

Growing in FAITH™

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

May 2022

St Mark Church - St James Church

Emporium - Driftwood Pennsylvania

One Minute Meditations

Your turn

No parish can do the work of the Church without support from parishioners. For example, parishioners may bring Communion to the sick or infirm, clean the church, staff parish ministries, teach faith formation and give money to keep church facilities operating. It is this vital participation that brings the heart of Jesus to His people. Ask your pastor what your parish needs from you.

Sunday reminder

The Church requires that Catholics participate in Mass on Sunday and other holy days of obligation. It's the best way we regularly encounter Christ. We are also to abstain from work on Sunday that could interfere with the attention and worship due to God. God wants us to rest on Sunday to gather strength for the week ahead.

"Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with brotherly affection; outdo one another in showing honor"

(Romans 12:9-10).



Virtues are the antidotes to sin

Virtues are good moral habits that shape our hearts to be like God's. They help us habitually do what is good. As the building blocks for Christian moral living, virtues help to counter sin. For example:

Humility: This virtue is the antidote to pride. Humility helps us to recognize that God is worthy of our worship and obedience. Rather than focusing on ourselves, humility helps us to be willing to focus on God, live according to His ways. Ideas for practicing this virtue include always taking the less important position, drawing attention to others rather than ourselves, learning to love simple things.

Forgiveness: The sin of anger is

defined as an uncontrolled feeling of hatred and wrath. Indulging in anger causes us to hold onto hateful feelings for others. The antidote is forgiveness.

When offended by someone, forgive quickly and work to heal the relationship. Refrain from gossip and avoid criticizing unless you can offer reasonable and useful solutions.

Gratitude and generosity go hand-in-hand. They remind us God is the source of all good, and that

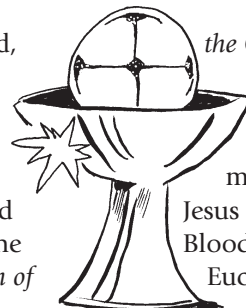
everything good we have is a gift to be enjoyed and shared. Stop the "compare-despair" cycle of envy and greed. Limit your time on social media and impulse shopping. Name something you appreciate daily, or find a way to show kindness each day.



Why Do Catholics Do That?

Why do Catholics call the Eucharist the "Real Presence?"

At the Last Supper, Jesus said, "This is my body...this is the cup of my blood" (Matthew 26:26-28) over the bread and wine, and so it was. He commanded His Apostles, and the priests after them, to do the same at every Mass (*Catechism of*



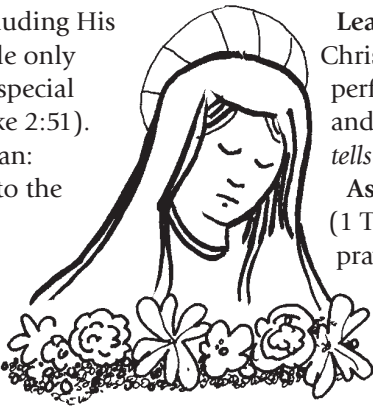
the Catholic Church, #1375).

When we receive Communion, we're literally heart-to-Heart with Jesus. The details are a mystery, but that doesn't stop Jesus from coming to us, Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity in the Eucharist.

“Behold your mother” (John 19:27)

On the Cross, Jesus gave us everything, including His mother to be our mother (John 19:27). While only God is worthy of worship, Mary is accorded special honor in imitation of Jesus’ love for her (Luke 2:51). To demonstrate honor and love for her, we can:

Call her “Mom.” When we are baptized into the Church, Mary becomes our mother by grace (CCC #967), and we can address her with confidence and affection as her children. Mary wants the best for us. She always leads us to her Son by the quickest and safest route.



Learn from her. Want to know how to follow Christ faithfully – daily? Mary was the first – and the perfect – Christian. She continually trusted God and followed His will, and tells us, “Do whatever he tells you” (John 2:5).

