

# Growing in FAITH™

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

July 2015

**St. Francis of Assisi Parish**

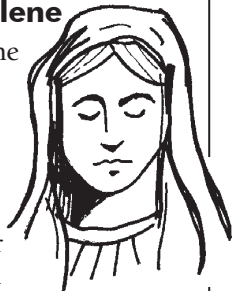
Rev. Anthony Francis Spilka, OFM Conv., Pastor

## One Minute Meditations

### St. Mary Magdalene

St. Mary Magdalene had reason to be grateful to Jesus.

He freed her from seven demons that oppressed her (Luke 8:2). In turn, St. Mary helped to support Jesus' ministry from her own money, followed him faithfully, and stood at the foot of the Cross with Jesus' mother. Often mistaken for the sinful woman in Luke 7:36-50, she was the one Jesus chose to inform the Apostles of his Resurrection. She is known as the "Apostle to the Apostles."



### From Pope Francis

In his recent encyclical, *Laudato Si*, Pope Francis challenges all of us to change our lifestyles to be gentler to the environment, the poor, and each other. Remember creation is a gift. "Find happiness in simple things: get-togethers, helping others, honing a talent, enjoying art and music, praying."

*"The Lord God then took the man and settled him in the garden of Eden, to cultivate and care for it" (Genesis 2:15).*



## Are you a new creation?

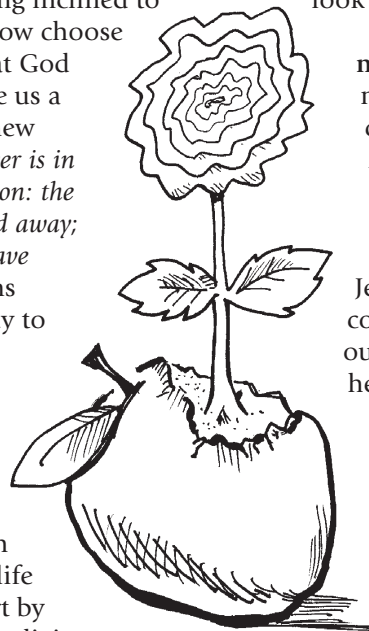
When sin first entered the world, God's perfect plan of creation went awry. Instead of being inclined to do good, humans now choose sin. This is not what God intended, so he gave us a chance to become new creations. *"So whoever is in Christ is a new creation: the old things have passed away; behold, new things have come"* (2 Corinthians 5:17). Are you ready to become something new?

**Our new life begins now.** Jesus did not die on the Cross so that our new life could begin someday. Our new life begins now. We start by working to become a living,

breathing example of the teachings of Jesus Christ. We start by trying to look like him.

**Immediate perfection is not required.** It is important not to wait until we think we can get it completely right. All that matters is to make a start. God will help us with the rest.

**Use the Lord's strength.** Jesus knew that once lost, we couldn't make it to Heaven on our own. We need his help so he left us supports such as the Sacraments where we can seek his grace. When we stumble and fall, Jesus will pick us up and help us get back on track. Trying again is what makes the difference between the old and the new.



## Why Do Catholics Do That?

## What is Anointing of the Sick?

The Sacrament, "Anointing of the Sick," strengthens those suffering a serious illness or infirmity of age. Anointing can be received more than once in a lifetime. *"Is anyone among you sick? He should summon the presbyters*

*of the church, and they should pray over him and anoint [him] with oil in the name of the Lord"* (James 5:14).

This sacrament also has the effect of uniting the sick to the passion of Christ, giving peace and strength, and forgiving sins.



## Don't take a vacation from Mass

The lazy days of summer can make it tempting to be lazy on Sunday and stay home from Mass, but here are four reasons to fit Mass attendance into our summer schedules:

1. **After Jesus' resurrection**, his followers came together to keep his message alive and became the early Church. Every time we attend Mass, we help to keep Jesus' message alive – but that can only happen in church.
2. **At Sunday Mass**, millions of people we don't know are praying for us and with us. Where else can we get that kind of help?



3. **Attending Mass connects us to the Communion of Saints** – the saints in heaven, the souls in purgatory and believers on Earth. That's powerful company.
  4. **Mass is the way a Catholic fulfills the 3rd Commandment** to keep holy the Sabbath day – instructions straight from God. If God says to do something, we should do it.
- Note:* to find a Catholic church or Mass time anywhere in the country, call 858-207-6277 or visit [www.masstimes.org](http://www.masstimes.org).

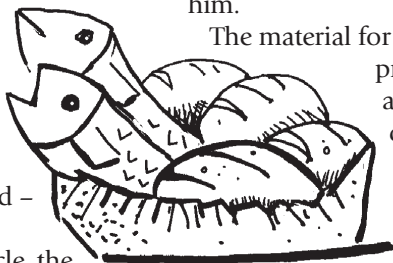
### from Scripture

#### John 6:1-15; loaves and fishes.

Jesus' fame spread largely due to the healings and other signs he performed. People came from all over hoping to share in the material benefits he offered. With the famous miracle during which he multiplied a few loaves and fishes to feed thousands, Jesus met peoples' material need and introduced the eternal bread – himself.

After witnessing the miracle, the crowd wanted to make Jesus king. They thought that this sign was proof that he was the "Prophet, the one who is to come into the world," in the final days" (Deuteronomy 18:15, 18). After all, the

great prophet Moses fed people too. But Jesus wasn't fooled by their enthusiasm and left quickly. He knew that their zeal was not true faith in him.



The material for this miracle was provided by a boy – an insignificant child. By choosing him, though, Jesus showed that nobody is insignificant

when it comes to proclaiming the Gospel. So, what bread or fish can you offer to God? If you have true faith in the real Bread, your offering just might become a miracle, too.

### Q & A

#### What is "stewardship"?

Remember the parable of the three servants who looked after the master's money while he was gone? The first two servants invested the money wisely, but the third was punished for having done nothing with what was given him. (See Matthew 25:14-30.) He was a poor steward



of his master's goods.

A steward is someone trusted to manage an employer's affairs and possessions. We have each been trusted with talents and strengths to use in God's service and to further his mission. He expects us to use these gifts to help others know him, love him, serve him, and be happy with him in Heaven.

Today, stewardship means committing the best portion of our time, talent, and treasure to the mission of the Church. Generous sharing of resources, including money, is central to caring for God's Church and his people. When you realize that everything you have and everything you do is from God, then you want to give back to God in thanksgiving. That's modern day stewardship in action.

### Feasts & Celebrations

**July 11 – St. Benedict (543).** While pursuing an education in Rome, Benedict became disillusioned with the life of privilege and retired to a cave outside of Rome for three years. Others who recognized his holiness followed him. In 529 he built Monte Cassino – his first monastery – and wrote the rule of the Benedictines, "Ora et Labora," which means "Pray and Work."

**July 14 – St. Kateri Tekakwitha (1680).** A smallpox epidemic in her Native American village left Kateri orphaned, disfigured, and sight

impaired. Introduced to Catholicism by missionaries, she was baptized at the age of 19. Ostracized by those in her village, she moved to a Christian village where she lived in holiness.

**July 16 – Our Lady of Mount Carmel (1251).** A holy place to ancient Jews, a large monastery was built on Mount Carmel to honor the Mother of God. Carmelite tradition holds that she appeared to St. Simon there and gave him a scapular. Wearing one has become a popular way to honor the Blessed Mother.



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