

Growing in FAITH™

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

July 2017

Ascension of Our Lord Church

Rev. Walter Austin, Pastor

One Minute Meditations

St. Lawrence of Brindisi

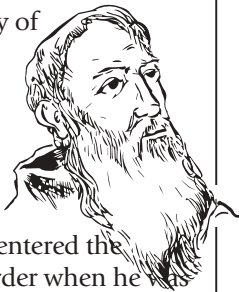
Born to a family of Italian merchants, St. Lawrence's parents died when he was young. Educated by an uncle, he entered the Capuchin Order when he sixteen. He was ordained seven years later.

A Biblical scholar and preacher, St. Lawrence had a gift for languages, including Italian, Latin, Hebrew, Greek, German, Bohemian, Spanish, and French. He worked to spread the influence of the Capuchin Franciscan order, establishing monasteries in Germany and Austria.

Can you see God?

Are you aware of God's presence in your life? Looking for ways in which he blesses us rather than thinking about prayers he hasn't yet answered makes us more aware of how he moves in our lives. Of course, God is always with us whether we see him or not. Ask him to give you eyes to see him.

"Trust always in your God. He does not lose battles,"
St. Josemaría Escrivá.



And the Lord said, "Let it go ..."

"It is good sense to be slow to anger, and an honor to overlook an offense" (Proverbs 19:11). Human nature entails taking offense when someone says or does something we don't like. When it happens often, however, being offended doesn't just hurt our feelings, it compromises our happiness and wellbeing. Try these ideas to let it go ...

Assume the best. Most people aren't out to get us. Unless proven otherwise, believe that others have good intent and don't mean to offend. They're just living their lives.

Step back. We often get upset because others disagree with or don't share our opinions. Opinions are separate from identities. Someone can disagree with

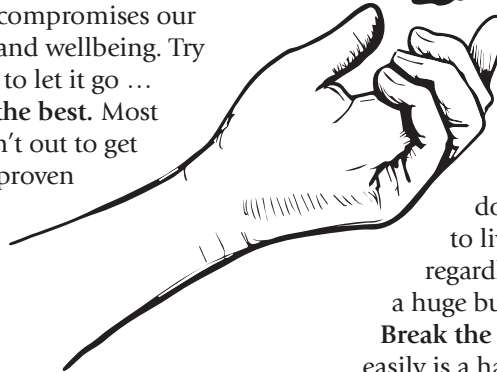
what we think but still enjoy who we are.



Don't make it about you. Thinking that what others do or think reflects on you is fertile soil for being easily and often offended.

Most of what happens around us has nothing to do with us. Allowing others to live their own lives regardless of you and yours takes a huge burden off your shoulders.

Break the habit. Taking offense easily is a habit that, fortunately, can be broken. Instead of noticing what others are doing "to" us, we can choose to note what is done "for" us by God and others. Practicing gratitude is more pleasant than feeling hurt.



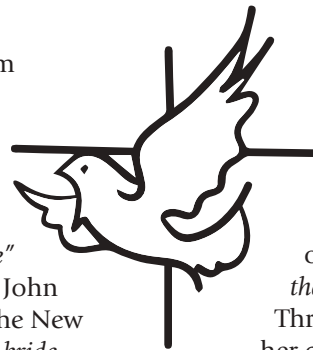
Why Do Catholics Do That?

Why is the Church referred to as "She" or "Her"?

Imagery and symbolism help describe Christ's relationship to the body of believers known as the Church. For example, the Church is called Christ's "pure bride" (2 Corinthians 11:2). St. John wrote of the Church as the New Jerusalem, "prepared as a bride

adorned for her husband" (Revelation 21:2).

The Church is also a "mother." "Because we receive the life of faith through the Church, she is our mother" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #169). Through baptism, we become her children.

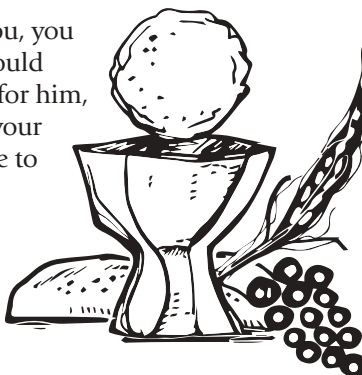


Are you ready for the Eucharist?