Ask her for prayers. Christ is the one Mediator (1 Timothy 2:5). However, she also receives our prayers for others. Because she is His mother and the Queen of Heaven, Mary’s prayers are powerful. She will keep praying for us until we are in Heaven.

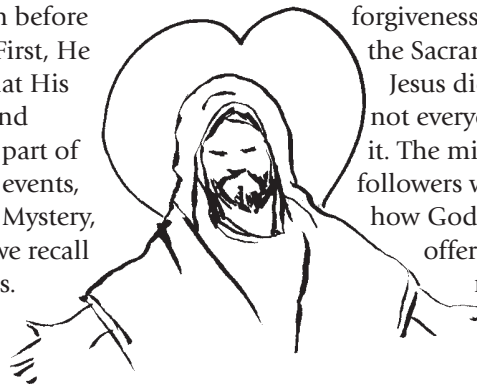
from Scripture

Luke 24:46-53, Our mission from God

This passage is Luke’s version of the Ascension when Jesus ascends to His Father in Heaven. Jesus gave his disciples a mission before entering Heaven. First, He reminded them that His suffering, death, and Resurrection were part of God’s plan. These events, called the Paschal Mystery, are so important we recall them at every Mass.

Then, Jesus sent His disciples out to call others to repentance and discipleship. Having heard about Christ’s suffering, death and Resurrection for their salvation, the next logical step would be to repent

– literally, to “go beyond their usual way of thinking.” People were and are invited to reconcile with God by the forgiveness of their sins through the Sacraments.



Jesus died for everyone, but not everyone knew about it. The mission of His first followers was to tell everyone how God saved them and to offer them, in Christ’s name, a way forward:

repentance and forgiveness. If we know Christ, His sacrifice, His love, and the eternal life He offers us, we are commanded to tell others, whether by word, deed, or living example.

Feasts & Celebrations

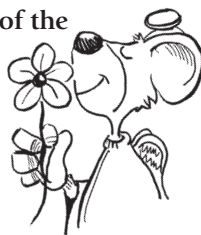
May 12 – St. Pancras (c. 304). Orphaned at an early age, he was brought by an uncle to Rome and, inspired by Christians, they converted. Both were beheaded for refusing to sacrifice to idols during the reign of Emperor Diocletian. St. Pancras was only fourteen years old.

May 14 - St. Matthias (1st century). When the apostles met to choose Judas’ successor, Peter said that the new Apostle must have followed Jesus from his baptism to his Ascension and

witnessed his Resurrection. St. Matthias was chosen by lots to fill Judas’ place.

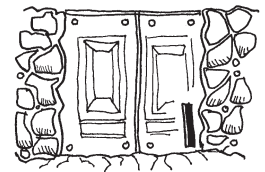
May 22 - St. Rita of Cascia (1457). Unwillingly married off to a cruel husband at the age of twelve, St. Rita spent eighteen unhappy years before being widowed. After her sons died of illness, she became an Augustinian nun. She was known for her devotion to prayer and charity.

May 29 - Ascension of the Lord. This solemnity marks the completion of Jesus’ mission of salvation and His triumphant entry into Heaven.



Q & A What is the feast of our Lady of Loreto?

In 2019, Pope Francis set aside a day specially devoted to Our



Lady of Loreto. Loreto, Italy, is believed to be where the house in which Mary grew up is located. According to tradition, angels carried the house from Israel to Italy in the thirteenth century when the Holy Land was under attack.

Whether angels really transported the house, or a devout, wealthy family paid to have it moved, scientific findings have verified that the house itself is not from thirteenth-century Italy. The architectural style, construction, and the pollen granules found in the mortar are not characteristic of thirteen-century Italy, but of first-century Palestine.

We are not required to believe in the miraculous transportation of the House of Loreto, but the significance of this devotion still applies. We are reminded of her universal motherhood (John 19:27). We’re encouraged to ask her intercession for families today, and to remember the importance of the family in God’s saving plan.

Our Mission

To provide practical ideas that promote faithful Catholic living.

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