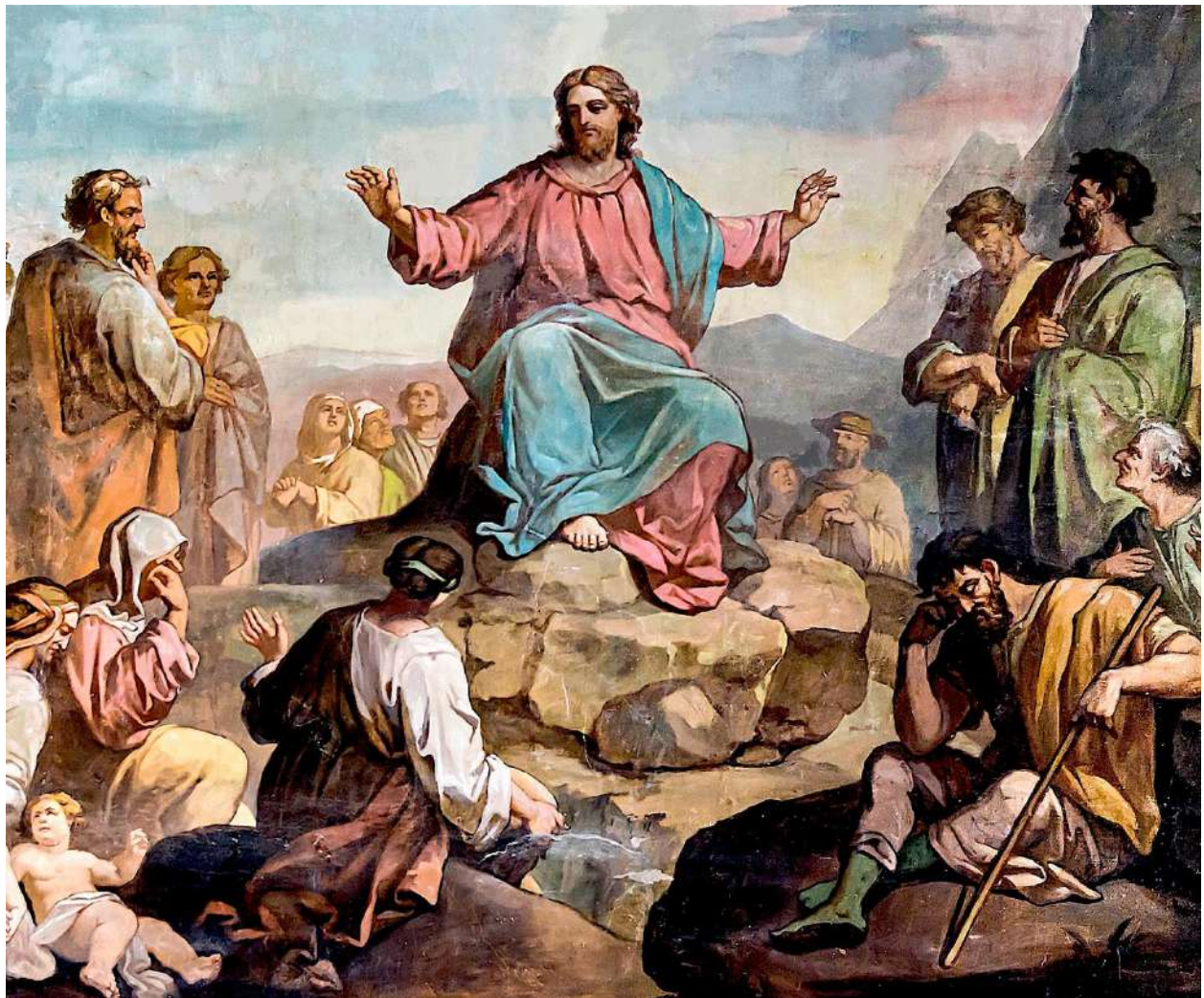


# *My Free Catechism*



**“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven” (Matt 5:3).**

Second Edition

Mr. Romeo Maria del Santo Niño, O.P.



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Second Edition

Mr. Romeo Maria del Santo Niño, O.P.

*Nihil Obstat:*

Deacon Christopher May  
*Censor Librorum*

*Imprimatur:*

Most Reverend Alfred A. Schlert  
Bishop of Allentown

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Given this 8<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2024 at the Chancery of the Diocese of Allentown.



Reverend Keith A. Mathur  
Chancellor

*+ Alfred A. Schlert*

Most Reverend Alfred A. Schlert  
Bishop of Allentown

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DEDICATED  
TO  
THE HOLY CHILD JESUS  
AND HIS MOTHER  
MARY, QUEEN OF PEACE



## FOREWORD

This catechism is meant to be used as supplementary learning material at home or in the classroom. Although copyrighted, it is free. The digital copy of this book may be freely reproduced and distributed to friends and family, provided that the entire book is copied and disseminated and no changes are made. A digital copy of this book in PDF or other format may be downloaded for free from various online distribution platforms or my *website*, [thetheologycorner.com](http://thetheologycorner.com). A printed copy is also available, but at a cost.

This catechism is intended for pupils in the higher grades but is comprehensive enough for young adults and the general public. Also, it aims to serve as a free resource for many ordinary Catholics who need to learn or review what the Catholic Faith teaches but who have neither the time nor the endurance to read the voluminous and theologically precise *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.

The catechism is divided into four parts, namely, Part One: *The Apostle's Creed*; Part Two: *The Sacraments*; Part Three: *The Commandments*; and Part Four: *Prayer and Christian Perfection*. The entire catechism may be copied, shared, printed on paper, or uploaded to children's mobile devices or tablet computers.

I did not write this catechism from scratch. I also made use of the questions and answers from old catechisms in the public domain, such as the *Catechism of St. Pius X*. However, I revised, expanded, and updated many of the texts to reflect current Church teachings. Color illustrations, which are missing in many old catechisms, were added to make the book more attractive to young readers.

Most of the pictures used here are also believed to be in the public domain here in the U.S. Others, which I found on the internet without provenance, have an undetermined copyright status. Still, I took the liberty of using them based on the concept of "fair use," as defined by Title 17, U.S. Code §107, for educational purposes. Picture credits and a link to their sources and licenses (when available) are given at the end of each part of the book.

External references in the texts, such as references to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC), the *1983 Code of Canon Law* (CIC), etc., are added mainly for the use of teachers, catechists, or parents who are coaching the children in learning this catechism. In this catechism, texts in blue italics contain internal or external hyperlinks. They work well when the digital version of this catechism is used on a computer.

The biblical texts used in this catechism are mostly from the *1859 Douay-Rheims* edition, which, because of their antiquity and being in the public domain, I have slightly edited to make the English less archaic for contemporary readers. I have also used the newer biblical names, verse numbers, and psalm numbers to make them compatible with the newer English editions of the Bible.

I gratefully acknowledge here the help of all those who have given me helpful suggestions, comments, and feedback.

Although I wrote this book as a lay Dominican, it is my project and not the project of the Lay Fraternities of St. Dominic. Therefore, any error, omission, or legal infraction detected in this book is solely my responsibility and does not implicate the Lay Fraternities of St. Dominic or the Order of Preachers.

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## *Part One: The Apostles' Creed*



**Fig. 1 The Virgin in Prayer**

Artist: Giovanni Battista Salvi da Sassoferrato (1609–1685)

## PART 1 - THE APOSTLES' CREED

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# INTRODUCTION: *Holy Scripture, Sacred Tradition, and the Apostles' Creed*

## HOLY SCRIPTURE

### 1. Where are the truths that God has revealed contained?

The truths that God has revealed are contained in the Holy Scriptures and Sacred Tradition.

### 2. What is Holy Scripture?

Holy Scripture is the collection of books containing God's revelation that have been written by prophets, evangelists, Apostles, and other sacred writers *under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit* (CCC 105).

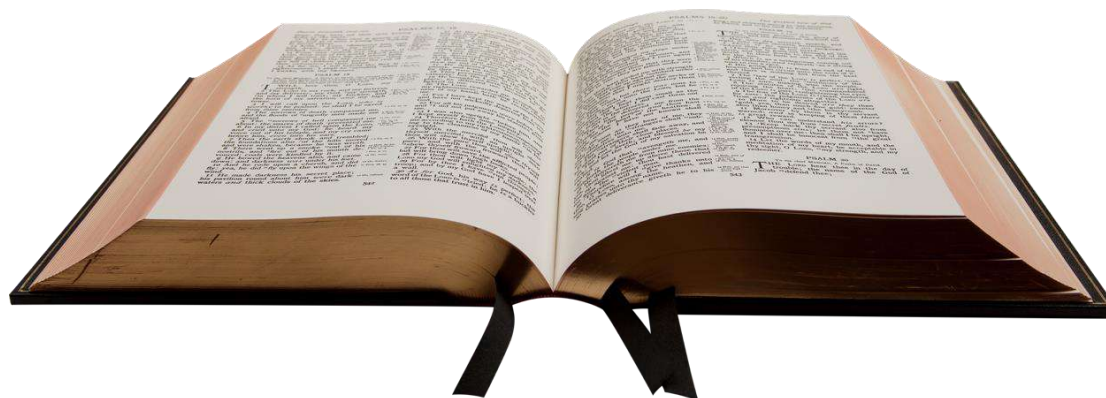


Fig. 1.0.1 The Holy Scripture

### 3. How is the Holy Scripture divided?

The Holy Scripture is divided into two parts: the Old and the New Testaments.

### 4. What is the Old Testament?

The Old Testament comprises the inspired books written before the coming of Jesus Christ.

### **5. What is the New Testament?**

The New Testament comprises the inspired books written after the coming of Jesus Christ. The books of the New Testament that deal especially with the life of Christ are called the “Gospels.”

### **6. What is the common name for Holy Scripture?**

The common name for Holy Scripture is the Holy Bible.

### **7. What is the meaning of the word “Bible”?**

The word “Bible” means “the book.” Actually, the Bible is a collection of books bound together in a single volume. It is the book “par excellence,” the book of books.

### **8. Why is the Bible, or Holy Scripture, called the book “par excellence”?**

Holy Scripture is so named because of the surpassing merit of its content and of the Author (the Holy Spirit) Who inspired it.

### **9. Since the Bible is “inspired,” are the books of the Bible inspiring to read?**

No. The fact that the Bible is “inspired” means that it was written under the guidance and protection of the Holy Spirit. It does not mean that its contents are inspiring to read, although some are.

### **10. Can there be any error in the Holy Scripture?**

There cannot be any error in the Holy Scripture since, indeed, God inspired its writing. This is called “biblical infallibility.” The Bible cannot be in error, especially on matters that have been revealed to us *for the sake of our salvation* (CCC 107).

However, although the principal author of the sacred books is God Himself, this does not prevent the possibility that in the copies and translations of the Bible that have been made, some errors on the part of the copyists or translators may have crept into them.

**11. Did not the Bible say that God created the world in only six days? Yet, most scientists teach that it took billions of years for the universe to form. Does that not prove an error in the Bible?**

Not at all. God's purpose in telling the story of creation in the Bible is not to give us a scientific account of the world's beginnings. His purpose was to tell us, in a language that the common people would understand, that He created the world and that the world did not come into existence by itself. Actually, God could have made the world in an instant. However, the Bible says that the world was completed in six days because it was teaching ordinary people the need to worship God and *sanctify the Sabbath*. The Bible is giving us *religious truth*, not scientific erudition.

**12. Besides being in error about the number of days it took the world to form, the Bible is also wrong in other details. For example, it says that the plants and fruit trees appeared on the third day, while the sun and moon were created on the fourth day (Gen 1:9–19). But science says the reverse: the sun and the moon existed first, then the plants appeared on Earth. Therefore, the sequence given in the Bible is also wrong.**

The Bible is infallible, not in all its scientific and historical details, but in what the Holy Spirit wants to teach *for the sake of our salvation*. Thus, when the Bible teaches that the world did not make itself and that God is the origin of all things, including man, the Bible cannot be wrong because it is important for the sake of our salvation to know that we owe our being to God. However, whether the world was formed in 6 days or billions of years, or whether the green plants were created before the sun and the moon, are details that do not matter to our eternal salvation. Such details are neither covered by biblical infallibility nor are necessarily free from error.

**13. Is the reading of the Bible necessary for all Christians?**

The reading of the Bible is not absolutely necessary for all Christians since they are also instructed by the Church. However, its reading is very useful and recommended to all (CCC 133).

## 14. How many books are in the Bible?

There are 46 books in the Old Testament and 27 books in the New Testament, for a total of 73 books (CCC 120).

### OLD TESTAMENT

Book	Abbrev.	Book	Abbrev.
Genesis	Gen	Song of Songs ( <i>Canticles</i> )	Sg
Exodus	Ex	Wisdom	Wisd
Leviticus	Lev	Sirach ( <i>Ecclesiasticus</i> )	Sir
Numbers	Num	Isaiah ( <i>Isaias</i> )	Isa
Deuteronomy	Deut	Jeremiah ( <i>Jeremias</i> )	Jer
Joshua ( <i>Josue</i> )	Jos	Lamentations	Lam
Judges	Jgs	Baruch	Bar
Ruth	Ruth	Ezekiel ( <i>Ezechiel</i> )	Ez
1 Samuel ( <i>1 Kings</i> )	1 Sam	Daniel	Dan
2 Samuel ( <i>2 Kings</i> )	2 Sam	Hosea ( <i>Osee</i> )	Hos
1 Kings ( <i>3 Kings</i> )	1 Kgs	Joel	Joel
2 Kings ( <i>4 Kings</i> )	2 Kgs	Amos	Am
1 Chronicles ( <i>1 Para.</i> )	1 Chr	Obadiah ( <i>Abdias</i> )	Ob
2 Chronicles ( <i>2 Para.</i> )	2 Chr	Jonah ( <i>Jonas</i> )	Jon
Ezra ( <i>1 Esdras</i> )	Ezr	Micah ( <i>Micheas</i> )	Mi
Nehemiah ( <i>2 Esdras</i> )	Neh	Nahum	Nah
Tobit ( <i>Tobias</i> )	Tob	Habakkuk ( <i>Habacuc</i> )	Hab
Judith	Jdt	Zephaniah ( <i>Sophonias</i> )	Zep
Esther	Esth	Haggai ( <i>Aggeus</i> )	Hg
Job	Job	Zecariah ( <i>Zacharias</i> )	Zec
Psalms	Ps	Malachi ( <i>Malachias</i> )	Mal
Proverbs	Prov	1 Maccabees ( <i>1 Machabees</i> )	1 Macc
Qoheleth ( <i>Ecclesiastes</i> )	Qo	2 Maccabees ( <i>2 Machabees</i> )	2 Macc

Some old Bibles combine Jeremiah and Lamentations into one book, thus ending with a total of only 45 books in the Old Testament.

The names given in the table are those used in most modern versions of the Bible. The names in parentheses are the names used in the old *Douay-Rheims* version.

The books highlighted in yellow are missing in Protestant Bibles. The books of Daniel and Esther are not missing, but Daniel 3:24–90, 13 and 14, and Esther 11–16 (Vulgate) are missing. Thus, the Protestant Old Testament is not complete.

## NEW TESTAMENT

Book	Abbrev.	Book	Abbrev.
Matthew	Matt	1 Timothy	1 Tim
Mark	Mark	2 Timothy	2 Tim
Luke	Luke	Titus	Tit
John	John	Philemon	Phlm
The Acts of the Apostles	Acts	Hebrews	Heb
Paul to the Romans	Rom	James	Jas
1 Corinthians	1 Cor	1 Peter	1 Pet
2 Corinthians	2 Cor	2 Peter	2 Pet
Galatians	Gal	1 John	1 John
Ephesians	Eph	2 John	2 John
Philippians	Phil	3 John	3 John
Colossians	Col	Jude	Jude
1 Thessalonians	1 Thes	Revelation	Rev
2 Thessalonians	2 Thes		

The list of books in the Old and the New Testament given above is known as the *canon* of Holy Scripture.

### 15. Which books of the New Testament deal with the life of Christ?

The first four books in the list above are the ones that deal with the life of Christ and are called the Gospels, which means “good news.” They were written by the four evangelists: Saints Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

### 16. How are the passages in the Bible referenced?

All the books of the Bible are divided into chapters, and every sentence, called a *verse*, is numbered. When a passage or text is quoted from the Bible, the author will usually give the name of the book, the chapter number, and the verse number. Frequently, only



the abbreviation, rather than the full name of the book, is given. A colon (:) separates the verse number from the chapter number. For example, consider the following:

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the land” (Matt 5:3–4).

The symbol at the end of the quoted text, “Matt 5:3–4,” indicates that the text was taken from the Gospel of St. Matthew, Chapter 5, verses 3 thru 4.

### **17. Through which means can we know the true meaning of the Holy Scripture?**

We can only know the true meaning of the Holy Scripture through the Church (CCC 85) because she alone is secure against error in her interpretation.<sup>1</sup> Christ promised her the protection of the Holy Spirit in the words, “The Paraclete, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in My name, will teach you all things...” (John 14:26).

### **18. May any translation of the Bible in the vernacular be read?**

We should read only those translations of the Bible in the vernacular that have been acknowledged as faithful translations and which have explanations also approved by the Catholic Church.

### **19. Why does the Catholic Church not recommend Protestant Bibles?**

The Catholic Church does not recommend Protestant Bibles because they are not complete and lack the explanatory annotations and footnotes that explain the Catholic understanding of many obscure passages in Holy Scripture.

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<sup>1</sup> Here and in succeeding pages, the Church is designated with a feminine pronoun (she, her). This designation is consistent with the traditional idea that because we initially receive our spiritual life from the Church through the Sacrament of Baptism, and because we, like infants, are constantly nourished in the faith by the milk of Church teachings, the Church is rightly called “Our Holy Mother Church.”

## **20. Why are there fewer books in the Protestant Bibles?**

Protestant Bibles have the same number of New Testament books as the Catholic Bibles. However, Protestant Bibles have fewer Old Testament books because they follow the canon of Judaism, which regarded only books originally written in Hebrew as authentically part of the Bible.

## **21. In what languages were the books of the Bible originally written?**

The books of the Bible were originally written in Hebrew, Aramaic (the language spoken by Christ), and Greek. Most books of the Old Testament were written in Hebrew. The books of Tobit, Judith, and portions of Daniel, Ezra, and Jeremiah were written in Aramaic. The Book of Wisdom and 2 Maccabees were written in Greek.

The books of the New Testament were all written in Greek, except the Gospel of St. Matthew, which was originally written in Aramaic but soon translated also into Greek.

## **22. What is the current physical status of the books of the Bible?**

Today, none of the original books of both the Old and New Testaments are still extant. We have only manuscript copies of the original. Some original scrolls were destroyed naturally because of the perishable nature of the material on which they were written. Some were destroyed during the Jewish wars. Others were destroyed during the cruel Roman persecutions under the Edict of Diocletian in A.D. 303. Yet, some fragments and manuscript copies have survived. (See Fig. 1.0.2, for example.) With the discovery of the Dead Sea scrolls at Qumran, fragments and copies of certain disputed books of the Old Testament *in their original Hebrew and Aramaic languages*—particularly Tobit, Sirach, and Baruch Ch. 6—were also found, which greatly weakened both the Jewish and Protestant position of excluding them from the Old Testament canon.



Fig. 1.0.2 The Psalms Scroll

## 23. Where did we get the manuscript copies of the Old and New Testament books?

We owe the copies that we have of them to the painstaking work of many dedicated Catholic monks who, prior to the invention of the printing press in A.D. 1450, carefully and faithfully hand-copied the texts of both the Old and New Testaments in their monasteries.

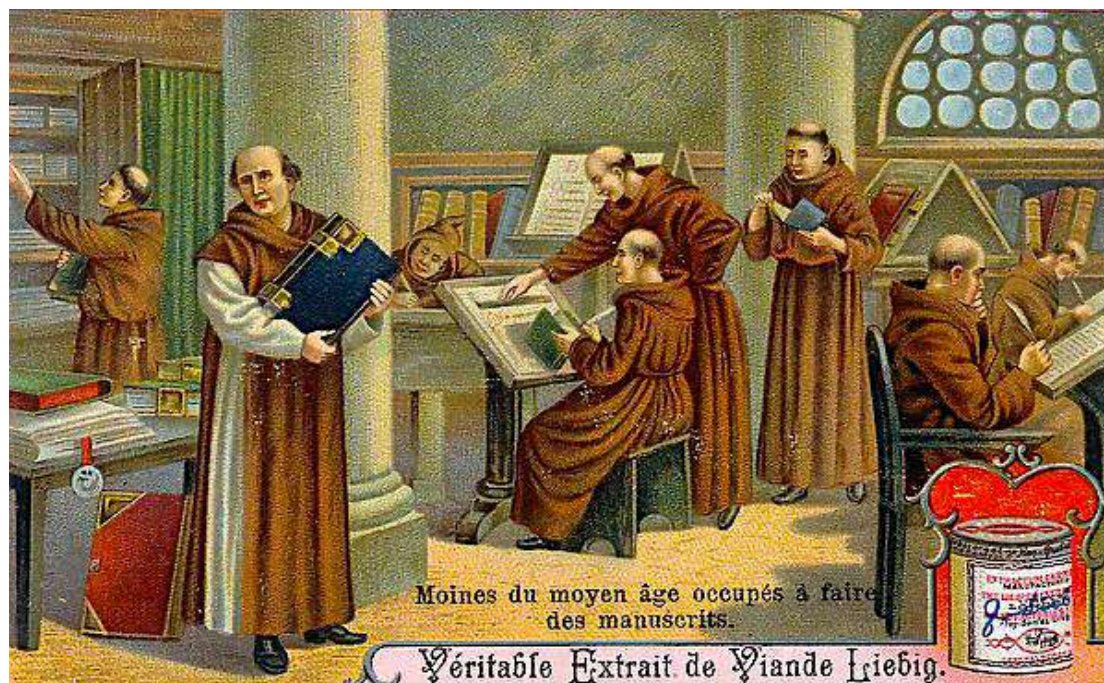


Fig 1.0.3 Medieval Monks Copying Biblical Manuscripts



## SACRED TRADITION

### **24. What is meant by Sacred Tradition?**

Sacred Tradition, Apostolic Tradition, or simply Tradition (with a capital “T”) is God’s revelation that originated with Jesus Christ and the Apostles but has not been committed to writing *by way of divine inspiration*, and which, through the centuries, has come down to us without alteration by word of mouth through the constant teaching and practice of the Church (CCC 75–79).

### **25. If Sacred Tradition refers to divinely revealed truths that have not been committed to writing, then how do we discover them?**

It is not that Sacred Tradition refers to divine revelation that was never committed to writing but to revealed truths that were not committed to writing *by way of divine inspiration*. Actually, many of the truths of Sacred Tradition and what the early Church believed are also recorded and preserved in the Church’s conciliar decrees, the writings of the Fathers of the Church, the Acts of the Martyrs, and even in the prayers and liturgy of the early Church. But none of these writings were made under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. They are valuable because they preserve what the Church received from Christ and the Apostles, but they are not “inspired” writings.

### **26. How do we know, then, which writings are inspired by the Holy Spirit?**

We only know which writings are “inspired” through the Church. The Catholic Church was divinely instituted to lead all men to salvation. Therefore, she alone can infallibly decide which books should be regarded as “inspired” and which are not. In the *Council of Trent*, A.D. 1546, the Church officially defined the *canon* or list of inspired books that comprise the whole Bible (CCC 120).

## 27. Is Sacred Tradition infallible?

Yes, Sacred Tradition is infallible because it contains the revealed word of God. But one must be careful not to equate Sacred Tradition with the various *records* or *monuments* of Sacred Tradition, such as the writings of the Fathers of the Church and others. Sacred Tradition itself is infallible, but the human records of it made by the Fathers and other early Christians are not.



**Fig. 1.0.4 St. Ignatius of Antioch**

One of the Fathers of the Church, St. Ignatius (A.D. 35–117), lived during the time of the Apostles and became the third bishop of Antioch (in Syria). In his writings, he declared the reality of Christ as true God and true man and affirmed his belief in the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist. During the cruel Roman persecutions, his body was devoured by the lions at the Roman Amphitheatre because he chose to die rather than renounce his faith.

**28. If the writings of the Fathers and other records of Sacred Tradition are neither inspired nor infallible, then what good are they?**

Although these writings are neither inspired nor infallible, they are valuable because from them we also learn what the early Church received from the Apostles. For example, when there is a morally unanimous agreement among the Fathers of the Church on the status of a proposition as divinely revealed (the criterion of unanimity), then we can be sure that the truth of the proposition is part of Sacred Tradition. Not all Fathers need to express their agreement, either. If some of the Fathers, at different times and in different places, express their agreement *without opposition from the others*, then it may rightly be presumed that there exists a morally unanimous agreement. Let us not forget that we also have a divinely appointed Teaching Authority, the Church, which determines which statements from the Fathers are divinely revealed or are authentically part of Sacred Tradition.



**Fig. 1.0.5 Madonna and Child in a Catacomb Art**

The records of Sacred Tradition are not limited to the writings of the Fathers of the Church and other ancient religious writings but also include artworks. For example, one of the earliest monuments to the ancient Catholic veneration of Mary may be found in the Catacomb of Priscilla in Rome. The image above, estimated to be about 1500 years old, shows the Virgin Mary nursing the Child Jesus.

**29. What importance must we attach to Sacred Tradition?**

We must attach to Sacred Tradition the same importance as we attach to the Holy Scripture because both are means of transmission of divine revelation (CCC 80–82). We ought to be thankful that, in addition to Holy Scripture, we also have Sacred Tradition. Many revealed truths are not fully or clearly recorded in Holy Scripture, and we learn them mainly from Sacred Tradition.

**30. What are some examples of divinely revealed truths that are not fully stated in Holy Scripture but which we learn from Sacred Tradition?**

Some examples of divinely revealed truths that are not fully or clearly stated in the Holy Scripture but which we learn from Sacred Tradition are the mystery of the Blessed Trinity, the dogmas about the Virgin Mary, the infallibility of the pope, etc. From Sacred Tradition, we also learn many of our Catholic practices, such as the practice of Infant Baptism, observing the Sabbath on Sunday, offering the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, confessing our sins to a priest, etc. Many of these beliefs and practices are only hinted at in Holy Scripture and not clearly stated. Indeed, we know even the canon of Holy Scripture only from the Church's Sacred Tradition because none of the books of the Bible gave us a list of which books were inspired. It is only through Sacred Tradition that the Church has come to know which of the many competing books that have been written in the past are inspired and which are not.

**31. Is it not that Christ censured Sacred Tradition in Matt 15:3–19 and Mark 7:1–15?**

No. What Christ censured were the corrupt “traditions of men” that consisted of purely external displays of piety, such as the Jewish ritual of washing their hands without at the same time keeping the purity of their souls. Sacred Tradition is different. It consists of doctrinal teachings and practices that came from Christ and the Apostles and that had been transmitted from one generation to the next by word of mouth. It was of this that St. Paul was referring to



when he said to Timothy (a bishop of the early Church): “And the things that you have heard of me by many witnesses, the same commend to faithful men, who shall be fit to teach others also” (2 Tim 2:2). This text beautifully illustrates how doctrine was being handed down by word of mouth from one generation to the next.

### **32. Is Sacred Tradition the same as the various local customs and traditional practices observed in the Church?**

No. The universal doctrines and practices of Sacred Tradition must be distinguished from the various local customs and traditional practices observed in the church, such as the gestures in praying (whether kneeling or standing), the feast dates of the saints, the rules of fasting and abstinence, etc. These practices may be changed or even abandoned under the guidance of the Church (CCC 83).

### **33. Which came first, Holy Scripture or Sacred Tradition?**

Sacred Tradition came first. In fact, the early Christians did not have a New Testament. Christ Himself did not write a gospel, and the epistle written by the last Apostle (St. John) was not made until about A.D. 99. Thus, the Faith was being transmitted and preserved in the Church largely by Apostolic preaching or Sacred Tradition. It can also be said that even the New Testament itself merely grew out of the great Tradition of the Church.

### **34. What can be said about “*sola scriptura*,” or the Protestant principle that only what is written in the Bible must be believed?**

First, *sola scriptura* itself is *nowhere taught in the Bible!* The Bible did say that the Holy Scripture is great for teaching and refuting errors (2 Tim 3:16), but nowhere did it say that only what is written in the Holy Scripture must be believed. Second, if *sola scriptura* were true, then the early Christians and most Christians before the invention of the printing press would have had no way of knowing the faith since they did not have a Bible to read.

## THE APOSTLES' CREED

### 35. What is the Apostles' Creed?

The Apostles' Creed is a summary of the truths of our faith that the Apostles passed down to us. The Apostles' Creed is the one that will be discussed in this catechism. A similar creed, known as the *Nicene Creed*, is the creed that we recite at Mass (CCC 194–196).

### 36. What were the Apostles?

The Apostles were the friends of Our Lord, Jesus Christ, whom He trained to teach us our faith. There were twelve of them (Matt 10:1–4; Mark 3:13–19; Luke 6:12–16). They were the following:

1. St. Simon Peter
2. St. Andrew
3. St. James the Greater, son of Zebedee
4. St. John the Evangelist, son of Zebedee
5. St. Philip
6. St. Bartholomew
7. St. Thomas the Doubter
8. St. Matthew, the tax collector
9. St. James the Less, son of Alphaeus
10. St. Jude Thaddeus, son of Alphaeus
11. St. Simon the Cananaean
12. Judas Iscariot, the traitor who was later replaced by St. Matthias (Acts 1:21–26).

St. Peter and St. Andrew were brothers. St. James the Less and St. Jude Thaddeus were brothers, too, and were first cousins of Christ. Actually, the two sons of Zebedee—St. James the Greater and St. John the Evangelist—were also first cousins of Christ, Our Lord.

### 37. How many articles are there in the Apostles' Creed?

There are twelve articles in the Apostles' Creed. There is an ancient belief that the Apostles themselves composed the Creed, which is why it is called “The Apostles' Creed.”



**Fig. 1.0.4 Statues of the Twelve Apostles**

The statues are made by *Demetz Art Studio*

The statues of the Apostles, from left to right, are the following:

First Row – St. Peter, St. Paul, St. Matthew, and St. Jude Thaddeus;

Second Row – St. Andrew, St. Bartholomew, St. John the Evangelist, and St. Simon Zelotes;

Third Row – St. James the Less, St. James the Greater, St. Philip, and St. Thomas the Doubter.

**Note:** St. Paul was not one of the original Twelve Apostles. His statue is shown in the picture because he played a major role in the growth of the early Church, and is known as the “Apostle of the Gentiles.” The statue of Judas Iscariot, who was one of the original Twelve, is not shown because he betrayed Our Lord. St. Matthias replaced him later, but his statue is not shown either.

### 38. Recite the Apostles' Creed.

1. *I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven<sup>2</sup> and Earth.*
2. *And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, Our Lord,*
3. *Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary;*
4. *Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.*
5. *He descended into hell; on the third day, He rose again from the dead.*
6. *He ascended into Heaven and is seated at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty.*
7. *From thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.*
8. *I believe in the Holy Spirit.*
9. *The Holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints;*
10. *The forgiveness of sins;*
11. *The resurrection of the body; and*
12. *Life everlasting. Amen.*

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<sup>2</sup> In this catechism, I capitalize the word “Heaven” when referring to the place where God dwells and where the angels and saints enjoy His presence in supreme bliss and happiness. I use the word “heaven” (in lowercase) when referring to what is sometimes called the “heavens,” the place up in the sky where the stars and heavenly bodies exist and which is part of our material world. Thus, when I say that Christ ascended into Heaven, I do not mean that He went into outer space, but that He ascended to be with the Father and the Holy Spirit in the joyful company of the angels and saints. This Heaven is an invisible world of spirits, distinct from our material universe. I only call it a “place,” for lack of a better term, but it is not a material place because spirits, unlike matter, do not occupy space. The invisible world of God and the angels is not in outer space. It is not in space at all.

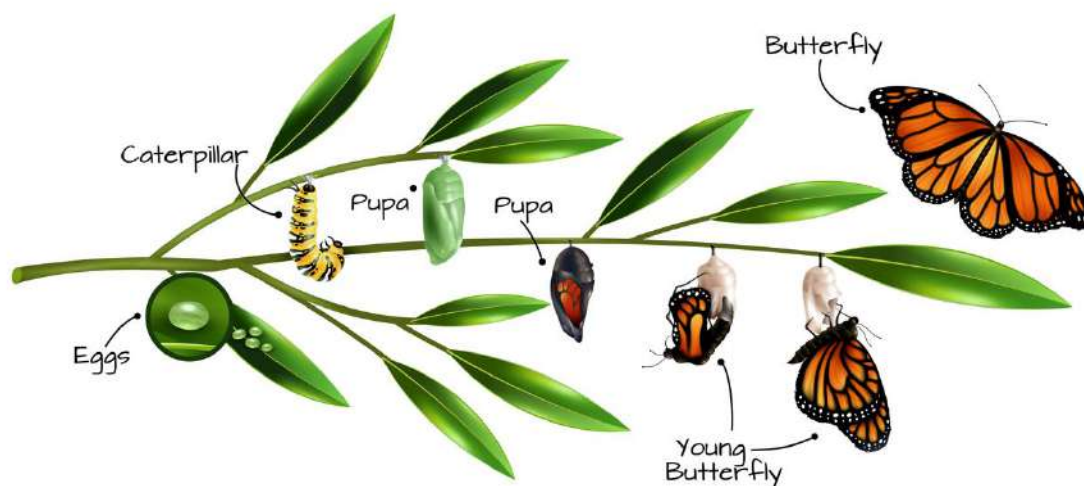
## ARTICLE 1: *“I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth.”*

### 1. What does the first article of the Creed teach us?

The first article of the Creed teaches us that there is one and only one God, that He is all-powerful, and that He created Heaven and Earth and everything else, that is to say, the whole universe.

### 2. How do we know that there is a God?

When you see footprints on the sand, don't you know that someone passed there? Well, the world is full of God's “footprints” in the marvelous things that He has made. Just look at how butterflies are formed, for example.



**Fig. 1.1.1 Metamorphosis of a Butterfly**

They start out as eggs. Then they become caterpillars. After a few days, they envelop themselves in a chrysalis (pupa or cocoon) made from their own bodies. Then they come out with a head, thorax, and abdomen; a pair of sensitive antennae; compound eyes; six jointed legs; and beautifully decorated wings, ready to fly. When something amazing like this happens, do you think it all happens by chance? Or is there Someone powerful and intelligent behind these transformations? This is just one example among hundreds of others

that we find in nature. Our hearts tell us that there is Someone powerful and intelligent behind all of this, although He is unseen by the human eye. That Unseen, Powerful, and Intelligent Being is GOD! (CCC 31-35)

The world is so full of God's marvelous works that the Bible says, "The fool says in his heart, 'There is no God'" (Ps 14:1).

### **3. Why do we call God our Father?**

We call God our Father because He created us and because, by nature, He is the Father of God the Son, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, and, by grace, our Father too, on account of which we are called adopted sons of God (CCC 238-240).

### **4. In the Creed, we say, "I believe in God the Father Almighty." What does the word "almighty" mean?**

The word "almighty" means all-powerful. God is almighty because He can make all things out of nothing. "Whatever the Lord is pleased to do," the Bible says, "He has done, in heaven, on earth, in the sea, and in the deeps" (Ps 135:6). Also, His power is *infinite*, that is, without limit (CCC 268–269).

### **5. Does God have other perfections besides being all-powerful?**

Yes, and because God is most perfect, all His perfections are also infinite. God's other perfections are the following:

ALL-KNOWING: He sees and knows everything without limit;

ALL-PRESENT: He is everywhere, including our minds and hearts;

ETERNAL: He always was, is, and always will be;

UNCHANGEABLE: He cannot change; He is always what He is;

ALL-GOOD: He seeks the good and does not sin;



ALL-LOVING and ALL-KIND: He loves and cares for us;

ALL-MERCIFUL: He is always ready to forgive;

ALL-JUST: He rewards the good and punishes the evil.

## **6. Why do we not see God?**

We do not see God because “God is a spirit” (John 4:24). A spirit has no body. And because He has no body, God cannot decompose into various parts and will never die.

## **7. If God cannot sin or die, why do we say He can do all things?**

Though God cannot sin or die, we say that He can do all things and is all-powerful because being able to sin or die is a lack of power, an imperfection rather than perfection. This imperfection cannot exist in God, who is most perfect.

## **8. Is there only one God?**

Yes, there is only one God.

## **9. Why can't there be more than one God?**

There can't be more than one God because God is an infinitely perfect being. If there were two infinitely perfect beings, each would possess perfection that the other lacked. In which case, neither of the two “infinite beings” would truly be infinite. Therefore, if God is truly infinite, then He is just one God, and there are no others like Him. “See that I alone am,” says the Lord, “and there is no other God besides Me” (Deut 32:39).

## **10. What is the greatest truth we have learned about God?**

The greatest truth we have learned about God is that in one God there are three Divine Persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Each of us is only one person. But God is different. He is



three Persons. The existence of three Persons in one God is known as the **mystery of the Blessed Trinity**.

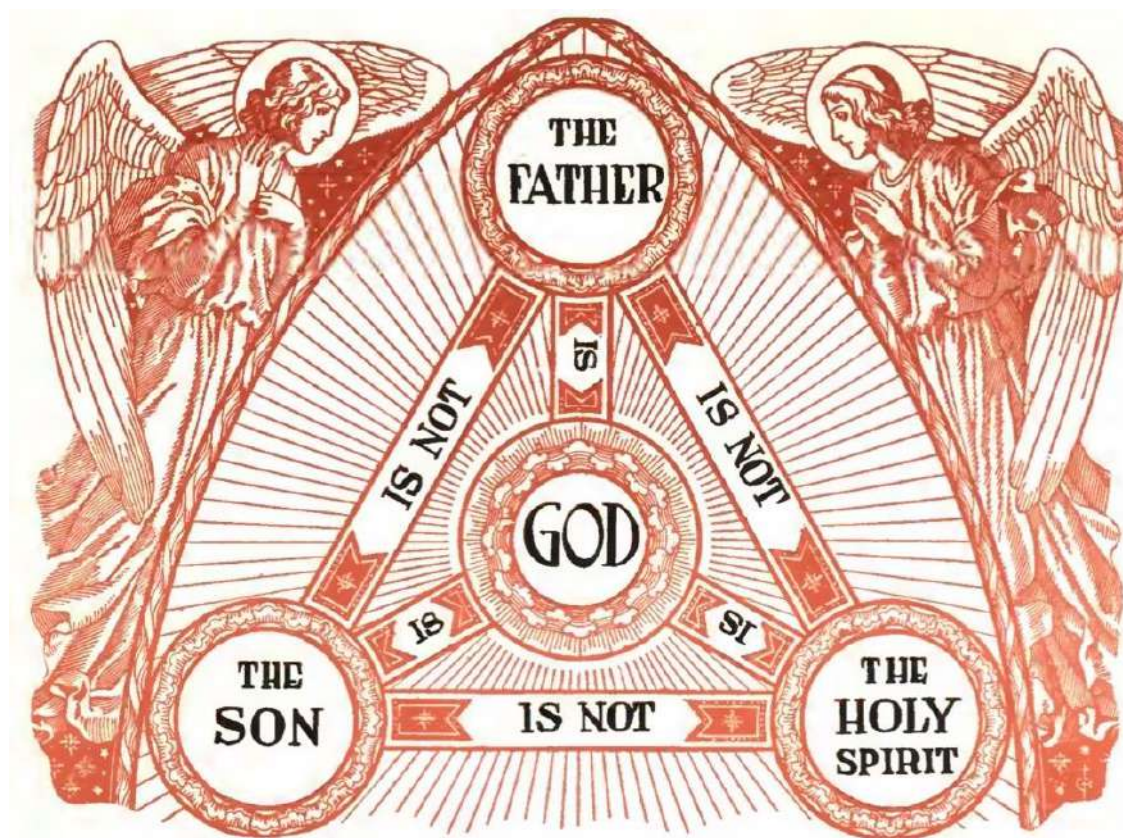


Fig. 1.1.2 A Diagram of the Blessed Trinity

The Father is not the Son, the Son is not the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit is neither the Father nor the Son. Each one of the Divine Persons is God, yet there are not three but only ONE God. This is a profound truth of our faith and is called the **Mystery of the Blessed Trinity** (CCC 253–256).

# 11. Why is the existence of three Persons in one God called a mystery?

The existence of three Persons in one God is called a *mystery* because this truth is *above* reason and we cannot possibly know about it if God had not revealed it to us. There is a legend about Saint Augustine, who struggled very hard to understand the mystery of the Blessed Trinity but always failed. “How, indeed,” he asked,

“can there be three Persons in one God?” One day, while walking by the seashore, he saw a boy running back and forth from the sea to a small hole on the shore. The child was bringing water from the sea and pouring it into the hole in the ground with a seashell.



**Fig. 1.1.3 St. Augustine and the Child on the Seashore**

Saint Augustine asked him, “What are you trying to do?” The boy replied, “I am trying to put all the water of the sea into this hole in the ground.” “That’s impossible,” the saint remarked. “The hole is too small to contain all the water in the sea.” The child answered, “It is easier for me to put all the water of the sea into this small hole than for your small mind to fully understand the immense mystery of the Blessed Trinity.” Then the boy disappeared. At this point, the saint realized that the child was an angel whom God sent to teach him that, because of the limitations of his human intellect, his effort to understand the Blessed Trinity was futile and vain. (For more about the Blessed Trinity, see [Appendix to Part 1](#).)

**12. In the Creed, we also say, “I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth.” What does it mean to create?**

To create is to make something *out of nothing*. Artists and builders also make things, but they need materials to make them. But God can make things, even the materials that He needs, out of nothing. That is how He made Heaven, the Earth, and the whole universe. He made them all out of nothing by His command alone, that is, by an act of His will. “You have created all things; for by Your will, they were and have been created” (Rev 4:11). (CCC 296, 325–327)

**13. Did God create us, too? Why?**

Yes, God created us too. God created us to know, love, and serve Him in this world and to be happy with Him forever in the next. It is important to realize that God did not create us merely for this world but for Himself, that is, to be happy with Him in our next life after death. Therefore, our final goal in life should not merely be to be happy here on Earth, which will end, but to be happy with Him in our next life, which will never end.

**14. Were man and the world created by the Father alone?**

Man and the world were created by the three Divine Persons because whatever one Person does with regard to creatures is also done by the other two Divine Persons in one and the same act.

**15. Why, then, is creation especially attributed to the Father?**

Creation is especially attributed to the Father because it is a work of divine power. Just as wisdom is attributed to the Son and goodness to the Holy Spirit, power is attributed to the Father, although all three Divine Persons possess the same wisdom, goodness, and power (CCC 258).





**Fig. 1.1.4 God the Father and Creator of the World**

God the Father is symbolized as an old man with a white beard to depict the fact that He has existed “from of old,” that is, from eternity.

**16. Does God take any interest in the world that He created? And does He care about us?**

Of course, He cares about the world and us. “He made the little and the great and equally cares for all” (Wisd 6:7). God takes care of the world and us because He created us and we belong to Him. He, therefore, preserves us and governs us through His infinite goodness and wisdom. Nothing happens in the world that He does not either will or permit (CCC 270).

## 17. If God cares about us, then why does He let bad things happen in the world?

God has His reasons. Note that there are two kinds of bad things that happen in the world: **physical evil** (such as sickness, death, earthquakes, etc.) and **moral evil** or **sin** (such as murder, war, etc.). God does NOT directly will either of these evils. However,

1. He *permits* sin because it is the price of human freedom. If men cannot sin, then how can they be free? Since God chose to endow creatures with freedom (free will), He permits, although He does not will, that they commit sin.
2. Physical evils are different. God wills them *indirectly* on account of the good that results from them. For example, God wills persecution and suffering because, without them, we will not have heroes and martyrs. Without hardship, we will not learn self-control and diligence. Without poverty, we cannot practice benevolence and charity. So, God indirectly wills these physical evils on account of the good that derives from them.
3. Many of those that we call physical evil are the results of natural processes and are often useful in themselves. For example, although pain causes suffering, it serves as a warning signal for a person to discover a hidden illness that otherwise would remain undetected. Also, many physical evils (such as poverty, hardship, sickness, etc.) are man-made and not due to God. God wills them indirectly to teach us a lesson and to call us back to Himself (CCC 309–314).

## THE ANGELS



**Fig. 1.1.5 Angels Singing Praises to God**

### **18. Which are the noblest of God's creatures?**

The noblest creatures created by God are the angels. The angels are intelligent and purely spiritual creatures (CCC 330). Strictly speaking, they have no wings or material figures because they have no bodies. Artists only draw them with wings and human forms to help our imagination. The wings remind us that they are God's messengers.<sup>3</sup> And, although they do not have mouths or vocal cords, they are often portrayed as singing because singing is a type of praising God, which is what the angels mostly do: they praise God unceasingly (Isa 6:3; Luke 2:13–14; Rev 4:8).

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<sup>3</sup> However, the imagery of angels with wings and human forms is not necessarily a purely human invention but may have a divine origin. The Bible tells us that the prophet Daniel described the Angel Gabriel, whom he saw in a vision, as having “the appearance of a man” (Dan 8:15). Likewise, the idea that angels have wings came from the Bible, for God commanded Moses to put the statue of two cherubs on the ark of the covenant, whose wings spread out to cover the ark (Ex 25:18–20). Actually, the different types of angels are not limited to having just two wings each. For example, the prophet Ezekiel described the four living creatures—which were identified as cherubim (a type of angel) according to Sirach 49:10—that he saw in his vision as having the likeness of a man in them, and they each had four wings (Ez 1:5–6). From his vision, the prophet Isaiah also described the seraphim—the angels who stand before God's throne—as having six wings each (Isa 6:2).

**19. Why did God create the angels?**

God created the angels so that they might honor and serve Him and be happy with Him forever in Heaven. They sing praises to God unceasingly (CCC 331–333).

**20. Were all the angels faithful to God?**

No, not all the angels remained faithful to God. Many of them became so proud of their power, their intelligence, and their beauty that they refused to serve God. As a result, they were expelled from Heaven by St. Michael the Archangel and condemned to suffer forever in hell (CCC 391–395).



**Fig. 1.1.6 St. Michael the Archangel**



**21. What are the angels called who were expelled from Heaven?**

The angels banished from Heaven are called fallen angels, demons, or devils, and their chief is called Satan (Rev 12:9).

**22. Are demons real, and can they harm us?**

Oh, they are as real as the noonday sun! Unfortunately, there are many people today who don't believe that demons and hell actually exist. And the demons love it! They know that they can do more harm if fewer people are on guard against them. Demons harm us by tempting us to sin. Don't think they aren't around just because you don't see them. They use the radio, the TV, the internet, video games, and all your favorite devices to bring evil thoughts into your heart. Keeping you away from prayer and God is their specialty! And they are very crafty, too. Don't think for a moment that they will appear to you as ugly, horrible-looking creatures, which they are. No, they will appear to you as enjoyable creatures, so you will not suspect that they are demons in disguise. They will appear to you in the form of fun games, fun shows, and fun companions, so that you will be enticed to neglect your duties, your studies, your prayers, and God. They are so crafty. That's how Satan tempted our first parents, Adam and Eve. He appeared to them as a harmless serpent and lied to them. That is why he is called "the father of liars" (John 8:44).

**23. Why do demons tempt us?**

The demons tempt us because they envy us. They desire our eternal damnation because of their hatred of God, whose image is reflected in us. However, God allows them to tempt us so that we may overcome them by His grace and show Him our loyalty.

**24. What do you call the angels who remained faithful to God?**

The angels who remained faithful to God are called the good angels, heavenly spirits, or simply angels.

## 25. How many angels are there?

The angels in Heaven are innumerable. The prophet Daniel said, “Thousands of thousands ministered to Him (God), and ten thousand times a hundred thousand stood before Him” (Dan 7:10).

## 26. Are all angels equal in dignity?

No, the angels differ in power, wisdom, and dignity according to their rank or office. There are nine ranks, or “choirs,” of angels mentioned in the Bible. These are the following:

1. Seraphim (Isa 6:1–7)
2. Cherubim (Gen 3:24)
3. Thrones (Col 1:16)
4. Dominations or dominions (Eph 1:21; Col 1:16)
5. Virtues (Eph 1:21)
6. Powers (Eph 1:21; 3:10; Col 1:16; 2:15)
7. Principalities (Rom 8:38; Eph 1:21; 3:10; Col 1:16; 2:15)
8. Archangels (1 Thes 4:15)
9. Angels (Gen 19; Tob 12:15; Matt 1:20; Rev 2:1–3:14).

Among those who rebelled against God were the *principalities* and *powers*, who are also on Earth to tempt us (Eph 6:12).

## 27. Are angels male or female?

Angels are neither male nor female since, indeed, they have no bodies. Neither are they young nor old because they have no bodies that can age. In their visions, however, saints and visionaries have seen both male and female angels as well as young and adult angels, for angels appear in our imagination in any form they want. Even Satan can disguise himself to us as an angel of light (2 Cor 11:14).

## 28. Do angels have names?

We know three angels by name because they are mentioned in the Holy Scripture. They are St. Michael, St. Gabriel, and St. Raphael. Only St. Michael was called an archangel (Jude 1:9), but of course, St. Raphael and St. Gabriel could be archangels, too.

1. **St. Michael the Archangel** was the one who led the good angels in the fight against Satan (Rev 12:7–9). He was also described as “the great prince, who stands for the children of thy people (Israel)” (Dan 12:1).
2. **St. Gabriel** was the one who appeared to Zachary to announce the birth of St. John the Baptist (Luke 1:11–19) and who announced to the Virgin Mary that she was going to be the Mother of God (Luke 1:26–38).
3. **St. Raphael** appeared in the book of Tobit and said, “I am the angel Raphael, one of the seven who stand before the Lord” (Tob 12:15).



