

Growing in FAITH™

Discovering hope and joy in the Catholic faith.

August 2022

Gathered in Christ's Love

Fr. Richard Piontkowski, Pastor

Jesus, I trust in you!

We fully trust in someone when we have a firm belief in his or her reliability, truth, ability, and strength. Do you trust God? He really is *"faithful and true"* (Revelation 19:11). You can trust Him ...

When you are overwhelmed: Can you imagine being responsible for every soul in the world? One night, Pope St. John XXIII, feeling overwhelmed by the problems in the Church, prayed, "Lord, it's Your Church; You take care of it. I'm going to bed." That's the perfect model for us. Surrender concerns to God, trust Him to handle them, and relax.

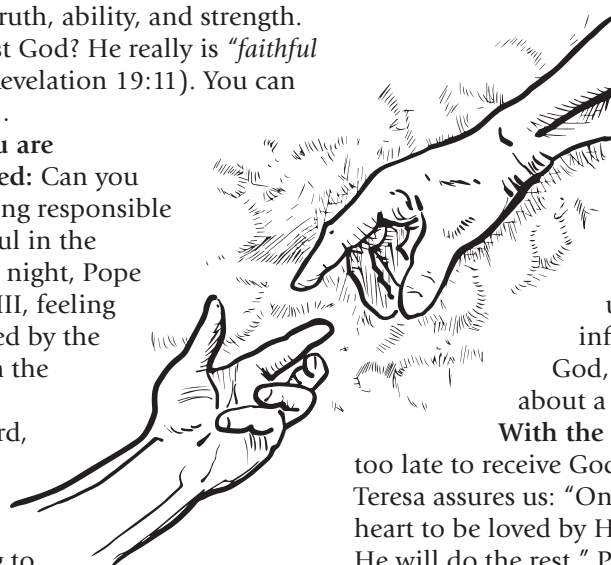
With the future: St. Padre Pio said, "You say you are anxious about the

future, but don't you know that the Lord is with you always and that our

enemy has no power over one who has resolved to belong entirely to Jesus?"

When we understand the infinite love of God, we won't worry about a thing.

With the past: It's never too late to receive God's mercy. Mother Teresa assures us: "Only open your heart to be loved by Him as you are. He will do the rest." Pope Francis has said that God is never tired of dispensing His mercy. We are the ones who tire of asking. Never tire of asking. Absolution is as close as your nearest Catholic church.



Why Do Catholics Do That?

Why do Catholics bury loved ones' remains?

Everything the Church teaches about care for the dying, funeral rites, and burial is out of respect for the body. For Catholics, the body has the added dignity of participating in the Sacraments during life: *"your body is a temple of*

the Holy Spirit" (1 Corinthians 6:19). In the Creed, we profess belief in the resurrection of the body. Therefore, the Church permits cremation as long as the cremains are buried in sanctified ground. Scattering ashes is prohibited.



One Minute Meditations

Get involved

Catholics have a long history of action – feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, caring for the poor, praying for souls. Are you doing all you can to help? If not, find out if there is a parish ministry that could use your time, talent, or treasure. Catholics are meant to make a difference.



Run, don't walk

If you think you don't sin and don't need the Sacrament of Reconciliation, run – don't walk – to the nearest confessional. *"If we say, 'We are without sin,' we deceive ourselves"* (1 John 1:8). Unconfessed sin, especially when it goes unnoticed, forms a barrier between us and God. Penance, absolution, and life amendment helps to break it down.

A Novena

Do you have a particular concern or an upcoming challenge? A novena – a prayer offered over nine consecutive days in preparation for a feast day or a special need – is a great way to ask for God's particular help.



Discerning God's will

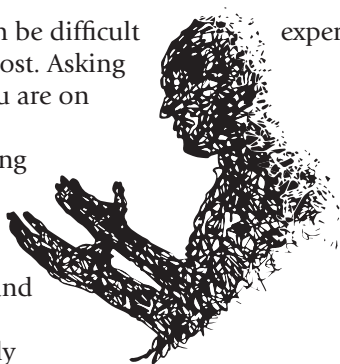
Do you have a big decision to make? It can be difficult to hear God's voice just when you need it most. Asking the right questions and looking for signs you are on track can help you make the right choice.

