

# **Basic Catholic Beliefs**

## **Class Notes**



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**UNIT ONE: Catholic Beliefs**

I.	Purpose of Our Existence .....	1
II.	God's Existence and Our Knowledge of Him .....	2
III.	Sacred Scripture/Bible .....	5

**UNIT TWO: The Creed**

I.	The Apostles' and Nicene Creeds .....	6
II.	God and His Perfections . .....	7
III.	Creation: Angels and Humans .....	9
IV.	Adam and Eve: Their Fall and Sin .....	14
V.	Jesus Christ and His Work of Salvation .....	21
VI.	The Holy Spirit and Grace .....	27
VII.	The Catholic Church .....	32
VIII.	The Communion of Saints, Forgiveness of Sins, and the Resurrection of the Body .....	40

**UNIT THREE: The Sacraments**

I.	Overview of the Sacraments .....	45
II.	Baptism .....	47
III.	Penance .....	52
IV.	Holy Eucharist .....	58
V.	The Sacrifice of the Mass .....	62
VI.	Confirmation .....	71
VII.	Anointing of the Sick .....	75
VIII.	Holy Orders .....	78
IX.	Matrimony .....	81

**UNIT FOUR: The Blessed Virgin Mary**

I.	Her Privileges .....	87
II.	Practical Applications .....	92

<b><u>CLASS PRAYER</u></b> .....	95
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**UNIT ONE: Catholic Beliefs****I. Purpose of Our Existence.**

A. Objective: To learn our purpose in life; to state the goals of this class.

1. Questions we ask ourselves:

- a. Where did I come from?
- b. Is there any design or plan to life?
- c. Why am I here on this earth?
- d. What do I want to get out of life?

2. Two ways to answer these questions, depending on which point of view we have:

- a. Hedonistic/Secular (Worldly) Point of View: Its philosophy states that we should live for today only. It is summed up by the statement: *"Eat, drink, and be merry for tomorrow you may die."*
- b. Catholic/Christian Point of View: Its philosophy states that we have an eternal destiny whereby the way that we live today will determine where we will spend eternity. ***Scripture References:***

(1) Gen 1:1-2, 24-31: First story of creation.

(a) Gen 1:1: *"In the beginning,...God created the heavens and the earth...."*

(b) Gen 1:24-25: *"Let the earth bring forth all kinds of living creatures....God saw how good it was."*

(c) Gen 1:27-30: *"God created man in his image...; male and female he created them. God blessed them, saying: 'Be fertile and multiply: fill the earth and subdue it. Have dominion...over all the living things of the earth.'"*

(d) Gen 1:31: *"God looked at everything he had made, and he found it very good."*

(2) Mt 22:37-40: *"You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind....You shall love your neighbor as yourself."*

(3) Jn 17:3: *"Now this is eternal life, that they should know you, the only true God, and the one whom you sent, Jesus Christ."*

(4) 1 Jn 2:15-17: *"Do not love the world or the things of the world...[for]...the world and its enticements are passing away. But whoever does the will of God remains forever."*

c. Purpose in Life: To know, love, and serve God so that we can get to heaven.

3. How will we get to heaven?
  - a. By *knowing* and *living* God's teachings in our daily lives.
4. Goals of this class:
  - a. To learn *about God* and *how He wants us to live*, since:
    - (1) *Knowledge about God = greater love of God.*
    - (2) *Greater love of God = greater service of God.*
    - (3) *Greater service of God = greater happiness here and eternity.*
5. How will we achieve these goals in this class?
  - a. By studying the *teachings of Jesus* as are expressed through the Catholic religion, *including*:
    - (1) Sacred Scripture: God's written word.
    - (2) Apostles' Creed: Contains the basic beliefs of the Catholic faith.
    - (3) Seven Sacraments: Channels of grace by which God works in our souls.
    - (4) Ten Commandments: God's laws given to Moses that tell us how we are to live.
    - (5) Mass: Jesus giving Himself to us in the Holy Eucharist and speaking to us through His Word proclaimed in Sacred Scripture.
    - (6) Blessed Virgin Mary: Mother of Jesus Christ, truly God and truly human.

## II. God's Existence and Our Knowledge of Him.

- A. Objective: To show that God exists from looking at the effects in the universe and to show that we can know and have a personal relationship with Him.
- B. Question: *Who made the world and all that it contains?* **Theories:**
  1. Evolution: Process of development from a primitive state to the present state.
  2. Big Bang Theory: Says that the universe began with a gigantic explosion. If we believe this, perhaps we can ask ourselves how orderly are the effects of an explosion from a detonated bomb or a leaky gas valve? The effects of an explosion are usually chaotic. Therefore, is it rational to postulate that the universe came into existence as the result of an explosion?
  3. Chance: Luck. To say that the universe happened by chance makes as much sense as saying that the

*presidential figures on Mount Rushmore* were carved by the wind and rain or that the *computer was formed* when thousands of pieces of wood, metal, plastic, and rubber were thrown into the air and came down perfectly assembled.

4. God: As Catholics and Christians, we believe that there is a super intelligent being who planned, made, and keeps in existence the entire universe. *We call this being God.* The remainder of this lesson will show that God exists and that we can have a personal relationship with Him.

#### C. God's Existence and Our Knowledge of Him:

1. Natural Revelation: The knowledge we have about God by looking at the things He created. We go from the *effects* in the universe to the *cause* of those effects. This knowledge proves His existence, but does not allow us to have a personal friendship with Him. **Examples:**
  - a. Physical World: Its beauty, e.g., trees, pictures of earth from the space shuttle, sunset, other planets in the universe, sun, and moon, seasons of the year, etc.
  - b. Human Person/Body: Its complexity and beauty, its "automatic" operation, e.g., blood flow, breathing, nerve impulses, etc.
2. Supernatural or Divine Revelation: The knowledge that God reveals about Himself and His plan of salvation that is *beyond what we can know of Him by human reason alone*, e.g., the *Blessed Trinity* and the *Holy Eucharist*. This knowledge allows us to share in God's divine life and, therefore, to have a friendship with Him. It comes to us through **two distinct modes**:
  - a. Sacred Scripture/Bible: The *written* word of God composed by humans under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.
  - b. Sacred or Apostolic Tradition (From "*tradere*," meaning "*to deliver*" or "*to hand over*"): The process by which God's truths and grace are made known and available to each generation. These truths and grace are "handed over" through **four modes of transmission**:
    - (1) Word of God: The mode of transmitting God's Word within Sacred Tradition is principally *oral*, beginning with Jesus' own teaching and preaching which He delivered to His Apostles, who in turn handed it on to their successors, the bishops. Eventually these teachings were put down in *written form* and transmitted in what the Church eventually called the *New Testament*, the fulfillment of the *Old Testament* prophecies.
    - (2) Liturgy: The content and grace necessary to live the truths of Divine Revelation are communicated through the Church's liturgical practices, particularly the *sacraments*.
    - (3) Magisterium (From "*magister*," meaning "*teacher*"): The teaching office of the Pope and those bishops in union with him, whose purpose is to safeguard the deposit of faith and morals that leads us to heaven. This process of transmission was established by Jesus Christ to guarantee that God's teachings would be "handed over" to each generation without error.
    - (4) Fathers of the Church: We have received our great theological, liturgical, and catechetical

traditions from the Eastern (Greek speaking) and Western (Latin speaking) Fathers of the Church, e.g., *St. Cyril of Jerusalem*, *St. John Chrysostom*, *St. Ambrose*, and *St. Augustine*. Through their works, the Church grew in her understanding of the truths of the faith and was able to transmit it intact and infallibly.

That Sacred Tradition is necessary can be seen from the fact that the *Canon of the Bible* (the officially accepted “*list*” of inspired books in the Bible) was not firmly established until after the Council of Hippo in 393 A.D. and reaffirmed by the Council of Carthage in 397 A.D. Thus, it was the Church, meeting in ecumenical council, that determined which books were inspired and were to be included in the Bible. Sacred Tradition, therefore, preceded Sacred Scripture, for the Gospel message was imparted *orally* long before it was put into *written form* and it was the Church, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, that decided which books were to be included in the Canon of the Bible. ***Scripture References:***

- (1) Jn 21:24-25: “*There are...many other things that Jesus did, but if these were to be described individually...the whole world would [not] contain the books that would be written.*”
  - (2) 1 Cor 11:2: “*I praise you because you remember me in everything and hold fast to the traditions, just as I handed them on to you.*”
  - (3) 2 Thes 2:15: “*Therefore...stand firm and hold fast to the traditions that you were taught, either by oral statement or by a letter of ours.*”
3. Sacred Deposit of the Faith: The collection of all God’s teachings included in *Sacred Scripture* and *Sacred Tradition* that is “handed over” by the Church. It includes the *deposit of truth* and the *necessary grace* to live these truths in daily life. ***Analogy:***
    - a. Water Faucet: A single water faucet can dispense both *hot* and *cold* water. The water comes from *one source*, e.g., the city water plant, but it has *two ways to be dispensed*: hot and cold. In a like manner, there is *one deposit of faith*, a “spiritual bank account,” that contains all God’s teachings. These teachings come to us in *two ways*: through *Sacred Scripture* and *Sacred Tradition*.
  4. Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition: ***Features:***
    - a. Equal Authority: Both are equal because both are inspired by the Holy Spirit. Each source either adds to or explains the other, but they are never in contradiction.
    - b. Completed: Both forms of inspiration were completed with the death of the last Apostle, meaning that there is no more new Divine Revelation. God has taught us everything that we need to know to get to heaven. All we need to do is to put it into practice in our daily lives.
    - c. Explained By: Both sources are explained or interpreted by the *Magisterium*.
  5. Private Revelations: Revelations made to individual persons that are *not* part of the sacred deposit of faith and, therefore, are not necessary for salvation. These revelations must be believed only by those for whom they are made. Examples include *St. Margaret Mary* (Sacred Heart apparitions), *St. Bernadette at Lourdes* (healing waters), and *Fatima* (Blessed Virgin Mary apparitions).

### III. Sacred Scripture/Bible.

A. Objective: To give a brief overview of the Bible.

B. Sacred Scripture/Bible:

1. Bible: Comes from the Greek word “*biblia*” meaning “*books*.” It is a collection of books or writings about God. **Features:**

a. Authorship: The books of the Bible were written by *humans* under the inspiration of the *Holy Spirit*. Thus, Sacred Scripture has **two authors**:

(1) God the Holy Spirit: By His direct action upon the *mind* and *will* of the writer, God silently inspired them to write His truths and teachings.

(2) Human Writers: God allowed the human authors to use their own writing style to express His *religious truths*.

b. Divided into **two parts**:

(1) Old Testament: Collection of writings that expresses the *agreement* between God and His chosen people, the *Jews* or *Israelites*. God agreed to bless His chosen people if they remained faithful to His commands. The writings of the Old Testament are also a remote preparation for the coming of Jesus Christ as the Redeemer of humanity. **Qualities:**

(a) 900 years: This collection of books was written over a period of 900 years.

(b) Number of Books: In *Catholic*, *Eastern Orthodox*, and *Anglican* bibles, there are *46 Old Testament books*. In *Protestant* bibles, there are *39 Old Testament books*.<sup>1</sup>

(c) Catholic/Protestant Bibles: Sometimes one will see on the front cover of a bible the phrase “*with Deuterocanonical books*” or “*with Apocryphal texts*.” **Definitions:**

i) Deuterocanonical: (“*Deutero*” meaning “*second*,” “*canon*” meaning “*list*”). They include *Tobit*, *Judith*, *Wisdom of Solomon*, *Sirach*, *Baruch*, *I* and *II Maccabees*, plus additions

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<sup>1</sup>“The reasons for this difference are as follows. In the early days of the Church there were two versions of the Old Testament used by the Jewish people: (a) an Old Testament in *Hebrew*, used in Palestine, which did *not* contain the seven books...; (b) an Old Testament in *Greek*, used by Greek-speaking Jews outside of Palestine, which *did* contain the seven books. This second version of the Old Testament, which had been translated into Greek about 150 years before the time of Jesus, was called the *Septuagint* (the Greek word for 70). In the late fourth century A.D. St. Jerome translated the entire Bible into Latin. His translation of the Old Testament was from the Greek Septuagint version. St. Jerome’s translation, called the *Vulgate*, was accepted by the Church as the official Latin translation of the Bible. In the 16<sup>th</sup> century the Protestant reformers made their own translation of the Bible into German. Their translation of the Old Testament was from the Hebrew, not the Greek, version. So the Protestant Old Testament, like the Hebrew version, lacks the seven books contained in the Greek and Catholic Old Testaments.” (Discovering the Bible, Book One by Rev. John Tickle, p. 7).

to *Daniel* and *Esther*.

- ii) Apocrypha: (Writings of doubtful authenticity). Term used by Protestants that refers to the seven Old Testament books that Catholic bibles contain and theirs lack.
- (2) New Testament: Collection of books, written originally in Greek, that expresses the *agreement* made by God with the *whole human race*. It fulfills Old Testament prophecies and contains *what Jesus Christ lived and taught* (the four Gospels), *how the Church lived and grew after Jesus' Ascension* (Acts of the Apostles and Letters), and *that Jesus saved us by His death and resurrection and continues to live in our midst*. **Characteristics:**
- (a) Written in less than 100 years: From 51 to 105 A.D.
  - (b) Number of Books: Catholic and Protestant bibles both contain 27 books.
  - (c) Gospels: The Gospels are “*good news*” because they contain the story of Jesus’ birth, infancy, teaching, death, and resurrection. They include: *Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John*.
  - (d) Synoptic Gospels: The word “*synoptic*” means “*seen with the same eye*.” The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke are known as the *Synoptic Gospels* because they record the same events.
  - (e) Order of New Testament Books: Gospels, Acts of the Apostles, Letters of St. Paul (14), General Letters (7), Book of Revelation.

## **UNIT TWO: The Creed**

### **I. The Apostles’ and Nicene Creeds.**

- A. Objective: To learn the meaning of the word “creed” and to know the distinctions between the Apostles’ and Nicene Creeds.
- B. Apostles’ and Nicene Creeds:
  - 1. Creed: Statement or code of beliefs.
  - 2. Apostles’ Creed: The Apostles’ Creed was formulated in Rome in the second century to help provide converts to Christianity a clear understanding of the basic beliefs.
  - 3. Nicene Creed: This creed is also known as the *Profession of Faith* and is recited at Mass. It came from the Council of Nicea in 325 in response to the Arian Heresy which denied the divinity of Jesus by claiming that He was a creature made out of nothing like every other created person. The Nicene Creed defined the divinity of Jesus and His equality with the Father.



**II. God and His Perfections: (Apostles' Creed: "I believe in God...").**

A. Objective: To show who God is by looking at His qualities/characteristics.

B. God and His Perfections:

1. Who is God?: *Qualities/Characteristics*:

- a. Supreme Being: God is the source of all being and is above and beyond all else that exists. There can only be one supreme being, for to speak of two or more would be a contradiction, since the word *supreme* means "*above all others.*" **Scripture References:**

(1) Is 44:6: "*I am the first and last; there is no God but me.*"

(2) Rv 1:8: "*I am the Alpha and the Omega...the one who is and who was and who is to come....*"

- b. Pure Spirit: An immortal being who has *intelligence* and *free will* and cannot be destroyed, except by an act of God. **Scripture Reference:**

(1) Jn 4:24: "*God is Spirit, and those who worship him must worship him in Spirit and truth.*"

- c. Self-Existing: God does not depend upon anyone for His existence.

- d. Infinitely Perfect: The qualities that God possesses are without limit. He needs nothing to make Him greater or more wonderful. Although God is above all He has created, some likeness of His being is found in every creature, from the most *glorious angel* to the *lowliest moss*. The beauty of a *flower*, for example, is a tiny reflection of God's unbounded beauty. Thus, there is nothing good or worthwhile in the universe that is not a reflection (a little "splinter," so to speak) of that same quality as it exists without limit in God. God's perfections include His *being*:

- (1) Eternal: God had no beginning and will have no end. He cannot change and there is no time with God. All is present. There is no past and no future. **Scripture References:**

(a) 2 Pt 3:8: "...*With the Lord one day is like a thousand years and a thousand years like one day.*"

(b) Jas 1:17: God is "*the Father of lights, with whom there is no alteration or shadow caused by change.*"

- (2) All-Good: God is the source of every good and is completely lovable.

- (3) All-Knowing: God knows everything: past, present, and future. **Scripture References:**

(a) Sir 42:18-20: "*He plumbs the depths and penetrates the heart; their innermost being he understands. [He] possesses all knowledge, and sees from of old the things that are to come....No understanding does he lack; no single thing escapes him.*"

(b) Heb 4:13: “*No creature is concealed...but everything is exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must render an account.*”

(c) Lk 8:17: “*For there is nothing hidden that will not become visible, and nothing secret that will not be known....*”

Because God knows the future, it does not follow that we lose our *free will* or that we are *predestined* (belief that God foreordained everything that would happen, e.g., the salvation or damnation of a person). We must make the distinction between God as *knower* and God as *causer*. **Example:**

(a) Salvation: God has foreknowledge of whether or not we will spend eternity with Him in heaven. His knowledge of this does not “cause” or “force” us to choose to be with Him. He simply “knows” or “foresees” what choices we will make with our free will before we make them.

(4) All-Present: God is everywhere, all the time, and keeps everything in existence. He can do so because He is a pure spirit being. **Scripture Reference:**

(a) Ps 139:7-8: “*Where can I hide from your spirit? From your presence, where can I flee? If I ascend to the heavens, you are there; if I lie down in Sheol, you are there too.*”

(5) Almighty: God can do or make anything. **Scripture Reference:**

(a) Jdt 16:13-14: “*...O Lord, great are you...wonderful in power and unsurpassable....*”

Because God is almighty, people sometimes ask the question “*Can God make a square circle?*” The answer is “no,” because a square circle is not a something, it is a no-thing, a contradiction in terms, like a *daylight night*. The same principle applies to the question “*Can God commit a sin?*” Again, no, because sin, too, is a no-thing, a failure to give obedience to God. God can do anything, but He does not do no-things.

(6) All-Wise: God knows best how to use the things He has made and how best to plan for His creatures. This eternal divine plan for the universe and for all that happens is known as *divine providence*. **Scripture Reference:**

(a) Wis 8:1: God’s wisdom “*reaches from end to end mightily and governs all things well.*”

(7) All-Holy: God is without sin. Our holiness is but a reflection of God’s infinite holiness. The holiness of the Blessed Virgin Mary, when compared to the dazzling splendor of God, would be like a *match flame* compared to the *sun*.

(8) All-Merciful: God’s forgiveness is unlimited and unconditional. As long as we repent, so often will God forgive.

(9) All-Just: God is perfectly fair. He is not a doting grandmother, who closes His eyes to our sins.

He wants us in heaven, but His mercy cannot defeat His justice if we refuse Him the love which is the purpose of our being.

- e. Unity: There is one God. When we say “God,” we are referring to His divine nature, which is common to all three Persons. In God there is only one *nature*, which describes *what* someone or something is.
- f. Trinity of Persons: In God there are three divine *Persons*. A *person* describes *who* someone is. Thus, in saying that a man is a “person,” we mean that he is an intelligent being acting individually for himself. **Persons:**

(1) Father: The Father is God and the *First Person of the Blessed Trinity*. All *power* and the *work of creation* are attributed to Him.

(2) Son: The Son is God and the *Second Person of the Blessed Trinity*. To God the Son—*Jesus Christ*—we owe our *redemption* from sin and *salvation* from eternal death. Jesus Christ is both *human* and *divine*.

(3) Holy Spirit: The Holy Spirit is God and the *Third Person of the Blessed Trinity*. He lives within our souls and makes them *holy* (pleasing to God).

## 2. The Blessed Trinity: **Qualities/Characteristics:**

- a. Distinct: The three Persons are all *separate* from one another.
- b. Equal: The three Persons are all *equal*, for all are God.
- c. Indwelling: Term that describes the Blessed Trinity’s presence within our souls after baptism and as long as we’re free from mortal sin.
- d. Supernatural Mystery: Our belief in one God, three divine Persons is a mystery that cannot be understood by human reason alone. We believe it by an *act of faith*, i.e., because God has said that it’s true. **Scripture Reference:**

(1) Mt 28:19: “*Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Spirit....*”

- e. Sign of the Cross/Glory Be Prayer: We profess our belief in the Blessed Trinity whenever we make the *Sign of the Cross* or say the *Glory Be* prayer.

## III. **Creation: Angels and Humans: (Apostles’ Creed: “I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth...”).**

A. Objective: To show God the Father as Creator, to define the soul, and to show the hierarchy of creation.

C. Creation: Angels and Humans:

1. God the Father: Made all things *freely* (without a need to do so) out of *nothing* by His almighty power and He keeps all things in *existence* by His sustaining will. ***Scripture References:***
  - a. Gen 1:20, 24, 26-28, 31: “*Then God said, ‘Let the earth bring forth all kinds of living creatures....’ And so it happened. Then God said: ‘Let us make man in our image.....’ God created man in his image...male and female he created them....God looked at everything he had made, and he found it very good....*”
  - b. Col 1:16: “*For in him were created all things in heaven and on earth, the visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things were created through him and for him.*”
2. Soul: The source of life.
3. Order of Creation (from lowest to highest):
  - a. Inanimate Objects: Created things that don’t have life, e.g., *rocks, minerals, or water*. They glorify God simply by their existence.
  - b. Plants: ***Characteristics:***
    - (1) Vegetative Soul: Plants possess a low-level soul which gives them life.
    - (2) Mortal Soul: The soul dies when the plant dies.
  - c. Animals: ***Characteristics:***
    - (1) Animal Soul: Animals possess a more developed soul than plants.
    - (2) Sense and Memory Powers: Animal souls have *sense* and *memory powers* which allow animals to experience pleasure, feel pain, and to remember sense stimuli.
    - (3) Mortal Soul: The soul dies when the animal dies.
  - d. Humans: The bridge between the world of the *spirit* and the world of *matter*. ***Characteristics:***
    - (1) Human Soul: Human beings possess a far more developed soul than either plants or animals. Their souls are *created by God* and *infused into the body* at the moment of conception. The *human body* and *soul* are fused and linked to each other so intimately that, in this life, neither can get along without the other. ***Analogy:***
      - (a) Copper and Zinc: If a piece of *copper* and a piece of *zinc* are welded together, they form one piece of metal. However, no new substance has resulted, for anyone can see that it is still a piece of copper and a piece of zinc. But if the copper and zinc are melted down and mixed together, we get a new substance called *brass*. Brass is neither copper nor zinc; it is a new substance composed of both. In somewhat the same way, a human’s body and soul are united in one substance we call a *human being*.

The closeness of this union is seen from the way body and soul interact upon each other. For example, if I cut my *finger*, it's not just my body that suffers; my soul, too, suffers for *all of me* feels the pain. And if my soul is afflicted with *worry*, my body takes part in the worry and may develop *ulcers* or some other disorder. If my soul is struck with *fear* or *anger*, my body will reflect the emotion: my *face will flush* or *grow pale* and my *heart will beat faster*. Thus, my body will share the emotion with my soul.

Since the soul is a *spiritual reality* (not composed of matter), it has no measurements or weight. Thus, the *entire soul* is in *every part of the body* at one and the same time, not, partly in the *head*, partly in the *hand, foot*, etc. Therefore, if I were to lose an arm or a leg through surgery or accident, I would not lose part of my soul, for the soul would simply cease to be present in what was no longer a part of my *living body*. And when, finally, my body is so damaged by disease or injury that it can no longer sustain its function, then my soul will leave my body and I will be adjudged dead.

- (2) Sense and Memory Powers: The human soul possesses greater *sense* and *memory powers* than an animal soul.
  - (3) Intellectual and Free Will Powers: Unlike an animal soul, the human soul has the powers of *intelligence* and *free will*. With these powers, the human soul reflects in a limited way the powers of God. Its power of *intelligence* allows it to *know and understand truth*, to *reason to new truths*, and to *make judgments about right and wrong*. Its power of *free will* allows it to *deliberately choose to act or not to act*.
  - (4) Immortal Soul: Unlike plant and animal souls, a human soul will never die. Once it leaves the body for which it was made, it appears before God to be judged and enters eternal life or damnation. At the end of time, it will be reunited with the body it gave life to and both will share in eternal bliss or misery.
- e. Angels: Complete spirit beings without a body or need for a body who are far superior to human beings. The word “*angel*” means “*messenger*.” **Characteristics:**
- (1) Crowning Beauty of God's Creation: Angels are the high point of God's known creations, for they resemble Him most closely by their *spiritual nature* (non-material) and *mighty powers*.
  - (2) Keen Intellectual and Free Will Powers: The intellectual and free will powers of angels far surpass those of human beings. Angels have *infused knowledge* while ours is learned by study.
  - (3) Not Created Equal: Sacred Scripture tells us that there are different classes of angels and that there numbers are very great. Other than that, we know little about angels. Theologians, however, have offered us some insights into the various **classes**:
    - (a) Adore God Directly:
      - i) Seraphim: Word that means “*burning ones*.” They comprehend God with maximum clarity. *Lucifer* (“*Light Bearer*”) belongs to this class. That's why he's very powerful

and dangerous.

- ii) Cherubim: Word that means “*fullness of wisdom*.” They contemplate God less in Himself and more in His *wise plan* (providence) for creatures.
- iii) Thrones: A *throne* symbolizes *judicial* or *juridical power*. They contemplate God’s *power* and *judgments*.

(b) Fulfill God’s Providential Plans (Middle Management Personnel):

- i) Dominations: Word that means “*authority*.” They command the lesser angels.
- ii) Virtues: Word that means “*power*” or “*energy*.” They receive orders from the dominations and “*run*” the universe, so to speak, particularly the *heavenly bodies*.
- iii) Powers: They serve the virtues by fighting against evil influences that oppose God and the virtues’ providential plan.

