

Growing in FAITH™

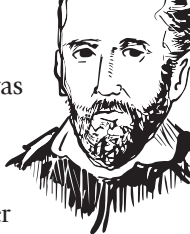
Discovering **hope and joy** in the Catholic faith.

February 2019

Ascension of Our Lord Church
Very Rev. Walter Austin, Pastor

One Minute Meditations

St. Jerome Emiliani



St. Jerome led a wayward life while a soldier until he was captured in battle and turned back to God. Soon after returning to Venice, he began studying for the priesthood and was ordained in 1518. With the devastation from the war came famine and plague. At his own expense, St. Jerome cared for the victims left behind, especially the children. For this purpose, he and some companions founded the Clerks Regulars of Somascha, in Somascha, Italy.

Make it a good day

A good day is one spent in God's presence. Start the morning by offering your efforts to God. Throughout the day, look for evidence of his nearness to you as you go about your business. Don't let minor irritants affect your mood.

"I don't care to inquire why they cannot believe an earthly body can be in heaven, while the whole earth is suspended on nothing." St. Augustine, *City of God*



Make every Sunday the Lord's Day

"This is the day the Lord has made: let us rejoice and be glad in it" (Psalm 118:24). God wants us to have a day of rest each week. He felt it was so necessary that he made it a **Commandment**.

While it is non-negotiable for God's people, a busy person may find it hard to do Sunday right. Try these tips for making Sunday the Lord's Day:

Attend Mass. Both Jesus' Resurrection and Pentecost occurred on Sunday. There's no better way to celebrate the Lord's Day than to worship him during Mass on Sunday.

Schedule chores. It's not very restful to stand in line at the grocery store or change the oil in your car. Try to

accomplish chores and errands another day so you can spend time relaxing on Sunday.

Alternate entertainment. Instead of turning on the TV or zoning on the smartphone, take a nice long drive, curl up with a good book, or visit friends or family. Do whatever it takes to recharge your spirit.

Create a unique prayer habit. Offer prayers that you only say on Sundays. Read Scripture. Listen to sacred music. Take time to thank God for your blessings.

Protect the day. Make Sunday a priority. Don't let anything interfere with your rest, peace, or worship. Let the Holy Spirit guide your day.



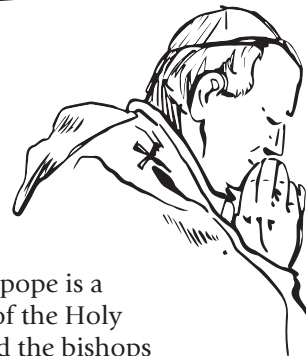
Why Do Catholics Do That?

Why do Catholics believe the pope is infallible?

As visible head of the Church on earth, the pope has the gift of infallibility. This means that by gift of the Holy Spirit, the pope can't err in teaching the faith.

That's not to say that a pope is a perfect person. This gift of the Holy Spirit helps the pope, and the bishops

with him, guide the Church in staying faithful to Christ. The pope is only infallible when he solemnly declares a teaching on faith and morals as St. Peter's successor (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #890-891).



“Please forgive me!”

Throughout history, there has been only one person who never made mistakes. The rest of us make plenty but few of us are comfortable with asking for forgiveness for them. Yet owning up to our mistakes is a big step toward preventing their recurrence. Try this:

Start by looking at the other person when you apologize. This communicates that you know you have caused harm and are ready to accept the consequences of your behavior.

Name the actions for which you are sorry. Be specific.



Assure the other person that the actions won't happen again and detail the steps you will take to rectify any harm you caused. Remember – true contrition involves making amends for your sin.

Give some visible sign that you are sincerely sorry. Shake hands or give a touch on the shoulder. Such an action will help start the healing of your relationship.

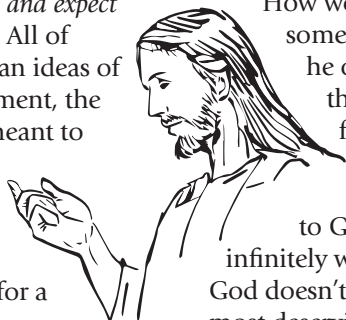
Taking steps to achieve sincere contrition and forgiveness will help you grow in holiness as you work to eliminate an occasion of sin.

from Scripture

Luke 6:27-38; Being merciful as God is merciful

In this Gospel passage, Jesus tells us to *“love your enemies...lend and expect nothing back...and forgive.”* All of these go against our human ideas of fairness. In the Old Testament, the *“eye for an eye”* rule was meant to make sure the punishment wasn't excessive. Likewise, the idea of getting favors was meant to show gratitude for a favor already given.

The problem is that *“an eye for an eye”* can result in a vicious cycle of violence and destroyed relationships. The *“favor for favor”* idea reduces the value of giving gifts out of kindness and



appreciation to simply owing favors. How would you know if the good someone did you was because he or she loved you or because they wanted something from you?

Jesus “updates” the old understanding of justice to God's justice, which is infinitely wiser and more perfect. God doesn't dole out his love to the most deserving, but freely to everyone. His goodness includes mercy as well as justice. His love is generous, selfless, simple, and compassionate. The surest sign of being God's children is if we love others the way he does.

Q & A What is the difference between a basilica, a cathedral, and a shrine?

Different church buildings serve different purposes. Basilicas are traditionally large, rectangular churches that have a historical and spiritual



importance, such as St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. The ancient Romans originally used them to house kings or judges. Later, Christians used the style for places to worship God, the King of Kings.

The pope can raise important church buildings of historical and spiritual significance, for example a cathedral, to the status of *“minor basilica.”* When you visit, you'll know you're in a minor basilica if the conopaeum (a red-and-yellow umbrella), a special bell, and the Vatican seal (papal crown and crossed keys) are on display.

A cathedral is the chief church in a diocese and is where the bishop presides. The name *“cathedral”* comes from the word *“cathedra,”* which is Latin for *“the chair.”* This refers to the bishop's chair, which represents his authority. A shrine is a sacred place where a saint's relic is preserved, an apparition took place, or a place to encourage a specific belief or devotion.

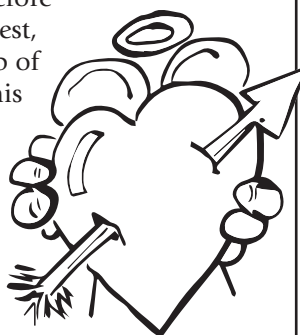
Feasts & Celebrations

Feb. 11 – Our Lady of Lourdes (1858). A heavenly *“lady”* appeared to St. Bernadette Soubirous, a poor and sickly girl from a small village in France. Soon after the first vision, a spring with miraculous, healing waters emerged from a nearby cave. The *“lady”* revealed herself as the *“Immaculate Conception”* – the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Feb. 22 – St. Peter's Chair (1st century). We celebrate the establishment of the Holy See and pray for the preservation of God's Church. The *“Chair of Peter”* refers to the relic of an actual chair of St. Peter and to the

spiritual authority of the Church, symbolized by the chair.

Feb. 26 – St. Porphyry (420). Born to a wealthy Greek family in Macedonia, St. Porphyry lived as a hermit. His quiet life was interrupted when he inherited a fortune, which he quickly gave to the poor. He worked as a shoemaker before becoming a priest, then the Bishop of Gaza (against his will). Despite initial resistance, St. Porphyry successfully evangelized Gaza.



Our Mission

To provide practical ideas that promote faithful Catholic living.

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(540)662-7844 (540)662-7847 fax
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(Unless noted Bible quotes and references are from the Revised Standard Version and the New American Bible)