Growing in FAITH™

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

March 2021

Saint Teresa of Avila Parish
Rev. J. Jerome Wild, Pastor

One Minute Meditations

The Eucharist is now

During the celebration of the Eucharist, the past action of Jesus becomes present. It is a liturgical representation of His sacrifice. Not merely a commemoration, Mass makes the sacrifice truly present. When we participate in the Eucharist, the past becomes present to us and we are present at the saving event.

Live generously

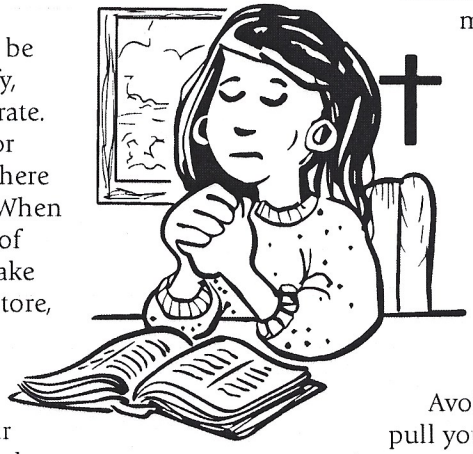
In a world that judges people based on their accumulated wealth, it is easy to notice what we don't have and to wish for it. Lent, however, invites us to live in gratitude for what we do have. Gratitude then gives rise to generosity – sharing God's love and gifts with others. Generous people are encouraging, positive, and appreciative. During Lent, notice and appreciate God's gifts and share them with others.

Always ready

"God never tires of forgiving us; we are the ones who tire of seeking his mercy" (Pope Francis).

Refocus in the desert

Lent may be a time of penance and sacrifice but it doesn't have to be a time of sadness. In fact, the season brings an opportunity to become the people God created us to be. This time in our spiritual desert can be a chance to simplify, focus, and concentrate.



Simplify. Look for areas in your life where there are excesses. When we have too much of something, it can take extra time to sort, store, and maintain the supply beyond what we need. For example, is your clothes closet packed too tightly? Is your pantry overstocked? Can you clean out and give some gently used items to the poor? You'll spend less mental and physical energy if you keep only what you need.

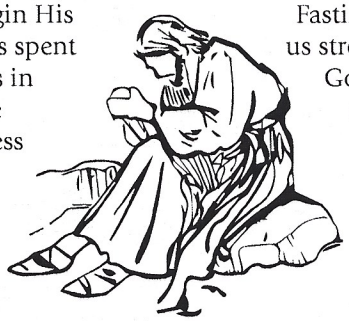
Focus. During Lent, we are called to spend more intentional time with God. To help, consider fasting from distractions. Limiting social media exposure, controlling time spent working, or turning off the cell phone for periods of time can help you find space to add more prayer and Scripture reading to your day.

Concentrate. Avoid influences that pull you away from God. *"... But worldly anxiety, the lure of riches, and the craving for other things intrude and choke the Word, and it bears no fruit"* (Mark 4:19). Resolve to live a life that pleases God.

Why Do Catholics Do That?

Why do Catholics fast and abstain?

In preparing to begin His public ministry, Jesus spent forty days and nights in the wilderness of the desert. In the starkness of the desert, He strengthened His connection to his Father. God's love was all Jesus needed.



Fasting and abstinence also help us strengthen our connection to God. They are ways of expressing sorrow for the ways we stray from God's friendship. By denying ourselves material comforts, we increase our dependence on God and our appreciation for His gifts.

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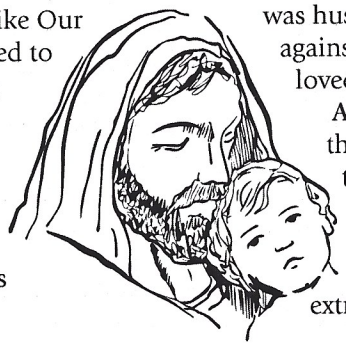
St. Joseph – ordinary or extraordinary?

