

Catholic Faith Corner

Understanding, Teaching, and Living the Faith

Sea of Galilee at Sunrise



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Mindfulness, Being in the Present Moment

by KATHLEEN GLAVICH, SND on [NOVEMBER 6, 2019](#)
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Don't let a moment
go by without savoring it!



Mary Kathleen Glavich, SND

I'm a Sister of Notre Dame, of Chardon, Ohio, the author of eighty-plus books on religious education and spirituality, including a novel, "The Fisherman's Wife: The Gospel According to St. Peter's Spouse." I enjoy giving talks and retreats and was a pastoral associate at St. Dominic Church. I also edit and self-publish books for others.

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Recently a friend said that mindfulness is helping her through a grieving process. Mindfulness is living fully aware of the present moment: who we are, what are we feeling, and what is happening right now. Rooted in Buddhism, mindfulness is gaining in popularity today.

Often we dwell on things of the past. Remembering and cherishing good memories are positive acts. On the other hand, focusing on past failures, regretting bad decisions, recalling slights and harm done to you by others only serve to bring on a case of depression. It is not healthy to be stuck in the past, which is over and done and cannot be changed. Some of our expressions reflect this fact: It's water under the bridge. Don't cry over spilled milk. Let bygones be bygones.

Opposite of being wrapped up in the past and just as distracting is concentrating on the future. Yes, it is good to plan ahead, to be proactive, but we may be tempted to pin all our hopes to what's coming and ignore today. For example, thinking of an upcoming vacation in Florida—the sun, the rest, the freedom—and be impervious to the beauty of the autumn leaves surrounding us now. Or worse, we might be imagining misfortunes that might occur and be fearful: what if I cause a car accident? what if I get the flu and can't attend a wedding? what will I be like in thirty years? For good reason, we pray at Mass that God deliver us from anxiety.

You may remember James Thurber's short story "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty." This character was constantly daydreaming, imagining himself a hero in his fantasies. In the meantime he was missing out on real life. That was a shame for him and would be for us. The past no longer exists, and the future doesn't exist yet. Only the present is real.

Three hundred years ago the Jesuit Caussade introduced the concept of the sacrament of the present moment. God gave us each moment, and we can realize his presence with us in that precious time. Stewing over the past isn't necessary when we are aware of God's love. Dreading the future is dispelled when we remember that we are in God's hands. Such Christian mindfulness brings about peace.

So how do we practice mindfulness? How do we relish the fact that we are alive here and now? Some people simply stop what they are doing and pay attention to their breathing. They take deep breaths and become aware of the air passing in and out of them. Another technique is to reflect on what each sense is presently experiencing. What are you seeing? What are you hearing? What are you feeling?

Here is one way to practice mindfulness: It is easy to eat meals mindlessly and quickly. How much healthier and enjoyable it would be to be attuned to the taste of



About Sister Kathleen Glavich, SND

Jesus ordered us to make disciples of all nations and teach them. Mary Kathleen, a Sister of Notre Dame from Chardon, Ohio, responds to this call through writing, speaking, giving retreats, and teaching. Her motto, adopted from Eddie Doherty's gravesite, is "All my words for the Word!"

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each food, savoring its sweetness, tartness, or spiciness. Pay attention to what it looks like—its color and texture—and how it feels as you chew it. Is it crunchy or tough?



It's said that the present is a present. If so, why not open it?

Another friend has a mindfulness button on her watch. Periodically it alerts her to stop and gaze at a geometric design that expands. Mindfulness apps are readily available nowadays.

How do you practice mindfulness?

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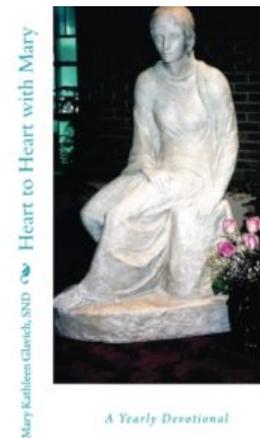
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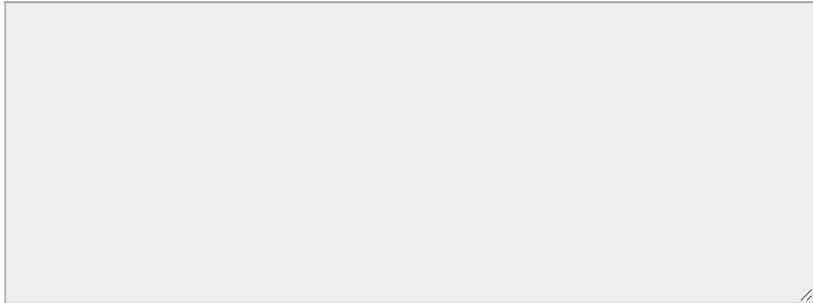
Featured Book

Totally Catholic! A Catechism for Kids and Their Parents and Teachers

Do you wish you had a simple, child-friendly summary of what Catholics believe? This book took first place in the Association of Catholic Publishers awards 2014 in the category of Children's Books. It can be purchased from Pauline Books and Media or from me. (\$14.95)

A Heavenly Book

Do you believe in angels? Most people do. The Catholic Companion to Angels offers heavenly facts about these majestic creatures, confirming that you can turn to them for help. Uniquely, The Angels comes with three covers (statue, stained-glass, or painting). Choose the one you like best.



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My First Novel!

The Fisherman's Wife is the story of St. Peter's spouse, the long-suffering but delightful woman who puts up with Peter and his obsession with the itinerant preacher named Jesus. Through her we meet Peter, Jesus, and other biblical characters. In Capernaum she witnesses Jesus' healings and hears his words. The book is based on the Gospels, legends, and what is known about first-century Jewish women. The rest is sheer imagination. Order directly from me FOR AN AUTOGRAPHED COPY at kglavich@ndec.org.

A Bit of Humor

A Slow Student During indoor recess, the third and fourth graders were playing school. Taking part in the game, the teacher, Sister Janet, sat at a child's desk. Adam, who was playing the teacher, came up to her and asked, "And just how many years have you been kept back?" (from "Why Is Jesus in the Microwave?")

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