If you knew that Jesus were coming to visit you, you would probably work hard to get ready. You would make your home sparkle, prepare special food for him, and block out the time so you could give him your full attention. This is what we can do to prepare to receive Jesus every Sunday in the Eucharist.

Clean house. Do whatever is necessary to be properly disposed for communion with Christ. If you are not free from serious sin, attend Confession, do penance, and amend your life.

Prepare. The Eucharistic Fast is an ancient



custom that helps us to receive Holy Communion with reverence. Abstain from food or drink, with the exceptions of water and medicine, for at least one hour before receiving Holy Communion.

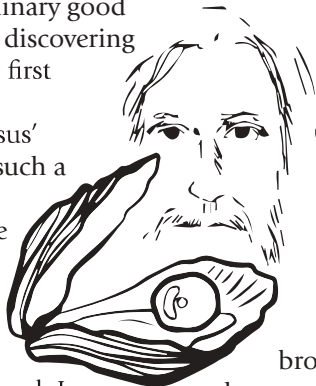
Give him your attention. The rituals of the Mass help us to focus completely on God's love for us and ours for him. Follow along with the prayers (use a missal, if necessary) and sing the songs so that you don't miss a word.

from Scripture

Matthew 13:44-52, Hidden treasure.

In this Gospel reading, Jesus compared several scenarios of extraordinary good fortune to the experience of discovering the Kingdom of God. In the first scenario, a man discovers a treasure buried in a field. Jesus' audience knew uncovering such a treasure would change their lives. Just so, discovering the hidden treasure of the Kingdom can give new meaning to our lives, too.

In the second scenario, a merchant finds a valuable pearl. In the barter-based economy of ancient Israel, a merchant's fortune depended upon the quality and desirability of what he had to sell. A valuable pearl



was well worth the painstaking search to find it. To those hungry and searching for God, Jesus assured them they would find the answers they sought in the Kingdom.

Finally, Jesus compared the separation between the evil and righteous to the sifting that happens when a large catch is brought ashore. Similarly, when we put our whole life in service to our love for God, then the individual pieces fall into place around that love. Whatever is contrary to this love falls away.

Q & A Are Catholics required to wear scapulars?

Originally, scapulars were part of the religious habit worn by members of certain orders. The smaller scapular worn by lay people consists of two small squares of fabric worn on the chest and back connected by strings.



The most common scapular is the Scapular of Our Lady of Mount Carmel.

According to one tradition, the Blessed Mother appeared to St. Simon Stock, a Carmelite monk, in Cambridge, England, on July 16, 1251. Our Lady gave the scapular to him as a sign of her favor for the Carmelite Order and promised that whoever wore the brown scapular until death would not suffer the fires of Hell, be preserved in time of danger, and experience peace and protection.

Any Catholic can wear the scapular if desired, but it must be blessed by a priest to be a sacramental. The scapular is worn under the clothes. It is worn continuously (except during bathing or swimming). For Catholics who wear it, it is a reminder of Mary's motherly love and intercession.

Feasts & Celebrations

July 1 – St. Junípero Serra (1784). Born in 1713, St. Junípero joined the Franciscan Order in 1730. In 1750, Fr. Serra left everything behind to become a missionary in America. He founded 21 missions and taught the Native Americans trades, from farming to crafting. He also established the foundation for protections for the Native Americans and brought them the gift of faith.

July 22 – St. Mary Magdalene (1st century). Mary Magdalene was the woman from whom Jesus expelled seven demons in St. Luke's gospel

(Luke 8:2). She helped to financially support Jesus' ministry and stood by the cross of Jesus with his mother. She was the one who first informed the Apostles of Jesus' Resurrection.

July 26 – Sts. Joachim and Anne (1st century). Little is known about Jesus' grandparents, but we know Mary was raised in a devout home. Her unshakeable faith, her devotion to the laws of her religion, and her steadiness in moments of crisis indicate the values with which she was raised.



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