

# Growing in FAITH™

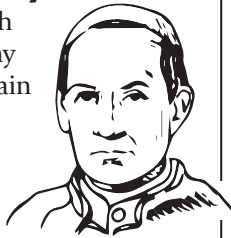
Discovering **hope and joy** in the Catholic faith.

October 2017

## One Minute Meditations

### St. Anthony Mary Claret

The son of a cloth weaver, St. Anthony was born in Spain in 1807. He wanted to become a Jesuit missionary but was prevented by his health. He was ordained a priest in Catalonia and in 1849, he founded the Claretian order. Shortly after, he became the archbishop of Cuba. He established the Religious Publishing House and produced more than 200 works. He was confessor to Queen Isabella II and participated in the First Vatican Council.



### God's search for us

Oftentimes it feels like we are searching for God, but he is the one looking for us. God created us, redeemed us, and calls us to follow him. Today, ask God to show you where he's calling you and resolve to follow him.

*"Thou art my God; I will exalt thee, I will praise thy name; for thou hast done wonderful things, plans formed of old, faithful and sure"* (Isaiah 25:1).



## Begin again

It is an unfortunate part of our human condition that we make mistakes. Fortunately, our loving Father always grants additional chances. In fact, he is delighted when we refresh our sincere attempts to live fully in his love. Here's how to begin again.

**Shake off failure.** There is nothing more defeating than dwelling on sins or errors of the past. Do what you can to prevent repeating past mistakes, shake it off, and move confidently forward.

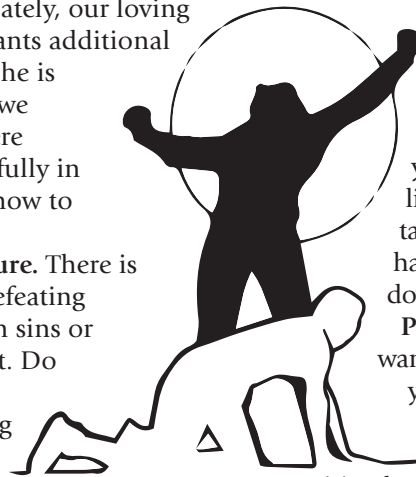
**Take stock and confess.** Rebuild your future on a solid foundation. Perform a detailed examination of conscience and then go to Confession. If necessary, ask your priest for a good

examination tool to use. Perform your penance immediately and make amends. Then, knowing that God has forgiven you, forgive yourself. Repeat often.

**Make a plan.** What would you like to change in your life? Are there steps you can take that will make you holier, happier, healthier? Write them down and commit.

**Pray for strength.** You may want to make minor tweaks to your life or major change may be in order. Either way, prayer and daily spiritual exercises are key to success. We need God's strength and guidance to succeed.

**Begin.** Each beginning starts with a new day. Take your first step knowing that God is with you and success is possible.



## Why Do Catholics Do That?

### Why do Catholics sit, stand, and kneel during the Mass?

We adopt different postures throughout the Mass to help us focus, and each posture means something different.

We sit during the homily and the readings to help us listen. We stand during the Gospel, and when the priest enters and

leaves, to show him honor and respect when he represents Christ.

Finally, we kneel at the Consecration in adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, because Christ, himself, is present. These actions are intended to engage both our bodies and our minds in prayer.



## God's will be done

Ever pray really hard for something only to be disappointed in the outcome? The let down feels like God isn't listening. Yet, our way isn't God's way. He always listens to our prayers but doesn't necessarily answer the way we expect. Of course, we know no one is more qualified to lead than our heavenly Father. Doesn't it make sense to trust him?

**Don't be outcome specific.** Asking God to double your income may not be reasonable. Instead put your worries in his hands. Know that



your Father has your best interest in mind and will find the solution that is just right for you.

**Be open to alternatives.** Sometimes taking a different job or buying a less expensive home is the better choice. You may net more personal time and less overall stress.

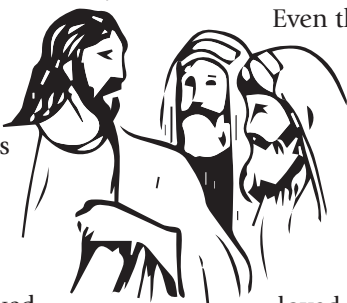
**Let Scripture speak to you.** *"Trust in the Lord with all your heart, on your own intelligence rely not; In all your ways be mindful of him, and he will make straight your paths"* (Proverbs 3:5-6).

### from Scripture

#### Matthew 22:34-40. Jesus has the right answers.

In their first meeting with Jesus, the Pharisees attempted to trap him into publicly contradicting Jewish law by sending a slick lawyer to "engage" him. Then Jesus could be arrested and silenced. The lawyer they sent knew that generations of Jews had debated fruitlessly about which law was the most important. Pretending to seek Jesus' opinion, he asked him to choose which of the 613 commandments of the Jewish law was the most important.

Jesus silenced them by saying that everything starts and ends with love –



love of God and love of others. To love God is to love one another. Love is at the heart of all the other laws.

Even the Pharisees couldn't argue with that.

While it is easy to love God, loving others is more difficult. It means including those our natural inclination says to exclude or avoid. Jesus

loved prostitutes, thieves, lepers, even his political enemies. True love of neighbor is measured by how we treat the poor, the vulnerable, and our enemies. This is how God loves and he calls us to the same.

### Q & A What is a "sacramental character?"

Certain Sacraments leave an indelible mark on our souls. Called the "character" or "seal," it marks us as belonging to Christ (*Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC), #1272*) in a special and permanent way. The Sacramental character is first received in Baptism and is also imprinted in the Sacraments of Confirmation and Holy Orders. Like Baptism, these Sacraments are only received once.



Each "mark" patterns us after Christ in a different way. In Baptism, we become children of God and sharers in Jesus' mission. In Confirmation, we receive a second character, which strengthens us to proclaim Christ publicly (*CCC, #1304*). In Holy Orders, a man is consecrated to the service of Christ and the Church.

The Father set his seal on Christ (John 6:27) and we are sealed in Christ (2 Corinthians 1:22). It is a sign that the one baptized, confirmed, and ordained bears a special and unique relationship to Christ. This indelible seal remains even in a person not in the state of grace or who has lost faith.

### Feasts & Celebrations

**Oct. 23 – St. John of Capistrano (1456).** Born in Capistrano, Italy in 1386, St. John studied law at Perugia. He resigned his post as governor to join the Franciscans in 1416. Renowned for his preaching, he was asked to lead the crusade that successfully recaptured Constantinople from the Ottomans and saved Christendom.

**Oct. 28 – Saints Simon and Jude (1st Century).** St. Simon was a Zealot – a Jew who believed that the Messiah would free them from political

oppression. St. Jude was a fisherman. After being called by Jesus to be Apostles, they eventually traveled to Persia where they preached the Gospel until they were martyred.

**Oct. 30 – St. Alphonsus Rodriguez (1617).** Following the tragic losses of his children and wife, St. Alphonsus entered the Jesuit order as a lay brother and worked as a hall porter at a college on the island of Majorca. Known for holiness and wisdom, many students and civil authorities came to him for advice, including the young St. Peter Claver.



#### Our Mission

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)