**Fig. 1.1.7 The Angel Raphael Helps Tobias Catch a Big Fish**

**29. Can angels talk to each other?**

According to St. Thomas Aquinas, the angels do not “talk” because they have no mouths or vocal cords. But they do communicate with each other by an act of their will, by which they reveal whatever they wish to communicate.

**30. Do angels know the future?**

No, the angels do not know the future, because being able to know the future belongs only to God (Isa 41:23).

**31. Do angels know our secret thoughts?**

Strictly, no. However, they know our external actions and can guess our thoughts from our behavior.

**32. Can angels move material objects?**

Yes. Although angels do not have bodies, they can move material objects with their power. The Bible tells us that it was an angel who rolled back the stone that covered Christ’s tomb (Matt 28:2).

**33. How powerful are the angels?**

They are very powerful. In the Old Testament, the prophet Isaiah spoke of one angel single-handedly destroying an Assyrian army of 185,000 men (Isa 37:36).

**34. What about demons? Can they possess and control us?**

Demons are fallen angels and, therefore, are more powerful than us. So, yes, they can possess and control us. The Gospels tell us that Christ cast out a number of devils from people possessed by them (Matt 12:22; 15:22–28; Mark 1:23–26; 5:1–13). However, one must be careful not to identify all unusual behaviors as cases of demonic possession. If demonic possession is suspected, the devil or devils can be cast out by a ritual known as *exorcism*. To help and protect ourselves from the influence of the devil, we must also be praying the *Prayer to St. Michael the Archangel*.

### 35. What became of the angels who remained faithful to God?

The angels who remained faithful to God stayed in Heaven to enjoy the vision of God forever and to love, bless, and praise Him without end.

### 36. Is praising God all that the good angels do?

Some of them also act as God's ministers and messengers, while others act as our *guardian angels*. The belief that every human being has a personal guardian angel, especially one whom God assigned to watch over him "from infancy to death," is not merely a pious or popular Catholic belief. It is official Catholic teaching (CCC 336).



**Fig. 1.1.8 Guardian Angel Protecting a Child from the Demon**

Most pictures of guardian angels show them protecting children from physical harm. The above picture shows the guardian angel protecting a child from the devil, which is what the guardian angel mostly does.



### 37. Should we be praying also to our guardian angel?

Yes. We should be particularly devoted to our guardian angel, honoring him, invoking his aid, and following his inspirations throughout our lives. See Appendix to Part 4 for the *Prayer to Our Guardian Angel*.

### 38. Do individuals alone have a guardian angel?

Many people think that guardian angels protect individual souls only. Yet we know from St. John the Evangelist that each church or community of believers also has its guardian angel (Rev 1:20). Angels may be assigned to watch not just churches but entire cities and nations (CCC 57).



**Fig. 1.1.9 Guardian Angel of Portugal**

The statue shows the angel carrying the coat of arms of Portugal. A statue of a similar angel carrying the shield of the U.S.A. is at the National Blue Army Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima in Washington, D.C., and is known as the “*Guardian Angel of the United States*.”

## MAN

**39. Which is the noblest creature God has placed on Earth?**

The noblest creature God has placed on Earth is man.

**40. What is man?**

Man is a rational creature composed of body and soul.

**41. What is the soul?**

The soul is the noblest part of man because it is a spiritual substance endowed with intelligence and free will, capable of knowing God, loving Him, and possessing Him forever.

**42. Can the human soul be seen and touched?**

The soul can neither be seen nor touched because it is a spirit.

**43. Will the human soul die when the body dies?**

The human soul never dies because a spirit has no parts that can decompose. A spirit is, therefore, indivisible and immortal. The human soul is immortal and will never die.

**44. Is man free in his actions?**

Yes, man is free in his actions. Each one feels within himself that he can do a thing, leave it undone, or do one thing rather than another. Man has the power of free choice. It is because man is free to choose between good and evil that he will either be rewarded or punished in the next life. Because God is all-just, He will reward the good and punish the evil in the next life.

**45. Why do we say that man was created in the image and likeness of God?**

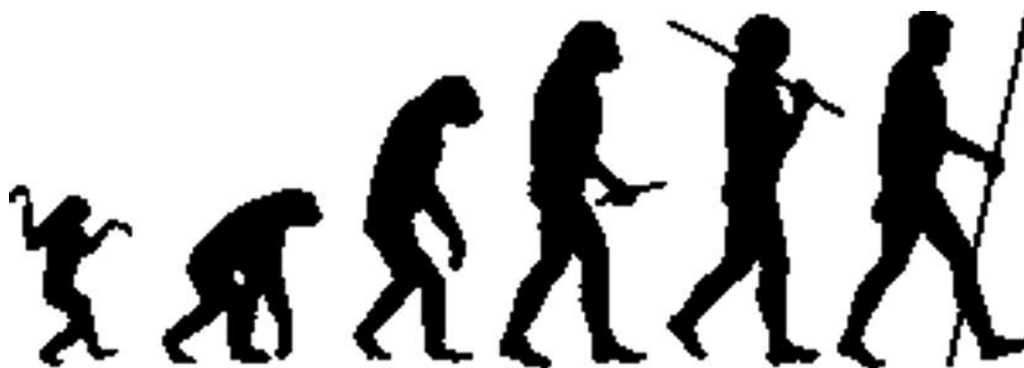
We say that man was created in the image and likeness of God because the human soul is spiritual, rational, free in its operations, and capable of knowing and loving Him forever. These perfections reflect the image of God in us (CCC 1705).



**46. Which, then, is more important—the body or the soul?**

The soul, which never dies, is certainly more important than the body, which can die. This is why those who spend more time taking care of their bodies but neglect to take care of their souls are indeed very foolish. Equally foolish are those who make a great effort to gain riches and success in this world but fail to pray, avoid sin, and practice the virtues that will help them attain union with God. The Bible says, “What does it profit a man if he gains the whole world but suffers the loss of his soul?” (Mark 8:36)

**47. Did not science say that man actually came from lower forms of animals through evolution?**



**Fig. 1.1.10 A Simplified Illustration of Human Evolution**

The idea that the human body evolved from the bodies of lower animals is an unproven hypothesis of modern science. The Bible said that God created man in a special way from matter already in the world, but it did not say that his body came from the bodies of lower animals. His soul, being spiritual, cannot evolve from matter but was created directly by God: “And the Lord God formed man of the slime of the earth and breathed into his face the breath of life...” (Gen 2:7) While it is *possible* that the human body (but not the soul) could be a product of evolution, this is highly *unlikely* because man was made into God’s image and likeness. Granted that this “image and likeness” is primarily in the soul, the truth is that the body also shares in the dignity of man. For it is the *whole man*, not just the soul, that was made into God’s image and likeness (CCC 364).

**48. Are there not many scientists who claim that evolution is already a proven fact?**

Yes, but there are also many equally competent scientists who deny the allegation. The truth is that the idea of evolution, not only of man but of other species of animals, is still an open scientific question. In any case, whether the various species of plants and animals evolved from lower species or were formed independently of each other from other created substances, the action of God is still required to direct the development of matter into different living substances. The beauty of creation is not the work of chance!

Also, while evolution is possible for the various species of plants and lower animals, it is *impossible* for the human soul, which is spiritual, and *unlikely* for the human body, which shares in the dignity of the whole man.

**49. Does not the idea of evolution prove that there can be a conflict between science and religion?**

Not at all. There may be a conflict between unproven scientific *hypotheses* and religion, but not between science and religion. There cannot be a conflict between science and religion because both come from God, who is the source of all truth, and God does not contradict Himself. In fact, there have been many prominent scientists who have also publicly manifested their religious faith. **Roger Bacon** (1220–1292), a Franciscan friar, antedated Francis Bacon in formulating the principles of the scientific method. **Guy de Chauliac** (1300–1368), a papal physician, was the father of modern surgery. **Gregor Johann Mendel** (1822–1884), an Augustinian priest, was the founder of modern genetics. **Georges Lemaître** (1894–1966), a Belgian Catholic priest, was the father of the Big Bang theory. More examples can be given. *Wikipedia* shows long lists of [Catholic Clergy Scientists](#) and [Lay Catholic Scientists](#).

**50. In what state did God place our first parents, Adam and Eve, in Paradise?**

God originally placed our first parents, Adam and Eve, in a state of innocence and grace. Sanctifying grace was the chief gift that God gave our first parents, for it made them friends of God and gave them the right to Heaven. Unfortunately, Adam and Eve lost this grace when they sinned.

**51. What do you call the state of Adam and Eve before they fell into sin?**

The state of Adam and Eve before the Fall is called “the state of original justice.” This state was characterized by a triple harmony. In the state of original justice, Adam and Eve were in *harmony with God*; they were in *harmony with themselves*; and they were in *harmony with the rest of creation* (CCC 374).

1. Adam and Eve were in harmony with God because they enjoyed God’s friendship, and God provided them with everything they needed. Since they were created *as adults*, God gave them the gift of **knowledge**. With this gift, they didn’t have to learn how to walk, speak, or manage their lives because God already gave them these skills and abilities at the moment of creation.
2. Adam and Eve were also in harmony with themselves, not only by being at peace with each other but also internally, or within themselves, because their passion was perfectly subject to their reason. This is called the gift of **integrity**. By this gift, Adam and Eve suffered no evil inclination because their passion and sensible desires were in perfect accord with the rule of their reason.
3. Adam and Eve were also in harmony with the rest of creation. This means that they were not only at peace with all the animals but also with all the elements and forces of nature. With their gifts of **immunity** and **immortality**, Adam and Eve were created free from all sicknesses, pain, sorrow, and even death.

**52. How did Adam and Eve commit the first sin?**

When God placed Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, He told them that they could eat any fruit in the garden except the fruit of a certain tree that grew in the garden. One day, the devil appeared to Eve in the form of a serpent and told her that if she were to eat the forbidden fruit, she would also become all-knowing and all-powerful like God. That was a lie. But Eve believed it, ate the fruit, and gave some to Adam. When Adam learned from Eve what the devil said, he also believed the devil's lie and ate the fruit. Both Adam and Eve disobeyed God and committed the first sin by eating the forbidden fruit.



**Fig. 1.1.11 The Sin of Adam and Eve**



**53. What was the nature of Adam's sin?**

Adam's sin was a sin of pride and grave disobedience.

**54. What happened to Adam and Eve on account of their sin?**

They lost the *grace* of God and the right they had to the kingdom of Heaven. They were driven out of Paradise and lost the triple harmony that existed in their state of original justice. For not only did they break their friendship with God, but they also lost the internal harmony within themselves and their harmony with the rest of creation. In Paradise, Adam and Eve didn't have to work because God provided them with everything they needed. But outside of Paradise, they had to work to sustain themselves. And without the special gifts of knowledge, integrity, immunity, and immortality, they had to learn everything, including how to harness the forces of nature and how to tame the animals that were once subject to them. They also became subject to all sorts of misery and illnesses and were condemned to death.

**55. If Adam and Eve had not sinned, would they have been exempt from death?**

Yes. If Adam and Eve had not sinned and had remained faithful to God, then, after their happy and peaceful stay here on Earth and without dying, they and their descendants would have been transferred by God into Heaven to enjoy a life of unending happiness with Him.

**56. Did Adam and Eve deserve the special gifts originally given to them?**

No, those gifts were free from God. They are called "preternatural gifts" because they were *over and beyond what Adam and Eve would have naturally received* if God had not given them a very special love. Thus, one could not justly blame God for taking those gifts away from them after the Fall.



**57. Does this sin belong to Adam and Eve alone?**

No, this sin is not the sin of Adam and Eve alone; it is also our sin, though in a different sense. In the case of Adam and Eve, it was an **actual sin** because they committed it by an act of their will. In us, it is not actual sin but is called **original sin** because we acquired it, not by actually committing it, but because we *originated* from Adam and Eve, who committed it.

**58. How can original sin be transmitted to all humans?**

When parents lose their home to fire because of their carelessness, don't the children also lose their home? Of course, they do. When Adam and Eve lost their special gifts and privileges because of their sin, we, their descendants, also lost the same gifts and privileges. This loss is an inherited one. And that is what original sin is. It is the sin and punishment of all human beings, which they inherited by having originated from Adam and Eve. Every descendant of Adam and Eve is born without the right to enter Heaven and without the gifts of integrity, immortality, immunity, and knowledge.

**59. Are all humans born with original sin?**

Yes, except for the Blessed Virgin Mary and Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Since the Virgin Mary was destined to be the Mother of God, the Almighty God preserved her from original sin by applying to her the future merits of her Son, Jesus Christ, when she was conceived. This special privilege is called the *privilege of her **Immaculate Conception***.

It is by her immaculate conception that Mary would crush the head of the serpent (representing Satan), a prophecy given when God drove Adam and Eve out of Paradise. God told the serpent: "I will put enmities between you and the woman (Eve), and your seed and her seed (Mary); **she shall crush your head**, and you shall lie in wait for her heel" (Gen 3:15).



**Fig. 1.1.12 Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception**

Did you notice what the Virgin Mary is stepping on? Can you explain what it means?

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**60. Is the Virgin Mary's immaculate conception an article of our Catholic Faith?**

Yes, the immaculate conception of the Virgin Mary is an article of our Catholic Faith, although it is not one of the twelve articles of the Apostle's Creed. It is one of the teachings of the Church that we learned from Sacred Tradition. Although this teaching was disputed at one time, the Apostles and the early Church felt that it would be an embarrassment to the Son of God to have a sinful mother. Therefore, on December 8, 1854, Pope Bl. Pius IX ended all discussions by defining the immaculate conception of the Virgin Mary as an infallible dogma that must be believed by all (CCC 491).

**61. Why did Jesus Christ not contract original sin?**

Our Lord was not born with original sin because He did not originate from Adam since He did not have a human father. Instead, He received the holiness of God the Father, His true Father in Heaven. Of course, Jesus Christ also received His human nature from His mother, Mary, who is a descendant of Adam. But because of the privilege of her immaculate conception, the Virgin Mary was conceived and born without original sin. Therefore, Jesus Christ did not inherit original sin through her either.

**62. If everyone, except the Virgin Mary and Jesus Christ, is born with original sin, how could humanity be saved?**

No one would be saved if God did not show mercy toward them.

**63. What mercy did God show to the human race?**

When He drove them out of Paradise, God promised Adam and Eve that He would send them a Redeemer, or Savior, who would regain for them and their descendants the gift of *grace* and the right to the kingdom of Heaven. The Redeemer would also free them from the slavery of sin<sup>4</sup> and the devil.

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<sup>4</sup> The "slavery of sin" refers to our tendency to sin or our weakness to control our passions and evil inclinations, which, *as a result of sin*, often prompt us to avoid what is good and do acts that are evil. Thus, St. Paul says, "I do not do the good that I will, but I do the evil that I hate" (Rom 7:15).

**64. Who is the promised Redeemer or Savior of the world?**

The promised Redeemer or Savior of the world is the Son of God, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, who took human nature without losing His divinity. As man, He took the name Jesus Christ. By becoming man, God the Son was able to pay for the sin of man by obeying God the Father, even though it led to His suffering and death on the cross.

**65. How did God the Son become man?**

God the Father first sent the Angel Gabriel to a holy virgin whose name was Mary. The angel said to her, “Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee.” It means, “God is very pleased with you, Mary.” Then he explained to her that God had chosen her to become the mother of a child Who would be called Jesus. Mary asked the angel, “How shall this happen?” The angel answered, “By the power of the Holy Spirit. He will come upon you, and the child who will be born of you shall be called the Son of God.” When Mary said yes, the Baby Jesus began to grow in her womb. (Luke 1:26–38).

**66. Did God the Son cease to be God when He became man?**

No, He remained God while also being a man. Jesus Christ is both true God and true man.

**67. When did God the Son become a man?**

God the Son became a man over 2000 years ago in the womb of the Virgin Mary. He was born in a stable in Bethlehem on Christmas Day. That was the first Christmas. Shepherds came to visit Him. Then, a few days after His birth, three wise men (believed by many people to be Arabian kings because of the expensive gifts they carried) came from the east to visit Him, showing that He was the Lord of the ignorant as well as the learned, the Lord of the poor and the rich alike.



## ARTICLE 2: *“And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, Our Lord.”*

### 1. What does the second article of the Creed teach us?

The second article of the Creed teaches us that the Son of God is the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity; that, like the Father, He is God eternal, almighty, Creator, and Lord; that He became man to save us; and that the Son of God, who became man, is called Jesus Christ.

### 2. Why is the Second Person called the Son?

The Second Person is called the Son because He was begotten by the Father from all eternity by way of intelligence. For this reason, He is also called the Eternal Word of the Father.<sup>5</sup>

### 3. Since we are also sons of God, why is Jesus Christ called the only Son of God the Father?

Jesus Christ is called the only Son of God the Father because He alone is His Son by nature, whereas we are His sons by adoption.

### 4. Why is the Son of God, who became man, called Jesus Christ?

The name “Jesus” means Savior or “God saves.” The Son of God who became man is called Jesus because He came to save us from the punishments due to our sins. When the Angel Gabriel told the Virgin Mary that she was chosen to be the Mother of God, he also told her that the baby that would be born of her was to be named Jesus (Luke 1:31). He is also called “Christ,” which means consecrated or anointed, because He has been anointed with the Holy Spirit and with power (CCC 430, 436).

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<sup>5</sup> In us, words are the verbal representation of our ideas or mental images, and these ideas and images proceed from our minds. In God, the Word also represents the Image that proceeds from the Father’s eternal act of knowing Himself. By knowing Himself, the Father forms an Image of Himself. This “Image” of the Father— this Eternal Word—is God the Son. (CCC 241)





**Fig. 1.2.1 The Annunciation**

### **5. Why is Jesus Christ called Our Lord?**

Jesus Christ is called Our Lord because this title indicates His sovereignty, supreme power, and authority over us. To call Jesus “Lord” is to believe in His divinity (CCC 449, 455).

### **6. Did people have any knowledge of Our Lord Jesus Christ before He was born?**

Yes. Before His birth, many prophecies foretold His coming, and people were already expecting the Savior whom God promised to our first parents, Adam and Eve.

### **7. What did the prophecies foretell about the future Redeemer?**

Regarding the future Redeemer, the prophecies foretold whose family He was to come from, the place and time of His birth, His miracles, the circumstances of His passion and death, His resurrection, and even His ascension into Heaven. That was how the three wise men knew when and where Christ was to be born. They learned it from the prophecies written on ancient scrolls and manuscripts. They went to Judea looking for Him.

### **8. How do we know that Jesus Christ is the promised Savior and Redeemer of the world?**

We know that Jesus Christ is truly the promised Savior and Redeemer of the world because, in Him, all the prophecies about the Savior were fulfilled.

### **9. How do we know that Jesus Christ is a true man?**

We know that Jesus Christ is a true man because He was born of a human mother, the Virgin Mary. He has a body and soul like ours. He has our human nature. As a true man, Christ was born just like us. He grew up, worked, ate, slept, and did everything that normal human beings do. However, St. Thomas Aquinas taught that Christ never got sick, suffered any abnormality, or committed sin because He was a perfect human. He could feel pain and suffer injury because a normal body would feel pain when wounded. He could get hungry and thirsty because these are normal for any human body. He had everything that a normal human body has. But sin, sickness, and physical and psychological abnormalities are not normal for a human being. So, Christ, being a perfect man, did not have those.

### **10. How do we know that Jesus Christ is truly God?**

We know that Jesus Christ is truly God because (1) God the Father said of Him, “This is My beloved Son...” first, when St. John the Baptist baptized Him (Matt 3:17), and second, during the Transfiguration (Matt 17:5); (2) the Angel Gabriel told the Virgin Mary that her son would be the Son of God (Luke 1:35); and (3)



Christ himself said that He is true God (Mark 14:61–62), and He confirmed it by performing marvelous miracles.

**11. What miracles did Jesus Christ perform that showed His divinity?**

Besides the fact that He rose from the dead, the chief miracles performed by Jesus Christ that showed His divinity are restoring health to the sick, sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, and life to the dead. In one instance, He also walked on water, calmed the storm, changed water into wine, and multiplied bread and fish to feed 5000 men, not counting women and children (Matt 14:21).



**Fig. 1.2.2 Christ Healing the Sick**

## **ARTICLE 3: “Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary.”**

### **1. What does the third article of the Creed teach us?**

The third article of the Creed teaches us that, by the operation of the Holy Spirit, the Son of God took a body and soul like ours in the chaste womb of the Virgin Mary and was born of her.

### **2. Did the Father and the Son also take part in forming the body and creating the soul of Jesus Christ?**

Yes, all three Divine Persons cooperated in forming the body and creating the soul of Jesus Christ.

### **3. Why, then, is it simply said that He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and not also by the Father and the Son?**

It is simply said that He was conceived by the Holy Spirit because the incarnation of the Son of God is a work of goodness and love. Works of goodness and love are attributed to the Holy Spirit in the same manner as works of divine power are attributed to the Father, although all three Divine Persons also cooperate in works of divine omnipotence, such as the creation of the world.

### **4. Did God the Son cease to be God when He became man?**

No, He remained true God and true man, a God-man. It is difficult to understand how God can be a man at the same time. This is another profound truth of our faith, which is why it is called a mystery—the **Mystery of the Incarnation** (CCC 464–469).

### **5. Are there, then, two natures in Jesus Christ, one human and one divine?**

Yes, in Jesus Christ, there are two natures: the divine and the human. This union of the divine and human natures in the single Person of Christ is known as a *hypostatic union*. He is God and a perfect man—a true God-man. There is no one else like Him. He is the only Person who is both true God and true man (CCC 481).

**6. In Jesus Christ, are there also two persons, the divine and the human?**

No, Christ is only ONE Person, although He has two natures. As a Person, He is divine and is the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity. Jesus Christ, the true God, is the same Divine Person as Jesus Christ, the true man. Therefore, there is only one Person, called Jesus Christ, and He is not a human but a Divine Person.

**7. Was Jesus Christ always a man?**

No, Jesus Christ became a man only 2000 years ago when He was conceived in the womb of the Virgin Mary.



**Fig. 1.3.1 Conceived by the Holy Spirit and Born of the Virgin Mary**



### **8. Is Jesus Christ always God?**

Yes, Jesus Christ is always God. Because, as the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, He is equal to the Father and the Holy Spirit in being and divinity. If the Father and the Holy Spirit are always God, so is Jesus Christ.

### **9. How many wills are there in Jesus Christ?**

In Jesus Christ, there are two wills, one human and the other divine. Jesus Christ also possessed free will, but, as a perfect man, He would not choose evil because to choose evil is a defect of freedom, an imperfection rather than a perfection.

### **10. Are the Son of God and the Son of Mary the same Person?**

Yes, the Son of God and the Son of Mary are the same Person, which is Jesus Christ, true God and true man.

### **11. Is the Blessed Virgin Mary God?**

No, the Virgin Mary is only human. But because Jesus Christ is God, and Mary is the mother of Jesus, Mary is rightly called the Mother of God (CCC 509).

### **12. How did the Virgin Mary become the mother of Jesus Christ?**

The Virgin Mary became the mother of Jesus Christ when she conceived Him through the power of the Holy Spirit and without the need of any man. Thus, Jesus Christ did not have a human father, but He had a foster father or guardian whose name was St. Joseph, the man to whom the Virgin Mary was legally married.

### **13. Is it part of our Catholic Faith that Mary was always a virgin?**

Yes, it is part of our Catholic Faith that Mary was always a virgin *before, during, and after* the birth of Jesus Christ. She remained a virgin when she conceived Jesus Christ because she conceived Him solely by the power of the Holy Spirit and not by any man. She is, therefore, truly the Virgin of Virgins (CCC 510).

#### 14. What became of the Blessed Virgin Mary after Our Lord ascended into Heaven?

After Our Lord ascended into Heaven, the Blessed Virgin Mary followed St. John the Apostle, to whose care Our Lord entrusted her (John 19:25–27).

#### 15. Where did the Virgin Mary die?

Nobody knows where the Virgin Mary died. And nobody knows if she died at all. All that we know is that at the end of her stay here on Earth, she was lifted body and soul into Heaven (CCC 966).

Some believe that, because death is a penalty for sin and Mary was sinless, she did not die but was lifted straight to Heaven when the time came for her to be reunited with her Son.

Others believe that, because Mary was Our Lord's companion in sorrow, if Jesus Himself died, Mary also would have died, not as a penalty for sin but to make her compassionate suffering with her Son more complete. They also believe that, after three days, she was raised from the dead and was lifted into Heaven.

Note the difference between the Virgin Mary and Our Lord Jesus. Because Jesus Christ is God, He rose from the dead and ascended into Heaven *by His own power*.<sup>6</sup> On the other hand, because Mary is only human, she needed to be raised from the dead (if she died) and lifted into Heaven *by the power of God*. This is the reason why we say that Jesus Christ *ascended* into Heaven by Himself, while the Virgin Mary *was assumed* into Heaven by God. We celebrate Christ's **ascension** into Heaven by His own power, but we celebrate Mary's **assumption** into Heaven by the power of God.

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<sup>6</sup> As a man, of course, Christ needed His body to be raised from the dead by God. This is why we read texts like “God raised Him up from the dead on the third day” (Acts 13:30). But, as God, Christ rose from the dead by His power, for He said, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up” (John 2:19). As St. John clarified, Christ was speaking of the temple of His body (John 2:21).



**Fig. 1.3.2 The Assumption of the Virgin Mary**

Notice how the artist shows the Virgin Mary being lifted by the angels rather than going up into Heaven by herself.



## **16. Is the assumption of the Virgin Mary also an article of our Catholic Faith?**

**Yes, the assumption of the Virgin Mary is also an article of our Catholic Faith.** Like the dogma of the immaculate conception, the dogma about the assumption of Mary into Heaven is not one of the twelve articles of the Apostle's Creed, but it is a teaching that is binding on all Catholics. It was defined by Pope Bl. Pius XII as an infallible teaching on November 1, 1950. Therefore, one may still doubt whether the Virgin Mary died or not, but one may no longer doubt that she was assumed into Heaven when her time came to be reunited with her Son. The dogma of the assumption of the Virgin Mary must be believed by all Catholics.

## **17. When was the Virgin Mary assumed into Heaven?**

The exact year of the Virgin Mary's assumption into Heaven is not recorded anywhere. But some of the visionaries, such as St. Bridget of Sweden and Blessed Catherine Emmerich, said that the Virgin Mary stayed on Earth for 15 or 16 more years after Christ's ascension into Heaven. Another visionary, the Venerable Mary of Agreda, said that the Virgin Mary was already 70 years old when she was lifted into Heaven. However, all these data only came from private revelations and must, therefore, be regarded only as approximate estimates, not dogmas.

## **18. What happened when the Virgin Mary entered Heaven?**

It is the pious belief of many Catholics that upon her arrival in Heaven, the Virgin Mary was crowned **Queen of Heaven**. This belief has not been defined as infallible teaching, but it is a logical sequel to the dogma of the assumption. Since Mary has been associated with Jesus Christ in the work of redemption, it is only right that she also shares, in a subordinate way, the royal dignity of her Son. In other words, just as Jesus Christ is regarded as Our Lord and King, Mary is hailed as Our Lady and Queen.



**Fig. 1.3.3 The Coronation of the Virgin Mary**



## **ARTICLE 4: “*Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.*”**

### **1. What does the fourth article of the Creed teach us?**

The fourth article of the Creed teaches us that to redeem the world from sin, Jesus Christ suffered under Pontius Pilate (the Governor of Judea), died on the cross, and, on being taken down from there, was buried.

### **2. How did Jesus Christ redeem the world from sin?**

Christ redeemed the world from sin by suffering and dying on the cross. He was first scourged, crowned with thorns, and then crucified.

### **3. Could the Father not just forgive Adam’s sin instead of sending His Son to suffer for us?**

No, because Adam’s sin had a penalty to be paid, which was death, and divine justice requires that it be paid. The Father sent His Son to pay the penalty and satisfy divine justice.

### **4. Would it not have been enough for an angel to come and redeem us from sin?**

No, because the offense that Adam’s sin gave to God was, in a sense, infinite. The dignity of the person offended measures the seriousness of an offense; the higher the dignity of the offended person, the more grievous the offense. Thus, it is a more serious offense to strike a military general than to strike an ordinary soldier. Since the Person offended by Adam’s sin was God, who is infinite in dignity and perfection, the offense that Adam caused by His sin was, in that sense, infinitely grievous. No reparation by any creature would be adequate to compensate for the offense done to God’s majesty. No reparation made by even the entire world, by an angel, or the heavenly host would be enough to satisfy the damage caused by man’s sin.



**Fig. 1.4.1 A Pendant Showing the Instruments of Christ's Passion**  
From the Metropolitan Museum of Art

### **5. Why did the Son of God Himself need to come and redeem us?**

Just as the dignity of the person offended measures the seriousness of an offense, so too does the dignity of the person making the reparation measure the value of the reparation. The higher the dignity of the person making the reparation, the more valuable the reparation. If the person making the reparation is a Divine Person, the reparation will have infinite merit and be sufficient to satisfy an infinitely grievous offense. This is why the Son of God had to come and become human so that, through His sacrifice, satisfactory reparation could be made for man's sin.

### **6. What does the word “suffered” denote?**

The word “suffered” denotes all the pains that Christ endured during His passion.

### **7. Did Jesus Christ suffer as God or as man?**

Jesus Christ suffered as man. As God, He could neither suffer nor die.

### **8. What kind of punishment was death on the cross?**

In those days, the punishment known as the *crucifixion* was the cruelest and most disgraceful of all punishments. It was the kind of punishment usually reserved for criminals. Although Christ was innocent as a lamb, He was punished and treated like a criminal. In fact, He was crucified with two thieves.

### **9. Who was it that condemned Jesus Christ to be crucified?**

He who condemned Jesus Christ to be crucified was Pontius Pilate, the Governor of Judea, who, though recognizing Christ's innocence, cowardly yielded to the threats of the people of Jerusalem. The Jews told him that if he did not condemn Christ, who was reputed to be the King of Kings, then he was not being loyal to Caesar, the Emperor of Rome. Pilate did not want to get into trouble with Caesar, so he handed Christ to the Jews to be crucified.

**10. So, were Pontius Pilate and the Jews responsible for Christ's death on the cross?**

Yes, but Pontius Pilate and the Jews were not solely responsible for Christ's death. Actually, we sinners are all responsible for Christ's passion and death, for if we had not sinned, Christ would not have come to suffer for us. So, the Church does not lay the entire blame for the sufferings of Jesus Christ on Pontius Pilate and the Jews alone, but also on Christians and all sinners. St. Francis of Assisi even said, "Nor did demons crucify him; it is you who have crucified him and crucify him still, when you delight in your vices and sins" (CCC 598).

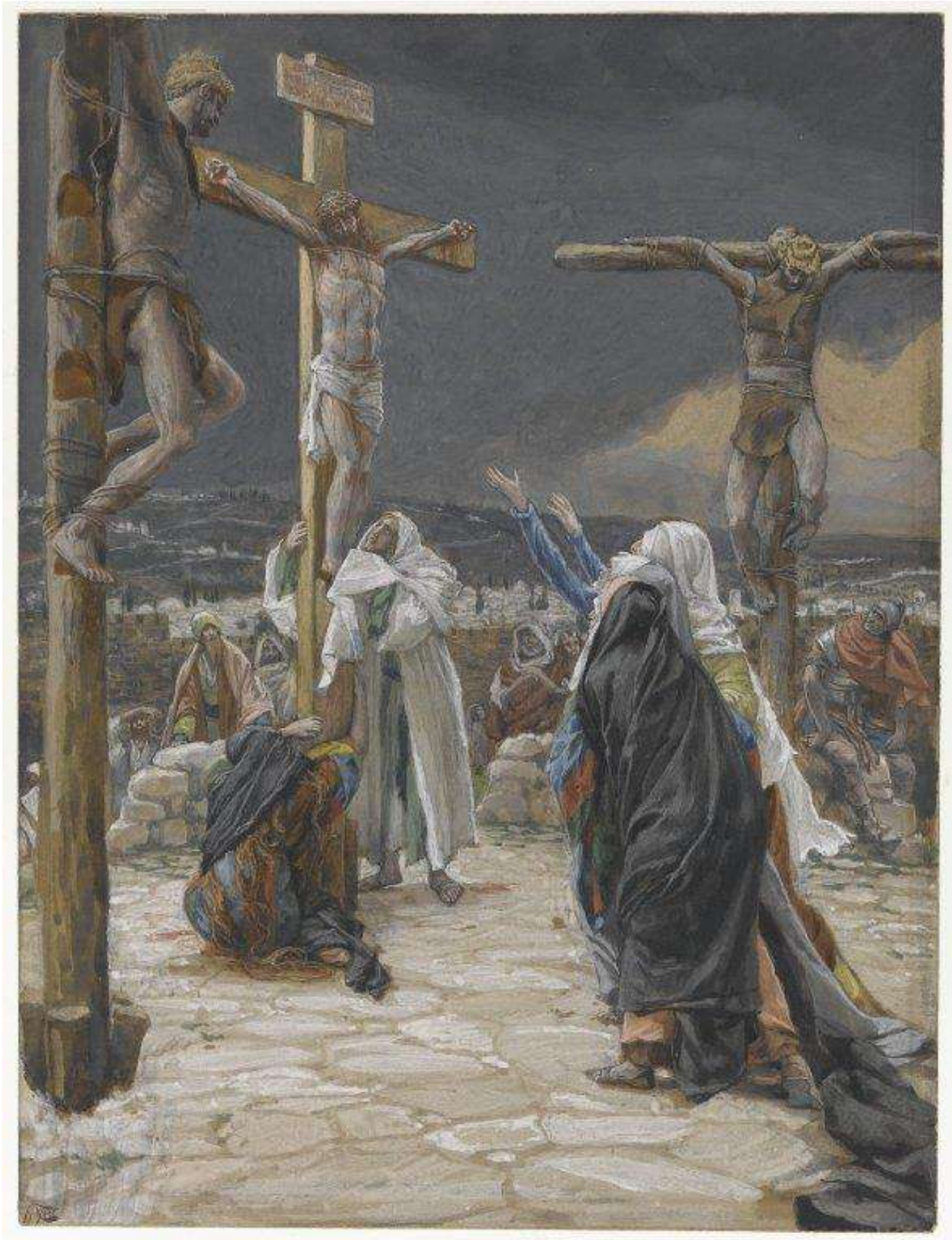
**11. Were Christ's passion and death determined solely by the free decisions of men?**

No, they were also part of God's predetermined plan of salvation. Christ came to redeem us from sin. God allowed and knew from eternity all the events that would lead to Christ's passion and crucifixion without violating the freedom of the people who were involved in bringing about His plan of salvation. The Jews, King Herod, Pontius Pilate, and all those who participated in making God's plan unfold in history were not merely passive players acting according to God's plan but were each actively using their free decisions to bring about, unbeknownst to them, God's redemptive plan (CCC 599, 600).

**12. What, then, was the ultimate or first cause of Christ's passion and death?**

The ultimate cause, or the first initiative, that brought about Christ's passion and death is God's eternal love for us. From eternity, God's benevolent love, without merit on our part, conceived the incarnation of the Son of God so that the damage caused by Adam's Fall—already present in His eternal vision—could be repaired (CCC 604).





**Fig. 1.4.2 Christ Crucified Between Two Thieves**



**13. Where was Jesus Christ crucified?**

Jesus Christ was crucified on Mount Calvary (Matt 27:33), a place called *Golgotha* in Hebrew (John 19:17).

**14. Could Jesus Christ not have freed Himself from the hands of Pilate and the Jews?**

Yes, Jesus Christ could have freed Himself from the hands of Pilate and the Jews, but knowing that it was His Father's will that He should redeem us from sin, He voluntarily accepted death on the cross and offered His life to the Father for our sake (CCC 606).

**15. What did Jesus Christ do while on the cross?**

On the cross, Jesus Christ prayed for His enemies, gave His Most Blessed Mother as a mother to St. John, and, in his person, to all of us. Christ offered up His death in sacrifice and satisfied the justice of God for the sins of humankind.

**16. If Christ died on the cross and Christ is God, then could we say that God died on the cross?**

To say "God died on the cross" is misleading because God never dies. To avoid confusion, it is better to say, "A Divine Person died on the cross," rather than simply saying, "God died on the cross." For although God, as God, never dies, the Divine Person, Jesus Christ, has a human nature that can die (CCC 468).

**17. Was it necessary for Christ to suffer as much as He did?**

No, Jesus Christ didn't need to suffer as much as He did because, each of His acts being of infinite value, the least of His sufferings would have sufficed for our redemption.

**18. Why, then, did Jesus Christ suffer so much?**

Jesus Christ suffered so much to satisfy divine justice all the more abundantly, to display His love for us even more, and to inspire us with the deepest horror of sin.

**19. Did anything remarkable happen when Christ died?**

Yes, at the death of Jesus Christ, the sun was darkened, the earth trembled, the veil of the temple was torn in half, graves opened, and many of the dead arose (Matt 27:51–52).

**20. Was the divinity separated from the body and soul of Jesus Christ by His death?**

No. At His death, the Divine Person, Jesus Christ, continued to assume His body and soul. Therefore, only the soul of Christ was separated from the body, but His body and soul *continued to exist in His Person*. This is why, at His death, Christ's body was not reduced to a mere cadaver but remained sacred, divine, and incorrupt (CCC 626, 627, 630).

**21. For whom did Jesus Christ die?**

Jesus Christ died for all men and made satisfaction for all (CCC 605).

**22. If Jesus Christ died for the salvation of all men, will all men be saved?**

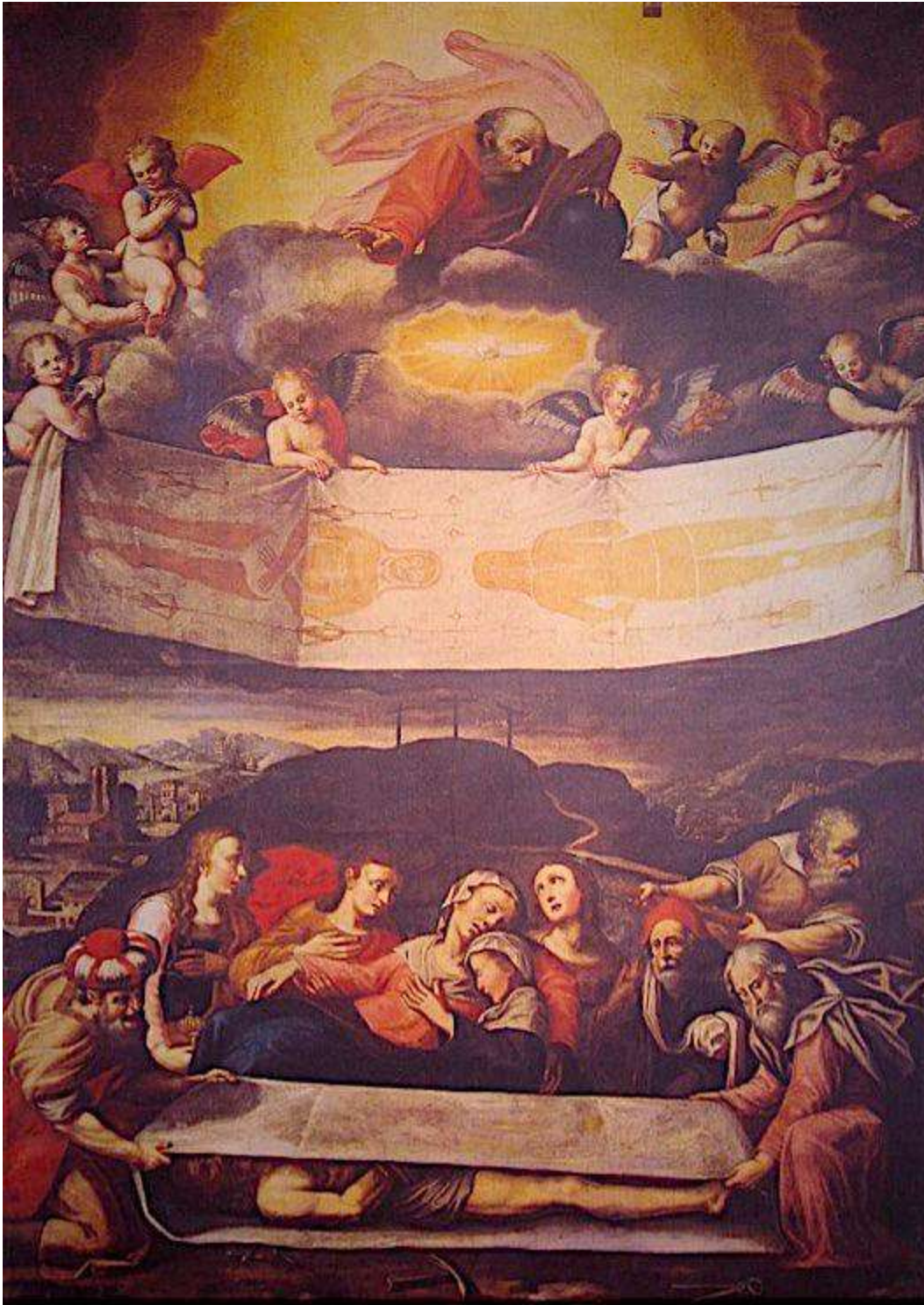
Jesus Christ died for all, but not all are saved because not all will acknowledge Him. Not all observe His Law, and not all avail themselves of the means of salvation He has left us.

**23. To be saved, is it enough that Jesus Christ died for us?**

No, it is not enough for our salvation that Jesus Christ has died for us. It is also necessary that the fruit of His passion and death be applied to each one of us by each one receiving the sacraments and the graces earned by His passion and death, especially the Sacraments of Reconciliation and the Holy Eucharist.

**24. Where was the body of Jesus Christ buried?**

The body of Jesus Christ was buried in a new grave cut out of a rock on the mount, not far from where He was crucified.



**Fig. 1.4.3 The Burial of Jesus Christ**

The body of Jesus Christ was wrapped in a long linen cloth called a shroud (Mark 15:46). After the resurrection, Jesus Christ left the tomb, but the linen cloth remained (Luke 24:12).

## ARTICLE 5: “*He descended into hell; on the third day He rose again from the dead.*”

### 1. What does the fifth article of the Creed teach us?

The fifth article of the Creed teaches us that the soul of Jesus Christ, on being separated from His body, descended to the “hell of the just,” and that on the third day, it became united once more to His body, never to be parted from it again.

### 2. What is meant here by the “hell of the just”?

There are two kinds of “hell”: the *hell of the damned* and the *hell of the just*. Before Christ redeemed us from sin, no one could enter Heaven because it had been closed for us by Adam’s sin. The souls of bad people who had died went straight to the “hell of the damned,” while the souls of good people who had died went to the “hell of the just,” where they waited until Christ accomplished our redemption by His death.

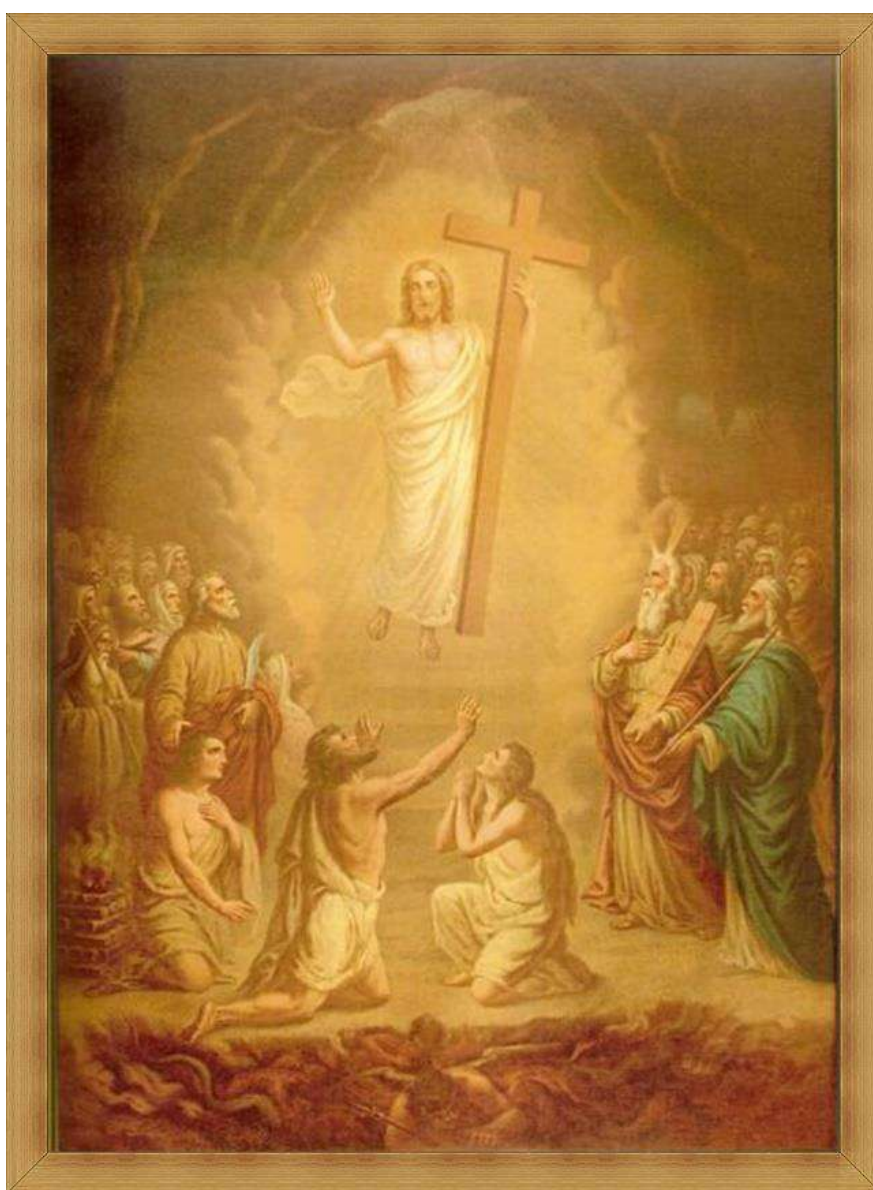
The **hell of the damned** (Greek *Gehenna* or Hebrew *Gai Hinnom*) is where the devils and demons are punished. This is also the place where the souls of bad people go when they die with mortal sin in their souls. The bad souls that go there will suffer hellfire together with the demons forever. There will be no end to their pain and suffering.

The **hell of the just** (Greek *Hades* or Hebrew *Sheol*) was the underworld, or the abode of the dead, a temporary place where the souls of good people go after death. This is the place where they waited until Christ came to accomplish our redemption. There were neither demons nor devils in the hell of the just, and the human souls waiting there did not suffer hellfire. It is called “hell” only because it was a place separate from Heaven and God. The kind of pain that the good souls suffered was the pain of their *longing* for God: “I can’t wait to be in Heaven. I can’t wait to see God.” The



longer they waited, the more they suffered. So, although there was no hellfire in this place, it was a kind of hell because, unlike Heaven, it was not a place of perfect happiness.

In the fifth article of the Creed, we say that Christ descended into “hell.” But He did not descend into the hell of the damned. He went into the hell of the just to tell the good souls waiting there the good news that their long wait was over and that they could now go to Heaven with Him (CCC 633).



**Fig. 1.5.1 Christ's Descent into the Hell of the Just**



**3. Why were the souls of good people (or the “just”) not admitted into Heaven before the death of Jesus Christ?**

The souls of good people were not admitted into Heaven before the death of Jesus Christ because Adam’s sin closed Heaven’s door to them, and it was fitting that Jesus Christ, who reopened it by His death, should be the first to enter it.

**4. If the souls of the just already went to Heaven with Christ, does the “hell of the just” still exist today?**

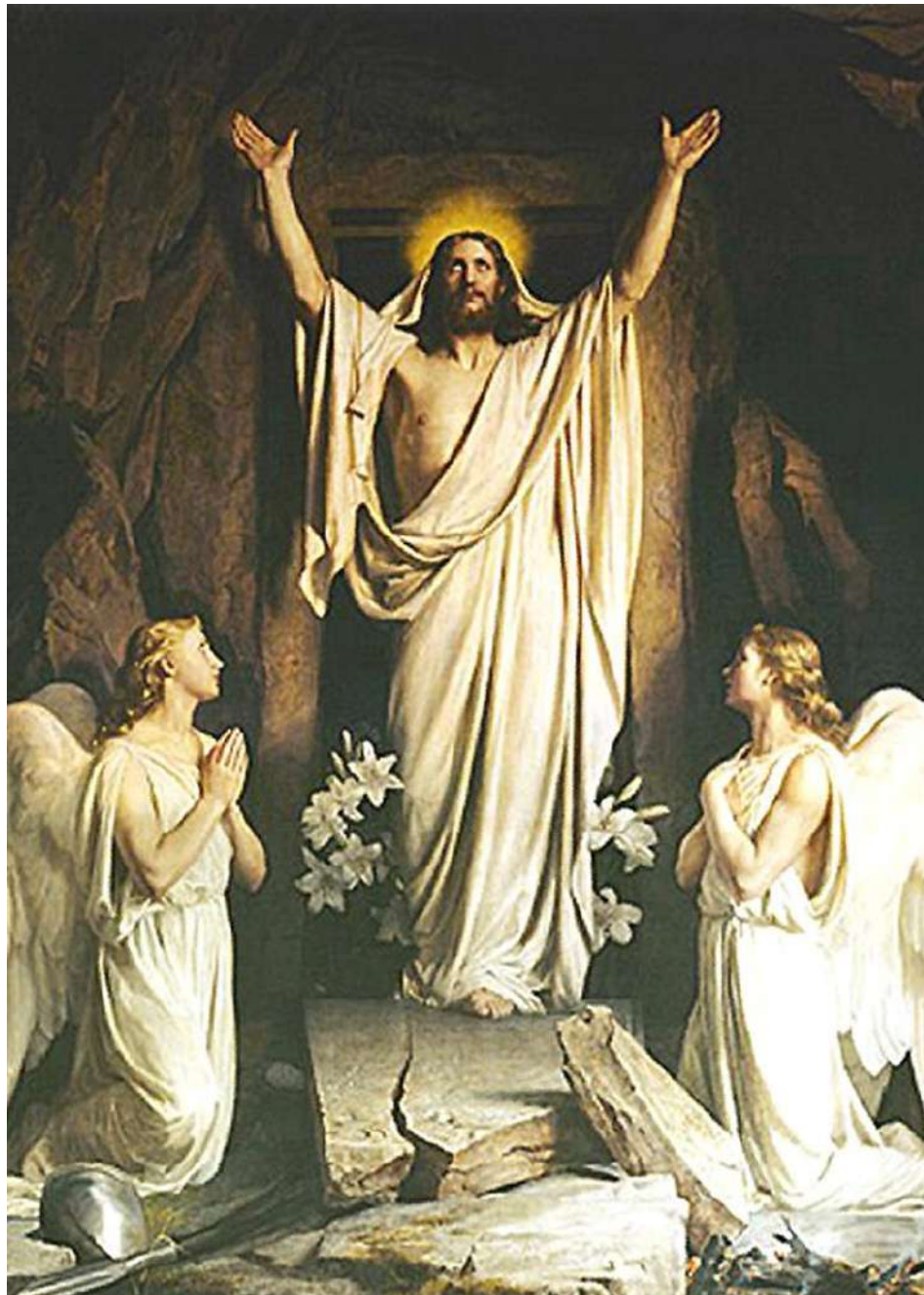
No, the hell of the just does not exist anymore because all the good souls who were waiting there have already left and joined Christ in Heaven. However, there is an old belief that there might still exist a similar place, called the “Infants’ Limbo,” where the souls of infants who have died without Baptism, go. Since they died without being baptized, they still had original sin in their souls. The old belief was that they couldn’t go to Heaven at all, although they would not be punished in the hell of the damned either since they had no actual sins. In a sense, the infants’ limbo was similar to the “hell of the just” because, in limbo, the souls of infants did not suffer hellfire, but they were not enjoying heavenly happiness either because they were separated from God. Presently, however, the Catholic Church believes that, on account of Christ’s great love for children, there is good reason to hope that God found a way to make salvation available to these infants as well (CCC 1261).