(c) Directly Order Human Affairs:

- i) Principalities: Word that means “*territory ruled by a prince*.” They care for earthly *cities, nations, and kingdoms*.
- ii) Archangels: They carry important messages from God to human beings. Sacred Scripture tells us the names of three of them: *Gabriel* (“*Hero of God*”), *Michael* (“*Who is like God*”) and *Raphael* (“*God has healed*”).
- iii) Ordinary/Guardian Angels: That each of us has an individual guardian angel is not a matter of faith, but it’s a commonly held belief by Catholics and Christians.

- (4) Tested: It is by an *act of love* that a spirit, whether an *angel* or a *human soul*, fits itself for heaven. That love must be proved in the only way in which love for God can be proved, namely by a *free and voluntary submission of the created will to God*, more commonly known as an “*act of obedience*” or an “*act of loyalty*.”

God made the angels with free wills so that they might be capable of making their *act of love*, their *choice of God*. Only after they had done so would they see God face to face and enter heaven. God has not made known to us the nature of the test to which the angels were put, but again, theologians have offered their ideas. One of those ideas is that God gave the angels a *preview of Jesus Christ* (in all His humiliations, e.g., as a *baby in a manger*, a *criminal on the cross*) and *commanded that they adore Him*. According to this theory, some of the angels rebelled at the prospect that they would have to adore God in the guise of a *human being*. Conscious of their own spiritual magnificence, beauty, and dignity, they could not bring themselves to an act of submission that adoration of Jesus Christ would demand of them. Under the leadership of one of the most gifted angels, *Lucifer*, the sin of pride turned many of the angels away from God and there rang through heaven the awful cry, “*We shall not serve!*” Thus, *evil* and *hell* began. ***Scripture Reference:***

- (a) Rv 12:7-8: “*Then war broke out in heaven; Michael and his angels battled against the dragon. The dragon and its angels fought back, but they did not prevail and there was no longer any place for them in heaven.*”

Unlike we human beings, God did not give the sinning angels a second chance because of the *perfect clarity of their minds* and the *unhampered freedom of their wills*. These fallen angels understood the full consequences of their sin. Theirs was what we would call a “*cold-blooded*” sin. By their *deliberate* and *fully aware* rejection of God, their wills were fixed against God forever. There burns in them an everlasting hatred for God and all His works.

4. Fallen Angels: Those angels that rebelled against God are known as *fallen angels*, *devils*, or “*Satan*,” a Hebrew word meaning “*adversary*” or “*enemy*.” In their undying hatred for God, it is natural that they would hate one of God’s creatures—human beings.

When they sinned, the fallen angels lost none of their *natural endowments*. Thus, the devils possess a *keenness of intellect* and a *power over nature* such as is unknown to mere human beings. All their cleverness and power are directed now toward keeping us from heaven by leading us into our own path of rebellion against God. ***Analogy***:

- a. Evil Cop: Just as an *evil cop* has knowledge of law enforcement’s strategies and skills and uses this knowledge to do evil, so devils use their God-given talents and endowments for evil.
5. Diabolical Possession/Obsession: The full extent of the devil’s power over the created universe, including human beings, is unknown to us. We do know that *the devil can do nothing unless God permits*. We also know that God, having set His creative plan in motion, does not normally take back (either from angels or human beings) any of the original powers He bestowed. Thus, devils can and have tormented people from within and outside their bodies. When God permits these things to happen, it is to *show His glory* (i.e., that despite the devil’s powers and abilities, God is more powerful), to *punish sins* (e.g., for use of the Ouija board), to *convert sinners* (i.e., “this is what happens when a devil controls a person’s life, so you had better change”), or to *provide some means for the practice of virtue* (e.g., St. John Vianney and the development of the virtues of faith, trust, and hope). ***Distinctions***:
- a. Diabolical Possession: The condition when a devil *enters into* the body of a person and takes control of that person’s physical activities, e.g., his *speech*, *movements*, and *activities*. In this state, a person loses control over his own physical actions to a stronger power. What the body does is being done by the devil, not the person himself. The devil, however, CANNOT take control of the person’s soul.
- b. Diabolical Obsession: The condition when a devil attacks a person *from without* rather than *from within*. Thus, he may *pick the person up and dash him to the ground*, *throw him out of bed*, or *torment him with hideous noises and other manifestations*. Examples include St. John Vianney and Padre Pio.
- c. Exorcism: The religious rite by which a devil is cast out of a person possessed or obsessed. The office of exorcist belongs to every priest, but it may not be officially exercised except with special permission from the bishop, and then only after careful investigation has established that it really is

a case of possession and not just mental illness.<sup>1</sup>

**IV. Adam and Eve: Their Fall and Sin: (Apostles' Creed: "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth...").**

A. Objective: To show how God blessed Adam and Eve and how, by their disobedience, they forfeited these gifts and ushered sin into the world.

B. Adam and Eve: Their Fall and Sin:

1. Adam and Eve: They were the first humans that God created and the parents of the human race. Because the soul is spiritual in nature, it cannot "evolve" from matter. It follows, therefore, that the souls of Adam and Eve were *directly* and *immediately* created by God.<sup>2</sup> God blessed Adam and Eve with several *gifts*:

a. Preternatural Gifts: Those gifts that do not belong, by right, to human nature and yet, they are not entirely beyond the capacity of human nature to receive and to possess. **Example:**

(1) Horse: If a horse were given the power to *fly*, that ability would be a *preternatural gift*, for it is not natural for a horse to fly, and yet there are creatures that do fly, e.g., *birds*.

Adam and Eve were blessed with several preternatural gifts **including**:

(1) Natural Knowledge: They possessed a clear and flawless natural knowledge of God and of the world that could have been gained only by intense study and research.

(2) Strength of Will: They possessed remarkable strength of will and perfect control of the passions and senses, resulting in a perfect interior peace and lack of self-conflict. Thus, their will was not weakened by any *sensual desire*. Because of this, they felt no shame, even though they were naked.

(3) Freedom from Suffering and Death: As God made Adam and Eve, they would have lived out their allotted time upon earth free from pain and suffering. When their years of temporal life were completed, they would have entered into eternal life--body and soul-- without having to experience the separation of soul from body that we call *death*.

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<sup>1</sup> "There is, of course, nothing to prevent a priest from using his power of exorcism in a private, unofficial capacity. On a railroad train, for example, a priest listened unhappily to a torrent of blasphemy and profanity from the man in the seat ahead. Finally, the priest said silently, "*I command you, Satan, in the name of Jesus Christ the Son of God, to go back to hell and leave this man alone!*" The blasphemous language stopped at once. Another time the same priest spoke a similar private exorcism in the presence of a married couple who were quarreling bitterly--and immediately their anger subsided. The devil often is present and at work, even outside the extreme cases of possession and obsession" (The Faith Explained by Leo Trese, p.34).

<sup>2</sup>God continues to do so today. Husband and wife cooperate with God in the formation of the body, but the spiritual soul is made by God and infused into the body at the moment of conception. Thus, human life is sacred from the moment of conception because the human person begins to exist at that moment.



- b. Supernatural Gift: The gift that Adam and Eve possessed that was completely *above* their nature to have. **Example:**

(1) Dog: If a dog were given the power to *think* and to *understand abstract truths*, that would be, in some sense, a *supernatural gift*, for it is *above* the nature of a dog or any animal to think.

The supernatural gift that God blessed Adam and Eve with was *sanctifying grace*, a share in God's divine life. As a result of this gift, Adam and Eve were no longer destined to an eternal happiness that would be merely a *natural happiness*, i.e., a happiness based upon a purely natural knowledge and love of God who would still be invisible. Rather, with sanctifying grace, Adam and Eve would have known God as He is, face to face, after their life on earth had ended.

2. God's Command/Test: Just as a devoted father is not content merely to fulfill his minimum duty toward his children, so God was not content to give to Adam and Eve only those gifts to which human beings are entitled to by their nature—a marvelous human body endowed with the human soul and its wonderful powers of intelligence and free will. God went far beyond these and conferred on Adam and Eve the *preternatural gifts of freedom from suffering and death* and the *supernatural gift of sanctifying grace*. In God's original plan, these gifts were to be passed on by Adam and Eve to their descendants. Only one thing was required of them so that they might confirm and secure these gifts for their posterity, namely, *they must, by a free act of choice, give their love irrevocably to God*.

Because it is of the very nature of *true love* to make a complete surrender of self to the one who is loved, God tested Adam and Eve by an *act of obedience*, since in this life, obedience to God's will is the only way that we can prove our love for Him. God commanded Adam and Eve not to eat the fruit of a certain tree in the Garden of Paradise. We know what happened. Adam and Eve preferred their own will to God's will. They failed the test. **Scripture Reference:**

- a. Gen 2:15-17: "*The Lord God then took the man and settled him in the garden of Eden....[He] gave man this order: 'You are free to eat from any of the trees of the garden except the tree of knowledge of good and bad. From that tree you shall not eat; the moment you eat from it you are surely doomed to die.'*"

3. Original Sin: The first sin of Adam and Eve by which they chose self in preference to God. Before the fall, there was neither *ignorance* nor *weakness*. It was with complete clarity of mind and with complete control of reason over passion that Adam and Eve sinned. Like the sin of the fallen angels, it was a sin of *pride* (for the tempter whispered to them that if they ate this fruit, they would be as great as God) and it had enormous consequences, **including:**

- a. Loss of the Preternatural Gifts: They lost their *lofty wisdom*, *perfect self-control*, and *freedom from suffering and death*. In return, they now had to obtain *knowledge by laborious study*, they experienced *concupiscence* (the insubordination of man's desires to the dictates of human reason), and they were subjected to all kinds of *physical and emotional suffering and death*.
- b. Loss of the Supernatural Gift: Their souls were deprived of *sanctifying grace*, God's divine life.
- c. Transmitted: Because of their sin, Adam and Eve were stripped down to the bare essentials of what belonged to them by virtue of their human nature. As their descendants, we have inherited their sin

and its consequences. Since God has not deprived us of anything that we have a strict right to as human beings, He cannot be accused of being unjust or unfair to us for depriving us of Adam and Eve's preternatural and supernatural gifts. They were the representatives of the entire human family. By their act of disobedience, we all suffer. **Analogy:**

(1) Ruler of a Country: A government leader represents the people of his country. When he declares war or makes peace, all the people he serves are affected by his actions. So it is with the sin of Adam and Eve. We, their descendants, are all affected.

Since Adam and Eve, only one human being (excluding Jesus Christ) has possessed a perfectly balanced human nature: the *Blessed Virgin Mary*. Because Mary was destined to be the Mother of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, she was preserved from original sin from the very first moment of her existence. Thus, from the very instant of her conception in Anne's womb, Mary was in union with God because her soul was filled with sanctifying grace. Since Mary's soul was created pure and spotless as the soul of Eve and because she was sin free during her lifetime as Eve was supposed to be, she is sometimes called the *Second Eve*. This unique privilege granted by God to Mary is called the *Immaculate Conception*. It is commemorated each year by the Church on December 8.

4. Actual/Personal Sins: Whereas we *inherit* original sin, actual or personal sins are the sins that we *actually* or *personally* commit, whether by *action*, *thought*, *desire*, or *omission*.<sup>3</sup> They are a refusal to give God our obedience and love. *Since every bit of us belongs to God, every bit of us owes obedience to God, not only in outward words and actions, but also in our innermost thoughts and desires as well.* Indeed, we may sin not only by doing what God has forbidden (*sin of commission*, e.g., to steal), but also by failing to do what God has commanded (*sin of omission*, e.g., failure to pay our just debts). **Types:**
  - a. Mortal/Deadly Sin: Grave or serious sin against the law of God that deprives us of sanctifying grace, God's presence and life within our soul. It makes us *enemies with God*, *lose the merit of all our good actions* (just as a bank crash wipes out one's savings) and *deserving of eternal punishment in hell*.<sup>4</sup> It is consoling to know, however, that merits which have been lost by mortal sin are restored the moment that sanctifying grace returns to the soul. **Scripture References:**

(1) 1 Jn 5:16: "*If anyone sees his brother sinning, if the sin is not deadly, he should pray to God and*

<sup>3</sup>Analogy: "Actual sin may be either mortal or venial, depending upon the degree of malice in the sin. We know there are degrees of gravity in disobedience. A son who disobeys his parents in the things that are petty or ways that are thoughtless is not thereby convicted of lack of love for his parents. His love may be a less perfect love, but the love is still there. However, if that same son should disobey his parents deliberately in a manner that is of grave importance to them, a matter which would hurt and grieve them deeply, then we would have good reason to conclude that the boy does not really love his parents. At least we could conclude that he loves himself more than he loves them. The same thing may be said of our relationship with God. If we disobey God in a matter of lesser importance, then it is not necessarily a denial of our love for God." (The Faith Explained by Leo Trese, p. 50).

<sup>4</sup>Analogy: Mortal sin is a rejection of God. "It severs the union between our soul and God just as definitely as a pair of wire cutters would sever the union between your home and the electric company's generators if the wire cutters were applied to the power line outside your house. In the latter event, your house would instantly be plunged into darkness; in the case of mortal sin, the same thing happens to our soul--with far more terrible consequences--because our soul is plunged not merely into darkness, but into death." (The Faith Explained by Leo Trese, p. 53).

*he will give him life. This is only for those whose sin is not deadly. There is such a thing as deadly sin.”*

- (2) Rom 6:21: “*But what profit did you get from these things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of these things is death.*”

***Characteristics:***

- (1) Serious Matter: The offense (whether a *thought, action, intention, desire, or omission*) must be seriously wrong.
- (2) Sufficient Reflection: The person must know that the offense is seriously wrong.

A person cannot sin through ignorance, unless that ignorance is his own fault, e.g., if a teenager purposely avoided learning the truth that *drunkenness* is a mortal sin because it would interfere with his “having a good time.”

- (3) Full Consent: The person must deliberately or freely choose the action or omission which God has forbidden.

A person cannot be made to commit a mortal sin by *force*, e.g., *if someone physically stronger forces me to shoot another person*. A person cannot commit a mortal sin by *accident*, e.g., *as when I unintentionally bump into someone thereby knocking him down and fracturing his skull*, nor can a person commit a mortal sin in his *sleep*, *no matter how evil the dream is*.

- b. Venial Sin: A sin that lessens a little the love of God in our hearts and weakens our resistance to temptation. “*Venial*” comes from the Latin word “*venia*,” which means “*forgiveness*.” It is readily forgivable by God, even without the sacrament of penance. This does not mean that a venial sin “doesn’t matter.” Any sin is an act of ingratitude toward God, a failure to love Him. In all creation, there is no evil as great as a venial sin, excepting only mortal sin. Every venial sin brings punishment in its train, either here on earth or in purgatory, and it paves the way for mortal sin, for if we keep saying “yes” to ourselves in little things, we will likely end up saying “yes” when a big temptation confronts us. ***Analogy/Scripture Reference:***

- (1) Spark: Just as a spark starts a large forest fire, so habits of venial sins can lead to mortal sins.

- (2) 1 John 5:17: “*All wrongdoing is sin, but there is a sin that is not deadly.*”

5. Material and Formal Sins: It’s easy to say that a particular action is sinful. It’s not so easy to say that a person has committed a sin. Thus, we need to distinguish between *material* and *formal* sins. ***Distinctions:***

- a. Material Sin: When a person commits an action that is sinful, but had *no intention* of doing so, we say he has committed a *material sin*. There was an *evil deed*, but *no evil intent*. Such a sin would not need to be confessed. ***Examples:***

- (1) Missing Mass: If a person forgets that a particular day is a holy day of obligation and misses

Mass as a result, then his mortal sin is a *material* or *outward sin* only because there was no intention to do wrong.

(2) Premarital Sex: If two teenagers honestly did not know that premarital sex was a mortal sin and engage in such behavior, then their sin is a *material* or *outward sin* only because there was no intention to do wrong.

b. Formal Sin: When a person has the *intention* of committing a sin, but does not carry it out, we say he has committed a *formal sin*. This sin would have to be confessed, for it is the *intention which exists in the mind and will of the person which determines the malice of a sin*. It is the intention to do what self wants, rather than what God wants, that constitutes the evil. That is why we become guilty of a sin the moment we make up our mind to commit the sin—even though we do not get the chance to commit the sin or we later change our mind. **Examples:**

(1) Missing Mass: If a person decides on Saturday that he is going to skip Sunday Mass so that he can “party” all night and “sleep in” the next day, but then changes his mind the following morning and attends Mass, then his sin is a *formal sin*. It would need to be confessed because the deliberate intention to sin was present.

(2) Premarital Sex: If a teenage boy learns that his parents are going to be out of town on a particular weekend and makes plans to have sexual relations with his girlfriend at his house, but then does not carry out his intentions because his parents canceled their trip, then his sin is a *formal sin*. It would need to be confessed because he had the deliberate intention to sin.

While we are on the subject of “intention,” it should be noted that we *cannot change a bad deed into a good or harmless deed simply by having a good purpose in mind*. E.g., if I steal from a rich man to give to a poor man, it is still the sin of stealing; if I tell a lie in order to protect a friend, it is still the sin of lying; or if parents use artificial contraceptives in order to give their present children more advantages, the guilt of their deed remains. In summary, *the end never justifies the means*. A good purpose does not justify an evil means.

6. Capital Sins: The seven principal faults or character flaws to which almost all personal sins can be traced. They are the heads or sources of all personal sins (from the Latin word “*caput*,” meaning “head”). They **include**:

a. Pride: The excessive love of one’s self or the disordered seeking after one’s own honor and glory. Examples include *vanity*, *boastfulness*, and *over-reliance on one’s own spiritual strength*. The opposite virtue is *humility*.

b. Avarice/Greed/Covetousness: The immoderate or excessive desire for wealth or worldly possessions. Sins springing from this character flaw include *stealing*, *fraud*, *sins of injustice on part of employers or employees*, *stinginess*, and *indifference to the needs of the poor*. The opposite virtue is *generosity*.

c. Lust: The inordinate seeking of the pleasures of the flesh. Many acts of *dishonesty*, *injustice*, and *deceit* can be traced to this capital sin. *Loss of religious faith* and *despair of God’s mercy* are also frequently the fruits of lust. The opposite virtue is *chastity*.

d. Anger: The disordered emotional state in which we seek revenge upon others or maintain unreasonable opposition to persons and things. *Murder, quarreling, profanity, hatred, malicious gossip, and property damage* are some sins to which the capital sin of anger gives rise. The opposite virtue is *meekness*.

e. Gluttony: The excessive love for food and/or drink. This desire may be sinful in various ways, ***including:***

(1) Eating or drinking more than is needed to maintain bodily strength.

(2) Glutting one's taste for certain foods with known detriment to health, e.g., a diabetic going on a chocolate candy bar "binge."

(3) Indulging one's appetite for exquisite food or drink, especially when they are beyond a person's financial means, e.g., exotic seafood; caviare.

(4) Eating or drinking too avidly, i.e., ravenously, e.g., Thanksgiving meal.

(5) Drunkenness.

Sins of gluttony can result in the *sinful abuse of one's health, blasphemous speech, and neglect of a person's duties to his family*. The opposite virtue is *temperance*.

f. Envy: The sadness or discontent at the excellence, good fortune, or success of another. It implies that a person considers himself deprived by what he envies or that an injustice has been done. It leads to *hatred, slander, gossip, and resentment*. The opposite virtue is *love of neighbor*.

g. Sloth: Neglect of one's duties—spiritual or temporal—through laziness. Implicit in sloth is the unwillingness of the person to perform the duty because of the sacrifice and effort required. Sins that spring from this fault include *missing weekend Mass, laxity in prayer, spiritual mediocrity, and neglect of work or family*. The opposite virtue is *diligence*.

7. Temptation: Any appeal or enticement to sin. Temptations arise ***from:***

a. The World Around Us: They can come from our living and work places as well as from friends and acquaintances.

b. The Passions: They can arise from the deep-seated, intense desires that we have for self-gratification, both *carnal* (e.g., *gluttony* or *lust*) and *spiritual* (e.g., *envy* or *pride*).

c. Devil: They can be caused by an evil spirit, whose method is to encourage every form of greed or selfishness, in order to lead one to pride, and through pride, to all other sins.

From whatever source the temptation may come, we know that with God's help, we can conquer the temptation if we want to. *It's through temptation, met and defeated, that we acquire great merit before God, for there would be little credit in being good if it were easy to be good.* The great saints were not men and women who had no temptations. Rather, in most cases, they had *tremendous temptations* and

became saints by their victories. The battle with temptations is analogous to *exercising muscles*. Just as a person needs to *exercise* and *work* those muscles that he wants to develop, so our *spiritual muscles of virtue* are exercised and developed by fighting temptations.

8. Occasion of Sin: Any person, place, or thing that of its nature or because of human frailty can lead a person to sin. Unless we avoid unnecessary danger or the circumstances that entice us to sin, then we are not doing our part. If we go looking for danger, then God's hands are "tied," so to speak. We have choked off grace at its very source. **Types:**
  - a. Proximate: When the danger is certain and probable, e.g., *habit of fornication by a teenage couple when alone*. There is a positive obligation to avoid all voluntary proximate occasions of sin.
  - b. Remote: When the danger is slight, e.g., *the possibility of a temperate person becoming drunk at a party*. There is no obligation to avoid a remote occasion unless there is probable danger of its becoming proximate.
  - c. Voluntary: Dangers that can be easily avoided, e.g., *a diabetic avoiding chocolate candy bars or someone easily enticed by pornography to avoid such web sites*.
9. Conscience: The intellect judging the goodness or badness of a way of acting that a person now faces. To be formed properly, our consciences must adhere to the principles of *faith* and *reason*. Thus, an action is right or wrong because of the *objective principles* to which the mind must subscribe, not because of the *subjective principles*, i.e., my own personal opinion or feelings. **Example:**
  - a. Adultery: This action is wrong because of the *objective principles of faith* (God says it's wrong) and *reason* (it's an injustice to one's spouse) and not because of *subjective principles* ("it's my opinion that it's wrong" or "it's wrong because it's my friend who was cheated on").
10. Ways to Avoid and/or Overcome Sin:
  - a. Develop a Habit of Prayer: "*Communication with God*."
  - b. Frequent the Sacraments: *Regular Confession* and the *Holy Eucharist* are the greatest sources of grace for overcoming sin.
  - c. Remember God's Presence: Remembering that God knows our innermost thoughts and desires, sees everything that we do, and is always with us can help us to shun sin.
  - d. Temple of the Holy Spirit: Because God created us in His image and likeness, our bodies are sacred. By virtue of our baptism, the Holy Trinity lives in our soul.
  - e. Stay Occupied: There is much truth in the saying, "*Idleness is the devil's workshop*." Temptations abound and are more easily entertained when we have nothing else to do.

V. **Jesus Christ and His Work of Salvation: (Apostles' Creed: "I believe...in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead...").**

A. Objective: To show that humanity needed a Savior after original sin, that Jesus Christ is our Savior, and to learn how Jesus provided for our salvation by His incarnation, passion, death, and resurrection.

B. Jesus Christ and His Work of Salvation:

1. Need for and Promise of a Redeemer: Adam and Eve, by their sin, lost sanctifying grace and their right to heaven. God did not abandon them, however. Rather, just before their expulsion from the garden, God promised to send a Savior to free humanity from sin and to "reopen" the gates of heaven. **Scripture Reference:**

a. Gen 3:14-15: "*Then the Lord God said to the serpent: '...I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; He will strike at your head, while you strike at his heel.'*" The devil's defeat is implied in the contrast between head and heel.

2. Patriarchs: God's promise was renewed several times with the Old Testament patriarchs: *Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and David.*

3. Prophets: After the patriarchs, God sent the prophets (e.g., *Nathan, Elijah, Elisha, Isaiah*, etc.), who spoke in His name. There were 750 prophets, the last being *Malachi*.

4. Jewish People: The "chosen" race from whom the Savior came.

5. The Blessed Virgin Mary: From the Jewish race, God chose the sinless Virgin Mary to be the mother of Jesus Christ.

6. The Incarnation: Jesus Christ—God—took on a human nature like ours. **Points:**

a. Person: Describes *who* someone is. In Jesus Christ, there is only one person: the *divine person*.

b. Nature: Describes *what* someone or something is." Beings obtain their nature from their origin. Thus, a child has a *human nature* from its parents. Jesus has two natures: *divine* and *human*. The *divine nature* of Jesus is eternal and came from God the Father. His *human nature* came from Mary, after she conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit. **Points:**

(1) Mary, Mother of God: Mary was Jesus' mother with respect to his *human nature*, but not His *divine nature*. Since Jesus is one divine person and this one person was born of Mary, she truly is the Mother of God.

