

Growing in FAITH™

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

May 2018

St. Raphael Catholic Church

Rev. John M. Connell, Pastor

One Minute Meditations

St. Joseph the Worker

As Jesus' father on Earth, protector of the Holy

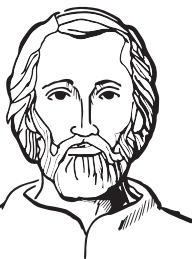
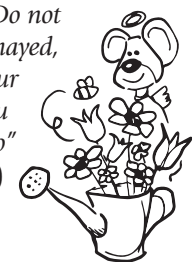
Family, and the spouse of the Blessed Mother, St. Joseph was an example of obedience. He was also a carpenter who used the work of his hands to serve his family and community.

Jesus, too, was a carpenter. He learned the trade from St. Joseph, working side-by-side in his carpentry shop. Jesus learned dedication, integrity, and the dignity of work from the example of his earthly father.

Turn to Mary

This month, we honor Mary, the Mother of God (and ours, too). Trust her for guidance and protection: "Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help, or sought thine intercession was left unaided."

"I command you: be strong and steadfast! Do not fear nor be dismayed, for the Lord, your God, is with you wherever you go" (Joshua 1:9)



"Lord, grant me serenity."

Stress can result from feeling powerless in difficulties, yet change isn't always up to us. Knowing when to step back and surrender can actually bring peace. When faced with what we cannot change, try these tips for increasing feelings of serenity and peace.

"My peace I give you" (John 14:27). Remember, Jesus does not want us to be troubled by worldly concerns. When you feel yourself starting to worry or stew about a difficult situation (or person), act out your belief that your prayer for resolution will be answered. Substitute positive, cheerful thoughts for negative ones. God is in control.

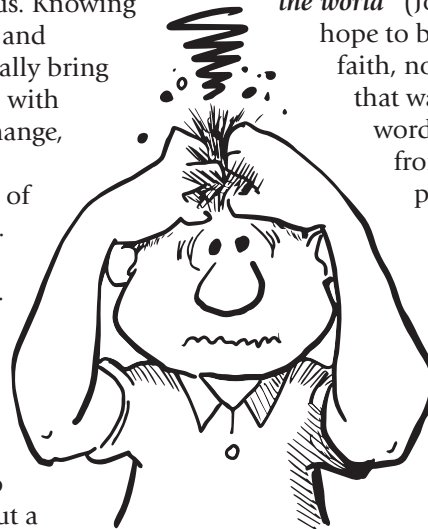
"Rejoice in the Lord always. I shall say it

again: Rejoice!" (Philippians 4:4).

"... Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). While we hope to be strong witnesses of our faith, not everyone will see us that way. Sometimes sharp words or critical comments from others can disturb our peace. Feedback can be helpful, but if anyone gets to you for more than day or two, consult a fellow Christian whom you trust for a better perspective.

"I can do all things in him who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13). Take every opportunity

to appreciate your place in God's kingdom. Relish the tasks you have been given, for a job well done brings satisfaction and increased contentment.



Why Do Catholics Do That?

The saints' prayers for us are called "intercessory prayers." Asking the saints to pray for us is "good and pleasing to God" and is encouraged in Scripture: "I ask that supplications, prayers, petitions, and thanksgivings be offered" (1 Timothy 2:1).



Why do we ask the saints to pray for us?

Intercessory prayer is powerful: by it, the saints help us on earth and we help those in Purgatory. Our prayers are joined to the prayers of Christ, who "never ceases to intercede for us" (Catechism of the Catholic Church, #2741).

Three ways to share God's love

Christians know that our most important task is to share God's love with others. Finding ways to communicate love in a fallen world can be tricky, however. Try these strategies:

"And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kindly to everyone, an apt teacher, forbearing," (2 Timothy 2:24). Does someone have a need you can meet? Can others benefit from your knowledge or talents? Show love by cheerfully jumping to help those around you.

"The ill-tempered stir up strife, but the patient settle



disputes" (Proverbs 15:18). It's hard to show love for others if we are fighting with them. When tempted to get involved in a spat, ask if winning will strengthen a relationship, lead to a better outcome, and if the issue is meaningful or important. If not, try to compromise or walk away.

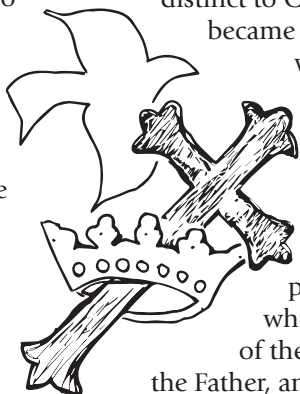
"Bless the Lord, my soul; and do not forget all his gifts" (Psalm 103:2). When we are constantly aware of God's love, our natural response is to offer up our voices to praise him.

from Scripture

Matthew 28:16-20, The Holy Trinity

Jesus appeared to the Apostles on the mountain top in Galilee, so they could receive their final instructions. They were to go forth, baptize, and make disciples, and to teach what they had been taught. These are our instructions, too. Once we meet Jesus and experience his love for us, we can't keep him to ourselves. We must share him.

Jesus also revealed to the Apostles, and to the crowd gathered with them, that God is a Trinity —Father, Son, and Holy Spirit — three Divine Persons united in love. The



belief that God is three, yet one, is distinct to Christianity. When we became members of the Church, we were baptized in the name of the Trinity.

The Trinity is a mystery we may not fully understand, but we can still live in its love and power. We proclaim our faith in it whenever we make the Sign of the Cross: "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." Our ultimate goal is to follow Christ into the eternal life of the Trinity.

Q & A Why are Christians asked to evangelize?

Before Jesus ascended to Heaven, he instructed his disciples, "Go into the whole world and proclaim the gospel to every creature"



(Mark 16:15). The Gospel, or "good news," to which Jesus referred is his

Resurrection and victory over death. God became man and died for our sins, then rose from the dead. Thanks to Jesus, we have hope for a new life on Earth and eternal life in Heaven if we follow him. "There is no salvation through anyone else, nor is there any other name under heaven given to the human race by which we are to be saved" (Acts 4:12).

Think of it another way: If you discovered a way to eliminate hunger in the world or found a medicine to cure all diseases, you would want to share what you know with everyone who will listen. Jesus' death and Resurrection offers something more amazing: eternal life. Once we have heard and believed the Good News, we can't keep it to ourselves. We must tell everyone about it.

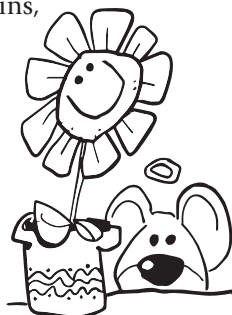
Feasts & Celebrations

May 3 – Saints Philip and James (1st Century). St. Philip was born in Bethsaida and followed John the Baptist before he followed Christ. After the Ascension, St. Philip preached in Asia Minor, where he was martyred. St. James, son of Alphaeus, was also one of the twelve apostles. He is often confused with St. James, Brother of the Lord, who helped St. Peter in leading the early Church.

May 10 – Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord (1st Century). This solemnity marks the completion of Jesus' mission of salvation and his

triumphant entry into Heaven. *Note:* In many dioceses, observance of Ascension has been moved to the following Sunday.

May 18 – St. Felix of Cantalice (1587). Born to poor, pious parents in Italy, St. Felix was called "Brother Deogratias" because he was always thanking God. As a young man, he joined the Capuchins, who sent him to Rome to be the friary's official beggar. He was also friends with Saints Philip Neri and Charles Borromeo.



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