**5. The fifth article said that on the third day, Christ rose from the dead. What day was that?**

Christ rose from the dead on the morning of Easter Sunday. He died on the cross on the afternoon of Good Friday. That was not exactly three full days, based on our method of reckoning. But the Jewish method of counting counts the days, including the first and the last day, even if these were only partial days. Thus, Friday (afternoon) + Saturday + Sunday (morning) = three days.

**6. Was the resurrection of Jesus Christ like the resurrection of other people who had been raised from the dead?**

No, the resurrection of Jesus Christ was not like the resurrection of other people who had been raised from the dead, because He rose by His own power, while the others were raised solely by the power of God.



**Fig. 1.5.2 The Resurrection**

**7. Was Christ's risen body similar to the bodies of those who had been raised from the dead, such as Lazarus? (John 11:43–44)**

No, because Christ's resurrection was not a simple return to earthly life but to a glorified bodily life unrestricted by the limitations of space and time. For example, His resurrected body is no longer subject to hunger, sickness, or death, and He can now be present anywhere He wants to be at the swiftness of thought. On the other hand, the other people who were also raised from the dead merely returned to their original earthly lives, and their bodies were still subject to the limitations of the present life, which included hunger, sickness, and death (CCC 645).

**8. Did Jesus Christ rise from the dead by His power, or was He raised from the dead?**

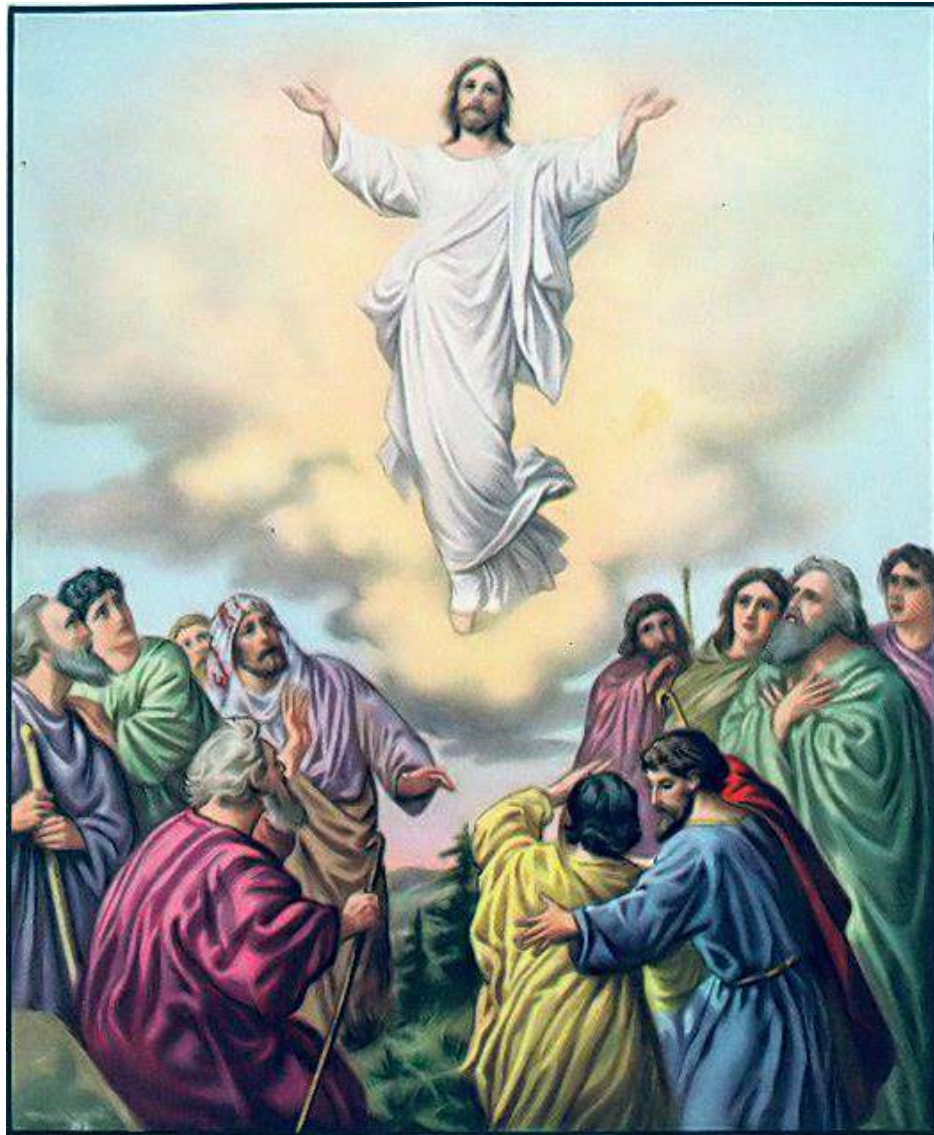
*As God*, Christ rose from the dead *by His power*. Speaking about His body, He said, "I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again" (John 10:18). *As man*, however, Christ had a human body that needed to be raised from the dead by God. And the resurrection of His body from the dead, just like the formation of His body in the womb of the Virgin Mary, was the work of the three Divine Persons (CCC 648).



## **ARTICLE 6: “*He ascended into Heaven and is seated at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty.*”**

### **1. What does the sixth article of the Creed teach us?**

The sixth article of the Creed teaches us that Jesus Christ, forty days after His resurrection, ascended of Himself into Heaven in the sight of His mother, His Apostles, and disciples, and that while as God He was equal to His Father in glory, as man He has been raised above all the angels and saints and is constituted Lord of all things.



**Fig. 1.6.1 The Ascension of Our Lord**

## **2. Why did Jesus Christ remain forty days on Earth after His resurrection before ascending into Heaven?**

After His resurrection, Jesus Christ remained forty days on Earth before ascending into Heaven, to prove by several apparitions that He was not a ghost and that He had truly risen, and to instruct the Apostles still further and to confirm them in the truths of faith.

## **3. Why did Jesus Christ ascend into Heaven?**

Jesus Christ ascended into Heaven (1) to take possession of the kingdom He had merited by His death; (2) to prepare the place of our glory and to be our mediator and advocate with the Father; and (3) to send the Holy Spirit upon His Apostles (CCC 666, 667).

## **4. Where did Jesus Christ ascend into Heaven?**

In Mount Olivet (Acts 1:12), the same place where His bitter passion began (Luke 22:39).

## **5. Explain the words, “is seated at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty.”**

The words “is seated” are just a figurative way of signifying the inauguration of Christ’s kingdom (Dan 7:14). The words “at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty” are again a figurative expression because the Father, since He is a spirit, has neither a right nor a left hand. The expression merely denotes that while Christ, *as God*, is equal to His Father in glory, *as man*, He has a place of honor above all creatures, even above the highest angel in Heaven (CCC 663, 664).

## **6. Where is Jesus Christ now?**

As God, Jesus Christ is everywhere. As man, He is physically in Heaven and sacramentally in the Holy Eucharist. The presence of Jesus Christ in the Blessed Sacrament is not a physical presence, which is why you do not see His head, body, arms, or legs, but His sacramental presence is nonetheless a *real* presence.





**Fig. 1.6.2 Christ Seated at the Right Hand of the Father**

## ARTICLE 7: “*From thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.*”

### 1. What does the seventh article of the Creed teach us?

The seventh article of the Creed teaches us that at the end of the world, Jesus Christ, in all His glory and majesty, will come from Heaven to judge all men, both good and bad, and to give to each of them the reward or punishment that he or she shall have merited.

### 2. When will Christ judge us?

Christ will judge us twice: **first**, immediately after death, and **second**, on the last day (or at the end of the world). The first judgment is called the *particular judgment*. It is called “particular” because only one particular person is judged. The second judgment (or the Last Judgment) is called the *general judgment*. It is called “general” because every person, including the angels and the devils, will be judged.

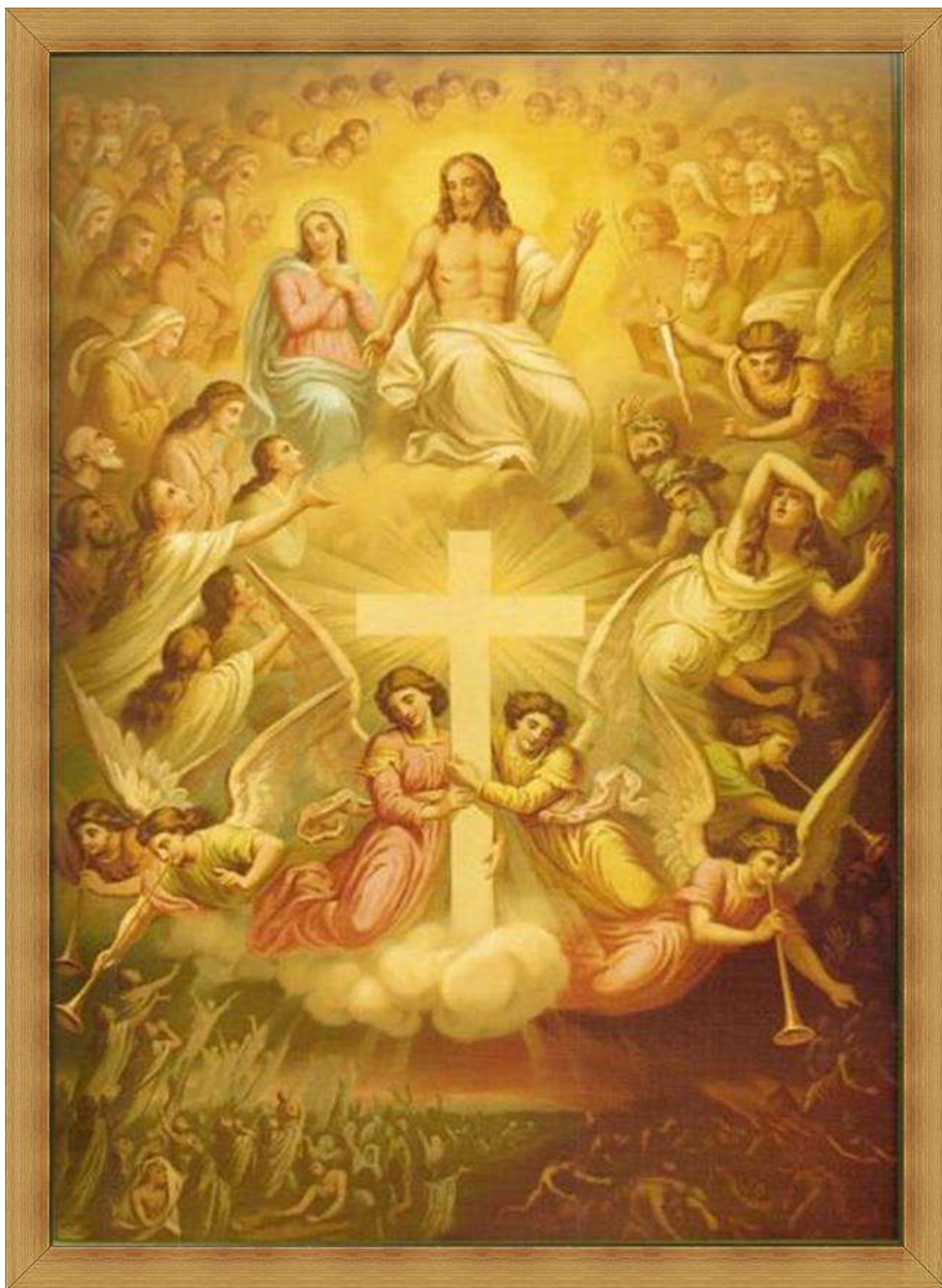
### 3. At the particular judgment, what rewards or punishments are appointed for the souls of those who have died?

Souls that are perfectly sinless and have no attachments to sin will go straight to **Heaven**. Souls that have small sins will also go to Heaven, but they will first have to go to **Purgatory** for further purification and to satisfy any temporal punishments due to their forgiven mortal sins. Souls that have unforgiven mortal sins are condemned to suffer with the demons in the **hell of the damned**.

### 4. How will we be judged?

We will be judged according to all our thoughts, desires, words, works, and omissions. We will not be judged only according to how popular, successful, or rich we have been in the world, but by how much we have loved and served Him and our neighbors for His sake. **IMPORTANT: Read Matthew 25:31–46.**





**Fig. 1.7.1 The Last Judgment**

**5. According to Our Lord's description in the Gospel of St. Matthew, what will the just Judge say to the good?**

The just Judge (Jesus Christ) will say, "Come, ye blessed of My Father, possess the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matt 25:34). Thus, the good will go to Heaven.

**6. And what will the just Judge say to the wicked?**

To the wicked, He will say, "Depart from Me, you cursed, into everlasting fire, which was prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matt 25:41). Thus, the wicked will go to the hell of the damned.

**7. If everyone has to be judged by Jesus Christ in a particular judgment immediately after death, why must all be judged in the general judgment?**

We must all be judged in the general judgment for several reasons: (1) to glorify God; (2) to glorify Jesus Christ; (3) to glorify the saints and give them the reward of their good works; (4) to confound the wicked and give them the punishment that they have deserved; and (5) to give the body its sentence of reward or punishment along with the soul.

**8. How will God's glory be manifested in the general judgment?**

God's glory will be manifested in the general judgment in this way: All shall then know how justly God governs the world, even though here on Earth the good are often afflicted and the wicked are often in prosperity.

**9. How will the glory of Jesus Christ be manifested in the general judgment?**

The glory of Jesus Christ will be manifested in the general judgment in this way: He who was unjustly condemned by men shall then come before the whole world as the Supreme Judge of all.



**10. How will the glory of the saints be manifested in the general judgment?**

The glory of the saints will be manifested in the general judgment in this way: Many of them, who died despised by the wicked, shall be glorified before the whole world.

**11. How great will the confusion of the wicked be in the general judgment?**

In the general judgment, great indeed shall be the confusion of the wicked, especially of those who have oppressed the just and who have tried in this life to be esteemed as men of virtue and goodness. On the last day, their most hidden sins will be exposed before the whole world, and everyone will see how wicked they really were (1 Cor 4:5).

**12. Will Purgatory still exist after the general judgment?**

No. After the general judgment, there will only be Heaven and hell. This is because the general judgment will be preceded by the resurrection of all the dead, including those in Purgatory (CCC 1038).

**13. When will the general judgment take place?**

The general judgment will happen during the second coming of Christ when He returns in glory. But only the Father knows the day and the hour when Christ will come again (Matt 24:36).

**14. Are there any events that will precede the second coming of Christ?**

Yes, the following events are expected to happen before the Second Coming:

1. *The widespread conversion of the Jews to Christianity*, as prophesied by St. Paul: “For I would not have you ignorant, brethren, of this mystery... that blindness in part has happened in Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles came in. So, all Israel should be saved...” (Rom 11:25–26).

2. *There will be a great apostasy from the faith.* “As it came to pass in the days of Noah,” Christ said, “so shall it also be in the days of the Son of Man. They ate and drank; they married wives and were given in marriage until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all... Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of Man shall be revealed” (Luke 17:26–27, 30). A little later, Christ also said, “But yet the Son of Man, when He comes, shall He find faith on Earth, do you think?” (Luke 18:8)
  
3. *The Antichrist, the “man of sin” or the “son of perdition,” will appear and deceive many people with false miracles and attempt to substitute himself in the place of Christ.* Thus, St. Paul says in his epistle: “And we beseech you, brethren, regarding the coming of Our Lord Jesus Christ and of our gathering together unto him, that you be not easily moved from your sense nor be terrified, neither by spirit nor by word nor by epistle, as sent from us as if the day of the Lord were at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means, for that day will not come unless there comes a revolt first, and the **man of sin** be revealed, the **son of perdition** who opposes and is exalted above all that is called God or that is worshipped, so that he sits in the temple of God, showing himself as if he were God” (2 Thes 2:1–4). This rebellion is the final assault that the devil will attempt against the Church before the second coming of Christ (CCC 675–676).

## 15. Will the Antichrist be one individual or several?

Based on Sacred Scripture, the Fathers and Doctors of the Church agree that the Antichrist will be one individual. However, there will be many forerunners of the Antichrist who, because they will likewise try to deceive the elect, are also called “antichrists.” It was in this sense that St. John writes, “Many seducers are gone out into the world who confess not that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh. This is a seducer and an antichrist.” (2 John 1:7).

## ARTICLE 8: *“I believe in the Holy Spirit.”*

### 1. What does the eighth article of the Creed teach us?

The eighth article of the Creed teaches us that the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity, is God eternal, infinite, almighty, Creator, and Lord of all things, just as the Father and the Son are.

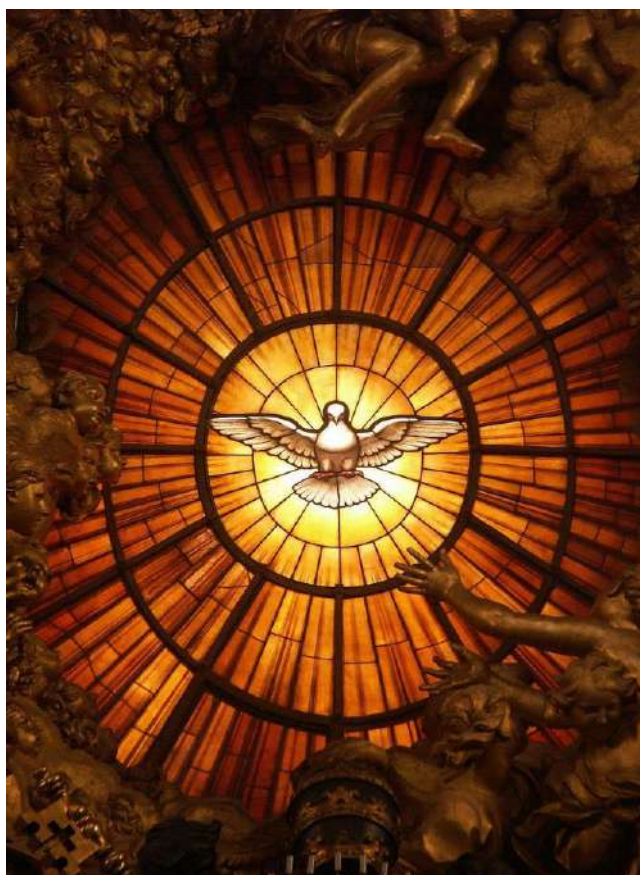


Fig. 1.8.1 The Holy Spirit as a Dove in the Apse of St. Peter's Basilica

### 2. From Whom does the Holy Spirit proceed?

The Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son, as from one principle, by way of will and love<sup>7</sup> (CCC 246).

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<sup>7</sup> The Son proceeds from the Father by way of intelligence because the Father, in the act of knowing Himself, begets His eternal Image, the Son. The Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son, but by way of will and love, because the Holy Spirit proceeds as the Love between the Father and the Son.

**3. If the Son proceeds from the Father, and if the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son, it would seem as if the Father and the Son are prior to the Holy Spirit. How then can it be said that all three Persons are eternal?**

It is said that all three Persons are eternal because the Father has begotten the Son from all eternity, and the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son from all eternity.

**4. Why is the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity especially designated by the name of the Holy Spirit?**

The Holy Spirit is the name that especially designates the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity because He proceeds from the Father and the Son by way of spiration and love. “Spiration” is an old English word for the act of breathing (CCC 691).

**5. What works are especially attributed to the Holy Spirit?**

To the Holy Spirit are especially attributed works of love and goodness, particularly the incarnation of the Son of God and the sanctification of souls.

**6. Do the Father and the Son equally sanctify us with the Holy Spirit?**

Yes, all three Divine Persons equally sanctify us, just as all three Persons cooperated in forming the body and creating the soul of Jesus Christ. But, like the incarnation of the Son of God, the sanctification of souls is especially attributed to the Holy Spirit because it is a work of love and goodness (CCC 258, 689).

**7. When did the Holy Spirit descend upon the Apostles?**

The Holy Spirit descended upon the Apostles on the day of Pentecost, that is, fifty days after the resurrection of Jesus Christ and ten days after His ascension (CCC 731).



**8. Where were the Apostles during the ten days preceding Pentecost?**

The Apostles were gathered together in the “upper room” with the other disciples and were persevering in prayer with the Virgin Mary and the other women (Acts 1:12–14). They were expecting the Holy Spirit, Whom Christ promised to send them (John 14:16, 26).



**Fig. 1.8.2** Descent of the Holy Spirit as Tongues of Fire

**9. What effects did the Holy Spirit produce in the Apostles?**

The Holy Spirit strengthened the faith of the Apostles and filled them with light, strength, charity, and an abundance of all His gifts.

**10. Was the Holy Spirit sent for the Apostles alone?**

No, the Holy Spirit was sent for the whole Church and every faithful soul (CCC 732).

### **11. What does the Holy Spirit do in the Church?**

The Holy Spirit gives spiritual life to the whole Church, guides her in understanding the Faith, and protects her from error.

### **12. How does the Holy Spirit give spiritual life to the Church?**

The Holy Spirit gives spiritual life to the Church by giving various graces and gifts.

### **13. What graces does the Holy Spirit give to the Church?**

The Holy Spirit gives two kinds of grace: *sanctifying grace* and *actual grace*.

**Sanctifying grace** is the divine life in our souls that makes us pleasing and holy before God. We receive this grace first through Baptism, which removes original sin from our souls and allows God to dwell in them. His living presence in our souls gives us a new life that is a sharing in God's life itself. This new, divine life—called sanctifying grace—makes us holy, adopted children of God, and heirs of Heaven. We nourish this grace chiefly by receiving the sacraments, particularly Reconciliation and the Holy Eucharist.

**Actual grace** is the help that the Holy Spirit gives us to do good and avoid evil. By cooperating with the Holy Spirit through the actual graces that He gives us, we can avoid sin and preserve the sanctifying grace in our souls. We receive and increase actual graces through prayer and the performance of good works.

### **14. What other gifts does the Holy Spirit give to the Church?**

The Holy Spirit gives seven special gifts. These gifts are wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and the fear of the Lord (See Isa 11:2). We receive them first at Baptism, but we receive an *increase* of these gifts from the Holy Spirit, especially at the Sacrament of Confirmation. These gifts in turn produce in us what St. Paul collectively called the “fruit of the Spirit,” such as charity, joy, peace, patience, kindness, etc. (Gal 5:22–23).

### 15. What purpose do the gifts of the Holy Spirit serve?

The gifts of the Holy Spirit help us to develop good habits, called *virtues*, and eliminate bad ones, called *vices*.



Fig. 1.8.3 The Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit

### 16. Explain the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit.

The seven gifts of the Holy Spirit are given in the book of Isaiah, the Prophet. Here, Isaiah prophesied the spiritual gifts that Christ would have: “*And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him: the spirit of **wisdom**, and of **understanding**, the spirit of **counsel**, and of **fortitude**, the spirit of **knowledge**, and of **godliness**. And he shall be filled with the spirit of **the fear of the Lord***” (Isa 11:2–3). The gift of godliness is more popularly known as **piety**.

**Wisdom** is a gift that enables us to make a right judgment about *divine things* so that we see things from God’s point of view and not from man’s point of view. For example, by this gift, we judge that virtue is better than wealth and that charity is to be preferred over great learning.

**Understanding** is a gift that helps us penetrate more fully the meaning of what we believe—the truths and mysteries of our faith, whose reasons we cannot know by the natural light of the intellect alone.

**Counsel** is a gift that allows us to make a right judgment about our actions and to be directed by the Holy Spirit toward things that redound to God’s glory, our salvation, and that of our neighbor.

**Fortitude** is a gift that inspires us with confidence to do what is good, to face dangers, and to endure what is difficult, thus enabling us to overcome all obstacles, dangers, and difficulties.

**Knowledge** is a gift that enables us to make a right judgment about *created and human things* at their proper worth, learn how to use them rightly, and direct them to our last end, which is God. For example, by the gift of knowledge, we judge that the care of the soul is better than the care of the body. The gift of knowledge is similar to the gift of wisdom because they both enable us to make a right judgment. However, the gift of knowledge refers to making a right judgment about created and human things, while the gift of wisdom refers to making a right judgment about divine things.

**Piety** (or godliness) is a gift that enables us to love and worship God and to preserve a benevolent mind toward our neighbor for the love of God.

The **Fear of the Lord** is a gift that allows us to control our desires for fear of offending God or doing anything that could separate us from Him.



## **ARTICLE 9: “*The Holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints.*”**

### **THE CHURCH IN GENERAL**

#### **1. What does the ninth article of the Creed teach us?**

The ninth article of the Creed teaches us that Jesus Christ founded a visible society on Earth called the Catholic Church and that all those who belong to this Church are in communion with (or form a community with) one another. The Church community includes not only members who are on Earth but also those who are in Purgatory and those who are in Heaven.

#### **2. Why, immediately after the article that talks about the Holy Spirit, is mention made of the Catholic Church?**

Immediately after the article that talks about the Holy Spirit, mention is made of the Catholic Church to indicate that the Church’s holiness comes from the Holy Spirit, who is the Author of all holiness (CCC 749).



**Fig. 1.9.1 The Holy Spirit Guides and Protects the Church**

### 3. What does the word “Church” mean?

The word “Church” means an *assembly* of believers. It does not refer to the building where the people pray but to the churchgoers who gather together to pray in the building. We ARE the Church, not the building<sup>8</sup> (CCC 751).

### 4. Why is the Church called the Mystical Body of Christ?

The Church is called the **Mystical Body of Christ** because its members are united by supernatural bonds with one another and with Christ, their head. The metaphor came from St. Paul, who said, “He is the head of the body, the Church” (Col 1:18).

### 5. Where are the members of the Catholic Church to be found?

The members of the Catholic Church are found partly in Heaven, forming the **Church Triumphant**; partly in Purgatory, forming the **Church Suffering**; and partly on Earth, forming the **Church Militant**. The Church on Earth is called “militant” because it is still engaged in combat with the temptations and forces of the devil (CCC 954).

### 6. Do these various parts of the Church constitute only one Church?

Yes, these various parts of the Church constitute only one Church and only one Mystical Body because they have the same head, Jesus Christ, the same Spirit animating and uniting them, and the same goal, which is eternal happiness.

### 7. What other metaphor has been used for the Church besides being the “body” of Christ?

The Church has also been referred to as the “bride” or “spouse” of Christ. This metaphor also came from St. Paul, who compared the union of husband and wife to that of Christ and His Church (Eph 5:22–33). (CCC 796)

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<sup>8</sup> To avoid confusion, “Church” (in upper case) refers to the assembly of believers, while “church” (in lower case) refers to the building.

## THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN PARTICULAR

### 8. What is the Catholic Church?

The Catholic Church is the union or congregation of all the baptized who, while still living on Earth, profess the same Faith and the same law of Jesus Christ, participate in the same sacraments, and obey their lawful pastors, particularly the Roman Pontiff.

### 9. What is necessary to be a member of the Church?

To be a member of the Church, it is necessary to be baptized, to believe and profess the teachings of Jesus Christ, to participate in the same sacraments, and to acknowledge the pope and the other lawful pastors of the Church.

### 10. Who are the lawful pastors of the Church?

The lawful pastors of the Church are the Roman Pontiff, that is, the pope, who is the supreme pastor, and the bishops. Other priests, too, and especially the parish priests, have a share in the pastoral office, subject to the bishop and the pope.



**Fig. 1.9.2 Pope St. Pius X**

The Pope who approved First Communion for Children  
Patron Saint of First Communicants

# **11. Why do you say that the pope is the supreme pastor of the Church?**

We say that the pope is the supreme pastor of the Church because Jesus Christ assigned this office to St. Peter, the first pope, in these words: “I say to you: that you are Peter, and upon this rock, I will build My Church... and I will give to you the keys of the kingdom of Heaven... Whatever you shall bind upon Earth shall be bound also in Heaven, and whatever you shall loose upon Earth shall be loosed also in Heaven” (Matt 16:18–19). Later, Christ also said to him, “Feed My lambs, feed My sheep” (John 21:15, 17). Therefore, anyone who succeeds St. Peter keeps his office as supreme pastor of the Church.



**Fig. 1.9.3 Christ Made St. Peter Head of the Church**



**12. Do the many societies of people who are baptized but who do not acknowledge the pope as their head belong to the Catholic Church?**

No, those who do not acknowledge the pope as their head do not belong to the Catholic Church.

**13. How can you tell that the Catholic Church is the true church founded by Jesus Christ?**

The true church founded by Christ is distinguished from other societies that claim to be true by four marks: she is **one**, **holy**, **catholic**, and **Apostolic**. By these marks, you can tell that the Catholic Church is the true church founded by Christ (CCC 811).

**14. Why is the Catholic Church one?**

The Catholic Church is one because her children of all ages and places are united together in the same Faith, the same worship, the same law, and the same sacraments under the same visible head. There can be only one Church. For, as there is but one God, one Faith, and one Baptism, the true Church can only be one. Among all Christian churches, the Catholic Church alone is truly one. She has one Faith, one pope, and one denomination anywhere in the world (CCC 813).

**15. What about the various Catholic Eastern Churches, such as the Byzantines, the Syrians, the Armenians, etc.? Are they not different denominations of the Catholic Church?**

No, these Churches are also members of the one, true Church founded by Christ. They all recognize the Roman pontiff as their supreme pastor, and although they have different external practices, customs, and liturgical rites, they all profess the same Faith and have the same valid sacraments as the Roman Catholic Church. In fact, a Roman Catholic may go to confession, attend Mass, and receive Holy Communion at an Eastern Catholic Church and still fulfill his Sunday obligation. The variety of rites and practices in

the Catholic Church does not prove its disunity, but its *universality* and the richness of its historical and religious heritage.

#### **16. Why is the Catholic Church holy?**

The Catholic Church is holy because her Founder, Jesus Christ, is holy; her saints are holy; her Faith, her laws, and her sacraments are holy (CCC 823).

#### **17. How can you say that the Catholic Church is holy when there are reported sexual abuse scandals in the Church?**

We should judge the Catholic Church by the conduct of those who live and follow her teachings, not by those who ignore them. The existence of sinners and bad clergy in the Catholic Church does not prove that she is not holy, but that she is composed of human members. In a sense, the existence of scandals in the Church speaks of its genuineness as a true Church of human beings, in the same way that the imperfections we find in diamonds prove that they are real rather than fake.

#### **18. Why is the Catholic Church catholic?**

The word “catholic” means *universal*. The Catholic Church is catholic because she embraces the faithful of all nations, of all times, of all places, and of all ages and conditions. The Catholic Church satisfies this character of universality. It is the same for all people of all ages, anywhere in the world (CCC 830–831).

#### **19. Why is the Catholic Church Apostolic?**

The Catholic Church is Apostolic because (1) she is founded on, and has a history that goes back without a break to the time of, the Apostles; (2) she believes and teaches all that the Apostles believed and taught; and (3) she is guided and governed by their lawful successors. Only the Catholic Church is Apostolic. The other Christian sects date back only to the sixteenth century or later, but the Catholic Church dates back to the first century of Christianity, that is, the time of Christ and the Apostles (CCC 857).



Fig. 1.9.4 Icon of Christ, the 12 Apostles, and the Evangelists

## 20. To be saved, is it enough to be any sort of member of the Catholic Church?

No. To be saved, it is not enough to be any sort of member of the Catholic Church. It is necessary to be a *living* member.



**21. Who are the living members of the Church?**

The living members of the Church are the just and the just alone, that is, those who are actually in the state of grace.

**22. And who are the dead members?**

The dead members of the Church are the faithful in mortal sin. These members may be physically alive, but they are spiritually dead.

**23. Can one be saved outside the Catholic Church?**

No. No one can be saved outside the Catholic Church, just as no one could be saved from the flood outside the Ark of Noah, which was a figure of the Church. This means that those who know the Church to be founded by Christ but choose not to join it will not be saved. But those people who were raised outside the Catholic Faith or, *through no fault of their own*, are ignorant of Christ or the Church but who, with a sincere heart, seek God and, moved by grace, try in their actions to do God's will, are indeed separated from the body of the Church but are united to the soul of the Church and, therefore, may be saved (CCC 846, 847).

**24. How were the patriarchs, the prophets, and other righteous men who lived before the coming of Christ saved?**

The patriarchs, the prophets, and other righteous people who lived before the coming of Christ were saved by the faith they had in Christ to come, by means of which they spiritually belonged to the Church.

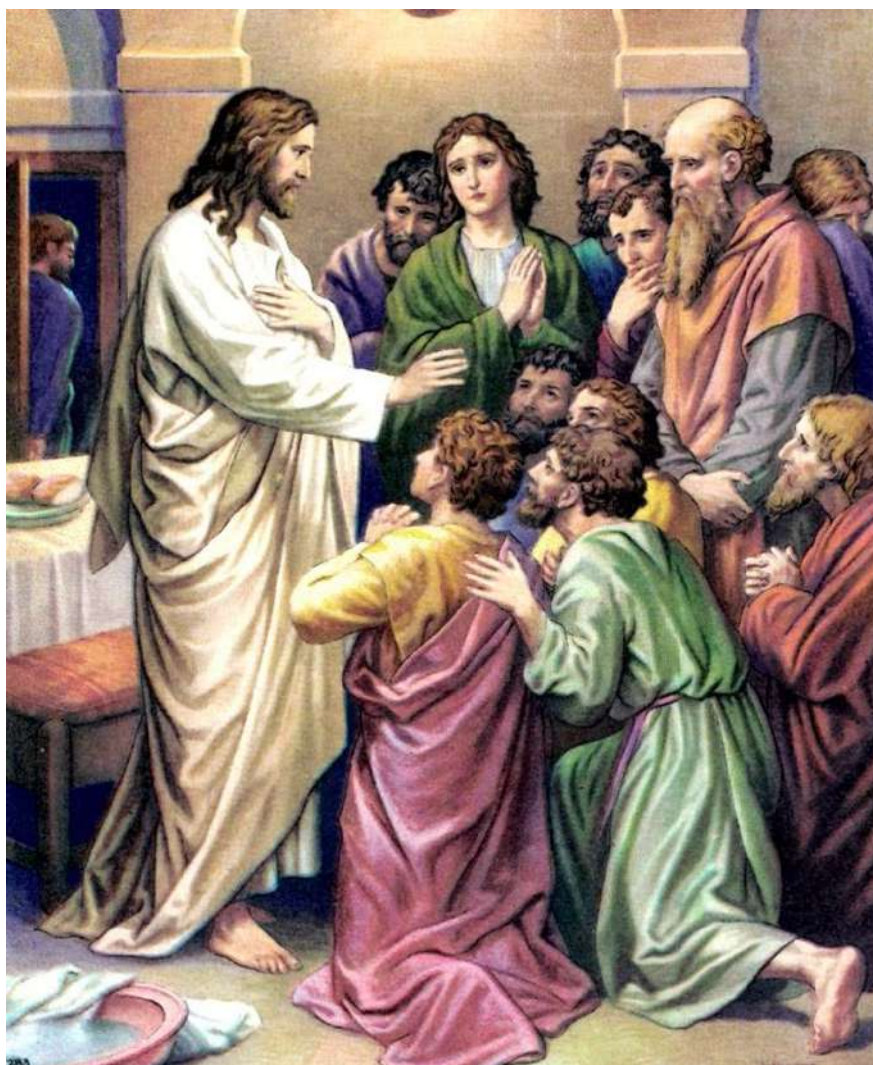
**25. Suppose that a man is a member of the Catholic Church but does not put her teachings into practice. Will he be saved?**

A member of the Catholic Church who does not put her teachings into practice or persevere in charity is a dead member. Hence, he will not be saved. It is not enough to be a member of the Catholic Church. One must also be a *living* member by persevering in charity and doing good works (CCC 837).



**26. Are we then obliged to believe all the truths that the Church teaches us and to do all that the Church commands?**

Yes, we are obliged to believe all the truths that the Church teaches and to do all that the Church commands because Jesus Christ said to the Apostles, “He who hears you, hears Me, and he who despises you, despises Me” (Luke 10:16).



**Fig. 1.9.5 Christ Promised to Send the Holy Spirit**

“I will ask the Father, and he shall give you another Paraclete,<sup>9</sup> that he may abide with you forever... The Paraclete, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and bring to your minds everything that I have said to you” (John 14:16, 26).

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<sup>9</sup> “Paraclete” is another word for advocate or counselor. The Holy Spirit is our Paraclete, the One whom Christ sent to counsel and guide us.

**27. Can the Church err in what she proposes for our belief?**

No, the Church cannot err in what she proposes for our belief because, according to the promise of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit unfailingly assists her in her teachings and protects her from error.

**28. Is the Catholic Church infallible, then?**

Yes, the Catholic Church is infallible. So, those who reject her teachings lose faith and become heretics.

**29. Can the Catholic Church be destroyed or perish?**

No, the Catholic Church may be persecuted, but she can neither be destroyed nor perish. In fact, many kingdoms, civilizations, and societies have already come and gone, but the Catholic Church has stood since the time she was founded. She will last till the end of the world because Jesus Christ promised that He would be with her till the end of time (Matt 28:20).

**30. Why is the Catholic Church so persecuted?**

The Catholic Church is so persecuted because, like her Founder, Jesus Christ, who was also persecuted, she disapproves of sin and vice, combats error and immorality, and condemns all acts of injustice and oppression.

**31. Does a Catholic have any other duties toward the Church?**

Every Catholic ought to have a boundless love for the Church, ought to consider himself infinitely honored and happy in belonging to her, and ought to work for her glory by every means in his or her power.

## **THE *MAGISTERIUM***

**32. Is there any distinction among the various members of the Catholic Church?**

There is a very notable distinction among the members of the Catholic Church. For there are some who rule and some who obey; some who teach and some who are taught (CCC 873).

**33. What do you call that part of the Church that teaches?**

That part of the Church that teaches is called the *Magisterium*.

**34. What do you call that part of the Church that is taught?**

That part of the Church that is taught is called the Learning Church, or simply the faithful.

**35. Who set up this distinction in the Church?**

Jesus Christ Himself established this distinction in the Church.

**36. Are the *Magisterium* and the Learning Church two Churches?**

The *Magisterium* and the Learning Church are two distinct parts of the same Church, just as in the human body, the head is distinct from the rest of the body, and yet they form one body together.

**37. Of whom is the *Magisterium* composed?**

The *Magisterium* is composed of all the bishops, with the pope as their head, whether they are dispersed throughout the world or assembled in a council (CCC 880).

**38. And the Learning Church, of whom is it composed?**

The Learning Church is composed of all the faithful—both lay and religious.

**39. Who, then, are they who possess the teaching authority in the Church?**

The teaching authority in the Church is possessed by the *Magisterium*, that is, by the pope and the bishops, and, dependent on them, by the other sacred ministers (priests and deacons). The pope, the bishops, the priests, and the deacons, arranged in the order of their successive ranks, comprise the organizational structure, known as the *hierarchy*, in the Church.

**40. Are we obliged to listen to the *Magisterium*?**

Yes, we are obliged, under the pain of eternal damnation, to listen to the *Magisterium*. For Jesus Christ said to the pastors of His Church, in the persons of the Apostles, “He who hears you, hears Me, and he who despises you, despises Me” (Luke 10:16).

**41. Besides her teaching office, does the Church have any other authority?**

Yes, besides her **teaching office**, the Church has the authority to administer the sacraments and sacred things, which is called her **sanctifying office**, and the authority to make laws and to exact their observance, which is called her **governing office** (CCC 893, 894–896).

**42. Does the authority possessed by the members of the hierarchy come from the people?**

The authority possessed by the hierarchy does not come from the people, and it would be heresy to say it did. It comes solely from God.

**43. To whom does the exercise of this authority belong?**

The exercise of this authority belongs solely to the pope and to the bishops subordinate to him. However, the bishops have no authority unless they are in communion with the pope (CCC 883).



## THE POPE AND THE BISHOPS

### 44. What is a pope?

The pope, who is also called the sovereign pontiff or the Roman pontiff, is the vicar of Jesus Christ on Earth and the visible head of the Catholic Church. The first pope was St. Peter himself.



Fig. 1.9.6 St. Peter, the First Pope of the Catholic Church

### 45. Why is the pope called the vicar of Jesus Christ?

The pope is called the vicar or representative of Jesus Christ on Earth because he represents Christ on Earth and acts in His place as supreme pastor of the universal Church (CIC 331).

### 46. Why is the pope the visible head of the Church?

The pope is the visible head of the Church because he visibly governs her with the authority of Jesus Christ Himself, who is her Invisible Head (CCC 936).

**47. Can the pope err when teaching the Church?**

The pope cannot err; that is, he is *infallible* when teaching about faith and morals because of the promise of Jesus Christ that He would be with us till the end of time and because of the unfailing assistance and protection of the Holy Spirit.

**48. When is the pope infallible?**

The pope is infallible when, as pastor and teacher of all Christians and in virtue of his supreme Apostolic authority, he defines and proclaims a doctrine regarding faith or morals to be believed by the entire Church. He is not infallible when he only gives his opinion about science, politics, etc., but he is infallible when, in his office as Supreme Teacher, he makes a solemn pronouncement *on matters of faith or morals* to be believed by the entire Church. He is also infallible in the *ordinary exercise* of his teaching office when he teaches or reiterates a doctrine that the Church has consistently taught through the ages (CCC 891–892).

**49. What sin would a man commit if he refused to accept the solemn definitions of the pope?**

He who refuses to accept the solemn definitions of the pope, or who even doubts them, sins against faith. And if he remains obstinate in his unbelief, he will no longer be a Catholic but a heretic.

**50. Why has God granted the pope the gift of infallibility?**

God has granted the pope the gift of infallibility so that we may all be sure of the truths that the Church teaches.

**51. Does the gift of infallibility mean that the pope cannot sin?**

No, the gift of infallibility prevents the pope from making false teachings, but it does not prevent him from sinning. Infallibility is not the same as impeccability, which is immunity from sin.

**52. How should every Catholic act toward the pope?**

Every Catholic must acknowledge the pope as Father, Pastor, and Universal Teacher and be united with him in mind and heart in his solemn pronouncements and even in his ordinary teaching practice when he repeats what the Church has consistently taught through the ages.

**53. After the pope, who are those who, by divine appointment, are to be most venerated in the Church?**

After the pope, those who, by divine appointment, are to be most venerated in the Church are the bishops. They are the pastors of the faithful, whom the Holy Spirit placed to rule the Church in the diocese entrusted to them in dependence on the pope.

**54. What is a bishop in his own diocese?**

A bishop in his diocese is the teacher who teaches, the steward of the sacraments and graces, and the father who governs the faithful belonging to his diocese (CCC 888, 893, 894).

**55. Why is the bishop called the lawful pastor?**

The bishop is called the lawful pastor because the jurisdiction, or power, that he has to govern the faithful of his diocese is conferred upon him according to the laws and regulations of the Church.

**56. Who do the pope and the bishops succeed?**

The pope succeeds St. Peter, the Prince of the Apostles, while the bishops succeed the Apostles in all that pertains to the ordinary government of the Church.

**57. Who assists the bishop in the care of souls?**

Priests, especially parish priests, assist the bishop in the care of souls. With due dependence on his bishop, the parish priest presides over and directs a portion of the diocese, known as a *parish*.

## **THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS**

**58. What do the words “the communion of saints” in the ninth article of the Creed teach us?**

In the words “the communion of saints,” the ninth article of the Creed teaches us that the Church’s spiritual goods, both internal and external, are common to all her members because of the intimate union that exists between them. The words do not mean the receiving of Holy Communion by the saints. Rather, they signify the fact that the various members of the Church—including those on Earth, those in Purgatory, and those in Heaven—form a communion or community that shares in the graces and spiritual goods of the Church and which they all hold in common (CCC 947).

**59. Which are the internal goods that are commonly shared in the Church?**

The internal goods that are commonly shared in the Church are the graces received through the sacraments; the virtues of faith, hope, and charity; the infinite merits of Jesus Christ; the superabundant merits of the Blessed Virgin and the saints; and the fruit of all the good works done in the Church (CCC 950).

**60. Which are the external goods that are commonly shared in the Church?**

The external goods that are commonly shared in the Church are the sacraments, the sacrifice of the Mass, public prayers, religious functions, and all the other outward practices that unite the faithful.

**61. Do all the children of the Church participate in this communion or sharing of goods?**

All Catholics who are in the state of grace participate in the sharing of internal goods, while those who are in mortal sin do not perfectly participate in these goods.





**Fig. 1.9.7 The Communion of Saints**

The upper half shows the saints in Heaven (or the *Church Triumphant*); in the middle are the faithful on Earth hearing Mass (or the *Church Militant*); and in the group below are the faithful departed still in Purgatory (or the *Church Suffering*).

**62. Why can't those who are in mortal sin perfectly participate in the sharing of these spiritual goods?**

Because that which unites the faithful with God and with Jesus Christ as His living members, rendering them capable of performing meritorious works for eternal life, is the grace of God, which is the supernatural life of the soul. Since those who are in mortal sin are without the grace of God, they are excluded from perfectly sharing in the spiritual goods, and they cannot accomplish works meritoriously toward eternal life.

**63. Do Christians, then, who are in mortal sin, derive no advantage from the internal and spiritual goods of the Church?**

Christians who are in mortal sin continue to derive some advantage from the internal and spiritual goods of the Church since they still preserve their Christian character, which is indelible, and the virtue of faith, which is the basis of justification. They are aided, too, by the prayers and good works of the faithful toward obtaining the grace of conversion to God.

**64. Can those in mortal sin participate in the external goods of the Church?**

Those in mortal sin can participate in the external goods of the Church unless indeed they are cut off from the Church by excommunication.

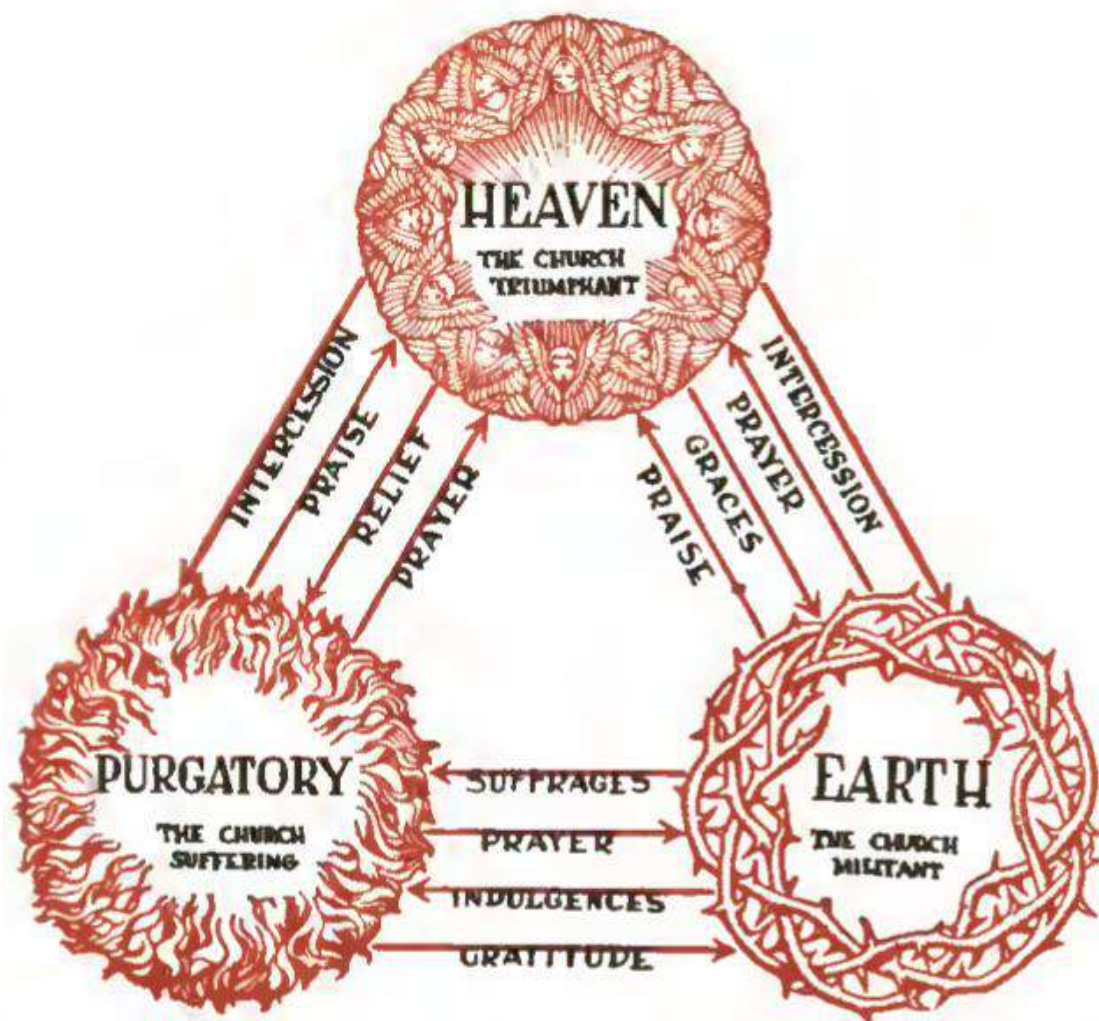
**65. Why are the members of this communion (or community) called saints?**

The members of this communion or community are called “saints” because all on Earth are called to sanctity and have been sanctified by Baptism, while those in Heaven have already attained perfect sanctity, and those in Purgatory are undergoing purification and will eventually attain perfect sanctity.