(2) St. Joseph: Because Jesus was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit, He had no human,

- biological father. St. Joseph was Jesus' *guardian* or *foster-father*.
- (3) Feast of the Annunciation (March 25): Recalls the angel Gabriel "announcing" to Mary God's plan for her to become the Mother of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.
  - (4) Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord (Christmas: December 25): Before, Jesus' birth, the Jews were Roman subjects. The emperor called for a census and ordered the people to register in the towns of their ancestors. Joseph and Mary were descendants of King David from Bethlehem. During their time in Bethlehem, Jesus was born.
- c. Hypostatic Union: This term comes from the Greek word "*hypostasis*" which means "*that which lies underneath*." It refers to the union of the *divine nature* of the Son of God with the *human nature* in the person of Jesus Christ.
7. Jesus Christ: The Second Person of the Blessed Trinity and the Savior of the world. **Points:**
- a. Jesus: In Hebrew, the word means "*Yahweh is salvation*" or "*Savior*." It refers to the name of Mary's Son, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity.
  - b. Christ: Word that means "*anointed*." It describes Jesus' mission; it is not His last name.
  - c. Messiah: Hebrew word for "*anointed one*."
  - d. Savior: Comes from the Latin word, "*salvare*," which means "*to save*." It is a title applied to Jesus Christ because He gave His life for the salvation of the human race.
  - e. Lord: Word that means "*master*." It refers to a person who possesses and exercises authority and to whom respect is ascribed. Applied to the risen Jesus, it refers to the authority He has in the *life of the Church* and over its *members*.
  - f. Christian: Term that refers to a baptized follower of Jesus Christ. **Distinctions:**
    - (1) Professed Christian: Person who believes in the essentials of the Christian faith, notably the Apostles' Creed.
    - (2) Catholic Christian: Person who believes in the essentials of the Christian faith and further accepts the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church, participates in the Eucharistic liturgy and sacraments of Catholic Christianity, and gives allegiance to the Catholic hierarchy, especially to the Bishop of Rome.
8. The Life of Jesus Christ: **Points:**
- a. From Childhood to Age Twelve: Sacred Scripture says very little about the life of Jesus from childhood to age twelve.
    - (1) Holy Family Flees to Egypt: See Mt 2: 13-15.



- (2) Murder of the Holy Innocents: See Mt 2:16-18.
- (3) Holy Family Returns to Nazareth After the Death of King Herod: See Mt 2:19-23.
- (4) Feast of Passover: See Lk 2:41-52. At the age of twelve, Jesus accompanied Mary and Joseph to Jerusalem for the yearly festival of Passover. On their return home, Jesus stayed behind and was found three days later in the Temple asking questions of the teachers.
- b. Hidden Life: Sacred Scripture says nothing about Jesus' life after Mary and Joseph found Him in the Temple until He begins His public ministry at age thirty.
- c. Beginning of Public Life: At age thirty, Jesus left Nazareth and began to preach, teach, and perform miracles for the next three years.
  - (1) Baptism in the Jordan River: See Lk 3:21-23.
  - (2) Temptations in the Desert: See Mk 1:12-13.
  - (3) Chooses First Disciples: See Mk 1:16-20.
  - (4) First Miracle: Wedding at Cana: See Jn 2:1-11.
  - (5) Twelve Apostles Chosen from His Disciples: See Lk 6:12-16.
  - (6) Taught in Galilee and Surrounding Regions: See Mk 1:14-8:26. The Pharisees indignation was raised and they plotted to kill Him.
- d. End of Public Life: Jesus redeemed humanity by His passion, death, and resurrection. **Points:**
  - (1) Jerusalem: Shortly before His death, Jesus entered Jerusalem in triumph, riding a donkey, with children waving palms and singing "*Hosanna in the highest*" (Mt 21:9). This is commemorated by the Church on *Palm Sunday*, the beginning of *Holy Week*.
  - (2) Paschal/Passover/Last Supper: The *Paschal Feast* was celebrated each year by the Jews in remembrance of their deliverance from slavery to the Egyptians when the Angel of Death "passed over" those houses sprinkled with the blood of the paschal lamb. Jesus ate this supper with His disciples on the evening before His death. He gave the Paschal Feast new meaning when He became the *Paschal Lamb*, the one who was sacrificed.
  - (3) Holy Eucharist: At the Last Supper, Jesus instituted the *Holy Eucharist* by changing ordinary bread and wine into His Body and Blood (See Mt 26:26-30; Mk 14:22-26; Lk 22:14-20). He provided for a continuation of this sacrifice by establishing the *priesthood*. These events are recalled by the Church on *Holy Thursday* and every time that the *Holy Sacrifice of the Mass* is offered.
  - (4) Washing of the Feet: After the supper, Jesus washed the feet of the Apostles to teach them humility (See Jn 13:1-20).

(5) The Redemption: A *redeemer* is one who pays, satisfies, or compensates for an offense done to another. As Redeemer, Jesus offered His sufferings and death to God the Father in satisfaction for the sins of all people and regained for them the right to heaven. **Points:**

(a) Suffered and Died: It was Jesus' *human nature* that suffered and died, not His *divine nature*.

(b) Died for All: Jesus died for all, without exception.

(c) The Passion: Term that refers to the sufferings that Jesus Christ endured for our salvation. The Passion is recalled by the Church each year on *Good Friday*, the day of our salvation. Jesus' sufferings **included**:

i) His Bitter Agony of Soul: After the Last Supper, Jesus and His Apostles left the city of Jerusalem, crossed the Kidron Valley, and made their way up the Mount of Olives to a grove of olive trees known as the *Garden of Gethsemane*. The Last Supper had been concluded and Jesus, as was His custom prior to all major events in His life, wanted to spend some time alone in prayer. During this time of prayer, Jesus asked His heavenly Father to spare Him this suffering. An angel appeared to comfort Him. "*He was in such agony and he prayed so fervently that his sweat became like drops of blood falling on the ground*" (Lk 22:43-44).

This bloody sweat, known in medicine as *hematidrosa*, occurs when the capillaries under the skin expand and burst upon coming into contact with the millions of sweat glands which are distributed over the body. The blood is exuded with the sweat, coagulates outside the skin, and falls as drops to the ground. According to medical authorities, it is caused by *physical exhaustion* accompanied by *profound emotion* or *fear* and *violent mental disturbance*. All of these conditions were present during Jesus' agony in the garden.

ii) His Cruel Scourging: At Pilate's order, the guards took Jesus to a dungeon below the praetorium, stripped Him of His clothes, and tied Him to one of the stone pillars. There, they beat Him with a leather-thonged whip known as a *flagellum*, the ends of which were braided with balls of lead or sharp pieces of sheep bone. Giuseppe Ricciotti, in his Life of Christ, gave this graphic description of scourging: "*Usually, whoever underwent the Roman scourging was reduced to a sickening and terrifying monstrosity. At the first blows, the neck, back, hips, arms, and legs grew livid, and then became streaked with bluish welts and swollen bruises; then the skin and muscles were gradually lacerated, the blood vessels burst and blood spurted everywhere, till finally the prisoner, every one of his features disfigured, was nothing but a bleeding mass of flesh. Very often he fainted under the blows, and sometimes he died*" (p. 621).

iii) His Crowning with Thorns: Although Jesus had been reduced to a bleeding mass of flesh from the scourging, the soldiers were not through with Him. They placed a scarlet military cloak over His shoulders and fashioned a crown of thorns which they jammed down on His head. Placing a reed in his hand as a symbol of authority, they mocked Him by bowing before Him, spitting on Him, and saying, "*Hail, King of the Jews!*" (Mt

27:29).

- iv) His Carrying of the Cross: After the scourging and crowning with thorns, Jesus was brought before the crowd. “*Behold, the man!*” (Jn 19:5), Pilate said, expecting some sign of sympathy. But the crowd shouted back, “*Crucify him, crucify him!*” (Jn 19:6). Unwilling to resist the pressure of the howling mob, Pilate handed Jesus over to be crucified. The horizontal beam of the cross was placed on Jesus’ lacerated shoulders and He was made to carry it to His place of execution, a plot of ground outside the city gates near a well-traveled road where the vertical portion of the cross was already in the ground. The purpose of choosing such a conspicuous place was to give the greatest number of people an opportunity to see what savage punishment opposition to Rome would bring. Called *Golgatha*, which meant “*Skull Place*,” it was about half a mile from the residence of Pontius Pilate. Under ordinary circumstances, this would not have been a long walk, but considering that Jesus hadn’t slept in more than twenty-four hours, had nothing to eat or drink in more than twelve hours, and had suffered violent damage to His body through a bloody sweat, the scourging, and crowning with thorns, this was a slow and excruciatingly painful journey.
- v) His Crucifixion and Death: Having arrived at Golgatha, Jesus experienced the cruelest and most vicious form of punishment ever devised—*crucifixion*. Crucifixion was not a Roman invention. The practice is believed to have begun in the Persian Empire, and spread to other peoples in the Mediterranean basin, where the Romans perfected it. They liked it because it had three clear advantages over other means of execution. First, it was *unbelievably painful* for the victim; second it provided a *lingering death*; and third, it was a *horrific deterrent* for anyone contemplating a similar offense. At the time of Jesus, it was considered such a vile method of execution, that it was reserved for criminals and slaves. A Roman citizen, no matter how serious his crime, was rarely crucified.

One of the most authoritative books on the physical aspects of the crucifixion was written by a French surgeon and teacher of anatomy, Pierre Barbet, M.D. In his book, A Doctor at Calvary, Dr. Barbet presents a medical description of Jesus’ sufferings. It is based on extensive laboratory experimentation on cadavers and amputated limbs and on a careful study of photographs from the *Holy Shroud*, which many authorities believe to be the sheet in which the body of Jesus was wrapped after He was taken down from the cross. The image on the shroud bears all the marks that one would expect to find on the body of Christ in view of the brutalities recorded in the Gospels.

Having arrived at Calvary, the soldiers stripped Jesus of His clothes, ripping open His wounds and causing thousands of painful shocks over His entire body. He was then made to lie on the ground with arms outstretched and had His wrists nailed to the wood. Nails were never driven in the palms, contrary to centuries of pious images, because they could not support the weight of a hanging body. Instead, the nails were driven through the hollows of the wrist, where a cross-hatch of bone secured the spike. Dr. Barbet found through experimentation that when a nail pierced this spot, it partially severed the *median nerve*, causing bolts of fiery pain in both arms and causing the thumbs to jerk inward against the palms. This corresponded exactly to the stains on the shroud. Not only did the bloody wound appear on the wrist in the pictures of the shroud, but the image of the

hands showed no sign of thumbs. Although Sacred Scripture refers to nails in the hands, the archeological evidence is not at odds with the Gospels since the ancient people considered the wrist to be part of the hand.

At this point in the execution, the crossbeam was raised to the upright stake and secured in place. Jesus' body now hung suspended off the ground, supported only by the nails in His wrists. The next step was to fix the feet. Contrary to the form of most crucifixes, there was no block on which the feet rested. Rather, the executioners bent the right knee and placed the right foot flat against the cross; the left knee was then bent and the left foot brought around in front of the right. One nail, driven through the middle of both feet, fixed them firmly to the cross.

Flexing the legs was also part of the "science" of crucifixion, for death on a cross almost never occurred due to blood loss. The wounds in the wrists and feet, while agonizing, did not sever any major blood vessels. Bleeding from scourging might have been sufficient to cause death, but generally, crucifixion victims died of *suffocation*, for the weight of the body hanging by the arms impaired the proper functioning of the lungs. Thus, Jesus could inhale, but not exhale. If His legs were nailed straight, death would have occurred within minutes. By leaving the legs bent, Jesus could use His feet as a fulcrum, pushing upward on the nail when exhalation was required. This meant that the greatest agony of crucifixion occurred from the almost constant sensation of suffocation. To speak, as Jesus did from the cross, took an enormous toll because it required Him to push up against the nail in His feet and hold that position for as long as it took Him to complete the words. And what words did Jesus speak? They weren't the curses and blasphemies that were usually screamed by those nailed to a cross. Rather, with the soldiers and people taunting Him, Jesus said, "*Father, forgive them, they know not what they do*" (Lk 23:34). After enduring the agony of crucifixion for three hours, Jesus' last words were "*It is finished*" (Jn 19:30). The mission on which His Father had sent Him—the redemption of humanity—had been completed. What had been lost at the tree in the Garden of Eden had been won back on the tree of the cross.

Because crucifixion was an official method of execution for non-Roman citizens, death could not be and was not left to chance. If the soldiers on duty wanted to hasten death, they would break the legs so the condemned could no longer push up to empty their lungs. Since Jesus was already dead, thereby excluding the need to break His legs, the centurion on duty had one of his soldiers pierce Jesus' heart and lung with a spear (Jn 19:34). By doing so, the soldier verified that the court's sentence of death had been carried out on a victim whose legs had not been broken.

Once death had been officially verified, the friends and family of the victim would be permitted to take the body for burial. If no one came to claim the body, it would be left on the cross to be savaged by wild animals. Sacred Scripture tells us that Joseph of Arimathea sought permission from Pilate to remove Jesus' body from the cross and buried it in his own tomb (Jn 19:38-42).

- (d) Limbo of the Fathers/Sheol/Hades: Until Jesus died on the cross and paid the price of Adam and Eve's sin, no human soul could enter heaven. And yet, in the many centuries that had

elapsed since Adam and Eve, there surely had been great numbers of people who had believed in God and obeyed His laws. Since such souls were not deserving of hell, they existed in a *state of purely natural happiness, without any direct vision of God*. They were happy very much as we on earth would be happy if everything were perfect for us. We call this place the *Limbo of the Fathers* or *Sheol* (Hebrew) or *Hades* (Greek), the abode of the dead. It is the place that the Apostles' Creed refers to when it says that Jesus "*descended into hell*."

- (e) Resurrection: Jesus rose from the dead three days after His death to show that He was truly God and to teach His followers that they would also rise from the dead. This event is commemorated every Sunday, but especially *Easter Sunday*.
- (f) Ascension: Jesus remained on earth forty days after His resurrection to prove that He had risen and to complete the instruction of His Apostles. Having completed His work, He ascended to His Father in heaven, where, at the end of time, He will pronounce a sentence of eternal reward or punishment for every human being. This event is commemorated by the Church each year on *Ascension Thursday*, forty days after Easter.

## VI. **The Holy Spirit, Grace, Virtues, Gifts, Fruits, and Merit: (Apostles' Creed: "I believe...in the Holy Spirit...").**

- A. Objective: To learn about the Holy Spirit; His operation in our soul by grace, the virtues, and the gifts; the fruits or effects of His presence in our soul; and how to increase our happiness here and in eternity.
- B. The Holy Spirit, Grace, Virtues, Gifts, Fruits, and Merit:
  - 1. The Holy Spirit: The third person of the Blessed Trinity who proceeds from the Father and the Son and who is equal to them. Scripture tells us that the Holy Spirit occasionally takes on *sensible forms*:
    - a. Dove: When Jesus was baptized by John in the Jordan River, the Holy Spirit appeared as a *dove* (Mt 3:16), a symbol of the *peace* and *gentleness* with which the Holy Spirit works in our souls.
    - b. Mighty Rushing Wind: On Pentecost, the Holy Spirit descended like a *mighty rushing wind* (Acts 2:2), representing the *strengthening of the will*.
    - c. Tongues of Fire: On Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came to rest on the Apostles in the form of *tongues of fire* (Acts 2:3), symbolic of *zeal* and *illumination of mind*.
  - 2. Grace: An interior supernatural gift of God bestowed on us through the merits of Jesus Christ for our salvation. ***Explanation:***
    - a. What Is It? Grace is "*interior*," meaning that it is *invisible*. It is "*supernatural*" meaning that it is *above* the ordinary powers of the soul. It is a "*gift*" meaning that it is freely given to us and not something that rightfully belongs to us.
    - b. From Whom? Grace is given to us by "*God through the merits of Jesus Christ*," meaning that after Adam and Eve's fall, all human beings were deprived of God's divine life and eternal happiness.

Jesus, by His passion, death, and resurrection merited or earned for us the grace that Adam and Eve lost by their sin.

- c. For What Purpose? Grace is freely given to us by God so that we can share in His divine life on earth and in eternity.

3. Types of Grace: There are many types of grace *including*:

- a. Sanctifying/Habitual Grace: Supernatural quality of the soul that sanctifies or makes it holy because it confers *new life*, a *participation* in the life of God Himself. We received sanctifying grace for the first time at our *baptism*. Sanctifying grace is sometimes called *habitual grace* because it is intended to be a *habitual* or *permanent condition* of the soul. Once we are united with God in baptism, it is intended that we remain united with Him forever. **Effects:**

(1) Temples of God: This grace “causes” God to “take up residence in our soul,” to dwell in us as in a temple.

(2) Heirs to Heaven: This grace enables us to live in close union with God in this life and prepares our soul for another gift which God will add after death, namely, the *power to see God face to face and to know Him as He really is*. This gift is known as the *Light of Glory*.

(3) Holy and Pleasing to God: God’s presence in our soul makes it holy and pleasing. His presence there also makes us more aware of the *folly of sin*, more prone to *doing good works*, and it *strengthens our will to avoid sin*.

(4) God’s Adopted Children: Because this grace was purchased for us by Jesus Christ and because we share it with Him, God the Father consequently sees us as He sees His Son. Thus, each baptized person becomes an *adopted child of God*. Our relationship is no longer merely that of *creature* and *Creator*, but that of *child* and *Father*. **Scripture References:**

(a) Eph 1:4-5: “...*In love he destined us for adoption to himself through Jesus Christ, in accord with the favor of his will.*”

(b) 1 Jn 3:1-2: “*See what love the Father has bestowed on us that we may be called the children of God. Yet so we are. The reason that the world does not yet know us is that it did not know him. Beloved, we are God’s children now....*”

- b. Actual/Helping Graces: Supernatural, momentary, impulses from God that “help” to *enlighten our minds* to know what is right and to *strengthen our wills* to do what is good. **Points:**

(1) Transient: These graces are temporary and last only as long as needed. We receive hundreds of them each day.

(2) Given Despite Mortal Sin: These graces “encourage” us to repent and seek God’s forgiveness when we’ve committed a mortal sin.

(3) Necessary: These graces are necessary for us to resist temptations and to perform other actions

which merit an eternal reward.

- (4) Not Given Equally: God's grace works in and through our *human will*. It does not destroy our freedom of choice, for to be effective, it requires our cooperation. Those who cooperate generously with the graces that God gives will receive more generously.
- c. Gratuitous Graces: Supernatural gifts conferred on particular persons *for the salvation of others*. These gifts are independent of the moral life or behavior of the people who possess them, meaning that those who possess these gifts are not necessarily just or holy people. **Examples:**
- (1) Gifts of Prophecy, Miracles, Tongues:
- (2) Priestly Powers of Consecration and Absolution:
- (3) Hierarchical Power of Jurisdiction: The right to exercise official and public authority in some capacity, e.g., *a bishop in his diocese, a pastor in his parish, or bishops, priests, and deacons in their preaching*.
- d. Sacramental Graces: The distinctive graces conferred by each of the seven sacraments which help a person to fulfill the purpose of that particular sacrament, e.g., *the grace conferred in the sacrament of Penance which helps a person to avoid the sins he confessed*.
4. Virtue: A habit or permanent disposition which inclines a person to do good and to avoid evil. **Types:**
- a. Natural Virtue: A virtue that is acquired by our own efforts, i.e., by consciously developing a certain good habit. **Example:**
- (1) Virtue of Veracity or Truthfulness: If a person wants to develop this virtue, he has to be watchful of his speech, careful not to say anything that is at variance with the truth. In the beginning, this might be difficult, especially if it causes embarrassment or inconvenience. A habit, however, whether good or bad, is strengthened by repeated acts. Little by little, the person will find it easier to tell the truth, even when the results are more painful. Eventually it will pain the person to tell a lie. At this point, the person knows that he has developed the virtue of veracity. Because it was done through his own efforts, it is deemed a *natural virtue*.
- b. Supernatural Virtue: A virtue or habit that is conferred upon the soul directly by God that inclines the person to perform certain actions that are supernaturally good. **Types:**
- (1) Theological/Divine Virtues: Virtues infused into our soul at baptism that pertain directly to God. They **include:**
- (a) Faith: The virtue by which we firmly *believe* all the truths that God has revealed because He has said that they are true, e.g., that the *Holy Eucharist is truly Jesus' Body and Blood* or the mystery of the *Blessed Trinity which says there is one God, three divine persons*.

The virtue of faith is granted to an infant at baptism and alone, would be enough to save the baptized infant if he died. However, with the age of reason, there must be *acts* of faith as

well.

Faith can only be lost by a refusal to believe what God has revealed. In heaven, faith will give way to knowledge, since there will no longer be any need to “believe in” the God whom we actually see. ***Symbols:***

- i) Cross:
  - ii) Root of a Tree: The theological virtues are sometimes portrayed as a *living tree*. Faith is the *root* of the tree.
- (b) Hope: The virtue by which we firmly *trust* that God, who is all-powerful and faithful to His promises, will give us eternal happiness and the means to obtain it. In other words, *we can't lose heaven except by our own fault*, for so far as God is concerned, our salvation is certain. It is only our cooperation with God's grace that is uncertain.

God desires the salvation of *every* person. Therefore, we should never weary of praying for sinners and unbelievers, especially for our family members and friends, for God never entirely withdraws His grace from even the most hardened sinners. Even if a loved one has died, apparently unrepentant to the end, we should not lose hope, for we cannot know, in this life, what thunderbolts of grace God may have unleashed upon that stubborn soul in the last split-second of consciousness. That knowledge will only be revealed in eternity.

Like faith, the virtue of hope, given to an infant at baptism, must not be allowed to lie dormant. With the advent of reason, the virtue must find expression in *acts* of hope.

We can only lose this virtue by the sins of *presumption* (acting as though we can save our souls by our own efforts), *despair* (salvation is believed to be impossible because of our faults), or *loss of faith* (for how can we hope in God if we don't believe in Him?). Since we will possess the happiness that we hoped for, the virtue of hope will disappear in heaven. ***Symbols:***

- i) Anchor:
  - ii) Trunk of a Tree: Where faith is the *root*, hope is the *trunk* growing from the root.
- (c) Charity/Love: The virtue by which we *love* God above all things for his own sake and our neighbor as ourselves for the love of God. Charity is sometimes called the *queen of all virtues*, for the other virtues carry us *towards* God, but charity *unites* us with Him. Charity also allows us to love our neighbor with a supernatural love, to have a good will towards our neighbor because we know that is what God wants. Incidentally, our “neighbor” includes everyone whom God has made: the angels, saints, souls in purgatory, and all living human beings, even our enemies! It is the latter that we find most difficult to love. It is not difficult to love “everyone” in a vague and general sort of way, but to wish well to and to be willing to help those who have hurt us is most difficult. By ourselves it is impossible, but with the divine virtue of charity, we can do so. In fact, we *must* do so or our love for God is a sham.



In loving God and our neighbor, we should remember that it need not be an *emotional* love, for supernatural love resides in our *will*, our power of choice, not in our *emotions*. Thus, we can have a very deep love of God, as is proved by our fidelity to Him, and yet, not have any *feeling* of that love. Similarly, we can have a genuine love for our neighbor, even though on the natural level we may have a strong distaste for him. The key elements are that *we can forgive the person, for God's sake, for the wrong he's done*; that *we pray for him, with the hope that he will get the grace he needs to save his soul*; and that *we would be willing to help him if he would be in need, in spite of our own natural repugnance*. If we can do these things, then the virtue of charity is functioning in us.

As with the virtues of faith and hope, the charity received at baptism must be exercised in *acts* of love after the age of reason is attained.

The virtue of charity—love of God—is lost every time we commit a mortal sin. It is the only theological virtue that will continue to exist in heaven. ***Symbols:***

- i) Burning Heart:
  - ii) Fruit of the Tree: Where faith is the *root*, hope is the *trunk*, charity is the *fruit* growing on the tree.
- (2) Cardinal Moral Virtues: Virtues infused into our soul at baptism that do not pertain directly to God, but rather concern our attitude towards persons and things in relation to God. They are called “cardinal” (from the Latin word *cardo*, meaning “hinge”) virtues because they are the “hinge” virtues, the key virtues upon which all other moral virtues depend. They ***include:***
- (a) Prudence: The virtue that enables a person to know what is right and to act appropriately in any given situation.
  - (b) Justice: The virtue that allows us to recognize the rights of all people and to give them their rightful due, under any and all circumstances.
  - (c) Fortitude: The virtue that helps us to do good in spite of the difficulties faced in the performance of our duties.
  - (d) Temperance: The virtue that moderates the desire for pleasure.
5. Gifts of the Holy Spirit: Spiritual qualities given by God at baptism that make the soul responsive to the silent voice of God within, docile to His gently guiding hand. The more mature that one is in the spiritual life, the stronger influence these gifts have in drawing the soul nearer to God with greater ease and more fervent love. They ***include:***
- a. Wisdom: The first and highest of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. It helps us to appreciate the things of God.
  - b. Understanding: The gift that helps us to understand God's truths easily and with depth.

- c. Counsel: The gift that perfects the virtue of prudence. It enables a person to judge promptly and rightly, as by a sort of supernatural intuition, what should be done, especially in difficult situations. With this gift, the Holy Spirit speaks, as it were, to the heart and in an instant, enlightens a person as what to say or do.
  - d. Fortitude: Gift that gives a person special strength of will. It confers an extraordinary readiness to undergo trials for love of God, unusual courage to bear difficulties even for many years, and perseverance in a lifetime fidelity to one's vocation in spite of heavy trials or disappointments.
  - e. Knowledge: Gift that allows a person to judge everything from a supernatural viewpoint. Through this gift, the faithful can see the providential purpose of whatever enters their lives and they are able to put created things to right use according to God's will for themselves and others.
  - f. Piety: The word "piety," in its original meaning, describes the attitude of a child towards his parents: a mixture of *love, confidence, and reverence*. This gift of the Holy Spirit helps us to maintain this attitude of childlike intimacy with God.
  - g. Fear of the Lord: Gift that confirms the virtue of hope and inspires a person with profound respect for the majesty of God. Its corresponding effects are protection from sin through dread of offending God and a strong confidence in His help. It helps those who possess it to have a vivid sense of God's greatness, a lively sorrow for the least faults committed, and a vigilant care in avoiding occasions of sin.
6. Fruits of the Holy Spirit: The identifiable effects of the Holy Spirit working in a person's soul. They include *charity, joy, peace, patience, benignity, goodness, long-suffering, mildness, faith, modesty, continency, and chastity*. These fruits are evident in the lives of those who live habitually in a state of sanctifying grace and who subordinate their will to God's.
7. Merit: Divine reward for the practice of virtue and good works. We can only gain eternal merit for our actions if we're free from mortal sin. When our souls contain God's presence through sanctifying grace, our deeds become, in a sense, the work of God Himself. Thus, even the *least* action, provided it be a morally good action, e.g., *washing dishes*, has supernatural value when it is performed in union with God, for whatever God does, even when He does it through us as His free and willing instruments, has a divine worth. All that is necessary for these actions to be meritorious is that we have the intention of *doing them for God*.

