

# Growing in FAITH™

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

September 2007

## One Minute Meditations

### Think of this

When bad things happen consider this: Jesus knows how you feel. Without cause, he was beaten, tortured, humiliated, and murdered. It doesn't get much worse than that. Asking Jesus to help you accept your sufferings will make them easier to bear.

### Jesus, the family man

Though he was suffering greatly, one of Jesus' last thoughts on the cross was of his mother. He asked John to care for her after his death. He knew that family is a great gift from God. Try to give your family the very best of yourself.

### From St. Therese of Lisieux

*"I have not the courage to search through books for beautiful prayers ... unable either to say them all or choose between them, I do as a child would do who cannot read - I just say what I want to say to God, quite simply, and he never fails to understand."*



## Do you really trust God?

Do you trust God with everything in your life or only some things? Do you give him your problems but take them back when he doesn't do what you want? Yet it is only when we have complete trust in God that our lives work well.

### Is God trustworthy?

A trustworthy person has high moral integrity and character. We have thousands of years of history in the Bible that

prove God means what he says and says what he means. He always does what he promises.

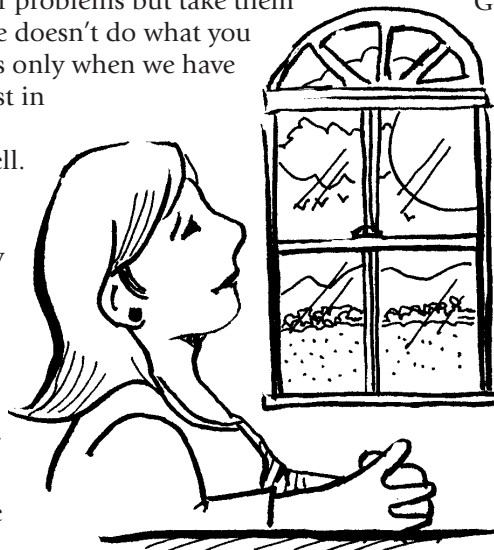
**Is God capable?** Certainly God took care of King David, Job, Moses and even Jesus. Does that make him

capable and interested in taking care of you?

God has power over all creation so he certainly has the ability to accomplish anything. He has infinite wisdom, so he knows what you need. More to the point, God loves you with unimaginable intensity so he always wants what is best for you. In fact, God is more qualified than you are to take care of what you need.

### Are you ready to really trust God?

Start by thanking him no matter what. Everything that he allows to happen to us is for our good. Then remind yourself that God is fully in charge. Finally, ask him what you should do next and do it.



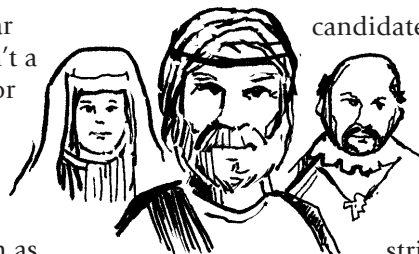
## Why Do Catholics Do That?

## Why does the Church canonize saints?

Prior to the year 1234, there wasn't a formal process for declaring someone a saint. This led to some figures of legend becoming known as saints. Pope Gregory IX established procedures to investigate the life of a

candidate to determine if he or she has achieved sainthood in Heaven.

The Church wants us to look to the saints as role models and advocates. Therefore, a stringent and objective process must be followed before someone can be declared a saint.



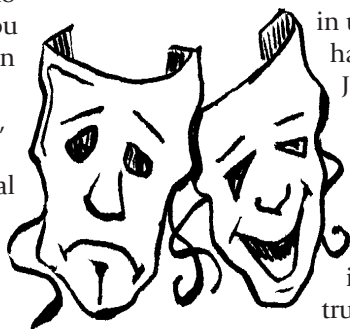
## Dealing with your feelings

Feelings don't make us sin but our response to them can cause us to sin. Here are four ways you can get your feelings to work for you rather than against you.

**Don't let them rule.** No matter how you feel, always do what you know to be right. Doing the right thing may even change your emotional response.

**Talk it over.** Ask someone you trust to help you develop Christian responses to your emotions.

**Pattern Jesus.** When we decide to shape our



behavior in accordance with God's ways, everything in us, including our feelings, will work harmoniously. The key is to ask, "What would Jesus do?"

**Commit to the truth.** Often we allow our feelings to "run away" with us. When that happens, a situation can seem worse than it really is, an accidental slight intentional, and a thoughtless remark vicious. Instead of giving in to the emotion, commit to understanding the truth. What really happened? With the help of the Holy Spirit, you can discern the right response.

### from Scripture

#### Luke 16:19-31, Our brother's keeper

This is one of the clearest and most direct parables Jesus told. It starts with Lazarus, a beggar who lay suffering, miserable and ignored outside the home of a rich man. By contrast, the rich man had a wonderful and comfortable life on earth oblivious to what was happening outside his very door. In the afterlife, however, it is the rich man who suffers torment and begs for relief.

The rich man was condemned not because he was wealthy, but

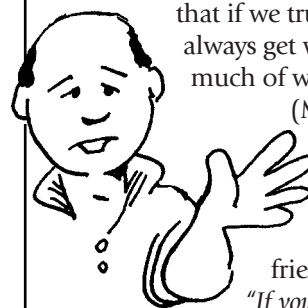


because he had become blind to the suffering of others. He knew what Scripture and the prophets said that God expected of him but he didn't do it. His suffering in the afterlife was just punishment.

The Bible makes it plain that he wants us to love each other as he does. When we live our faith, we transform our prayers into deeds of love just as Jesus asked. As he demonstrates in this parable, the reward for doing what Jesus asked will be eternal joy.

### Q & A Why doesn't God answer my prayers?

When you pray really hard for something and don't get it, it probably feels like God didn't answer. In fact, the answer was "no." The Bible tells us that if we trust God, we'll always get what we need and much of what we want, too (Matthew 6:25-33).



But we have to do our part. Strengthen your friendship with God.

*"If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask for whatever you want and it will be done for you"* (John 15:7). God wants our friendship all the time, not just when we want something. Daily prayer is key.

Come clean. Unconfessed sin creates static in the connection to God. The sacrament of Confession helps clear the line. In Psalm 32, David says that his life was miserable when he avoided responsibility for his sin. As soon as he confessed it, God answered his prayers.

Look for it. God's answer may not be what you were looking for but may be even better. Keep watch for the unexpected.

### Feasts & Celebrations

**Sept. 13 - St. John Chrysostom (407).** A powerful public speaker, he was a brutal critic of clergy who abused their office and royals who turned a blind eye to the suffering of the poor. He died in exile as a result.

**Sept. 27 - St. Vincent de Paul (1660).** St. Vincent de Paul, was devoted to the spiritual and physical relief of the poor and sick. He founded several hospitals, and ransomed over 1,200 galley slaves from North Africa.

**Sept. 21 - St. Matthew.** Also known as Levi, he was a notorious tax collector. St. Matthew left everything

when Jesus called him to spread the Gospel. He wrote the Gospel According to Matthew.

**Sept. 29 - St. Michael, St. Gabriel, and St. Raphael, the Archangels.** Members of the third hierarchy of angels around the throne of God, archangels are entrusted with important missions to mankind such as St. Gabriel's visit to the Blessed Mother to tell her she had been chosen as the mother of God.



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