

# Growing in FAITH™

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

January 2013

**St. Peter Damian Church**  
Rev. Walter Takuski, Pastor

## One Minute Meditations

### A Christian's job

As followers of Christ, our primary job is to love. "Keep the joy of loving God in your heart and share this joy with all you meet especially your family. Be holy – let us pray." Blessed Teresa of Calcutta

### Help Catholics come home

Do you know someone who was baptized Catholic but has stopped attending Mass, is questioning the faith, or hasn't found a parish home? Why not help your friend to come home? Perhaps you can act as a resource or offer to attend Mass together. If you aren't sure how to help, ask your pastor or priest for advice.

### January saint

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton is the Year of Faith saint we celebrate in January. A wealthy American, St. Elizabeth became Catholic after her husband died. Despite much personal tragedy, she founded the Sisters of Charity of St. Joseph, a teaching order that established affordable schools.



## Grow in love for God this New Year

The more we know God, the more we love him. It naturally follows because of who he is. But we can't love someone we don't know. When making New Year's resolutions, consider adding a plan for deepening your knowledge of God.

**Learn and study our faith.** The Catholic Church leads us to God and we have two millennia of inspired Church teaching to help.

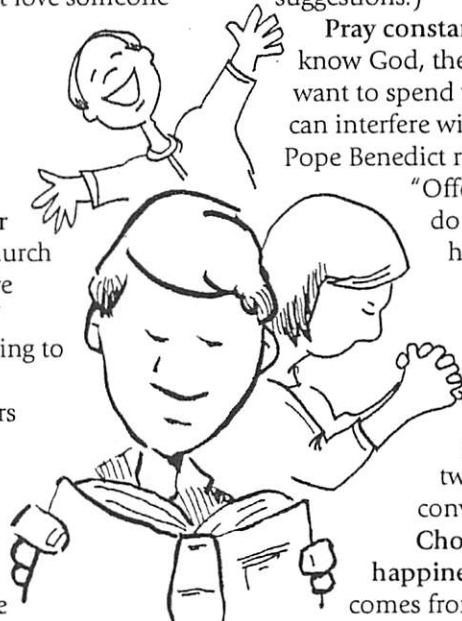
For a start, the prayers and readings at Mass remind us of what we know about God. To go deeper, we can turn to the works of many reliable Catholic authors. For example, *The Catholic Way* by Cardinal Donald W. Wuerl, uses easy-to-understand language to explain many

wonderful aspects of our doctrine and practice. (Your pastor may have more suggestions.)

**Pray constantly.** The better we know God, the more time we will want to spend with him but life can interfere with formal prayer.

Pope Benedict recently advised, "Offer everything you do to the Lord, ask his help in all the circumstances of daily life and remember that he is always beside you." Make prayer a constant, two-way conversation with God.

**Choose joy over happiness.** Happiness comes from pursuing the rewards of this world. Joy is pursuing those of the next. Happiness never lasts. Joy lasts forever but can only come from knowing and loving God.

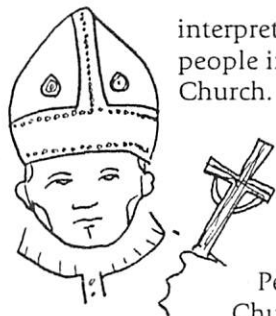


## Why Do Catholics Do That?

In Matthew 16:13-19, Jesus changed Simon's name to Peter ("rock") making him the foundation of the Church. Jesus gave Peter the keys to the kingdom of God on earth and the power of binding and loosing, which in Judaism meant giving him the authority to

## Why do Catholics obey the Pope?

interpret the Scriptures and bring people into communion with the Church. Peter traveled to Rome and became its first bishop. His successors, the popes, receive the same position and authority Peter had as head of the Church.

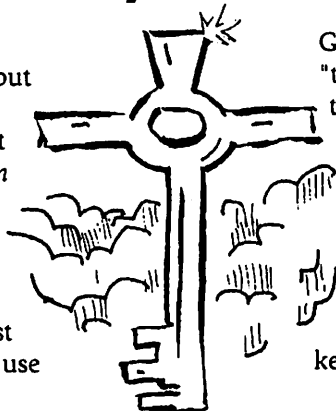


## The keys to holiness

Holiness will help us to get to Heaven and comes when we surrender to God's will and put all of our trust in him.

