

Growing in FAITH

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

November 2007

One Minute Meditations

A roomful of friends

Learning about the saints is a like walking into a large room full of strangers. You scan the faces looking for a friendly one who beckons you over. Find ways to scan the sea of faces looking for the ones with whom you would like to become friends.

Don't miss a good meal

After living and dying for love of us, Jesus invented a way to remain with us in the Holy Eucharist. In this wonderful Sacrament, he makes himself the food of our souls. That's a meal you don't want to miss.

The living God

"This God shows himself to us; he looks out from eternity into time and puts himself into relationship with us ... He has "defined" himself and stands now before us as our Lord, over us and in our midst."

Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger (Pope Benedict XVI), *God is Near Us*.



Stewardship is about love, not money

For many of us, we think "stewardship" means "fundraising." In fact, real stewardship is about love. When we practice good stewardship, we become more fulfilled, have a greater sense of purpose, and live happier lives and build a better world.

And while it's not just about money, good stewards have all the money they need.

Sharing love. All families come together in love to care for each other, enjoy each other, and help each other. Healthy families put the needs of the family first before spending time or money on anything else.

In God's family, we also come

together in his love to care for each other. As stewards, we find ways to use our time and gifts to meet the needs of God's family first.

Offering love.

Take stock of the gifts you have:

faith, wisdom, prosperity, discernment, etc. Then ask where you can put your talents and resources

to work for your parish so you can take your place at God's table. When you do, you will make God's family stronger and healthier.

Showing gratitude for God's love.

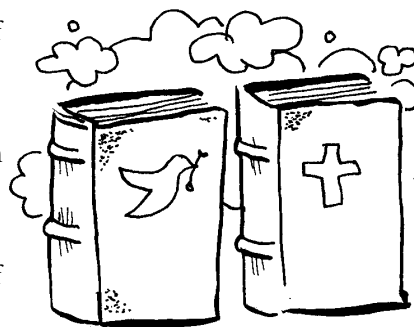
Practicing good stewardship means understanding that God has generously given us gifts which we, in turn, use for his purpose. Everything we have and everything we are comes from God. He deserves the best we have to give.



Why do Catholics do that?

Why do Catholics read the Bible?

The Bible is a set of books written under God's inspiration. The Old Testament traces God's relationship with the Jews and the New Testament recounts the life and teachings of Jesus and the growth of the early Church.



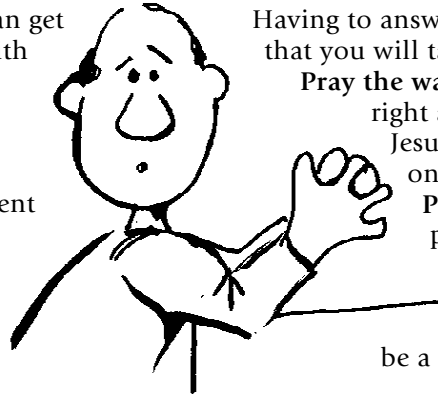
Since God is the author of the Bible, we know it is true. We also know that the Bible contains all that God wants us to know about him. What better way to get to know God than to read his book?

Pray constantly, but when?

There's no question that daily life can get hectic. The more quiet time you have with God, the better, but quality is more important than quantity. Try these tips:

Write it on the calendar. Have a reminder come up on your PDA or computer, or write it on your appointment calendar, "Appointment with God."

Find a prayer partner. Is there someone at work or in your neighborhood with whom you can spend time each day in prayer?



Having to answer to a partner will make it more likely that you will take the time.

Pray the wait. Waiting for an elevator is just the right amount of time for a "Glory Be," or the Jesus prayer ("Jesus, son of God, have mercy on me a sinner").

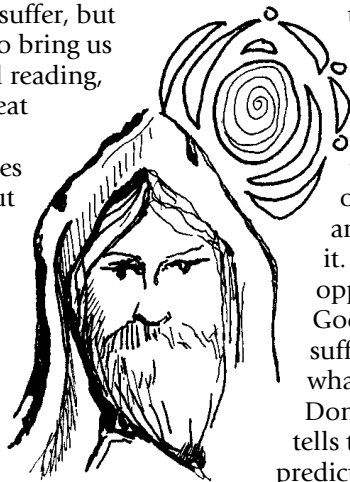
Pocket your prayer. String ten beads, ten paper clips or ten of anything that will fit into your pocket. Pull it out when you have a moment and say ten quick prayers. The weight in your pocket will be a good reminder, too.

from Scripture

Luke 21:5-19, "good" suffering

God doesn't want us to suffer, but he often uses our suffering to bring us closer to him. In this Gospel reading, Jesus warned of a time of great suffering and predicted opportunities for the disciples to tell their persecutors about Jesus and his love. He promised to be with them and inspire them in what to say.

As he predicted, Jerusalem fell after months of siege by the Roman armies during which its inhabitants suffered terribly. Many disciples were tried and executed, but many people were converted by their



testimony.

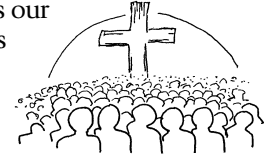
Suffering comes from living in a world made imperfect by sin. Jesus points out that he doesn't want our needless suffering and will help us through it. If we look for opportunities to glorify God in the midst of our suffering, he will tell us what to say and when.

Don't forget: God always tells the truth. As Jesus' predictions of difficult times have come true, so will his promises of happiness in the next life if we stay true to him.

Q & A What does it mean to "live my faith?"

Living our faith each day can help shape a better society and a more peaceful world. For reference, turn to the Gospels, the Ten Commandments, and other tools like the Catholic principles of social justice. Then try these ideas for a start:

Begin at home: How we treat our spouse, children, siblings and parents illustrates reflects our faith. This means treating them with respect, putting their needs before our own, and forgiving them easily.



Take it to work: Christians often have to choose between competing values in the workplace. Remember that we are called not just to avoid evil but to do right. Don't let your desire to do well in your job keep you from advocating for justice.

Americans enjoy one of the most affluent lifestyles in the world. Remember, "Everyone to whom much is given, of him will much be required" (Luke 12:48). Catholics are called to take care of the poor, help the vulnerable, welcome the stranger, treat all with dignity. That's how we live our faith.

Feasts & Celebrations

Nov. 1 – All Saints Day. In the early Church, each saint and martyr had a feast day. Later persecution of Christians created so many martyrs that there weren't enough days for individual commemorations. Eventually Pope Gregory IV designated Nov. 1 as All Saints Day.

Nov. 2 – All Souls Day. We remember all the dead on this day, especially our loved ones and souls in Purgatory. Our prayers and sacrifices can help them get to Heaven faster.

Nov. 4 – St. Charles Borromeo (1584). After earning doctorates in civil and canon law by the age of 21,

he was called to Rome by his uncle, Pope Pius IV, to be cardinal and bishop of Milan. He led by example to reform his diocese and tirelessly worked for poor and sick in his care.

Nov. 10 – Pope St. Leo, the Great (461). Pope St. Leo helped the Church stay united despite attacks from false teachers and warring tribes. He is famous for his explanations of the faith.



Our Mission

To provide practical ideas that promote faithful Catholic living.

Success Publishing & Media, LLC
Publishers of *Growing in Faith™* and *Partners in Faith™*
(540)662-7844 (540)662-7847 fax
www.growinginfaith.com

(Unless noted, Bible quotes and references are from the Revised Standard Version and the New American Bible.)