## VII. **The Catholic Church: (Apostles' Creed: "I believe...in the holy Catholic Church...").**

- A. Objective: To learn about the Catholic Church, its purpose, defining marks, and attributes.
- B. The Catholic Church:
  - 1. The Catholic Church: Congregation of all baptized persons united in the *same true faith of Jesus Christ*, the *same sacrifice*, the *same sacraments*, and *governed by their bishops under one visible head*, the Bishop of Rome. ***Characteristics:***
    - a. Founder: Jesus preached revolutionary ideas to the people of His time: *love your enemies, blessed*

*are the meek, fast in secret*, etc. Jesus meant these teachings for everyone, not merely those who listened to Him. Yet, Jesus never wrote any of His teachings down. To make His teachings known, He established an organization to carry on His work in the world after His death. This organization is known as the *Catholic Church*. ***Scripture References:***

(1) Mt 16:17-18: “*Jesus said to him in reply, ‘Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah....And so I say to you, you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it.’*”

(2) Eph 2:19-20: “*...You are the fellow citizens...and members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the capstone.*”

- b. Purpose/Mission: Since Jesus died for all people, the Catholic Church has the mission of continuing His work of redemption for all time. The graces of Jesus’ redemption are applied to each person through the Catholic Church in the *sacraments* and by the exercise of Jesus’ threefold office of *teaching, sanctifying, and ruling*. ***Scripture References:***

(1) Mk 16:15: “*Go into the whole world and proclaim the gospel to every creature.*”

(2) Acts 2:4: “*And they were all filled with the holy Spirit and [spoke] in different tongues.*” (Speaking in foreign languages symbolizes the Church’s worldwide mission).

- c. Established/Created: God designed the body of His Church in the person of Jesus Christ. This task was spread over three years, from Jesus’ first public miracle at Cana until His ascent into heaven. During this time span, Jesus:

(1) Chose His Twelve Apostles: For three years, He trained them to:

- (a) Teach: The Apostles had the task of making Jesus’ teachings, the truths of salvation, known to others. ***Scripture Reference:***

i) Mt 28:19-20: “*Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations...teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.*”

- (b) Sanctify: The Apostles provided the means to live out Jesus’ teachings through the sacraments. ***Scripture References:***

i) Mt 28:19: “*Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.*”

ii) Lk 22:19: “*This is my body...Do this in remembrance of me.*”

iii) Jn 20:23: “*Whose sins you shall forgive, are forgiven them; whose sins you shall retain, they are retained.*”

- (c) Rule: The Apostles were given authority to make laws concerning the promulgation of Jesus’ teachings and the administration of the sacraments. ***Scripture References:***

i) Mt 18:17-18: “...*If he refuses to listen to the church, then treat him as you would a Gentile....Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.*”

ii) Lk 10:16: “*He who hears you, hears me; and he who rejects you, rejects me.*”

(2) Created the Seven Sacraments: Visible signs of God’s grace.

(3) Provided Leadership for His Kingdom on Earth: Simon was entrusted with full authority over Jesus’ Church. In doing so, Jesus changed his name from *Simon* to *Peter*, which means “rock.” In biblical times, a change of name usually indicated a significant event. And so it was for Peter: *Jesus gave him primary leadership and authority in His Church.* After His resurrection, Jesus fulfilled His promise when He received from Peter a thrice repeated avowal of love and told Him to “*Feed my lambs; feed my sheep.*” ***Scripture References:***

(a) Mt 16:17-18: “*Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah. For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my heavenly Father. And so I say to you, you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it.*”

(b) Mt 16:19: “*I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven.*” In the time of Christ, keys were a *sign of jurisdiction*. To say that a man had received the keys of a city was equivalent to saying that he was placed in charge of the city. In the Bible, whenever the expression was used, it meant just that. Therefore, when Jesus entrusted the “*keys of the kingdom of heaven*” to Peter, it meant that He gave him complete authority over His Church. Jesus frequently referred to His Church on earth as the “*kingdom of heaven.*”

(c) Mt 16:19: “*Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.*” Peter is promised the supreme power to bind his subjects by laws and precepts and to free their souls from spiritual ties such as *sins* and *censures*. The power of binding and loosing was given to the other Apostles, but here, it is promised to Peter individually to show that he possesses it in a special way.

(d) Lk 22:31-32: “*Simon, Simon...I have prayed that your own faith may not fail; and once you have turned back, you must strengthen your own brothers.*”

(e) Jn 21:15-17: “...*Jesus said to Simon Peter, ‘...Do you love me more than these?’ [Peter] said to him, ‘Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.’ [Jesus] said to him, ‘Feed my lambs....Feed my sheep.’*” The entire flock of Christ, the sheep and lambs (the bishops, priests, deacons, and people), were to be under the jurisdiction of Peter.

d. Hierarchy: Jesus’ Church has a definite structure, ***including:***

(1) Jesus Christ: Jesus is the *invisible head* of His Church. Just as the head and brain function as the command center for the human body, so Jesus Christ, as Head of His Church, teaches His truths through those who represent Him. He gives them grace and supernatural life through the Holy Spirit. Thus, *when the Church teaches, it is actually Jesus Christ teaching.* ***Scripture Reference:***

- (a) Lk 10:16: “*He who hears you, hears me; and he who rejects you, rejects me.*”
- (2) Apostles: The original twelve men that Jesus chose to help Him with His work of redemption. Since Jesus died for all people and since His Church continues His work of redemption for all time, Jesus willed that the Apostles have successors in each age. These successors **include**:
- (a) Pope: The *visible head* of the Catholic Church. The supreme headship of Peter was clearly an essential part of Jesus’ plan for His Church. This we see from the fact that Peter alone was made the “*foundation*” of the Church, the “*key-bearer*,” the *supreme teacher*, and the *one shepherd of the flock*. Certainly the *foundation* is to last as long as the building; the *key-bearer* must last while there is a kingdom; a *supreme teacher* as long as there are people to be taught; a *shepherd* as long as there is a flock. Since Jesus came to save all souls, not only those who were contemporaries of the Apostles, it follows that Peter, a mortal man, needed a successor. This successor is the *pope*, the *Bishop of Rome*. He has supreme authority over the universal Catholic Church and ensures its common good.
- (b) Bishops: The successors of the Apostles, the first bishops of the Catholic Church. *Each bishop has received his episcopal power in an unbroken continuity from Jesus Christ, through the Apostles.* A bishop’s jurisdiction in a diocese flows from his union with the pope, St. Peter’s successor. ***Scripture References:***
- i) Mt 28:19-20: “*Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations,...teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.*”
- ii) Jn 20:21: “*Jesus said to them... ‘As the Father has sent me, so I send you.’*”
- (c) Priests: Clergy who help bishops to fulfill their responsibilities. Through the sacrament of *holy orders*, priests are given the power to *sanctify* (as in the Mass and the sacraments), but not the power of *jurisdiction* (the power to teach and govern). A priest possesses the power of jurisdiction only to the extent that it is *delegated* to him by a bishop. These powers of jurisdiction that are delegated by the bishop are known as *faculties*.
- (d) Deacons: Clergy who assist bishops and priests in preaching, baptizing, witnessing marriages, administering parishes, etc. ***Types:***
- i) Permanent Deacon: A deacon who will have a *lifelong commitment* to serving as a deacon in the Catholic Church. Presently, such deacons can be married, but only if they are so *prior* to their ordination. If a deacon’s wife dies, he promises to remain unmarried and celibate for the rest of his life.
- ii) Transitional Deacon: A deacon who has a *temporary commitment* to serving as a deacon in the Catholic Church because he intends to be ordained a priest.
- (e) Laity: The remainder who belong to the Catholic Church and for whom the clergy exists.
2. The Catholic Church is both:

- a. A Juridical Church: An organization or public society whose members and leaders are bound together by visible and legal bonds of unity.
- b. A Mystical or Spiritual Organism: An actual living body animated by a soul—the Holy Spirit. It is called the *Mystical Body of Christ* because its members are united with one another and with Christ the Head by the spiritual bonds of grace and charity, thus resembling the organs or members and head of a living human body. *It is through baptism that we are incorporated into the Mystical Body of Christ.*

As members, we have an obligation to help the spiritual body to grow and to be healthy. Jesus expects each of us to bring Christ and His teachings to the little part of the world that we live in: our *home, neighborhood, parish, and diocese.*

A person remains a member of the Church as long as he does nothing to sever the relationship, e.g., by *schism* (denying or defying the authority of the Pope), *heresy* (denying one or more of the truths of faith as proclaimed by the Church), or *excommunication* (being ejected from the membership because of certain grave and unrepented sins).

3. Marks of the Catholic Church: The four essential signs that prove that the Catholic Church is the true Church that Jesus established. These *marks* can be easily recognized by all people of good will. Jesus has done so in view of the fact that He founded His Church at the cost of His own life. His Church is the *gate to heaven* through which everyone must enter, at least by implicit desire. Having made His Church a prerequisite of our everlasting happiness, Jesus has stamped it plainly with His “*trademark*,” with His mark of divine origin.

- a. One: Refers both to the *uniqueness* and *unity* of the Church. The Church founded by Jesus is *unique* because He only founded one Church and it is *united* because Jesus intended His Church to be undivided, as a reflection of His own unity with His Father. Thus, Jesus intended for His Church to be *one*, for its members to be united in *doctrine, worship, and government*. This it is, for wherever Catholics go to church, whether in Hong Kong or Alaska, in New York or Cairo, they profess the same *faith*, have the same *Sacrifice of the Mass*, the same *sacraments*, and are united under the same *visible head*, the Bishop of Rome. **References:**

(1) Mk 3:24-26: “*If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand.*”

(2) Jn 10:16: “*I have other sheep who do not belong to this fold. These also I must lead, and they will hear my voice, and there will be one flock, one shepherd.*”

(3) CCC, par.866: “*The Church is one: she acknowledges one Lord, confesses one faith, is born of one Baptism, forms one Body, is given life by the Spirit, for the sake of one hope, at whose fulfillment all divisions will be overcome.*”

- b. Holy: The Church is holy by reason of her *founder, Jesus Christ*; in her *sacraments* through which God pours out His grace upon us; and in the *lives of her faithful*, especially in those heroic souls whom she has led to sanctity. Saints are saints because they conformed their lives perfectly to Jesus Christ. **References:**

- (1) Mt 5:48: “*So be perfect...as your...Father is perfect.*”
- (2) Jn 17:17, 19: “*Consecrate them in the truth. Your word is truth. And I consecrate myself for them, so that they also may be consecrated in truth.*”
- (3) CCC, par. 867: “*The Church is holy: the Most Holy God is her author; Christ, her bridegroom, gave himself up to make her holy; the Spirit of holiness gives her life. Since she still includes sinners, she is the ‘sinless one made up of sinners.’ Her holiness shines in the saints; in Mary she is already all-holy.*”
- c. Catholic (“*Universal*”): The Church is universal because Jesus wants everyone to belong and because it extends to all times and places and fulfills the divine command to teach all nations God’s truths. The phrase “*Catholic Church*” was first used by St. Ignatius of Antioch in 107 A.D. Writing a letter to the Smyrneans, he said that “*wheresoever the Bishop shall appear, there let the people be, even as Jesus may be, there is the Catholic Church.*” **References:**
- (1) Acts 1:7-8: “*...You will be my witnesses to the ends of the world.*”
- (2) CCC, par. 868: “*The Church is catholic: she proclaims the fullness of the faith. She bears in herself and administers the totality of the means of salvation. She is sent out to all peoples....She encompasses all times. She is ‘missionary of her very nature.’*”
- d. Apostolic: The Catholic Church was founded by Jesus on the Apostles and is governed by their lawful successors. It must hold intact the *doctrine* and *traditions* of the Apostles, to whom Christ gave authority to teach. **References:**
- (1) Mt 16:17-19: “*...You are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church.*”
- (2) Eph 2:19-20: “*...You are fellow citizens...of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the capstone.*”
- (3) CCC, par. 869: “*The Church is apostolic. She is built on a lasting foundation: ‘the twelve apostles of the Lamb’ (Rev. 21:14). She is indestructible (cf. Mt 16:18). She is upheld infallibly in the truth: Christ governs her through Peter and the other apostles, who are present in their successors, the Pope and the college of bishops.*”
4. Attributes of the Catholic Church: Qualities that make her voice the same as that of God, **including:**
- a. Authority: The power to command others. Authority is necessary for every organization, for without it, members cannot achieve their common purpose. All legitimate authority comes from God and is given to the Church in spiritual matters. Thus, the pope and bishops, as the lawful successors of the Apostles, have authority from Jesus Christ to *teach, sanctify, and rule* in spiritual matters. To refuse to obey the authority of the Church is to refuse to obey God. **References:**
- (1) Mt 28:19-20: “*Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations,...teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.*”

(2) Lk 10:16: “*He who hears you, hears me; and he who rejects you, rejects me.*”

- b. Infallibility: Freedom from error in teaching. By the assistance of the Holy Spirit, the Catholic Church cannot make a mistake when she solemnly proclaims that a certain matter of *faith* (belief) or *morals* (conduct) has been revealed by God and must be held and followed by all. These infallible teachings are expressed through the *Magisterium* (from the Latin, “*magister*,” meaning “teacher”), *the Church’s teaching authority instituted by Jesus Christ and guided by the Holy Spirit which seeks to safeguard and explain the truths of the sacred deposit of faith*. It includes the pope and those bishops in union with him and is exercised in the following **ways**:

(1) Extraordinary Magisterium: Teaching authority exercised in a *solemn* manner, **including**:

- (a) Formal Declarations of the Pope: Every pope, as the lawful successor of St. Peter, is infallible in matters of *faith* or *morals*. This *infallibility* (freedom from error) differs from *impeccability* (freedom from sin) and assures that Jesus’ teachings will come down to all generations *undistorted* and in their *entirety*. In order to speak infallibly, the pope must speak *ex-cathedra* or *officially*, under the following **conditions**:
- i) Matter of Faith or Morals: The pope’s pronouncement must be a matter of *faith* or *morals*, not, e.g., *which team will win the World Series* or *a list of the best novels*.
  - ii) Speaks as the Vicar of Christ: In his pronouncement, the pope must make it clear that he is speaking officially, as the Vicar of Christ, to the *universal Church*, i.e., to all the faithful in the world, not only to the people of his diocese.
  - iii) Words: The words, “*we proclaim*” or “*we define*” are often used to make it clear that he is speaking to the universal Church.
  - iv) Binding: The pope must declare his intention to bind all members of the Catholic Church to accept the teaching.

Examples of formal declarations by the pope **include**:

- i) Dogma of the Immaculate Conception: Pope Pius IX, in 1854, declared that Mary was conceived without original sin. This infallible definition was not a new doctrine, but rather, an official declaration of an article of faith that had been believed all along.
  - ii) Dogma of the Assumption: Pope Pius XII, in 1950, infallibly declared that Mary was assumed body and soul into heaven after completing her life on earth.
- (b) Formal Declarations of Ecumenical Councils: An assembly convened by the Holy See of all the bishops of the world. The solemn declarations of *faith* or *morals* made by the bishops in union with the pope at these councils are infallible. The pastoral advice or disciplinary legislation of these councils is not infallible. **Examples**:
- i) Council of Trent: In 1547, all the bishops of world in union with the pope, solemnly defined that Jesus instituted seven sacraments.



- ii) Vatican Council II: Matters of *faith* or *morals* promulgated in the sixteen texts of this council from 1963-65 are infallible.
- (2) Ordinary Magisterium: The teaching office of the hierarchy under the pope exercised through *written* or *spoken* means. When the ordinary magisterium is universal, i.e., collectively intended for all the faithful, it is also infallible. **Example:**
  - (a) *Humane Vitae*: 1968 papal encyclical that expounds the Church's teachings on marriage and birth regulation.
  - (b) Abortion: The teaching on abortion has been consistent, perpetual, and universal. While never having been declared solemnly, it is an infallible teaching.

**References:**

- (a) Mt 28:20: "*And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age.*"
  - (b) CCC, par. 889: "*To preserve the Church in the purity of the faith handed on by the apostles, Christ...willed to confer on her a share in his own infallibility...[T]he People of God, under the guidance of the Church's living Magisterium, 'unfailingly adheres to this faith.'*"
  - (c) CCC, par. 890: "*...It is this Magisterium's task to...guarantee [God's People] the objective possibility of professing the true faith without error....To fulfill this service, Christ endowed the Church's shepherds with...infallibility in matters of faith and morals....*"
- c. Indefectibility: Quality by which the Catholic Church will last until the end of time. **References:**
- (1) Mt 16:18: "*...You are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it.*"
  - (2) Mt 28:20: "*....Behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age.*"
5. Orthodox Churches: A family of churches that officially broke from Rome in 1054. Each church is independent in its internal administration, but all share the same faith and are in communion with each other, acknowledging the honorary primacy of the Patriarch of Constantinople. They are also known as the *Eastern, Greek, or Russian Orthodox Churches*.
6. Protestantism: The system of faith, worship, and practice derived from the principles of the Reformation in the sixteenth century. These Protestant denominations do not possess the marks of the Catholic Church in their fullness, but have them in a lesser degree. Three premises have remained fairly constant:
- a. The Bible as the only rule of faith, excluding *tradition* and *Church authority*.
  - b. Justification by faith alone, excluding *supernatural merit* and *good works*.
  - c. The universal priesthood of believers, excluding a *distinct episcopacy* or *priesthood divinely*

*empowered through ordination to teach, govern, and sanctify the people of God.*

The dictum that “*Outside the Church there is no salvation*,” means that there is no salvation for those who are outside the Church through their own fault. Those who are outside the Church, through no fault of their own, and who do the best they can according to what they know and who make good use of the graces God gives them, can be saved.

**VIII. The Communion of Saints, Forgiveness of Sins, Death, Judgment, Heaven, Purgatory, Hell, and the Resurrection of the Body (Apostles’ Creed: “...I believe in the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen”).**

- A. Objective: To define the Communion of Saints; to show that Jesus can forgive our sins; and to teach about what happens after death and the reward that awaits us.
- B. The Communion of Saints, Forgiveness of Sins, Death, Judgment, Heaven, Purgatory, Hell, and the Resurrection of the Body:

1. The Communion of Saints: The word “*saint*” comes from the Latin word “*sanctus*,” meaning “*holy*.” Every Christian soul, incorporated with Christ by baptism and harboring within himself the presence of the Holy Spirit, is *holy*, a *saint* in the original meaning of the word. Today the word “*saint*” refers to those who are in heaven. The word “*communion*” means “*union with*.” Thus, the *Communion of Saints* is the spiritual union of the members of the *Church on earth*, the *blessed in heaven*, and the *souls in purgatory*. **Three Branches:**

- a. Church Triumphant: The *saints* and *angels* in heaven, who because of their faithfulness to God and triumph over sin, have gained everlasting life. They help the *souls in purgatory* and the *faithful on earth* by their prayers. They are not so rapt up in their own bliss as to forget the souls they left behind. Rather, their perfect love for God includes a love for all souls whom God has made and has adorned with His graces. They long to help onward to heaven all souls, whose precious value they now realize as never before. We, for our part, should honor the saints. Just as an artist is honored when his works are praised, so God is honored when the saints are praised, for He is their maker, sanctifier, and redeemer.
- b. Church Suffering: The *souls in purgatory*, who before they can enter heaven, must make amends for any *unforgiven venial sins* and/or the *temporal punishment* due their forgiven sins.
- c. Church Militant: The faithful on earth who must “fight” against *temptation*, *sin*, and *error*. We are helped by the prayers of the *saints in heaven* and the *souls in purgatory*.

As members of the Mystical Body of Christ through baptism, all the members of the Church are one family, share in the spiritual treasures of the Church to a greater or lesser degree depending on their dispositions, and aid one another by *prayers* and *good works*. The Communion of Saints is a consoling doctrine, for it tells us that although our deceased loved ones are separated from us *physically*, they’re still united to us *spiritually*. **References:**

- a. 1 Thes 5:25: “*Brothers, pray for us*.”

- b. CCC, par. 954-962: “We believe in the communion of all the faithful of Christ, those who are pilgrims on earth, the dead who are being purified, and the blessed in heaven, all together forming one Church...”(par. 962).
2. Forgiveness of Sins: Jesus gave His Apostles and their successors the power to forgive sins in the sacrament of Penance. **Scripture Reference:**
  - a. Jn 20:19-23: “...Whose sins you forgive are forgiven...and whose sins you retain are retained.”
3. Death: The cessation of the bodily functions of a human being through the departure of the soul. It is part of revelation that, in the present order of divine providence, *death is a punishment for sin*, the consequence of *original sin*. In the case of Jesus and Mary, because of their freedom from sin, death was neither a punishment nor a consequence of sin. Yet, as they were truly human, death was natural for them. Properly speaking, only the body dies when separated from its principle of life, the *soul*. However, the Bible speaks of a second death (Rev. 20:6), referring to the souls in hell, who are separated from their principle of supernatural life, *God*.

The best way to prepare for death is by *living a holy life, avoiding sin, and doing good works*. In doing so, we need not fear death, for it is the passageway into eternal life with God. We should often recall the thought of *death and eternity*, for there is much truth in the saying, “*As a person lives, so he dies.*” If we live a reckless life, it’s likely that we’ll die that way. Those who put off reforming their lives in the hope of a death-bed repentance are like a *traveler who begins to pack when the jet is ready to depart*.

**Scripture References:**

- a. Lk 2:29-30: By living a holy life, we, like Simeon, will be able to say, “*Now, Master, you may let your servant go in peace...for my eyes have seen your salvation.*”
  - b. 2 Tim 4:6-8: “...*The time of departure is at hand....I have finished the race; I have kept the faith. From now on the crown of righteousness awaits me, which the Lord...will award to me....*”
4. Judgment: Decision about one’s merits or demerits. **Types:**
  - a. Particular Judgment: The *individual judgment* passed on each human being immediately after death. It is a judgment in the sense that God irrevocably determines a person’s lot for eternity, depending on his or her cooperation with grace during their time on earth. The rewards or punishments appointed for people after death **include:**
    - (1) Heaven: The place and condition of perfect supernatural happiness. This happiness consists essentially in the *immediate vision and love of God* and secondarily in the *knowledge, love, and enjoyment of creatures*. Until the final resurrection, except for Jesus and Mary, only the *souls* of the just are in heaven. After the last day, the just will be in heaven in *body and soul*. Although the same God will be seen and enjoyed by all, not everyone will have the same degree of happiness. This beatitude will depend on the *measure of grace with which a person dies*, and this in turn will be greatly conditioned by the *merits that one earns during life on earth*. Thus, *a greater love of God + a greater love of neighbor during time on earth = a greater happiness in heaven*. **References/Analogies:**

- (a) Jn 14:1-4: *“In my Father’s house, there are many dwelling places.”*
- (b) Two Bottles: Imagine possessing a 20 ounce bottle and a 32 ounce bottle. If both bottles are filled to the brim, one can see that both bottles are full and that neither bottle can hold more liquid. One can also see that the 32 ounce bottle contains more liquid than the 20 ounce bottle. Analogously, the same is true for the souls in heaven. The more a person loves God on this earth, the greater his or her capacity for love and happiness in heaven. Those who loved God less will not be jealous of those who loved God more, for they will be “filled” to their capacity with God’s love.
- (c) Sistine Chapel: Two men looking at the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel will have complete enjoyment in the sight of Michelangelo’s masterpiece, but the man with the *cultivated eye* will have more enjoyment than the man with a *lower order* of artistic tastes. The man with little artistic appreciation will be quite satisfied; he will not be aware that he is missing anything, but he will be missing a lot. *Similarly, we all will be perfectly happy in heaven, but the degree of happiness will depend on the spiritual sharpness of our vision.*
- (2) Purgatory: The state or condition where the souls of the just are *purged, cleansed, or purified* after death for their *venial sins* and/or the *temporal punishment due their forgiven sins*. Since everyone in heaven is perfect, we, too, must be sinless before entering there. Purgatory purifies us of all *self-love*. Its necessity comes out of God’s *justice* and *mercy*: *justice* because all sin offends God and the damage it causes must be “repaired”; *mercy* because if our sins aren’t mortal in nature, God gives us one final opportunity after death to be cleansed of all sin so that we can enter heaven.

The sufferings in purgatory are not the same for all, but are proportioned to each person’s degree of sinfulness. Since the human soul is made for God and because our body in this life serves (we might say) as an insulator, we do not feel the terrific attraction that God has for the soul. However, the moment the soul leaves the body, it is exposed to the full power of God’s “pull” upon it, much like a *piece of metal is attracted to a strong magnet*. Crazy with hunger for God, the soul’s greatest agony in purgatory is, therefore, *its desire to be with God and its knowledge that it must first be “purged” of its self-love*. In addition to this delayed union, the souls in purgatory also suffer acutely in other ways, perhaps in those things in which they sinned the most. Although these souls suffer greatly, they do so *joyfully* since they are certain of their salvation. The souls in purgatory would not want to appear before God in their present state, so there is joy in their agony: *joy in the knowledge of the ecstasy to come*.

