

One Minute Meditations

St. John Fisher

Born in Beverley, England, St. John Fisher became a

renowned scholar and bishop. He even served as chaplain to the mother of King Henry VIII. Things with the royal family soured when St. John denounced the king's divorce from Queen Catherine and refused to recognize King Henry as Head of the Church of England. He was arrested twice but remained loyal to the Catholic Church, even to death. He shares his feast day with St. Thomas More.

St. Joseph's way

In St. Joseph's life, God found the silence he needed to be heard over the noise of a carpenter's routine and was able to establish an immediate rapport. When God spoke, St. Joseph immediately obeyed. God will speak to us, too, in the silence of our lives.

"If we acknowledge our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from every wrongdoing"
(1 John 1:9).



Is sin real?

The world tells us that sin doesn't really exist and we should just try to be good people. Frankly, that isn't enough. Sin results when we don't follow God's laws. Dealing with sin is uncomfortable but the consequences are eternal.

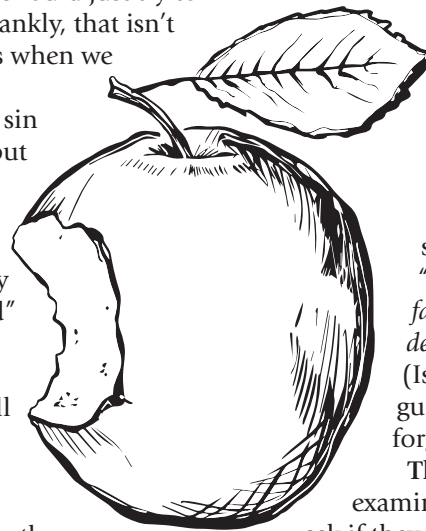
God's rules
rule. While we may think we are "good" and others may look up to us, eventually God will decide if we have been what he considers "good." Since his opinion is the one that matters, his rules rule.

Sin is real. The world tells us that sin doesn't exist but Catholics know that "sin is a deliberate thought, word, deed, or omission contrary to the eternal law of God" (*Catechism of the*

Catholic Church). The law can be found in the Ten Commandments, the Beatitudes, and in Scripture. The law says sin is real.

No guilt, no forgiveness. Unconfessed sin separates us from God. *"For you have hidden your face from us and have delivered us up to our guilt"* (Isaiah 64:6). Avoiding guilt means losing God's forgiveness.

The plan. Each evening, examine the day's actions and ask if they please God or not. Resolve to do better and take steps to change. Seek absolution through the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Then when you meet God he will say, *"Well done, my good and faithful servant"* (Matthew 25:23).



Why Do Catholics Do That?

Why do Catholics believe the Church is holy?

The Church is holy, not because of her individual members, but because God, who created, guides, sustains, and purifies her, is holy. She also has the means to grow in holiness: the sacraments, the Ten Commandments, prayer,



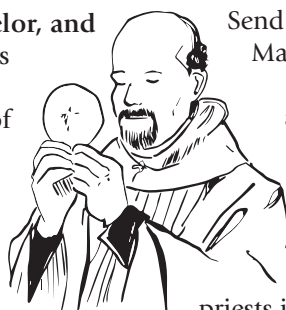
and the virtue, charity. This holiness comes from the lives of the saints, who followed Christ faithfully and practiced heroic virtue. "The Church, then, is 'the holy People of God,' and her members are called 'saints'" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC)*, 823).

We can help our priests help us.

The parish priest is celebrant, teacher, counselor, and financial manager. He works more than 60 hours weekly, doing everything from administering Sacraments to taking out the trash, yet nine out of ten priests report being happy in their ministry. Our support can help them stay strong:

Pray for a priest every day. Let him know, and the knowledge of your prayers will strengthen him in difficult times.

Express appreciation. Tell your priest when something he has done or said makes a difference to you.



Send an encouraging note or e-mail, or mention it after Mass.

Wait for the facts. A priest's visible position can attract misunderstanding. Until you have the facts, give your priest the benefit of the doubt.

Roll up your sleeves. A priest's job is easier if we each use our gifts in our parishes. Ask how you can help.

Attend Mass. The best way to support our priests is to attend Mass every weekend and Holy Day. Acting in the person of Christ is the greatest job benefit.

from Scripture

Luke 9:51-62, The profile of a disciple

This Gospel passage is all about the requirements of discipleship. The first man, filled with enthusiasm, blurted out his intention to follow Jesus. Jesus reminded him that he had no home, no family, and no place to sleep. The difficulties of having to "let go" and, if needed, "do without" to follow Christ have turned many away.

For the second man in the story, the problem was priorities. Jesus called him personally, but instead, the man wanted to fulfill his duty to his dying father first. Whenever God invites us to follow him, we can't delay him. Our



duty, as disciples, is to obey.

The third man wanted to say farewell to his family at home before leaving. Jesus knew that

looking back while plowing can ruin the job. He used that example to help the third man

understand that, if we are serious about following Christ, we

can't constantly be changing our decision.

We will have to make sacrifices to follow Jesus, but he promises us that the rewards will be worth much more than anything we leave behind.

Q & A

What is "Catholic guilt?"

Popular culture often refers negatively to "Catholic guilt," implying that Catholics are weighed down by a regretful awareness of having done

wrong. Actually, guilt has a purpose. Our conscience is like the compass in our car, and guilt is what tells us we're going the wrong way. It helps us to get back on the road—in this case, to Heaven.

There's good guilt and bad guilt. Good guilt is what someone feels if he did something he knew was wrong on purpose, i.e. if he sinned. Sin hurts our relationship with God and is harmful to us. "Healthy" guilt calls for a contrite heart and a change of behavior. For Catholics, guilt should disappear when we're forgiven in Confession.

However, guilt with no corresponding sin, or lingering guilt over confessed sins, is bad guilt. This "useless" guilt denies God's goodness, mercy, and power to save. It also robs us of peace and joy. If you struggle with bad guilt, talk to a priest, counselor, or trusted friend for help.

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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)

Feasts & Celebrations

June 5 - St. Boniface (754). The "Apostle of Germany," St. Boniface was a monk dedicated to spreading the Gospel in Germany. He converted many to Christianity and restored dioceses in Bavaria, Thuringia, and Franconia.

June 17 - St. Emily de Vialar (1856). Born into the French aristocracy, St. Emily used her inheritance to found a religious order—the Sisters of St. Joseph of the Apparition. They cared for the sick and started schools in Europe, Africa, and Asia.

June 23 - Corpus Christi Sunday. On

this solemnity, we celebrate the transformation of the bread and wine into Jesus' Body and Blood in the Holy Eucharist. This solemnity was established by Pope Urban IV in 1264 in response to the need for a Eucharistic feast day.

June 29 - SS. Peter and Paul (1st century). Peter, an ordinary fisherman made extraordinary by God's grace, was chosen by Jesus to lead the Church. An early persecutor of the Church, Saul became the Great Apostle Paul, also transformed by grace.

