

Growing in FAITH™

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

July 2013

St. Cecilia Church
Rev. James L. Secora, Pastor

One Minute Meditations

St. Kateri Tekakwitha

The Year of Faith saint for July is St. Kateri Tekakwitha, one of the newest American saints.

A smallpox epidemic in her Native American village left Kateri orphaned, disfigured, and half-blind at the age of four. Introduced to Catholicism by visiting priests, she was baptized at the age of 19 against the strenuous objections of her relatives. Eventually, the persecution against her became so strong that she had to steal away to a Christian village where she lived in holiness.



Room for God

"Make room therefore for Christ, and refuse entrance to all others. When you have Christ, you are rich and have need of (nothing) else."

Thomas À Kempis

Pray all day

St. Paul tells us to "pray without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5:17). Try repeating the "Jesus Prayer": "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner."



Let God love you

Have you ever seen a parent scoop up a child and hug him closely as if he couldn't get enough of that beloved child? That's how God feels about you. He loves you dearly and shows you each day. Open your heart to him.

He longs to embrace you and tell you that he loves you. Let God love you through the people around you. When you need help, support, or healthy love, don't refuse those whom God sends to you.

God wants our safety and shows us the surest path for us to walk. Jesus walked it first to show us how. Follow

his steps to stay safe.

Our Father lets us make our own choices but gives advice to guide us. All we need to know to make smart decisions is contained in Scripture. Refer to it often to find out what God thinks is best.

He is always ready to forgive. We are the ones who forget to ask. Meet him in Confession regularly.

As a loving Father, he waits for our next visit and longs for our love. Don't miss a chance to meet him at Mass and in daily prayer.

And, as a good Father, he waits for the day when all his children will come home to him and rest forever in his arms.



Why Do Catholics Do That?

The word "host" comes from hostia, which means "victim." During the Exodus, each Hebrew family sacrificed a lamb, the blood of which was smeared on the doorways of their homes. The occupants were thus saved from the death

Why do Catholics call communion wafers the "Host?"



of the first-born, which the Egyptians suffered. Jesus is our spotless lamb who saves us from the death of sin. He serves as our victim in the bloodless sacrifice of the Mass. Since the communion wafer is Jesus, we call it "host."

The power of forgiveness

When someone wrongs you in some way, do you hold a grudge and keep the hurt? Here are three reasons to embrace the power of forgiveness.

Forgiveness is not something we do for the other person, but something we do for ourselves. Refusing to forgive merely prolongs hurt feelings. It helps us dwell on them and keep them alive. And that feels awful.

But when you forgive, the negative feelings are purged and there's new room for goodness. The



energy that sustained the anger is now available for other purposes. And that's a much better feeling.

Need another reason? Jesus taught us that to receive daily forgiveness of our own sins we must forgive those who have hurt us. If we can't or won't—how can we obtain it for ourselves?

Think about praying for anyone who hurts you and ask God to bless him. Not only will you find the pain start to lessen, you'll be saying one of Jesus' favorite prayers. He prayed it while on the Cross.

from Scripture

Luke 11:1-13, the perfect prayer

The Our Father is actually four prayers in one. First, it is a prayer of praise and gives God the glory that he is due. Second, it is a prayer of petition in which we ask God to provide what we need. Third, it is a prayer asking for forgiveness and the strength to be forgiving. And last, it is a prayer of acknowledgement. It forces us to admit that God knows what is best for us and reminds us to submit to his will rather



than our own. That's what makes it the perfect prayer model.

God hears all prayers, but he wants to know that we are committed to that for which we are asking. Is it a real need or just a momentary thought? Like the neighbor in this Gospel reading, Jesus encourages us to be persistent and continue to ask for God's help, seek God's will, and open the door to God's grace in our lives.

Q Other than attend & Mass, what else must I do?

We are also called to perform works of mercy. "The works of mercy are charitable actions by which we come to the aid of our neighbor in his spiritual and bodily necessities." (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2447).

There are seven spiritual works of mercy: to admonish the sinner, to instruct the ignorant, to counsel the doubtful, to comfort the sorrowful, to bear wrongs patiently, to forgive all injuries, to pray for the living and the dead.

There are also seven corporal works of mercy. They are: feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, visit those in prison, shelter the homeless, visit the sick, bury the dead.

How important is it for us to perform these acts? Jesus said, "For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me" (Mt 25:35-36). That makes it very important.

Feasts & Celebrations

July 11 - St. Benedict. While pursuing an education in Rome, Benedict became disgusted with the life of privilege and retired to a cave outside of Rome for three years. Others who recognized his holiness followed him. In 529 he built Monte Cassino - his first monastery - and wrote the rule of the Benedictines, "Ora et Labora," which means "Pray and Work."

July 15 - St. Bonaventure (1274). Cured of an illness through the prayers of St. Francis of Assisi, St. Bonaventure became a Franciscan. As minister general of the order, he cultivated a love

of the way of St. Francis and the order's ideals.

July 31 - St. Ignatius of Loyola (1556). Ignatius spent several years defending his native country of Spain. His resulting injuries required several surgeries at home, and long recuperative periods during which he began a religious conversion and a lifelong dedication to education. He later started a community of priests called the Company of Jesus, now known as the Society of Jesus.



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