

Growing in FAITH™

Discovering hope and joy in the Catholic faith.

March 2022

St. Jude Catholic Church

One Minute Meditations

The Commandment imbalance

Of the Ten Commandments – God's most important laws – only the first three address how we are to respect the Creator of the universe. The other seven detail how we are to treat each other. It is one more way God lets us know how very much He wants us to love one another.

Just adore

Do you ever run out of things to say during your prayer time? Or worse, do you ever get weary of saying the same things over and over? Why not just sit in silent adoration of the one who loves you more than you can imagine? What words can be better or more appropriate than that?

"Then you shall delight in the LORD, and I will make you ride on the heights of the earth; I will nourish you with the heritage of Jacob, your father, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken" (Isaiah 58:14).



3 ways to become holier during Lent

Jesus said, a disciple *"when he is fully taught will be like his teacher"* (Luke 6:40). Lent is our chance to shed the worldly baggage that keeps us from becoming more like Christ. Consider these ideas for routing out sin and embracing virtue:

Remove the wooden beam. We delight in pointing out the sins and shortcomings of others. This is the sin of detraction, disclosing someone's faults and failings to others without an objectively valid reason. We can use the season of Lent to search for our own faults and remove them instead.

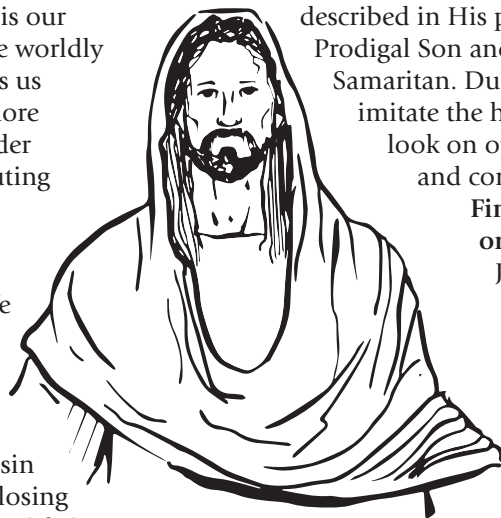
Look like Christ. Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI said that we all crave

being looked upon with love. Christ looks upon us with pure love, as described in His parables of the Prodigal Son and the Good Samaritan. During Lent, let's imitate the heart of Christ and look on others with empathy and compassion.

Find the sacred in the ordinary. St.

Josemaria Escriva taught that there is a call to holiness that can be lived by sanctifying our everyday life. He said, "Carry out the little duties of each moment: do

what you ought and concentrate on what you are doing ... There is no other way, my daughters and sons: either we learn to find our Lord in ordinary, everyday life, or we shall never find Him."



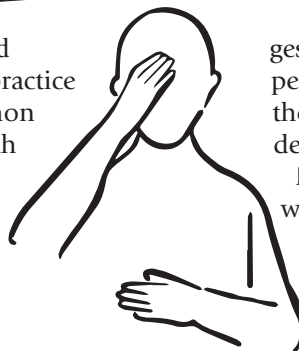
Why Do Catholics Do That?

Back in the second century when this practice began, it was common to honor a ruler with a gesture of respect. Whether bowing down on one knee or touching the forehead, such

Why do Catholics make the Sign of the Cross?

gestures were ritual ways to honor a person of great power. The Sign of the Cross became one such devotion to the Holy Trinity.

Now a prayer in itself, each time we make the Sign of the Cross we express respect for God and request His blessings for ourselves.



"Giving up" or "giving for?"

Lent implies deprivation and uncomfortable penances, but it can be more meaningful. Consider turning your offerings into gifts of gratitude for God's gifts:

Give time in prayer: God, who created the universe, wants to spend time with you. Whether it's reading Scripture, praying the Rosary, or attending daily Mass, know that God is delighted you're spending time with Him, and will give you all the graces you need to stay close to Him.

Give small gifts with great love: St. Therese of Lisieux was expert at turning small sacrifices into



powerful deeds by her love. Our Lenten sacrifices, entrusted to God, do immense good that we'll see fully in Heaven. Whoever knew that our simple Lenten offerings can be part of God's saving work?

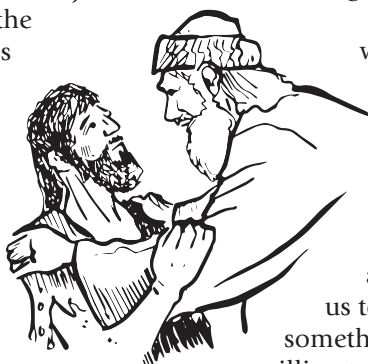
Give half your cloak: According to legend, St. Martin of Tours gave half of his cloak to a cold beggar. That night, Jesus appeared to St. Martin in a dream, wearing the cloak. When we serve others, it is Jesus who ultimately receives our gift.

from Scripture

Luke 15:1-3, 11-32, The Father's heart

In this Gospel reading, Jesus told the story of the Prodigal (or reckless) Son. It goes like this. One day, the younger son demanded his father to give him his share of the estate. He left to squander it far from home.

When his money was gone, his situation grew desperate and he returned to his father, humbled and asking for mercy. The father was overjoyed to have his son back and threw a huge party. The older son, however, resented his brother's welcome and complained to his father that he didn't get a reward to celebrate



his obedience—and he was the "good one!"

Jesus promised that when we approach God with a truly repentant heart, we can always come home. It's not that God wants us to feel bad, but, like any parent, he wants us to understand we did something wrong and be willing to change. Through this parable, Jesus shows us that God is a loving, generous Father whose deepest nature is merciful, forgiving love. We are reminded that we can always come home.

Q & A How can I get over my fear of Confession?

For many Catholics, going to Confession is unsettling. Facing and admitting our faults to another person – even in a confidential setting – is uncomfortable, even painful. In this case, the priest is acting in the person of God and it takes courage and humility to present ourselves before God. In Confession we say to God, "Please forgive me for intentionally rejecting You and Your love."

If you feel uncomfortable while waiting in the Confession line, it's a good sign. It means your conscience is healthy and working. Remember that God sees us standing in line and He is ready to welcome us back. He isn't angry or brooding, or smug because our poor choices proved He was right. In fact, when we are sincerely repentant, He and all of heaven celebrate because we're returning to Him (Luke 15:10). When the priest says the words of absolution, imagine God embracing you, saying, "My child, your sins are forgiven you...Go and sin no more." We receive powerful graces, and are asked to make amends where possible. Rejoice in the chance to start again.

Our Mission

To provide practical ideas that promote faithful Catholic living.

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Feasts & Celebrations

March 2 – Ash Wednesday. First day of Lent. Ashes from burnt palms are placed on the forehead as a sign of penance. Ash Wednesday is a day of abstinence from meat and fasting – one regular meal and two smaller meals that together don't equal a full meal.

March 5 – St. John Joseph of the Cross (1734). St. John joined a group of Franciscans called the Reform of St. Peter of Alcantara. Despite his elevated position and spiritual gifts, he remained humble, doing menial tasks around the monastery.

March 8 – St. John of God (1550). Originally, St. John was a soldier known for his violence and immorality. After nearly dying in battle, he converted and dedicated his life to serving the poor and sick.

March 17 – St. Patrick of Ireland (c.461). Born in Scotland, St. Patrick was kidnapped and brought to Ireland as a slave. He escaped but later returned to become the bishop of Ireland and is credited for having established the Church there.