**66. So, does the communion of saints extend to Heaven and Purgatory?**

Yes, the communion of saints extends to Heaven and Purgatory because charity unites the Church Triumphant, the Church Suffering, and the Church Militant. The saints pray to God both for us and for the souls in Purgatory; in turn, the poor souls in Purgatory praise and thank the saints and the people on Earth who pray for them. We, on our part, give honor and glory to the saints at the same time that we relieve the suffering souls in Purgatory through our prayers and good works. The word “suffrage” is used to refer to the prayers and good works that we offer on behalf of the souls in Purgatory (CCC 962; 1475).



**Fig. 1.9.8 Diagram of the Communion of Saints**

## **THOSE OUTSIDE THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS**

### **67. Who are they who do not belong to the communion of saints?**

Those who are in hell do not belong to the communion of saints in the other life. In this life, those who are in mortal sin and those who are outside the Catholic Church do not belong to the communion of saints. Note that one does not lose membership in the Catholic Church through mortal sin. However, those in mortal sin are spiritually dead and cannot perfectly participate in the communion of saints.

### **68. Who are they who are outside the true Church?**

Outside the true Church are the infidels, the Jews, the heretics, the apostates, the schismatics, and the excommunicated.

### **69. Who are the infidels?**

The infidels are those who have not been baptized and do not believe in Jesus Christ as God because they either believe in a different god or gods or, though admitting one true God, they do not believe in Jesus Christ as the true God; for instance, the Muslims, the Hindus, the Buddhists, etc.

### **70. Who are the Jews?**

The Jews are those who profess the Law of Moses, have not received Baptism, and do not believe in Jesus Christ as the promised Savior of the World.

### **71. Who are the heretics?**

The heretics are baptized Catholics who obstinately refuse to believe one or more truths revealed by God and taught as articles of faith by the Catholic Church; for example, the Arians, the Nestorians, and all those Christians (including some Protestants) *who were previously baptized as Catholics* but now obstinately deny or doubt one or more truths of the Catholic Faith.

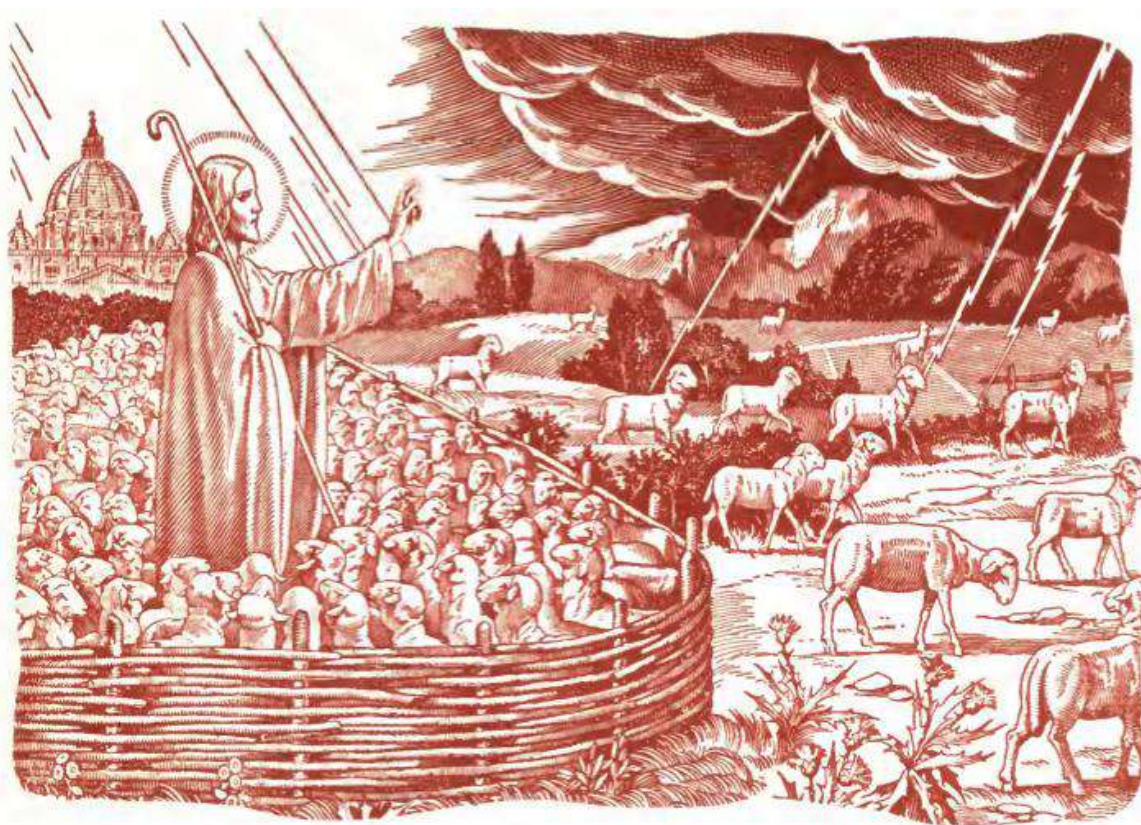


## 72. Who are the apostates?

The apostates are those who had been baptized but who abjure or, by some external act, deny the entire Catholic Faith that they previously professed.

## 73. Who are the schismatics?

The schismatics are baptized Catholics who, while not explicitly denying any dogma, voluntarily separate themselves from the Catholic Church. This includes the first generation of Orthodox Christians and all previously baptized Catholics who choose to separate themselves from the Roman Catholic Church.



**Fig. 1.9.9 Sheep Outside the Fold**

Those who are outside the Catholic Church are like sheep outside the fold. This is unfortunate. Christ wished all the faithful to be members of the one, holy, catholic, and Apostolic Church, so “that there shall be one fold and one shepherd” (John 10:16). Note that those in mortal sin are still in the fold, but they are like dead sheep within the fold and cannot share the joy of the living.

**74. Who are the excommunicated?**

The excommunicated are those who, because of grievous transgressions, are punished by being cut off from membership in the Catholic Church by the pope or by their bishop, who, however, hopes for and desires their return to the Church.

**75. Should excommunication be feared?**

Excommunication should be greatly feared because it is the severest and most terrible punishment the Church can inflict upon her rebellious and obstinate children.

**76. What goods are the excommunicated deprived of?**

The excommunicated are deprived of public prayers, sacraments, indulgences, and Christian burial.

**77. Can we in any way help the excommunicated?**

We can in some way help the excommunicated and all others who are outside the true Church by giving salutary advice, praying, and doing good works, and by begging God in His mercy to grant them the grace of being converted to the Faith and of entering the communion of saints.

**78. What should our attitude be toward those who are outside the Catholic Church?**

We ought to treat them with kindness and respect since people do not lose their human dignity just because they have different religious beliefs. If possible, we should also work for the unity of all believers, so that the dream of Our Lord may be fulfilled, that “there shall be one fold and one shepherd” (John 10:16). The idea of promoting unity among all believers is known as *ecumenism* (CCC 820).

## 79. Are there false and true approaches to ecumenism?

Yes. The true approach to ecumenism, or toward the unity of all believers, is by helping people of other faiths see and accept the bases and truths of our Catholic Faith, and rejecting incompatible and false beliefs. True ecumenism cannot be achieved simply by closing our eyes to the differences or incompatibilities in the faiths of different religions. To think that one can achieve unity simply by placing idols of other religions inside Catholic Churches, or by praying together with people of other faiths without having a common God to pray to, or by bending and watering down the doctrines and liturgy of the Church and being silent when the doctrines and traditional practices of the Church are unfairly criticized, is to pursue the path of freemasonry, syncretism, and *false ecumenism*.

True ecumenism requires familiarity with or knowledge of the beliefs of other religions. However, an ineffectual dialogue that consists merely of an exchange of beliefs with people of other faiths while remaining silent about their erroneous doctrines does not attain true ecumenism. The way to true ecumenism is through a combination of **charity** and **sound scholarship**. It is through the practice of *holiness*, the clear *expounding* of the doctrines of the Faith, and the adequate *refutation* of incompatible teachings that the eyes of the ignorant are opened and the hearts of the lukewarm are inflamed. In past centuries, the truth and moral beauty of the Catholic Church shone brilliantly in the holiness and learning displayed by her doctors and saints. The idea that the Church today should only embrace non-Catholics and not refute erroneous or false beliefs is false ecumenism. Vatican II's call for true ecumenism is a call for prayerful charity and scholarship, sanctity, and deep learning, not a call for mediocrity and indifference, silence, and timidity in the face of new and ancient errors (CCC 820–822).



## ARTICLE 10: *“The forgiveness of sins.”*

### 1. What does the tenth article of the Creed teach us?

The tenth article of the Creed teaches us that Jesus Christ has left to His Church the power of forgiving sins.

### 2. Can the Catholic Church forgive every sort of sin?

Yes, the Catholic Church can forgive all sins, no matter how many or how grave they may be, because Jesus Christ has given her full power to bind and to loose (CCC 982).



**Fig. 1.10.1 The Prodigal Son Begged Forgiveness from His Father**



### **3. Who exercises this power of forgiving sins in the Church?**

Those who exercise the power of forgiving sins in the Church are, first of all, the pope, who alone possesses this power in all its fullness; then the bishops; and, dependent upon the bishops, the priests (CCC 986).

### **4. How does the Church forgive sins?**

The Church forgives sins through the merits of Jesus Christ by conferring the sacraments instituted by Him for this purpose, especially the Sacraments of Baptism and Reconciliation.

### **5. Are all punishments due to sin forgiven when the Church forgives sins?**

No, the forgiveness of sin removes the *guilt* of sin but not all the temporal punishments due to sin. Usually, some temporal punishments remain to be satisfied even after the guilt of sin has been forgiven in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. This is why most people have to spend time in Purgatory even when they die without an unforgiven mortal sin in their souls. However, some or all of these punishments can be removed even on Earth by receiving *indulgences* from the Church. (Indulgences will be explained in the next section of this catechism.)

### **6. What is Purgatory?**

Purgatory is the place where souls who have died in the state of grace suffer temporal punishments due to their sins. Souls in Purgatory will eventually go to Heaven, but they must first satisfy the temporal punishments due to their sins. Also, Purgatory is the place where souls undergo a process of purgation or purification. This is because sin does not only cause guilt. It also deforms the soul by giving it evil dispositions, inclinations, and unhealthy attachments to creatures. All these deformities must be removed from the soul in Purgatory before it can enter Heaven because the Bible says, “There shall not enter into it (i.e., Heaven) anything defiled” (Rev 21:27). (CCC 1030–1032, 1472)

## INDULGENCES

### **7. What is an indulgence?**

An indulgence is the remission of the temporal punishment due to sins that have already been pardoned as far as their guilt is concerned. For example, an indulgence can be gained by praying the Rosary, reading the Bible, etc. The Catholic Church grants this remission outside of the Sacrament of Reconciliation (CCC 1471).

### **8. From whom has the Church received the power to grant indulgences?**

The Church received the power to grant indulgences from Our Lord Jesus when He gave her the power to bind and loosen (CCC 1478).

### **9. In what way does the Church, by means of indulgences, remit this temporal punishment?**

By means of indulgences, the Church remits this temporal punishment by applying to us the superabundant merits of Jesus Christ, of the Blessed Virgin, and of the saints, which constitute what is known as the “Treasury of the Church” (CCC 1476–1477).

### **10. Who has the power to grant indulgences?**

The pope alone has the power to grant indulgences to the whole Church and the bishops in their respective dioceses, according to the faculty given to him by the pope.

### **11. How many kinds of indulgences are there?**

Indulgences are of two kinds: plenary and partial.

A **plenary** indulgence is the remission of all the temporal punishment due to sins.

A **partial** indulgence is the remission of only a part of the temporal punishment due to sins.



**Fig. 1.10.2 An Angel Frees a Soul in Purgatory**

#### Notes

1. The picture above shows an angel freeing a soul from Purgatory. The poor souls are depicted as suffering in a pit of fire, but the “fire” in Purgatory is expiatory and cleansing, not a punitive fire like the hellfire in the hell of the damned. But artists have no better way of showing this on canvas than to use the same image for an essentially different kind of fire.
2. The place called “Purgatory” actually refers to the state or condition that a soul that is undergoing purification is in. Since disembodied souls do not occupy space, “Purgatory” is technically not a material place. But humans often think of spiritual realities in terms of their analogy with bodily realities, so we speak of “Purgatory” as if it were a place.

## **12. Why does the Church grant indulgences?**

In granting indulgences, the Church intends to aid our incapacity to expiate all the temporal punishment in this world by enabling us to obtain by means of works of piety and Christian charity that which in past ages Christians gained by the rigor of Church-imposed penances.

## **13. What value should we place on indulgences?**

We should place the greatest value on indulgences because, by gaining them, we satisfy the justice of God and obtain possession of Heaven sooner and more easily.

## **14. Can indulgences that we gain be applied to souls in Purgatory?**

Yes, indulgences that we gain can be applied to souls in Purgatory when the Vatican Apostolic Penitentiary says that they may be so applied. The souls in Purgatory are no longer able to gain indulgences for themselves, which is why they need our help. Unlike the poor souls in Purgatory, we on Earth can gain indulgences for ourselves, but we can also ask God to apply the indulgences that we gain to the souls in Purgatory. This is known as *suffrage*.

## **15. What are the conditions necessary to gain a plenary indulgence?**

The conditions necessary to gain a plenary indulgence are the following (MI Norms 20.1):

1. Holy Communion (with or without Mass), which needs to be received each day that you want to gain a plenary indulgence;
2. Sacramental confession, which may be done 20 days before or after the indulgenced work is done;
3. The completion of all prescribed works and conditions, such as the public recitation of the Holy Rosary or the reading of



the Bible for at least a half-hour, *with the intention of gaining the indulgence*;

4. Prayer for the intentions of the Holy Father—one *Our Father* and one *Hail Mary* are sufficient; and
5. Freedom from all attachment to sin

## 16. What does “attachment to sin” mean?

The Apostolic Penitentiary did not define the term “attachment to sin,” but the condition might apply to habitual sinners, such as those in the habit of committing sins of impurity, habitual gamblers or drunkards, etc. Although they may have made a valid confession and received Holy Communion, habitual sinners may still be attached to sin. The Apostolic Penitentiary requires that those who wish to gain a plenary indulgence be free of all attachments to sin, including venial sins. This means that we should try to break all habitual sins, even those that are venial, such as the habit of saying bad words, habitually cursing, habitually being late for Mass, and habitually watching movies that we know are near occasions of sin for us, etc. All bad habits and tendencies toward sin must be absent from our hearts if we want to gain a plenary indulgence.

## 17. Isn’t the requirement to be free of all attachments to sin too prohibitive?

Although the requirement to be free of all attachments to sin might seem prohibitive, God is understanding and merciful, and He might extend His generosity to *those who are honestly struggling to get rid of their bad habits*. Although these sinners may not have freed themselves completely of their bad habits, there is reason to believe that in their present condition, only their bodies are attached to sin but not their wills, since they are indeed struggling to be free of it. For this reason, habitual sinners who wish to receive a plenary indulgence should still strive to gain it and leave the matter of actually gaining the indulgence to God’s mercy and generosity.

## 18. What would be an easy way to gain partial indulgence for the souls in purgatory?

An easy way to gain a partial indulgence for the souls in Purgatory is to recite this simple prayer:

*"Eternal rest grant to them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace."* (MI Grant #29.2.2, p. 83)

The partial indulgence may be gained more than once a day, every day (MI Norms 18.1).

## 19. What are some things that you can do to gain a plenary indulgence?

Here are some things that you can do to gain a plenary indulgence:

1. **Read the Holy Scripture** as spiritual reading for at least a half-hour (MI Grant #30.1). You gain this plenary indulgence for yourself, but you may also offer it for the poor souls in purgatory (Norms 3), although not for another living person. You can gain a plenary indulgence every day by reading the Holy Scripture for at least a half-hour every day, but not more than once a day (MI Norms 18.1). The reading can be done anywhere, anytime, during the course of the day, but it must be done with the intention of gaining the indulgence (MI Norms 17.2). The other conditions for receiving the plenary indulgence, which apply to the gaining of all plenary indulgences, must also be satisfied (MI Norms 20.1).
2. **Visit and adore the Blessed Sacrament** for at least a half-hour (MI Grant 7.1.1). All other conditions for gaining any plenary indulgence must be fulfilled (MI Norms 20.1)
3. **Publicly and continuously pray at least five decades of the Rosary** in the church or at home with your family or friends (MI Grant 17.1.1). The Rosary must be prayed publicly or in a group; otherwise, only a partial indulgence is gained. Also, it must be prayed *without interruption*; this means, for example, that you should not pray only two decades now and three decades an hour later. The name of the mystery must be

announced before each decade, and the meditation on the mysteries must accompany the vocal prayer (MI Grants 17.1.2 and 17.1.3). All other conditions must be fulfilled (MI Norms 20.1).

4. **Visit the cemetery** between November 1 and November 8, inclusive, and pray even mentally for the faithful departed. (See MI Grant 29 for details.) Unlike the indulgence attached to the reading of the Holy Scripture, the indulgence gained by a visit to the cemetery does not apply to you but only to the souls in Purgatory.



**Fig. 1.10.3 A Couple Visits the Cemetery**

The *Manual of Indulgences* gives many more ways of gaining both partial and plenary indulgences. It is unfortunate that very few people are taking advantage of them. In fact, many people are not even aware that many of our common prayers and practices have partial or plenary indulgences attached to them.

**20. Is it possible to gain an indulgence for oneself at the point of death?**

Yes. A plenary indulgence can be gained by a person in danger of death when a priest administers the sacraments and imparts the apostolic blessing. Even if the priest is unavailable, Holy Mother Church still grants a plenary indulgence to those at the point of death *who have been in the habit of reciting some prayers during their lifetime*. In this case, the Church even supplies for the three conditions ordinarily required for a plenary indulgence, namely, sacramental confession, Holy Communion, and prayers for the intentions of the Holy Father. This plenary indulgence can be obtained even if they have already acquired a plenary indulgence on that same day. The *Manual of Indulgences* therefore enjoins all catechists to make sure that the faithful are made aware of this great indulgence (MI Grants 12.1–5).



## ARTICLE 11: “*The resurrection of the body.*”

### 1. What does the eleventh article of the Creed teach us?

The eleventh article of the Creed teaches us that *all* men will rise again, every soul resuming the body it had in this life (CCC 998).

### 2. How will the resurrection of the dead be accomplished?

The resurrection of the dead will be accomplished by the power of Almighty God and the ministry of the angels: “For the Lord himself shall come down from Heaven with commandment and with the voice of an archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead who are in Christ shall rise first” (1 Thes 4:15).



**Fig. 1.11.1 The Resurrection of the Dead**

### **3. What about those who were cremated? Will they also rise again?**

It does not matter whether the dead were cremated or buried. Everyone will rise again. Each person will rise with his own body, not another person's body: "For I know that my Redeemer lives, and in the last day I shall rise out of the earth. And I shall be clothed again with my skin, and in my flesh, I shall see my God. Whom I myself shall see, and my eyes shall behold, and not another; this my hope is laid up in my bosom" (Job 19:25–27).

### **4. If you had a deformity when you were born or when you died, would you rise with a deformed body?**

Since St. Paul said that the dead shall rise *incorruptible* (1 Cor 15:52), we believe that in the resurrection of the dead, our bodies will be restored to their natural condition, that is, without defects or deformities (CCC 997).

### **5. How long will it take for the dead to rise?**

The resurrection of the dead will happen very quickly: "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye..." (1 Cor 15:52)

### **6. When will the resurrection of the dead take place?**

The resurrection of the dead will take place at the end of the world, during the second coming of Christ. Then the general judgment shall follow (CCC 1001, 1038).

### **7. Why does God will the resurrection of the body?**

God wills the resurrection of the body for three reasons: (1) so that the soul, having done good or evil while united with the body, may be rewarded or punished along with it; (2) because we are not destined to exist as disembodied souls, since a human being by nature is a *composite* of body and soul; and (3) as Christ has given greater dignity to the human body by taking it (as part of the human nature that He assumed), so greater dignity is given to the body when the soul reunites with it.

### 8. Will they all rise in the same way?

No, there will be a vast difference between the bodies of the blessed and the bodies of the damned. Only the bodies of the blessed shall have, like the risen Christ, the features and endowments of glorified bodies.

### 9. What are the features and endowments that are to characterize the bodies of the blessed?

The bodies of the blessed will be like a “spiritual body,” similar to Christ’s glorified body (CCC 999).

They shall have the following features, endowments, or gifts:

1. **Impassability**, by which they can never again be subject to evil, nor to any kind of pain, nor to the need for food, rest, or the like (1 Cor 15:53);
2. **Brightness** or **clarity**, by which they shall shine as the sun and as so many stars (1 Cor 15: 41–42);
3. **Agility**, by which they shall be able to pass in a moment and without fatigue from one place to another and from Earth to Heaven (1 Cor 15:43–44); and
4. **Subtlety**, by which they shall be able to penetrate or pass through any body, as did Jesus Christ, who, after the resurrection, passed through closed doors (John 20:19).

### 10. And what about the bodies of the damned?

The bodies of the damned will be destitute of all the endowments of the glorified bodies of the blessed and will bear upon them the appalling mark of eternal reprobation. Their bodies will be incorruptible and their senses intact, but they will suffer the everlasting torment of hell.

## ARTICLE 12: “*And life everlasting. Amen.*”

### 1. What does the last, or twelfth, article of the Creed teach us?

The last article of the Creed teaches us that, after the present life, there is another life, eternally happy for the blessed in Heaven or eternally miserable for the damned in hell.

### 2. Can we comprehend the bliss of Heaven?

No, we cannot comprehend the bliss of Heaven, because it is beyond the scope of our limited minds and because the goods of Heaven cannot be compared with the goods of this world.



**Fig. 1.12.1 If the Earth Is So Beautiful, Just Imagine What Heaven Must Be Like**

Saint Paul says: “Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor has it entered the heart of man, what things God has prepared for those who love him” (1 Cor. 2:9).

### 3. What does the happiness of the blessed consist in?

The happiness of the blessed consists in seeing God “face to face” and in loving and possessing Him forever (CCC 1023).



**4. What does the misery of the damned consist in?**

The misery of the damned consists in being forever deprived of the vision of God and punished with eternal torment in hell.

**5. How do we know that a good and merciful God will punish wicked souls with an everlasting punishment?**

We know that the pains of hell are everlasting because it was Jesus Christ Himself Who said so: “Then He shall also say to those who shall be at His left hand, ‘Depart from Me, you cursed, into **everlasting fire**, which was prepared for the devil and his angels...’ These shall go into **everlasting punishment**, but the just shall go into everlasting life” (Matt 25:41, 46). Although God is good and merciful, He is also just. Therefore, those who think that there is no hell or that there is no everlasting punishment are deluding themselves. Hell is just as real as Heaven is (CCC 1035).

**6. Are the happiness of Heaven and the miseries of hell for the soul alone?**

At present, the happiness of Heaven and the miseries of hell are for the soul alone, because only the souls of those who have died are in Heaven or hell. But after the resurrection of the body, when the souls are again united to the body, a man in the fullness of his nature, that is, body and soul, will be forever happy in Heaven or forever tormented in hell.

**7. Shall the bliss of Heaven and the miseries of hell be the same for all men?**

The bliss of Heaven in the case of the blessed and the miseries of hell in the case of the damned will be the same in substance and everlasting duration, but in measure or degree, they will be greater or less according to the extent of each one’s merits or demerits in their earthly life.

**8. Do the souls of those who die in mortal sin go straight to hell?**

Yes, the souls of those who die in the state of mortal sin are cast right away into hell (CCC 1033-1034).

**9. Do souls with no unforgiven mortal sin go straight to Heaven?**

Most souls, even though they have no unforgiven mortal sins, will need to pass through Purgatory to suffer the temporal punishments due to sin and to undergo a process of purification by which all their evil inclinations and worldly attachments are removed before they go to Heaven (CCC 1030–1031).

**10. What does the word “Amen” signify at the end of the Apostles’ Creed?**

The word “Amen” at the end of a prayer signifies “so be it.” But at the end of the Apostles’ Creed, it signifies and confirms what was said at the beginning of the Creed: “I believe...” Therefore, the “Amen” of the Apostles’ Creed means, “So it is my faith, and all things contained in these twelve articles are what I hold and firmly believe to be true” (CCC 1064).

# Appendix to Part 1

## The Blessed Trinity



**Fig. A1 A Symbol of the Blessed Trinity**

The picture above is an artistic representation or symbol of the three Persons in one God. The man with the white beard is the symbol of God the Father. The man holding the crown is the symbol of God the Son. And the white dove is a symbol of the Holy Spirit. This picture is only a symbol because, actually, the three Divine Persons cannot be seen by the eye.

**1. How did we know about the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity, that is, that there are three Persons in one God?**

We know about the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity through **Sacred Tradition**. Of course, the Bible clearly states that there is one God (Deut 6:4; 1 Par 17:20; Mark 12:29). It also says that the Father is God (Mal 2:10; Luke 10:21; 1 Cor 8:6). It teaches that the Son, Jesus Christ, is God (Matt 3:17; Mark 14:61–62; Luke 1:35; John 1:1; Col 2:8–10; Titus 2:11–14) and that the Holy Spirit is God (Acts 5:1–4; 1 Cor 3:16). But how can all three—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—be God when there is only one God? That is the problem. The Bible did not state precisely the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity because the word “person,” as distinguished from substance or nature, is not in the Bible and was not used until the third century A.D. However, belief in the Blessed Trinity was preserved in the Church through her Sacred Tradition.

**2. Why is the Father the First Person of the Blessed Trinity?**

The Father is the First Person of the Blessed Trinity because He does not proceed from any other Person but is the origin of the other two Persons, that is, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

**3. How does the Son come from the Father?**

According to St. Thomas Aquinas, God is a spirit. The first act of a spirit is to know. In knowing Himself, the Father forms an Image of Himself, which is the Son.

**4. How does the Holy Spirit come from the Father and the Son?**

In knowing each other, the Father loves the Son, and the Son loves the Father. This Love that proceeds from both the Father and the Son is the Holy Spirit.



**5. If the Son comes from the Father, is He then a mere creature of the Father?**

No, and this is why. In us, the ideas and images that we form of ourselves are distinct from our natures or substances. But in God, who is a simple substance, the Image that He forms of Himself is identical to and of the same nature or substance as His own. Therefore, although the Son proceeds from the Father as the Father's Image, He is one in being and *consubstantial* with the Father. He is co-existent, equally eternal, and equally divine as the Father. No one existed ahead of the other. They both exist from eternity.

**6. If the Holy Spirit—as the Love between the Father and the Son—proceeds from the Father and the Son, is He not then a creature of both the Father and the Son?**

No, and this is why. In us, our affections are distinct from our substances. But in God, His Love is identical to and consubstantial with Himself, so that the Holy Spirit, although proceeding from the Father and the Son, is one in being and consubstantial with both of them. The Holy Spirit is co-existent, equally eternal, and equally divine as the Father and the Son. No one existed ahead of the others. They all exist from eternity because they are substantially one and the same God, only differing from each other as terms of a relation.

**7. What does “terms of a relation” mean?**

There are always two terms in every relationship. For example, in the paternal relationship between Abraham and Isaac, Abraham was the father and Isaac was the son. Abraham was the father because he begot Isaac, and Isaac was the son because he was begotten by Abraham. In God, the Father differs from the Son because He is the One begetting, and the Son is the One begotten. Now, among humans, the terms of a paternal relationship—Father and Son—are two distinct substances. But in God, in whose simplicity there is no composition, the terms of the relation—Father and Son—although distinct as terms, are the same substance. In other words, between the Father and the Son, there is no substantial difference but only a

relational difference. The Father and the Son are not two separate and distinct substances. They are the same God, differing only in the fact that the Father is related to the Son as the One begetting, while the Son is related to the Father as the One begotten. Likewise, the Holy Spirit differs from the Father and the Son, not substantially but relationally. The Holy Spirit is related to the Father and the Son as the One proceeding from them, while the Father and the Son are related to the Holy Spirit as the joint term or origin from whom the Holy Spirit comes.

### **8. Is the mystery of the Blessed Trinity contrary to reason?**

No, it is not. It is difficult to understand and is a profound mystery because it is *above* reason, but it is neither incongruous nor contrary to reason. What makes it so difficult for us to understand is that we have no experience or examples in nature of God's utter simplicity. All creatures in the world are not simple but composite beings. Every creature is composed of its substance and its features (also called "accidents"), and the features are not identical to the substance itself. For example, a piece of wood may be long or short, but its length—which is a feature of its substance—is not the same as the wood itself. Likewise, a man may be wise, but wisdom is not his substance. We may say that he possesses wisdom, but he is not wisdom itself. But in God, who is absolutely simple and in whom there is no composition of substance and accidents, whatever attribute He has, He is. Therefore, it is proper to say not merely that God is wise or that He has wisdom, but that He is Wisdom itself—Subsistent Wisdom. The same is true of relationships within the Godhead. Among creatures, relationships are mere features of their substances; my fatherhood exists in me but is not my substance. But in God, the relationships are identical to God's substance itself. Hence, they are called "Subsistent Relations." The Father, as Father to the Son, is God. The Son, as the Image of the Father and eternally begotten by the Father, is *substantially* the same God. The Holy Spirit, as the Love between the Father and the Son and proceeding eternally from both, is likewise *substantially* the same God.

## Picture Credits and Sources

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### Fig. 1 The Virgin in Prayer

Artist: Giovanni Battista Salvi da Sassoferrato (1609–1685)

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### Fig. 1.0.1 The Holy Scripture

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### Fig. 1.0.2 The Psalms Scrolls

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### Fig. 1.0.3 Medieval Monks Copying Biblical Manuscripts

Artist: Unknown, circa 19<sup>th</sup> century.

<https://www.mediastorehouse.co.uk/fine-art-finder/artists/french-school/middle-ages-monk-writing-manuscripts-22748424.html>

### Fig. 1.0.4 St. Ignatius of Antioch

Artist: Possibly Cesare Fracanzano (1605–1651) of the Neapolitan School of Painting

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### Fig. 1.0.5 Madonna and Child in a Catacomb Art

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### Fig. 1.0.4 The Twelve Apostles

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### Fig. 1.1.1 Metamorphosis of a Butterfly

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**Fig. 1.1.2 A Diagram of the Blessed Trinity**

An illustration from Bishop Louis LaRavoire Morrow, *My Catholic Faith* (My Mission House, Kenosha, WI, 1963), p. 30

<https://archive.org/details/B-001-014-327/page/n33/mode/2up>

**Fig. 1.1.3 St. Augustine and the Child on the Seashore**

Artist: Giovanni Bonati (1635-1681)

<https://stpius10mulund.org/st-augustine/>

**Fig. 1.1.4 God the Father**

Artist: Eustache Le Sueur (1616–1655)

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**Fig. 1.1.5 Angels Singing Praises to God**

Image by Jo-B from *Pixabay.com*

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**Fig. 1.1.6 St. Michael the Archangel**

Artist: Guido Reni (1575–1642)

[https://sdcason.com/content/images/2021/01/After\\_Guido\\_Reni\\_-\\_Saint\\_Michael-1.jpg](https://sdcason.com/content/images/2021/01/After_Guido_Reni_-_Saint_Michael-1.jpg)

**Fig. 1.1.7 The Angel Raphael Helps Tobias Catch a Big Fish**

Artist: Corrado Giaquinto (1703–1766)

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Giaquinto,\\_Corrado\\_-\\_Tobias\\_and\\_the\\_Angel\\_-\\_c.\\_1740.png](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Giaquinto,_Corrado_-_Tobias_and_the_Angel_-_c._1740.png)

**Fig. 1.1.8 Guardian Angel Protecting a Child from the Demon**

Artist: Luca Giordano (1634–1705)

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**Fig. 1.1.9 Guardian Angel of Portugal**

A statue exhibited in the Museu Nacional Machado de Castro, Coimbra, Portugal

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**Fig. 1.1.10 A Simplified Illustration of Human Evolution**

Artist: Locutus Borg

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**Fig. 1.1.11 The Sin of Adam and Eve**

An illustration from Most Rev. Louis La Ravoire Morrow, *My First Communion* (The Edward O'Toole Co., Inc., New York, N.Y., 1949), p. 25

<https://archive.org/details/myfirstcommunion00morr/page/24/mode/2up>

**Fig. 1.1.12 The Immaculate Conception**

Artist: Giovanni Domenico Tiepolo (1727–1804)

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**Fig. 1.2.1 The Annunciation**

By Bartolomé Esteban Murillo (1617–1682)

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**Fig. 1.2.2 Christ Healing the Sick**

Artist: Heinrich Hofmann (1842–1902)

An illustration used in Lillie A. Faris, *Standard Bible Story Readers*, Book One, 1925, p. 76.

<https://4000jesuspictures.com/714%20ARTIST%20SETS/HOFMANN%20AND%20PLOCKHORST/MIRACLES/Heinrich+Hofmann+118.jpg.html>

**Fig. 1.3.1 Conceived by the Holy Spirit and Born of the Virgin Mary**

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<https://www.medjugorje.ws/en/pictures/nativity-jesus-christ/>

**Fig. 1.3.2 The Assumption of the Virgin Mary**

Artist: Guido Reni (1575–1642)

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**Fig. 1.3.3 The Coronation of the Virgin Mary**

Artist: Hans von Aachen (1552–1615)

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**Fig. 1.4.1 Instruments of Christ's Passion**

Pendant 3 3/16" x 2 1/2," circa 17<sup>th</sup> century, containing the emblems of the passion

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**Fig. 1.4.2 Christ Crucified Between Two Thieves**

A watercolor painting by James Jacques Tissot (1836–1902)

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**Fig. 1.4.3 The Burial of Jesus Christ**

A painting by Giovanni Battista della Rovere (1560–1627)

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**Fig. 1.5.1 Christ's Descent into the Hell of the Just**

An illustration from a Portuguese catechism of 1910

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**Fig. 1.5.2 The Resurrection**

A painting by Carl Heinrich Bloch (1834–1890)

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**Fig. 1.6.1 The Ascension of Our Lord**

Artist: Otto Adolph Stemler (1872–1953)

An illustration from Lillie A. Faris, *Standard Bible Story Readers*, Book Two, 1925, p. 143

**Fig. 1.6.2 Christ Seated at the Right Hand of the Father**

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**Fig. 1.7.1 The Last Judgment**

An illustration from a Portuguese catechism of 1910

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**Fig. 1.8.1 The Holy Spirit as a Dove in the Apse of St. Peter's Basilica**

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**Fig. 1.8.2 Descent of the Holy Spirit as Tongues of Fire**

Artist: Matthys Voet (circa 1600 +)

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**Fig. 1.8.3 The Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit**

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<https://stjosephthomsriver.org/images/stories/ConfirmationHeadline2021.jpg>

**Fig. 1.9.1 The Holy Spirit Guides and Protects the Church**

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**Fig. 1.9.2 Pope St. Pius X**

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**Fig. 1.9.3 Christ Made St. Peter Head of the Church**

Artist: Otto Adolph Stemler (1872–1953)

An illustration from Lillie A. Faris, *Standard Bible Story Readers*, Book Five, 1928, p. 109

**Fig. 1.9.4 Icon of Christ, the 12 Apostles, and the Evangelists**

Artist Unknown

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Икона\\_Союз\\_любви.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Икона_Союз_любви.jpg)**Fig. 1.9.5 Christ Promised to Send the Holy Spirit**

Artist: Heinrich Hofmann (1842–1902)

<https://4000jesuspictures.com/714%20ARTIST%20SETS/HOFMANN%20AND%20PLOCKHORST/PASSION/LAST%20SUPPER/Heinrich+Hofmann+94.jpg.html>**Fig. 1.9.6 St. Peter, the First Pope of the Catholic Church**

Artist: Paolo Emilio Besenzi (1608–1656)

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:St\\_Peter\\_Besenzi.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:St_Peter_Besenzi.jpg)**Fig. 1.9.7 The Communion of Saints**

An illustration from a Portuguese catechism of 1910

<http://www.sendarium.com/p/catecismo-ilustrado-de-1910.html>, #15**Fig. 1.9.8 Diagram of the Communion of Saints**An illustration from Bishop Louis LaRavoire Morrow, *My Catholic Faith* (My Mission House, Kenosha, WI, 1963), p. 159<https://archive.org/details/B-001-014-327/page/n161/mode/2up>**Fig. 1.9.9 Sheep Outside the Fold**An illustration from Bishop Louis LaRavoire Morrow, *My Catholic Faith* (My Mission House, Kenosha, WI, 1963), p. 134<https://archive.org/details/B-001-014-327/page/n137/mode/2up>**Fig. 1.10.1 The Prodigal Son Begged Forgiveness from His Father**

Artist: Bartolomé Esteban Murillo (1617–1682)

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Return\\_of\\_the\\_Prodigal\\_Son\\_1667-1670\\_Murillo.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Return_of_the_Prodigal_Son_1667-1670_Murillo.jpg)**Fig. 1.10.2 An Angel Frees a Soul in Purgatory**

Artist: Ludovico Carracci (1555–1619)

<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Carracci-Purgatory.jpg>**Fig. 1.11.1 The Resurrection of the Dead**

An illustration from a Portuguese catechism of 1910

<http://www.sendarium.com/p/catecismo-ilustrado-de-1910.html>, #17**Fig. 1.12.1 If the Earth Is So Beautiful, Just Imagine What Heaven Must Be Like**

The Canadian Rockies in the Morning

Photographed by Sergey Pesterev, CC BY–SA 4.0 license

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Rockies\\_in\\_the\\_morning.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Rockies_in_the_morning.jpg)**Fig. A1 A Symbol of the Blessed Trinity**

Slightly retouched to hide damage on the canvas.

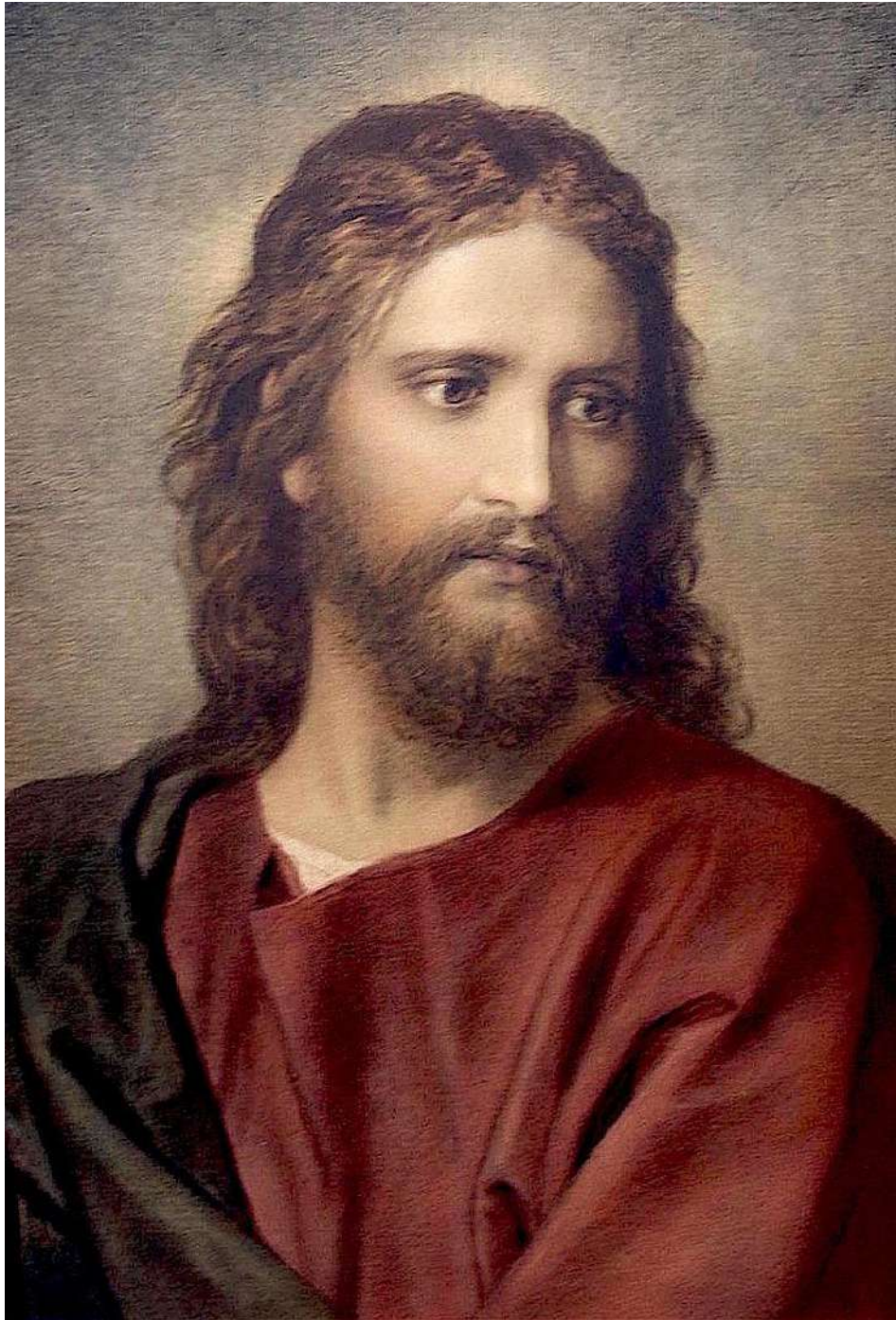
Artist: Max Fürst (1846–1917)

[https://www.wikiwand.com/en/Trinity\\_Sunday](https://www.wikiwand.com/en/Trinity_Sunday)





## *Part Two: The Sacraments*



**Fig. 2 Portrait of Jesus Christ**  
Extracted from the Painting “Christ and the Rich Young Ruler”  
By Heinrich Hofmann (1824–1911)

## PART 2 – THE SACRAMENTS

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## INTRODUCTION: *The Sacraments and Sacramentals*

### NATURE OF THE SACRAMENTS

**1. What is treated of in the second part of this catechism?**

The second part of this catechism treats of the sacraments.

**2. What is meant by the word “sacrament”?**

The word “sacrament” means a sensible and efficacious sign of grace, instituted by Christ to sanctify our souls (CCC 1114).

**3. Why do you call the sacraments sensible and efficacious signs of grace?**

The sacraments are called sensible and efficacious signs of grace because they signify, by means of sensible things, the divine grace that they produce in our souls. In Baptism, for example, the pouring of water on the head of the person and the words, “I baptize thee,” which mean, I wash thee, “in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit,” are sensible signs of what Baptism accomplishes in the soul. That means, just as water washes the body, so, in like manner, does the grace given in Baptism cleanse the soul from sin.

**4. How many sacraments are there, and what are they called?**

There are seven sacraments (CCC 1113):

1. Baptism
2. Confirmation
3. Eucharist
4. Reconciliation (or Penance)
5. Anointing of the Sick (or Extreme Unction)
6. Holy Orders
7. Matrimony





**Fig. 2.0.1 Illustration of the Seven Sacraments**

Top row: Baptism and Confirmation

Middle row: Eucharist, Reconciliation, Anointing of the Sick

Bottom row: Holy Orders and Matrimony



## 5. Why are there seven sacraments?

There are seven sacraments because they meet the seven spiritual needs that correspond with the seven bodily needs of our natural lives (CCC 1210).

1. In our natural lives, we first need to be born. This corresponds to **Baptism**, by which we are spiritually “born again” as children of God.
2. Next, we need to grow physically and be strong to mature. To this need in our spiritual life corresponds the Sacrament of **Confirmation**, by which we are made spiritually strong and perfect Christians.
3. Then we need food to eat and nourish our bodies, and to this, the **Eucharist** corresponds as the food of our souls.
4. Of course, we also need healing whenever we get sick or wounded. To this necessity corresponds the Sacrament of **Reconciliation**, which heals us whenever sin spiritually wounds our souls.
5. We also need help when we are seriously sick or dying. To this corresponds the sacrament called **Anointing of the Sick**, which gives our souls special help against the assaults of the devil during our critical illnesses and in our last moments.
6. In our natural lives, we also need officers and governors to regulate and maintain order in civil society. To this necessity corresponds the Sacrament of **Holy Orders**, which gives us deacons, priests, and bishops who rule and govern the things that pertain to our spiritual life.
7. Finally, our natural life requires us to multiply and populate our cities. To this corresponds the Sacrament of **Matrimony**, by which marriage becomes sacramental and generative of future citizens of our Heavenly City.

## 6. What is necessary to constitute a sacrament?

To constitute a sacrament, it is necessary to have the *matter*, the *form*, and the *minister*, who must have the intention to do what the Catholic Church does.

### **7. What is the matter of the sacraments?**

The *matter* of the sacraments is the material, sensible thing or *action* used in effecting the sacrament, such as natural water in Baptism or the imposition of hands in Holy Orders.

### **8. What is the form of the sacraments?**

The *form* of the sacraments is the formula of words that are pronounced to effect the sacrament. In Baptism, for example, the minister would say, “I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.” That is the form or formula of the Sacrament of Baptism.

### **9. Who is the minister of the sacraments?**

The *minister* of the sacraments is the person who administers or confers the sacrament. In Baptism, for example, the minister is ordinarily a priest or a deacon.

## **THE PRINCIPAL EFFECT OF THE SACRAMENTS: GRACE**

### **10. What is grace?**

Grace is an inward and supernatural gift given to us without any merit of our own, but solely through the merits of Jesus Christ, to gain eternal life.

### **11. How many kinds of grace are there?**

There are two kinds of grace: *sanctifying grace* and *actual grace*.

### **12. What is sanctifying grace?**

Sanctifying grace is the supernatural gift of divine life in our souls that renders us holy, adopted children of God, and heirs to Heaven.

### **13. How many kinds of sanctifying grace are there?**

Sanctifying grace is of two kinds: first grace and second grace.

#### **14. What is first grace?**

First grace is that sanctifying grace by means of which one passes from the state of mortal sin to the state of grace.

#### **15. Which sacraments confer first grace?**

The sacraments that confer first sanctifying grace and change our soul from a state of sin to a state of grace are Baptism and Reconciliation. On that account, these two sacraments are called **sacraments of the dead** because they are instituted chiefly to restore the life of grace to a soul that has been spiritually dead by sin.

#### **16. What is second grace?**

Second grace is that sanctifying grace that confers an *increase* of grace on those who are already in a state of grace.

#### **17. Which are the sacraments that increase grace in those who already possess it?**

The sacraments that increase grace in those who already possess it are Confirmation, Eucharist, Anointing of the Sick, Holy Orders, and Matrimony, all of which confer second grace. On that account, these five sacraments are called **sacraments of the living** because those who receive them must be free from mortal sin; that is, they must already be spiritually alive by being in the state of grace.

#### **18. Does a person sin when, knowing that he is not in a state of grace, he receives one of the sacraments of the living?**

Yes, he who receives one of the sacraments of the living while conscious that he is not in the state of grace commits the serious sin of sacrilege. Therefore, it is good practice to go to confession first and receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation before receiving any of these five sacraments: Confirmation, Eucharist, Anointing of the Sick, Holy Orders, and Matrimony.

**19. What is actual grace?**

Actual grace is a supernatural gift that enlightens the mind and moves and strengthens the will to help us do good and avoid evil. By helping us avoid sin, actual grace preserves our sanctifying grace (or the divine life in our souls), which can be lost by sin.

**20. Can we resist the grace of God?**

Yes, we can resist the grace of God because grace does not destroy our free will.

**21. By the aid of our powers alone, can we do anything to attain everlasting life?**

Without the grace of God and by our own powers alone, we cannot do anything helpful to attain everlasting life.

**22. How is grace given to us by God?**

God gives us sanctifying grace chiefly through the sacraments. Actual grace may be obtained through prayer or through the performance of good works, such as works of mercy.

**23. Do the sacraments confer any other grace besides sanctifying grace?**

Besides sanctifying grace, the sacraments also confer sacramental grace proper to each sacrament (CCC 1129).

**24. What does sacramental grace do?**

Sacramental grace confers the right to receive the actual graces necessary to fulfill the obligations arising from the sacrament received. Thus, when we were baptized, we also received the right to receive the actual graces we need to live a Christian life.

**25. Do the sacraments always confer grace on those who receive them?**

The sacraments always confer grace, provided they are received with the necessary and proper dispositions (CCC 1131).



**26. Who gave the sacraments the power of conferring grace?**

Jesus Christ, by His passion and death, gave the sacraments the power of conferring grace. Therefore, Jesus Christ is the source of all graces (CCC 1116). Since the sacraments derive their efficacy from Christ, they confer grace by the fact that they are performed or celebrated, *independent of the righteousness or holiness of the minister* celebrating the sacrament (CCC 1128, 1584).