No one can know “how long” purgatory lasts for any individual soul. While there is *duration* beyond the grave, there is no “time” as we know it: no nights, days, hours, or minutes. However, whether we measure purgatory by *duration* or *intensity* (an instant of twisting torture can be worse than a year of mild discomfort), the fact remains that the soul in purgatory cannot lessen or shorten its own sufferings. We, by our *prayers* (especially the Sacrifice of the Mass), *good works, indulgences, and sufferings* can and should lessen the duration and intensity of their suffering. Purgatory will not continue after the end of the world, but its duration for any particular soul will continue until it is free from all guilt and punishment. **References:**

- (a) 2 Mac 12:38-46, esp. vv 42-44: *“Turning to supplication, they prayed that the sinful deed*

*might be blotted out....In doing this he acted in a very...noble way, inasmuch as he had the resurrection of the dead in view; for if he were not expecting the fallen to rise again, it would have been useless and foolish to pray for them in death.”* This is the best and earliest statement that prayers and sacrifices for the dead are beneficial. Judas believed that expiation could be made for certain sins of otherwise good men: soldiers who gave their lives for God’s cause.

- (b) Mt 5:26: “...*I say to you, you will not be released until you have paid the last penny.*”
  - (c) Rev. 21:27: “*But nothing unclean will enter. Only those will enter whose names are written in the book of life.*”
  - (d) CCC, n. 1032: “*From the beginning the Church has honored the memory of the dead and offered prayers in suffrage for them, above all the Eucharistic sacrifice, so that, thus purified, they may attain the beatific vision of God. The Church also commends almsgiving, indulgences, and works of penance undertaken on behalf of the dead.*”
- (3) Hell: Place and state of *eternal punishment* for the *fallen angels* and *human beings* who die *deliberately estranged* from God. It consists of a ***twofold punishment***:
- (a) Spiritual: Caused by the knowledge that one is deprived of the sight and love of God for eternity through one’s own fault. This is the greatest torment of hell, for the soul is made for God. There, the damned have devils and loathsome creatures for eternal companions, hate God, each other, and themselves, and feel despair, envy, and hopelessness.
  - (b) Sensual: Torture caused by outside agents, notably fire, which will be supernatural and non-consuming.

The punishments of hell are proportioned to the degree of sinfulness of each person. The existence of hell is consistent with divine justice, since God respects human freedom. Those who enter hell actually condemn themselves by their resistance to the grace of God. God merely fulfills their free choice. **References:**

- i) Mk 9:43-47: “*It is better to enter life maimed than to go into Gehanna, into the unquenchable fire.*”
  - ii) Rev. 14:11: “*The smoke of the fire that torments them will rise forever...and there will be no relief day or night for those who worship the beast or its image or accept the mark or its name.*”
  - iii) Dante’s Inferno: Sign over the gate of hell: “*Abandon all hope, ye who enter here.*”
  - iv) C. S. Lewis’ The Great Divorce: “*Not Thy will, but mine be done.*”
- b. General Judgment: The universal judgment of the human race at the end of the world. This judgment will hold no surprises for us as far as our own eternal fate is concerned, for we will already have undergone our own *particular judgment*. The sentence that was passed on us in the particular

judgment will be publicly confirmed and God will reveal the accumulated blessings and injuries that resulted from our good and evil deeds. On that day, all our thoughts, words, and deeds—public and secret—will be made known. The whole of life, which so often seems a tangled skein of unrelated events, sometimes harsh and cruel, will be unfolded before us. At that time, we shall see *how the jigsaw piece of life that we have known, fit into the great magnificent whole of God's plan for humanity*. We shall see how God's wisdom, power, love, and mercy have been at work through it all. This judgment is necessary so that God's justice, wisdom, and mercy may be glorified in the presence of all. ***Scripture References:***

(1) Mt 25:31-34, 41, 46: *"When the Son of Man comes in his glory...he will sit upon his glorious throne, and all the nations will be assembled before him.*

(2) Lk 8:17: *"For there is nothing hidden that will not become visible, and nothing secret that will not be made known and come to light."*

5. Resurrection of the Body: At the end of time, the bodies of the dead will rise from their graves and be reunited with their souls, nevermore to be separated. Since it is the *whole* human—body and soul—that either loved or hated God, it is the *whole* human—body and soul—that will be in heaven or hell. Our risen bodies will be free from the physical limitations which characterize them in this world. They no longer will need food, drink, or rest and they no longer will be subject to pain, fatigue, or death. In some sense, they will be "*spiritualized*" and "*glorified*", i.e., they will possess a perfection and beauty that will be a participation in the perfection and beauty of the soul which is united to God. Those in hell will appear hideous. ***Scripture References:***

a. Phil 3:21: *"He will change our lowly body to conform with his glorified body."*

b. Jn 5:28-29: *"Because the hour is coming in which all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and will come out, those who have done good deeds to the resurrection of life, but those who have done wicked deeds to...condemnation."*

6. Life Everlasting: Reference to heaven. Because God has given us free will, He does not force us to be with Him in heaven. We choose where we want to spend eternity by the way we live during our time on earth. Since our degree of happiness in heaven is determined by the depth of our love for God, we should love Him to the best of our ability in this life.
7. Amen: Word that means "*so it is*" or "*so be it.*" It expresses our firm belief in all the doctrines that the Apostles' Creed contains.

**UNIT THREE: The Sacraments**

## A. Their Necessity

## 1. Purpose in Life:

- a. Know God
- b. Love God
- c. Serve God
- d. Heaven

2. Heaven does *not* belong to us by right.

3. It is not *natural* or *proper* to us as human beings.

4. To attain heaven, we must be *raised* to a new life, a *supernatural life* called *sanctifying grace*.

5. The sacraments raise us to this new life whereby we share in God's life.

## B. Definition: Sacred, sensible, sign, established by Jesus Christ to give grace. Explained:

## 1. Sacred:

a. "Holy" because of what they do and because Jesus instituted them.

## b. Sensible:

(1) Reasonable or rational.

(2) Able to be "recognized" or "perceived" by one of the five senses.

## c. Sign

(1) Object or action that represents or communicates something to us. Examples:

(a) *Smoke* is a sign of *fire*.

(b) *Red lights* and *siren* are sign of an emergency or "trouble."

(2) *Sacraments* are *signs* of Jesus Christ working *invisibly* in our souls.

(3) Sacraments as signs are composed of two things:

(a) *Matter*: The physical substance of the sacrament.

(b) *Form*: The words that "cause" the sacrament to give grace. Examples:

(i) Matter: Baptism: *Water* being *poured*.

(ii) Form: "*I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.*"

(iii) Matter: Penance: *Person* and *sins*.

(iv) Form: "*I absolve you from your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.*"

(v) Matter: Holy Eucharist: *Bread* and *wine*.

(vi) Form: "*This is my Body*" and "*This is the cup of my Blood.*"

(vii) Matter: Confirmation: *Laying on of hands* and *anointing with Oil of Chrism*.

(viii) Form: "*Be sealed with gift of the Holy Spirit.*"

(ix) Matter: Anointing of the Sick: *Laying on of hands* and *anointing with the Oil of the Sick* on the *forehead* and *hands*.

(x) Form: "*Through this holy anointing, may the Lord in His love and mercy, help you with the grace of the Holy Spirit*" and "*May the Lord who frees you from sin, save you and raise you up.*"

(xi) Matter: Holy Orders: *Laying on of the bishop's hands* on the man's head.

(xii) Form: "*We ask you....Father, to give this servant...the dignity of the presbyterate...*"

(xiv) Matter: A *man* and a *woman* exchanging their vows.

(xv) Form: "*I, N., take you, N., to be my [wife, husband]. I promise to be true...in sickness and in health. I will love you and honor you all the days of my life.*"

## d. Established by Jesus Christ:

- (1) Jesus instituted the sacraments, not the Church.
- (2) No human power can attach *inward grace* to an *outward sign*.

e. To give grace: Effects:

- (1) Sanctifying Grace: Share in God's divine life. Causes the Holy Trinity to dwell in one's soul and/or increases one's capacity to *love* God.
- (2) Sacramental Grace: The specific "help" that each sacrament gives which are keyed to our particular needs or state of life. We do not receive these graces all at once. Rather, they are a moral claim upon God for whatever help we need, *as and when we need it*, to fulfill the purpose of that sacrament.  
Analogy/Examples:
  - (a) Sam's Club Card: Allows one to purchase products in the store at a discounted price.
  - (b) *Penance*: Helps one to avoid sin.
  - (c) *Confirmation*: Helps one to be strong in the practice of his faith.
  - (d) *Marriage*: Helps couples to live their vocation.
- (3) Sacramental Character: Three of the sacraments "imprint" a permanent "quality" which alters and imparts to the soul, powers it did not previously possess. This "quality" is forever visible to God, the angels, and the saints. The three sacraments that imprint this "quality" include:
  - (a) *Baptism*: Gives power to receive the other sacraments.
  - (b) *Confirmation*: Gives power to practice faith fearlessly.
  - (c) *Holy Orders*: Enables priest to have Mass and other sacraments.

C. Other Distinctions

1. Sacramental Minister: The grace that each sacrament gives does *not* depend on the spiritual state of the one giving the sacrament. Thus, as long as the sacramental minister has the *authority* (power) to perform the sacrament, the *intention* of giving the sacrament, and performs the *essential ceremonies*, then a sacrament will confer grace. Analogy:
  - a. Medicine: Good medicine is good regardless of the pharmacist or doctor.
2. Grace Received: The amount of grace one gets from a sacrament depends on one's *preparation* and *desire*. The greater these interior dispositions, the freer the "flow" of grace. Analogy:
  - a. Pail: The more sand one empties out of a pail, the more water it can hold. Likewise, the more obstacles removed the more capacity for grace.
3. Worthy Reception: In order to receive the sacraments of the *Holy Eucharist*, *Confirmation*, *Anointing of the Sick*, *Holy Orders*, and *Marriage* worthily, one must be free from *mortal sin*, lest one be guilty of *sacrilege* (the abuse of a sacred object). *Baptism* and *Penance* free one from mortal sin.
4. Invalid: A sacrament given to anyone *against his will* has no sacramental effect. To be valid, one must want to receive the sacrament. For *infants*, *the unconscious*, or *those who do not have the use of reason*, the intention is supplied by the Church and/or their parents, sponsors, or spouse.
5. Sacramental: An action or object that always gives *actual grace*, if one does not resist it, and an increase in *sanctifying grace*, if one is free from mortal sin and performs the action devoutly. It is the *prayers of the Church* that make sacramentals a means of grace whereas *sacraments* give grace of *themselves*. Example:
  - a. Holy Water: A sacramental that gives grace when one dips one's hand in the water and makes the Sign of the Cross. Its power comes from the prayers that the Church offers when blessing the water.



I. Baptism:A. Scripture References:

1. Jn 3:3-5: "Jesus answered, 'Amen, amen, I say to you no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit.'"
2. Mt 28:18-20: "Then Jesus approached and said to them... 'Go... and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all I have commanded you.'"

B. Baptism: The sacrament that gives our souls the new life of sanctifying grace by which we become Christians, children of God, and heirs of heaven. Since it is the sacrament that admits us into the Church, Baptism must precede all other sacraments. Baptism was instituted by Jesus at His own Baptism and commanded at His Ascension.



1. The first picture shows Jesus being baptized by St. John the Baptist in the river Jordan, before He began His public life. This baptism was a figure of the sacrament that Christ was to institute later.



2. The Apostles baptized all converts before they were admitted into the Church. On the first Pentecost, three thousand were baptized. Philip, one of the first seven deacons, after instructing the eunuch whom he had met reading the Scriptures, baptized him in a river they were passing.

In the early days of the Church, people were baptized by *immersion*. Stripped of their old clothes, they entered the pool and were submerged in the water. In doing so, they understood that they were dying to their former sinful selves and were being buried in the water to rise as Jesus did, to new life. When they left the water, they put on white garments to show that they were alive with the new life of Christ. Thousands of years later, God does the same for us in Baptism. He washes away sin and gives us new life in His Son, Jesus Christ. Effects:

1. **Removal of Sin:** Baptism cleanses us from all sin, *original* and *personal*, and remits all punishment due these sins. However, it does not remove the *effects* of original sin: *suffering*, *death*, *concupiscence* (desire to sin), and *ignorance*. Rather, it gives us the strength to cope with suffering in this life; the promise of deliverance from suffering after death and of bodily immortality at the end of the world; and the grace to resist sin and to grow in holiness. *Scripture Reference:*
  - a. Acts 2:38: "Peter said to them, 'Repent and be baptized...in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the holy Spirit.'"
2. **Sanctifying Grace:** When Baptism takes away original sin, it gives our souls the new life of sanctifying grace. Thus, by Baptism, we are born again.
3. **Children and Temples of God:** Baptism welcomes us into a life of intimacy with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit by making us God's adopted children and Temples of the Holy Spirit. It makes us heirs to heaven and allows us to gain merit by our good works. *Scripture References:*
  - a. 1 Cor 3:16-17: "Do you not know that you are the temple of God, and the spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy that person; for the temple of God, which you are, is holy."
  - b. 1 Jn 3:1: "See what love the Father has bestowed on us that we may be called children of God. Yet so we are...."



4. **Theological Virtues:** At Baptism, the theological virtues of *faith*, *hope*, and *charity* are infused into our souls, as well as the gifts of the Holy Spirit. These virtues and gifts help us to grow in the new life we share with God.
5. **Members of the Catholic Church:** By Baptism, we become members of Christ's Mystical Body, the Church. All baptized persons belong to the one, true Church of Jesus Christ—the Catholic Church—even though some of them are not fully united with it. Those who are in

full communion with it, are subject to its laws and are capable of receiving the other sacraments. *References:*

- a. Eph 4:4-6: "[There is] one body and one Spirit, as you were also called to the one hope of your call; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all."
  - b. Decree on Ecumenism, 3: "But in subsequent centuries much more serious dissensions appeared and large communities became separated from full communion with the Catholic Church. However, one cannot charge with the sin of separation those who at present are born into these communities and in them are brought up in the faith of Christ, and the Catholic Church accepts them with respect and affection as brothers. For men who believe in Christ and have been properly baptized are put in some, though imperfect, communion with the Catholic Church."
6. **Baptismal Character:** The souls of the baptized are invisibly marked with a permanent seal that marks them as Christians and cannot be removed by anything, even mortal sin. Thus, Baptism can be received only once, since it has the lasting effect of conferring a permanent relationship with Christ. The baptismal character is the sign of the Christian's permanent vocation—his calling by Jesus Christ.
- Scripture References:*
- a. Eph 4:30: "And do not grieve the holy Spirit of God, with which you were sealed for the day of redemption."
  - b. Jn 6:39: "And this is the will of the one who sent me, that I should not lose anything of what he gave me, but that I should raise it on the last day."

D. Types:

1. **Baptism of Water:** The ordinary method by which the sacrament of Baptism is conferred. The person is either immersed in water or water is poured over his head while, at the same time, the words "I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" are pronounced.
2. **Baptism of Desire:** One who loves God above all things, is sorry for his sins, and ardently longs for Baptism when it is impossible to receive it; or one who, not knowing the necessity of Baptism, sincerely wishes to do all required for salvation, is said to have received *Baptism of Desire*. This Baptism confers sanctifying grace and entitles one to the possession of heaven, but it does not imprint the permanent baptismal character nor enable the person to receive the other sacraments. *Scripture Reference:*

a. Jn 14:21: "Whoever has my commandments and observes them is the one who loves me. And whoever loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and reveal myself to him."

3. Baptism of Blood: One who lays down his life for Christ or some Christian virtue is said to have received *Baptism of Blood*. Thus, the Holy Innocents whom King Herod slew out of hatred for Jesus, received this Baptism. *Scripture Reference:*

a. Mt 10:39: "Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it."

E. Other Concerns:

1. Parents' Duties: Parents are gravely bound to see that their children are baptized shortly after birth and that they teach their children about and raise them in the practice of the Catholic faith. They do this by bringing them to Mass on Sundays and Holy Days, by teaching them their prayers and praying with them, and by enrolling them in religious education classes.

2. Godparents' Roles: Godparents serve as the official representatives of the Christian community, in whose name they request Baptism for their godchild. They have the duty of providing for the religious training of the child should the parents neglect or be unable, for some reason, to fulfill their duty.

One godparent or sponsor is required, but two (one from each <sup>gender</sup>) are allowed. The sponsors must be Catholics who are at least 16 years old, <sup>Catholics</sup> and who actively practice their Catholic faith. Others who are present at the Baptism are known as *witnesses*.

3. Unbaptized Infants/Adults: The fate of infants or adults who die before Baptism is left to the mercy of God. Their lack of Baptism may be supplied in a way we do not know.

4. Ministers of Baptism: A bishop, priest, or deacon is the usual minister of Baptism. However, if there is danger that a person will die without it, anyone else may and should baptize. All that is necessary is for the person to have the *intention* to perform the rite Christ instituted as necessary for salvation and to pour water over the head while pronouncing the words, "I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."

5. Symbols of Baptism: When a person is baptized a number of symbols are used, *including:*

- a. **Signing with the Cross:** The priest, parents, and godparents sign the forehead of the candidate with the cross as a reminder that the person is being *sealed with redemption and consecrated to God*.
- b. **Oil of Catechumens:** The candidate is anointed on the chest with this oil to symbolize *wisdom thriving in his heart* and that he may patiently *bear the yoke of Christ*.
- c. **Pouring of the Water:** The candidate's soul is *washed clean of all sin* by the pouring of the water and the pronouncement of the words of Baptism.
- d. **Oil of Chrism:** The candidate is anointed on the crown of the head with this perfumed oil to show that he is *chosen by and belongs to God*.
- e. **White Garment:** A white garment is placed upon the candidate to show that his soul is now *spotless with grace*.
- f. **Lighted Candle:** A lighted candle is given to the newly baptized to impress upon them the importance of keeping the *flames of faith, hope, and charity burning brightly in their hearts*.



I. Penance:A. Scripture References:

1. Mt 9:2-8: "...Jesus knew what they were thinking and said..., Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or... 'Rise and walk'? 'But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins'—he then said to the paralytic, 'Rise, pick up your stretcher and go home.' He rose and went home."
2. Jn 20:19-23: "...[Jesus] said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.' And when he said this, he breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained.'"

B. Penance: The sacrament by which Jesus Christ, through the absolution of the priest, forgives sins committed after Baptism.



The picture shows Jesus instituting the sacrament of Penance on the first Easter Sunday night. He breathed on the Apostles and said: "Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained" (Jn 20:23). Our Lord had previously promised Peter the right to forgive sins, saying: "I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven. Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Mt 16:19).

Jesus instituted this sacrament giving His apostles and their successors—the bishops and priests—the authority to forgive sins. In encountering the priest, who represents Christ in a particular way, the penitent meets Christ and receives His forgiveness. When the priest absolves the penitent in the name of Christ, he receives assurance of God's mercy and forgiveness. He may also receive advice, prayer, and encouragement from the priest that will help him to avoid or to overcome sin in the future.

C. Spiritual Effects:

1. Sanctifying Grace: Worthily received, the sacrament of Penance restores or increases God's divine life within us. If we are guilty of mortal sin, the sacrament forgives the guilt of the sin and restores sanctifying grace. If we are not guilty of deadly sin, the sacrament increases this grace, thereby making us more like God.
2. Forgiveness of Sins: The guilt of all mortal and venial sins is forgiven, assuming that we're sorry for them and in the case of mortal sin, that we've confessed them.
3. Remission of Punishment: All sin has a price. Death is the punishment for sin, not only physical death but also, in the case of mortal sin, spiritual death. Thus, there are two kinds of punishment due to sin:

- a. Eternal Punishment: The punishment that is due unforgiven mortal sins: eternal separation from God in hell. *Scripture References:*

(1) Mt 25:41: "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you accursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.'"

(2) Lk 3:17: "His winnowing fan is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and gather wheat into his barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

- b. Temporal Punishment: The sufferings and trials that sinners must endure after the guilt of their sins has been forgiven. This is necessary to satisfy God's justice, to teach us the great evil of sin, and to warn us not to sin again. *References:*

(1) Gen 3:16-24: "...Cursed be the ground because of you! In toil shall you eat its yield all the days of your life. Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to you, as you eat of the plants of the field. By the sweat of your face shall you get bread to eat, until you return to the ground, from which you were taken...."

This passage relates how Adam and Eve suffered for the rest of their lives, even though they had repented.

(2) 2 Sam 11:1-4, 5-10, 13-17: David committed adultery with Bathsheba, after which she conceived. To cover his sin, David had the woman's husband killed. Later, David was confronted by the prophet Nathan (2 Sam 12:1ff) for his sins of adultery and murder. Being sorry for his sins, he was forgiven by God. Nevertheless, as a punishment for his forgiven sins, his newborn son was taken from him.

- (3) <sup>123</sup> **Analogy:** A teenage son is disobedient to his parents. They forgive him, but punish him by grounding him for the weekend. A girl steals candy from a store. Her parents forgive her but make her return the candy and apologize to the manager. The purpose of these punishments is to teach the person that sin has a price and not to sin again in this manner.

God removes all or part of the temporal punishment due to forgiven sin, depending on the *depth of our sorrow for sin* and the *strength of our purpose of amendment*. We pay the debt of our temporal punishment either in this life or in purgatory. The *chief means* of satisfying the debt of temporal punishment are:

- (1) **Attending Mass:** Participation at Mass is the supreme way to overcome our sins and to come to a deeper love of God.
- (2) **Prayer, Fasting, and Almsgiving:** Denying ourselves food and other legitimate pleasures for the love of God or giving material goods or money to the needy are excellent ways to remit the punishment due our forgiven sins.
- (3) **Works of Charity:** Performing good works and deeds for the love of God will make reparation for our sins.
- (4) **Endurance of Sufferings:** Patiently accepting and carrying our daily crosses with love, like Jesus did, will lessen the punishment due our sins.
- (5) **Indulgences:** The remission of all or part of the temporal punishment due forgiven sins which is granted through the infinite merits of Jesus Christ and of the superabundant satisfaction of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the saints, when certain conditions are fulfilled. In granting an indulgence, the Church does not cancel any expiation due to God. It only supplies for our deficiencies by drawing on the spiritual treasury of the Church. *Analogy:*

- 51-
- (a) **Mother and Children:** A mother had several sons and daughters. Some of them acquired great riches and upon their death, left their possessions to her to be used as she pleased. Having younger children in college, she used the money to pay for their education. She supplied for their economic deficiencies by using the superabundant material merits of her deceased children.

**Types:**

- (a) **Plenary:** An indulgence that removes all temporal punishment due forgiven sins. *Conditions:*

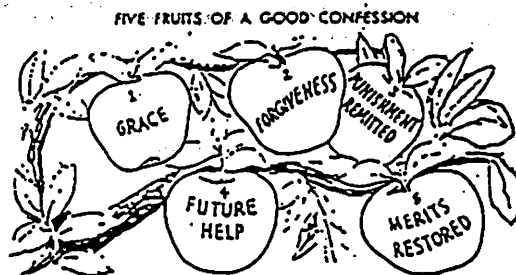


- i) Perform Work: One must perform the work to which the indulgence is attached.
- ii) Sacramental Confession: One must go to confession and receive absolution on the day the work is performed or several days before or after the performance of the prescribed work.
- iii) Eucharistic Communion: One must receive Holy Communion on the day of the prescribed work or several days before or after the performance of the work.
- iv) Prayer for the Pope: One must say a prayer (usually an *Our Father*, *Hail Mary*, and *Glory Be*) for the intentions of the pope. Again, this should be done on the same day the work is performed, but it can be done several days before or after.
- v) No Attachment to Sin: All attachment to sin, even venial sin, must be absent.

If all these conditions are fulfilled, one can gain a plenary indulgence. If these conditions are only partially fulfilled, one gains a partial indulgence. No one but God knows for certain when a plenary indulgence is actually gained, because only God knows whether our dispositions are adequate. Nevertheless, we should do our best in acquiring indulgences in reparation for our sins, for they teach us about the evilness of sin and help us to grow in holiness. Indulgences can also be applied to the souls in purgatory.

(b) Partial: An indulgence that removes part of the temporal punishment due forgiven sins.

4. Actual Graces: God gives us the graces we need to avoid sin in the future. In addition, He gives us the grace to appreciate His mercy and to do penance for our sins.
5. Restoration of Merits: The merits of our good works are restored if they were lost by mortal sin.



D. Conditions Necessary for Worthy Reception of the Sacrament of Penance:

1. **Examination of Conscience:** *Conscience* is the judgment our mind makes on what is right and wrong. It does not depend on what we *feel* is right and wrong but rather, what God, through His Church, teaches us is right and wrong. To make a good examination of conscience, we should ask God's help to know our sins. We can do this by calling to mind the *commandments of God*, the *precepts (laws) of the Church*, the particular *duties of our vocation in life*, and by asking ourselves how well we've followed these commands.
2. **Contrition:** Contrition is the sorrow we have for our sins and the firm purpose we have in trying to sin no more. God can't forgive our sins if we're not sorry for them and don't want to amend our lives. *Types:*
  - a. **Imperfect Contrition:** The motive for our sorrow is the *justice of God* and the *punishment* our sins deserve. For example, John is sorry for his sins because he fears the eternal fires of hell.
  - b. **Perfect Contrition:** The motive for our sorrow is the *goodness of God*, which prompts us to love Him above all else for His own sake. For example, Elizabeth is sorry for her sins because she knows her sins have offended God, who loves her unconditionally.
3. **Purpose of Amendment:** Sincere intention not to sin again and to avoid the near occasions of sin.
4. **Confession:** Telling our sins to a priest for the purpose of obtaining forgiveness. This is the method that Jesus has chosen.
5. **Penance:** We must perform the penance that the priest gives us. The acceptance of the penance shows our willingness to make amends to God and to lead a holier life.

