

# Growing in FAITH™

Discovering hope and joy in the Catholic faith.

June 2023

Resurrection Catholic Church, Montgomery, AL 36110

Fr. Manuel Williams, C.R., Pastor

## One Minute Meditations

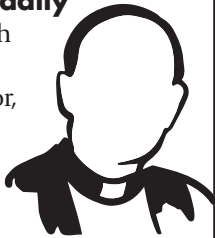
### Pray for priests daily

The average parish priest is celebrant, teacher, counselor, minister, and financial manager. He works more than 60 hours per week, does everything from administering Sacraments to bringing comfort to troubled souls to taking out the trash, and he is paid just enough to get by. Yet, nearly nine out of ten priests report being happy in their ministry. Our support can help them stay strong in their faith and true to their calling.

### Love at home

"God has created us so we do small things with great love. I believe in that great love that comes, or should come from our heart, should start at home: with my family, my neighbors across the street, those right next door. And this love should then reach everyone." Saint Teresa of Calcutta

"The father of the righteous will greatly rejoice; he who begets a wise son will be glad in him" (Proverbs 23:24).



## God so loves the world

In 1673, Jesus appeared to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, a French nun, and revealed the intensity of His love in the image of the Sacred Heart, *"Behold the Heart which has so loved [mankind] that it has spared nothing...in order to testify Its love."*

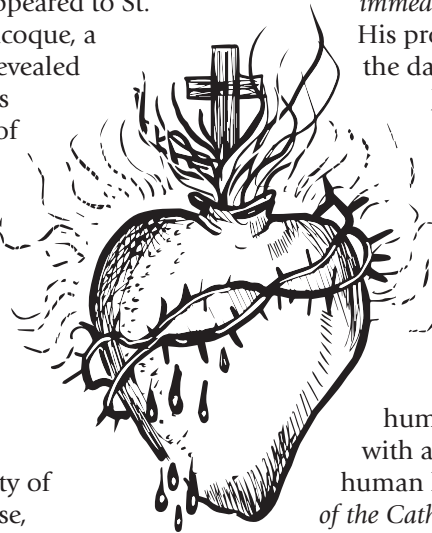
**God's love is intense:** The famous image illustrates the reality of a love that is intense, extravagant, passionate, and eternally faithful. Display the Sacred Heart image in your home or workplace to remind you that His extravagant love is for you.

**His Heart is our safe place:** Jesus advised St. Faustina: *"Do not bargain with temptation but lock yourself*

*immediately in my Heart."* Seek His protection often throughout the day, *"O Sacred Heart of Jesus, I place all my trust in You."*

**God shares our nature:** The Sacred Heart illustrates the mystery of the Incarnation – when the Son of God became (sinless) man. He "worked with human hands; he thought with a human mind ... with a human heart he loved" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #470). He shared and understands our human condition.

**Our hearts can conform to His:** When we put others needs before our own, find the good in others, and show patience, we love like Christ. We do this with His help, *"O Sacred Heart of Jesus, make my heart like Yours!"*

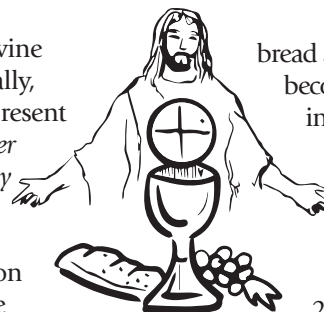


## Why Do Catholics Do That?

### Why do Catholics believe the Eucharist is more than a symbol?

Catholics have it on divine authority that Jesus is really, truly, and substantially present in the Eucharist, *"Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life"* (John 6:54). When the priest, acting in the person of Christ, consecrates the

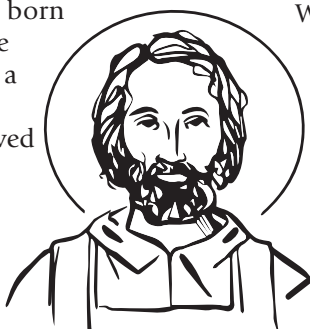
bread and wine, we believe that Jesus becomes truly present. Scientific investigations of the hundreds of Eucharistic miracles support this amazing mystery. In the Eucharist, Christ fulfills His promise to remain with us *"to the end of time"* (Matthew 28:20).