**27. What sacraments are most necessary for salvation?**

The sacraments most necessary for salvation are Baptism and Reconciliation. Baptism is necessary to remove original sin, and Reconciliation is necessary to remove actual mortal sins committed after Baptism. But while Baptism and Reconciliation are the most necessary for salvation, they are not the greatest.

**28. What is the greatest of all the sacraments?**

The greatest of all the sacraments is the Eucharist because it contains not only grace but also Jesus Christ, the Author of grace and the sacraments.

**THE CHARACTER IMPRESSED BY THE SACRAMENTS****29. What sacraments can be received only once?**

The sacraments that can be received only once are Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders. These sacraments can be received only once because each of them imprints an *indelible* character, mark, or “seal” on the soul that is never effaced. The character that they imprint on the soul marks us as members of Jesus Christ at Baptism, as His soldiers at Confirmation, and as His ministers at Holy Orders (CCC 1121).

**30. Is it a sin to receive these sacraments more than once?**

Yes. It is a mortal sin of sacrilege.

## SACRAMENTALS

### 31. What are the so-called “sacramentals”?

Sacramentals are blessed objects and rituals instituted by the Church for purposes of divine worship. Examples of sacramental objects are blessed rosaries, scapulars, medals, statues, crucifixes, holy water, holy cards, an altar, religious habits, vestments (clothing used by ministers and altar servers), holy candles, incense, or any other religious object consecrated for purposes of divine worship. A chapel, a church, a convent, or any building dedicated for purposes of divine worship is also a sacramental. But sacramentals are not limited to *objects* or *things*, for they also include the *actions* and *rituals* themselves by which a minister invokes the blessing of God upon people and things. For example, the gestures and formula of words used by a minister to bless a rosary, a car, a house, a newborn child, or the remains of the departed are also sacramentals (CCC 1667, 1671–1672).



Fig. 2.0.2 Sacramentals

### **32. But why are these blessed objects and rituals called “sacramentals”?**

They are so-called because they bear a resemblance to the sacraments in the fact that they are also signs of something sacred.

### **33. How do sacramentals exactly differ from the sacraments?**

First of all, sacramentals are instituted by the Church, while sacraments are instituted by Christ Himself. Secondly, although sacramentals are signs of something sacred, they do not confer divine grace as the sacraments do. The sacraments confer the grace that they signify. For example, the Sacrament of Baptism is not merely a sign of the cleansing of a soul; it actually cleanses the soul of the person being baptized of original and actual sin, if there be any. A sacramental, such as holy water, does not of itself forgive sin, not even venial sin, but it inclines a person to pious acts that lead to the forgiveness of sin. Thus, St. Thomas Aquinas says that, although holy water itself does not confer grace or wash away sin, the pious *use* of holy water, or the acts of devotion and piety that go along with it, are enough to forgive venial sin (CCC 1670).

### **34. How should we use sacramentals?**

We should use sacramentals with faith and devotion and not treat them like objects of superstition. For instance, we should not wear a crucifix or a medal as if it were a “good luck charm” (CCC 1676).

### **35. How should we dispose of old or broken sacramentals?**

In the Catholic tradition, old or broken sacramentals (medals, rosaries, statues, holy cards, missals, prayer books, etc.) should be burned or buried respectfully. Unwanted holy water and holy oil may be poured directly on the ground, but not in regular plumbing. In no way should blessed objects be treated irreverently or profanely (CIC 1171).

# LESSON 1 BAPTISM

## NATURE AND EFFECTS OF BAPTISM

### 1. What is the Sacrament of Baptism?

Baptism is a sacrament by which we are freed from original and actual sin and incorporated into the Church.

### 2. What are the effects of the Sacrament of Baptism?

The Sacrament of Baptism confers first sanctifying grace, by which original sin is washed away, as well as any actual sin committed before Baptism. It allows the Holy Spirit to dwell within our souls; it remits all punishment due on account of our sins; it imprints the indelible character of a Christian; it makes us children of God, members of the Catholic Church, and heirs to Paradise; and it enables us to receive the other sacraments. Indeed, Baptism is called the first sacrament because we cannot receive any other sacrament before it (CCC 1213).

### 3. What is the matter of Baptism?

The **matter** of Baptism is natural water that is poured on the head of the person to be baptized in such a quantity as to flow.

### 4. What is the form of Baptism?

The **form** or formula of Baptism is: *"I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."* The whole formula must be pronounced because the Baptism is not valid if the words "I baptize you" or any of the three Persons of the Blessed Trinity are omitted.

### 5. When did Christ give the form of Baptism and the command to baptize?

Before He ascended into Heaven, He said, "Go, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit..." (Matt 28:19).



## **MINISTER OF BAPTISM**

### **6. To whom does it belong to confer Baptism?**

The ordinary ministers of Baptism are the bishops, priests, and, in the Latin Church, also the deacons, but in case of necessity, any person, whether man or woman, even a heretic or an infidel, can administer it, provided he or she performs the rite of Baptism using the correct formula and has the intention of doing what the Church does in baptizing (CCC 1256).

### **7. If it were necessary to baptize a person in danger of death, and if several people were present, who should administer the sacrament?**

If it were necessary to baptize a person in danger of death and if several people were present, a priest, if one were at hand, should administer the sacrament; in his absence, a deacon; or else, “any member of the faithful, indeed any person who has the requisite intention, can and sometimes must administer Baptism” (OBC General Introduction, #16).

### **8. What intention should the person baptizing, have?**

The person baptizing should have the intention of doing what Holy Catholic Church does in baptizing.

## **THE RITE OF BAPTISM**

### **9. How is Baptism given?**

Baptism is given by pouring water on the head of the person to be baptized—and if it cannot be poured on the head, then on some other principal part of the body—and saying at the same time, “I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.” If the person to be baptized is an infant, then the sponsors, called godfathers and/or godmothers, usually hold the infant at the baptismal font.

In the Catholic Church, Baptism is most expressively performed by triple **immersion** of the candidate in water. However, the ancient practice of simply pouring water on the head three times in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit is also very common (CCC 1239–1243).



Fig. 2.1.1 Infant Baptism

**10. If one were to pour the water and another were to pronounce the words, would the person be baptized?**

If one poured the water and another said the words, the person would not be baptized because the person who pours the water must pronounce the words.

**11. When in doubt whether the person is dead, is it right to omit baptizing him?**

When in doubt whether the person is dead, he should be baptized conditionally, saying, "If you are alive, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."

**12. When should infants be brought to the church to be baptized?**

Infants should be brought to the church to be baptized **as soon as possible**.

**13. Why such anxiety to have infants receive Baptism?**

There should be the greatest anxiety about having infants baptized because, on account of their tender age, they are exposed to many dangers of death. And without the assurance afforded by Baptism, the salvation of the child is entirely up to God's mercy.

**14. Do parents sin, then, who, through negligence, allow their children to die without Baptism, or who defer it?**

Yes, fathers and mothers who, through negligence, allow their children to die without Baptism may be guilty of grievous sin because they risk depriving their children of eternal life. They may also sin grievously by putting off Baptism for a long time because they expose them to the risk of dying without having received it (CCC 1250–1251).

**15. When the person who is being baptized is an adult, what dispositions should he have?**

An adult who is being baptized should have, besides faith, true sorrow, even if it is imperfect, for the mortal sins he may have committed. He would not need to go to confession because his mortal sins would be wiped out along with the original sin by the Sacrament of Baptism. However, he needs to have true sorrow for his sins.

**16. If an adult in mortal sin was baptized without such sorrow, what would he receive?**

If an adult was baptized in mortal sin without such sorrow, he would receive the character of Baptism, but not the remission of his sins or sanctifying grace. And these two effects would be suspended until the obstacle is removed by perfect contrition or by the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

## **NECESSITY OF BAPTISM**

**17. Is Baptism necessary for salvation?**

Baptism is absolutely necessary for salvation, for Our Lord has expressly said: “Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God” (John 3:5).

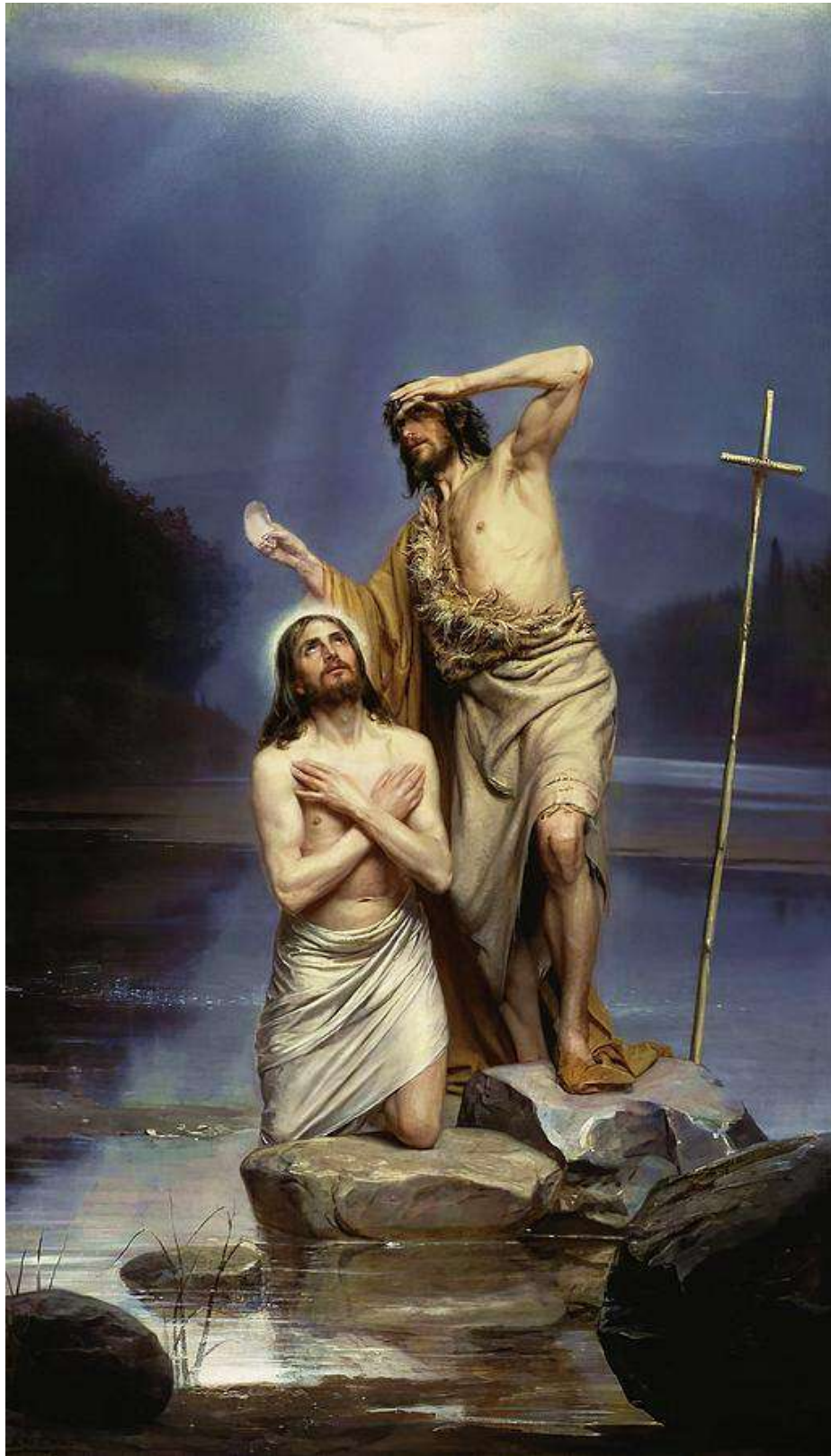
**18. Was Jesus Christ also baptized?**

Yes, Jesus Christ was baptized by Saint John the Baptist at the Jordan River. When He was baptized, He saw the Holy Spirit descend as a dove upon Him. (Matt 3:13-17)

**19. If Christ was sinless, why did He have to be baptized?**

Strictly speaking, Jesus Christ did not have to be baptized because He was indeed born without the stain of original sin and did not commit a single actual sin. But since He came to teach us how we could become children of God by Baptism, He allowed Himself to be baptized to set us an example. However, the Baptism that He Himself instituted, unlike that conferred by Saint John, is *sacramental* because it does not merely induce us to repentance; it actually washes away sin and justifies the sinner. Speaking of Christ, St. John says, “I indeed baptize you with water unto penance, but He who comes after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear; He shall baptize you *with the Holy Spirit and with fire*” (Matt 3:11). (Italics added for emphasis.)





**Fig. 2.1.2 The Baptism of Christ**

The picture shows Christ being baptized by St. John the Baptist.

## 20. Can the effects of Baptism be supplied in any other way?

The effects of Baptism can be supplied in other ways:

1. By martyrdom, which is called **Baptism of Blood**. This is received by an unbaptized person who dies for the cause of Christianity or for the love of Christ (CCC 1258).
2. By an act of explicit desire to be baptized and, hence, is called **Baptism of Desire**. This is received by an unbaptized person who has shown an explicit desire to be baptized, such as a catechumen who is preparing for Baptism, but who dies before actually receiving the sacrament (CCC 1259).
3. By an act of sincere desire to love and serve God, and this is called **Baptism of Implicit Desire**. This is received by those who are ignorant of the gospel but who seek the truth and do the will of God according to their understanding of it. It may be presumed that such people would have wanted to be baptized explicitly had they known about it (CCC 1260).
4. By God's mercy. The Catholic Church entrusts the salvation of unbaptized children or infants who have died without Baptism, to God's mercy (CCC 1261).

## 21. If Baptism is necessary for salvation, then why are the effects of Baptism supplied in so many ways other than by Baptism?

Because God can make exceptions to His rule. *“God has bound salvation to the Sacrament of Baptism, but he himself is not bound by his sacraments”* (CCC 1257). This is the reason why the Church recognizes that even unbaptized infants may, through God's boundless mercy, be saved. For exactly the same reason, although Christ made the confession of sins a condition for receiving forgiveness through the Sacrament of Reconciliation, God can, in His mercy, grant pardon to a truly repentant sinner even if he is unable to go to confession before he dies.

## **22. What obligations does the person baptized have?**

The person baptized is obliged (1) to profess the Faith and observe the law of Jesus Christ and His Church, and (2) to renounce the devil and his works and pomps<sup>10</sup> forever. The devil craftily allures us by filling our minds with the maxims and ideals of the world that are contrary to the maxims and ideals of the gospel.

## **NAMES AND SPONSORS**

## **23. Why is the name of a saint frequently given to the person who is being baptized?**

Since Baptism effects the regeneration of a person into a new spiritual life, the one who is being baptized is frequently given a new name to signify the fact that the baptized is now a “new man.” The name of a saint is usually chosen to put him under the protection of a heavenly patron and to encourage him to imitate that saint’s example.

## **24. Can infants be baptized when they have no actual faith?**

Yes, through the faith of the Church and of their godparents.

## **25. Who are the godfathers and godmothers in Baptism?**

The godfathers and godmothers in Baptism are those persons who, in accordance with the decree of the Catholic Church, hold the infants at the font, answer for them, and become guarantees in the sight of God for their Catholic education, especially in the absence of the parents (CIC 872).

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<sup>10</sup> The so-called “pomps” of the devil refer to his empty promises by which he seduces us to do evil. Satan gave us an example of this when he offered Christ the glory of the whole world if He would fall down and adore him. But Christ answered him, saying, *The Lord your God shall you adore, and Him only shall you serve* (Matt 4:8–10).

**26. Are we obliged to keep the promises and renunciations made for us by our sponsors?**

We are certainly obliged to observe the promises and renunciations made for us by our sponsors because it is only on this condition that God has received us into His grace.

**27. What sort of people should be chosen as godfathers and godmothers?**

The persons who should be chosen as godfathers and godmothers should be practicing Catholics, conscientious of and obedient to the laws of God and the Church.

**28. What are the obligations of godfathers and godmothers?**

Godfathers and godmothers are bound to see that their spiritual children are instructed in the truths of the Catholic Faith and live as good Catholics, should parents be negligent or be prevented by illness or death from fulfilling their duties (CCC 1255).



## LESSON 2 CONFIRMATION

### 1. What is the Sacrament of Confirmation?

Confirmation is a sacrament that gives us the Holy Spirit, imprints on our souls the mark of a soldier of Jesus Christ, and helps us become perfect Christians.

### 2. How does the Sacrament of Confirmation help us become perfect Christians?

The Sacrament of Confirmation helps us become perfect Christians by strengthening our faith and increasing the other virtues and gifts received in Baptism.

### 3. What gifts of the Holy Spirit are increased by Confirmation?

The gifts of the Holy Spirit increased by Confirmation are these seven: wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord. (See Part One, Art. 8, for the definition of these gifts.)

### 4. When did Our Lord institute this sacrament?

The time is not certain. However, we know that this is by divine institution, for St. Paul said, “Now he that confirms us with you in Christ and that has anointed us is God, Who also has sealed us and given the pledge of the Spirit in our hearts” (2 Cor 1:21–22). And St. Paul himself confirmed twelve disciples by imposing his hands on them after baptizing them: “Having heard these things, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. When Paul had imposed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them...” (Acts 19:5–6).

### 5. What is the matter of this sacrament?

The **matter** of this sacrament, besides the imposition of hands by the bishop, is the anointing of the forehead with sacred chrism.



**Fig. 2.2.1 Confirmation**

## **6. What is sacred chrism?**

Sacred chrism is the oil of olives mingled with balsam and consecrated by the bishop on Holy Thursday (CCC 1297).

**7. What do the oil and balsam in this sacrament signify?**

In this sacrament, the oil, which is unctuous and strengthening, signifies the abounding grace that is diffused over the soul of the Christian to confirm him in his faith. The fragrant balsam signifies that the Christian, strengthened by this grace, is enabled to give forth the good odor of Christian virtue.

**8. What is the form of the Sacrament of Confirmation?**

The **form** or formula of the Sacrament of Confirmation is this: "*Be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit*" (CCC 1300, 1320).

**9. Who is the minister of the Sacrament of Confirmation?**

The ordinary **minister** of the Sacrament of Confirmation is the bishop. A priest may be given the faculty to confer this sacrament and is then called an *extraordinary minister of Confirmation* (CCC 1313–1314).

**10. How does the bishop administer Confirmation?**

In administering the Sacrament of Confirmation, the bishop first stretches his hands over those to be confirmed and invokes the Holy Spirit upon them. Next, he anoints the forehead of each one with sacred chrism in the form of a cross, saying the words of the formula. Then he gives each confirmed person the sign of peace, saying, "Peace be with you." Finally, he solemnly blesses all those he has confirmed (CCC 1299–1301).

**11. Why is the anointing made on the forehead?**

The anointing is made on the forehead, where signs of fear and shame appear, so that the person who is confirmed may understand that one should not blush at the name and profession of a Christian nor fear the enemies of his faith.





**Fig. 2.2.2 A Bishop Anointing the Foreheads of Children with Sacred Chrism**

## **12. Is the Sacrament of Confirmation necessary?**

Yes, it is morally necessary for the maturity of our Christian life so that, enriched by the strength of the Holy Spirit, we may act as true witnesses and soldiers of Jesus Christ, spreading and defending the Faith by word and deed (CCC 1285).

## **13. Should we all endeavor to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation then?**

Yes, all baptized persons who are not yet confirmed should endeavor to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation and to have those under them receive it (CCC 1306).



**14. Does one sin by refusing to receive it when one might have it without great inconvenience?**

Yes, and it is a mortal sin if it is avoided out of contempt or omitted out of gross neglect, especially in a place or time of persecution. For, by neglecting to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation, we expose ourselves to the great danger of denying our Faith, against which this sacrament was especially instituted by Our Lord.

**15. At what age is the Sacrament of Confirmation recommended to be received?**

In the U.S., the *United States Conference of Bishops* (USCCB) recommends that, except where there is a danger of death or some other grave reason, the age for Confirmation be from *the age of discretion* (around seven) to the age of sixteen because the candidates also need to be properly instructed in the Catholic Faith. Preparation for Confirmation should strive to awaken Christian maturity in the candidate and a sense of belonging to the Church of Jesus Christ (CIC 891; CN 891).

**16. What dispositions are required to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation worthily?**

The Sacrament of Confirmation is one of the sacraments of the living. Therefore, to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation worthily, it is necessary *to be in the state of grace*, know the principal mysteries of our Faith, have the right intention, and be ready to be a witness to Christ. To be assured of being in the state of grace at the time of Confirmation, children should go to confession and receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation a few days before receiving Confirmation (CCC 1310, 1319).

**17. Would he who receives Confirmation a second time be guilty of sin?**

Yes, he would commit the grievous sin of sacrilege because Confirmation is one of the sacraments that imprints an indelible character on the soul and may, therefore, be received only once.

**18. What should a Christian do to preserve the grace of Confirmation?**

To preserve the grace of Confirmation, a Christian should pray often, do good works, and live according to the commandments of God and of the Church, despite human respect.

**19. Why are there also godfathers and godmothers in Confirmation?**

There are also godfathers and godmothers in Confirmation so that, by word and example, they may show the confirmed the way to eternal life and help him in the spiritual combat against the devil (CIC 892).

**20. What qualifications are required of sponsors (godfathers and godmothers)?**

Sponsors should be of proper age, good character, Catholics, confirmed, and instructed in the Catholic Faith. It is desirable that the same person who was the sponsor at the child's Baptism be the sponsor also at the child's Confirmation (CIC 874.1 and 893.2).

## LESSON 3 HOLY EUCHARIST

### THE NATURE OF THE EUCHARIST

#### 1. What is the Sacrament of the Eucharist?

The Eucharist is a sacrament in which, by the marvelous conversion of the whole substance of bread into the Body of Jesus Christ and that of wine into His Precious Blood, are contained truly, really, and substantially the body, blood, soul, and divinity of the same Lord Jesus Christ, under the appearance of bread and wine as our spiritual food.

#### 2. In the Eucharist, is there the same Jesus Christ who is in Heaven and who was born on Earth of the Blessed Virgin?

Yes, in the Eucharist, there is truly the same Jesus Christ who is in Heaven and who was born on Earth of the Blessed Virgin.

#### 3. Why do we believe that in the Eucharist, Jesus Christ is really present?

We believe that in the Eucharist, Jesus Christ is truly present because He himself said it, and the Holy Catholic Church teaches it. This is what we read in the Gospel of St. Matthew: “While they were at supper, Jesus took bread, blessed it, broke it, gave it to His disciples, and said, ‘*Take and eat. This is My body.*’ Taking the chalice, He gave thanks and gave it to them, saying, ‘Drink of this, all of you. For *this is My blood* of the New Testament, which shall be shed for many for the remission of sins’” (Matt 26:26–28). Did you read that well? He did not say, “This is the symbol of My body,” nor did He say, “This represents My blood.” What He said was, “This IS My body... This IS My blood.” In the Gospel of St. John, He made it clear that He was indeed talking of His real flesh and blood: “Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you shall not have life in you” (John 6:54).

#### 4. What is the *matter* of the Sacrament of the Eucharist?

The **matter** of the Sacrament of the Eucharist is that which was used by Jesus Christ himself, namely, **wheat bread** and **grape wine** (CCC 1412).

A small amount of water is also added to the chalice to signify the fact that blood and water flowed from the side of Christ when He was pierced by a lance (John 19:31–34).



Fig. 2.3.1 Hosts Made of Wheat Bread in the Bowls and Grape Wine in the Chalice

#### 5. What is the *form* of the Sacrament of the Eucharist?

The essential **form** or formula of the Sacrament of the Eucharist consists of the words used by Jesus Christ himself: *“This is My body, which will be given up for you... This is the chalice of My blood...”* The complete formula is actually longer (CCC 1412).



**6. What is the host before consecration?**

The host before consecration is just ordinary bread.

**7. What is the Host after consecration?**

After consecration, the Host is now the true Body of Our Lord Jesus Christ under the sensible appearance of bread; that is, it is now the Body of Christ, although it still looks and tastes like bread.

**8. What is in the chalice before consecration?**

In the chalice before consecration, there is wine with a few drops of water.

**9. What is in the chalice after consecration?**

After consecration, there is in the chalice the true Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ, under the sensible appearance of wine; that is, it is now the Blood of Christ, although it still looks and tastes like wine.

**10. When does the change of the bread into the Body and of the wine into the Blood of Jesus Christ take place?**

The change of the bread into the Body and of the wine into the Blood of Jesus Christ is made at the very moment when the priest pronounces, in the person of Christ, the words of consecration during Holy Mass.

**11. What is the consecration?**

The consecration is the re-enactment, by means of the priest, of the act of Our Lord Jesus Christ at the Last Supper, in which He changed bread and wine into His Adorable Body and Most Precious Blood by saying, “This is My Body... This is the chalice of My Blood.”

**12. What does the Church call this supernatural change of bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ?**

The Catholic Church calls this supernatural change, which is daily wrought upon our altars, *transubstantiation* (CCC 1376).

### 13. Transubstantiation is a big word. What does it really mean?

Transubstantiation refers to the process whereby one substance is changed wholly and entirely into another substance. To understand this more fully, it is first necessary to distinguish a *substance* from its *accidents*. When we see an apple, for instance, what we actually see with our sense of sight is its color, shape, and size. When we hold an apple in our hand, we can feel, through our sense of touch, its weight and the texture of its skin. When we take a bite, we can perceive, through our sense of taste, its sweetness and flavor. But notice that the color, size, shape, weight, skin texture, sweetness, or flavor of the apple is not the apple itself. They are merely the accidental features or characteristics of the substance that we call an ‘apple.’ The substance ‘apple’ itself, which stands beneath these accidents, is not perceived by our senses. It is only perceived by our mind. When our senses perceive the accidents, our minds know at the same time that there is a substance underlying them because accidents do not naturally exist by themselves. For example, there is no such thing as the color ‘red’ existing by itself; it exists only in a red object and does not exist apart from it. The same is true of all the other accidents. They all need an underlying substance to support their existence in the world.

In transubstantiation, the substance of the bread is changed wholly and entirely into the substance of Christ’s body *without changing the accidents!* The accidents of the bread remain, but they do not thereby become the accidents of Christ’s body. They are only supported now in their existence by Christ’s divine power. This is why the bread, after transubstantiation, still looks and tastes like bread, although it is no longer bread but Christ’s body. Something similar happens when the substance of the wine is changed into Christ’s blood. The substance ‘wine’ becomes Christ’s blood and ceases to be wine, although it still looks and tastes like wine. In the Eucharist, Christ’s body remains hidden. He exists with His proper accidents—including head, body, arms, and legs—only in Heaven.



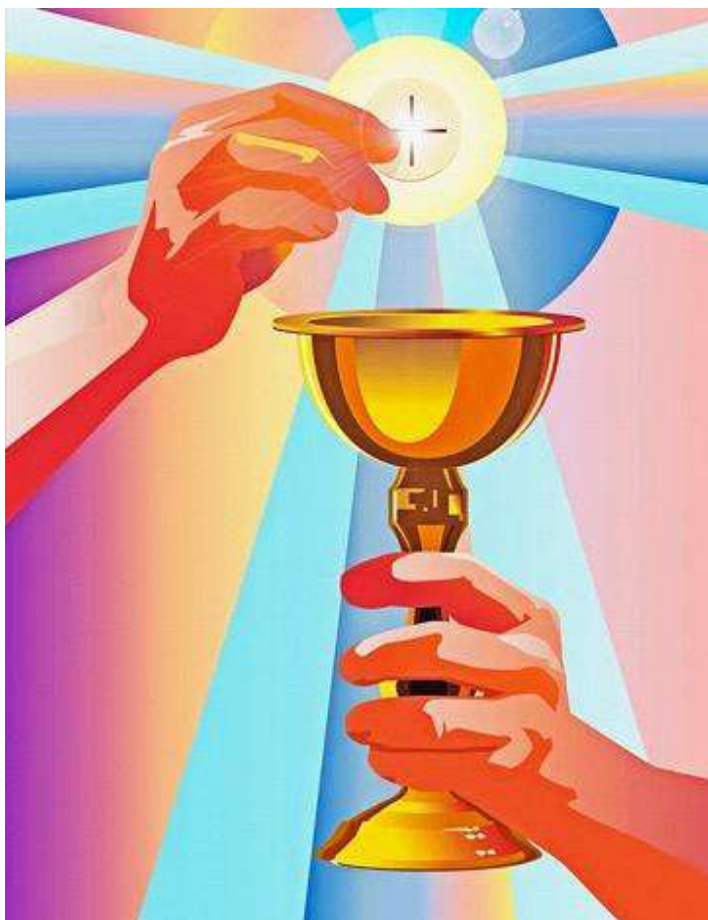
**Fig. 2.3.2 The Host is the Body of Jesus Christ After Consecration**

**14. Who gave the words of consecration the power to change bread and wine into Christ's Body and Blood?**

Our Lord Jesus Christ himself, who is Almighty God, gave this great power to the words of consecration.

**15. Under the accidents of the bread, is there only Jesus' body, and under the accidents of the wine, is there only His blood?**

Strictly speaking, no. Under the accidents of bread, the **whole** Christ is present, not just His body. And under the accidents of wine, the **whole** Christ is present, not just His blood. The reason is that there cannot be a living body without living blood, and vice versa. Both in the Sacred Host and in the Sacred Wine, Jesus Christ is really, wholly, and entirely present because He is living and immortal in the Eucharist as He is in Heaven. Where His Body is, there are also His blood, soul, and divinity; and where His Blood is, there are also His body, soul, and divinity, all of which are inseparable in Jesus Christ (CCC 1377).



**Fig. 2.3.3 Jesus Christ is Present Wholly and Entirely in the Holy Eucharist**

**16. When Jesus Christ is in the Host, does He cease to be in Heaven?**

When Jesus Christ is in the Host, He does not cease to be in Heaven. He is still physically in Heaven but sacramentally in the Host. The sacramental presence of Christ in the Host is a *real presence*, but without the proper accidents of His body.

**17. When the Host is broken, is the Body of Jesus Christ also broken?**

When the Host is broken, only the accidents and sensible appearance of the bread are broken. Christ remains undivided and exists, wholly and entirely, *in each part or particle of the broken Host*.



**18. Why is the Most Holy Eucharist preserved in our churches?**

The Most Holy Eucharist is preserved in our churches so that it may be adored by the faithful and brought to the sick when necessary.

**19. Should the Eucharist be adored?**

The Eucharist ought to be adored by all because it contains really, truly, and substantially Our Lord Jesus Christ himself.

**20. Who is the ordinary minister of the Holy Eucharist?**

The only person who has the power to change the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ is an ordained priest or bishop. However, the ordinary minister for distributing Holy Communion is an ordained bishop, priest, or deacon (CIC 910.1).

**21. Who are the extraordinary ministers for distributing Holy Communion?**

The extraordinary ministers for distributing Holy Communion are Catholic persons who, although not ordained as deacons or priests, have been authorized by the bishop or priest to distribute Holy Communion, either during Holy Mass or afterward, to sick people at home, in the hospital, or to the elderly in nursing homes. Unordained Catholic persons, including acolytes (or altar servers), may be called to help as extraordinary ministers *only if not enough ordinary ministers are present* (CIC 230.3; RS 157). At Holy Mass, the USCCB also requires the number of extraordinary ministers to not exceed what is sufficient for the reverent and orderly distribution of Holy Communion (NDRHC 28).

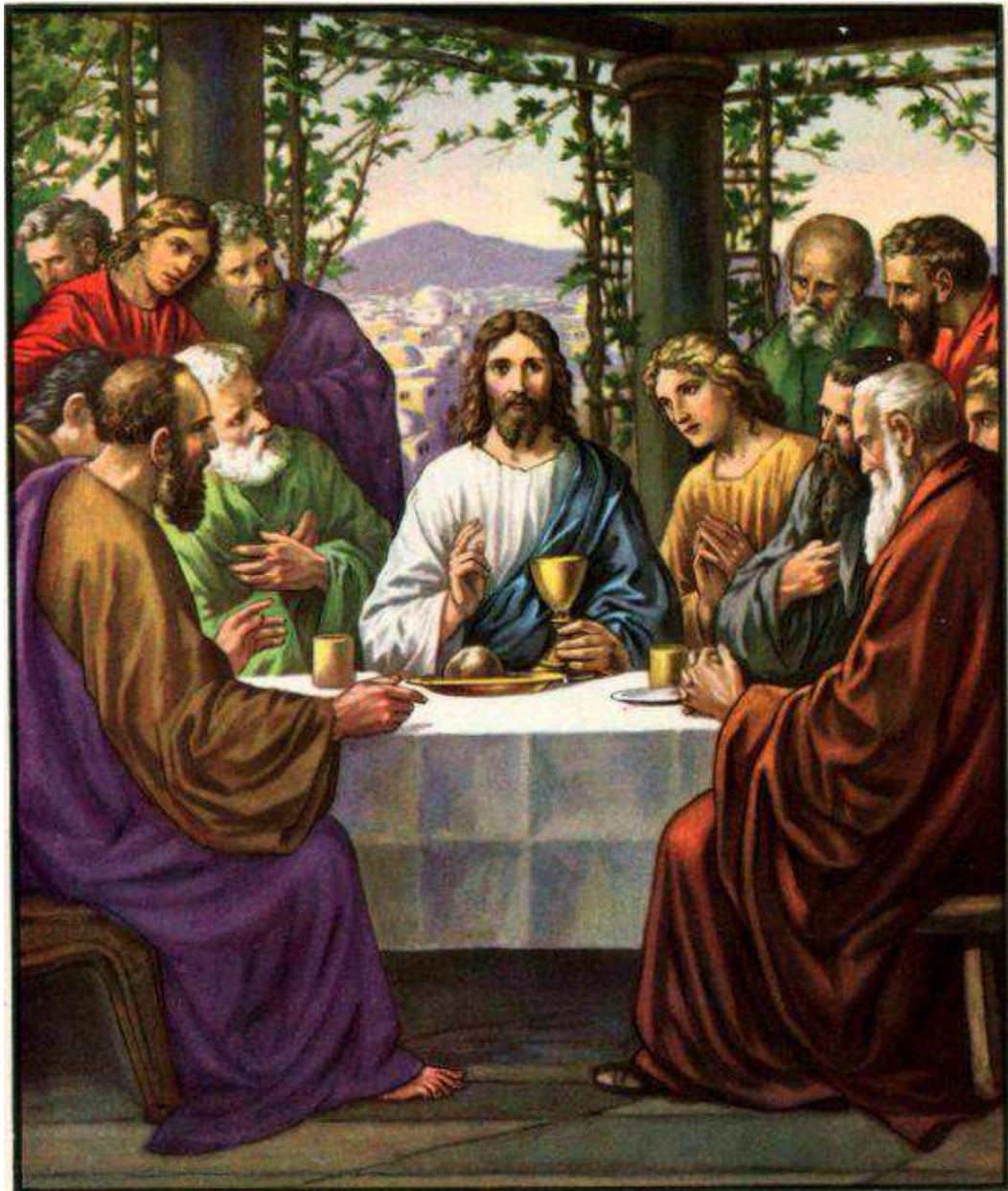
**22. Who are the “Eucharistic ministers”?**

The term “Eucharistic minister” broadly refers to anyone who distributes Holy Communion. Therefore, it applies to both ordinary and extraordinary ministers. If you want to refer exclusively to unordained Catholics who assist in distributing Communion, you should use the term “extraordinary minister for distributing Holy Communion.”

## THE INSTITUTION AND EFFECTS OF THE EUCHARIST

### 23. When did Jesus Christ institute the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist?

Jesus Christ instituted the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist during His last supper with His Apostles, when He said, “Do this for a commemoration of Me” (Luke 22:19). (CCC 1337–1344)



**Fig. 2.3.4 Christ Instituted the Eucharist During His Last Supper with the Apostles**

**24. Why did Jesus Christ institute the Most Holy Eucharist?**

Jesus Christ instituted the Most Holy Eucharist for three principal reasons: (1) to be the sacrifice of the New Law; (2) to be the food of our souls; (3) to be a perpetual memorial of His passion and death and a precious pledge both of His love for us and of eternal life.

**25. Why did Jesus Christ institute this sacrament under the appearance of bread and wine?**

Jesus Christ instituted this sacrament under the appearance of bread and wine because the Eucharist is intended to be our spiritual nourishment. Therefore, it was fitting that it should be given to us in the form of food and drink.

**26. What are the effects that the Most Holy Eucharist produces in us?**

The principal effects that the Most Holy Eucharist produces in those who worthily receive it are these: (1) it increases our union with Christ; (2) it preserves and increases the life of the soul, which is grace, just as natural food sustains and increases the life of the body; (3) it remits venial sins and preserves us from mortal sin; (4) it unites us with all the faithful as one Mystical Body of Christ, the Church (CCC 1391–1396).

**27. Does not the Most Holy Eucharist produce other effects on us?**

Yes. The Most Holy Eucharist produces four other effects: (1) it weakens our passions; (2) it increases charity toward God and our neighbor, especially the poor; (3) it promotes prayer toward the unity of all Christians; and (4) it gives us a pledge of future glory and the resurrection of our body (CCC 1397–1398, 1402).

## **DISPOSITIONS NECESSARY TO RECEIVE HOLY COMMUNION WORTHILY**

### **28. When does the Sacrament of the Eucharist produce its marvelous effects in us?**

The Sacrament of the Eucharist produces its marvelous effects in us when it is received with the requisite dispositions.

### **29. What conditions are necessary for a good Communion?**

To make a good Communion, three conditions are necessary:

1. To be in the state of grace;
2. To avoid taking any food or drink, except water and medicine, for one hour before Holy Communion (CIC 919); and
3. To know what we are about to receive and to approach Holy Communion devoutly. Very young children, as well as those who have not been well instructed in their catechism and who do not understand that what they receive in Holy Communion is the real Body of Christ, are not yet ready to receive Holy Communion and should not join the Communion line. Also, the First Communion of children must always be preceded by the Sacrament of Reconciliation (CIC 913–914).

### **30. What is meant by being in the state of grace?**

To be in the state of grace means to have a pure conscience and to be free from mortal sin.

### **31. Does he who goes to Communion in mortal sin receive Jesus Christ?**

He who goes to Communion knowing that he is in mortal sin receives Jesus Christ but not His grace. Also, he commits a sacrilege and renders himself deserving of the sentence of damnation. St. Paul says, “He that eats and drinks unworthily eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Body of the Lord” (1 Cor 11:29).



### **32. What should one who knows that he is in mortal sin do before receiving Communion?**

One who knows that he is in mortal sin must make a good confession before receiving Holy Communion (CIC 916). Without sacramental confession, even an act of perfect contrition is not enough to enable one who is in mortal sin to receive Holy Communion worthily.

If you know that you have a mortal sin and you have not gone to confession, **STAY IN YOUR SEAT** when Communion time comes and just make an “Act of Spiritual Communion.” You do not have to join the Communion line just because everybody else is going to Communion. It is better to remain seated than to commit another mortal sin of sacrilege! There are also many valid reasons for not joining the Communion line, such as failure to observe the Eucharistic fast, a bad cough, reception of Holy Communion in a prior Mass, etc. So, don’t think people will judge you if you do not receive Communion at that time.

The **Act of Spiritual Communion** is said as follows:

*“My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there, and I unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.”*

### **33. Can one who only has venial sins still receive Holy Communion?**

Yes. Venial sins should not prevent anyone from receiving Holy Communion. However, one should always make an act of contrition before approaching the sacrament.

**34. Can you receive Holy Communion when you are in doubt about having committed a mortal sin?**

When you have sinned but are not certain whether or not it is a mortal sin, you may still receive Holy Communion because, although the sin may *objectively* be a mortal sin, *subjectively* you did not commit a mortal sin for lack of perfect knowledge. However, it is recommended that you disclose the matter to your confessor at your next confession so that your doubt may be resolved and that you may be properly guided before doing the same or similar acts in the future.

**35. Can a Catholic be denied Holy Communion?**

Yes. According to Church law, those “obstinately persevering in manifest grave sin are not to be admitted to Holy Communion” (CIC 915). For example, a politician who is publicly known to promote abortion, same-sex marriages, racism, and other practices contrary to the Faith can and should be denied Holy Communion.

**36. What sort of fast is required before receiving Holy Communion?**

Before receiving Holy Communion, there is a required one-hour natural fast, which is broken by taking food or drink except water and medicine. Chewing gum in church before Holy Communion breaks the Eucharistic fast and should be avoided. Although the requirement for the Eucharistic fast is one hour *before* Communion, it is safer to stop taking food or drink (including chewing gum) one hour *before the Mass begins* because this gives you a certain margin of error in case you miscalculate the time.

The elderly, the sick, and those who care for them are exempt from fasting and may receive Holy Communion even if they have eaten something within the preceding hour.

**37. If one were to swallow a particle that remained between the teeth, might he still go to Communion?**

If one were to swallow a particle that remained between the teeth, he might still go to Communion because the particle is no longer regarded as food or has lost its character as food.

**38. The third condition for making a good Communion is “to know what we are about to receive.” What does this mean?**

“To know what we are about to receive” means to know and firmly believe that what we are about to receive in Holy Communion is NOT ordinary bread or wine but the true Body or Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

**39. What do the words “to approach Holy Communion devoutly” mean?**

“To approach Holy Communion devoutly” means to dress modestly and with humility when receiving Holy Communion, prepare before receiving the sacrament, and perform acts of thanksgiving and adoration afterward.

**40. In what does the preparation before Communion consist?**

Preparation before Communion consists in meditating for some time on whom we are about to receive and on who we are, and in making acts of faith, hope, charity, contrition, adoration, humility, and desire to receive Jesus Christ. Because of the short time available between the consecration and Holy Communion, it is good practice to arrive a few minutes early and start these prayers and preparations before the Mass begins. See the prayers before and after Holy Communion in the *Appendix to Part 4*.

**41. In what does the thanksgiving after Communion consist?**

Thanksgiving after Communion consists in keeping ourselves recollected to honor the Lord who is within us and renewing our acts of faith, hope, charity, adoration, thanksgiving, offerings, and requests, especially for those graces that are most necessary for

ourselves and for those for whom we are bound to pray. Due to the limited time after Communion, it is again good practice not to rush out of church immediately after Mass but to stay behind for a few minutes in the church to give thanks to Our Lord, who so lovingly touched our souls.

**42. What should we do on the day on which we have received Communion?**

During the day on which we have received Communion, we should remain as recollect as possible, occupy ourselves in works of piety, and discharge the duties of our state with greater diligence.

**43. How long does Jesus Christ abide within us after Holy Communion?**

After Holy Communion, Jesus Christ abides within us by His real presence until the accidents of bread or wine are destroyed, consumed, or absorbed by our bodies. However, He abides in our souls by His grace as long as we commit no mortal sin.

**44. Is it necessary to receive Holy Communion in the form of both bread and wine?**

No, it is not necessary to receive Holy Communion in the form of both bread and wine, since Christ is wholly present in either one. Ordinarily, one receives only the consecrated Host. On special occasions, such as after the Baptism of an adult, sacred ordination, religious profession, or wedding, Communion may be taken under both kinds (SC 55). However, it is the choice of the communicant, not the minister, whether or not to receive Communion from the chalice (NDRHC 46).

Although it is not necessary for the laity to receive Holy Communion in both forms, the priest celebrant himself is required to always take Communion in both bread and wine to manifest the meaning of the sacrament more fully.



## THE MANNER OF RECEIVING HOLY COMMUNION

### 45. Should we kneel or should we stand when receiving Holy Communion?

In the U.S., most people stand in line when they approach the priest or the Eucharistic minister to receive Holy Communion. Therefore, the USCCB decided that *communicants may remain standing* when they receive the Holy Eucharist. However, the ancient practice of receiving Holy Communion on the tongue while kneeling as a form of reverence has not been abolished and remains the right of all the faithful (GIRM 160; RHCM; RS 91).



Fig. 2.3.5 Holy Communion

**46. What form of reverence must be shown to the Holy Eucharist when receiving Holy Communion?**

The traditional form of reverence is to “fall on your knees” and receive Holy Communion on the tongue. But if you are receiving Holy Communion standing rather than kneeling, show reverence to Our Lord at least by *bowing the head* before the Blessed Sacrament and by saying “Amen” after the priest or minister says, “The Body of Christ.” *At his or her choice*, the communicant may receive Holy Communion on the tongue even when standing (GIRM 160–161).



**Fig. 2.3.6 Boy Receiving Holy Communion**

**47. Should Holy Communion be received in the hand or on the tongue?**

In the U.S., the USCCB permits receiving Holy Communion in the hand, but receiving Holy Communion on the tongue has been the traditional practice and remains the right of all the faithful (GIRM 160; RS 92). Those who receive Holy Communion in the hand ought to be careful that no particle of the Sacred Host be left on the fingers or in the hand because each particle contains the Sacred Body of Our Lord. (See question #17.) Since the eye cannot see very small particles of the Sacred Host, which are left on the fingers or in the hand and are sometimes accidentally dropped on the floor, receiving Holy Communion on the tongue is recommended.





**Fig. 2.3.7 First Holy Communion**

This picture shows children receiving Holy Communion for the first time. Observe how nicely they are dressed. Even after First Communion, prudence and a great reverence for Our Lord in the Eucharist should prompt us to always be modestly and appropriately dressed for Mass and Holy Communion (CCC 1387). This decorum applies as well to extraordinary ministers who are distributing Holy Communion (NDRHC 29).

#### 48. How is Holy Communion received on the tongue?

When receiving Holy Communion on the tongue, close your eyes, lift your head, open your mouth wide, and *extend* your tongue slightly over the lower lip so the priest or minister can put the Sacred Host properly on your tongue. Do not be embarrassed to extend and show your tongue. Many saints have done the same.

A communion-plate for the faithful, which was traditionally held by an altar server under the chin of the communicant to avoid the danger of the Sacred Host accidentally falling on the ground, is still recommended by the Vatican (RS 93). Sadly, very few parishes in the U.S. provide a chin paten or communion-plate for the faithful, even when this was specifically required by the USCCB as an item to be prepared for Holy Mass (GIRM 118c).



**Fig. 2.3.8 An Altar Server Holds a Paten as Pope Benedict XVI gives Holy Communion to a Sister**

When Holy Communion is distributed by intinction, that is, by the priest dipping the Host into the Sacred Wine, then Communion may be received only on the tongue. In this case, each communicant should hold a communion-plate under the chin if an altar server does not hold a chin paten for him (NDRHC 49).



**49. How is Holy Communion received in the hand?**

When receiving Holy Communion in the hand and you are right-handed, put your right hand under your left. Then, when the priest puts the Host in your hand, pick it up with your right hand and put it in your mouth. If you are left-handed, put your left hand under your right. When the priest puts the Host in your hand, pick it up with your left hand and put it in your mouth (RHCM; NDRHC 41). Do not walk away with the Host in your hand. You **MUST** first put the Host in your mouth *in the presence of the priest or the Eucharistic minister* before walking back to your seat (RS 92).

**50. What if a Host or any of its particle should fall on the floor?**

If a Host or any particle should fall on the floor, it is to be picked up reverently by the minister (GIRM 280; EMHCM).

**51. What if any of the Precious Blood is spilled?**

If any of the Precious Blood is spilled, the area where Blood was spilled should be washed with water, and this water should then be poured into a special sink in the sacristy called a *sacrarium*, which leads directly to the soil, not the drain (GIRM 280; NDRHC 29).

**52. How is the Sacred Host to be consumed?**

While the Church has not prohibited chewing the Sacred Host, it is better to simply let it dissolve in our mouths, swallow it as soon as possible, and avoid spitting for some time. If the Host should cling to the roof of the mouth, remove it with your tongue, but never with your finger.

**53. What must you do after receiving Holy Communion?**

After receiving Holy Communion, you should spend some time adoring Our Lord, relishing His divine presence, thanking Him, and saying your *Prayers after Holy Communion*. After the Mass and *throughout the day*, think of this great moment when Our Lord Jesus came and gave you a “kiss” in your soul.

## THE PRECEPT OF HOLY COMMUNION

### **54. When are we bound to receive Holy Communion?**

The third precept of the Catholic Church requires that we receive Holy Communion during Easter time (CCC 2042). In the U.S., the time for fulfilling this sacred duty has been extended by an indult from the First Sunday of Lent to Trinity Sunday.<sup>11</sup> Merely saying an Act of Spiritual Communion does not fulfill this precept.

### **55. At what age does the precept of Paschal Communion begin to bind?**

The precept of Paschal Communion begins to bind as soon as a child is capable of receiving it with the requisite dispositions.

### **56. Do they sin if they are old enough to observe the Easter duty but do not?**

Those who are old enough to observe the Easter duty but do not, either because they are unwilling or because, through their own fault, they are not instructed, undoubtedly sin. Their parents or guardians also sin if the delay in Communion is due to their fault, and they shall have to render a strict account to God for it.

### **57. Is it a good and useful thing to go to Communion often?**

The Church encourages the faithful to receive Communion often, even daily (CCC 1389), provided we do so with the requisite dispositions. We may also receive Holy Communion *again on the same day*, but only at the Mass or celebration of the Eucharist in which we participate (CIC 917). For example, if you attend Mass and receive Holy Communion on Saturday morning, and then attend Mass on Saturday evening to fulfill your Sunday obligation,

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<sup>11</sup> This indult was given to pastorally assist the faithful and give them more time to fulfill their Easter duty. It is apparently a very old one that dates back to the time of Pope Pius VIII and has never been rescinded. The indult, given in 1829, appears even in the Baltimore Catechism of 1891!

then you may receive Holy Communion again, even if you already received one in the morning. If you attend Mass the next day (Sunday), you may also receive Holy Communion again.

**58. How long can you receive Holy Communion without first going to confession?**

You can receive Holy Communion without going to confession as long as you remain free from mortal sin. However, for those who receive Holy Communion frequently or every Sunday, regular confession at appropriate intervals, such as monthly or every four weeks, is recommended, even if there are only venial sins to confess (RS 86).

## LESSON 4 RECONCILIATION

### THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION IN GENERAL

#### 1. What is the Sacrament of Reconciliation?

The Sacrament of Reconciliation (formerly called the Sacrament of Penance) is a sacrament instituted by Jesus Christ to remit the sins committed after Baptism.

