

# Growing in FAITH™

Discovering hope and joy in the Catholic faith.

November 2022

St Mark Church - St James Church

Emporium - Driftwood Pennsylvania

## One Minute Meditations

### So many saints

In the early Church, there was a great desire to celebrate the saints and martyrs by assigning each a feast day. However, Christians had been so persecuted that there weren't enough days in the calendar for individual commemorations. Eventually Pope Gregory IV designated November 1 as All Saints Day.



### Happiness

As a loving Father, God wants us to be happy. True happiness is: "Joy and beatitude over receiving the fulfillment of our vocation as creatures: a sharing in the divine nature and the vision of God. God put us into the world to know, love, and serve him, and so come to the happiness of paradise (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, # 1720).

### Patience makes sense

Don't be tempted to compare yourself to others. God's plan for each of us is unique. "Be still before the Lord, and wait patiently for him; fret not yourself over him who prospers in his way" (Psalm 37:7).



## Effective prayer is humble, yet bold

Jesus said, "Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you receive it, and you will" (Mark 11:24). The best prayers require the boldness to ask for what we want and the humility to surrender to God's will. Try these tips to pray with humility and boldness:

**Seek reconciliation:** The most common reason for ineffective prayer is unconfessed sin. Start with a thorough examination of conscience to see what needs confessing. Seek forgiveness in the Sacrament of Reconciliation regularly. Ask for the grace to improve.

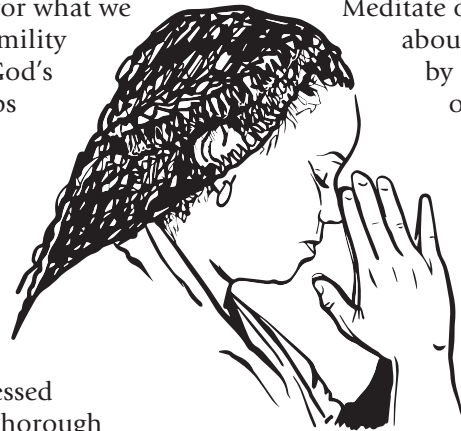
**Step aside:** Sometimes our prayers become lists of demands instead of

conversations with our beloved Father. Put the focus back on Him. Choose a Scripture verse, Biblical image, or a mystery of the Rosary, for example.

Meditate on it and talk with Him about it. We learn humility by lessening the focus on ourselves.

**Give thanks:** Each day, honor God as the source of all that is good in your life. Think of four or five of your favorite blessings and thank Him for them. Doing this daily strengthens our faith in His care.

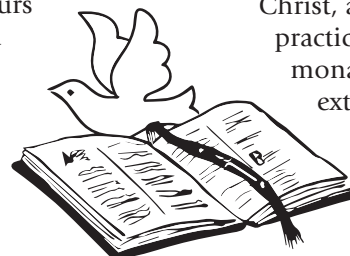
**Act in faith:** "Cast all your anxieties on him, for he cares for you" (1 Peter 5:7). Asking God for help with all your concerns – which is different from demanding – is a sign of humility and bold faith.



## Why Do Catholics Do That?

## Why do Catholics pray the Liturgy of the Hours?

The Liturgy of the Hours is a cycle of prayers said throughout the day. It's the highest form of prayer in the Church after the Mass. The Hours are a meditation on the psalms, canticles, and Scripture readings, and bring us closer to

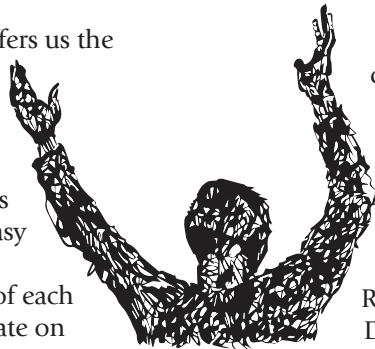


Christ, and to each other. The practice began in the monasteries, but has been extended to priests, deacons, religious orders and the lay faithful. At any given time, someone somewhere, is praying the Liturgy of the Hours.

# Become new during Advent

During the Advent season, the Church offers us the chance to prepare our hearts to celebrate Jesus' birth at Christmas. It's our opportunity to become the people God intended us to be.

