - All Saints Day. Because of the intense persecution of the Church, there were more martyrs than there were calendar days to celebrate them each individually. Pope Gregory IV designated November 1 as All Saints Day.

Nov. 4 - St. Charles Borromeo (1584). After earning doctorates in civil and canon law by the age of 21, he was named cardinal and bishop of Milan by Pope Pius IV. He worked to reform his diocese and cared for the poor and sick.

Nov. 22 – Solemnity of Christ the King (1925). God promised his people a king who will be triumphant over their enemies. Jesus is our King. In Baptism and Confirmation, we are brought under his kingship.

Nov. 29 - First Sunday of Advent. During this four-week season, we anticipate the Messiah's birth and his coming on the last day. Christians around the world light candles in an Advent wreath each night of Advent to signal the coming of the true light of Christ.



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