#### 2. Why is the name “reconciliation” given to this sacrament?

The name “reconciliation” is given to this sacrament because it aims to restore our friendship with God that we have lost through sin.

#### 3. When did Jesus Christ institute the Sacrament of Reconciliation?

Jesus Christ instituted the Sacrament of Reconciliation on the day of His resurrection when, entering the Supper Room, He solemnly told His Apostles, "Receive ye the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained" (John 20:22).

#### 4. What is the matter of the Sacrament of Reconciliation?

The **matter** of the Sacrament of Reconciliation consists of the sins committed by the penitent after Baptism, and the acts of the penitent himself, that is, *contrition*, *confession*, and *satisfaction*.

**Contrition**, or sorrow for sin, is a grief of the soul that leads us to detest sins committed and resolve not to commit them anymore (CCC 1451).

**Confession** is the disclosure of our sins to the priest and consists in accusing ourselves of the sins we have committed in order to obtain absolution and receive penance for them (CCC 1455–1456).



**Satisfaction** or penance is the reparation of damage caused by sin, which may include prayer or good works that the confessor enjoins on the penitent in expiation of his sins (CCC 1459–1460).

**5. What is the form of the Sacrament of Reconciliation?**

The **form** of the Sacrament of Reconciliation is the formula of absolution spoken by the priest in remitting sin: *"I absolve you from your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."* See CCC 1449 for the complete formula.

**6. Who is the minister of the Sacrament of Reconciliation?**

The **minister** of the Sacrament of Reconciliation is the bishop or a priest authorized by the bishop to hear confessions (CCC 1461–1462).

**7. Why do you say that a priest must be authorized by the bishop?**

A priest must be authorized by the bishop to hear confessions because, to administer this sacrament validly, the power of Orders is not enough. The power of jurisdiction, that is, the power to judge, must also be given by the bishop.

**8. Of all the parts of the Sacrament of Reconciliation, which part is the most necessary?**

Of all the parts of the Sacrament of Reconciliation, the most necessary is contrition because, without it, no pardon for sins is obtainable, while with it alone, pardon can be obtained, provided that along with it there is at least an implicit desire to go to confession.

## EFFECTS AND NECESSITY OF RECONCILIATION



Fig. 2.4.1 Confession

### 9. What are the effects of the Sacrament of Reconciliation?

The Sacrament of Reconciliation confers sanctifying grace, restores our friendship with God, and remits our mortal sins as well as our venial sins, which we confess and are sorry for. It changes eternal punishment into temporal punishment and even remits temporal punishment more or less according to our dispositions. It revives the merits of the good works done before mortal sin was committed. It reconciles us with the Church and re-establishes our communion with the saints, which sin has damaged. Reconciliation also gives the soul aid in due time against falling into sin again and restores peace of conscience (CCC 1468–1469).

**10. Is the Sacrament of Reconciliation necessary for all to be saved?**

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is necessary for salvation for all who have committed a mortal sin after Baptism.

**11. Is it a good thing to go to confession often?**

Yes, it is an excellent thing to go to confession often, even if there are only venial sins to confess, because the Sacrament of Reconciliation, besides taking away sin, also gives the graces necessary to avoid sin in the future. For those who receive Holy Communion every Sunday, monthly confession is highly recommended. For those who are conscious of having committed a mortal sin, confession is necessary before Communion and is, therefore, recommended to be done at the soonest possible time.

**12. Has the Sacrament of Reconciliation the power to remit all sins, no matter how numerous or great they are?**

The Sacrament of Reconciliation has the power to remit all sins, no matter how numerous and great they are, provided it is received with the requisite dispositions.

**13. How many conditions are necessary to make a good confession?**

To make a good confession, five things are necessary:

1. Examination of conscience
2. Sorrow for having offended God
3. A resolution to not sin anymore
4. Confession of sins
5. Satisfaction or penance

**14. What should we do first of all to make a good confession?**

To make a good confession, we should first of all earnestly beseech God to give us the light to know all our sins and the strength of will to detest them.

## EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

### 15. What is conscience?

Conscience is the voice of reason in us that judges whether our acts have been good or bad. It is our human intellect itself in the act of making a judgment on the goodness or sinfulness of our acts.

### 16. What does conscience do?

Conscience does three things:

1. It testifies and judges whether or not we have committed a sin.
2. It compels and binds us when it judges whether an act ought to be done or avoided.
3. It accuses, excuses, or rebukes us when it judges that we have acted sinfully.

### 17. Are there different kinds of consciences?

Yes. A conscience may either be true or erroneous, certain or doubtful, scrupulous, lax, or tender.

A **true** conscience is one that judges human acts rightly and declares what is truly good and what is truly sinful. To form a true conscience and be able to judge rightly, one must diligently study the laws of God and of the Church.

An **erroneous** conscience is one that judges incorrectly and declares what is good to be sinful and what is sinful to be good. It is the opposite of a true conscience and is blameworthy if the incorrect judgment results from the negligence to learn the laws of God and of the Church.

A **certain** conscience is one that judges the goodness or sinfulness of an act without fear of being in error.

A **doubtful** conscience is one that suspends judgment about the goodness or sinfulness of an act, or whether sin has actually been committed, because of the fear of being in error. This is the opposite



of a certain conscience, and it happens when the mind sees equally good reasons for thinking an act to be good or to be bad. If the act has not been performed yet, one must study the matter diligently or resolve his doubts with his spiritual confessor before performing the act. It is never lawful to act with a doubtful conscience.

A **scrupulous** conscience is a sick conscience that judges human acts as good or bad without a solid basis. In general, a scrupulous person is fearful of committing a mortal sin but tends to *exaggerate* or *overestimate* the gravity of his sins. For example, he might judge that temptations are sins. Or, he might judge that an impure thought that lingered on his mind was a mortal sin when he had not really given full consent to it but was merely half-hearted or slow in resisting it.

A **lax** conscience is a careless conscience that *underestimates* the goodness or sinfulness of human acts. This is the exact opposite of a scrupulous conscience. A lax conscience tends to make light even of mortal sins.

A **tender** or delicate conscience is the conscience of the saints. It is one that compels us to avoid anything in the slightest degree evil. However, a tender conscience is not scrupulous and rightly judges sin without exaggerating or underestimating its gravity.

## 18. What is the examination of conscience?

The examination of conscience is a diligent search of our conscience for the sins committed since our last good confession. We should, first of all, carefully recall to mind all the sins we have committed but not confessed, in thought, word, deed, and omission against the Ten Commandments and the Precepts of the Church. Secondly, we should examine our conscience in light of the Beatitudes (Part 4., Lesson 6), the works of mercy (Part 4, Lesson 7), as well as the theological and moral virtues (Part 4, Lesson 5). Lastly, lay and religious people aspiring for Christian perfection

should examine their consciences in the light of the evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity, obedience, and any other promises or vows that they have made (Part 4, Lesson 8) and the Holy Scripture.

**19. Is there anything else we should examine about ourselves?**

We should also examine ourselves regarding our attachments to the occasions of sin and our capital vices (Part 4, Lesson 5).

**20. How much time should be spent on the examination of conscience?**

More or less time should be spent in the examination of conscience according to the needs of each case, that is, according to the number and kind of sins that burden the conscience and according to the time that has elapsed since the last good confession.

**21. How may the examination of conscience be rendered easy?**

The examination of conscience is made easy by making an examination of conscience *every evening* based on the actions of the day.

## **SORROW FOR SIN**

**22. What is sorrow for sin?**

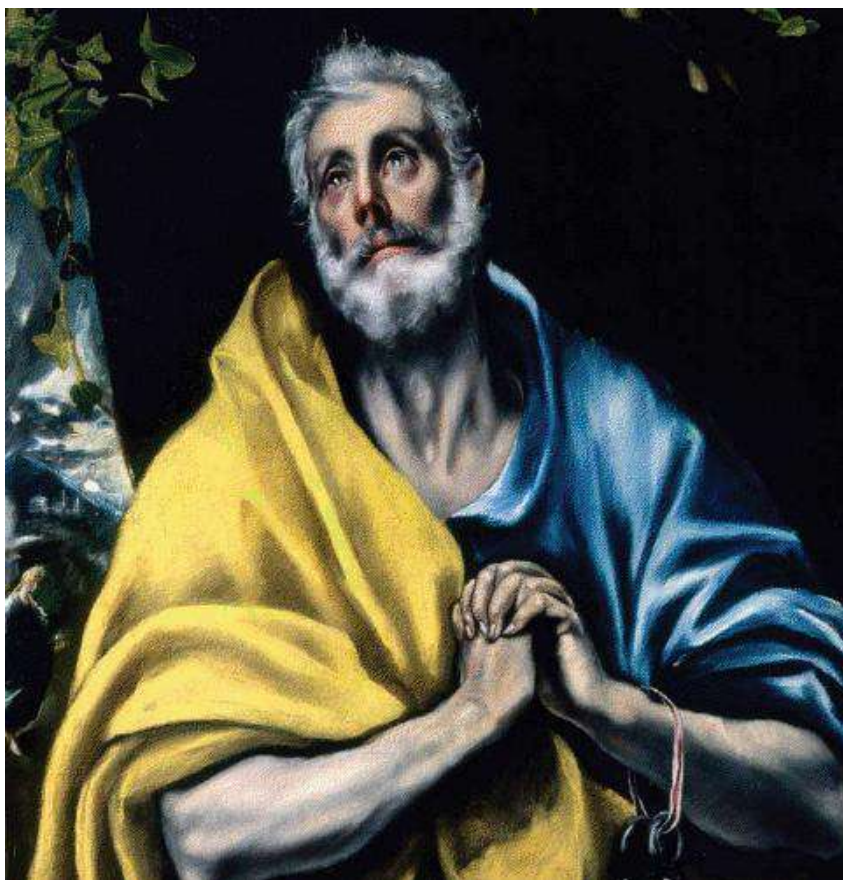
Sorrow for sin consists in the grief of the soul and in a sincere detestation of the offense made against God.

**23. How many kinds of sorrow are there?**

Sorrow is of two kinds: perfect sorrow and imperfect sorrow.

**24. What is perfect sorrow?**

Perfect sorrow, also known as *contrition*, is the grief of the soul that arises from having broken our relationship with God, who is infinitely good and worthy of being loved for His own sake.



**Fig. 2.4.2 The Sorrow of St. Peter**

St. Peter was sorry for denying Christ three times (John 18:13–27)

## **25. Why is perfect sorrow or contrition called perfect?**

Perfect sorrow or contrition is called perfect for two reasons: (1) because it considers the goodness of God alone and not the loss of Heaven or the pains of hell; and (2) because it enables us to obtain pardon for sins at once, even though the obligation to confess them remains (CCC 1452).

## **26. Does perfect sorrow, then, obtain us pardon for our sins independently of confession?**

Perfect sorrow or contrition does not obtain us pardon for our sins independently of confession because it always includes the intention to confess them. However, perfect sorrow can obtain pardon and restore us to grace at once because it proceeds from charity, which cannot exist in the soul together with sin.

## 27. What is imperfect sorrow?

Imperfect sorrow, also known as *attrition*, is that by which we repent of having offended God, not because He is infinitely good and deserving of our love, but for fear of hell, the punishment deserved in this life or in the life to come, or because of the very foulness of sin itself (CCC 1453).

## 28. What qualities must sorrow have to be true sorrow?

To be true, sorrow must have four qualities: it must be *internal*, *supernatural*, *supreme*, and *universal*. True sorrow, be it perfect or imperfect, must have these four qualities:

**Internal:** That means it must exist in the heart and will and not in words alone.

**Supernatural:** That means it must be excited in us by supernatural motives that come from faith rather than purely natural and human motives. For example, if we are sorry for the sin of stealing only because we were caught committing it and we fear going to jail or suffering temporal penalties that would be imposed by the law, then our motive is purely natural and human. But if we are sorry because we believe that stealing is against one of God's commandments, that by stealing we lose sanctifying grace and our friendship with God, and that we deserve the fires of hell, then our motive comes from our faith and is supernatural.

**Supreme:** That means it must move us to hate sin as the greatest of all evils, being as it is an offense against God. For our sorrow to be supreme, it is not necessary to shed tears of sorrow, but in our hearts, we must regard having broken our relationship with God as worse than any other misfortune whatsoever.

**Universal:** That means it must extend to *every* mortal and venial sin committed. Whoever has four mortal sins but is sorry for only three of them remains an enemy of God.



**29. What should we do to have true sorrow for our sins?**

To have true sorrow for our sins, we should ask God to grant us the grace of true sorrow and to excite it in ourselves by thinking about how great the evil we have done through sin is.

**30. In going to confession, should we be extremely solicitous to have true sorrow for our sins?**

In going to confession, we should certainly be very solicitous to have true sorrow for our sins, because if sorrow is lacking, the confession is no good.

**31. If one has only venial sins to confess, must he be sorry for all of them?**

He must repent of all that he remembers having committed. It is not necessary to confess all his venial sins, but it would be sacrilegious to deliberately not repent of any of those sins that he remembers.

**32. If a man in mortal sin is dying and no priest is available to hear his confession, can his sins still be forgiven?**

Yes, provided he makes an act of perfect contrition.

**33. Is it good to make an act of contrition often?**

It is good and most useful to make an act of contrition often, especially before going to sleep or when we know we have fallen into mortal sin or fear we have, to recover God's grace as soon as possible. Also, the practice of examining our consciences every night, followed by an act of perfect contrition, will make it easier for us to obtain from God the grace of making a good confession at the time of our greatest need, that is, when we are in danger of death.

## RESOLUTION OF SINNING NO MORE

### 34. In what does a good resolution consist?

A good resolution consists in a determined will not to commit sin in the future and to use all necessary means to avoid it. To be good, a resolution should have three principal conditions: it should be *absolute*, *universal*, and *efficacious*.

An **absolute** resolution is one that is done without any restrictions on time, place, or person.

A **universal** resolution is one that aims to avoid all mortal sins, both those already committed and those that we can still commit.

An **efficacious** resolution is one in which there is a determined will to lose everything rather than commit another sin, to avoid the dangerous occasions of sin, and to stamp out our bad habits.

### 35. What is meant by a bad habit, and how do we correct it?

A bad habit is an acquired disposition by which we fall easily into those sins to which we have become accustomed. To correct a bad habit, we must watch over ourselves, pray much, go often to confession, have one good spiritual director, and put into practice the counsel and remedies that he gives us.

### 36. What is meant by dangerous occasions of sin?

The dangerous occasions of sin are all those circumstances of time, place, person, or thing that, of their very nature or because of our frailty, lead us to sin. We are strictly bound to shun them. A person who has difficulty avoiding a certain occasion of sin should tell the matter to his confessor and follow his advice.

## CONFESSION

**37. Having properly prepared for confession by an examination of conscience, by exciting sorrow, and by forming a good resolution, what do you do next?**

Having properly prepared for confession through an examination of conscience, sorrow, and a firm purpose of amendment, I will accuse myself of my sins before the priest to get absolution.

**38. Can't we confess our sins directly to God?**

You can, but that would not be a sacramental confession. If you confess your sins directly to God, you do not know whether He has given you absolution because you do not hear His voice. In the Sacrament of Reconciliation, you actually hear the priest, who, in God's name, gives you pardon for your sins.

**39. Is not the confession of sins to a priest only a recent invention of the Catholic Church?**

No. It is an ancient practice that dates back to the time of the Apostles. St. James writes in his epistle: "Confess therefore your sins to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be saved" (Jas 5:16). In the *Acts of the Apostles* it is also written, "Many of them that believed came confessing and declaring their deeds" (Acts 19:18).

**40. Does confession do any special good or comfort to our souls?**

Yes, confession brings great comfort to souls burdened with guilt and remorse. Just as the disclosure of secret grief to a friend brings peace, the disclosure of sins to God in the person of the priest gives a great feeling of peace and relief.

**41. What sins are we bound to confess?**

We are bound to confess all our mortal sins; however, it is recommended that we also confess our venial sins (CCC 1458). See more about mortal and venial sins in Part 3, Introduction, Q.17–20.



**Fig. 2.4.3 The Sacrament of Reconciliation**  
A boy making a confession and a girl doing penance.



#### **42. What is a general confession?**

A general confession is the telling of the sins of our entire life, or a great part of it, to a priest. It is done in the same way as a regular confession, except that it takes more time and preparation.

#### **43. Do we need to make a general confession?**

It is only necessary when our past confessions have been bad. However, it may be useful for someone who is making a big change in his life, such as one who is getting married. On the other hand, it may be hurtful and must be avoided when the person is scrupulous.

#### **44. Why is a general confession not recommended for scrupulous people?**

A general confession is not recommended for scrupulous people because it will do them more harm than good. A scrupulous person is never satisfied with his past confessions, and a general confession is not likely to satisfy him either. A scrupulous person sincerely wants to make a good confession but always finds an excuse for doubting his last confession. He keeps thinking, “Maybe I did not describe my sin to the priest perfectly,” or “Maybe I have given full consent but was just dishonest to say it,” etc. He is, therefore, never at peace and is always anxious about the state of his soul. This is clearly the work of the devil because confession ought to give us peace and relief from remorse, not mental torture.

Scrupulous people should stop listening to their minds and simply follow the judgment and advice of their confessors, *even if the advice seems to counter their consciences*. Although, in general, one must follow the dictates of one’s conscience, this rule does not apply to a sick conscience that is unable to see sins in their proper worth. Actually, since a mortal sin is committed when one *deliberately* does it *with full knowledge* of the gravity of the sin, and a confession is bad only when one *knowingly and deliberately* hides a mortal sin during confession, it is practically impossible to doubt it when a mortal sin is committed or when one has been dishonest in confessing it.

#### 45. What are the qualities a confession ought to have?

The principal qualities that confession ought to have are five: it ought to be *humble, sincere, prudent, brief, and entire*.

**Humble** means that the confession must be done without arrogance, pride, or boasting, but with the feelings of one who is guilty and who is begging for forgiveness.

**Sincere** means that the confession must reveal sins as they are, without excusing, lessening, or exaggerating them.

**Prudent** means that the confession must use the most careful words and avoid revealing the sins of others.

**Brief** means that the confession must be short and should avoid saying anything useless or unnecessary for the confession.

**Entire** means that all mortal sins that we are conscious of having committed since our last good confession must be made known, together with the circumstances and number. The circumstances need to be confessed because they can change the nature and gravity of the sin, such as those circumstances that change a sinful action from being a venial sin to one that is mortal, or those that make a sinful action equivalent to two or more mortal sins. Here are two examples:

1. A boy tells a lie to avoid being punished by the school, but his lie makes his classmate look bad and gets him in trouble instead. He must reveal this fact in confession. It is not enough to say, "I told a lie to avoid being punished." He must also say that his lie got his classmate in trouble. To be fair, he must confess his lie, not just to the priest during confession but also to the school principal, to save his classmate from getting an undeserved punishment from the school that his lie caused.

2. A man steals a sacred object, say a chalice, from the church. In this case, it is not enough to say, “I stole a drinking cup from the church.” He must also say that the cup was a chalice, a sacred object used to hold the Blood of Christ at Mass. Stealing this chalice is not just an act of theft but also an act of sacrilege. His act was, therefore, a double sin.

**46. If a penitent is not certain of having committed a sin, must he confess it?**

If a penitent is not certain of having committed a sin, he is not bound to confess it, and if he does confess it, he should add that he is not certain of having committed it.

However, if a penitent is certain of having committed a sin but is not certain of the *gravity* of his sin, he should confess his doubt and resolve it with his confessor during confession. For, although *subjectively* he did not commit a mortal sin for lack of perfect knowledge, *objectively* the sin could be a mortal sin. Therefore, it is in his best interest that the matter be discussed with his confessor so that he can make the right judgment before performing the same or similar acts in the future.

**47. What should he do if he does not remember the exact number of his sins?**

He who does not distinctly remember the number of his sins must mention the number as nearly as he can.

**48. Does he who, through forgetfulness, does not confess a mortal sin or a necessary circumstance, make a good confession?**

He who, through pure forgetfulness, does not confess a mortal sin or a necessary circumstance, makes a good confession, provided he has been duly diligent in trying to remember it. However, if a mortal sin forgotten in confession is later remembered, he is still bound to confess it the next time he goes to confession.



**Fig. 2.4.4 The Penitent Mary Magdalene**



**49. What sin does he commit who, through shame or some other motive, willfully hides a mortal sin in confession?**

He who, through shame or some other motive, willfully hides a mortal sin in confession profanes the sacrament and is, therefore, guilty of *sacrilege*. None of his sins are forgiven, and he just added one more mortal sin to his soul. The next time that he goes to confession, he must reveal to his confessor that he made a bad confession, what sin he concealed, in how many past confessions he concealed it, and confess again *all the sins he previously confessed since his last good confession*.

**50. What reflection should a penitent who is tempted to conceal a sin in confession make?**

He who is tempted to conceal a mortal sin in confession should reflect on three things: (1) that he was not ashamed to sin in the presence of God, who sees all; (2) that it is better to manifest his sin secretly to the confessor than to live tormented by sin, die an unhappy death, and be covered with shame before the whole world on the day of general judgment; and (3) that the confessor is bound by the seal of confession, even if it costs him his life. By the **seal of confession**, the priest is bound to keep everything he hears in confession secret under the pain of excommunication (CIC 983.1, 1388.1). Actually, even a layman who overhears someone's confession is also bound to secrecy with strict penalties, not excluding excommunication (CIC 983.2, 1388.2).

**51. Is it not a heavy burden to be obliged to confess one's sins to a priest, especially when these are shameful sins?**

Although it may be a heavy burden to confess one's sins to a priest, it still must be done because it is a divine precept and because pardon can be obtained in no other way. Besides, we should be confident that whatever we reveal in confession will remain hidden because we know that the priest, who hears our confession, is bound by the seal of confession to keep everything he hears in confession secret (CCC 1467).

## CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

### **52. How do you make a good confession?**

These are the simple steps for making a good confession (HGC):

1. Kneel at the confessional and say, “Bless me, Father, for I have sinned.” Then, make the sign of the cross.
2. Then say, “It has been \_\_\_\_\_ (days, weeks, months, or years) since my last good confession.”
3. Say all your sins humbly, sincerely, prudently, briefly, and entirely, making sure that you mention the number and relevant circumstances of your sins.
4. When you have finished, say, “I am sorry for these and all my sins.”

### **53. Having thus finished your confession, what remains to be done?**

Having finished your confession, listen respectfully to what the confessor says, accept the penance with the sincere intention of performing it, and, while he gives you the absolution, say the *Act of Contrition*. Sometimes, the priest waits to hear you say and finish your *Act of Contrition* before giving the absolution. When he is finished, you simply say, “Amen.” The priest may also say, “Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good.” Your response would be, “His mercy endures forever.”

### **54. Having received absolution, what remains to be done?**

Having received absolution, leave the confessional, thank God for a good confession, perform your penance as soon as possible, and put into practice the advice given to you by the confessor.

### **55. Must confessors always give absolution to those who go to confession to them?**

Confessors should only give absolution to those whom they judge are properly disposed to receive it.

**56. May confessors sometimes defer or refuse absolution?**

Confessors not only may but must defer or refuse absolution in certain cases so as not to profane the sacrament. For example, confessors may refuse absolution to the following penitents:

1. Those who refuse to learn the principal mysteries of their Faith or who neglect to learn their catechism
2. Those who are gravely negligent in examining their conscience or who show no signs of sorrow or repentance
3. Those who are able but are not willing to return or make up for the goods they have damaged or stolen
4. Those who are unwilling to restore the reputations of those whose good names they have injured
5. Those who do not forgive their enemies from their hearts
6. Those who refuse to correct their bad habits
7. Those who will not avoid bad places, bad shows, bad friends, and other occasions of sin that endanger their souls

**57. Is a confessor not too severe if he defers absolution because he does not believe the penitent is well enough disposed?**

A confessor who defers absolution because he does not believe the penitent is well enough disposed is not being too severe. On the contrary, he is being charitable and acts as a good physician who tries all remedies to save the patient from harming himself through a sacrilegious confession.

**58. Should the sinner to whom absolution is deferred or refused despair or leave off going to confession altogether?**

A sinner to whom absolution is deferred or refused should not despair or leave off going to confession altogether. On the contrary, he should humble himself, acknowledge his deplorable state, profit from the good advice his confessor gives him, and thus put himself as soon as possible in a state deserving of absolution.

**59. Is the Sacrament of Reconciliation always held privately through individual confession and absolution?**

Although the Sacrament of Reconciliation is ordinarily done privately through individual confession and absolution, a communal celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation with general confession and general absolution may be permitted in cases of grave necessity. However, only the diocesan bishop may decide whether the conditions of grave necessity exist for a general absolution to be granted. The mere fact that there is a large gathering of the faithful, as in a feast or a pilgrimage, does not constitute a grave necessity (CCC 1484).

**60. What case example can you give showing grave necessity?**

In cases of war, for example, where many will be exposed to the danger of death but there are not enough priests nor enough time to hear every penitent's confession, a general absolution may be allowed. For the absolution to be valid, however, each penitent must still have the intention of individually confessing their sins to a priest at the soonest opportunity (CCC 1483).

**61. Can you confess to a priest in another parish?**

Yes, it is permissible to make your confession to any legitimately approved confessor, even in another parish. In fact, you may even confess to a Catholic priest of another rite (CIC 991).

**62. How often should you go to confession?**

Every faithful Catholic who has reached the age of discretion is obliged to confess his or her mortal sins at least once a year (CIC 989). Those who are conscious of having committed a mortal sin should go to confession as soon as possible before receiving Holy Communion again. For those who receive Holy Communion frequently or every Sunday, it is good practice to go to confession at least monthly, even if there are only venial sins to confess.



## **SATISFACTION OR PENANCE**

### **63. What is satisfaction?**

Satisfaction, which is also called sacramental penance, is one of the acts of the penitent by which he makes a certain reparation to the justice of God for his sins by performing the works the confessor imposes on him. For example, if the penitent has stolen something, the confessor might ask him, in addition to doing some prayers, to return the item that he has stolen. That work—prayer and returning the stolen goods—is his penance or satisfaction. The penitent is bound to accept the penance imposed on him by the confessor if he can perform it; if he cannot, he should humbly say so and ask for some other penance (CCC 1460).

### **64. When should the penance be performed?**

If the confessor has not fixed a time, the penance should be performed as soon as convenient and, as far as possible, while in the state of grace.

### **65. How should the penance be performed?**

The penance should be performed entirely and devoutly.

### **66. Why is penance imposed in confession?**

A penance is imposed because, after sacramental absolution, which remits sin and its eternal punishment, there generally remains a temporal punishment to be undergone, either in this world or in Purgatory.

### **67. Why has Our Lord willed to remit all the punishment due to sin in the Sacrament of Baptism but not in the Sacrament of Reconciliation?**

It has been suggested that Our Lord has willed to remit all the punishment due to sin in the Sacrament of Baptism but not in the Sacrament of Reconciliation because the sins committed after Baptism are much more grievous, being committed with fuller

knowledge and greater ingratitude for God's benefits, and also so that the obligation of satisfying them may restrain us from falling into sin again.

**68. Can we, by ourselves, make satisfaction to God?**

By ourselves, we cannot make satisfaction to God, but we can do so by uniting ourselves to Jesus Christ, who alone gives value to our actions by the merits of His passion and death.

**69. Does the penance that the confessor imposes always suffice to discharge the punishment that remains due to our sins?**

The penance that the confessor imposes does not ordinarily suffice to discharge all the punishment remaining due to our sins, and hence we must try to supply it with other voluntary penances.

**70. Which are the works of penance?**

The works of penance may be reduced to three kinds: prayer, fasting or mortification, and the corporal and spiritual works of mercy (visiting the sick, teaching the ignorant, etc.). Self-flagellation and other excessive bodily mortifications should not be done without consulting your priest or spiritual director.



**Fig. 2.4.5 Flagellants**

**71. Which penance is more meritorious, that which the confessor gives or that which we do of our own choice?**

The penance that the confessor imposes is the most meritorious because, as part of the sacrament, it receives greater virtue from the merits of the passion of Jesus Christ.

**72. Do those who die after having received absolution but before they have fully satisfied the justice of God go straight to Heaven?**

No, they go to Purgatory to satisfy the justice of God and to be perfectly purified.

**73. Can the souls in Purgatory be relieved of their pain by us?**

Yes, the souls in Purgatory can be helped by our prayers, by all our good works, by indulgences, but above all by the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

**74. Besides his penance, what else must the penitent do after confession?**

Besides performing his penance after confession, the penitent, if he has justly injured another in his goods or reputation, or if he has given him scandal, must, as soon as possible and as far as he is able, restore his goods, repair his honor, and remedy the scandal.

**75. How can the scandal be remedied?**

The scandal given can be remedied by removing the occasion for it and by edifying those whom we have scandalized by word and good example.

**76. How should we make satisfaction to someone whom we have offended?**

We should make satisfaction to someone whom we have offended by asking his pardon or by some other suitable reparation.

## LESSON 5 ANOINTING OF THE SICK

### 1. What is the Anointing of the Sick?

The Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick (formerly called “Extreme Unction”) is a sacrament instituted for the spiritual as well as the temporal comfort of those who are seriously sick or who are in danger of death (CCC 1511, 1514).

### 2. When did Jesus Christ institute this sacrament?

The timing is uncertain, but some think that Christ instituted it between His resurrection and ascension. We know at least that the “Anointing of the Sick” was administered during Apostolic times because St. James said in his epistle, “Is any man sick among you? Let him bring in the priests of the church and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith shall save the sick man. And the Lord shall raise him up, and if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him” (Jas 5:14–15).

### 3. What is the *matter* of this sacrament?

The *matter* of the sacrament, called “Anointing of the Sick,” is the laying on of hands and the anointing of the forehead and hands with oil blessed by a bishop.

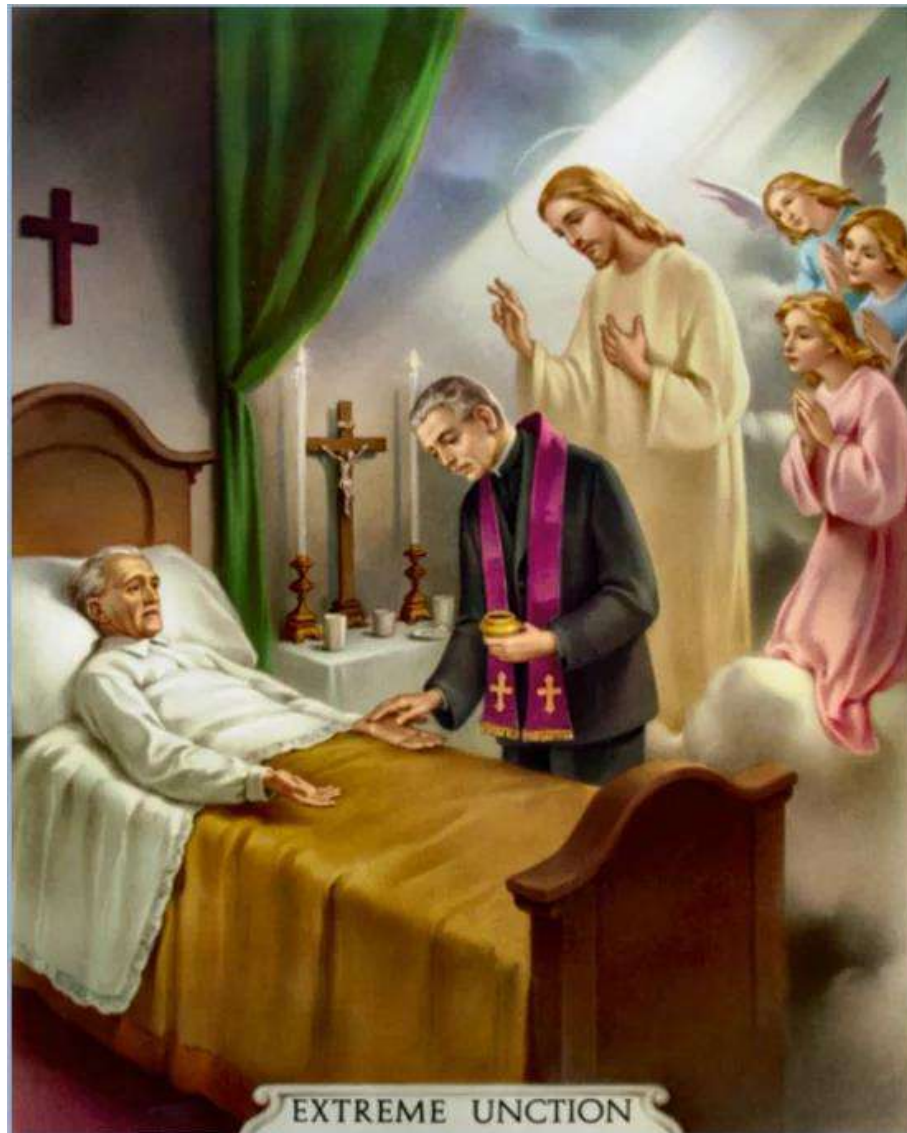
### 4. What is the *form* of this sacrament?

The *form* of this sacrament is the words spoken by the priest as he anoints with blessed oil the forehead and the hands of the sick person: “*Through this holy anointing, may the Lord in His love and mercy help you with the grace of the Holy Spirit. May the Lord who frees you from sin save you and raise you up*” (CCC 1513).

### 5. Who is the minister of this sacrament?

The minister of this sacrament is a priest (CCC 1516).





**Fig. 2.5.1 Anointing of the Sick**

## **6. What are the effects of the Anointing of the Sick?**

The Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick produces the following effects: (1) it increases sanctifying grace; (2) it remits venial sins and also mortal sins which the sick person, if contrite, is unable to confess; (3) it gives strength to bear illness patiently, to withstand temptation, and to die holily; (4) it unites one more closely to Christ's passion and to contribute to the good of the Church; (5) it aids in restoring the health of the body if it is for the good of the soul; and (6) it prepares the soul for its final journey to Heaven (CCC 1520–1523, 1532).

## 7. When should Anointing of the Sick be received?

The anointing of the sick should be received when the illness is dangerous and, if the sick person is still able to make a confession, after he or she has received the Sacraments of Reconciliation and the Holy Eucharist. It is also better to receive it while the patient still has the use of his senses and has some hope of recovery.

Communion given to the sick in danger of death is also called **Holy Viaticum** (from the Latin word *via*, which means way) because it supports them on their way from this life to eternity (CCC 1524).



Fig. 2.5.2 Viaticum

**8. Why is it good to receive the Anointing of the Sick when the sick person still has the use of his senses and has some hope of recovery?**

It is good to receive the Anointing of the Sick while the sick person retains the use of his senses and while there remains some hope of recovery because

1. He thus receives it with better dispositions and is hence able to derive greater benefit from it;
2. This sacrament restores the health of the body (if it is good for the soul) by assisting the healing powers of nature. Hence, it should not be deferred until recovery is despaired of.

**9. With what dispositions should the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick be received?**

The dispositions for receiving the Anointing of the Sick are (1) to be in the state of grace, (2) to have confidence in the power of this sacrament and the mercy of God, and (3) to be resigned to God's will.

**10. What should the sick person's feelings be upon seeing the priest?**

On seeing the priest, the sick person should feel thankful to God for having sent him and should gladly receive the comforts of religion, which, if he is able, he should request himself.

## LESSON 6 HOLY ORDERS

### 1. What is the Sacrament of Holy Orders?

Holy Orders is the sacrament through which the Church continues the mission entrusted by Christ to the Apostles by giving the power to exercise the duties connected with the worship of God and the salvation of souls, and which imprints the character of a minister of God on the soul of the person who receives it (CCC 1536).

### 2. Why is it called Orders?

It is called Orders because it comprises various grades, one subordinate to the other, from which the sacred hierarchy is composed. The highest grade is the episcopate, which contains the fullness of the priesthood; then comes the priesthood; then comes the diaconate. Integration into each grade is accomplished by a rite known as *ordination* (CCC 1537).

### 3. When did Jesus Christ institute the Sacerdotal Order?

Jesus Christ instituted the Sacerdotal Order at the Last Supper when he conferred on the Apostles and their successors the power of consecrating the Holy Eucharist. Then, on the day of His resurrection, He conferred on them the power of remitting and retaining sin, thus constituting them the first priests of the New Law in all the fullness of their power.

### 4. What is the *matter* of the Sacrament of Holy Orders?

The *matter* of the Sacrament of Holy Orders is the imposition of the bishop's hands on the recipient, which is a sign indicative of the grace conferred by this sacrament (CCC 1597).

### 5. What is the *form* of the Sacrament of Holy Orders?

The *form* of Holy Orders is the prescribed prayers that accompany the imposition of the bishop's hands and which give meaning to the matter or the imposition of hands. The prayers are different for the ordination of bishops, priests, and deacons (CCC 1586–1588).





**Fig. 2.6.1 Ordination to the Priesthood**

## **6. Who is the minister of this sacrament?**

The bishop is the minister of this sacrament (CCC 1576). The bishop ordinarily ordains priests and deacons in his own diocese. However, he may ordain clergy in another diocese with the diocesan bishop's permission. Also, only a bishop can consecrate another bishop, but not without papal approval (CIC 1013).

## **7. What are the effects of Holy Orders?**

Holy Orders gives bishops the spiritual power to ordain other bishops, priests, and deacons,<sup>12</sup> and it gives priests the power to consecrate bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ, to administer the sacraments, and to preach in the name of the Church. It also creates an indelible mark on the soul of the recipient, thus marking him as a minister of God (CCC 1581–1583).

## **8. How do you know that the ordination of bishops and priests is not a recent Church invention and that it was practiced by the Apostles?**

One piece of evidence is St. Paul, who gave this advice to Timothy, the first bishop of Ephesus: “Neglect not the grace that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the imposition of the hands of the priesthood” (1 Tim 4:14). Then to Titus, first bishop of Crete, he also writes: “For this cause I left thee in Crete, that you might set in order the things that are wanting and ordain priests in every city, as I also appointed you” (Titus 1:5). (CCC 1590)

## **9. Is the dignity of the Catholic priesthood great?**

The dignity of the Catholic priesthood is indeed great because of the two-fold power that Jesus Christ has conferred upon it—that over His real body and that over His mystical body, the Church—and because of the divine mission committed to priests to lead men to eternal life.

## **10. Is the Catholic priesthood necessary in the Church?**

The Catholic priesthood is necessary in the Church because, without it, the faithful would be deprived of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and some of the sacraments. They also would have no one to instruct them in the faith and would be like sheep without a shepherd, a prey to wolves.

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<sup>12</sup> A **bishop** possesses the *fullness* of the Sacrament of Holy Orders. For, in addition to possessing all the powers of the priesthood, he also has the power to ordain other deacons, priests, and bishops.

### 11. Is it a sin to despise priests?

It is a very grave sin because the scorn and insults cast on priests fall on Jesus Christ Himself, who said to His Apostles, “He who despises you, despises Me” (Luke 10:16). However, it is not a sin to expose the activities of a pastor who covers up a sinful lifestyle under the cloak of sacred ministry.

### 12. Is it lawful for priests to marry?

No, because there is a Church precept against it that comes to us by tradition from the Apostles. God’s service requires total dedication and an undivided heart. Even the Apostles did not remain with their wives after they were called to the ministry (CCC 1579).

### 13. Is it lawful for women to be priests?

No, because it is clear from Christ’s actions that He wanted an all-male priesthood. If Our Lord did not mind having female priests, then why did He select only male Apostles? Why did He not even call His mother, the Virgin Mary, to the ministry? From the beginning of the Church and through the centuries, the Church never changed her tradition of ordaining only men to the priesthood.<sup>13</sup> The priest often has to act *in the person of Christ*, especially in celebrating the Eucharist. How appropriate do you think it is for a female priest to consecrate the host and say, in the person of Christ, “This is *My* body?”

Also, every priest is a sign of Christ because the priest sacramentally represents Christ. Now, just as the sacramental sign of Baptism is lost when a liquid other than water is used, the sacramental sign of the priesthood is lost when someone other than a male person is ordained because Christ, whom the priest represents, became incarnate as a male (CCC 1548).

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<sup>13</sup> Pope St. John Paul II says, “I declare that the Church has no authority whatsoever to confer priestly ordination on women and that this judgment is to be definitively held by all the Church’s faithful.” Apostolic Letter, *Ordinatio Sacerdotalis* (May 22, 1994), par. #4.

**14. What motive should he have if he embraces the ecclesiastical state?**

The motive of one who embraces the ecclesiastical state should be the glory of God and the salvation of souls alone.

**15. What is necessary to enter the ecclesiastical state?**

To enter the ecclesiastical state, a divine vocation is necessary before all else. To find out if God calls us to the ecclesiastical state, we should (1) fervently pray to the Lord to make known His will to us; (2) consult our bishop or a learned and prudent director; and (3) diligently examine whether we have the capacity necessary for the studies, the duties, and the obligations of this state, which includes a life of celibacy (CCC 1578–1579).

**16. If one were to enter the ecclesiastical state without a divine vocation, would he do something wrong?**

If one were to enter the ecclesiastical state without a divine vocation, he would commit a great wrong and run the risk of being lost.

**17. Do those parents sin when, from worldly motives, they impel their sons to embrace the ecclesiastical state without any vocation?**

Those parents who, for worldly motives, impel their sons to embrace the ecclesiastical state without any vocation commit a very grave sin, because by so acting they usurp the right God has reserved to Himself alone of choosing His ministers, and they expose their children to the danger of eternal damnation.

**18. What are the duties of the faithful toward those who are called to Holy Orders?**

The faithful should (1) give their children and dependents full liberty to follow the call of God; (2) pray to God to grant good pastors and zealous ministers to His service; and (3) have a special respect for all who are consecrated by Holy Orders to God's service.



## LESSON 7 MATRIMONY

### NATURE OF MATRIMONY

#### **1. What is the Sacrament of Matrimony?**

Matrimony is a sacrament, instituted by Our Lord Jesus Christ, that creates a holy and indissoluble union between a man and woman, which gives them the grace to produce and raise their children as Christians (the first aim of marriage) and to love each other holily (the second aim of marriage).

#### **2. So, does marriage have two aims?**

Yes. The primary aim of marriage is the procreation and education of children. The secondary aim is the mutual love and comfort of man and wife (CCC 1601).

#### **3. Can a man be married to a man, and a woman to a woman?**

No, because the primary aim of marriage is to produce and raise children for God. Although we often hear of “same-sex marriage,” especially among gays and lesbians, the truth is that the marriage of two people of the same sex is not capable of naturally producing children and, for that reason, fails to meet the primary aim and purpose of marriage. A true marriage is always between one man and one woman. If same-sex marriage is not even a natural and true marriage in the eyes of God, much less can it be a sacrament. The fact that some States legalize this practice is unfortunate because it betrays an ignorance of the primary aim of marriage.

#### **4. Does the Sacrament of Matrimony have any other special signification?**

Yes. The Sacrament of Matrimony also signifies the indissoluble union of Jesus Christ with the Church, which is His spouse and our holy mother.

**5. By whom was Matrimony instituted?**

Matrimony was instituted by God Himself in the Garden of Paradise (Gen 1:27–28; 2:21–24) and was raised to the dignity of a sacrament by Our Lord Jesus Christ (Matt 19:6).

**6. Why do we say that the bond of marriage is indissoluble?**

We say that the bond of marriage is indissoluble, or that it cannot be dissolved except by the death of either husband or wife, because God so ordained it from the beginning and Our Lord Jesus Christ solemnly proclaimed it (CCC 1614).

**7. Can the contract be separated from the sacrament in a Christian marriage?**

No, in marriage among Christians, the contract cannot be separated from the sacrament because, for Christians, marriage is nothing else than the natural contract itself, raised by Jesus Christ to the dignity of a sacrament. For this reason, every true marriage among Christians, whether Catholic or non-Catholic, is also a sacrament. For Catholics, however, some requirements must be met before the marriage can be regarded as true or valid. (See Q. 17 below.)

**8. What is the *matter* of the Sacrament of Matrimony?**

The *matter* of Matrimony is the external *exchange of promises* by which man and woman bind each other to the indissoluble union of marriage. This verbal exchange of promises is the sensible sign of the grace conferred by this sacrament.

**9. What is the *form* of the Sacrament of Matrimony?**

The *form* of Matrimony is the *mutual consent* of the man and woman to the words exchanged during the ceremony. “I take you to be my wife...”; “I take you to be my husband...” The external words themselves are just the *matter* of the sacrament, but the mutual consent of the parties to these words is the *form* that constitutes the covenant of sacramental marriage (CCC 1626).

**10. What effects does the Sacrament of Matrimony produce?**

The Sacrament of Matrimony (1) gives an increase in sanctifying grace, and (2) gives a special sacramental grace for the responsible discharge of all the duties of the married state.



**Fig. 2.7.1 Sacrament of Matrimony**

## **MINISTER – RIGHT DISPOSITIONS**

### **11. Who are the ministers of this sacrament?**

In the Latin Church, the ministers of this sacrament are not the priests but the **couple themselves**, who together confer the sacrament on each other normally during Holy Mass (CCC 1623).

### **12. How is this sacrament administered?**

In the Latin rite, this sacrament is administered by the contracting parties themselves, who declare, in the presence of the priest and of two witnesses, that they take each other in marriage.

### **13. What use, then, is the blessing that the parish priest gives to the married couple?**

The blessing that the parish priest gives to the married couple is not necessary to constitute the sacrament, but it is given to sanction their union in the name of the Church and to invoke more abundantly on them the blessing of God (CCC 1630).

### **14. What intentions should those who contract marriage have?**

Those who contract marriage should have the intention (1) of doing the will of God, who calls them to that state; (2) of working out in that state the salvation of their souls; and (3) of bringing up their children as Christians, if God should bless them with any.

### **15. How should those who are about to be married prepare themselves to receive this sacrament fruitfully?**

To receive this sacrament fruitfully, those about to be married should (1) earnestly recommend themselves to God, so as to know His will and obtain the graces necessary for that state; (2) consult their parents before making any promise, because obedience and the respect due to them demand this; (3) prepare themselves by a good confession, or, if necessary, a general confession of their whole life; (4) avoid all dangerous familiarity in word or act while in each other's company (CCC 1622).



**16. What are the principal obligations of married couples?**

Married couples should (1) guard inviolably their conjugal fidelity and behave always and in all things as Christians; (2) love one another, bear patiently with one another, and live in peace and concord; (3) think seriously of providing for their children, if they have any, according to their needs; (4) raise them as Christians; and (5) leave them free to choose the state of life to which they are called by God (CCC 1652–1654).



**Fig. 2.7.2 Betrothal of the Virgin Mary and St. Joseph**

## CONDITIONS AND IMPEDIMENTS

### 17. What is necessary to contract a valid Catholic marriage?

To contract a valid Catholic marriage, it is necessary to be free from every diriment impediment to marriage (Q. 19) and to freely consent to the marriage contract in the presence of the parish priest (or a priest or deacon delegated by him) and two witnesses.

### 18. What is necessary to contract marriage lawfully?

To contract marriage lawfully, it is necessary to be free from every prohibitory impediment to marriage, to be instructed in the principal truths of religion, and, finally, to be in a state of grace; otherwise, a sacrilege would be committed.

### 19. What are the impediments to marriage?

Impediments to marriage are certain circumstances that render marriage either invalid or unlawful. The former are called *diriment impediments*, and the latter are *prohibitory impediments*.

**Diriment** (or invalidating) impediments render a marriage invalid. Some examples of invalidating impediments (CIC 1083–1107):

1. **Lack of age** By canon law, the minimum age for a valid marriage is 16 for a man and 14 for a woman.
2. **Antecedent and perpetual impotence** (permanent inability to perform the sexual act) However, neither a doubt about impotence nor sterility (the inability to have a child) is an impediment to marriage.
3. **An existing marriage** that has not been annulled;
4. **Disparity of worship**, that is, when one party is baptized and the other is not (Muslims, Jews, Buddhists, infidels, etc.);
5. **Holy Orders** and irrevocable **solemn vows** of chastity in a religious institute;
6. **Lack of free matrimonial consent** due to coercion, fear, ignorance, mental incapacity, psychological immaturity, etc.;

7. **Blood relationship** to any degree in the direct line (natural or legitimate) and to the fourth degree in the collateral line. The *collateral relatives* include siblings (including adopted, step-, and half-siblings), cousins, aunts and uncles, and in-laws.
8. **Sameness of sex** because a valid marriage can only exist between a man and a woman. This is a requirement of *natural law*, not canon law, and cannot be changed even by the pope.

**Prohibitory** impediments render the marriage *unlawful* but not invalid. Examples are: a simple vow of chastity; mixed religion (or marriage between a Catholic and a baptized non-Catholic Christian); marriage at forbidden times (Lent and Advent). Actually, marriage can be done at any time of the year. What is not permitted during Lent and Advent is a pompous wedding or Nuptial Mass, which is not in keeping with the spirit of the season.

**20. Are the faithful obliged to make known to Church authorities the impediments of which they are aware?**

The faithful are obliged to make known to Church authorities any impediments of which they are aware. For this reason, the names of those who intend to get married are published in the church.

**21. Who has the power to regulate impediments to marriage, to dispense from them, and to judge the validity of Catholic marriage?**

The Church alone has the power to place and regulate impediments to marriage, to judge the validity of marriage among Catholics, and to dispense from the impediments that she has placed.

**22. Why has the Church alone the power to place and regulate impediments and to judge the validity of marriage?**

The reason is that the marriage contract, being inseparable from the sacrament in a Christian marriage, also comes under the power of the Church, to which alone Jesus Christ gave the right to make laws and decisions about sacred things.

**23. Can the civil authority dissolve the bonds of Christian marriage by divorce?**

No, the bond of Christian marriage cannot be dissolved by the civil authority, because the civil authority cannot validly interfere with the matter of the sacrament, nor can it put asunder what God has joined together. A civil divorce does not dissolve a Christian marriage, and those who remarry civilly after getting a civil divorce would not be truly married before the sight of God and, should they live together, would be guilty of adultery (CCC 1650).