**Courage.** During the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5), Jesus said, "blessed are the poor in spirit, blessed are they who mourn," and promised that when we turn to God in times of trial, we will be comforted and cared for. Trusting God in difficult times takes courage.

**Discipline.** Jesus makes it clear that we must apply the correct principles to our habits and use



God's laws as our standards. When he talked about "the meek, the merciful, those who hunger and thirst for righteousness," he was giving us a ruler. We are to measure our behavior against these standards to see if we are on the right path to holiness.

**Endurance.** Only a true follower of Christ can put the Sermon on the Mount fully into practice. It takes endurance to combine holy inner attitudes with these outward actions and keep it up for life.

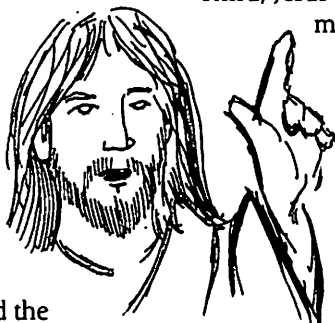
### from Scripture

**Luke 1:1-4, 4:14-21;  
Jesus teaches in the synagogue**

This Gospel tells the beginning of Jesus' teaching in the synagogues of Galilee. It makes several points.

First, Jesus entered the synagogue on the Sabbath according to his custom. He regularly took time to worship, showing us the importance of communal worship.

Second, Jesus read the scriptures, explained their meaning, and finally applied the scripture to a situation. In the process he taught us how to approach the Bible. Some Bible passages can be confusing so explanation is important when we read Scripture. Applying its lessons in our lives



is equally important. Jesus came into the world to bring glad tidings to us.

Third, Jesus provided details of his mission: "to bring glad tidings to the poor...to proclaim liberty to captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, and to announce a year of favor from the Lord."

This passage from Isaiah is a prophecy of the Messiah. When Jesus said, "Today this Scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing," he confirmed for his listeners that he was the awaited Messiah.

### Q & A What is the Liturgy of the Hours?

The Liturgy of the Hours is a public and common prayer of the Church comprised of psalms, scripture texts, canticles, hymns, writings from the works of Church Fathers, and other prayers. Ordained clergy and religious are required to pray the Liturgy of the Hours daily, which has components that are prayed many times throughout the day in order to sanctify it.

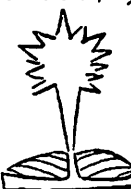
In the Middle Ages, monks gathered for prayer seven times a day. The Liturgy of the Hours is based on the prayer formulas used by the monks. "The traditional terms of 'hours,' familiar in the daily breviary, namely, matins, lauds, terce, sext, none, vespers, and compline, have been replaced by simpler terms under the headings: Office of readings, morning prayer, three daytime prayers, evening pray, and night prayer" (*The Catholic Encyclopedia*).

While the Liturgy of the Hours is obligatory for the ordained, all Catholics are encouraged to participate in one or more of the Hours. Many do morning, evening, or night prayer. Some parishes have community evening prayer.

**Our Mission**

To provide practical ideas that promote faithful Catholic living.

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### Feasts & Celebrations

In January we celebrate the Holy Name of Jesus. "...at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, of those in heaven and on earth and under the earth" (Philippians 2:10).

**January 1 – Solemnity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God.** When we celebrate this feast, we honor Mary, but also Jesus as God. This is a holy day of obligation and Catholics are required to attend Mass.

**January 13 – Baptism of Our Lord.** Celebrates the baptism of Jesus by his cousin, St. John the Baptist. This also marks the end of the Christmas Season.

**January 26 – Sts. Timothy and Titus (1st century).** Timothy was a convert of Paul's and later became his trusted friend joining him in apostolic work. He was with Paul at the founding of the Church in Corinth. Titus was also a friend of Paul's who served the early Church as a peacemaker and as administrator to a community on Crete.

