

Growing in FAITH™

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

March 2017

Church of St. Elizabeth

Rev. James Weiner, Pastor

One Minute Meditations

St. Dominic Savio

St. Dominic was born to a pious peasant family in Riva, Italy.

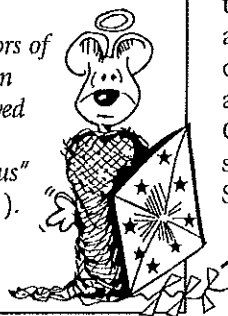
When he was 12, he joined St. John

Bosco's Oratory as a student. There, he founded the Company of the Immaculate Conception to help Don Bosco in his work. Dominic had mystical experiences in prayer but tried to keep them secret. His frail health led to lung problems. He died at home of a lung infection. He is the youngest non-martyr to be canonized.

Hearing God's voice

It can be difficult to "hear" God's voice in today's world, but with some effort, we can learn to recognize it. Read a chapter of the Gospels and listen: a phrase may grab your attention or you may experience peace and joy. Remember, God often speaks to our hearts, not our ears.

"So be imitators of God...and live in love, as Christ loved us and handed himself over for us" (Ephesians 5:1).



Make the most out of Catholic Spring Training

One way to think of Lent is as Spring Training for Catholics. We may come into the season out of top spiritual form but, by working to renew our skills, we can be back in shape by Easter. Strengthening the Cardinal Virtues will help.

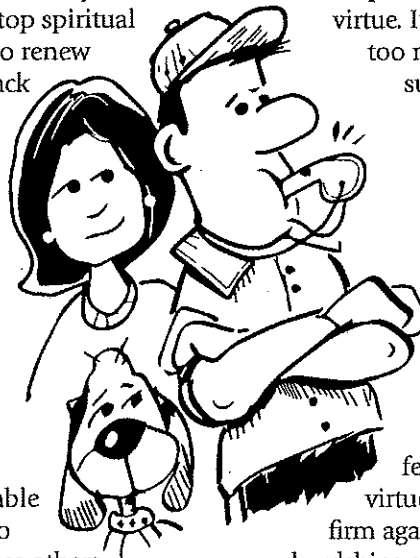
Prudence - the thinking virtue. It helps us live wisely in the middle ground between fear and recklessness. For example, we can take out a mortgage to buy a home that's comfortable but we avoid going into excessive debt to impress others. Prudence helps us live with wisdom.

Justice - the "play fair" virtue. We learn early to "play fair" by sharing toys and treats. Fairness is a basic ingredient of justice. Justice thrives when we give

what is due to God and others.

Temperance - the "just right" virtue. It is possible to have too much of a good thing, such as too much food or drink or watching too much television. Temperance, also called "moderation," is the virtue that helps us find the balance. It keeps us from becoming too attached to the world.

Fortitude - the fearless virtue. This virtue helps us to stand firm against fear and hardships and persevere in attaining what is good. Fortitude strengthens our resolve to resist temptation, overcome personal weaknesses, and make sacrifices for what is good.

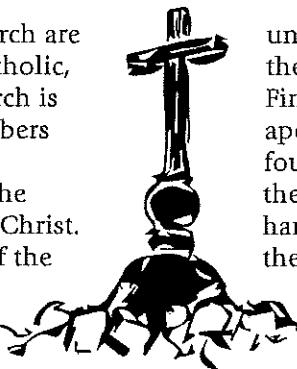


Why Do Catholics Do That?

The Marks of the Church are that she is "one, holy, catholic, and apostolic." The Church is one because all her members are united in Christ. The Church is holy because she shares in the holiness of Christ. She is catholic because of the

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

universal mission to spread the Gospel to all people. Finally, the Church is apostolic because she is founded on the teaching of the Apostles, which was handed down to us through their successors, the bishops.



“And the Lord said, ‘Lighten Up’ ...”