E. Benefits of Confession:

1. **Shame Lessened:** The urge to confess is natural to humans. Sorrow and shame are lessened when shared with another person because we realize that we're not alone.
2. **Conscious of Sinfulness:** Confession requires us to think of our sins. Being aware of them helps us to realize God's mercy and to take steps in overcoming them.
3. **Forgiveness:** We need reassurance that our sins are forgiven. We do not have this if we merely say in our hearts, "I'm sorry." When Jesus forgave sins, He announced that fact so that the sinner knew that he was forgiven. After the priest pronounces the words of absolution—"I absolve you from your sins in the name of the Father,

*and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit*"—we know for certain that our sins are forgiven. *Scripture Reference:*

- a. Mt 9:2: *"And there people brought to him a paralytic on a stretcher. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, 'Courage, child, your sins are forgiven.'"*



4. **Humility:** By confessing our sins, we become aware of our shortcomings. Consequently, our pride or excessive self-love is reduced because we realize that we need God's help to become better.
5. **Spiritual Advice:** The priest to whom we confess our sins is our spiritual father and counselor. In order to help us to amend our lives and to grow in holiness, the priest needs to know the sins we've committed and any circumstances that might increase or decrease the guilt of the sin. Knowing this, the priest can give us advice on how to lead a holier life.
- F. **Frequent Confession:** We should receive the sacrament of Penance on a monthly basis, even if we're not guilty of mortal sin. Such a practice will help us to come to a deeper love of God by giving us the grace we need to overcome our faults. *Reference:*
1. **Encyclical on the Mystical Body**, 88, by Pope Pius XII said: *"To hasten daily progress along the path of virtue, we wish the practice of frequent confession to be earnestly advocated. Not without the inspiration of the Holy Spirit was this practice introduced into the Church. By it genuine self-knowledge is increased, Christian humility grows, bad habits are corrected, spiritual neglect and tepidity are countered, the conscience is purified, the will strengthened, a salutary self control is attained, and grace is increased in virtue of the sacrament itself."*
- G. **Final Thought:** God is merciful and wants to forgive our sins. Therefore, no matter what we've done, no sin is too great to be forgiven. In addition, the saints pray for our conversion and rejoice when we return to God because they realize that in remaining faithful to God we will, one day, experience the same joy of seeing God face to face as they now do. *Scripture Reference:*
1. Lk 15:7: *"I tell you, in just the same way there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous people who have no need of repentance."*

I. Holy Eucharist:A. Scripture References:

1. Mt 28:20: "...I am with you always, until the end of the age."
2. Jn 6:51: "I am the living bread that came down from heaven; whoever eats this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world."
3. Jn 6:52-56: "Jesus said to them, '...Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you do not have life within you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him on the last day. For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him.'"
4. Jn 6:60-61, 66-68: "Then many of his disciples who were listening said, 'This saying is hard; who can accept it?' Since Jesus knew that his disciples were murmuring about this, he said to them, 'Does this shock you?' As a result of this, many of his disciples returned to their former way of life and no longer accompanied him. Jesus then said to the Twelve, 'Do you also want to leave?'"
5. Mk 14:22-24: "While they were eating, he took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them, and said, 'Take it; this is my body.' Then he took a cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, and they all drank from it. He said to them, 'This is my blood of the covenant, which will be shed for many.'"

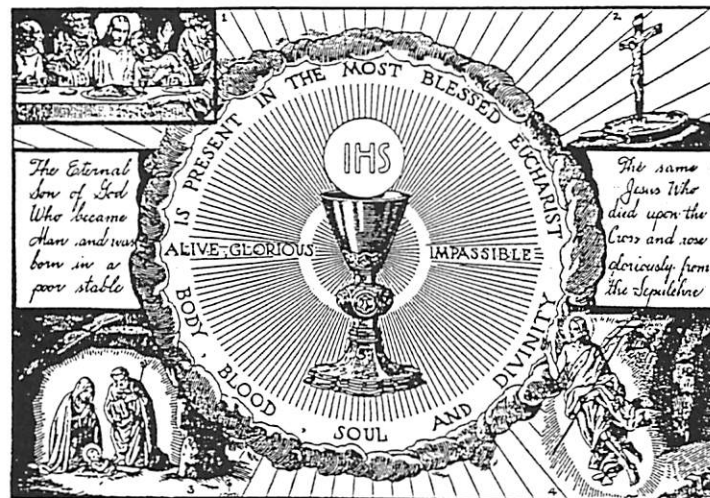
- B. Holy Eucharist: The sacrament and sacrifice in which Jesus Christ, body and blood, soul and divinity, is contained, offered, and received, under the appearances of bread and wine. Where Christ's living body and blood are, there also must be His soul, for the body and blood cannot live without the soul. And where Christ's soul is, there also is His divinity, which cannot be separated from His humanity.

Like the other sacraments, the Eucharist is a sign of Christ. Unlike the other sacraments, it is not only an action of Christ, but also contains Christ personally. We know that Jesus is truly present in the Eucharist because of His words, "This is my body; this is my blood." These words were spoken in fulfillment of Jesus' promise that He would give us His flesh to eat and His blood to drink. Jesus meant for the people to take these words literally, not figuratively. Consequently, some of His followers became upset and turned away from Him. Jesus did not correct them by telling them they misunderstood Him. Rather, He let them go away in disbelief (see Jn 6:60ff).

- C. Last Supper: Jesus instituted the Holy Eucharist at the Last Supper, the night before He died on the cross. The Last Supper was a

ceremonial meal called the *Passover*, which commemorated the freeing of the Jews from slavery in Egypt. At this meal, the Jews ate the paschal lamb, which had been sacrificed by the priest. In the presence of His twelve apostles, Jesus gave new meaning to the *Passover Supper*. After He changed the bread and wine into His Body and Blood, He told His apostles to "*do this in memory of me.*" With these words, Jesus established, not only the Holy Eucharist, but also the Sacred Priesthood, thereby ensuring that we would be able to receive His Body and Blood until the end of time. *Scripture Reference:*

1. Lk 22:19-20: "*Then he took the bread...and gave it to them, saying, 'This is my body, which will be given for you; do this in memory of me. And likewise the cup...saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which will be shed for you.'*"



At the Consecration at Mass, the bread and wine are changed into the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is the Sacrament that Jesus instituted at the Last Supper (1). In the Blessed Eucharist is the same Person who was born in Bethlehem (3), crucified on Calvary (2), and rose gloriously from the dead on the first Easter morning (4).

- D. Transubstantiation: The miracle that takes place at Mass whereby the entire substance of the bread and wine is changed into the Body and Blood of Christ. Thus, after the words of consecration, all that remains of the bread and wine is their *appearance*--their *looks*, *texture*, and *taste*. The appearances remain so that we are able to consume Jesus without difficulty. It should also be noted that Jesus is present in each part of the consecrated host and in each drop of the consecrated wine. Thus, when the host is broken, the Body of Christ is not broken, but remains whole and entire in each fragment, just as when we break a mirror into many pieces, each piece reflects our entire face, not a fraction of it. Jesus remains in the consecrated species as long as the appearances of bread and wine remain.
- E. Holy Communion: Expression that refers to the reception of the Holy Eucharist. *Effects:*

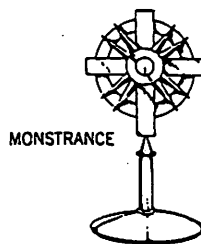
1. **Unites:** Holy Communion unites us personally with Jesus, causing an increase of sanctifying grace in our souls.
2. **Strengthens:** Holy Communion makes us more eager to do good and strengthens our will to avoid sin and to do spiritual work.
3. **Cleanses:** Holy Communion cleanses us from venial sin, preserves us from mortal sin, and helps us withstand temptation.
4. **Promise:** The devout and frequent reception of Holy Communion promises us a glorious resurrection and everlasting happiness.

F. **Tabernacle:** The round or the Blessed Sacrament is to be kept locked, with a light constantly, indicating As Catholics, we believe the Blessed Sacrament in the tabernacle, just as truly as He is present in heaven, He can only be seen with the eyes of faith. Since Jesus is truly present in the tabernacle, we show reverence to Him by *genuflecting* (going down on one knee), whenever we pass in front



rectangular receptacle where reserved. The tabernacle is *sanctuary light* burning before the real presence of Christ. that Jesus is present in the tabernacle, just as truly as except that here on earth, He appears of bread and wine. the eyes of faith. Since Jesus tabernacle, we show reverence (going down on one knee), of the tabernacle.

G. **Eucharistic Adoration and Benediction:** Worship of Jesus' Real Presence in the Blessed Sacrament. During Adoration and Benediction, the Holy Eucharist is placed in the *monstrance* for all to see and to adore. After exposition, there is time for quiet and/or vocal prayer. The service concludes by blessing the adorers with the Holy Eucharist (raising the monstrance and tracing the Sign of the Cross).



Jesus longs for us to visit Him frequently in the Blessed Sacrament. Doing so increases our desire to be with Him in heaven and to live out His teachings in our daily lives.

H. **Worthy Reception:** To worthily receive Holy Communion, we *must*:

1. **Be Free of Mortal Sin:** We must not receive Holy Communion when we are guilty of mortal sin, since such sin deprives us of God's divine

life and makes us His enemies. Knowingly receiving Jesus in this state is an insult and a *sacrilege*—the contemptuous treatment of a person, place, or thing dedicated to God. St. Paul said that those who receive Holy Communion in a state of deadly sin eat and drink to their own condemnation. *Scripture Reference:*

- a. 1 Cor 11:27-29: "...Whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord unworthily will have to answer for the body and blood of the Lord....For...[he] eats and drinks judgment on himself."
2. **Fast:** Unless we're sick or it's necessary to save the Blessed Sacrament from insult or injury, we have an obligation to fast from all food (including gum) and drink (excluding water) for one hour, prior to receiving Holy Communion, to show our reverence and spiritual hunger for our Lord.
3. **Practice Regular Confession:** Going to confession on a regular basis (monthly, if possible), will help us to overcome our sins and allow us to receive the graces of Holy Communion more abundantly.
4. **Receive the Eucharist Frequently:** The Catholic Church strongly encourages us to come to daily Mass. Since the Holy Eucharist contains Jesus Himself, it is the most excellent of the seven sacraments and the best way to overcome our faults and to come to a deeper love of God. If we're unable to attend daily Mass, we should make a *spiritual communion*, telling our Lord that we desire to receive Him spiritually. When passing by a Catholic Church where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved, we should bow our heads as a sign of respect and say a brief prayer in honor of our Lord. Such practices will allow us to receive some of the graces that we would normally receive in Holy Communion.

As Catholics, we are required to receive Holy Communion at least once a year during the Easter Season, meaning that if we are guilty of mortal sin, we must first go to confession. *Reference:*

- a. Decree on Frequent Communion by Pope St. Pius X: "*The desire of Jesus Christ and of the Church that all Christians should daily approach the holy banquet is based chiefly on this, that Christians united to God through the sacrament should derive from there the strength to conquer concupiscence, wash away light faults of daily occurrence, and forestall more serious ones, to which human frailty is exposed.*"

I. The Sacrifice of the Mass:A. Scripture References:

1. 1 Cor 11:23-26: "...The Lord Jesus, on the night he was handed over, took bread, and after he had given thanks, broke it and said, 'This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.' In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.' For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes."
2. Eph 5:1-2: "So be imitators of God, as beloved children, and live in love, as Christ loved us and handed himself over for us as a sacrificial offering to God...."
3. 1 Pt 1:17-19: "...Conduct yourselves with reverence...realizing that you were ransomed from your futile conduct...not with perishable things like silver or gold but with the precious blood of Christ as of a spotless unblemished lamb."

B. Nature and History of Sacrifice: A sacrifice is the offering of a victim by a priest to God and the destruction of it in some way, to acknowledge that He is the Creator and Lord of all things. In order to make a solemn religious act of sacrifice to God, people have, from the earliest days, asked priests (those consecrated to the service of God) to offer their sacrifices, to be the intermediary between God and them.



God gave to Moses detailed instructions on sacrificial offerings (Lev. 1-7; 16; 22). Among the Jews, the high-priest, in the name of the people, offered morning and evening an unbloody sacrifice of in-

cense, flour, oil, and frankincense. Then he offered a bloody sacrifice of a lamb, together with food and drink. On the Sabbath, two lambs, with bread and wine, were offered in addition as sacrifice.

On certain solemn feasts the Jews sacrificed hundreds of victims amidst impressive ceremonies. Their chief feasts were: (a) the Pasch or Passover, which commemorated their deliverance from Egypt; (b) the Pentecost, in remembrance of the

Law received on Mount Sinai; (c) the Tabernacles, to commemorate their wanderings in the desert; and (d) the Expiation or Atonement, in which the priest sacrificed for his own and the people's sins. These sacrifices typified the sacrifice of Christ.



- C. The Cross: The cross was the perfect sacrifice by which Jesus Christ gave up His life for our redemption. On the cross, the *priest* was Jesus Christ. He was also the *victim*, since the gift was His own life. Jesus gave His life for our redemption and to show His love and devotion to His heavenly Father.



The Father was most pleased with the sacrifice Jesus offered. He accepted this gift and showed His appreciation by raising Jesus from the dead on Easter Sunday and bringing Him to heaven forty days later, the holy day we know as *Ascension Thursday*.



The Jewish sacrifices were merely types of the Sacrifice of Christ on Calvary, and ceased with the passing of the Old Law. In the New Law we have the True Sacrifice, the same that Christ offered on

Calvary by His death. The High Priest is Christ Himself, and Christ, too, is the Victim. St. Paul said, "It is impossible that sins should be taken away with blood of bulls and of goats" (Heb. 10:4).

- D. The Mass: The central act of worship in the Catholic Church, by which Jesus, through the ministry of the priest, offers Himself to God in an unbloody manner under the appearances of bread and wine. Thus, the Mass commemorates the *sacrifice of the cross*, for it is truly the same Jesus who is present on the altar as was on the cross. In addition, the Mass is also a *ceremony*. Jesus did not want His sacrifice continued in the same bloody way as it was on the cross. Thus, at the Last Supper, He gave us a ceremony in which we could continue His sacrifice. Since that time, the Church has added other prayers and actions to that ceremony which bring out the deeper meaning of Christ's

#### ON THE CROSS

Priest

Jesus Christ.

Victim (Gift)

Christ's Body and Blood.

Act of Offering

The act of love of the Sacred Heart, shown by shedding all Its Precious Blood.



#### IN THE MASS

Priest

Jesus Christ, the invisible priest of every Mass. The ordained priest takes His place.

Victim

Christ's Body and Blood (under the appearances of bread and wine).

Act of Offering

The same act of love of the Sacred Heart, shown by the separate consecration of bread and wine to symbolize the death of Christ on the Cross.

great act of love. Except in unique circumstances, Mass is always offered in a *Church*, a special place of worship where we do nothing else but pray and enter the presence of God.

E. Purpose: We offer the Mass to God as a *Sacrifice of*:

1. Adoration: We offer the Mass in adoration of God's divine majesty, power, and love for us.
2. Thanksgiving: We offer the Mass in thanksgiving for all the benefits we have received from Christ.
3. Expiation: We offer the Mass in reparation for our sins.
4. Petition: We offer the Mass to obtain all that we need for ourselves, for the living on earth, and for the souls in purgatory.

Through the Mass, Christ abundantly applies to us the merits and satisfaction of His death on the cross. Consequently, we should assist at Mass with reverence, attention, and devotion.

F. Rites: The different ways of lawfully celebrating Mass are called *rites*. In the two thousand years of the Church's history, different customs, languages, and rituals have developed. At the present time, there are twenty-two different *Rites of the Catholic Church*. These rites are usually grouped under *two main rites*:

1. Roman or Latin Rite: The largest of the rites to which most Catholics throughout the world belong.
2. Eastern Rites: World-wide, there are approximately eight million Catholics who belong to these rites. This group includes the *Byzantine, Alexandrian, Antiochian, Armenian, and Chaldean Rites*. Catholics of these rites are in full union with the pope. Those Churches who have the same ritual of the Mass as the Eastern Rite Churches and who have true bishops and priests, but who do not recognize the pope as visible head of the entire Church are called *Eastern Orthodox*. In all the rites, there is the common element of the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist. All the rites believe that the bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ.

G. Order of the Latin Rite Mass: The way in which the Mass is celebrated has developed over almost two thousand years. The original language of the Mass at Rome was Greek, which was changed to Latin in the third century. Major reforms in the Mass occurred in the time of *Pope St. Gregory I* (600), during the *Frankish Empire* (c. 800), at the time of the *Council of Trent* (c. 1565), and after the *Second Vatican Council*

(1965). Each of the reforms was an attempt to purify and renew the liturgy. Nevertheless, our basic ritual is 1700 or more years old. Some parts are even older, e.g., the *Preface Dialogue*, which is quoted by St. Justin in the year 150. Our First Eucharistic Prayer is probably more than 1500 years old. The words of Consecration are even older, going back to the time of Jesus Himself.

To appreciate the Mass, we must understand its order. Thus, the Mass consists of the following *parts*:

1. **Introductory Rites:** The opening part of the Mass which prepares us to hear the Word of God and to receive Jesus in Holy Communion.  
*Elements:*

- a. **Entrance Procession/Song:** The procession normally begins at the back of the Church and proceeds down the center aisle during which time a song that praises God is sung. The entrance song, besides deepening the unity among the congregation, should introduce the feast or mystery of the season. Those who participate in the procession are usually the *servers*, *lector* (reader), *deacon*, and *priest*.
- b. **Greeting:** After making the Sign of the Cross, the celebrant greets us by expressing the presence of the Lord, usually by the words, "*The Lord be with you.*"
- c. **Penitential Rite:** After the greeting, the priest asks us to bring to mind our sins and to ask God to forgive us and Mary, the saints, and the people in Church to pray for us.
- d. **Gloria:** An ancient hymn of praise to the Blessed Trinity that is sung or said on all Sundays outside of Advent and Lent and on great feasts. It is also referred to as the *Angelic Hymn* because the introductory words come from the angels at Christ's birth, as can be seen in the Biblical narrative.
- e. **Opening Prayer:** The prayer by the celebrant that concludes the Introductory Rites of the Mass and summarizes the theme and focus of each particular Mass. We respond to this prayer spoken by the celebrant in our name by saying "*Amen*," meaning "*so may it be.*"

2. **Liturgy of the Word:** The major part of the Mass between the *Opening Prayer* and the *Preparation of the Gifts*, during which the Word of God is proclaimed in the readings. It brings before us what God wants to say to us. It *includes*:

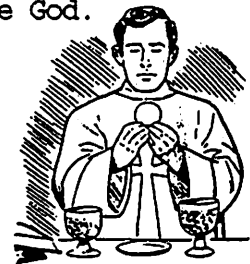
- a. **First Reading:** Usually a reading from the *Old Testament*, that part of the Bible that describes God and the world before Jesus.

- b. **Psalm Response:** Psalms are *songs of thanks to God* or *prayers that ask God for forgiveness and help*. They come from the Old Testament and serve as a responsorial between the lector and us. The psalm usually expresses the dominant themes of the readings.
  - c. **Second Reading:** The reading that come from the *New Testament*, that part of the Bible that teaches us about Jesus and how we are to live.
  - d. **Gospel Acclamation:** That part of the Mass where we praise God with a sung "*Alleluia*" (except during Lent) or some other verse, because we are going to hear Jesus speak to us through the Gospel.
  - e. **Gospel:** The reading taken from one of the four *Gospels*, a word meaning "*Good News*." Special marks of honor distinguish the reading of the Gospel, since only a deacon, priest, or bishop can proclaim it. The ordained prepare themselves to proclaim the Gospel by receiving a blessing or saying a short prayer. Candles may be brought to the pulpit and the Gospel Book may be incensed. During the reading of the Gospel, we stand and respond to its conclusion by saying, "*Praise be to you, Lord Jesus Christ*," indicating that Christ is present and speaking to us.
  - f. **Homily/Sermon:** The part of the Mass where the bishop, priest, or deacon explains the Scripture readings or God's teachings to us.
  - g. **Profession of Faith:** The prayer we recite after the homily that reminds us what we believe as Catholics.
  - h. **General Intercessions/Prayers of the Faithful:** Series of petitions where we pray for the needs of others and ourselves.
3. **Liturgy of the Eucharist:** The major part of the Mass that corresponds to the words and actions of Jesus at the Last Supper, when He took the bread and wine and changed it into His Body and Blood. *Parts:*
- a. **Preparation of the Altar and Gifts:** The part of the Mass where the gifts of bread and wine and our monetary offerings for the support of the Church are brought forward and offered to God. The altar is also prepared at this time for the sacrifice.
  - b. **Eucharistic Prayer:** The great prayer of thanksgiving that comes after the priest prays over the gifts. It is during this part of



the Mass that the bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Christ. *Elements:*

- (1) **Introductory Dialogue:** The dialogue between the celebrant and us that comes after the prayer over the gifts. It consists of three verses: "*The Lord be with you*" (asking God to be with us); "*Lift up your hearts*" (asking us to give God our love); and "*Let us give thanks to the Lord our God*" (thanking God the Father for the gift of His Son, Jesus Christ). We respond to each of the verses by saying: "*And also with you;*" "*We lift them up to the Lord;*" and "*It is right to give Him thanks and praise.*"
- (2) **Preface:** The prologue of the Eucharistic Prayer which ascribes praise and thanksgiving to God for the mystery being celebrated. It concludes with the singing or recitation of the *Preface Acclamation* (Holy, holy, holy...), a prayer in which we, with the angels and saints, praise God.
- (3) **Words of Consecration:** The words of Jesus repeated by the priest in which the substance of bread and wine is changed into the Body and Blood of Christ, even though the appearances of bread and wine remain.
- (4) **Memorial Acclamation:** One of four responses that is sung or recited by us immediately after the Consecration, which reminds us that Jesus died for us and that He is our Savior. After the acclamation, we continue the Eucharistic Prayer by praying for our friends and family members who have died. We also remember Mary, the Apostles, and the other saints and ask God to help us to be like them.
- (5) **Doxology:** Prayer of praise to the Father, through Christ and the Holy Spirit, which concludes the Eucharistic Prayer. In it, all people—the saints in heaven, the souls in purgatory, and all living persons—united by the action of the Holy Spirit, join Jesus in offering glory and honor to God the Father.
- (6) **Great Amen:** Our response to the *Doxology* that gives our assent and affirmation to all that has been done. It says that we have joined in praising the Father for all His wonderful works, have offered ourselves with Jesus, and now are ready to receive Jesus in Holy Communion. As St.



Augustine once said, "[It puts] our signature to the [Eucharistic Prayer]."

- c. Communion Rite: The part of the Mass where we prepare to receive Jesus in the Holy Eucharist. Holy Communion expresses the unity within Christ's Church. Thus, non-Catholics and those Catholics living in mortal sin cannot receive the Holy Eucharist, since they are not fully united with Jesus and His Church. *Parts:*
- (1) Our Father: The prayer Jesus taught to the Apostles and to us, which asks God to provide for all our needs. It consists of *seven petitions*--the first three relating to the *things of God*, the last four relating to the *needs of human beings*. In the Mass, it expresses our unity with one another as brothers and sisters, by which we call God our Father.
  - (2) Embolism: The sequel to the Lord's Prayer, which continues the petition to liberate us from evil arising from sin. It also makes an appeal for peace.
  - (3) Sign of Peace: When we pray the Our Father, we ask to be forgiven and we say that we will forgive others. We offer each other a sign of peace to show that we mean these words.



- (4) Lamb of God: The series of invocations that is recited or sung during the breaking of the consecrated Host. It reminds us that Jesus is the Lamb that was offered to God for our sins and for our salvation.
- (5) Reception of Holy Communion: The celebrant, along with any concelebrating priests, receives Holy Communion first, since he is the shepherd of the praying community. Holy Communion is then distributed to the deacons, Eucharistic Ministers, and lay people. We may receive the Body of Christ on our *tongues* or in our *hands* and should do so with reverence and devotion. After receiving Him, we should go back to our seats and thank Him for coming into our lives.



- (6) **Prayer after Communion:** The prayer that concludes the Liturgy of the Eucharist. The celebrant speaks in the name of the community by thanking the Father for the gifts received and asks Him that the fruits of Holy Communion may be produced in us, so that we can lead holy lives and attain everlasting life in heaven.
4. **Concluding Rite:** The concluding part of the Mass. *Elements:*
- a. **Announcements:** Messages concerning parish activities.
  - b. **Greeting:** Just as the people were greeted at the beginning of the Mass, so the celebrant greets them again with the words, "*The Lord be with you.*"
  - c. **Blessing:** Sacred rite by which the Church, through the celebrant, asks God's favor on us. The celebrant does this while making the *Sign of the Cross* over us, to which we respond "*Amen.*"



- d. **Dismissal:** After giving the blessing, the celebrant dismisses us by telling us to "*Go in peace*" and to live in our daily lives what we learned at Mass.
  - e. **Closing Song/Procession:** As at the beginning of Mass, we sing a joyful song to God to praise and to thank Him for all His blessings, while the priests and ministers depart from the sanctuary. It is our farewell to the ministers for their help in reenacting and re-presenting Christ's sacrifice on the cross.
- H. Articles/Terms Used for Mass:

- 1. **Alb:** The white robe worn by the priest and servers for Mass.
- 2. **Altar:** The table on which the priest offers the Sacrifice of the Mass.
- 3. **Altar Servers:** Persons who assist the priest at Mass.
- 4. **Ambry:** The box in which the holy oils are kept in Catholic Churches.
- 5. **Aspergill:** The wand used to sprinkle holy water.
- 6. **Bells:** Instrument that is rung at the beginning of the Eucharistic Prayer and at the elevation of the Host and Precious Blood to remind the people that this is the most sacred part of the Mass.

