

# Growing in FAITH™

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

March 2016

**St. Francis of Assisi Parish**

Rev. Anthony Francis Spilka, OFM Conv., Pastor

## One Minute Meditations

### St. Casimir of Poland

Born a prince of Poland, St. Casimir was endowed with a strong conscience by a great teacher, John Dlugosz. He was recognized for his holiness and integrity. He slept on the ground and spent nights in prayer. When his father sent him to take over Hungary, Prince Casimir assessed the odds against winning the war. Seeing he was outnumbered, he turned back out of concern for his troops, and resolved never to go to war again.



### Act from Within

Sometimes we can do the right thing for the wrong reason. For example, do we follow the Ten Commandments because we are afraid of being punished, or because it's the right thing to do? Today, make a commitment to follow your conscience and act from within.

*"We even boast of our afflictions, knowing that affliction produces endurance, and endurance, proven character, and hope does not disappoint"*  
(Romans 5:3-5).



## Four ways to build a special relationship with Jesus

Scripture clearly says that God wants to have an intimate relationship with each of us. Yet it can be challenging to feel close to one we can't always see. It may help to remember that Jesus is a living person, still accessible and available. *"Call to me and I will answer you, and will tell you great and hidden things which you have not known"* (Jeremiah 33:3).

**Picture him in detail.** Imagine his clothing, his face, and the color of his hair and eyes. Recall that image whenever you talk to him.

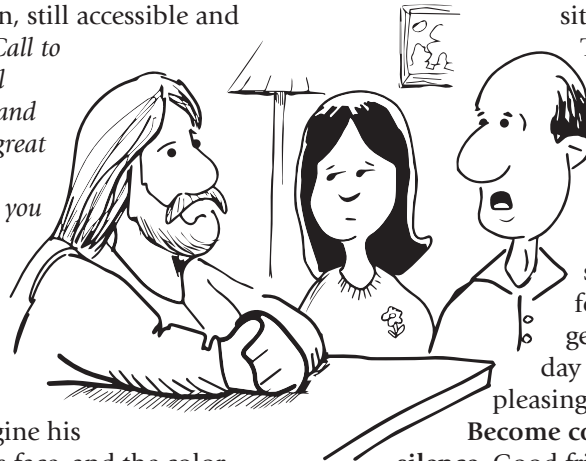
**Learn his background.** Read his biography (the Scriptures). Find out about his mother and father, his

friends, neighbors, how he spent his time on Earth and what he does now. Discover his likes, dislikes and qualities he looks for in his friends.

**Spend time with him.** Imagine he is sitting next to you.

Tell him about yourself. Share your struggles, what you hope to accomplish, what makes you happy, what saddens you. Ask for Jesus' help to get through your day in a way that is pleasing to God.

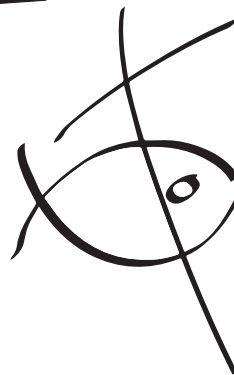
**Become comfortable with silence.** Good friends don't always talk. Sometimes they sit in companionable silence just to be together. Using your image of Jesus, spend time in silence with him, just for the sake of being together.



## Why Do Catholics Do That?

### What do Catholics believe are the Four Marks of the Church?

The Marks of the Church are that it is 'one, holy, catholic, and apostolic.' The Church is one because all the members are united in Christ. The Church is holy because it shares in the holiness of Christ, who founded it.

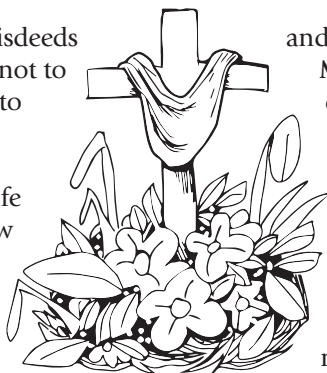


It is catholic because of its universal mission to spread the Gospel to all people. Finally, the Church is apostolic because it is founded on the teaching of the Apostles, which was handed on to their successors the bishops.