With all the fighting and suffering in the world around us we can sometimes forget the joy of being a child of God. Try these tips to lift your spirits:

“Therefore I commend mirth, because there is nothing good for man under the sun except eating and drinking and mirth” (Ecclesiastes 8:15). Laughter is like changing a baby’s diaper. The change isn’t permanent, but it makes everything okay for a while. Each day, try to find at least one



thing that makes you smile. Even the act of looking can help.

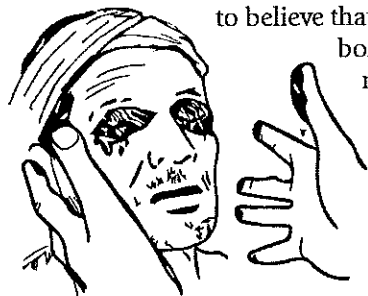
“Rejoice in the Lord always. I shall say it again: Rejoice! ... Have no anxiety at all” (Philippians 4:4, 6a). St. Paul wrote that while he was in prison – not a place conducive to hope. He knew that like the most loving father, God wants us to be happy and carefree. All we have to do is trust him. Turn your worries over to the Lord and know that he will handle them better than you can.

from Scripture

John 9:1-41, The sight of faith

In this Gospel reading, Jesus cured a blind man on the Sabbath by making clay and smearing it on the man’s eyes. This cure was two-fold; the man received both physical sight and the sight of faith. As he was being questioned by the Pharisees, his understanding of Jesus moved from knowing him as simply a “man”, to acclaiming him as a prophet, and finally, to worshipping him as the Son of God.

While the faith of the cured man progressed, the spiritual sight of the Pharisees did just the opposite. Their anger blinded them to the truth—that



the curing of the blind man was God’s work. Furious that Jesus failed to observe the Sabbath, they refused to believe that the man had been born blind and was miraculously healed.

In baptism, we are given the gift of faith—the ability to “see” God and our life in relation to his loving plan.

The longer we follow Jesus and learn from him, the better we understand him. The more we turn away from sin, the sharper our “vision” becomes.

Q & A

Why do we give things up for Lent?

We give up things for Lent to help us grow closer to God. We imitate Jesus, who spent forty days in the desert, fasting



and praying. “By the solemn forty days of Lent the Church unites herself each year to the mystery of Jesus in the desert” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, #540).

Whenever we think of our sacrifice — whether it is a favorite food, pastime, or fifteen minutes of sleep — we are reminded of Christ’s sacrifice of love for us.

Giving things up for Lent is also an expression of penance for the wrong we’ve done. The forms of penance the Church recommends are prayer, fasting, and almsgiving (charitable deeds). To be effective, however, these acts must come from a place of sincere repentance. “Jesus’ call to conversion and penance ... [aims at] the conversion of the heart, interior conversion” (CCC #1430). It involves turning our hearts back to God and away from that which separates us from him. “Going without” purifies us and helps us resist temptation more easily.

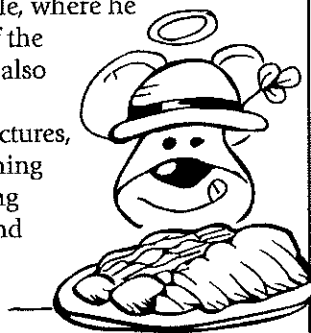
Feasts & Celebrations

March 1 – Ash Wednesday. The first day of Lent. Ashes from the burnt palms of the previous Passion Sunday are blessed and placed on the foreheads as a sign of penance.

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 18 – St. Cyril of Jerusalem (386). Born around 315 and raised in

Jerusalem, St. Cyril was ordained a priest by the bishop of Jerusalem. He was appointed the Bishop of Jerusalem, but spent half of it in exile due to a conflict between himself and the Arian heretics. He was falsely accused and banished from Jerusalem. He attended the Second Council of Constantinople, where he was cleared of the rumors. He is also known for his catechetical lectures, aimed at teaching those preparing for baptism and the newly baptized.



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