**24. What is a civil marriage?**

It is nothing but a mere formality prescribed by civil law to give and ensure the civil effects of the marriage to the spouses and their children.

**25. Is it sufficient for a Christian to get only a civil marriage or contract?**

For a Christian, it is NOT sufficient to get only a civil contract, because it is not a sacrament and, therefore, not a true marriage. Spouses who would live together united by only a civil marriage would be in a habitual state of mortal sin, and their union would always be illegitimate in the sight of God and of the Church.

**26. Should those who marry in the church also get a civil marriage?**

Civil marriage should also be performed because, though it is not a sacrament, it provides the spouses and their children with the effects and protection of civil law. For this reason, the Church, as a general rule, allows sacramental marriage only after the formalities prescribed by the civil authorities have been accomplished. In many countries, however, especially English-speaking countries, the civil authority acknowledges religious marriage in the church and gives it the same value as civil marriage; thus, there is no need for a separate ceremony. However, various States and countries may add certain requirements and formalities that should be observed.



## THE BLESSING OF SAME-SEX COUPLES AND COUPLES IN IRREGULAR SITUATIONS

### **27. Can the Church bless adulterous or other irregular unions, including same-sex unions?**

No, the Church cannot bless any sinful unions or relationships. The Church can only bless sinners, but not sins.

### **28. Can the Church bless all sinners?**

The Church can bless all *repentant* sinners who are willing to leave their sinful lives and pursue a life of virtue. But a holy blessing—even a non-liturgical, simple blessing—cannot be given to sinners who are obstinate in sin and are unwilling to break their sinful relationships, because this is against Christ’s command: “Give not that which is holy to dogs; neither cast your pearls before swine” (Matt 7:6). Giving a blessing to unrepentant sinners is like giving what is holy to dogs or casting your pearls before swine.

### **29. Can the Church bless couples in adulterous or other irregular situations, including same-sex couples?**

The Church can bless *individual sinners* who are struggling to live a chaste life, but it cannot bless adulterous, immoral, or same-sex *couples* who are unwilling to abandon their sinful union. Besides being against Christ’s command (Matt 7:6), the blessing of couples in sinful relationships cannot avoid causing a grave scandal. Consider two homosexuals, A and B, who happen to be in the same room together. Are they a couple? Not necessarily, unless they are in a romantic relationship with each other. It is their homosexual relationship—their mutual promise to engage in homosexual acts—and not merely their being together that makes them a homosexual ‘couple.’ Without that homosexual relationship, you only have a couple of homosexuals, not a homosexual couple. For this reason, blessing two same-sex persons *as a couple* cannot avoid causing the scandal of blessing a sinful union, for *it is their union or relationship that defines them as a couple*.

**30. Did not the Vatican recently issue a document, *Fiducia supplicans* (FS),<sup>14</sup> that permits deacons and priests to bless same-sex couples and couples in irregular situations?**

Indeed, the cited document permits the blessing of same-sex couples and couples in irregular situations, but only under certain conditions. Specifically, it requires that the blessing be given in such a way that the ceremony does not resemble a wedding or that it endorses a sinful relationship. For instance, it cannot be performed “in concurrence with the ceremonies of a civil union” or “with any clothing, gestures, or words that are proper to a wedding” (FS 39). The problem is, when an ordained minister gives a blessing to two persons *as a couple*, then—no matter how hard the minister tries to avoid giving a blessing that resembles a wedding—the blessing will still resemble a wedding because the two persons are being blessed *as a couple*, that is, as a union of two hearts and lives. And when the minister gives a blessing to *a couple who are unwilling to break their sinful relationship*, then—no matter how strongly the minister says that he is only blessing the persons but not their union—the blessing of the couple *as a couple* will also be a blessing of the sinful relationship that defines them as a couple. Therefore, since the conditions required by the document negate the ability of the minister to give this blessing in practice, the successful implementation of this document remains to be seen. It is like permitting your children to watch TV, provided that they watch it with their eyes closed and their ears plugged. In practice, the permission is worthless and only opens the door for some clergy, who are sympathetic to the LGBTQ agenda, to do incalculable damage to the good name of the Church.

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<sup>14</sup> Being a statement of church policy and not a dogmatic pronouncement, the document is not infallible. For the text of this document, see

[https://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc\\_ddf\\_doc\\_20231218\\_fiducia-supplicans\\_en.html](https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_ddf_doc_20231218_fiducia-supplicans_en.html)

## Picture Credits and Sources

### **Fig. 2 Portrait of Jesus Christ**

Artist: Heinrich Hofmann (1824–1911)

Source for the Portrait:

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Christ,\\_by\\_Heinrich\\_Hofmann.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Christ,_by_Heinrich_Hofmann.jpg)

Extracted from the Painting “Christ and the Rich Young Ruler”

<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hoffman-ChristAndTheRichYoungRuler.jpg>

### **Fig. 2.0.1 Illustration of the Seven Sacraments** (circa turn of 19th/20th century)

Top row: Baptism and Confirmation

Middle row: Eucharist, Reconciliation, Anointing of the Sick

Bottom row: Holy Orders and Matrimony

Artist: Anonymous.

Source: Dr. Fischer Kunstauktionen, Slovene Ethnographic Museum

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hinterglasbild\\_Die\\_Sieben\\_Sakramente\\_Slowenien.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hinterglasbild_Die_Sieben_Sakramente_Slowenien.jpg)

### **Fig. 2.0.2 Sacramentals**

Note: The site has a Pinterest button, indicating that the image may be shared.

<https://shop.catholicsupply.com/blog/What-are-Sacramentals-and-how-can-we-use-them>

### **Fig. 2.1.1 Infant Baptism**

Traditional image (circa 1920s) found in many places on the internet without provenance.

[https://osst-abbey.org/yahoo\\_site\\_admin/assets/images/Baptism.146174950\\_std.jpg](https://osst-abbey.org/yahoo_site_admin/assets/images/Baptism.146174950_std.jpg)

### **Fig. 2.1.2 The Baptism of Christ**

Artist: Carl Heinrich Bloch (1834–1890)

<https://pixels.com/featured/2-the-baptism-of-christ-carl-bloch.html>

### **Fig. 2.2.1 Confirmation**

Traditional image (circa 1920s) found in many places on the internet without provenance.

<https://www.stchristopherclaxton.com/sacraments/confirmation/>

### **Fig. 2.2.2 A Bishop Anointing the Foreheads of Children with Sacred Chrism**

Artist: Jacques Dumont le Romain (1704–1781)

<https://fineartamerica.com/featured/the-sacrament-of-confir-mation-jacques-dumont-le-romain.html>

### **Fig. 2.3.1 Hosts Made of Wheat Bread in the Bowls and Grape Wine in the Chalice**

Free Photo by Adamy Gianinni (Seutec Studio) from *Pixabay.com*.

<https://pixabay.com/photos/church-communion-cat-eucharist-5011686/>

**Fig. 2.3.2 The Host is the Body of Jesus Christ After Consecration**

<https://publicdomainvectors.org/en/free-clipart/Illustration-of-Holy-Eucharist-symbol/33225.html>

**Fig. 2.3.3 Jesus Christ is Present Wholly and Entirely in the Holy Eucharist**

Free Illustration by Annalise Batista from *Pixabay.com*

<https://pixabay.com/illustrations/holy-communion-catholic-eucharist-4784984/>

**Fig. 2.3.4 Christ Instituted the Eucharist During His Last Supper with the Apostles**

Source: *Archive.org*.

<https://ia803006.us.archive.org/7/items/OldBiblePicturesSmaller/A6E1CBBB-2236-4C0C-A4F0-2AC2A5453AD1.jpeg>

**Fig. 2.3.5 Holy Communion**

Traditional image found in many places on the internet without provenance.

<https://virgofidelischurch.weebly.com/sacraments.html>

**Fig. 2.3.6 Boy Receiving Holy Communion**

Free picture by Herney Gómez from *Pixabay.com*

<https://pixabay.com/photos/first-communion-rite-religion-2925469/>

**Fig. 2.3.7 First Holy Communion**

Traditional image (circa 1920s) found in many places on the internet without provenance.

<https://www.spxbc.com/holy-eucharist>

**Fig. 2.3.8 An Altar Server Holds a Paten as Pope Benedict XVI gives Holy Communion to a Sister**

A photo found in many places on the internet without provenance.

<https://www.tldm.org/news36/on-canonical-digits-and-eucharistic-particles.htm>

**Fig. 2.4.1 Confession**

Artist: Giuseppe Molteni (1800–1867)

Courtesy of Fondazione Cariplo, CC BY–SA 3.0 license

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Artgate\\_Fondazione\\_Cariplo\\_-\\_Molteni\\_Giuseppe,\\_La\\_confessione.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Artgate_Fondazione_Cariplo_-_Molteni_Giuseppe,_La_confessione.jpg)

**Fig. 2.4.2 The Sorrow of St. Peter**

Artist: El Greco (1541–1614)

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:El\\_Greco\\_-\\_Las\\_lágrimas\\_de\\_San\\_Pedro.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:El_Greco_-_Las_lágrimas_de_San_Pedro.jpg)

**Fig. 2.4.3 The Sacrament of Reconciliation**

Traditional image (circa 1920s) found in many places on the internet without provenance.

<http://www.stcorneliuslb.org/sacrament-information.html>



**Fig. 2.4.4 The Penitent Mary Magdalene**

Artist: Guido Reni (1575–1642)

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Guido\\_Reni\\_-\\_The\\_Penitent\\_Magdalene\\_-\\_Google\\_Art\\_Project.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Guido_Reni_-_The_Penitent_Magdalene_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg)

**Fig. 2.4.5 Flagellants**

Illustration from the Nuremberg Chronicle, by Harmann Schedel (1440–1514)

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Nuremberg\\_chronicles\\_-\\_Flagellants\\_\(CCXVr\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Nuremberg_chronicles_-_Flagellants_(CCXVr).jpg)

**Fig. 2.5.1 Anointing of the Sick (aka “Extreme Unction”)**

Traditional image (circa 1920s) found in many places on the internet without provenance.

<https://www.spxbc.com/anointing-of-the-sick>

**Fig. 2.5.2 Viaticum**

Artist: Tadeusz Gorecki (1825–1868)

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Tadeusz\\_Gorecki\\_-\\_Viaticum\\_-\\_MP\\_2061\\_MNW\\_-\\_National\\_Museum\\_in\\_Warsaw.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Tadeusz_Gorecki_-_Viaticum_-_MP_2061_MNW_-_National_Museum_in_Warsaw.jpg)

**Fig. 2.6.1 Ordination to the Priesthood**

Traditional image (circa 1920s) found in many places on the internet without provenance.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Holy\\_Orders\\_Picture.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Holy_Orders_Picture.jpg)

**Fig. 2.7.1 Sacrament of Matrimony**

Traditional image (circa 1920s) found in many places on the internet without provenance.

<https://holycomforterparish.org/matrimony/>

**Fig. 2.7.2 Betrothal of the Virgin Mary and St. Joseph (cropped)**

Artist: Raphael (1483-1520)

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Raffaello\\_-\\_Spotalizio\\_-\\_Web\\_Gallery\\_of\\_Art.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Raffaello_-_Spotalizio_-_Web_Gallery_of_Art.jpg)



### *Part Three: The Commandments*



**Fig. 3 The Holy Family**  
Artist: Bartolomé Esteban Murillo (1617–1682)

## PART 3 – THE COMMANDMENTS

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# INTRODUCTION: *The Commandments and Sin*

## THE COMMANDMENTS OF GOD IN GENERAL

### 1. What is treated of in the third part of this catechism?

The third part of this catechism treats of the commandments of God and those of the Church.

### 2. How many commandments of God are there?

God has given Ten Commandments, collectively called the *Decalogue*. Here are the Ten Commandments of God (Ex 20:1–17; Deut 5:6–22):

I am the Lord, thy God.

1. Thou shalt not have strange gods before Me.
2. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.
3. Remember to keep holy the Sabbath day.
4. Honor thy father and thy mother.
5. Thou shalt not kill.
6. Thou shalt not commit adultery.
7. Thou shalt not steal.
8. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.
9. Thou shalt not covet another's wife.
10. Thou shalt not covet another's goods.

### 3. Why are the Ten Commandments of God called the Decalogue?

The word “decalogue” means “ten words (or sentences).” The Ten Commandments of God are called the Decalogue because God, aside from having stamped them on the soul of every man, also promulgated them in the form of ten sentences engraved by His own finger on two tablets of stone in Mount Sinai (Ex 31:18).



**Fig. 3.0.1 Moses Carrying the Two Tablets of Stone on Which the Ten Commandments Were Written (Deut 4:13)**

#### **4. What is the chief and greatest commandment?**

The chief and greatest commandment is the **love of God**: “You shall love the Lord your God with your whole heart and with your whole soul and with your whole mind and with your whole strength” (Mark 12:30). In the Decalogue, the first three commandments, 1, 2, and 3, are all summed up in the command to love God above all things.

#### **5. What is the second greatest commandment?**

The second greatest commandment is the **love of our neighbor**: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself” (Mark 12:31). The rest of the commandments, 4 through 10, are all summed up in the command to love our neighbor. Our Lord Jesus Christ gave us an example of how to love our neighbor in the “Story of the Good Samaritan” (Luke 10:25–37).

#### **6. Is it then possible to summarize the Ten Commandments?**

Yes, the Ten Commandments may be summarized into just these two: *love God above all things* and *love your neighbor as yourself*.

#### **7. Are we bound to observe all the commandments?**

Yes, we are bound to observe all the commandments (CCC 2068) because we are bound to live according to the will of God, who created us, and because a serious transgression against even one of them is enough to merit hell.

#### **8. Is it possible for anyone to observe all the commandments?**

Yes, it is possible to observe all of God’s commandments, because God never commands anything that we cannot fulfill and because He gives grace to observe them to those who ask as they should. In the Bible, we see Zachary and Elizabeth as examples of people who observed all the commandments: “They were both just before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord without blame” (Luke 1:6).

**9. What, in a general way, should we consider in each of the commandments?**

In each of the commandments, we should consider its positive and negative parts, that is, what it commands and what it forbids.

**10. Why is it said at the beginning of the Ten Commandments, “I am the Lord thy God”?**

It is said at the beginning of the Ten Commandments, “I am the Lord thy God,” to show us that God, our Creator, is the one who gives these commandments and that we, being His creatures, are bound to obey them.

## SIN

**11. What is sin?**

Sin is an offense against God. Any act against the will of God, or any act of disobedience against Him, is a sin (CCC 1849–1850).

**12. How many kinds of sin are there?**

There are two kinds of sin: *original sin* and *actual sin*.

**Original sin** is the sin in which we are all born and which we contracted just by being descendants of our disobedient first parents, Adam and Eve.

**Actual sin** is that which man, after coming to the use of reason, commits of his own free will.

**13. What evil effects has the sin of Adam and Eve brought upon us?**

The evil effects of the sin of Adam and Eve are the privation of grace and the loss of Paradise, together with ignorance, an inclination to evil, death, sickness, and all our other miseries.





Fig. 3.0.2 Adam and Eve Expelled from Paradise

#### 14. How is original sin canceled?

Original sin is canceled by the Sacrament of Baptism.

#### 15. How many kinds of actual sin are there?

There are two kinds of actual sin: *mortal* and *venial*. **Mortal** sins are big sins; **venial** sins are small sins (CCC 1854).

#### 16. What is mortal sin?

Mortal sin is a sin that totally destroys charity in the heart by seriously failing in our duties toward God, toward our neighbor, or toward ourselves (CCC 1855).

### **17. Why is it called mortal?**

It is called mortal (from the Latin *mors*, which means death) because it brings death to the soul by making it lose sanctifying grace, which is the divine life in our souls.

### **18. What does mortal sin do to the soul?**

1. Mortal sin deprives the soul of grace and makes it lose Heaven and the friendship of God;
2. It deprives it of merits already acquired and renders it incapable of acquiring new merits;
3. It makes it the slave of the devil;
4. It makes it deserve hell as well as the chastisements of this life.

### **19. What is required to constitute a mortal sin?**

To constitute a mortal sin, three things are required (CCC 1857–1861):

1. The sin must be about a serious or *grave matter*;
2. There must be *full knowledge* or full consciousness of the gravity of the matter; and
3. There must be *full consent*, which means there must be a deliberate will to commit the sin.

*The matter is grave* when the thing under examination is seriously contrary to the laws of God and His Church.

*There is full knowledge* in committing sin when we know perfectly well that what we are doing is seriously evil.

*There is perfect consent of the will* in sinning when we deliberately determine to do a thing even though we fully know that thing to be gravely sinful.

When any of the above conditions are missing, the sin is a venial sin (CCC 1862).

## 20. What is venial sin?

Venial sin is a sin that does not totally destroy charity in the heart, but it wounds it by slightly failing in some duty toward God, toward our neighbor, or toward ourselves (CCC 1855).

It is called venial because

1. It is not serious compared with mortal sin.
2. It does not deprive us of divine grace.
3. God more readily pardons us.

## 21. What harm does venial sin do to the soul?

Venial sin (1) weakens and chills charity in us; (2) disposes us to mortal sin; and (3) renders us deserving of temporal punishments both in this world and in the next.

## 22. Are all mortal sins equally bad?

No, some mortal sins are more grievous than others, such as the “blasphemies against the Holy Spirit” and the “sins that cry out to God for vengeance.”

## 23. What are the “blasphemies against the Holy Spirit”?

The blasphemies against the Holy Spirit are these six (CCC 1864):

1. Despairing of being saved
2. Presuming to be saved without merit
3. Opposing known truths
4. Envyng another’s spiritual goods
5. Obstinate remaining in sin
6. Final impenitence

**The despair of being saved** is a lack of confidence in God’s mercy. It is the sin of Cain who said, “Oh, my sin is too great to be forgiven” (Gen 4:13).

**The presumption of being saved without merit** is an overconfidence in God's mercy that one can be saved without contrition or doing good works. Those who disbelieve in hell on the excuse that God is all-merciful also commit the same mistake.

**Opposing known truths** is obstinacy in refusing to accept the truth, especially the truths of faith. This is committed, especially by those who persist in their unbelief or heresy.

**Envy another's spiritual goods** is a sadness in seeing another person grow in virtue and perfection because it reminds them of their foolish disregard for their own soul.

**Obstinately remaining in sin** is a willful persistence in wickedness even after sufficient instruction and admonition.

**Final impenitence** is to die without contrition or repentance for one's sins. Those who live through life disregarding God and His laws often die impenitent.

#### **24. Why are these sins said to be against the Holy Spirit?**

These sins are said to be against the Holy Spirit because they are committed with pure malice. In other words, they are contrary to goodness, which is the special attribute of the Holy Spirit.

#### **25. What are the “sins that cry to God for vengeance”?**

The “sins that cry to God for vengeance” are these:

1. Willful murder (including abortion);
2. The sin of sodomy (unnatural sexual acts, including homosexual acts, which by nature cannot result in the production of an offspring);
3. Oppression of the poor;
4. Defrauding laborers of their wages (CCC 1867).



## 26. Why are these sins said to cry to God for vengeance?

These sins are said to cry to God for vengeance because the Bible says so and because their iniquity is so great and so manifest that it provokes God to punish them with the severest chastisements. For example, God destroyed the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah because of the lust and unnatural behavior of their inhabitants (Gen 19:24; Jude 1:7), after whom their sin was later named “sodomy.”

## 27. Are there biblical texts proving that the four sins cited above really cry out to God for vengeance?

Yes, there are, for that is how we know them:

1. **Willful murder** is the unjust taking away of another person’s life. In the book of *Genesis*, which records the murder committed by Cain against Abel, God spoke to Cain and said, “What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood cries to Me from the earth” (Gen 4:10).
2. **Sodomy** is any sexual activity that cannot naturally generate offspring. The people of Sodom and Gomorrah indulged in these kinds of sins that the angels who came to save Lot and his family told him: “We will destroy this place because their cry has grown loud before the Lord, who has sent us to destroy them” (Gen 19:13).
3. **Oppression of the poor** is the unjust taking advantage of inferiors. “You shall not hurt a widow or an orphan. If you hurt them, they will cry out to me, and I will hear their cry; my rage shall be enkindled, and I will strike you with the sword, and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless” (Ex 22:22–24).
4. **Defrauding laborers of their wages** is the unjust reduction or holding back of the laborer’s wages for selfish reasons. St. James wrote: “Behold, the wages of the laborers who have reaped down your fields, which by fraud you have held back, cry out; and the cry of the laborers has entered into the ears of the Lord of hosts” (Jas 5:4).

## LESSON 1 THE FIRST COMMANDMENT

**“Thou shalt not have strange gods before me.”**

### **1. What does God command us in the first commandment?**

In the first commandment, “Thou shalt not have strange gods before Me,” God commands us to acknowledge, adore, love, and serve Him alone as Our Sovereign Lord. He also wants us to nourish our faith, hope, and love for Him above all creatures.

### **2. How do we fulfill the first commandment?**

We fulfill the first commandment by practicing internal and external worship.

### **3. What is internal worship?**

Internal worship is the honor that is given to God with the faculties of the soul alone, such as by silent, private prayer and adoration.

### **4. What is external worship?**

External worship is the homage that is given to God by means of outward acts, such as kneeling, making the sign of the cross, praying in public, attending Mass on Sundays, and performing external sacrifices and outward acts of piety.

### **5. Is it not enough internally to adore God with the heart alone?**

No, it is not enough to adore God with the heart alone. We must also adore Him externally, with both soul and body, because He is the Creator and Absolute Lord of both.

### **6. Can there be external worship without internal worship?**

No, in no way can there be external worship without internal, because unless external worship is accompanied by internal, it is destitute of life, merit, and efficacy, like a body without a soul (CCC 2100).

## 7. What is forbidden by the first commandment?

The first commandment forbids

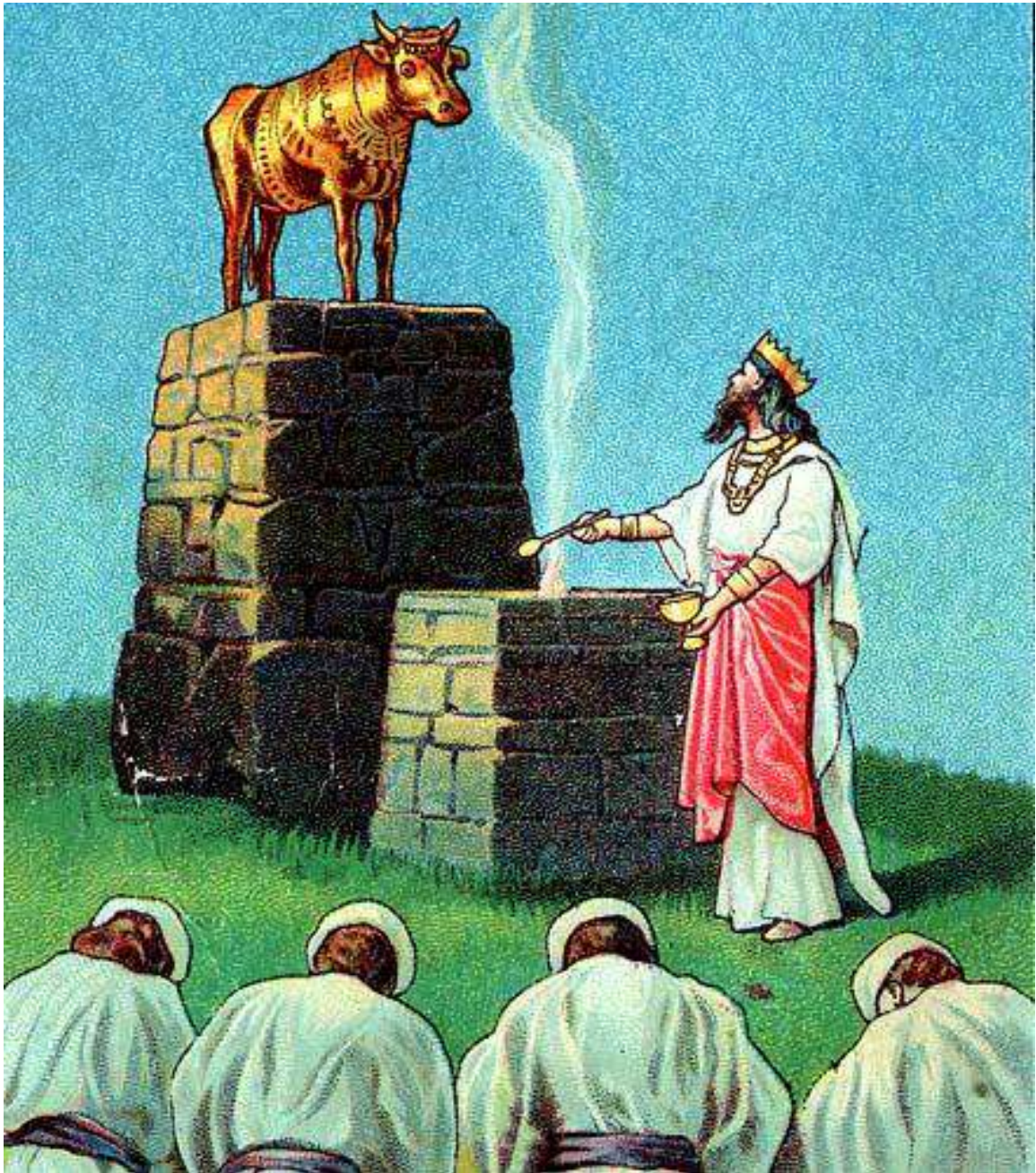
1. *Acts against faith*, which include neglecting to study our religion, disregarding what the Church teaches, obstinately refusing to accept the truths of our faith, and holding that all religions are equally the same (indifferentism). Participation in the rituals of other religions is a form of indifferentism and, therefore, also an act against faith. Heresy, apostasy, and schism are acts against faith and are violations of the first commandment (CCC 2088–2089).
2. *Acts against hope*, which include despairing of God’s mercy as well as assuming that God’s mercy will forgive sins without contrition and good works. These are two of the “sins against the Holy Spirit” that were discussed earlier, and they are sins against the first commandment (CCC 2091–2092).
3. *Acts against charity*, which include hatred of God, indifference toward Him, ingratitude to His love for us, lukewarmness, and spiritual sloth. Spiritual sloth consists in a reluctance to do anything pertaining to the worship of God or God’s service (CCC 2093–2094).

## 8. What else does the first commandment forbid?

The first commandment also forbids idolatry, irreligion, atheism, agnosticism, superstition, and, in general, all dealings with the devil (CCC 2110–2128).

**Idolatry** is the worship of idols and false gods, or the act of giving to any creature, such as a statue, an image, a man, an animal, or a plant, the supreme worship of adoration that belongs to God alone. The worship of the moon, the sun, the Earth, the world, or the material forces of the universe—all of which are mere creatures of Almighty God—is also a form of idolatry and is prohibited by the first commandment.





**Fig. 3.1.1 Jeroboam's Idolatry (1 Kgs 12:25–33)**

Idolatry is not limited to the worship of creatures or created objects. Those who spend all their time in games, in their job, or in some other material pursuits but who spend little or no time for God in prayer are likewise guilty of “material idolatry,” because they show that they worship these mundane things more than God.



**Irreligion** is a lack of reverence, if not outright hostility, toward God or religion. There are three acts that fall under this definition, all of which are against the first commandment:

1. *Putting God's goodness or power to the test*—Satan was guilty of this when he challenged Christ to prove Himself the Son of God by turning the stone into bread (Luke 4:3).
2. *Sacrilege*, which consists in the profanation of a place, person, or thing consecrated to God and set apart for His worship. For example, vandalizing a church, stealing a sacred object (such as a chalice used in Holy Communion), etc. Actually, any lack of reverence shown to something sacred, such as receiving Holy Communion with mortal sin in the soul, is sacrilege.
3. *Simony*, which consists in the buying or selling of spiritual things or positions, such as the position of bishop. This sin is named after Simon the magician, who thought he could obtain God's power with money (Acts 8:9–24). The buying or selling of religious articles itself is not simony. But buying or selling blessed objects *on account of their being blessed* is simony. When a blessed object is sold, the blessing becomes void, and the object needs to be brought to the priest again for a blessing.

**Atheism** is the denial of the existence of God. This is a sin against the first commandment if one has the right concept of what God is and still rejects His existence. However, God's action in the world is so manifest that only the fool says in his heart that there is no God (Ps 14:1). **Agnosticism** is the denial of man's ability to know God's existence, so it practically ends up also being atheism.

**Superstition** is the act of attributing to any person, object, or action a supernatural power that it does not possess. Consulting a fortune-teller, thinking that he or she has the power to see the future, is superstition. Using a charm or a rabbit's foot, believing that it has the power to bring good luck, is also a form of superstition. Likewise, using spells to avert danger or obtain a reward is superstition and is against the first commandment (CCC 2111).

**9. If one were to have recourse to the devil and invoke his help, would he commit a grave sin?**

Yes, because the devil is the most wicked enemy of both God and man. The first commandment forbids making any pact with the devil to obtain knowledge and power. Those who foolishly sell their souls to the devil sometimes find themselves out of time when they realize their mistake and end up being too late to beg God for His mercy and forgiveness.

**10. Is it permissible to engage in magic?**

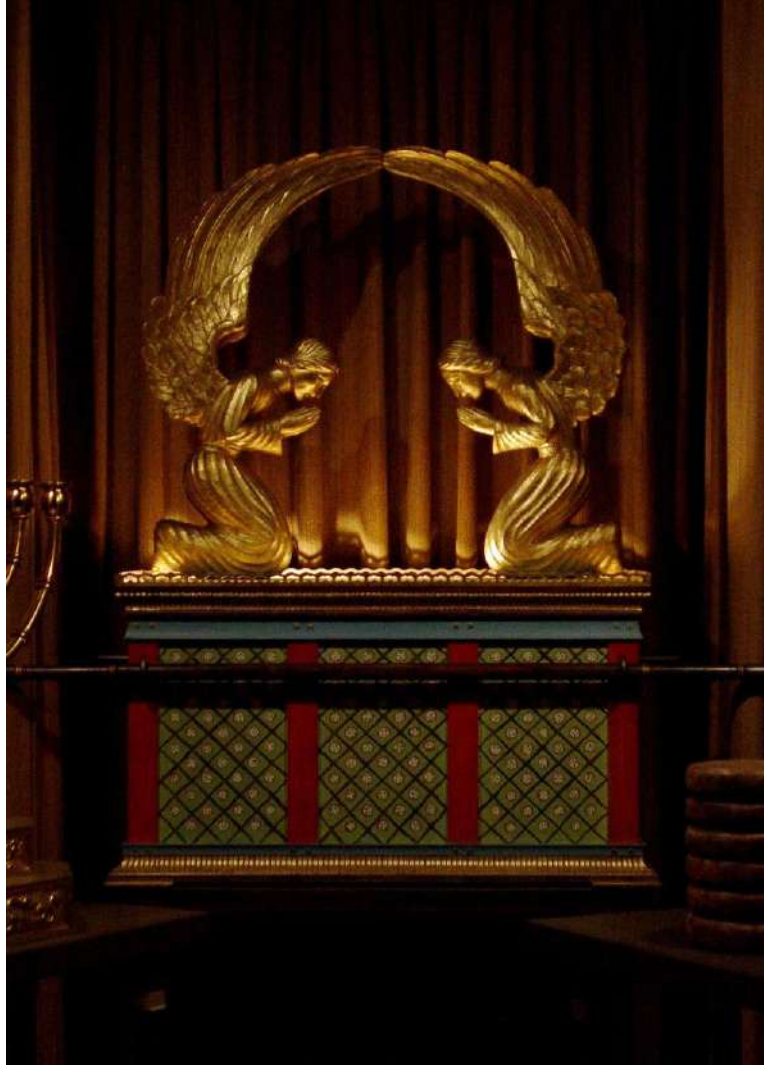
**Magic**, as the simple manifestation of wonders, is permissible as a form of entertainment, provided the intervention of evil spirits is not utilized and the entire show is performed by purely natural and clever tricks. But black magic, sorcery, and witchcraft, which invoke and use the occult powers of the devil, are forbidden by the first commandment (CCC 2116–2117).

**11. Is it permissible to engage in spiritism or consult the souls of the dead?**

**Spiritism** is the alleged practice of communicating with the souls of the dead through the use of mediums and seances. All practices of spiritism are forbidden because they are superstitious and often involve deception and/or diabolical intervention.

**12. Does not the first commandment forbid the making of statues and graven images as forms of idolatry?**

The first commandment forbids *worshipping* statues and images, but it does not forbid *using* statues and images in worshiping the true God. The first commandment forbids making statues and images *to be worshipped as gods*, but it does not forbid making statues as objects *to help us worship the true God*. In fact, God Himself commanded Moses to make a pair of cherubim for the ark of the covenant (Ex 25:18–22) and a brazen serpent as a means of saving the Israelites in the desert (Num 21:4–9). (CCC 2132)



**Fig. 3.1.2 The Ark of the Covenant**

**13. Do Catholics commit idolatry when they kneel down and pray before images and statues of Christ, Mary, or the saints?**

No, because we do not honor the statues and images themselves, but the people they represent.

**14. Does the first commandment forbid honoring and praying to the angels and the saints?**

No, it is not forbidden to honor and invoke the angels and saints. On the contrary, we should do so because they are God's friends and our intercessors with Him.

**15. The Bible says that Christ is the one mediator between God and men (1 Tim 2:5). Since Jesus Christ is the one true mediator with God, why have recourse to the intercession of the Blessed Virgin or the saints?**

The saints intercede for us *through the merits of Jesus Christ as well*. Therefore, their intercession does not negate Christ's role as our true mediator with God.



**Fig. 3.1.3 Boy Praying Before a Statue of the Blessed Virgin**

**16. May we honor the relics of the saints?**

The bodies and the remains of saints who have died are called *relics*. We should honor them because their bodies were temples of the Holy Spirit and will also rise gloriously to eternal life. Relics also include the saints' possessions (books, rosaries, clothing, etc.) and anything touched by them. We should love and honor them as well, just as we keep and cherish the mementos of our departed loved ones.



## 17. Are there different classes of relics?

Yes, and they are the following:

- A *first-class relic* is any part of the body of a saint or the saint's whole body.
- A *second-class relic* is any object touched or used by the saint during his or her lifetime, such as the saint's clothing, books, diaries, rosaries, etc.
- A *third-class relic* is any object touched to a first-class relic, such as a piece of cloth, handkerchief, or a holy card touched to any part of a saint's body.



**Fig. 3.1.4 Incorrupt Body of St. Bernadette Soubirous**

The bodies, or parts of bodies, of the saints are important **first-class relics**.

**18. What is the difference between the honor we give to God and the honor we give to the saints?**

The difference is that we adore God because of His infinite excellence, whereas we do not adore the saints but only honor and venerate them as God's friends and our intercessors with Him. The honor we give to God is called *latria*, that is, the worship of *adoration*. The honor we give to the saints is called *dulia*, that is, the *veneration* of the servants of God. But the special honor we give to the Blessed Virgin is called *hyperdulia*, which is a *super-veneration* of the Mother of God.

## LESSON 2 THE SECOND COMMANDMENT

**“Thou shalt not take the name of God in vain.”**

### **1. What does the second commandment forbid?**

The second commandment, “Thou shalt not take the name of God in vain,” forbids us (1) to utter the name of God irreverently; (2) to blaspheme God, the Blessed Virgin, or the saints; and (3) to make false, unnecessary, or unlawful oaths (CCC 2146, 2147).

### **2. What is meant by “not to utter the name of God irreverently?”**

“Not to utter the name of God irreverently” means not to mention His holy name, or any other name that in a special way refers to God Himself, Our Lord Jesus, the Virgin Mary, and the saints, in anger, in a joke, or in any irreverent way whatsoever.

### **3. What is blasphemy?**

Blasphemy is a horrible sin that consists of words or acts of contempt or malediction against God, Christ, the Blessed Virgin, the saints, or sacred things (CCC 2148).

### **4. Is there any difference between blasphemy and imprecation?**

There is a difference. By blasphemy, one wishes evil to or curses God, the Blessed Virgin, or the saints, while by imprecation, one wishes evil to or curses oneself or one’s neighbor.

### **5. What is an oath?**

An oath is the calling on God to witness the truth of what one says or promises.

### **6. Is it always forbidden to take an oath?**

It is not always forbidden to take an oath. An oath is lawful and even gives honor to God when it is necessary and when one swears with truth, judgment, and justice (CCC 2154–2155).

**7. When is an oath without truth?**

An oath is without truth when one affirms on oath what he knows or believes to be false or when one promises under oath to do what one has no intention of doing.

**8. When is an oath made without judgment?**

An oath is made without judgment when one makes it imprudently, without mature consideration, or in trivial matters.

**9. When is an oath made without justice?**

An oath is made without justice when one makes it to do something unjust or unlawful, such as, for example, to swear to take revenge, to steal, and so on.



**Fig. 3.2.1 Man Making an Oath**



**10. Is it a sin to swear or make an oath jestingly?**

Yes. We should be careful with our speech and not swear unnecessarily. The Lord Jesus said, “You have heard that it was said to them of old, ‘You shall not swear falsely, but you shall perform your oaths to the Lord.’ But I say to you *not to swear at all*... Let your speech be ‘Yes, yes’ and ‘No, no.’ That which is over and above these is from the evil one” (Matt 5:33–37).

**11. What sin does he commit if he swears falsely?**

He who swears falsely commits a mortal sin because he grievously dishonors God, the Infinite Truth, by calling Him to witness what is false. This is called *perjury* (CCC 2163).

**12. If we swear to do that which is evil, are we bound to keep the oath?**

No. Not only are we not obliged to keep the oath, but we would sin by doing such things because a valid oath does not promote iniquity.

In the Gospel of St. Mark, we have an example of a rash oath made by King Herod Antipas, who executed St. John the Baptist on the night of a sumptuous dinner party. After supper, Princess Salome, the daughter of Herodias, danced so delightfully that King Herod, who was very much entertained by the dance, made an oath to her and said, “Ask of me what you wish, and I will give it to you, though it be half of my kingdom.” Upon Herodias’ suggestion, Princess Salome went to the king and said, “I wish that you immediately give me the head of John the Baptist in a dish.” Although King Herod had previously refused Herodias’ request to kill St. John (who was then in prison), knowing that he was a holy prophet, he nevertheless gave the order to execute John and bring his head on a platter in order to fulfill his oath and avoid embarrassment. Princess Salome received the head of St. John in a dish and handed it to Herodias, her mother. (Mark 6:21–28).



**Fig. 3.2.2 Herodias with the Head of St. John the Baptist**

St. John the Baptist was beheaded on account of a rash oath made by King Herod Antipas to Princess Salome.

**13. What does the second commandment command us to do?**

The second commandment commands us to honor the holy name of God, to always speak with reverence of Him and His saints, as well as to keep our oaths and vows.

**14. What is a vow?**

A vow is a promise made to God regarding something that is good, within our power to do, and better than its opposite, and which we bind ourselves to fulfill *under the pain of sin*. The most common vows are the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience made in a religious institute.

A vow must be distinguished from a simple *promise* made to God to do or not do something. A simple promise does not bind under the pain of sin. For example, one may promise God to pray the Rosary every day for one month. If he fails to keep his promise, out of weakness or some other reason, he commits no sin. Still, one should not make such promises to God that one has no intention of fulfilling. That would be a mockery of God's majesty and goodness.

**15. If the keeping of a vow were to become very difficult, in whole or in part, what is to be done?**

When it becomes difficult to keep a vow, in whole or in part, one may seek commutation or dispensation from the bishop or from the pope, depending on the character of the vow.

**16. Is it a sin to break a vow?**

It is a sin to break a vow, and, therefore, we should not make vows without mature reflection or, as a rule, without the advice of our confessor or other prudent persons, so as not to expose ourselves to the danger of sinning.

**17. May vows be made to our Lady and the saints?**

Vows are made to God alone. However, we may promise God to do something in honor of our Lady or the saints.



## LESSON 3 THE THIRD COMMANDMENT

**“Remember thou keep holy the Sabbath day.”**

### 1. What does the third commandment command us to do?

The third commandment, “Remember thou keep holy the Sabbath day,” commands us to honor God by acts of worship on holy days.



**Fig. 3.3.1 People Going to Church on Sunday**

### 2. What are the Sabbath or holy days?

In the Old Law, the Sabbath—or the days the Jews reserved for worshipping God—were Saturdays and certain other days that were regarded as especially solemn by the Jews. In the New Law, they are Sundays and other holy days of obligation determined by the Church.



### 3. What are the holy days of obligation in the U.S. besides Sundays?

In the U.S., the holy days of obligation include the following:

Jan. 1 (New Year's Day)—Solemnity of **Mary, Mother of God**

Thursday of the sixth week of Easter – **Ascension of Christ**

Aug. 15—The **Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary**

Nov. 1—**All Saints Day**

Dec. 8—The **Immaculate Conception**

Dec. 25—**Christmas**, or the Nativity of Our Lord

When Jan. 1, Aug. 15, or Nov. 1 falls on a Saturday or Monday, the obligation to attend Mass does not apply. (CIC 1246 and CN 1246. 2)

### 4. Why is Sunday sanctified instead of Saturday in the New Law?

The Sabbath has been changed from Saturday to Sunday because it was on Sunday that Our Lord rose from the dead. The Church did not just recently adopt this practice. This has been going on since the time of the Apostles. Thus, we read in the *Acts of the Apostles*: “On the first day of the week (that is, Sunday), when we were assembled to break bread (that is, to celebrate the Eucharist), Paul discoursed with them, being to depart on the morrow. And he continued his speech until midnight” (Acts 20:7).

### 5. What act of worship is commanded by the Church on holy days?

The Church commands us to assist devoutly at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass either on the holy day or the evening of the preceding day (CIC 1248). Note that although the third commandment teaches us to sanctify the Sabbath, it is the Church that specifies when to celebrate the Sabbath and how to sanctify it. By its first precept, the Church commands us to sanctify the Sabbath on Sundays and holy days by attending Holy Mass and avoiding servile works that hinder divine worship (CIC 1247). Thus, the failure to attend Holy Mass on Sundays or holy days without a grave reason is a mortal sin.

**6. With what other good works does a good Catholic sanctify the holy days?**

A good Catholic sanctifies holy days: (1) by studying the catechism and listening to sermons or homilies (even on *YouTube*); (2) by spiritual reading and reflection; (3) by devoutly receiving the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist at the Sunday Mass; and (4) by the practice of prayer and works of Christian charity.

**7. What does the third commandment forbid?**

The third commandment forbids unnecessary servile work, buying and selling, and any other works that hinder the worship of God.

**8. What servile works are forbidden on holy days?**

The servile works forbidden on holy days are unnecessary works that are done for pay or works that are done to earn a living. Those who, because of poverty, misery, or social and family circumstances, cannot rest from work should still find sufficient time for God and the care of their souls.

**9. What sin does one commit by doing unnecessary work on holy days?**

One commits a mortal sin by doing *unnecessary* work that hinders the worship owed to God and the performance of works of mercy. However, brevity of time and cases of emergency will excuse one from grave sin.

**10. Is all servile work prohibited on holy days?**

On holy days, servile works are permitted that are necessary for life, such as nursing the sick, keeping the peace (police work), or those done for the service of God, as well as those done for a grave reason (CCC 2185).

**11. What if you are required by your employer to work on Sundays and holy days?**

You still have to set aside time for worship. Employers should cooperate in this regard and not make excessive demands on their employees' time (CCC 2187).

**12. Why is servile work forbidden on holy days?**

Servile work is forbidden on holy days in order that we may better attend divine worship, care for our souls, and enable us to rest from toil. Light gardening and innocent recreation are not forbidden, provided ample time is also set aside for worship, prayer, and reflection (CCC 2193).

**13. What else, above all, should we avoid on holy days?**

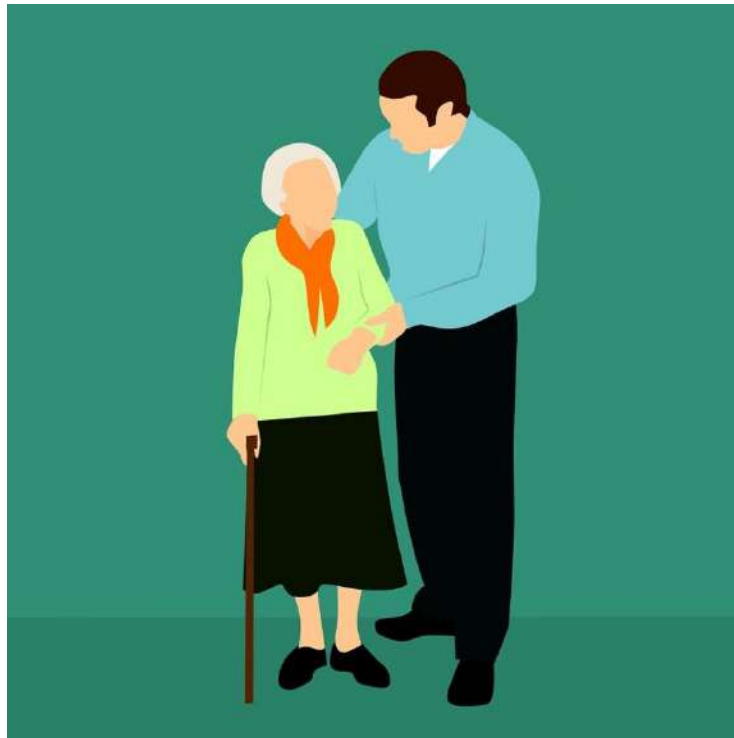
We should avoid sin and whatever leads to sin, such as morally dangerous games, recreations, and places of amusement.

## LESSON 4 THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT

**“Honor thy father and thy mother.”**

### **1. What does the fourth commandment command?**

The fourth commandment, “Honor thy father and thy mother,” commands us to respect our parents, obey them in all that is not sinful, and assist them in their temporal and spiritual needs, especially in their old age (CCC 2214–2220).



**Fig. 3.4.1 Caring for Aging Parents**

### **2. What does the fourth commandment forbid?**

The fourth commandment forbids us to offend our parents by word, deed, or in any other way.

### **3. Why does God ask us to honor our parents?**

In the fourth commandment, God asks us to honor our parents because we owe them our lives, and they were the ones responsible for raising and educating us (CCC 2197).



**4. Where did the authority of parents to command their children and the duty of children to obey their parents come from?**

The authority of parents to command their children and the obligation of children to obey their parents came from God, who constituted and established family life so that man might have the first helps that are necessary for his spiritual and temporal well-being.

**5. Have parents any duties toward their children?**

Yes! Parents are bound to love, support, and maintain their children; to attend to their religious and secular education; to give them a good example; to keep them from the occasions of sin; to correct their faults; and to help them embrace the state to which God has called them (CCC 2221–2231).



**Fig. 3.4.2 Mother Teaching Her Daughter to Pray**

## 6. Has God given us an example of a perfect family?

God gave us an example of a perfect family in the Holy Family, in which Jesus Christ lived subject to the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph until His thirtieth year, that is, until He began the mission of preaching the gospel entrusted to Him by His Eternal Father.



Fig. 3.4.3 The Holy Family in Nazareth

## 7. What other persons does this commandment include under the names of father and mother?

Under the names of father and mother, this commandment also includes our grandparents and ancestors, as well as all our superiors, both ecclesiastical and lay, whom we must consequently obey and respect. Our ecclesiastical superiors include our pastors (the deacons, priests, and bishops), while our lay superiors include our teachers, employers, and civil authorities (CCC 2199).

**8. Why does God command us to revere our pastors?**

God commands us to honor and reverence our pastors because they represent Christ and because God has appointed them to be the guides and feeders of our souls (1 Tim 5:17).

**9. If families were to live alone, cut off from each other, could they provide for all their material and moral needs?**

If families lived alone, cut off from one another, they could not provide for their individual needs, and hence it is necessary that they be united in civil society so as to mutually aid one another for the common good and happiness.

**10. What is civil society?**

Civil society is the union of many families under the authority of a governor for the purpose of assisting each other in securing their mutual perfection and temporal happiness.

**11. Whence comes the authority that rules civil society?**

The authority that civil society has to rule and govern families comes from God because all authority is from God: “There is no power but from God” (Rom 13:1).

**12. Are we under any obligation to obey the authority that governs civil society?**

Yes, all families and members of civil society are bound to respect and obey authority because that authority comes from God and because the common good demands it (CCC 2234).

**13. Are all laws imposed by the civil authority to be respected?**

Yes. In accordance with the command and example of Our Lord Jesus Christ, all laws imposed by the civil authority are to be respected, provided they are not contrary to the law of God. If civil authority commands us to do anything sinful, then, like St. Peter and the Apostles, we must answer and say, “We ought to obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29).

## LESSON 5 THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT

**“Thou shalt not kill.”**

### **1. What does the fifth commandment forbid?**

The fifth commandment, “Thou shalt not kill,” forbids us to kill, strike, wound, or do any other bodily harm to our neighbor, either by ourselves alone or with others. It also forbids hating our neighbor, wishing him evil, or offending him with insulting or injurious language.

### **2. Why is it a grave sin to kill one’s neighbor?**

The unjust killing of innocent human life is called *murder*. It is a grave sin to kill one’s neighbor because (1) the slayer unjustly invades the right that God alone has over the life of a person; (2) he disturbs the peace and destroys the security of civil society; and (3) he deprives his neighbor of life, which is the greatest natural good on Earth (CCC 2268–2269).



**Fig. 3.5.1 Killing an Innocent Person is *Murder*.**



**3. Are there cases in which it is lawful to kill?**

Yes, it is lawful to kill when fighting a just war, when carrying out a sentence of death in punishment of a crime (capital punishment), and in cases of necessary and lawful self-defense against an unjust aggressor. However, unnecessary killing and the murder of innocent people are forbidden even in a just war (CCC 2263–2267).

