



[If you haven't already, begin your meal with meal prayer, then take turns reading these boxes aloud, following the directions where applicable]

Blessed are the Pure in Heart

People judge by outward

appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart. -- 1 Samuel 16:7

The way people look at people is different than how God looks at people. People tend to judge others on how they look, what they do, how they act, and what they say. But God goes much deeper in his relationship than that. He goes right into our hearts. This is why Jesus says "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God." But what does it pure mean? Pure means not contaminated, not mixed with any other substance. This means that we must keep our desires focused on God, to unite what we want (our will) to what he created us for (his will). Any other desires in our hearts are "impurities" - they divide us from God. But the good news is that God's plans for us will always lead us to the deepest peace and joy possible when we follow them. Indeed, ultimately this will lead us to see God, which doesn't mean just beholding him with our eyes. Just like when you go "see" family, you spend time with them, when the pure of heart see God, they will come into God's presence and spend all of forever with him. The moments of joy and peace that we experience in this life as we grow closer to God are little glimpses until that time when we are fully united with him. Our hearts are restless until they rest in you, O God - St Augustine

St Catherine of Siena

St Catherine of Siena's feast day falls on April 29. She is a saint, a mystic and a doctor of the Church (despite struggling to learn to read and write as an adult), as well as a patroness of Italy and of Europe. Catherine considered herself married to Christ, she found him to be the best thing she could love above all other things. She sought to unite her heart to Christ's so closely that it was like Christ's heart was living within her. She did this through prayer, meditation on the Word of God and by the sacraments, above all by receiving Holy Communion frequently and with devotion. One of the ways that Catherine taught about God was the bridges or stairways leading to God: the first is detachment from sin, the second is the practice of the virtues, and the third is sweet loving union with God. Early in her life, Catherine spent her time in solitude with God, but eventually God called her out to into the world. She served the poor, challenged the powers of the time and called for reform, and wrote many letters which eventually earned her title as a doctor of the church. She is remembered for saying "Be who God meant you to be and you will set the world on fire."

Discussion

[These questions are a spark for conversation, not a strict outline.]

- If someone asked what pure means, what would you say?
- What things might distract or contaminate someone's heart from being fully united to God? What can help keep it pure?
- What do you imagine it will be like to "see" God?

Activity & Prayer

[For this activity section, you will need the additional resource provided by the parish. If you don't have it, you can download it on our website]

Choose at least one of the activities on the handout to help your family ponder the meaning of being pure in heart.

Be sure to include Catherine of Siena in your prayer by praying "St Catherine of Siena - Pray for us!"

End by praying the Beatitudes Prayer

Lord, make me poor spirit, so I can receive the kingdom of heaven.

Lord, when I mourn, help me find comfort.

Lord, make me meek, so that I may inherit the land.

Lord, help me to hunger and thirst for righteousness, so I may be satisfied.

Lord, make me merciful, so I may obtain your mercy.

Lord, make me pure of heart, so I may see you.

Lord, help me to make peace, so I may be called your child.

Lord, when I am persecuted for righteousness' sake, show me your kingdom.

Extras

Items available on FORMED.org about...

Pure of Heart:

Children's Video:

<https://watchformed.org/videos/purity>

Catherine of Siena:

Audio Biography:

<https://watchformed.org/videos/catherine-of-siena>

Half Hour Video Study:

<https://watchformed.org/videos/formed-live-who-is-st-catherine-of-siena>

Children's E-Book:

<https://watchformed.org/secret-s-of-siena-by-dianne-ahern>

Video for Children:

<https://watchformed.org/videos/lukas-storyteller-saint-catherine-of-siena>

Sacramental Life

This week's journal prompt for first reconciliation/communion: Congratulations on receiving your First Holy Communion! Discuss and draw about how it felt to receive Jesus in this way.

This week's confirmation work is: Mission and Works of Mercy Watch Decision Point 11.4 Your Untapped Greatness

Who do you know who is great at serving other people?

What does the story about the rich man and Lazarus make you think about?

What is one act of mercy you can commit to practicing in the next 30 days?

Looking Ahead

For Next Week, May 3:

- See the parish or website for additional handouts and coloring pages

Upcoming:

- Confirmation will be May 7 at 2:00 at St. Augustine
- We will gather as a parish for our closing COR event: Mass, May Crowning and Picnic on May 17 - details to come!