"Will it help me get to Heaven?" Answering this question first will weed out extraneous options quickly. Then, when deciding between two good choices, consider which one makes best use of your strengths, gifts, and your state in life.

Deep peace. In heartfelt prayer, you'll likely

experience a deep peace for one of your options. Only God gives this kind of peace (John 14:27). It's a good sign when that peace lasts throughout the decision process. Lack of peace is usually God saying, "no."

Good fruits. These are easiest to see after you have taken steps toward your decision. If you see spiritual fruits like generosity, joy, patience, and self-control growing in your soul, you're on the right track. Anxiety, turmoil, anger, tension are signs that you made a misstep.



from Scripture

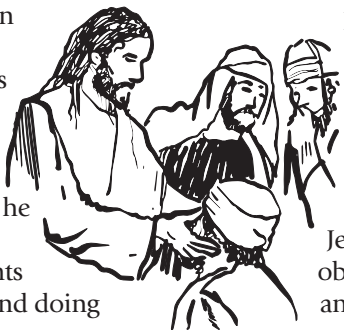
Luke 14:1, 7-14, Unreciprocated kindness

Jesus was under close and careful scrutiny by the Pharisees who were watching for a misstep in order to discredit him. They were afraid that his "radical" ideas would undermine the religion and tradition they protected. Nonetheless, he never let this critical scrutiny by his opponents keep him from saying and doing the right things.

As Christians, we must never succumb to pressure to do what is politically or socially correct at the expense of our spiritual beliefs and obligations. For example, there is a cultural value to

"networking" – entertaining people who can further our personal or professional goals. There is usually an exchange of favors implied in this kind of a relationship, "you scratch my back and I'll scratch yours."

In this parable, however, Jesus urged us to forget about obtaining benefit or admiration and instead serve people in need. He said that doing favors for and being kind to the disadvantaged can be very rewarding and will bring blessings to the host. The guests won't be able to reciprocate, but God will certainly repay the kindness.



Q & A What does Mary's Assumption mean for us?

On November 1, 1950, Pope Pius XII infallibly declared that, "having completed the course of her earthly life," the Blessed Virgin Mary was taken up, body and soul, into heavenly glory.

Although this doctrine was declared relatively recently, the Church's belief in it isn't new. Sacred Scripture and Tradition repeatedly emphasize Mary's

sinlessness and holiness (Luke 1:28), and her deep involvement in the mysteries of Christ's life. Given this, we believe Jesus preserved her body from decay and raised her to heavenly glory.

For us, the Assumption, is a "sneak preview" of what our ultimate destiny can be if we are faithful to Christ, as Mary was - having our glorified bodies, sinless and perfectly happy. What she is now, we hope someday to be. Moreover, the Assumption reveals the value of our bodies in God's plan. When God created us in His image, He created us body and soul and said it was "very good" (Genesis 1:31). It's so good, that He intends to raise us, bodily, into His glory.



Feasts & Celebrations

August 2 – St. Peter Julian Eymard (1868). Born in France, Peter was ordained in 1834 and earned a reputation as a preacher. He was friends with St. John Vianney. He founded the Congregation of the Priests of the Blessed Sacrament to increase devotion to the Holy Eucharist.

August 9 – St. Edith Stein (1942). Born Jewish, she was a brilliant atheist intellectual in Germany. Edith converted to Catholicism after studying St. Teresa of Avila, and became a Carmelite nun. Although her order tried to shelter her

from the Nazis, she was arrested and executed at Auschwitz.

August 15 – Solemnity of the Assumption. Declared a dogma of faith in 1950 by Pope Pius XII, the Assumption celebrates Mary's being taken up into Heaven body and soul at the end of her life.

Aug. 24 – St. Bartholomew the Apostle (1st Century).

Bartholomew is thought by some scholars to be the apostle, Nathanael (John 1:46). After Jesus's Ascension, Nathanael spread Christianity to India and Armenia, where he was martyred.



Our Mission

To provide practical ideas that promote faithful Catholic living.

Success Publishing & Media, LLC
Publishers of Growing in Faith™ and Partners in Faith™
(540)662-7844 (540)662-7847 fax
<http://www.growinginfaith.com>

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

© Copyright 2022 Success Publishing & Media, LLC