## Easter is a Second Chance

What if we could go back and undo all the misdeeds we regret from our past? Wouldn't it be freeing not to just be forgiven for our mistakes but to be able to make things so right it is as if they never happened? That is actually the nature of God's mercy. When Easter morning dawns, our new life begins and we start as new creations. Here's how to make the most of your second chance:

**Start off on the right foot:** Go to Easter Mass and renew your baptismal promises. Take to heart your vow to renounce evil



and embrace new life.

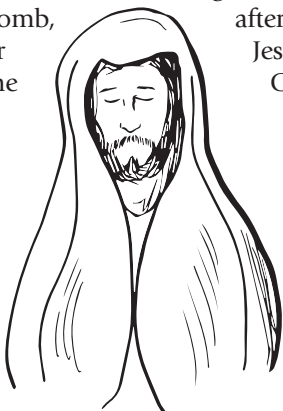
**Make an Easter resolution:** Be a truly new creation. Keep all your good Lenten habits going after Easter.

**Take advantage of God's bad memory.** God's perfect love means he does not bear grudges, keep track of wrongdoing, or hold onto ill will. When he forgives, he forgets. Stay close to the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession), and be confident that you are restored to full friendship with God.

### from Scripture

#### John 20:1-9, The Resurrection of Jesus

When Mary Magdalene told the Apostles what she saw at the tomb, John and Peter raced to see for themselves. When John saw the burial cloths inside the tomb, he may have recognized his friend's habits in how the cloths were arranged because "he saw and believed." John realized that Jesus was resurrected as he had promised.



living and the dead." John was there after the Resurrection when Jesus created the Catholic Church and commissioned her to preach and bear witness to Jesus and to God's love for us.

As followers of Jesus, we know that our love and our devotion to him will eventually reveal the truths of many mysteries to us.

On Easter morning, many truths were revealed to John. It was confirmed that Jesus is the Christ. Jesus is the one anointed by God to reconcile us to God, and Jesus was raised from the dead and is now "judge of the

Following Jesus as John did will help us to understand the beauty of God's plan. The key is to love Jesus as his "beloved disciple" did.

### Q & A How could God send his only Son to die?

Because Adam and Eve sinned, we needed a Savior to pay the price and save us from sin and death. *"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life"* (John 3:16).



While it was not easy for God to send his Son to die, he did it because he loves us and wants us to be with him in Heaven.

However, this does not mean God the Son was forced to die for us. Jesus said, *"No one takes [my life] from me, but I lay it down on my own"* (John 10:18). Jesus' sacrifice was freely offered to the Father on our behalf. *"Indeed, out of love for his Father and for men, whom the Father wants to save, Jesus freely accepted his Passion and death"* (Catechism of the Catholic Church, No. 609). The love of the Father and the Son for us was proved to the end on the Cross.

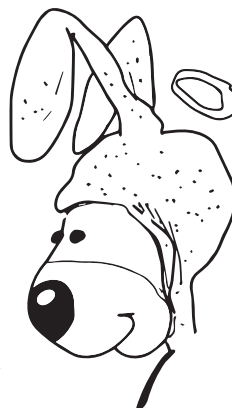
### Feasts & Celebrations

**March 6 - St. Colette (1447).** St. Colette was born in Corbie, France. She was orphaned at seventeen and gave her inheritance to the poor. She later became a Franciscan Tertiary and lived in solitude. St. Colette was told in a dream to reform the Poor Clares. Despite opposition, she founded seventeen convents under the reformed rule.

**March 19 - St. Joseph (1st century).** Jesus' earthly father and husband to the Blessed Mother, St. Joseph is a model of fatherhood and a protector of families. We know little about him, but the Bible

tells us he was a "righteous man" (Matthew 1:19). He is the patron saint of a happy death, because he died in the arms of Jesus and Mary.

**March 17 - St. Patrick (493).** Born in Scotland, St. Patrick was kidnapped and brought to Ireland as a slave. He escaped a few years later and became a priest. He was ordained the bishop of Ireland. He is credited for having established the Church there.



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