7. Blessed Sacrament: Jesus present in the Holy Eucharist.
8. Boat: A vessel that holds the unburned incense.
9. Candelabrum: Multiple-branched candle stick holder.
10. Candles: Used for Mass and other services in the Church. They represent God being the light and way of truth and are also a sign of celebration.
11. Chalice: The cup which holds the wine that is consecrated at Mass.
12. Charcoal: Black coal-like substance used to burn incense.
13. Chasuble: A sleeveless outer garment worn by the priest at Mass that symbolizes the yoke of Christ and charity.
14. Ciborium: The cup or bowl which holds the hosts that are to be consecrated or already have been consecrated.
15. Cincture: A belt or cord tied around the waist of an alb which symbolizes purity and chastity.
16. Corporal: A square piece of cloth on which the Host and chalice are placed during Mass.
17. Credence Table: A small table or shelf in the sanctuary where the chalice, paten, cruets, and other items for Mass are placed.
18. Crucifix: Cross with a figure of Jesus on it.
19. Cruets: The containers for the water and wine used at Mass.
20. Easter Candle: Tall candle used during the Easter season and at funerals that represents Jesus risen from the dead.
21. Eucharistic Ministers: Persons who help distribute Holy Communion.
22. Genuflection: Bending of the knee as an act of reverence.
23. Holy Oils: Blessed oils that are used in the various sacraments.
24. Humeral Veil: Oblong piece of cloth that covers the priest's hands and shoulders when he blesses people with the Blessed Sacrament.
25. Lectionary: The book that contains the readings from the Bible.
26. Lector: Person who does the Scripture readings at Mass.
27. Monstrance: Vessel which holds the Blessed Sacrament for Adoration.
28. Paten: The plate that holds the large hosts used by the priest as well as hosts for the people.
29. Pulpit: Elevated stand for reading the Word of God and for preaching.
30. Purificator: A small piece of white linen, marked with a cross in the center, that the priest uses to purify his fingers, the chalice, and paten after Holy Communion.
31. Sacramentary: The book that contains the prayers used for Mass.
32. Sanctuary: The part of the Church containing the altar.
33. Stole: A strip of cloth several inches wide that is worn by bishops, priests, and deacons at Mass and other celebrations of the sacraments.
34. Tabernacle: A cupboard or boxlike receptacle that holds Jesus present in the Blessed Sacrament.
35. Thurible: The vessel in which incense is burned. It is also known as a censer.
36. Thurifer: Person who carries the thurible.



I. Confirmation:A. Scripture References:

1. Acts 2:1-4: "When the time for Pentecost was fulfilled, they were all in one place together. And suddenly there came from the sky a noise like a strong driving wind, and it filled the entire house in which they were. Then there appeared to them as tongues of fire, which parted and came to rest on each of them. And they were filled with the holy Spirit and began to speak in different tongues, as the Spirit enabled them to proclaim."
2. Acts 8:5, 14-17: "Thus Philip went down to [the] city of Samaria and proclaimed the Messiah to them. Now when the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent them Peter and John who went down and prayed for them, that they might receive the holy Spirit; for it had not yet fallen upon any of them; they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid hands on them and they received the holy Spirit."

- B. Confirmation: The sacrament through which the Holy Spirit comes to us in a special way by the laying on of hands and the anointing with the *Oil of Chrism*. It enables us to profess our Catholic faith with courage and conviction and makes us soldiers of Jesus Christ.

In Baptism, we are born of water and the Holy Spirit. In Confirmation, we become full-fledged and responsible members of the Catholic Church. Confirmation may be likened to the day of *Pentecost* for the Apostles, when they received the Holy Spirit and began to fearlessly proclaim the Catholic faith to the rest of the world. The sacrament confers the same graces on us.



Peter and John Confirming the Samaritans (Acts 8, 14-17).

C. Rite of Confirmation: Confirmation is conferred *through*:

1. Laying on of Hands: The laying on of hands is a sign of communicating or giving what a person has. Thus, hands are laid on someone to show that what one person has, he passes on to another.

2. Anointing with Holy Chrism: The anointing with *Holy Chrism* on the forehead in the form of a cross signifies spiritual strengthening and that the Catholic must always be ready to profess his faith openly and to practice it fearlessly. Holy Chrism is a mixture of olive or vegetable oil and balsam (perfume), consecrated by the bishop during Holy Week at the Chrism Mass.

In ancient times athletes used to anoint their bodies with oil to limber up their muscles. The oil used in the sacraments symbolizes strength of soul.



3. Sacred Words: As the bishop or priest anoints the person to be confirmed, he says: "*Receive the seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit.*" This formula expresses clearly that in Confirmation, as on Pentecost, the Holy Spirit, Himself, is received.

D. Spiritual Effects:

1. Increases Possession of Divine Life: Confirmation increases our share of *sanctifying grace*. We achieve a new relationship with the Holy Spirit, similar to that of the Apostles on Pentecost.
2. Confers Actual Graces: Confirmation gives the necessary helping graces that enlighten our mind to believe God's truths more firmly and strengthen our will in upholding and living out God's teaching.
3. Bestows Sacramental Grace: Confirmation bestows a special grace for living out the sacrament. Thus, when we are confirmed we receive the grace to overcome our fear of suffering and the temptation to compromise living out Jesus' teachings in our daily life.
4. Sacramental Character: Confirmation imprints a permanent mark on the soul and makes us more like Christ in *three ways*:
  - a. Christ the Priest: We become like Christ the Priest in bearing suffering patiently and sacrificing courageously.
  - b. Christ the Teacher: We become like Christ the Teacher by acquiring a strong will to keep the faith and a strong mind to understand and share the faith.
  - c. Christ the King: We become like Christ the King by drawing others to Him through our words and good example.

E. Other Concerns:

1. Responsibilities: When confirmed, we have a duty to bring others to Christ. We do this *by*:

a. Praying for All People: *Scripture Reference:*

(1) 1 Tm 2:1: *"First of all...I ask that supplications, prayers, petitions, and thanksgiving be offered for everyone."*

b. Professing Belief in Christ: Confirmation requires us to believe and to profess the teachings of Christ, as taught by the Catholic Church. *Scripture Reference:*

(1) Mt 10:32-33: *"Everyone who acknowledges me before others I will acknowledge before my heavenly Father. But whoever denies me before others, I will deny before my...Father."*

c. Giving Good Example: Being Catholic is more than a once-a-week activity. Thus, when confirmed, we have an obligation to live out the Catholic faith in our daily lives and to bring others to Christ by our good example. *Scripture Reference:*

(1) Mt 5:14-16: *"You are the light of the world. A city set on a mountain cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and then put it under a bushel basket; it is set on a lampstand, where it gives light to all in the house. Just so, your light must shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father."*

d. Doing Works of Mercy: After being confirmed, we must come to the aid of those in need. *Scripture Reference:*

(1) Mt 25:37-40: *"Then the righteous will answer him and say, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? When did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? When did we see you ill or in prison, and visit you?' And the king will say to them in reply, 'Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.'"*

e. Participating in the Apostolate of Suffering: As confirmed Catholics, we are obliged to endure, patiently, bodily sufferings and spiritual trials; in union with Christ, as a form of prayer for some living person, the faithful on earth, or the souls in purgatory. *Scripture Reference:*

(1) 2 Cor 1:7: *Our hope for you is firm, for we know that as you share in the sufferings, you also share in the encouragement.*

f. Participating in the Work of the Church: After our Confirmation, we have a duty of taking an active role in the work of the Church, namely to lead holy lives and to sanctify others. Thus, we must live more perfectly the commandments, the virtues, and the sacraments. *Scripture Reference:*

- (1) Rom 10:14-15: *But how can they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how can they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone to preach? And how can people preach unless they are sent? As it is written, 'How beautiful are the feet of those who bring me [the] good news!'"*
2. **Worthy Reception:** To receive the full effects of Confirmation, we must be free from mortal sin and have been instructed about the basic truths of our Catholic faith. If we knowingly receive the sacrament of Confirmation in a state of deadly sin, we commit the grave sin of *sacrilege*. The sacrament is still valid and the permanent character is imprinted on the soul, but the special graces of the sacrament are not conferred until we repent.
3. **Confirmation Sponsor:** One sponsor is required at Confirmation. The sponsor must be at least 16 years of age and a practicing Catholic who has been confirmed.
4. **Patron Saint:** At Confirmation, we select a patron saint whose virtues and holy life we will strive to imitate.
5. **Ministers of Confirmation:** The usual minister of Confirmation is the bishop. However, priests may confirm in case of emergency or when the bishop has given them permission to do so. Hospital chaplains and parish priests may confirm adult converts.



I. Anointing of the Sick:A. Scripture References:

1. Mk 6:11-13: "Whatever place does not welcome you or listen to you, leave there...in testimony against them. So they went off and preached repentance. They drove out many demons...and anointed with oil many who were sick and cured them."
2. Jas 5:14-15: "Is anyone among you sick? He should summon the presbyters of the church, and they should pray over him and anoint [him] with oil in the name of the Lord, and the prayer of faith will save the sick person and the Lord will raise him up. If he has committed any sins, he will be forgiven."

- B. Anointing of the Sick: Sacrament established by Jesus to give the sick spiritual assistance, to forgive their sins, to restore the physical health to the body of the person who is seriously ill (if God wills it), and to prepare the person for death.

During His time on earth, Jesus had a deep sympathy and concern for the sick. He restored to health many of those with whom He came in contact. Through the Catholic Church and this sacrament, Jesus continues His work of comforting and healing the sick. Since this sacrament has the power to heal both physically and spiritually, it is beneficial to the seriously ill and the aged, not only those who are near death.

C. Rite of Anointing: The sacrament of Anointing is conferred *through*:

1. Laying on of Hands: The priest silently lays his hands on the head of the sick person, invoking Jesus to come and cure the illness.
2. Anointing with the Oil of the Sick: The priest anoints the forehead and palms of the hands of the sick person by tracing the Sign of the Cross with the blessed oil. The anointing represents the action of the Holy Spirit, who strengthens the soul of the sick person by His invisible grace.
3. Sacred Words: While anointing the forehead, the priest says:

"Through this holy anointing, may the Lord in His love and mercy, help you with the grace of the Holy Spirit." Then, anointing the palms of the hands, he says, "May the Lord who frees you from sin save you and raise you up."

D. Spiritual/Bodily Effects:

1. **Forgiveness of Sins:** This sacrament forgives our unforgiven mortal sins, if we have at least *imperfect contrition* (sorrow for sin based on the punishment of hell).
2. **Remission of Temporal Punishment:** The sacrament remits all or part of the punishment that is due forgiven sins.
3. **Supernatural Patience:** The sacrament gives us patience bearing with the sufferings of our illness.
4. **Confidence in God's Mercy:** The sacrament bestows confidence in God's mercy and forgiveness when our death is near.
5. **Moral Courage:** The sacrament strengthens our will in resisting temptations during illness and at the moment of death.
6. **Restoration of Bodily Health:** The sacrament can restore our bodily health, if God decides that the cure would be good for our spiritual welfare.

E. Other Concerns:

1. **Name Change:** The sacrament of Anointing was formerly called *extreme unction*, meaning "*final anointing*." The new term is preferred because this sacrament is intended for all who are seriously ill, not only for those who are at the point of death.
2. **Who?:** The sacrament of Anointing may be received by any baptized Catholic who has reached the age of reason and is either seriously ill or advanced in age. Thus, children may receive the sacrament from the time they reach the use of reason in order to bear their sufferings patiently, overcome tendencies to discouragement, or, if it be God's will, be restored to health. Likewise, the elderly who are notably weakened in physical strength, even when there are no signs of dangerous illness, may be anointed.
3. **Duration:** The effects of the sacrament continue as long as the person who receives it remains in the same physical condition that occasioned the reception of the sacrament. Thus, the effects of the sacrament continue until the need has passed. However, the remission of sins and the temporal punishment due forgiven sins remains indefinitely.

4. **Frequency:** We may be anointed again during the same illness, whenever the our condition worsens.
5. **Viaticum:** A Latin word meaning "*travelling provisions*" or "*food for the journey*." It refers to the practice of a person receiving Holy Communion when there is probable danger of death. Viaticum should not be deferred too long in sickness, lest the dying person loses consciousness. No laws of fasting for one hour apply when Viaticum is received.



6. **Assisting the Dying:** We can assist persons in their last moments by calling a priest to anoint them and to give them Viaticum. We can also assist them by being present at their side; by comforting them; by whispering short prayers; by helping them to recite acts of faith, hope, and love; by offering them a crucifix to hold and to venerate; and by encouraging them to offer their suffering in union with Christ.
7. **Ministers of Anointing:** The only valid ministers of the sacrament of Anointing are bishops and priests, since they have the power to forgive sins.

I. Holy Orders:A. References:

1. Heb 5:1-5: "Every high priest is taken from among men and made their representative before God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. He is able to deal patiently with the ignorant and erring, for he himself is beset by weaknesses and so, for this reason, must make sin offerings for himself as well as for the people. No one takes this honor upon himself but only when called by God, just as Aaron was. In the same way, it was not Christ who glorified himself in becoming high priest, but rather the one who said to him: 'You are my son; this day I have begotten you.'"
2. Lk 22:19: "Do this in memory of me."
3. Encyclical on the Development of Holiness of Priestly Life, 7: "The priest is like 'another Christ' because he is marked with an indelible character, making him, as it were, a living image of our Savior. The priest represents Christ who said, 'As the Father has sent me, I also send you; he who hears you hears me.'"

- B. Holy Orders: The sacrament by which Jesus gives to men the power and grace to perform the sacred duties of bishops, priests, and deacons.



Ordination to the priesthood takes place during the celebration of Mass. After the candidates have prostrated themselves on their faces before the altar, the Bishop lays his hands on the head of each and invokes the power of the Holy Spirit to ordain them. Afterward, the bishop invites the other priests present to lay their hands on the newly ordained, a symbol of their unity with one another. The newly ordained are then vested in a chasuble and stole and their hands are anointed by the bishop with *Holy Chrism*, a sign of their sacredness. The bishop then has them touch the *chalice* and *paten*, to show that the power to offer Mass is conferred. The new priests then concelebrate their first Mass with the bishop and the other priests.



C. Effects:

1. **Increase of Sanctifying Grace:** One of the purposes of God calling a man to the sacred ministry is to have him offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. This is the greatest privilege God can confer on a person and for which He gives grace upon grace.
2. **Permanent Character:** An ordained man's soul is permanently marked with an *indelible character* that gives him supernatural powers and allows him to share in the priesthood of Christ. It makes him a priest *forever*.
3. **Sacramental Grace to Fulfill Duties:** The ordained man is given all the graces he needs to fulfill the duties of his sacred ministry.
4. **Special Duties/Obligations:** Holy Orders confers the duty to *preach*, to *teach*, and to *sanctify*.
5. **Special Powers of Priesthood:** Holy Orders gives the power to celebrate certain of the sacraments. These powers vary according to the *degree of ordination*:
  - a. **Bishop:** A bishop is a priest who has been consecrated to God for the special function of overseeing a diocese. As bishop, he has the fullness of the priesthood and can celebrate all of the sacraments.
  - b. **Priest:** A priest shares in the powers of the bishop to celebrate the sacraments, to teach the people, and to govern them. He fulfills these roles most perfectly as pastor of a parish. He can celebrate all the sacraments excluding Holy Orders, which is reserved to a bishop alone.

The priest is the *representative of God* for all people. He is rightly called an "*alter Christus*," (another Christ) because He is the representative that Jesus, Himself, has chosen to speak and act in His name. Thus, the dignity of a priest is higher than any earthly dignity, for the humblest priest, by his word can call down God upon the altar and change bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ. As confessor, he can say to the sinner, "*I absolve you from your sins*" and the penitent's sins are forgiven. Therefore, whatever honor we pay to the priest, we render to God Himself. St. Francis of Assisi said that if he met an angel and a priest at the same time, he would salute the priest first.

Because of their dignity and role as Christ's representatives, priests have a grave obligation to follow Jesus' example. Therefore, we should pray daily for them that they will fulfill their duties.

c. Deacon: A deacon helps the priest and bishop to fulfill their duties. They have the primary function of *preaching* and *caring for the sick*. In addition, they can celebrate the sacraments of Baptism and Marriage. There are *two types of deacons*:

(1) Transitional Deacon: A deacon studying for the priesthood.

(2) Permanent Deacon: A deacon who is not studying for the priesthood and who can be married. A married permanent deacon, before his ordination, makes a promise to remain celibate for the rest of his life, should his wife die. A permanent deacon who is not married before his ordination, cannot marry afterward.

D. Social Sacrament: Holy Orders was given to the Church, primarily for the benefit of others. Along with Matrimony, Holy Orders provides for the life of the Church. The other five sacraments are for the salvation and growth in holiness of the individual person.

E. Other Concerns:

1. Great Blessing: Because of the dignity of the priesthood, parents should consider it a great blessing when God calls one of their sons to the priesthood. They should do all in their power to foster and support a religious vocation. God will reward their generosity not only in this life, but also in the next.
2. Altar Servers: Parents should encourage their children to serve at Mass, for it is a privilege to do so. Many priestly and religious vocations come from those who were servers.
3. Pray for Vocations: If we want to continue to receive the sacraments and to provide for the life of the Church, we need to pray daily for generosity among people in responding to God's call to serve as priests and deacons, religious brothers and sisters. The problem today is not that God is not calling people to this state of life. The problem is that those being called are not responding generously, placing worldly goods, pleasures, and fears before God.
4. Father: A priest is called "Father" as a sign of reverence. He is the spiritual father of those he serves. Just as a biological father gives life and cares for the physical and spiritual well being of his children, so a priest gives spiritual life to his people and cares for them. *Scripture Reference*:
  - a. 1 Cor 4:15: "Even if you should have countless guides to Christ, yet you do not have many fathers, for I became your father in Christ Jesus through the gospel."

I. Matrimony:A. References:

1. Gen 2:7, 18, 21-24: "The Lord God formed man out of the clay of the ground and blew into his nostrils the breath of life....The Lord God said: 'It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a suitable partner for him.' So the Lord God cast a deep sleep on the man, and while he was asleep, he took out one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. The Lord God then built up into a woman the rib that he had taken from man. When he brought her to the man, the man said: 'This one...is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; This one shall be called 'woman' for out of 'her man' this one has been taken.' That is why a man leaves his father and mother and clings to his wife and the two of them become one body."
2. Mt 19:4-6: "He said in reply, 'Have you not read that from the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female' and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, no human being must separate.'"
3. Jn 2:1-11: At the marriage feast at Cana, Jesus worked His first miracle, thus manifesting the holiness of the married state.
4. Eph 5:21-33: "...As the church is subordinate to Christ, so wives should be subordinate to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the church and handed himself over for her to sanctify her...that she might be holy and without blemish. So [also] husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one hates his own flesh but rather nourishes and cherishes it, even as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body. 'For this reason a man shall leave [his] father and [his] mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.' This is a great mystery, but I speak in reference to Christ and the church. In any case, each one of you should love his wife as himself, and the wife should respect her husband."

St. Paul is often given a bad rap for this quotation because some people think that he is degrading women. He is not. In order to appreciate the beauty of this passage, we must realize that St. Paul believes that the union between a Christian and Jesus is so close that it is analogous to being grafted to each other. He sees this same type of union between husband and wife. When they exchange their vows with one another, husband and wife become one. Just as the parts of the body cannot be in rebellion or disobedient to the total person, neither should husband and wife fail to love or be subject to one another. St. Paul suggests that the love between

husband and wife is to mirror Christ's love for His bride--the Church. Thus, understood in its proper context, St. Paul is not degrading women in this passage but is reminding husband and wife of the dignity and beauty of their vocation. Their love for one another is to imitate Christ's love for the Church: *permanent* (until death do us part); *faithful* (exclusive sharing of their sexual powers with their spouse only); and *life giving* (their love for each other should be open to bringing new human life into the world).



Christian marriage is a holy union, blessed by God, between one man and one woman. It mirrors the union between Christ and the Church.

5. Pastoral Constitution on the Church, 48: "*The intimate partnership of married life and love has been established by the Creator and qualified by his love....For God Himself is the author of matrimony, endowed as it is with various benefits and purposes. All of these have a very decisive bearing on the continuation of the human race, on the personal development and eternal destiny of the individual members of a family and on the dignity, stability, peace, and prosperity of the family itself and of human society as a whole. By their very nature, the institution of matrimony itself and conjugal love are ordained for the procreation and education of children and find in them their ultimate crown.*"
- B. Matrimony: Sacrament in which Christ unites a baptised man and a baptised woman in a life-long union and gives them the grace to carry out their duties. By virtue of this sacrament, *man, woman, and God* enter into an agreement whereby the man and woman pledge to be exclusively faithful to one another and God promises to give them the graces necessary to do this.
- C. Natural Institution: God instituted Matrimony in the Garden of Eden, when He created Adam and Eve. Before the coming of Christ, Matrimony was a sacred contract, but not a sacrament. *Scripture Reference*:
  1. Gen 2:24: "*That is why a man leaves his father and mother and clings to his wife, and the two of them become one body.*"

- D. Sacramental Institution: Sacred Scripture does not give us the scene of the actual institution of this sacrament, but it is generally understood to have taken place at the wedding feast of Cana, where Jesus manifested the holiness of the married state. By raising Matrimony to the level of a sacrament, Jesus made it a *source of holiness*, a means by which husband and wife provide for their salvation by coming to a deeper love of God and one another.
- E. Divine Purpose: Matrimony has been given a *twofold purpose* by God:
1. Children: Bringing children into the world is the primary purpose of Marriage. God who said, "*It is not good for the man to be alone*" (Gn 2:18) and who "*from the beginning... 'made them male and female'*" (Mt 19:4) wished to share with man and woman a special participation in His own creative work. Therefore, He blessed husband and wife saying, "*Be fertile and multiply*" (Gn 1:28). Thus, children are the greatest gift of Marriage and contribute substantially to the welfare of their parents, especially in their old age. In having sexual relations with one another, husband and wife cooperate with God in bringing a new human person into existence, a person who is meant to live with God forever in heaven. Their is no greater gift than bringing an immortal soul into the world.
  2. Personal Enrichment and Fulfillment: God also created Marriage for the purpose of the mutual fulfillment of the spouses. Husband and wife are to help one another and their children to get to heaven. To reward them for the sacrifices they must make in order to achieve these goals, God has made sexual intercourse between husband and wife the most fulfilling and pleasureable activity they can share with one another. In remaining faithful to God's intentions for this activity, namely *openness to life*, spouses grow in holiness.
- F. Effects:
1. Sanctifying Grace: The sacrament of Matrimony, worthily received, causes husband and wife to have an increase in the share of God's divine life.
  2. Sacramental Grace: ~~The sacrament give~~ the graces needed throughout married life to bring about an ever deeper union of husband and wife and to be faithful to their marriage vows. It helps them in the following *ways*:
    - a. Communication: Enables the spouses to better understand themselves and express their feelings to each other so that they can communicate on all levels, verbal and non-verbal.
    - b. Unity: Helps couples to solve the problems which are divisive.

- c. **Healing:** Assists spouses in healing wounds caused by acts of selfishness, uncharitableness, etc.
- d. **Parenthood:** Helps couples in raising and educating their children and dealing with the problems associated with being parents.
- e. **Sanctification:** Assists the spouses in acquiring virtuous habits and conduct and coming to a deeper love of God.

These graces are to be used in daily life together as husband and wife and are meant to work in conjunction with, not independently of the graces of the other sacraments. Thus, married people should receive the sacraments of *Penance* and the *Holy Eucharist* on a regular basis. *Confession* will help them to rid themselves of the faults which prevent a more perfect marital union and family life. and the frequent reception of *Holy Communion* will help them to grow more deeply in love with one another and Christ.

- 3. **Unbreakable Bond:** Husband and wife, by the exchange of their vows with one another, are united in a sacramental bond that can only be broken by the death of one of them. This bond provides for the stability and welfare of the spouses and their children. A stable, loving, family environment allows them to imitate most perfectly the Holy Family and to grow in holiness. Since the family is the backbone of society, a breakdown in the family means that society will begin to crumble. This breakdown is seen in our society by the unjust taking of innocent human life through abortion and murder and by violence and pornography. *Scripture Reference:*

- a. Mk 10:8-9, 11-12: "...So they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, no human being must separate....Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her; and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery."

#### G. Other Concerns:

- 1. **Between One Man and One Woman:** Marriage is between one person of each sex. Thus, contrary to popular opinion, two people of the same gender cannot be united in the sacrament of Marriage, since the dual purposes of Matrimony are unable to be fulfilled. From natural law, we can see that bodies of two males or two females do not physically complement one another.
- 2. **Artificial Contraception:** Artificial birth control and sterilization are gravely contrary (mortal sin) to God's laws concerning the marriage act, since they thwart the twofold purpose of Marriage—*procreative* and *unitive*. Contraceptive acts violate the procreative intention since their very purpose is to prevent new human life. Contraception also violates the unitive purpose of Marriage since

spouses are failing to give themselves completely to one another. They share everything but their *fertility*, a God given gift. Being sterilized (tubal ligation/vasectomy) is equivalent to destroying a non-diseased, perfectly functioning arm. The reproductive faculties are doing exactly what God intended them to do: *providing for new life*. To destroy them as a means of birth control is to frustrate the function for which they were created.

3. **Natural Family Planning:** The Church teaches that husband and wife are to bring children into the world in a responsible manner. For serious reasons they can space and limit the number of children by the practice of Natural Family Planning, a method of birth regulation that teaches *fertility awareness*. By monitoring certain bodily signs, husband and wife can determine when she is fertile and when she is not. With this knowledge, they can achieve or avoid pregnancy by having or refraining from sexual relations during the fertile time. Such a method follows God's plans for the marriage act because it always remains open to new life. Sometimes new life will not come about because the woman is naturally infertile at certain times of the month, the way God created her. The practice of Natural Family Planning will strengthen a couple's marriage because husband and wife will learn to better communicate with one another and to express their love for one another in ways other than sexual intercourse. Most importantly, by following God's intentions for the marriage act, they will have a clear conscience and will provide for their salvation.