**Be mindful.** Fulfilling our responsibilities well is how we glorify God. Yet, it can be easy to get lost in the routine of daily life. St. Josemaria said, "Carry out the little duties of each moment: do what you ought and concentrate on what you are doing."



**Resolve to do better.** "I want to be more considerate," is a great start. Specifics will make it happen. "I'll give others my full attention when they're speaking to me," or "I will be on time to respect others' schedules."

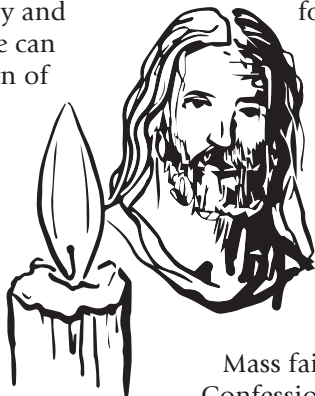
**Be flexible.** If you struggle to find 20 minutes to pray each day, try two 10-minute sessions morning and evening. If you lack time for an entire Rosary, pray one decade at a time throughout the day. Don't miss this chance to prepare well for the birth of Jesus at Christmas.

## from Scripture

### Matthew 24:37-44, Don't be afraid, do be prepared

The Church calendar is a gift to help us mark the seasons of joy and sorrow, work and rest. We can withdraw from the pattern of the world and remember that we wait in joyful hope for Jesus to come.

Beginning at the end of this month, the season of Advent is a time of warning and a time of preparation. Next month we celebrate Jesus' coming at Christmas. But he will come twice more: at our own death, and at the end of time. This Gospel reading reminds us that we will never know ahead of



time just when he will come for us. Advent is the time to ask, "What do I need to do to be ready to greet the Lord?"

Start by examining your conscience and pick one or two sinful practices you want to eliminate.

Then try to spend more time in prayer, attend

Mass faithfully, and go to Confession.

Finally, spend a few extra minutes each day in prayer. Then when Christmas comes, you will know you are ready to greet the Lord with joy.

## Q & A How does the Church decide who is a saint?

There are many people in Heaven who are saints but whose names we may never know. They are uncanonized saints. Canonization is the formal process by which the Church identifies and

determines whether someone has become a saint.



In its simplest form, official Church procedures detail three steps to recognizing a saint. First, the bishop of the

diocese where the person died begins an extensive investigation. The results are passed to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints. If the Congregation approves, the prefect presents the cause to the pope. With the pope's approval, the petitioner becomes "venerable" and is called "Servant of God."

Next, "beatification," may come after further investigation and a miracle has proven to be attributed to the Servant of God's intercession after his or her death. Then the person can be called "Blessed."

Finally, canonization may follow additional investigation and a second miracle also proven to have occurred after the beatification and as a result of the candidate's intercession. After canonization, the "Blessed" is called "Saint."

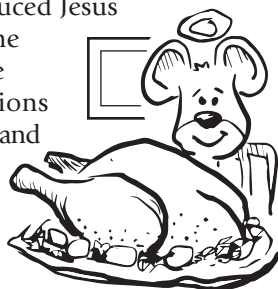
## Feasts & Celebrations

**November 2 – All Souls Day.** On this day we pray for the dead, especially our loved ones and the souls in Purgatory. Our prayers and sacrifices can help them get to Heaven.

**November 16 – St. Gertrude the Great (1301).** Born in 1256 in Germany, St. Gertrude was raised by and later joined the Benedictine nuns. When she was about twenty-six, she began having visions of Christ. She was known for her personal holiness, her kindness to the rich and poor, and her prayers for the souls in Purgatory.

**November 27 – First Sunday in Advent.** We anticipate Christ's birth and his coming on the last day. Catholics around the world light candles in an Advent wreath to signal the coming of the light of Christ.

**November 30 – St. Andrew (1st Century).** The son of a Galilean fisherman and brother of Simon Peter, he introduced Jesus to Peter. After the Resurrection, he conducted missions in Turkey, Greece and Macedonia. He was martyred on a X-shaped cross.



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