

# Growing in FAITH™

Discovering hope and joy in the Catholic faith.

September 2023

St. Anthony/St. Lawrence  
Father Christopher Aubuchon

## One Minute Meditations

### St. Padre Pio

Born to farmers in 1887, in southern Italy,



Francesco Forgione joined the Capuchin Friars at the age of 15, taking the name "Pio." In 1918, St. Pio received the five wounds of Our Lord's Passion, called the stigmata, in his body. Renowned for his preaching, holiness, and charity, thousands flocked to him for Confession and spiritual direction. Amidst his suffering, he continued to labor for the spiritual and physical well-being of others, founding a hospital that still operates today.

### Perfect is possible

Jesus said, "... be perfect, just as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matthew 5:48). Perfection to Jesus means loving God with all our hearts, praying for our enemies, and taking care of the poor. Love and service is the true measure of perfection.

*"Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with brotherly affection; outdo one another in showing honor"* Romans 12:9-10.



## Seven virtues for successful Catholics

Practicing virtues – habitual and firm dispositions to do good – leads to long-lasting interior freedom, joy, and peace. The following seven virtues, with God's grace, can help you do that:

**Faith** enables our belief in God and all that He has revealed through Scripture, Tradition, and the Church's teachings. Reciting the Creed, especially at Mass, is an act of faith.

**Hope** is the desire for Heaven and trust in God's promises to us. Trusting in the Lord even in trials and asking for forgiveness for sins are acts of hope.

**Charity** enables us to love God above all things and our neighbors as ourselves. True love is when we wish – and act for – the authentic good of others.

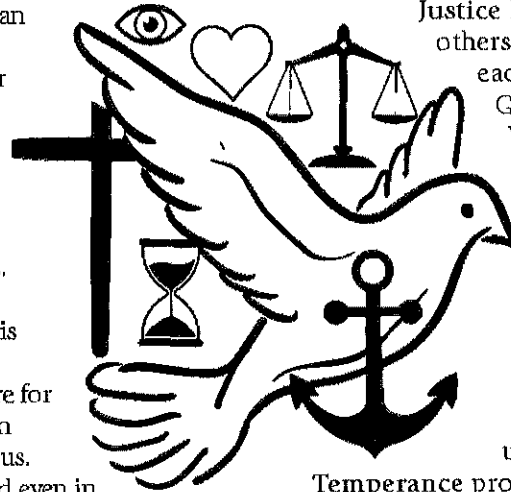
**Prudence** is the virtue that helps us to discern our true good in every circumstance and to choose the right means of achieving it.

**Justice** helps us respect others' rights and give to each his due. We owe God our worship.

We are made in His image, so we owe each other respect.

**Fortitude** strengthens us to follow Christ in the world, even if it's unpopular and uncomfortable.

**Temperance** properly orders our desire for pleasure, so that we appreciate earthly goods in moderation and value heavenly goods most. Observing the one-hour fast from food before receiving the Eucharist is an act of temperance.



## Why Do Catholics Do That?

### Why do Catholics attend Mass on holy days of obligation?

Throughout the year, the Church celebrates six feasts that honor a central mystery of our faith with extra enthusiasm. These days are so important that all Catholics are required to attend Mass to celebrate. They are listed on the US Conference of



Catholic Bishops' website, <http://www.usccb.org>.

All Sundays are also holy days of obligation. We live the third commandment to honor the Sabbath by attending Mass every Sunday.

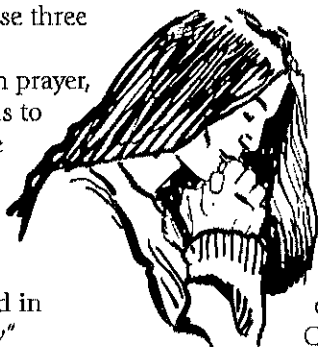
Celebrating these holy days is a reminder that we belong firstly to God.