4. **Divorce and Annulments:** Neither the Church nor the state has the power of dissolving a *valid, sacramental marriage* which has been consummated. The state, however, may dissolve the civil aspects of a valid marriage. In civil law this is called *divorce*, but in the eyes of God, the marriage still exists until the contrary is proven.

The Church process for proving the contrary is called an *annulment*. Therefore, when the Church rules that a particular marriage is null and void, she is declaring that something existed from its very beginning that prevented it from being a *sacrament*. An annulment does not say that a civil marriage did not exist. It simply says that the marriage was not a sacramental one. Thus, children from a broken marriage are not considered illegitimate.

5. **Validity:** In order to have a valid, sacramental marriage, Catholics must be married in *one of the two following ways*:
  - a. **Priest or Deacon:** Catholics must be married in a Catholic Church in the presence of a *priest* or a *deacon*, the Church's official representatives, and in the presence of two other witnesses.
  - b. **Dispensation:** If a Catholic is not married in a Catholic Church, he must have a *dispensation from canonical form* from the bishop,

meaning that he is dispensed from following this rule of being married in the Catholic Church. This dispensation is often given in the case of an *interfaith marriages*, when one of the spouses is Catholic and one is not and the marriage is to be witnessed by a Protestant minister in a Protestant Church. In such situations, the Catholic must sign a statement promising to do his best in raising the children in the practice of the Catholic faith. This is necessary because as Catholics, we believe that Jesus only established one Church--the Catholic Church--and that the fullness of Jesus' teachings and truth, therefore, reside with His Church. This can be proven from Sacred Scripture. The children, therefore, should have the advantage of being raised in the fullness of truth. Protestant Churches, because they were established by someone other than Jesus, have only a partial fullness of the truth of Jesus.

6. Minister: The bride and groom administer the sacrament of Marriage to each other, since Marriage is a *contract* between the two of them and God. The priest or deacon is the Church's witness to this public contract.



Those who enter Matrimony should imitate the good dispositions of Tobias and Sara (Tob 8:4-9) who began their married life with prayer and lived each day in the presence of God. Before receiving the sacrament of Marriage, Catholics should make a good confession, in order to be free of mortal sin and should, if at all possible, receive our Lord in Holy Communion at the marriage ceremony.



**UNIT FOUR: The Blessed Virgin Mary****A. Privileges:**

1. **Immaculate Conception:** From the first instant of Mary's existence in the womb of her mother, she, by a unique grace and privilege from God, was preserved from the stain of original sin that mars every person's coming into this world. Because of this special favor, Mary's soul was always "*full of grace*" (Lk 1:28). Thus, unlike all other human beings (excluding her Son, Jesus) who are conceived and born deprived of God's divine life and friendship known as *sanctifying grace*, Mary was pleasing to the Most High from the first moment of her conception. Whatever graces the saints throughout history have received partially, Mary possessed in their fullness. This is why she is revered by the Church as the *Queen of Apostles*, *Queen of Angels*, and *Queen of All Saints*. She possessed a greater degree of sanctity than any other created being.

It should be noted that the fullness of grace in Mary is not that of Jesus. In Him, that fullness is *complete from the beginning* and *cannot be increased*; in her, the fullness is *limited* and therefore *capable of being increased*.<sup>1</sup> Mary received the Holy Spirit at her conception, at the Incarnation, and at Pentecost. Each time, her faith, hope, and charity knew a progressive development.

Being preserved from original sin and its effects, namely, *ignorance* and *concupiscence* (unruly desires), it follows that Mary was also saved from all *personal* or *actual sin*. Her soul always remained immaculate. By comparing her situation to our own, we understand better how unique Mary is: *she is pure; we have been purified of original sin by Baptism*. This exemption from original sin granted Mary was due exclusively to her vocation as Mother of God. It was proclaimed as a dogma of faith in 1854 by Pope Pius IX. This dogma makes it clear that Jesus died to redeem all people--including Mary--without exception. Whereas we were washed clean of original sin and shared in the graces of Jesus' redemption when we were baptized, Mary shared in them at the moment of her conception and was preserved from original sin through the *foreseen merits* of her Son. She was, as the Church tells us, "*redeemed in a more excellent manner*."<sup>2</sup> ***References:***

- a. **Lk 1:41-42:** "...Elizabeth...cried out...and said, 'Most blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb.'"
- b. **Dogma of the Immaculate Conception:** "*The most Blessed Virgin Mary was, from the first moment of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege of almighty God and by virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ, Savior of the human race, preserved immune from all stain of*

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<sup>1</sup>L. J. Suenens, Mary the Mother of God, New York: Hawthorn Books, Inc., 1959, p. 33.

<sup>2</sup>Mary the Mother of God, p. 29.

*original sin.*”<sup>3</sup>

2. **Divine Motherhood**: When the angel Gabriel appeared to Mary, he said, “*Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High* (Lk 1:31-32). Thus, in Mary was formed that *human nature* which, from the first instant of its existence, was united to the Word, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity. That child, Jesus, unites indissolubly the *divine* and *human natures*. Thus, it is not enough to say that Mary is the *Mother of Jesus*. We must also say that she is the *Mother of God*. We will examine Mary’s divine maternity from three perspectives:

- a. **Mother of God**: At the Council of Ephesus in 431, Mary was given the title of *Theotokos*-- Mother of God. Mary is truly the Mother of God because she contributed everything to Jesus’ *human nature* that all mothers give to the fruit of their womb. In conferring her human nature on Jesus, she did so alone, apart from all other human intervention. Jesus’ human features, e.g., His gestures, bearing, accent, and intonation of voice, would have reflected Mary’s. From her, Jesus would also have learned the thousand and one details of daily living that a child learns at home, e.g., the language of His people, the religious rites, prayers, etc.

What must *never* be said is that Mary is mother of the Godhead or that she gives to our Lord His divine personality. Mary cannot be mother of the Godhead, for before she ever conceived Jesus, He was God from all eternity. Herein lies a paradox: *Jesus was born of a mother chosen by Him before He was born of her!* A second paradox is that *Jesus gives to His mother infinitely more than He receives from her*: “...Whereas Mary gives Jesus his humanity, he associates her with his own divine life;...while she forms him to her likeness, he imprints upon her soul his own divine likeness.”<sup>4</sup> Cardinal de Berulle summed up this teaching when he addressed our Lady with the following words: “*You give life to Jesus, because he is your Son, you receive life from Jesus, for he is your God. And thus, at the same time, you are both giver and receiver of life.*”<sup>5</sup>

- b. **Mother of the Church**: In a summary paragraph, the Catechism of the Catholic Church makes this statement: “[*Mary*] is mother wherever [*Jesus*] is Savior and head of the Mystical Body.”<sup>6</sup> Therefore, because Jesus is the founder of the Catholic Church, His Mystical Body, and its invisible head, it follows that Mary is *Mother of the Church*, for it is she who conceived and gave birth to Jesus. Pope Paul VI, in 1964, on the last day of the third session of Vatican Council II, proclaimed Mary as Mother of the Church “*for the glory*

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<sup>3</sup>Pope Pius IX, Bull *Ineffabilis Deus*, (December 8, 1954): J. Neuner and J. Dupuis, The Christian Faith in the Doctrinal Documents of the Catholic Church, New York: Alba House, 1982, 709, p. 204.

<sup>4</sup>Mary the Mother of God, p. 48.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 49.

<sup>6</sup>Catechism of the Catholic Church, Missouri: Liguori Publications, 1994, par. 973.

*of the Virgin and for our own consolation.”<sup>7</sup>*

Through the Catholic Church, particularly the seven sacraments, Jesus continues His work of redemption in the modern world. By His passion, death, and resurrection, Jesus, through the sacraments, restores and/or gives us an increase of *sanctifying grace*, the gift of supernatural life. Because Mary conceived, bore, and nourished Jesus, because she presented Him to the Father in the temple, shared in His sufferings as He died on the cross, and cooperated by her obedience, faith, hope, and charity in the work of Jesus in restoring supernatural life to souls, Mary “*is a mother to us in the order of grace.*”<sup>8</sup>

- c. **Our Spiritual Mother:** As Mary stood at the foot of the cross, Jesus drew her attention to John, His beloved disciple, and said, ““*Woman, behold, your son*” (Jn 19:26). Then, turning to John, He said, “*Behold, your mother*” (Jn 19:27). By entrusting John to His mother, Jesus has also consigned us, His modern day disciples, to Mary. We have become her spiritual children. From her place in heaven, Mary intercedes for us before the throne of her Son. She is “*a sign of certain hope and comfort to the Pilgrim People of God.*”<sup>9</sup> “*She is held as an example to the faithful...for the way in which, in her own particular life, she fully and responsibly accepted the will of God; because she received the word of God and acted on it; because charity and a spirit of service were the driving force of all her actions; because she was the first and most important of Christ’s disciples.*”<sup>10</sup>
3. **Perpetual Virginity:** This privilege of Mary states that she was always a virgin. Three stages of virginity are professed in this belief:<sup>11</sup> *Mary’s conception of her Son without the cooperation of man; giving birth to Jesus without violating her integrity; and remaining a virgin after Jesus was born.* This belief in Mary’s virginity before, during, and after she conceived Jesus is a dogma of faith, defined in 649 at the Council of Lateran.

That she had no children after our Lord’s birth is not contradicted in the least by the expression “brothers and sisters” which we find on occasion in the Gospels (e.g., Mt 12:49-50 or Mk 6:3). In the time of Jesus, the Hebrew and Aramaic languages used the terms “brothers” and “sisters” in a wider sense than we use them today. Besides referring to one’s siblings, the words could also refer to ones’ relatives or close friends. In modern day parlance, we use the terms in the same way, e.g., we refer to a friend as our brother or sister. Even if we lacked this precise language as to the extended meaning of these words, that fact that Jesus entrusted Mary to John

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<sup>7</sup>Thomas Xavier, Inside the Vatican, May 1997, p. 60.

<sup>8</sup>Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, VIII, 61.

<sup>9</sup>*Ibid.*, VIII, 68.

<sup>10</sup>Pope Paul VI, Apostolic Exhortation Marialis Cultus, (February 2, 1974): The Christian Faith in the Doctrinal Documents of the Catholic Church, 719, p. 211.

<sup>11</sup>John A. Hardon, S. J., Modern Catholic Dictionary, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1980, p. 337.

and John to her should be sufficient evidence that Mary had no other children. If she would have, the natural course would have been for Jesus to entrust His mother to them rather than to John.

With the light of faith, we can begin to come to a limited understanding why God the Father wanted His Son to be born of a virgin. Three reasons are given below:

- a. **God's Initiative:** Mary's virginity shows God's absolute initiative in the Incarnation. Jesus had no human, biological father. *"He is naturally Son of the Father as to his divinity and naturally son of his mother as to his humanity, but properly Son of the Father in both natures."*<sup>12</sup>
- b. **Sign of Mary's Faith and Fidelity:**<sup>13</sup> Mary is a virgin because her virginity is a sign of her faith--unblemished, unadulterated by doubt, perfect--and her *undivided gift of herself* to doing God's will perfectly.
- c. **Symbol of the Church:**<sup>14</sup> At once virgin and mother, Mary is a symbol of the Church. *"The Church...by receiving the word of God in faith becomes herself a mother. By preaching and baptism, she brings forth sons, who are conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of God, to a new and immortal life. She herself is a virgin, who keeps in its entirety and purity the faith she pledged to her spouse. Imitating the mother of the Lord, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, she keeps intact faith, firm hope and sincere charity."*<sup>15</sup>

#### ***References:***

- (1) **Is 7:14:** *"Therefore the Lord himself will give you this sign: the virgin shall be with child, and bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel."*
- (2) **Mt 1:20:** *"...Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. For it is through the holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her."*
- (3) **Dogma of Perpetual Virginity:** *"If anyone does not...confess truly and properly that holy Mary, ever virgin and immaculate, is Mother of God, since in this latter age she conceived in true reality without human seed from the Holy Spirit, God the Word Himself...and gave birth to Him without corruption, her virginity remaining equally*

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<sup>12</sup>Catechism of the Catholic Church, par. 503.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., par. 506.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., par. 507.

<sup>15</sup>Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, VIII, 64.

*inviolatæ after the birth, let him be condemned.”<sup>16</sup>*

4. Assumption: On the Feast of All Saints, 1950, Pope Pius XII proclaimed as a dogma of faith the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin: “We...define as a dogma revealed by God: the Immaculate Mother of God, Mary ever Virgin, when the course of her earthly life was finished, was taken up body and soul into the glory of heaven.”<sup>17</sup>

Every word in this intensely concentrated dogma matters. In it, the Pope alludes to the *Immaculate Conception*, the *divine motherhood*, and the *perpetual virginity* of Mary. These three truths of our Catholic faith, described in the pages above, have as their logical conclusion, the *Assumption*. This is especially true with respect to the Immaculate Conception, for as a result of this privilege, the devil never had a hold on Mary. From that initial exemption, it follows that Mary should also be granted an anticipated glorification.

As to whether or not Mary died before she was assumed into heaven, modern theologians generally believe that she died. Even though she was not bound by the law of death because of her exemption from sin, theologians believe that it was fitting that Mary’s body should conform to that of her Son, who allowed Himself to die for the salvation of all people. Theologians also make a distinction between *Mary’s Assumption* and *Jesus’ Ascension*. Jesus ascended to heaven by His own power. Mary was drawn there by God. Finally, the Church sees in the Assumption of Mary “*the image and beginning of the Church as it is to be perfected in the world to come*,”<sup>18</sup> an anticipation of our future resurrection. In Mary assumed into heaven, the perfect spiritual order has been achieved: *the body is completely docile to the soul and the soul is completely in the hands of God*. If at the end of time, we are in heaven, the same will be true for us.

5. Coredemptrix, Mediatrix, Advocate: In The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Vatican Council II makes this statement about Mary: “*Taken up to heaven [Mary]...by her manifold intercession continues to bring us the gifts of eternal salvation. By her maternal charity, she cares for the brethren of her Son, who still journey on earth surrounded by dangers and difficulties, until they are led into their blessed home. Therefore the Blessed Virgin is invoked in the Church under the titles of Advocate, Helper, Benefactress, and Mediatrix. This...is so understood that it neither takes away anything from nor adds anything to the dignity and efficacy of Christ the one Mediator [for] no creature could ever be counted along with the Incarnate Word and Redeemer.*”<sup>19</sup>

For the last several years, many bishops, cardinals, and Catholic lay persons have petitioned our

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<sup>16</sup>The Council of Lateran: The Christian Faith in the Doctrinal Documents of the Catholic Church, 703, p. 201.

<sup>17</sup>Pope Pius XII, Apostolic Constitution Munificentissimus Deus (November 1, 1950): The Christian Faith in the Doctrinal Documents of the Catholic Church, 715, p. 207.

<sup>18</sup>Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, VIII, 68.

<sup>19</sup>*Ibid.*, VIII, 62.

Holy Father to define, as dogma, the triad doctrine that Mary is *Coredemptrix*, *Mediatrice* of all *Graces*, and *Advocate for the People of God*.<sup>20</sup> That Mary is *Mediatrice* and *Advocate* already has precedent as the quotation from the Vatican II document above shows. Mary is called our *Mediatrice* because she cooperated in a unique way with Jesus in His redemptive labors on earth. She is *Mediatrice* and also *Advocate* because she continues to intercede for us who are still working out our salvation here on earth and for the suffering in purgatory. What is new is the title *Coredemptrix*.

Mark Miravalle, an American professor of theology, says that the proposed dogma could be summed up this way: “*The Coredemption of Mary is that privilege by which the Immaculate, ever-Virgin Mother of God, freely cooperated with and under Jesus Christ, her Son and Redeemer, in the historic Redemption of the human family, from her fiat at the Annunciation, to the sacrifice of her maternal heart at Calvary; and thus, Mary becomes for us the Mediatrice of all the graces of Redemption and Advocate for all God’s people.*”<sup>21</sup> This proposed dogmatic definition succinctly summarizes all the major teachings of the Catholic Church about Mary. Miravalle goes on to say that “*in addressing Mary as ‘Coredemptrix’ we must be clear that the prefix ‘co’ does not mean equal, but comes from the Latin word, ‘cum’, which means ‘with.’ The title of Coredemptrix applied to the Mother of Jesus never places Mary on a level of equality with Jesus Christ, the divine Lord of all, in the saving process of humanity’s redemption.*”<sup>22</sup>

The title *Coredemptrix* would clearly distinguish the subordinate and secondary coredemptive role of Mary from the unique, all-sufficient redemptive triumph of Jesus Christ. Such a title would also have immediate pastoral application, for it tells the world that “*suffering is redemptive.*” Out of Jesus’ suffering and death on the cross and Mary’s share in that suffering came our salvation and redemption. In a like manner, our suffering, when united with that of Jesus, has value. It unites us to Him and brings our Blessed Mother’s intercession. This has immediate application to our contemporary world, especially to those who advocate abortion and euthanasia, both which deny the redemptive value of suffering.

## **B. Practical Applications:**

1. **Exhortation:** The **Dogmatic Constitution on the Church** speaks against both extremes by calling for balance. Thus, we read: “*Mary has by grace been exalted above all angels and men to a place second only to her Son....She is rightly honored by a special cult in the Church*<sup>23</sup>....*The sacred synod...admonishes all the sons of the Church that the cult...of the Blessed Virgin, be generously fostered, and that the practices and exercises of devotion towards her, recommended*

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<sup>20</sup>Xavier, p. 59.

<sup>21</sup>Robert Moynihan, “A New Dogma in 1998?”, Inside the Vatican, May 1997, p. 58.

<sup>22</sup>Xavier, p. 60.

<sup>23</sup>Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, VIII, 66.

*by the teaching authority of the Church...be highly esteemed, and that those decrees, which were given in the early days regarding the cult images of Christ, the Blessed Virgin and the saints, be religiously observed.”*<sup>24</sup> To this end, I offer the following suggestions for our personal lives and for the students we teach in our religious education programs.

- a. **Pray the Rosary:** In all her appearances on earth, Mary has insisted that people pray the rosary daily. Through the centuries, this prayer has been highly recommended by the popes. Our current Holy Father’s devotion to our Blessed Mother in the rosary is evident from his writings and public appearances. The Catechism of the Catholic Church calls the rosary an “*epitome of the whole Gospel*.”<sup>25</sup> That it is, for the mysteries that we meditate on while praying the rosary summarize the central beliefs of our Catholic faith. Thus, in the *Joyful Mysteries* of the rosary, we think about the Incarnation, Jesus becoming human, and Mary’s role in this event. In the *Sorrowful Mysteries*, we recall the suffering, agony, and death that Jesus endured for our salvation. In the *Glorious Mysteries*, we meditate on Jesus’ triumph over death and Satan, the beginning of the Church, and our Blessed Mother’s assumption into heaven, where she continues to pray and intercede for us. The rosary is a beautiful scriptural and family prayer that can be prayed by anyone, even small children. It can be prayed while we are driving, working, or exercising. It is a multi-purpose prayer that helps us to remember Jesus, His mother, and their love for us. Fr. Peyton coined the famous saying that “*the family that prays together stays together*.” The rosary is one way for the family to pray together and to come to a deeper love of God.
2. **Final Thought:** The Catechism of the Catholic Church says that “*what the Catholic faith believes about Mary is based on what it believes about Christ, and what it teaches about Mary illumines in turn its faith in Christ*.”<sup>26</sup> St. Bernard said, “*Let us strive, through Mary, to ascend to Christ, Who, through her descended to us*.”<sup>27</sup> May we have a deep love for and devotion to our Blessed Mother. In doing so, Mary will lead us a deeper knowledge and love of her Son, Jesus Christ.

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<sup>24</sup>Ibid., VIII, 67.

<sup>25</sup>Catechism of the Catholic Church, par. 971.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., par. 487.

<sup>27</sup>Edward Leen and John Kearney, Our Blessed Mother: Talks on Our Lady, New York: P. J. Kenedy & Sons, 1946.

**UNIT ONE: Catholic Beliefs****I. Purpose of Our Existence**

- A. Sources: The Faith Explained by Leo Trese, pp. 3-12; Catechism of the Catholic Church, par. 1, 27-30.

**II. God's Existence and Our Knowledge of Him**

- A. Sources: By What Authority? An Evangelical Discovers Catholic Tradition by Mark Shea, pp. 119-20; Catholicism and Reason: The Creed and Apologetics (Leader's/Catechist's Manual) by Rev. Edward J. Hayes, Rev. Msgr. Paul J. Hayes, and James J. Drummey, pp. 7-17; "Divine Revelation" and "Sacred Tradition" by Stephen F. Miletic in Our Sunday Visitor's Encyclopedia of Catholic Doctrine, ed. by Russell Shaw, pp. 181-85, 603-6; The Catholic Church & the Bible by Rev. Peter M. J. Stravinskis, pp. 15-19; The Faith Explained by Leo Trese, pp. 13-15; The Question and Answer Catholic Catechism by John A. Hardon, pp. 29-33; Catechism of the Catholic Church, par. 31-100.

**III. Sacred Scripture/Bible**

- A. Sources: Catholicism and Reason: The Creed and Apologetics (Leader's/Catechist's Manual) by Rev. Edward J. Hayes, Rev. Msgr. Paul J. Hayes, and James J. Drummey, pp. 31-38; The Question and Answer Catholic Catechism by John A. Hardon, pp. 37-40; Catechism of the Catholic Church, par. 101-141; Discovering the Bible, Book One by Rev. John Tickle, pp. 5-8; About the Bible pamphlet, a Scriptographic publication; New American Bible, The New Oxford Annotated Bible with the Apocrypha, p. xxviii.

**UNIT TWO: The Creed****I. The Apostles' and Nicene Creeds**

- A. Sources: The Question and Answer Catholic Catechism by John Hardon, S.J., p. 43; What Catholics Believe: A Basic Understanding of the Apostles' Creed by Msgr. Vincent M. Walsh, p. 1; Catechism of the Catholic Church, par. 144-197.

**II. God and His Perfections**

- A. Sources: New American Bible; The Question and Answer Catholic Catechism by John Hardon, S.J., pp. 43-47; The Faith Explained by Leo Trese, pp. 16-26; What Catholics Believe by Msgr. Vincent Walsh, p. 1; Catechism of the Catholic Church, par. 198-278.

**III. Creation: Angels and Humans**

- A. Sources: New American Bible; The Question and Answer Catholic Catechism by John Hardon, S.J., pp. 48-53; The Faith Explained by Leo Trese, pp. 27-40; Angels (and Demons) by Peter Kreeft, pp. 74-75; The Three Ages of the Interior Life, Vol. Two, by Garigou-Lagrange, pp. 617-627; Catechism of the Catholic Church, par. 279-373, 391-395.

**IV. Adam and Eve: Their Fall and Sin**

- A. Sources: New American Bible; The Question and Answer Catholic Catechism by John Hardon, S.J., pp. 53-59; The Faith Explained by Leo Trese, pp. 40-60; Catechism of the Catholic Church, par. 374-390, 396-421, 1699-1802, 1846-1876.



## **V. Jesus Christ and His Work of Salvation**

- A. Sources: New American Bible; The Question and Answer Catholic Catechism by John Hardon, S.J., pp. 59-84; The Faith Explained by Leo Trese, pp. 61-76; Catholicism and Reason: The Creed and Apologetics by Rev. Edward J. Hayes, Rev. Msgr. Paul J. Hayes, and James J. Drummey, pp. 39-87; Life of Christ by Giuseppe Ricciotti, p. 621; “How Jesus Really Died” by Woodeene Koenig-Bricker in Catholic Heritage magazine, March/April 1997, pp. 9-10; Catechism of the Catholic Church, par. 422-682.

## **VI. The Holy Spirit and Grace**

- A. Sources: New American Bible; The Question and Answer Catholic Catechism by John Hardon, S.J., pp. 84-86; Modern Catholic Dictionary by John Hardon, S.J., pp. 229-231, 348; The Faith Explained by Leo Trese, pp. 77-119; Catholicism and Reason: The Creed and Apologetics by Rev. Edward J. Hayes, Rev. Msgr. Paul J. Hayes, and James J. Drummey, pp. 207-214; Catechism of the Catholic Church, par. 683-747, 1803-1845, 1987-2029.

## **VII. The Catholic Church**

- A. Sources: New American Bible; The Question and Answer Catholic Catechism by John Hardon, S.J., pp. 86-102; The Faith Explained by Leo Trese, pp. 120-144; Catholicism and Reason: The Creed and Apologetics by Rev. Edward J. Hayes, Rev. Msgr. Paul J. Hayes, and James J. Drummey, pp. 89-161, 245-254; Catechism of the Catholic Church, par. 748-945, 2030-2051.

## **VIII. The Communion of Saints, Forgiveness of Sins... and the Resurrection of the Body**

- A. Sources: New American Bible; The Question and Answer Catholic Catechism by John Hardon, S.J., pp. 102–104, 106-111; The Faith Explained by Leo Trese, pp. 145--156; Catholicism and Reason: The Creed and Apologetics by Rev. Edward J. Hayes, Rev. Msgr. Paul J. Hayes, and James J. Drummey, pp. 215-231; Catechism of the Catholic Church, par. 946-962, 977-1065.

### **CLASS PRAYER**

St. Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle; be our defense against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray, and do thou, O Prince of the Heavenly host, by the power of God, thrust into hell Satan and all the evil spirits who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.