

# Growing in FAITH™

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

August 2014

St. Cecilia Church

Rev. James L. Secora, Pastor

## One Minute Meditations

### St. Dominic

Journeying through France, Dominic was alarmed by the popularity of Albigensian heretics who threatened the Church. They taught that anything material was evil, rejecting the Sacraments and Incarnation. Albigensian preachers avoided material comforts while many Catholic preachers lived in luxury. Dominic became an itinerant preacher like the Apostles and in 1215 founded the Order of Preachers, "Dominicans." The ideal of Dominicans was study and prayer in all forms with a ministry of salvation to people by the word of God.



### Little Way of Love

St. Therese of Lisieux found large jobs intimidating, so she dedicated herself to small tasks done with love. Over a lifetime, small, loving contributions can add up to something wonderful. She called this her "Little Way of Love."

*"Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, 'I am the light of the world; he who follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life'"*

(John 8:12)



## How to share your faith with anyone

It's human nature to want to share what excites us. Yet we often find ourselves shying away from opening up about the wonders of our Catholic faith. After all, Jesus told us to "Go and make disciples of all nations..." (Matthew 28:19)

While this command can seem daunting, the truth is that anyone can be an evangelist.

**Be a vessel of God's grace.** How much we allow ourselves to be filled with God's grace will determine what we can share with others. One way to do this is to frequent the Sacraments and study our faith. After all, if we don't practice our own faith how can we help someone to become excited about theirs?

Let the faith shine. Show that you are proud to be Catholic. Certainly we do that when we attend Mass weekly, without fail. We also show our Catholicity when we reverently wear Miraculous Medals and Crucifixes. But we can also speak about how Christ's love influences our lives or let someone know that he or she is in our prayers.

**Remember that God is in control.** As

instruments of God's grace, we don't have to worry if we don't immediately see the fruits of our evangelization. We know God is at work. Our prayer to God can always be, "Lord, use me as you will."



## Why Do Catholics Do That?

## Why do Catholics honor Jesus' name?

We honor Jesus' name out of respect for the Person to whom it belongs. In the Bible, a name pointed to something important about a person. The name, "Jesus" is Hebrew for "God saves," thus signifying his identity and his



mission. "There is no...other name under heaven given to the human race by which we are to be saved" (Acts 4:1). There is power in Jesus' name; whatever we ask for in his name, he will grant (see John 14:13).

## Turn nasty criticism into growth

Criticism can bring you down if you let it. Instead, finding a gracious way to handle criticism can be the key to improving your life, attracting new friends, and becoming a better Christian.

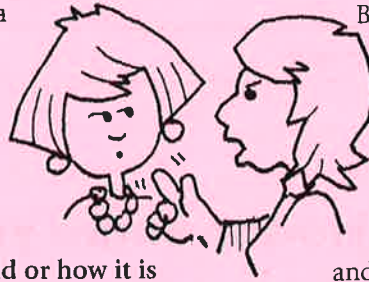
**Stay calm.** The person delivering the criticism may be having a bad day or seeking attention. Or, she may really want to help and just not be skilled in delivering criticism. Staying calm and avoiding defensiveness helps you look for the rose among the nasty thorns.

**Thank the commenter, no matter what is said or how it is**

**delivered.** People who make rude comments don't expect you to listen to them, much less be grateful for their comments.

Being appreciative is disarming. That's how to turn a critic into a friend.

**Weigh the criticism.** Do the comments contain something helpful you can use to become a better person? Is the person trying to help, to make things better, to keep you from repeating mistakes, to suggest positive improvements? If not, forget it and move on without anger.

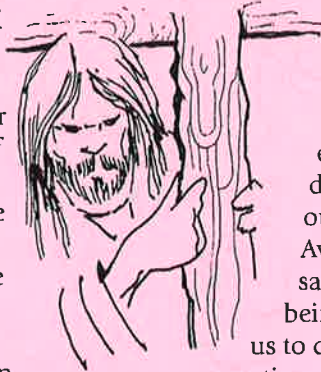


### from Scripture

#### Matthew 16:21-27 – The secret to a happy Christian life

In this reading, Jesus shocked his disciples by predicting his own death. Like many Jews of the day, they had believed that the Messiah would be a triumphant and powerful warrior king who would trample the enemies of his people. All longed for retaliation after centuries of slavery and humiliation. Jesus predicted he would be put to death instead, destroying their ideas of the Messiah.

Like a good friend, Peter wanted to protect Jesus from discomfort and attempted to reassure him. But Jesus knew that unless he suffered and died, we would all die in



our sins. He couldn't turn from his purpose and he rebuked Peter for tempting him. Sometimes our most difficult temptations come from our loved ones trying to spare us pain.

Saving ourselves from earthly pain might mean doing something that puts our souls in jeopardy. Avoiding the pain and sacrifice that comes with being a Christian could cause us to die spiritually and emotionally. The secret of a happy Christian life is not to avoid our personal Cross but to embrace it as Jesus did.

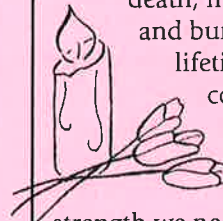
### Q & A Why is a Catholic Funeral important?

Although no one enjoys dwelling on death, most of us will mourn and bury loved ones in our lifetimes. Friends may counsel us to skip the church funeral and just "get it over with," but our faith provides the strength we need to deal with death.

The Church has created Rites to help us face the difficulties and reality of death.

Every baptized Catholic has a right to a Catholic funeral. The Rites of a Catholic Funeral include Prayers after Death, Prayers in the Presence of the Body, the Scripture Prayer Service at the Wake, the Funeral at Church (with or without Mass), and the Internment Prayer Service at the cemetery. Together these services not only make up the total Catholic Funeral Service, but also provide the Church's special prayers for the deceased. The Rites also support families and friends who are grieving for their loved one.

Catholics are entitled to a Catholic Funeral whether they are frequent or infrequent Mass attendees. (For specific questions, check with your local parish.)



### Feasts & Celebrations

**August 1 – St. Alphonsus Liguori (1787).** St. Alphonsus gave up legal practice in Italy to become a priest and founded the Redemptorist congregation in 1732. Despite a life of suffering, he was able to stay aware of the loving presence of Christ.

**August 6 - Transfiguration of the Lord (1st century).** Tradition identifies Mt. Tabor as the site where Jesus appeared radiant in the company of Moses and Elijah. A voice was heard to say, "This is my beloved son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him."

**August 15 - Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary (1st century).** Declared a dogma in 1950 by Pope Pius XII, the Assumption celebrates Mary being taken to Heaven body and soul at the end of her life.

**August 20 – St. Bernard (1153).** At the age of 20, Bernard joined the monastic community of Citeaux but was often called upon to settle disputes.

He became a defender of the faith and of the Pope in Rome.



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To provide practical ideas that promote faithful Catholic living.

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