

# Growing in FAITH™

Discovering hope and joy in the Catholic faith.

November 2023

## Gathered in Christ's Love

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### One Minute Meditations

#### St. Margaret of Scotland

A Hungarian princess, St. Margaret grew up in luxury and privilege, but she never lost sight of those in need and her duty to serve them. After the Battle of Hastings, her family fled to Scotland where King Malcom III sheltered them and eventually married Margaret. Although a queen, her private life was austere, dedicated to prayer and serving the poor—even washing beggars' feet. She is remembered for her life of piety, kindness, and generosity.



#### Christ the King

What does it mean to say Christ is King? Do we give Him our Sundays only, or the whole week? Set aside ten minutes for God. Offer Him the events of your day and say, "Your will be done."

*"No servant can serve two masters. He will either hate one and love the other, or be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and [the world]" (Luke 16:13).*



## Thanksgiving can inspire gratitude in action

St. Mother Teresa said, "It's not how much we give but how much love we put into giving." At Thanksgiving, we bask in the glow of our blessings but it's also a chance to share them with others. This is "gratitude in action:"

**Be generous with your time.** God can't be outdone in generosity. He gives life in His image and likeness. He gave the gift of Himself in Christ's offering on the Cross. In that spirit, how can you give of yourself? Prayerfully consider where and to whom you can give your time and attention.

**Be generous with your patience.** Ours is the God of second chances,

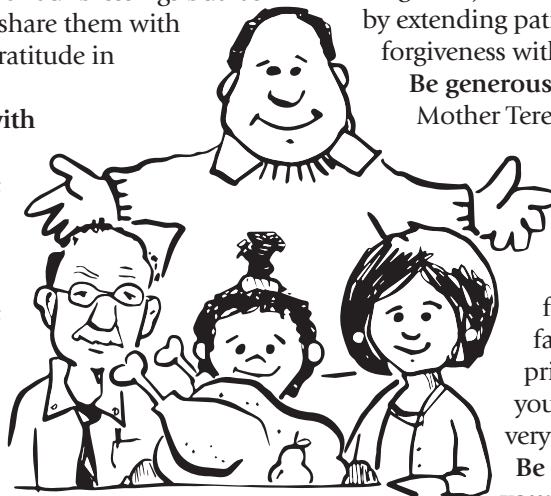
generous with His mercy. Decide to generously give others the benefit of the doubt, allow room for good intentions, and forgive injuries. Love as God loves by extending patience and forgiveness without limit.

**Be generous with your family.**

Mother Teresa said, "If you want to bring happiness to the whole world, go home and love your family." Make your family your top priority and give your loved ones the very best of yourself.

**Be generous with your joy.** Holidays can

be difficult for people without connections. Look for someone at church, at work, or in the neighborhood who might need a place to celebrate the holiday. Share holiday love and joy.



## Why Do Catholics Do That?

### Why do Catholics pray for the dead?

The practice of praying for the dead is an Act of Mercy and has Scriptural roots: "Thus he made atonement for the dead that they might be absolved from their sin" (2 Maccabees 12:45-46). Someone who dies in God's



friendship with sin on his soul must be purified before entering heaven. We can literally help souls get to heaven. Rest assured: if the person we've prayed for reaches heaven, the graces of those prayers are used to help other souls.

# Dealing with loss and those left behind

Christians know that death leads to marvelous new life, but it is still difficult to lose someone we love. We take comfort knowing that we remain connected in the Communion of Saints, the spiritual solidarity binding the faithful on Earth, the souls in Purgatory, and the saints in Heaven. Still, finding or offering comfort after a death can be challenging:

**Pray.** Pray that the souls who have died may find their place in Heaven. Perhaps arrange to have that prayer included in the intentions during Mass in your parish. Including them in your daily prayers also helps to

keep their intentions alive.

**Be present.** Attend the visitation or funeral. Such customs are part of honoring and praying for the deceased person and showing compassion to the living.

**Offer material support.** Bring a meal to the family. Mass cards, notes and phone calls can also offer comfort.

**Contribute.** Consider making a donation of time or money to organizations such as a local Hospice that provide grace and dignity to those dying.

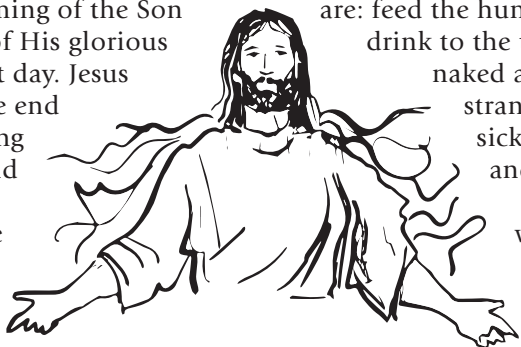


## from Scripture

### Matthew 25:31-46, Showing mercy to the "least"

In this Gospel reading, Jesus describes the coming of the Son of Man, that is, of His glorious return on the last day. Jesus will appear at the end of time as the King of the nations and the Judge of history. Everyone who has ever lived, from the first to the last, from the greatest to the least, will stand before Christ. All of us will be judged on how we loved, especially how we treated "the least" who are suffering among us.

The specific criterion for judgment is the basis for the



Corporal Works of Mercy, which are: feed the hungry and give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked and welcome the stranger, care for the sick and imprisoned, and bury the dead.

In the end, we will be judged on our response to the suffering of others. Do we, like the

"blessed," respond with compassion and mercy, or do we, like the others, turn a blind eye and do nothing? The goal is to see Christ in others and to minister to their needs accordingly.

## Q & A How does the Church decide who is a saint?

There are many people in Heaven who are saints but whose names we may never know. They are uncanonized saints. Canonization is the formal process by which the Church identifies and determines whether someone has become a saint.



In its simplest form, official Church procedures detail three steps to recognizing a saint. First, the bishop of the diocese where the person

died begins an extensive investigation. The results are passed to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints. If the Congregation approves, the prefect presents the cause to the pope. With the pope's approval, the petitioner becomes "venerable" and is called "Servant of God."

Next, "beatification," may come after further investigation and a miracle has proven to be attributed to the Servant of God's intercession after his or her death. Then the person can be called "Blessed."

Finally, canonization may follow additional investigation and a second miracle also proven to have occurred after the beatification and as a result of the candidate's intercession. After canonization, the "Blessed" is called "Saint."

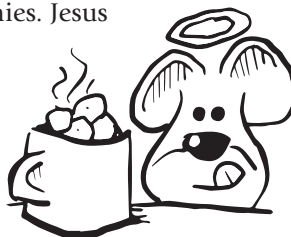
## Feasts & Celebrations

**November 1 – All Saints Day (Holy Day of Obligation).** In the early Church, there was a great desire to celebrate each of the martyrs. Because there were more martyrs than days of the year, Pope Gregory IV designated November 1 as All Saints Day. Celebrate the Saints by attending Mass.

**November 10 – Pope St. Leo the Great (461).** A native of Rome, St. Leo was elected pope while on a mission in Gaul. As pope, he defended the faith from heresy and promoted ecclesiastical unity.

**November 18 – St. Rose Philippine Duchesne (1852).** Born in Grenoble, France, she joined the Society of the Sacred Heart and came to America as a missionary. She opened the first free school for girls west of the Mississippi river, and the first Catholic school for Native Americans.

**November 26 – Solemnity of Christ the King.** God promised His people a king who would triumph over their enemies. Jesus is our King. In Baptism and Confirmation, we are brought under His kingship.



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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)