Why did Jesus choose Joseph to be His father on Earth? St. Joseph wasn't rich, powerful, or even sinless like Our Lady. Born ordinary, virtue and grace combined to make Joseph remarkable. In fact, by choosing him, Jesus gave us a model we can follow.



A man of faith. In spite of persecution and societal pressure, Joseph answered the call to live the two greatest commandments. He put God first and did all that He asked, no matter how incredible. And, Joseph put his family's needs before his own.

A husband. He respected that his primary vocation was husband to Mary. In fact, public opinion was against him when took pregnant Mary as his wife. He loved her anyway.

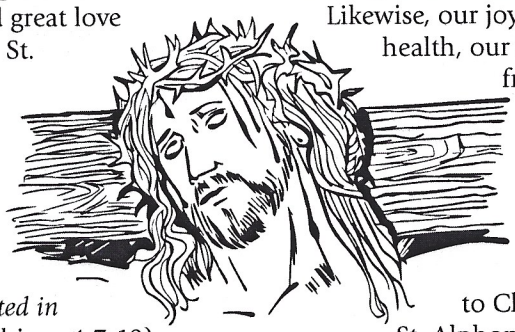
A father. As a devout Jew, he knew the psalms and the law of Moses. He didn't just teach his son a trade, Jesus was taught to be a faithful Son of God.

Like us, St. Joseph began ordinary but cooperated with God's grace to become extraordinary. That is possible for us, too.

from Scripture

Mark 14:1-15, 47, Make Jesus' Passion our own.

It's even more important to share in his suffering and great love during his Passion. St. Paul said, *"We hold this treasure in earthen vessels … always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our body"* (2 Corinthians 4:7-10). He means that everything that happens in our lives – the good and the bad – can be part of our bond with Jesus.



Every day our frustrations, our fears, our loneliness and temptations can become ways in which we share in the suffering and death of Christ.

Likewise, our joys, our good health, our family and friends are all important ways to share in the joy of his Resurrection. The point is to offer everything to Christ.

St. Alphonsus wrote, "We should consider not so much the sorrows Jesus suffered as the love with which he bore them." Disciples of Jesus can have the same attitude toward suffering as he did and can share in his joy of Resurrection.

Q & A What is Eucharistic Adoration?

Wouldn't it be amazing to be face to face with Jesus? Imagine sitting with Him, talking together, thanking Him for His gifts, asking for favors. In many churches throughout the world, Catholics are able to do just that in Perpetual Adoration.

Adoration is a Eucharistic devotion that offers the opportunity to be in the presence of Jesus, under the appearance of the Eucharistic Host – the Blessed Sacrament. Placed in a monstrance for display, all can see and pray in the presence of Our Lord. Parishes with Perpetual Adoration chapels are able to host adoration twenty-four hours a day. Other parishes offer periods of time adorers can worship in person.

"Adoration is the first attitude of man acknowledging that he is a creature before his Creator. It exalts the greatness of the Lord who made us and the almighty power of the Savior who sets us free from evil" (*CCC*, #2628). There are many ways to adore God, but in Adoration, we are truly in Jesus' presence adoring him in person.

Feasts & Celebrations

March 1 – St. David of Wales (c. 600). St. David is the patron saint of Wales. He was born into Welsh nobility, but instead chose to become a priest. He was later consecrated a bishop. He is best known for founding an ascetic monastery and ridding the area of the Pelagian heresy.

March 17 – St. Patrick of Ireland (c.461). Born in Scotland, St. Patrick was kidnapped and brought to Ireland as a slave. He escaped but later returned to become the bishop of Ireland and is credited for having established the Church there.

March 19 – St. Joseph, Husband of Mary (1st Century). Jesus' earthly father and husband to the Blessed Mother, St. Joseph is a model of fatherhood and a protector of families.

March 25 – Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion (1st Century). On Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion, we recall Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem, when he was greeted by crowds waving palms and cheering. This Sunday marks the beginning of Holy Week.

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