## Finding time for powerful prayer

If you struggle to find time to pray, try these three tips:

**Prioritize.** Much unseen good depends on prayer, and it's as critical to our souls as breathing is to the body. Jesus corrected St. Martha because she lost sight of "*the one thing...needful*" (Luke 10:41-42). Reserve time for daily prayer. Treat it as an important appointment – because it is.

**Set boundaries.** Jesus dismissed the crowd in the evening and "*went up into the hills to pray*"



(Matthew 14:23). Give God your undivided attention in prayer for whatever time you can. Be fully present, minimizing distractions. Let the world wait while you spend time with the One who loves you most.

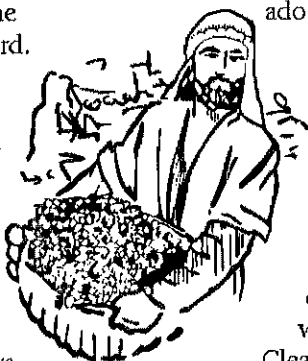
**Activate your work.** Few of us have the luxury of being able to spend all day in prayer but we can make a morning offering, giving our day to God's service. Entrust all the events, tasks, and concerns of the day to God's mercy and providence. This way, our work is made holy and can help bring souls to Christ.

### from Scripture

#### Matthew 20:1-16a, The generous landowner

In this Gospel reading, Jesus told a parable in which He compared God's kingdom to a vineyard in the charge of a generous landlord. In the parable, the landlord hires groups of workers at various times of the day. All agree with the landlord to work for a "fair wage."

The vineyard is God's kingdom and God is the generous landlord. Some Bible scholars propose that the earlier groups of workers represented the Jewish people, who had followed God's laws for thousands of years, while the Gentiles were the latecomers. The workers also stood for



those whom God calls at various stages of life: from infancy, adolescence, adulthood, and old age.

Then the landlord paid the laborers, beginning with the five o'clock workers. It must have shocked Jesus' listeners to hear that the landlord paid those who worked one hour as if they'd worked for twelve hours.

Clearly, God's idea of a "fair" wage is not the same as ours. What is important is not how many hours we've served God, but if we answered Him when He called us.

### Q & A What's the proper way to show reverence before I receive Communion?

In days past, everyone approached the altar, knelt at the altar rail and received the host on our tongues. That was prescribed as a posture of reverence to show respect and adoration for the Body and Blood of our Lord.

The bishops in the United States have decided that we may approach the altar and stand to receive Communion. When we approach, we are to bow as a gesture of reverence before we receive the consecrated host from the priest, deacon, or extraordinary minister of Holy Communion.

Today we can receive the host either on the tongue or in the hand. To receive in the hand, we place one hand, palm up, on top of the other to form a "throne." We can also receive Holy Communion in the form of precious Blood. When Holy Communion is offered under both kinds we repeat the bow of our heads before receiving each one.

Genuflection is appropriate at other times. For example, we genuflect before the tabernacle containing the Blessed Sacrament.

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To provide practical ideas that promote faithful Catholic living.

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

### Feasts & Celebrations

**September 1 – St. Giles (710).** Shrouded in mystery, St. Giles was a hermit who lived near the Rhône River in France. His fame as a miracle worker drew crowds and disciples to him. Eventually, St. Giles became abbot of a monastery.

**September 8 – Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary.** Mary's birth brought her parents joy, and we are joyful too – because Mary brings salvation to all of us with the birth of Jesus.

**September 14 - The Exaltation of the Holy Cross (c.326).** St. Helena, mother

of Emperor Constantine, discovered what is believed to be the Cross of Christ while on pilgrimage in Jerusalem. Constantine built the Basilica of the Holy Sepulcher on the site.

**September 28 – St. Wenceslaus (929).** Raised by his devout grandmother, St. Ludmilla, "The Good King" St. Wenceslaus worked to end Christian persecution in Bohemia, encouraged German missionaries, built churches, and cared for the sick and poor. He was martyred by a group of dissatisfied nobles, led by his brother, Boleslaus.

