

Growing in FAITH™

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

August 2016

St. Clement Mary Hofbauer Parish
Conventual Franciscan Friars

One Minute Meditations

St. John Vianney

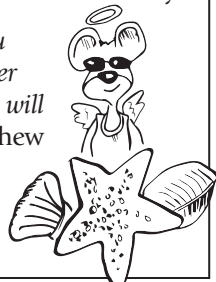
Difficulties with his studies almost cost St. John

Vianney the priesthood. Ordained because of his goodness, he had a gift for reading souls. As the Curé (pastor) of Ars, France, he was faced with people who were indifferent to Christ and comfortable in their lifestyles. To remedy this, he fasted and prayed for hours daily. He often spent as many as sixteen hours a day hearing confessions. His spiritual insight and example reclaimed thousands of lapsed Catholics.

A source of grace

Prayer isn't a luxury—it's a vital source of grace and strength. Making time for daily prayer is especially important when we're busy. In the morning, commit your day to God's care and service. Whether something causes you worry, anger, or happiness, say a quick prayer. Thank God for his help at the end of the day.

"Whatever you ask for in prayer with faith, you will receive" (Matthew 21:22).



You can make the world a better place

Each of us has the ability to make a difference in the world. In fact, for Catholics, acting for the common good is a requirement. "It is the duty of citizens to contribute along with the civil authorities to the good of society in a spirit of truth, justice, solidarity, and freedom" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC), #2239*).

Be informed, be decisive, and be heard. Pope Francis said, "...good Catholics immerse themselves in politics by offering the best of themselves so that the leader can govern." Government is meant to be a partnership between citizens and those they elect. Look past the newsy gossip about candidates and

do your research of upcoming local, state, and national elections so you can make excellent, informed decisions in the voting booth.

Be the best at what you do. No matter what you do for a living, whether you feel your efforts make a difference or go unnoticed, always do your best.

"Whatever your task, work heartily, as serving the Lord and not men" (Colossians 3:23).

Our actions cannot be defined by others, but by what God asks of us and what we owe to ourselves.

Be active. When Jesus was among us, he comforted those who were sad, fed people who were hungry, gathered close friends, shared love, alleviated suffering. Do the same.



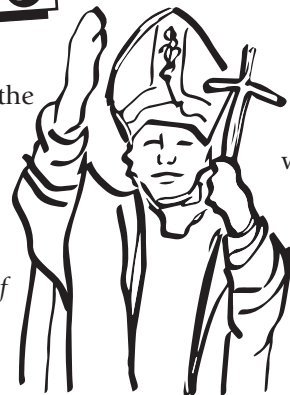
Why Do Catholics Do That?

Is the pope infallible?

Jesus named St. Peter as the head of his Church, and promised to send an Advocate to guide the Church. "*The Advocate...will teach you everything and remind you of all that (I) told you*" (John 14:26).

St. Peter's successor, the

pope, is preserved from error by the Holy Spirit when he teaches by virtue of his supreme authority on a matter of faith and morals to the whole Church. That teaching, considered infallible, is then binding on the whole Church.



We are happiest when God comes first

God's love for each of us is personal, individual, and never ending – and there is no lasting happiness without him. Yet without our intending, our relationship with God can fade into the background of a busy life. Try these tips for staying centered:

Make time with God a priority. Try not to skip devotions. For example, if you miss your morning prayer, make it up later in the day. If called away from your time with Scripture, pray a rosary later instead. Stay connected



with the one who loves you most.

Attend Mass every Sunday and do whatever is necessary to receive Holy Communion. It is in the Liturgy that Jesus is truly present to us. Benefit from your time together.

Pay God first. It takes money to do God's work in the world and the top funding source for the Catholic Church's ministries is her generous people. Set aside a portion of every paycheck for charity just as you do for your rent or mortgage. Write that check first.

from Scripture

Luke 14:1, 7-14, Unreciprocated kindness

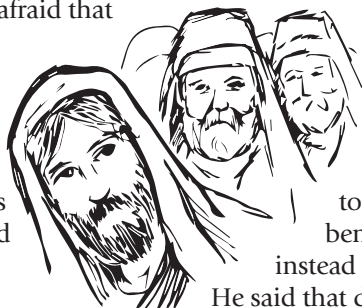
Jesus was under close and careful scrutiny by the Pharisees who were watching for a misstep in order to discredit him. They were afraid that his "radical" ideas would undermine the religion and tradition they protected. Nonetheless, he never let this critical scrutiny by his opponents keep him from saying and doing the right things.

As Christians, we must never succumb to pressure to do what is politically or socially correct at the expense of our spiritual beliefs and obligations. For example, there is a cultural value to "networking" –

entertaining people who can further our personal or professional goals. There is usually an exchange of favors implied in this kind of a relationship, "you scratch my back and I'll scratch yours."

In this parable, however, Jesus urged us to forget about obtaining benefit or admiration and instead serve people in need.

He said that doing favors for and being kind to the disadvantaged can be very rewarding and will bring blessings to the host. The guests won't be able to reciprocate, but God will certainly repay the kindness.



Q & A What do we get from prayer?

What do we get from spending time with someone we love? Prayer is spending time with God, our beloved, and learning to receive, experience and return his love in a genuine relationship. There is nothing more lovely or fulfilling than God.



We are told to "pray without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5:17), not because God needs our prayers, but because it's good for us. "Prayer is the raising of one's mind and heart to God or the requesting of good things from God" (CCC, #2559). However, prayer is about more than asking God for goodies.

In prayer, we thank God for his blessings, praise him for his goodness, and express sorrow for our sins. Through prayer, we find strength, peace, and comfort in difficult times.

In addition to God, prayer also connects us to each other. Intercessory prayer—praying for someone else—is powerful. Jesus responded in amazing ways to people who prayed for their friends (Mark 2:5, Matthew 15:28, Matthew 8:13). It starts with a personal relationship and prayer.

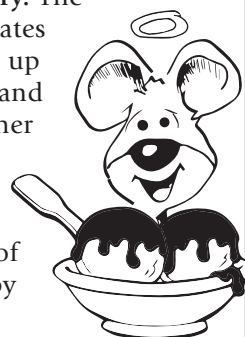
Feasts & Celebrations

August 6 – Transfiguration of the Lord (1st Century). Tradition says that Mt. Tabor was the site of the Transfiguration during which Christ showed his disciples the splendor of his beauty. The Lord appeared radiant in the company of Moses and Elijah, and a voice said, "This is my beloved son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him" (Matthew 17:5).

August 14 – St. Maximilian Mary Kolbe (1941). A Polish Franciscan, St. Maximilian was arrested by the Nazis in 1941 and imprisoned at Auschwitz.

When the jailers chose ten people to execute as punishment for an escape attempt, he substituted himself for a man with a family. He and nine others were stripped, starved and killed by lethal injection.

August 15 – Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The Assumption celebrates Mary's being taken up into Heaven body and soul at the end of her life. Although already a common belief, it was declared a dogma of our faith in 1950 by Pope Pius XII.



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To provide practical ideas that promote faithful Catholic living.

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