

Learning to Grow in Faith and Trust in God

1. I used to be a perfectionist, always aiming to do everything perfectly, and expecting the same from others. When I or others fail to meet my standards, then I get easily frustrated. But God doesn't require perfection, in the sense of not making any mistakes in life. When Jesus



said, "Be perfect just as your Father in heaven, is perfect (Mt 5:48)," The context of this verse is not about being flawless; it is about loving others in a perfect way. Right before this verse, Jesus talked about loving your enemies and doing good to those who hurt you. If you forgive your enemies and pray for them, then you are loving others in a perfect way. The perfect way of loving others is to have an all-inclusive love for all that it devoid of hate. That is the kind of perfection that God wants from us.

2. As I increased in age, going through serious health issues, I have learned to ask God only for what is enough to manage my life properly, rather than wanting in excess. A worker who had been laid off asks for the perfect job with a huge salary, as if that would fix all his problems. A couple with marriage issues asks for a perfect marriage where the other spouse can love unconditionally, while at the same time not willing to do it himself or herself. An elderly person suffering from an illness asks to be young and healthy, to be able to enjoy life again. All I ask is that God keeps me healthy enough so that I can continue to do what he wants me to do in the remainder of my life.

When we pray the Lord's Prayer and ask God to "Give us this day our daily bread," we are asking God only for the basic necessities to live through the day, while avoiding the extremes of poverty and greedy excess. This has translated to my eating habits; I no longer eat until I am full, I only eat until I have had enough.

It is a reminder for us to trust God one day at a time, developing a habit of humble and ongoing dependence on God. It is also a petition for grace to live a faithful life each day.

The Canaanite woman in Matthew 15:21-28 asked Jesus for the scraps that fell off the children's table, and that was enough for her. Jesus exclaimed, "O woman, great is your faith!" (Mt 15:28) Was Jesus impressed with her persistence, or was Jesus impressed because she asked only for the scraps of grace?

Let us learn a lesson from St. Paul: After an abundance of divine revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to him – which he described as being beaten by an angel of Satan; three times he begged the Lord that it might leave him (cf. 2Cor 12:1-8). One day, he was in third heaven, and the next day, he was going through a time of deep personal suffering and hardship; everything seemed to be going wrong. Perhaps many of us have been in this same situation before. And yet, the Lord simply said to him, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness (2Cor 12:9)." This teaches us that it is during the times when we feel so weak and broken, that the power of God's grace is enough to carry us through. I do not seek to feel happy every day, all I ask is that I feel a little fulfillment at the end of each day; that is enough for me.

耶穌聖名華人天主堂

THE HOLY NAME of Jesus CHINESE CATHOLIC MISSION

5395 Light Circle NW, Norcross GA 30071 678-691-3261 hnojatl.org

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3. Do you think that God measures us based on what we have accomplished? What I have learned from scripture is that God does not measure us by status, wealth or worldly achievements. Instead, God looks at the disposition of our hearts, how much we have grown in virtue, our faith and trust in Him, our obedience to Him and how we treat others. According to the Book of Proverbs, "All your ways may be straight in your own eyes, but it is the LORD who weighs hearts." (Prov 21:2) Does that mean that we should be devoid of ambition? Not necessarily. But at this point in my life, my only goal is to continue to do God's work each and every day, for only as long as God allows me to do it on this earth. Perhaps that is the greatest lesson I've learned: making every day about God, not myself.

PARISH ANNOUNCEMENTS

The OCIA Period of Inquiry is now open: During this period, people who have the desire to become Catholic ask questions about the Catholic faith and the OCIA program. All are welcome to contact Fr. Bill or any parish member, join in the celebration of the Eucharist and join the various activities of the parish. If you know anyone who has an interest in becoming Catholic, now is the time to reach out to them and pray for them.

Registration for Sunday School schoolyear 2026 - 2027 begins on August 16. The class schedule will be published within the next couple of weeks.

The Fall Schedule for the Chinese Language Classes have been posted in our church website: hnojatl.org. Starting this year, we will be offering classes on Saturdays from 2 - 4 pm and Sundays from 2 - 4 pm. Classes begin on August 15, please download the registration form from the website.

We will also have new classes to help our church members converse in the English language. Classes will be held on Sundays after the 10:30 am Mass.

Prayer List: Bian Cheng Zhang, Susan Lee, Jasmine Ho, Michael Tan, Bian Meiyi, Chen Shupeng, Chen Jianxin, Liang Chenjing and Xu Taicheng.

Mass Schedule	Confessions	Bible Study
Sundays 10:30 AM (Chinese)	By Appointment	Wednesdays 10:00 AM (Chinese)
Sundays 2:00 PM (English)		
	Anointing of the Sick	Eucharistic Adoration
Mondays 12:00 PM (English)	First Sundays after 10:30 AM Mass	Sundays 9:00 to 10:00 AM
Tuesdays 12:00 PM (English)	First Fridays after 6:30 PM Mass	
Wednesdays 12:00 PM (Chinese)		
Fridays 12:00 PM (English)		
First Friday 6:30 PM (English)		