# The best father on Earth

Scripture doesn't tell us that St. Joseph was born with special graces, yet he was chosen to raise God's Son. The Bible doesn't say that he had a gift of prophecy, yet Joseph never doubted God's word. He was an ordinary man who lived an extraordinary life.

**Ever faithful.** It would have been hard for any man to believe his fiancée was pregnant by the Holy Spirit. As a faithful Jew, though, Joseph knew what was written about the birth of the Savior. His devotion to God's



Word helped him recognize God's will.

**Steady protector.** At a moment's notice, Joseph left everything behind to whisk his family to safety (Matthew 2:13-15). Joseph's hard work and skill helped keep his family safe in a foreign land.

**Good man.** Scripture calls St. Joseph, a "righteous man," meaning he lived a virtuous life (Matthew 1:19). For example, he was compassionate by his treatment of Mary. Who better to raise the Son of God and care for his Mother than the best father on Earth?

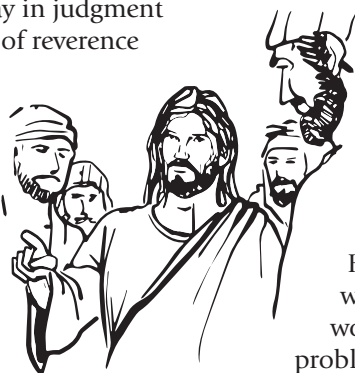
## from Scripture

### Matthew 10:26-33, "Be not afraid"

In this Gospel passage, Jesus teaches us that the only thing we should fear is God, who has the final say in judgment over us. This is the virtue of reverence (holy fear) – not fearing God as if He were a tyrant, but fearing to offend Him because He is good, holy, wise, and infinitely worthy of our honor and love.

If we faithfully follow Jesus Christ, we will encounter persecution. Even in the United States, we face efforts to undermine Catholic beliefs and values. These attacks don't hurt us physically, but can eat away at our faith,

our self-respect and respect for others, and ultimately, our happiness.



Jesus' advice to His followers 2,000 years ago applies to us today. Instead of being afraid, we can trust God, who watches over all the details of our lives and who wants us in Heaven even more than we want to be there. He won't make all our problems disappear but He will give us the strength and grace we need to get through them, especially through daily prayer and the Sacraments.

## Q & A What can I do to promote respect for life?

All Catholics are called to protect the dignity of life from conception to natural death. While casting votes for candidates who pledge to protect life is important, there are many options outside the voting booth.

### Assist pregnancy support centers.

Many centers offer counseling, material assistance, and even provide daycare. Find one in your area and volunteer your time, talents, or treasure in support.



**Speak up.** When you hear or read about a story in the news in which the value of life is demeaned, write a letter to the editor and to government leaders supporting life-affirming and non-violent solutions.

### Consider becoming a foster parent.

Many local social service agencies are overwhelmed by the number of children whose families cannot care for them. Contact your local social services department to inquire about the necessary training and certifications you'll need to take in a child who needs a temporary shelter.

**Visit local nursing homes** and offer residents the gift of companionship. Many older people feel lost and forgotten and would welcome the attention.

## Feasts & Celebrations

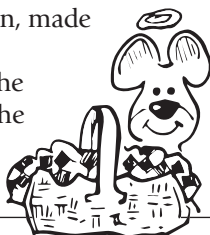
**June 1 – St. Justin Martyr (c. 165).** Justin was a Christian convert who searched for Truth. After his conversion, he held debates with pagans. When ordered by a pagan judge to renounce his faith or die, St. Justin responded, "Nobody in his senses would give up truth for falsehood." He was martyred for his faith.

**June 4 – Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity.** Today, we honor the central mystery of our Faith – that there is one God in three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Jesus revealed this mystery

after the Resurrection (Matthew 28:19).

**June 9 – St. Ephrem the Deacon (373).** Born at Nisibis in Mesopotamia, he became a deacon and taught catechism classes, opposed heresy, and wrote hymns, prayers, and commentaries on Scripture.

**June 29 – SS. Peter and Paul (1st Century).** Peter was the apostle chosen by Jesus to lead the Church – an ordinary fisherman, made extraordinary by God's grace. A persecutor of the Church, Paul became the Great Apostle, also transformed by grace.



## 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)