

Growing in FAITH™

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

October 2015

St. Clement Mary Hofbauer Parish
Conventual Franciscan Friars

One Minute Meditations

St. Teresa of Avila

Born in 1515, Teresa joined the Carmelites

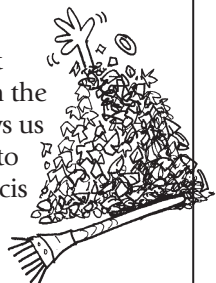
—over family objections
—in 1534.

Soon after, she became so ill that the sisters dug a grave for her. Teresa recovered and wrote a book on prayer called *The Interior Castle*, based on her suffering. In 1563, she founded a stricter order whose nuns wore rough brown habits and sandals instead of shoes. St. Teresa founded more than 17 convents of Discalced Carmelites and helped reform the Carmelite friars.

Love in Action

When we see others suffering, we might think, "The Church should do something." Yet as members of the Church, it's our job to take action and share Christ's love. We can be a listening ear, a helping hand, or an encouraging voice to someone in need. Whatever it is, the Church can always "do something."

"Faith does not remove us from the world, but draws us more deeply into it." Pope Francis



Choose to live a free life

God gave us free will so we can make our own choices and be free. Popular culture tells us freedom means doing whatever we choose even if that includes sin. Yet, true freedom is being open to God's love and closed to sin. *"Live as free men, yet without using your freedom as a pretext for evil"* (1 Peter 2:16). We are at our freest when we choose for good.

Don't give away your freedom. Sin can overtake us without our noticing. For example, sharing one juicy secret may make us feel popular but over time, gossip can become a habit we can't control. A nightly examination of the day can help

identify sinful actions before they become habits. Monthly visits to the Sacrament of Reconciliation will also sharpen that sense of sin.

Freely choose love. God won't force us to love him; he hopes we will choose it.

Often, we don't approach him because we feel unworthy, guilty, or distant. Instead, choose to believe that God's love is stronger than our sin or guilt. When we have faith that he loves us, we are free to love him back.

Choose for good.

Consistently making good and moral choices in today's society is hard but it leads to great reward. The more we choose good, the freer we become.



Why Do Catholics Do That?

Why do Catholics call the Church the "Body of Christ"?

On the first Pentecost, the Holy Spirit descended on the Apostles and united them as one Body to continue Christ's saving work. *"For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or*

free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit" (1 Corinthians 12:13).

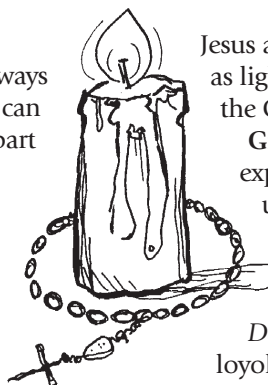
The Church is made up of all God's people, united by Baptism, each with a unique role. We act as Christ's Body on Earth, with Christ as our head.



Devotions for each of us

The graces we get from the Mass are essential, but sometimes we feel called to do more to keep God always in our thoughts throughout the day. That's when we can draw on devotions - external religious practices not part of the official liturgy of the Catholic Church. There are so many from which to choose and can be as unique as we are.

Something for everyone. The more devotions we know, the more we can use. Popular choices include the Rosary, novenas, adoration before the Blessed Sacrament, and celebrations in honor of



Jesus and the saints. There are seasonal devotions, such as lighting an Advent wreath or praying the Stations of the Cross during Lent.

Grow in love. Devotions are designed to help us experience God in everyday life. Their regular use help us to see God anew and fall in love with him more each day. Find one – or more – that works for you.

Note: for ideas, try *A Prayer Book of Catholic Devotions* (Loyola Press, 800-621-1008, loyolapress.com).

from Scripture

Mark 10:46-52, a blind man leads

Bartimaeus was a blind beggar who saw Jesus clearly. When he heard that Jesus was near he cried out, "Son of David," a title reserved for the Messiah. Although people tried to quiet him, Bartimaeus persisted until Jesus noticed him and called him over.

Immediately, Bartimaeus threw off his cloak and ran to Jesus' side. Even the little he had was discarded to get to Jesus.

Bartimaeus stood before Jesus humbly, but he was confident that Jesus had the power to do whatever he asked. The only person in Mark's gospel to call Jesus, "Master," Bartimaeus asked Jesus

for his sight. When his prayer was answered, Bartimaeus followed Jesus as his disciple.



It is this profound trust that Jesus wants to elicit from the crowd – and from us. The difficulties of being Christian in a secular world can blind us to the joys

of following Jesus. Try to approach Jesus with excitement and humble confidence. When we trust him as Bartimaeus did, we become true disciples who can tackle the difficult task of leading others down the road to God.



Q & A Does Original Sin make us sin?

The effects of Original Sin are frustratingly familiar. For example, who hasn't had the temptation to ignore our conscience? That is always a red flag that something is a sin.



Maybe it was because the temptation looked like fun, because it was easier than doing the right thing, or because someone cool was doing it.

This desire to do things that are contrary to what our conscience tells us is called "concupiscence." St. Paul says it well: "For I do not do the good I want, but I do the evil I do not want" (Romans 7:19).

The good news is that God's love is bigger than our sin. Christ set us free from the power of sin and death. Through his death and Resurrection, he healed humanity's broken relationship with God. "Just as through the disobedience of one person the many were made sinners, so through the obedience of one the many will be made righteous" (Romans 5:19). Fighting against the temptation to sin is hard, but not impossible.

Feasts & Celebrations

Oct. 7 - Our Lady of the Rosary (1571). Pope Pius V created this feast in thanksgiving to Our Lady of Victory who helped the Christians defeat the Ottoman Turks. Since they credited their success to praying the Rosary, the feast was renamed Our Lady of the Rosary by Pope Gregory XIII.

October 16 – St. Hedwig (1243). Born to the Duke of Croatia, Hedwig married the Duke Henry of Silesia, the head of the Polish Royal family. They had a happy marriage and together founded a convent, hospitals, and monasteries. After his death, Hedwig

became a Cistercian nun, keeping her wealth only to spend her fortune on charity.

October 17 – St. Ignatius of Antioch (1st century). Successor to St. Peter as the second bishop of Antioch, Ignatius encouraged obedience to bishops all over the world saying, "Wherever the bishop is, there let the people be, for there is the Catholic Church." He reminded people that Jesus is present in the Church and in one another.



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