**4. Did not the Catholic Church recently change its teaching on the use of capital punishment or the death penalty?**

Actually, no one, not even the Church, can change the moral law regarding the killing of human beings. However, circumstances can change the *applicability* of the moral law at different times and places. Today, the Church discourages the use of the death penalty because we now have better means of detaining criminals, but it may still be necessary, as in the past, to use it in less advanced countries and barbaric places where terrorism is rampant and is hailed as a virtue.

**5. Did not the current text of the Catechism (particularly CCC 2267) say that “the death penalty is inadmissible because it is an attack on the inviolability and dignity of the person”?**

That is true. But that does not mean that the death penalty is inadmissible *in principle*, because aggressors and enemy soldiers also retain their dignity as persons while making an unjust attack or waging an unjust war. Yet the *Catechism* teaches that legitimate defense against such aggressors, which includes the use of arms and inflicting a lethal blow, is not only a right but a grave duty (CCC 2264–2265). Indeed, God Himself may be said to have used “capital punishment” when He destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah for their abominable and repeated sins. Thus, it is not that the Church now thinks that the death penalty is absolutely and, in all cases, inadmissible. She merely recognizes the fact that today many States already have better means of detaining criminals and protecting their citizens from further violence by such criminals, so the death penalty in these places is no longer necessary.

**6. Does the fifth commandment also forbid us from doing harm to the spiritual life of another?**

Yes, the fifth commandment also forbids us from doing harm to another person's spiritual life through *scandal*.



**Fig. 3.5.2 A Millstone Hanged About the Neck**

Christ said, “But he that shall scandalize one of these little ones that believe in me, it would be better for him that a millstone should be hanged around his neck, and that he should be drowned in the depth of the sea” (Matt 18:6).

## 7. What is scandal?

Scandal is any word, act, or omission that gives an occasion for another person to commit sin. For example, when you tell immodest stories to a child, you are giving that child an occasion to commit sin and harm his or her soul. Even if the child did not sin on account of your stories, you have committed a grave sin of scandal because you endangered the child's soul. If harming the body is forbidden by the fifth commandment, so is harming the soul (CCC 2284).

## 8. Is scandal a grave sin?

Scandal is a grave sin because, by causing the loss of souls, it tends to oppose the greatest work of God, which is the salvation of souls. It causes the death of another person's soul by depriving it of the life of grace, which is more precious than the life of the body and is the source of a multitude of sins. Hence, God threatens the severest chastisement to those who give scandal, especially to the young (CCC 2285).

## 9. Why does God, in the fifth commandment, forbid the taking of one's own life or suicide?

God forbids suicide because man is not the master of his own life any more than he is of the life of another.

## 10. Is direct abortion also forbidden by the fifth commandment?

Abortion is a medical procedure that results in the death of an unborn child. If the death of the child is directly intended, then it is called *direct abortion* and is NOT permitted. This procedure is forbidden by the fifth commandment, even to save the mother's life. However, if the death of the child results merely as an unintended effect and every precaution is taken to safeguard the child, then this is a case of *indirect abortion* and may be allowed for a grave reason. But direct abortion, or the direct killing of an unborn child, is nothing but murder and a mortal sin (CCC 2270–2275).

**11. Is mercy killing or *euthanasia* also forbidden by the fifth commandment?**

Yes, “mercy killing,” or the practice of killing a person to relieve him of pain, is forbidden by the fifth commandment. However, the use of painkillers is permitted even if they hasten the death of the patient as an unintended effect. But equally forbidden is the direct killing of defective, moronic, or incapacitated individuals on the excuse of mercy. Even the government has no right to take the lives of innocent people (CCC 2276–2279).

**12. What else is forbidden by the fifth commandment?**

Other acts forbidden by the fifth commandment are those that cause injury to our bodies or minds, such as excessive eating or drinking, substance or drug abuse, and bodily *mutilation* (CCC 2290–2291).

**13. What is bodily mutilation?**

Bodily mutilation is the direct destruction or removal of any part of the human body. This is forbidden unless it is the only way to save or preserve the life of a person. It is also forbidden, even if it is done for purposes of experimentation or scientific research. Examples of bodily mutilation forbidden by the fifth commandment include sterilization, surgical methods of birth control, and sex change, which alters a person’s sexual identity (CCC 2295–2297).

**14. What does the fifth commandment command?**

The fifth commandment commands us to forgive our enemies, wish them well, and avoid war (CCC 2307–2308).

**15. What should he do who has injured another in the life of either the body or the soul?**

He who has injured another must not only confess his sin but also repair the harm by compensating his neighbor for the loss he has sustained, by retracting the errors he has taught, and by setting a good example.



## Anger, Hatred and Revenge



Fig. 3.5.3 Christ Driving the Merchants Out of the Temple

### 16. What is anger?

**Anger** is a strong feeling of displeasure, accompanied by a desire to punish the offender. Being unjustly angry with another person is always a sin against the fifth commandment. But when anger is justified, then it is not a sin. For example, Christ was justly angry at the money changers in the temple, because they had converted the temple, which was a house of prayer, into a den of thieves (Matt 21:13). So, he overturned their tables, made a scourge of little cords, and drove them all out (John 2:15).

**17. What is hatred?**

**Hatred** is a strong dislike for or ill will toward someone. It is like habitual anger because someone who hates someone sees nothing good in that person. It is not a sin to hate the evil qualities of others, but we must be careful *to hate only the sin and not the sinner*.

**18. What is revenge?**

**Revenge** is the desire to inflict excessive punishment on someone who has injured us, motivated by anger or hatred. It is a sin against the fifth commandment because it is unfair. It is not wrong to punish an offender, but the punishment must be justly proportionate to the offense. We must keep in mind that the purpose of punishment is not to inflict pain or injury but to correct the offender. If the punishment is excessive because it is vengeful, the offender will likely retaliate and reject the correction, thus defeating the purpose of the punishment.

## LESSON 6 THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT

**“Thou shalt not commit adultery.”**

### **1. What does the sixth commandment command?**

The sixth commandment commands us to be chaste and modest in act, in look, in behavior, and in speech. By the sixth commandment, husbands and wives are also commanded to be faithful to each other and to exercise the sexual act as an expression of love. A married person who makes love to his or her spouse purely for self-gratification and without love sins against the sixth commandment.

### **2. Is impurity a great sin?**

It is the gravest and most abominable sin in the sight of God and man; it lowers man to the condition of the brute. It drags him into many other sins and vices, and it provokes the most terrible chastisements from God both in this world and the next. Thus, God destroyed the ancient cities of Sodom and Gomorrah precisely because of their sins of impurity (Jude 1:7).



**Fig. 3.6.1 The Destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen 18 – 19)**

### 3. How are the sixth and ninth commandments related?

The sixth commandment commands us to be chaste and modest *exteriorly*, that is, in our actions, in our looks, and in our speech, but the ninth commandment commands us to be chaste and pure *interiorly*, that is, in mind and in the heart.

### 4. What does the sixth commandment forbid?

The sixth commandment forbids divorce, adultery, fornication, masturbation, sodomy, homosexual acts, the use of unnatural means of birth control, pornography, prostitution, rape, and any other form of immodesty in dress, speech, and actions.

**Divorce** is the act of breaking the marriage bond that binds husbands and wives together. This is a grave offense against the sixth commandment, even if it is recognized by civil law (CCC 2384–2385).

**Adultery** is the unfaithfulness of a married person who is having an affair (sex) with someone other than his or her spouse.

**Fornication** is a sexual union between an unmarried man and an unmarried woman. If one partner is married, then the sin is called adultery, not fornication. Heavy petting (without intercourse) may be regarded as a form of fornication. Likewise, the common practice of many people today who live together without being married or prior to being married is a case of fornication and, therefore, prohibited by the sixth commandment. Young men and women should wait until they are married before they sleep together. Women often do not realize that men respect them more when they show restraint and self-respect (CCC 2353).

**Masturbation** is the stimulation of the sexual organs in order to derive sexual pleasure. When performed deliberately, whether alone or with others, *it is always a mortal sin* (CCC 2352).



**Sodomy** is any sexual activity between two individuals that cannot naturally result in the generation of offspring. Sodomitic activities include anal or oral copulation, which cannot result in offspring. Such acts are unnatural and gravely immoral, even when performed within the context of marriage. Sexual activity between a person and a beast is called **bestiality** and is a gross form of sodomy.

**Homosexual acts** are sexual activities *between two people of the same sex*. Since these acts could not naturally result in offspring, they are also a special form of sodomy. Homosexual men are called *gays*, and homosexual women are called *lesbians*. Homosexual acts between gays or lesbians are grievously sinful because they are intrinsically disordered acts (CCC 2357).



Fig. 3.6.2 Some Emblems Used by Homosexuals

**The use of unnatural means of birth control** includes utilizing artificial devices, such as condoms, pills, or drugs, that are designed to prevent conception. This practice is unnatural because it frustrates the purpose of the sexual act by artificially blocking what the act would naturally accomplish without those devices, namely, the generation of offspring. Although not using an artificial device, an interrupted sex act, in which the penis is withdrawn from the vagina before ejaculation to prevent pregnancy, is also unnatural and condemned by the Bible (Gen 38:9–10). However, note that even natural methods of birth control (by abstinence or by the rhythm method) are immoral if used for purely selfish reasons and without justification (CCC 2368–2370).

**Prostitution** is the practice of engaging in sexual activity with someone for payment (CCC 2355).

**Rape** is a sexual act carried out forcibly or under threat of injury against a person's will or with a person who is incapable of giving valid consent because of immaturity, mental illness, intoxication, or deception (CCC 2356).

**Pornography** is the production of printed, audible, and/or visual materials (sound records, photos, videos, magazines, etc.) that explicitly display sexual organs or activities for the purpose of exciting sexual pleasure to third parties (readers, hearers, and viewers). All who promote pornography—the producers, the actors, the cameramen, the advertisers, the financiers, etc.—commit a grave sin against the sixth commandment (CCC 2354).

**Immodesty** in behavior, speech, or dress refers to any act, speech, or manner of dressing that leads to unlawful sexual pleasure. Immodest games, immodest stories, and immodest fashions, besides being forbidden by the sixth commandment, could also cause scandal when exposed to young people.

## 5. Are homosexual acts normal?

No, because they are *unnatural*. Saying that homosexual acts are unnatural does not mean that they do not happen in nature, but that they do not conform with *the intent that God has in nature*. “Male and female He created them,” the Bible says (Gen 1:27). This means that it is the Creator's will that a male should mate with a female, not a male with another male or a female with another female. The intent of the Creator in inventing sex was to preserve the species through the procreation of offspring, and this only happens in a relationship involving male and female. No offspring can result from the sexual activity of two males or two females. Therefore, homosexual acts do not conform to the order or intent of God in nature and are both unnatural and abnormal.

## 6. Are homosexual acts sinful?

Yes, homosexual acts are sins—mortal sins—because they are *intrinsically disordered acts*; that is, they violate the natural order established by God that sexual activity should only be between male and female and so that the procreation of offspring can be made possible. Some people have argued that homosexuality is natural and, therefore, not sinful because some lower animals have been observed to engage in so-called “homosexual” behavior. In many cases, however, the homosexual character of these animal acts is only apparent rather than real. Many animals do these for purely sexual gratification. And their behavior is not necessarily the pattern on which human behavior should be modeled. For example, brute animals frequently engage in sex without asking for the consent of the female. Should humans do the same? Of course not. Therefore, animal behavior should not be used as a model for human behavior, for brute animals do not know better. Unlike lower animals, human beings have a rational nature that can perceive and respect God’s will in nature. Unlike brute animals, we are aware that sex has a more noble purpose than purely sexual gratification, and that is the procreation of offspring. For human beings, therefore, to engage in sexual activity that does not naturally produce an offspring is an act against reason and our nature.

## 7. Are homosexual tendencies normal?

No. If homosexual acts are not normal, neither are homosexual tendencies. Some people say that homosexual tendencies could be normal for those who were born gay. However, there is no scientific proof yet that anyone is born gay or is gay “by nature.”

## 8. Are homosexual tendencies likewise sinful?

Yes, in the sense that they are *evil* and *objectively disordered*, that is, they are directed against an end intended by the Creator. As an adjective, the word “sinful” is not applied merely to acts that are sins, but to anything evil, such as sinful curiosity, sinful attire, etc.

## 9. Are homosexual tendencies sins?

No, homosexual tendencies are not sins, but this does not mean that homosexual tendencies are morally neutral and may be tolerated. An opposite analogy may help. The mere inclination to pray is not meritorious in itself because it is just a mere tendency. It is not meritorious until one actually prays. But, although the mere inclination to pray has no merit in itself, that does not mean that it has no value or is morally neutral. It is a tendency toward a good and worthy object (the love of God) and is, therefore, a *good* tendency that must be encouraged. Now consider an opposite tendency that is directed toward an evil object, such as a homosexual tendency. A homosexual tendency is not a sin because it is just a mere tendency and not an act. But it does not mean that a homosexual tendency is morally neutral. As a tendency or inclination, it is directed toward a wrong and evil object and is, therefore, an *evil* or sinful tendency and should be discouraged.

Habits are also tendencies. Good habits are called *virtues*, and bad habits are called *vices*. Vices are not sins, but as evil tendencies, they are sinful. If one acquires a bad habit or vice through repeated sinful acts, then one must *repent* of having acquired that bad habit and exert every effort to eliminate it. Likewise, chronic homosexual tendencies, if acquired from repeated homosexual acts, are a form of vice and must be discouraged. Members of the clergy who teach that homosexual tendencies may be tolerated or that one need not repent of homosexual tendencies just because these tendencies are not sins are severely mistaken and are guilty of pastoral malpractice.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> In 1986, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith wrote a letter to the bishops of the Catholic Church, *On the Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons*, and said, “Although the particular inclination of the homosexual person is not a sin, it is a more or less strong tendency ordered toward an intrinsic moral evil; and thus the inclination itself must be seen as an objective disorder” (PCHP, #3).



**10. What should our attitude be toward homosexuals?**

We should treat them with respect and compassion. Hate the sin (homosexual acts), but not the sinner. Even homosexuals are called to live a life of chastity and control their unnatural tendencies (CCC 2357–2359).

**11. What must we do to observe the sixth commandment?**

To observe the sixth commandment, we ought to pray often, be devoted to the Blessed Virgin, the Mother of Purity, meditate often on the passion of Jesus Christ, guard our senses, and frequent the sacraments with the proper dispositions. In addition, we must keep ourselves chaste by avoiding idleness, bad company, books, and magazines that glorify sex, pornographic videos and TV shows, indecent websites, dangerous conversations, and all other occasions of sin.

## LESSON 7 THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT

**“Thou shalt not steal.”**

### **1. What does the seventh commandment forbid?**

The seventh commandment, “Thou shalt not steal,” forbids all unjust taking and all unjust keeping of what belongs to another, as well as every other way of cheating our neighbor in his exterior or interior goods. The seventh commandment also forbids “human trafficking”<sup>16</sup> and any act or business dealings that treat people, particularly women and children, like marketable merchandise. The buying, selling, or trading of people leads to *slavery*, and it robs people not only of their external goods but also of their spiritual dignity and worth as human beings (CCC 2414).

### **2. What is meant by stealing?**

Stealing is taking another’s goods unjustly and against the owner’s will when the owner has every reason and right to be unwilling to be deprived of them. This is done in two ways: by theft and by robbery. **Theft** is committed by taking another’s goods secretly. **Robbery** is committed by taking another’s goods openly and, oftentimes, with violence.

### **3. Why is it forbidden to steal?**

Stealing is forbidden because stealing is an offense against justice and violates another person’s *right to property* (or the right to own what he or she has acquired through work, gift, or inheritance).

### **4. Are a person’s properties exclusively for himself alone?**

No, because the goods of this Earth are destined for the benefit of humanity. So, those who own properties over and above what they need also have a social responsibility to share their properties with others in great need (CCC 2404).

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<sup>16</sup> Human trafficking is the practice of coercing a person to provide labor and services or to engage in sex acts.



**Fig. 3.7.1 Boys Stealing Apples**

Question for discussion: When would stealing apples not be sinful?

**5. Are there cases when another's goods can be taken without sin?**

Yes, when the owner consents or when the owner unjustly refuses to share his goods with someone in extreme necessity. Since the goods of this Earth are destined to benefit humanity, a person in extreme need may take another's goods without sin, provided that he takes only so much as is absolutely necessary to relieve his pressing and extreme need (CCC 2408).

**6. Is it only through theft and robbery that another can be injured on his property?**

He can also be injured by fraud, usury, bribery, undue taxation, gambling, and any other act of injustice directed against his goods.

**7. How is fraud committed?**

Fraud is committed in trade by deceiving another by false weight, money, or goods; by falsifying writings and documents; by deceit in buying and selling or in contracts in general; as well as by refusing to pay what is just and agreed upon.

**8. How is usury committed?**

Usury is committed by charging excessive interest for money lent, thus taking unfair advantage of another's need or ignorance.

**9. How is bribery committed?**

Bribery is committed by offering or receiving money or other forms of inducement to obtain or grant a favor dishonestly or to lead another person to sin. This is committed, for example, by public officials who, in consideration for money received, allow any wrongdoing to go unpunished. Both the person who offered money and the one who received money unjustly are guilty of the sin of bribery. Giving alms to lead someone into heresy is also bribery.

**10. What is undue taxation?**

Undue taxation is the act of unjustly or unnecessarily collecting taxes from, but without a proportionate benefit to, the citizens.



**11. What is gambling, and why is it against the seventh commandment?**

Gambling is the act of playing a game of chance with money that one cannot afford to lose. Betting in a game of chance may sometimes be permitted if done merely to add fun to the game. However, this is dangerous if not controlled. Thus, betting large sums of money, especially money that is needed to support one's family, is sinful because it exposes the family to the risk of a great and unnecessary loss of financial support (CCC 2413).

**12. What other sorts of injustice may be committed with regard to another's goods?**

By unjustly causing another person to lose what he has; by not working as duty requires; by maliciously refusing to pay debts or defrauding laborers of their wages; by damaging property held in custody; by preventing another from making just gains; by aiding thieves; and by receiving, concealing, or buying stolen goods.

**13. Is it a grave sin to steal?**

It is a grave sin against justice when the matter is grave, for it is most important for the good of individuals, families, and society that each person's right to his property be respected.

**14. When is stolen matter grave?**

The stolen matter is grave when that which is taken is considerable (such as a man's day wage) or when a serious loss is inflicted on another by taking something that in itself is of little value (such as stealing a professor's eyeglasses or an old man's cane).

**15. What does the seventh commandment command?**

The seventh commandment commands us to respect not only the goods and properties of other people but also the integrity of all creation. Plants and animals are also destined to benefit humanity, so the seventh commandment also encourages us to care for them as their good stewards (CCC 2415–2418).

**16. What does the seventh commandment command employers and employees?**

The seventh commandment commands employees to do their work diligently in return for the payment they receive. Failure to do diligent work is a form of theft. Also, the seventh commandment commands employers to give their employees a fair or *just wage*. A fair or just wage is not merely one that complies with the law or one based merely on the market value of labor, but also one that provides the laborer with a dignified livelihood for himself and his family (CCC 2434).

**17. Is it enough for one who has sinned against the seventh commandment to confess his sin?**

It is not enough for one who has sinned against the seventh commandment merely to confess his sin; he must also do his best to restore what belongs to others and to repair the loss he has caused by his sin (CCC 2412).

**18. What is meant by repairing the losses caused?**

Repairing the losses caused refers to the compensation that must be made to another for the goods or profits lost owing to theft or other acts of injustice committed to his detriment.

**19. To whom must stolen property be returned?**

To him from whom it has been stolen; to his heirs, if he is dead; or, if this is really impossible, the value of it should be given to the poor or to some charity.

**20. What should one do if one finds something of great value?**

He should diligently seek the owner and faithfully return it to him.

## LESSON 8 THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT

**“Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.”**

### **1. What does the eighth commandment forbid?**

The eighth commandment, “Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor,” forbids false testimony in a court of justice, backbiting, detraction, calumny, flattery, rash judgment and suspicion, and every lying. It also forbids revealing or talking about the hidden faults or sins of others.



**Fig. 3.8.1 Revealing the Hidden Faults of Others by Gossiping is Sinful**

## 2. What is detraction or backbiting?

Detraction is revealing the hidden faults of another without sufficient reason (CCC 2477). It is also sometimes referred to as backbiting, which consists in speaking ill of someone behind his back. Detraction, or backbiting, is the secret staining of another person's good name. The bad habit of gossiping (also known as dishing or tattling), which consists in idle talk or rumor about other people's private affairs, could easily lead to detraction or backbiting and is, therefore, dangerous and must be avoided.

## 3. What is calumny?

Calumny is a sin that consists in maliciously attributing to another person faults and defects that he does not possess (CCC 2477).

## 4. What is slander?

Slander is the malicious act of attributing to another person an evil act that he did not commit.

## 5. What is flattery?

Flattery is a sin that consists in deceiving another by falsely praising him or others for the purpose of profiting thereby.

## 6. What is rash judgment or rash suspicion?

Rash judgment or rash suspicion is a sin that consists in judging or suspecting evil in others without sufficient basis. It is a sin because it robs our neighbor of his good name. Holy Scripture says, "Do not judge, that you may not be judged" (Matt 7:1).

## 7. What is a lie?

A lie is asserting as true what one believes to be false with the intention of deceiving (CCC 2482–2483). Lying is bearing false witness, and when done under oath, is called *perjury* (CCC 2476). Perjury is actually a double sin because it calls on God to bear witness to the lie. Therefore, it is a sin not only against the eighth commandment but also against the second commandment.



## 8. How many kinds of lies are there?

There are three kinds: the jocose lie, the officious lie, and the malicious lie.

A **jocose lie** is one that is told as a joke without causing injury to anyone.

An **officious lie** is a false statement made to save or benefit oneself or another without hurting anyone else.

A **malicious lie** is a false statement that hurts someone or his reputation. Perjury is a form of malicious lying done under oath.

## 9. Is it ever lawful to tell a lie?

No, it is never lawful to tell a lie, neither in a joke nor for one's own benefit or the benefit of another, because to lie is always a bad act in itself. To lie is to be a child of the devil, "for he (the devil) is a liar and the father of liars" (John 8:44).

## 10. Is spreading "fake news" a sin?

Yes, lying through social media, such as by spreading "fake news," to gain an advantage or advance a political agenda is a great evil because of the large number of people who are being misled by the false information (CCC 2493–2499).

## 11. What kind of sin is a lie?

A lie that is jocose or officious is a venial sin, but any lie, including a jocose lie, may be a mortal sin depending on the intentions of the speaker, the circumstances of time, place, and person affected by the lie, as well as the gravity and *nature* of the injury caused by the lie itself. For example, an injury done to one's good name could be more hurtful than an injury done to one's property (CCC 2484–2485).

**12. Is it always necessary to say all that you know?**

It is not always necessary to reveal all that you know, especially when the person who questions you has no right to know what he or she demands. We must always say the truth, only the truth, and nothing but the truth, but we do not always need to tell the whole truth to everyone, especially with regard to matters that have been entrusted to us confidentially (CCC 2491).

**13. Is it enough for someone who has sinned against the eighth commandment to confess his sin?**

It is not enough for someone who has sinned against the eighth commandment to confess his sin; he is also obliged to retract whatever he said when calumniating another and *to repair as far as he can* the harm he has done to another person's property, reputation, or good name (CCC 2487).

**14. What does the eighth commandment command us to do?**

The eighth commandment commands us to speak the truth at the proper time and place and, as far as we can, to put a good interpretation on the actions of our neighbor. Above all, the eighth commandment also commands us to bear witness *to the truth of our faith* (CCC 2472–2474).

## LESSON 9 THE NINTH COMMANDMENT

**“Thou shalt not covet another’s wife.”**

### 1. What does the ninth commandment forbid?

The ninth commandment, “Thou shalt not covet another’s wife,” expressly forbids every desire contrary to the fidelity that husband and wife vowed to observe when contracting marriage. It also forbids every thought or desire of anything that is prohibited by the sixth commandment.



**Fig. 3.9.1 Infidelity and Immodest Desires**

Thinking or desiring of having an affair with someone other than your spouse is against the ninth commandment.

### 2. Is impurity in thought or desire a great sin?

It is a grave and abominable sin in the sight of God and man because it lowers man to the condition of the brute. Christ said, “You have heard that it was said to them of old: *You shall not commit adultery*. But I say to you that whoever shall look on a woman to lust after her has already committed adultery with her in his heart” (Matt 5:27–28).

**3. Is every thought that comes into the mind that is against purity a sin?**

The thoughts that come into the mind against purity are not in and of themselves sins, but rather temptations and incentives to sin.

**4. When is an impure thought or desire a sin?**

Impure thoughts, even though they result in no bad deed, are sins when we willfully entertain them, consent to them, or expose ourselves to the proximate danger of consenting to them.

**5. Are the sexual thoughts, intentions, and desires of married couples toward each other sinful?**

No, the sexual thoughts, intentions, and desires of married couples toward each other are not sinful, *provided these are intended not merely for self-gratification but as an expression of love*. This is because married couples have a right to think and desire what they have a right to do. Now, married couples have a right to the enjoyment of their bodies as expressions of their mutual love for each other. Therefore, they also have the right to intend and desire the same sexual acts to increase or enhance their love. However, sexual thoughts, intentions, and desires of married couples toward persons other than their spouse, whether these are persons of the same or the opposite sex, are sinful and should be avoided.

**6. Are homosexual thoughts and desires sinful?**

Yes, because they are directed toward an end not intended by the Creator. Homosexual thoughts and desires, whether by single or married persons, are against the ninth commandment and are also sins against purity. Like unnatural tendencies, homosexual thoughts and desires can be controlled, and human beings ought to be masters rather than slaves of their passions.



**7. What must we avoid in order to keep our hearts pure?**

To keep our hearts pure, we must avoid idleness, bad company, the reading of bad books and magazines, watching indecent pictures, TV shows, and pornographic websites, engaging in dangerous conversations, and all other occasions of sin.

**8. What must we do to observe the ninth commandment?**

To observe the ninth commandment, we need to do pretty much the same things as those recommended for observing the sixth commandment: we ought to pray to God often; be devoted to the Blessed Virgin, the Mother of Purity; meditate on the passion of Jesus Christ; guard our senses; practice Christian mortification; and frequent the sacraments with the proper dispositions. Note, too, that the battle for purity is not merely an individual effort but requires the purification of the social climate (CCC 2525–2526).

## LESSON 10 THE TENTH COMMANDMENT

**“Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor’s goods.”**

### **1. What does the tenth commandment forbid?**

The tenth commandment, “Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor’s goods,” forbids the wish to deprive another of his goods and the wish to acquire goods by unjust means.

### **2. Why does God forbid the undue desire of another’s goods?**

God forbids the unregulated desire of another’s goods, because He wishes us to be just in thought and will and to hold ourselves completely aloof from unjust acts. A feeling of *envy* for the good fortune of others is dangerous and must be banished from the heart (CCC 2538–2540).

### **3. What does the tenth commandment command?**

The tenth commandment commands us to be satisfied with the state in which God has placed us and to bear poverty patiently. God rewards the poor in spirit, saying that the kingdom of Heaven is theirs. (Matt 5:3)

### **4. Is there a relationship between the tenth and seventh commandments?**

Yes. The seventh commandment requires our *exterior* acts to be respectful of the properties of others and not to steal them or damage them for no reason. The tenth commandment requires our *interior* acts (thoughts and desires) to be respectful of the properties of others. Thus, the *act* of stealing is against the seventh commandment. But the *thought* of stealing is against the tenth commandment.



**Fig. 3.10.1 The Tenth Commandment**

It is not forbidden to desire what other people have, but it is forbidden to desire or think of *depriving them* of what is theirs (CCC 2537).

### **5. How can a Christian be content in a state of poverty?**

A Christian can be content in a state of poverty by reflecting that our greatest good is a pure and peaceful conscience, that our true home is Heaven, and that Jesus Christ made Himself poor for our sake and has promised a special reward to those who bear poverty patiently (CCC 2544–2547).

## LESSON 11 THE PRECEPTS OF THE CHURCH

### 1. Besides the commandments of God, what else must we observe?

Besides the commandments of God, we must also observe the precepts of the Church.

### 2. Are we obliged to obey the Church?

Undoubtedly, we are obliged to obey the Church because Jesus Christ Himself commands us to do so: “He who hears you hears Me, and he who despises you despises Me, and he who despises Me despises Him Who sent Me” (Luke 10:16).

### 3. Is it a sin to transgress a precept of the Church?

To knowingly transgress a precept of the Church in grave matters is a mortal sin.

### 4. What are the precepts of the Church?

The precepts of the Church are the following (CCC 2042–2043):

1. To attend Mass on all Sundays and holy days of obligation
2. To confess our sins at least once a year
3. To receive Holy Communion during the Easter season
4. To keep all holy days of obligation holy
5. To fast and abstain on the days appointed

### NOTES

- **On the first precept:** This precept has been discussed in relation to the third commandment. For details, review Lesson 3 above.
- **On the second precept:** Although the second precept only requires going to confession once a year, it is good practice and highly recommended to go to confession *once a month*,



especially if you receive Holy Communion every Sunday or holy day of obligation. Also, make it a point to go to confession **as soon as possible** when you are conscious of having committed a mortal sin.

- **On the third precept:** In the U.S., the obligation to receive Holy Communion during the Easter season, sometimes called the “Easter duty,” can be fulfilled from the First Sunday of Lent until Trinity Sunday.
- **On the fourth precept:** Like the first precept, this one has been discussed in connection with the third commandment.
- **On the fifth precept:** This precept will be discussed more thoroughly in questions 6–9 below.
- Although not presented as a precept, the faithful also have the duty to provide for the material needs of the Church, each according to his abilities (CIC 222).

##### **5. Why does the Church have to make the first and fourth precepts when God has already given the third commandment?**

The third commandment only commands us to keep the Sabbath holy. But it is the Church that determines by its first precept that the Sabbath is to be observed on Sunday rather than Saturday. Also, it is the Church that determines the holy days of obligation, which must be observed like Sundays, and commands them to be kept holy by its fourth precept (CIC 1246 and CN 1246. 2). The best way to sanctify the Sabbath is by attending Holy Mass, avoiding unnecessary servile work and excessively long hours of recreation, and instead spending some time praying, reading the Bible or any spiritual book, studying the catechism, or performing a work of mercy (CIC 1247). See *Part 4, Lesson 7* for the Works of Mercy.

## 6. What does the law of abstinence forbid?

The law of abstinence forbids consuming meat from mammals and birds, but not eggs, butter, cheese, or meatless soups (such as chicken broth), although these are derived from meat. Veggies and, in general, seafood (fish, shrimp, etc.) are permitted (FAQ).



Fig. 3.11.1 An Example Dish During a Day of Abstinence

## 7. Who is required to abstain, and when is abstinence to be observed?

In the U.S., everyone ages 14 and up must abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday, Good Friday, and all Fridays of Lent, except when a solemnity falls on a Friday (CIC 1252). The Fridays outside the season of Lent are *days of penance* (CIC 1250), but not necessarily days of abstinence. Therefore, although abstinence from meat is a recommended form of penance even on Fridays outside Lent, one may instead pray the Rosary or do any corporal or spiritual work of mercy for penance (CIC 1253; PSPA 24–25). However, the requirement to do penance on all Fridays of the year, including those outside of Lent, is a precept of the Church, and failure to observe it without a grave reason is a grievous sin.

**8. What does the law of fasting command?**

The law of fasting requires all Catholics to have only one regular meal but allows two smaller meals that together do not equal one regular meal (FA).

**9. Who is required to fast, and when is fasting to be observed?**

In the U.S., everyone from age 18 to age 59 must fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday (CIC 1251 and CN 1253).

## Picture Credits and Sources

### **Fig. 3 The Holy Family**

Artist: Bartolomé Esteban Murillo (1617–1682)

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bartolomé\\_Esteban\\_Perez\\_Murillo\\_003.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bartolomé_Esteban_Perez_Murillo_003.jpg)

### **Fig. 3.0.1 Moses Carrying the Two Tables of Stone on Which the Ten Commandments Were Written (Deut 4:13)**

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Philippe\\_de\\_Champaigne\\_-\\_Moses\\_Presenting\\_the\\_Tablets\\_of\\_the\\_Law\\_-\\_c.\\_1648.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Philippe_de_Champaigne_-_Moses_Presenting_the_Tablets_of_the_Law_-_c._1648.jpg)

### **Fig. 3.0.2 Adam and Eve Expelled from Paradise**

Artist: Gustave Doré (1832–1883)

The original drawing is in black and white. I adjusted the colors.

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Adam\\_and\\_Eve\\_Driven\\_out\\_of\\_Eden.png](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Adam_and_Eve_Driven_out_of_Eden.png)

### **Fig. 3.1.1 Jeroboam's Idolatry (1 Kgs 12:25–33)**

Source: Providence Lithograph Co., 1904.

### **Fig. 3.1.2 The Ark of the Covenant**

Replica of the ark of the covenant in the Royal Arch Room of the George Washington Masonic National Memorial

Photo by Ben Schumin – own work, CC BY–SA 2.5,

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Royal\\_Arch\\_Room\\_Ark\\_replica\\_2.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Royal_Arch_Room_Ark_replica_2.jpg)

### **Fig. 3.1.3 Boy Praying Before a Statue of the Blessed Virgin**

The Pinterest button below the image indicates that the image may be shared.

[https://www.zazzle.com/vintage\\_little\\_boy\\_praying\\_to\\_blessed\\_virgin\\_mary\\_classic\\_round\\_sticker-217185410200771414?rf=238877146116362811&social=true&tc=pinterest](https://www.zazzle.com/vintage_little_boy_praying_to_blessed_virgin_mary_classic_round_sticker-217185410200771414?rf=238877146116362811&social=true&tc=pinterest)

### **Fig. 3.1.4 Incorrupt Body of St. Bernadette Soubirous**

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Bernadette\_Soubirous-sarcophagus.jpg: Original uploader was Roock at pl.wikipedia

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### **Fig. 3.2.1 Man Making an Oath**

Designed by Luis Molinero / Freepik

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### **Fig. 3.2.2 Herodias with the Head of St. John the Baptist**

Artist: Paul Delaroche (1797–1856)

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Herodias\\_with\\_the\\_Head\\_of\\_St.\\_John\\_the\\_Baptist\\_-\\_Paul\\_Delaroche\\_-\\_Wallraf-Richartz\\_Museum\\_-\\_Cologne\\_-\\_Germany\\_2017.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Herodias_with_the_Head_of_St._John_the_Baptist_-_Paul_Delaroche_-_Wallraf-Richartz_Museum_-_Cologne_-_Germany_2017.jpg)



**Fig. 3.3.1 People Going to Church on Sunday**

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Halonen\\_Going\\_to\\_church.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Halonen_Going_to_church.jpg)

**Fig. 3.4.1 Caring for Aging Parents**

Free photo from *Pixabay.com*.

<https://pixabay.com/illustrations/design-son-older-woman-mother-3062508/>

**Fig. 3.4.2 Mother Teaching Her Daughter to Pray**

Artist: Julius Schnorr van Carolsfeld (1794–1872)

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Mother\\_and\\_Daughter\\_in\\_Prayer\\_MET\\_DP804006.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Mother_and_Daughter_in_Prayer_MET_DP804006.jpg)

**Fig. 3.4.3 The Holy Family in Nazareth**

Artist: Rafael Flores (1832–1886)

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Rafael\\_Flores\\_-\\_The\\_Holy\\_Family\\_-\\_Google\\_Art\\_Project.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Rafael_Flores_-_The_Holy_Family_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg)

**Fig. 3.5.1 Killing an Innocent Person is Murder.**

Artist: Pietro Paolo Vasta (1736–1739)

A fresco in the cattedrale di Maria Santissima Annunziata, Acireale, Italy.

Photo found in many places on the internet. I cropped the photo to show only the relevant image.

<https://www.cwicmedia.com/blog/come-follow-me-lds-1-3-john-jude-part-2-new-testament>

**Fig. 3.5.2 A Millstone Hanged About the Neck**

An illustration in a Portuguese catechism of 1910

<http://www.sendarium.com/p/catecismo-ilustrado-de-1910.html>, #41

**Fig. 3.5.3 Christ Driving the Merchants Out of the Temple**

Artist: Antoine-Jean-Baptiste Thomas (1791–1833)

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Le\\_Christ\\_chassant\\_les\\_marchands\\_du\\_temple\\_-\\_Thomas.JPG](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Le_Christ_chassant_les_marchands_du_temple_-_Thomas.JPG)

**Fig. 3.6.1 The Destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen 18–19)**

Artist: Jacob Jacobsz (1640–1697), circa 1680

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Sodom\\_and\\_Gomorrah\\_afire,\\_by\\_Jacob\\_Jacobsz.\\_de\\_Wet\\_d.\\_J.,\\_probably\\_Köln,\\_c.\\_1680,\\_oil\\_on\\_canvas\\_-\\_Hessisches\\_Landesmuseum\\_Darmstadt\\_-\\_Darmstadt,\\_Germany\\_-\\_DSC01149.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Sodom_and_Gomorrah_afire,_by_Jacob_Jacobsz._de_Wet_d._J.,_probably_Köln,_c._1680,_oil_on_canvas_-_Hessisches_Landesmuseum_Darmstadt_-_Darmstadt,_Germany_-_DSC01149.jpg)

**Fig. 3.6.2 Some Emblems Used by Homosexuals**

Free image from *Needpix.com*.

<https://www.needpix.com/photo/1011654/rainbow-homosexuality-before-marriage-same-sex-marriage-gay-gay-movement-wedding-homosexual>

**Fig. 3.7.1 Boys Stealing Apples**

Artist: Karl Witkowski (1860–1910)

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Karl\\_Witkowski\\_-\\_Stealing\\_Apples.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Karl_Witkowski_-_Stealing_Apples.jpg)

**Fig. 3.8.1 Revealing the Hidden Faults of Others by Gossiping is Sinful**

From a Vintage Greeting Card, posted by Isabel Santos Pilot, CC BY–NC–SA 2.0

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/22864665@N06/15932276017/in/pool-vintagegreetingcards/>

**Fig. 3.9.1 Infidelity and Immodest Desires**

Free Photo by Gerd Altmann from *Pixabay.com*

<https://pixabay.com/photos/woman-face-wall-view-eyes-228178/>

**Fig. 3.10.1 The Tenth Commandment**

An old picture found in many places on the internet without provenance.

<https://holyfamilyvancouver.ca/examination/>

**Fig. 3.11.1 An Example Dish During a Day of Abstinence**

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[https://unsplash.com/photos/mVZ\\_gjm\\_TOk](https://unsplash.com/photos/mVZ_gjm_TOk)

## *Part Four: Prayer and Christian Perfection*



**Fig. 4 Christ the Good Shepherd**  
Artist: Bartolomé Esteban Murillo (1617–1682)

## PART 4 - PRAYER AND CHRISTIAN PERFECTION

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## INTRODUCTION: *Christian Perfection*

### **1. What is treated of in the fourth part of this catechism?**

The fourth part of this catechism treats of Christian perfection and the means of attaining it. Christian perfection consists in *conformity to God's will* and *union with God through sanctifying grace*. This is chiefly attained by prayer, observing the commandments of God and of the Church, and receiving the sacraments.

### **2. Are there other means of attaining Christian perfection in addition to prayer, observing the commandments of God and of the Church, and receiving the sacraments?**

Yes. The other means of attaining Christian perfection, in addition to prayer, observing the commandments of God and of the Church, and receiving the sacraments, are the following:

1. Attendance at Holy Mass
2. The Practice of the Virtues
3. The Observance of the Beatitudes
4. The Performance of Works of Mercy and other religious practices
5. The Observance of the Evangelical Counsels

## LESSON 1 PRAYER IN GENERAL

### 1. What is prayer?

Prayer is the raising of our minds and hearts to God or the requesting of good things from God (CCC 2590).

### 2. Why do we pray?

We pray (1) to praise and adore God, (2) to thank Him for the blessings we have received from Him, (3) to beg forgiveness for our sins, and (4) to ask Him for favors for ourselves and for others (CCC 2626–2649).

### 3. How is prayer divided?

Prayer is divided into *vocal*, *meditative*, and *contemplative* prayer. Vocal prayer is one that uses words accompanied by the attention of the mind and devotion of the heart. Meditative prayer, or *meditation*, is one that engages mostly the powers of the mind, imagination, and reasoning in conversing with God. Contemplative prayer is one that engages mostly the heart to attain a loving union with God (CCC 2700–2724).

### 4. How else may prayer be divided?

Prayer may also be divided into *private* and *public* prayers. Private prayer is that which each person says individually for himself or for others. Public (or *communal*) prayer is that which is said together by the sacred ministers (pope, bishops, priests, and deacons) in the name of the Church or by the faithful at large. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is an example of public prayer. Prayer that is said in common and publicly by the faithful, in processions, pilgrimages, and in the church is also public prayer. The Holy Rosary is commonly said individually, in which case it is a private prayer. But if it is prayed in common by several people at home, in the church, or in a procession, then it also becomes a public prayer.



**Fig. 4.1.1 The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is an Example of Public Prayer**

**5. Which are the chief things we should ask of God?**

The chief things we should ask of God are His own glory, our eternal salvation, the virtues, and the means of obtaining them. It is poor practice to always ask God only for material favors but neglect to pray for our spiritual needs (CCC 2632–2633).

**6. Is it not also lawful to ask God for temporal goods?**

Yes, it is lawful to ask God for temporal goods, but always with the condition that they be in conformity with His holy will and not a hindrance to our salvation.

**7. For whom should we pray?**

We should pray for all. But first, for ourselves, then for our parents, siblings, relatives, friends, and enemies; for the conversion of sinners and of those outside the true Church; and for the poor souls in Purgatory. “Pray for one another,” says St. James, “for the continual prayer of a just man avails much” (Jas 5:16).

**8. If God knows all that is necessary for us, why should we pray?**

Although God knows all that is necessary for us, He still wills that we pray to Him so as to acknowledge Him as the Giver of every good gift, to attest our humble submission to Him, and to merit His favors for ourselves. Also, prayer is necessary if we want the Holy Spirit to help us advance in virtue (CCC 2744).

**9. Do we have a well-founded hope of obtaining, by means of prayer, the help and graces that we need?**

Yes, our hope of obtaining from God the graces that we need is founded on the promises of the Almighty, Merciful, and All-Faithful God and on the merits of Jesus Christ.

**10. If prayer is so powerful, how is it that so many times our prayers are not heard?**

Our prayers are always answered, but often not in the way that we expect, either because we ask for things that are not good for us or because we do not ask properly (CCC 2735–2737).

**11. In whose name should we ask God for the graces we stand in need of?**

We should ask God for the graces we stand in need of in the name of Jesus Christ, as He Himself has taught us and as is done by the Church, which always ends her prayers with these words: “Through Our Lord Jesus Christ.”

**12. Why should we beg the graces of God in the name of Jesus Christ?**

We should beg the graces of God in the name of Jesus Christ because He is our primary Mediator, and it is through Him alone that we can approach the throne of God. However, we may also pray to the Blessed Virgin and the saints as our secondary mediators since they also intercede for us through the merits of Our Lord Jesus Christ.



### 13. What dispositions are required in order to pray well?

The first and best disposition to render our prayers efficacious is to be in the state of grace, or, if we are not in that state, to desire to put ourselves in it. We should also pray with humility, confidence, recollection, confidence, perseverance, and resignation.

### 14. What is meant by praying with humility?

It means sincerely acknowledging our own unworthiness and powerlessness, as well as *observing a respectful posture*.



**Poor Praying Posture**



**Good Praying Posture**

**Fig. 4.1.2 Improper and Proper Praying Posture**

Note: The girl on the left is only showing us an example of poor praying posture. The picture does not represent that this is the way she prays in real life.

**15. What is meant by praying with confidence?**

It means that we should have a **firm hope** of being heard if it is for God's glory and our own true welfare. It is not good to pray while *doubting* God's generosity and goodness.

**16. What is meant by praying with recollection?**

It means remembering that we are speaking to God. Hence, we should pray with all respect and devotion, as far as possible, avoiding distractions, that is, thoughts not related to our prayers.

**17. Do distractions lessen the merit of prayer?**

Yes, when, due to our attachments, we ourselves bring them about or do not promptly drive them away. But if we do all we can to be attached only to God, then our distractions do not lessen the merit of our prayer and may even increase it (CCC 2729).

**18. What is required to pray with recollection?**

Before prayer, we should banish all occasions of distraction, and during prayer, we should reflect that we are in God's presence.

**19. What is meant by praying with perseverance?**

It means that we should not grow tired of praying if God does not immediately hear us, but that we should continue to pray with increased fervor (CCC 2742–2743).

**20. What is meant by praying with resignation?**

It means that we should conform our will to the will of God, even when our prayers are apparently not heard, because He knows better than we do what is necessary for our eternal salvation.

**21. Does God always hear prayers when they are well said?**

Yes, God always hears prayers when they are well said, but He answers them in the way most conducive to our eternal salvation and not always in the way we wish.

**22. What effects does prayer have on us?**

Prayer makes us recognize our dependence on God, the Supreme Lord. It makes us advance in virtue. It strengthens us against temptation. It comforts us in tribulation. It aids us in meeting our needs. And it obtains for us the grace of final perseverance.

**23. When should we especially pray?**

We should especially pray when in danger, in temptation, or at the hour of death. “Pray,” Christ said, “lest you enter into temptation” (Luke 22:40).

**24. How often should we pray?**

We should pray often, in the morning—before beginning the more important actions of the day—throughout the day and night. Saint Paul advised us: “Pray without ceasing” (1 Thes 5:17).

## LESSON 2 THE “OUR FATHER” (or the *Lord’s Prayer*)

### 1. Which is the most excellent of all vocal prayers?

The most excellent of all vocal prayers is that which Jesus Christ Himself taught us, that is to say, the *Our Father*.

### 2. Why is *Our Father* the most excellent of all prayers?

Because (1) Jesus Christ Himself composed and taught it to us; (2) it contains clearly and in a few words all we can hope for from God; and (3) it is the standard and model of all other prayers.

### 3. Is *Our Father* also the most efficacious of prayers?

Yes, it is also the most efficacious of prayers because it is the most acceptable to God since we pray in the words His Divine Son taught us.

### 4. Why was *Our Father* called the Lord’s Prayer?

*Our Father* is called the Lord’s Prayer precisely because Jesus Christ, Our Lord, taught it to us with His own lips.

### 5. How many petitions are there in the *Our Father*?

In the *Our Father*, there are seven petitions preceded by an introduction.

Our Father, who art in Heaven = (Introduction)

1. Hallowed be Thy name;
2. Thy kingdom come;
3. Thy will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven;
4. Give us this day our daily bread;
5. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us;
6. And lead us not into temptation;
7. But deliver us from evil. Amen.





**Fig. 4.2.1 Christ Teaching the Apostles How to Pray the “Our Father”**

**6. When beginning the Lord’s Prayer, why do we call Him our Father?**

We begin the Lord’s Prayer by calling God our Father, to foster confidence in His infinite goodness through the remembrance that we are His *adopted* children (CCC 2782).

**7. Is Heaven a place? Why do we say “Who art in Heaven” if God is everywhere?**

Heaven is not a place in space because it is not material. Heaven is where God exists in His glory. We say, “Our Father, who art in Heaven,” to raise our hearts to Heaven, that is, to where God manifests His presence and His glory in us (CCC 2802).

**8. For what do we pray when we say, “Hallowed be Thy name”?**

In the first petition, “Hallowed be Thy name,” we ask our Father that His name—first revealed to Moses and then in Jesus—may be sanctified and that He be known, loved, honored, and served by the whole world and by ourselves in particular (CCC 2807–2815).

**9. For what do we pray when we say, “Thy kingdom come”?**

In the second petition, “Thy kingdom come,” we ask the Father to reign in us by His *sanctifying grace*, by which He dwells in our souls as a king in His palace. Most of all, we hope through this prayer for His return and look forward to His second coming as King of our heavenly kingdom (CCC 2816–2821).

**10. For what do we pray when we say, “Thy will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven”?**

In the third petition, “Thy will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven,” we beg the grace to do the will of God in all things by obeying His commandments and following His inspirations as promptly as the angels and saints obey Him in Heaven. We also beg the grace to accept the will of God in good times and bad, so that His plan of salvation may be fulfilled in our lives (CCC 2822–2827).





**Fig. 4.2.2 Accepting God’s Will in Good Times and Bad**

# **11. For what do we pray when we say, “Give us this day our daily bread”?**

In the fourth petition, “Give us this day our daily bread,” we beg of God all that is daily necessary for soul and body. *For our soul*, we ask God for the sustenance of our spiritual life; that is, we pray to the Lord to give us His Body (in the Eucharist), of which we are in constant need. *For our body*, we ask for all that is necessary for the support of our temporal life (CCC 2828–2836).

We add the word “daily” because we ask only for what is necessary to live and not for an abundance of food and other goods of the Earth. It also signifies that we are not too solicitous regarding the future but that we only ask for what we need at present (CCC 2837).

**12. For what do we pray when we say, “And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us”?**

In the fifth petition, “And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us,” we ask God’s mercy to pardon us our sins as we pardon those who offend us. Recall the “Parable of the Unforgiving Servant” in Matt 18:23–35 (CCC 2838–2845).

**13. For what do we pray when we say, “And lead us not into temptation”?**

In the sixth petition, “And lead us not into temptation,” we ask God to deliver us from temptations either by not allowing us to be tempted or by giving us the grace not to be overcome by them. We also ask for the Spirit of discernment, so that we may distinguish between good and evil, and the grace of vigilance and final perseverance (CCC 2846–2849).

Temptations are an incitement to sin that comes from the devil, from the wicked, or from our own evil passions. However, although God himself does not tempt anyone (Jas 1:13), He sometimes does lead us into temptation—as when the Holy Spirit led Christ to the mountain to be tempted by the devil (Matt 4:1)—and allows us to be tempted so as to test our fidelity, increase our virtue, and augment our merits. Nevertheless, He never lets us be tempted beyond our strength (1 Cor 10:13).

It is not a sin to have temptations. However, it is a sin to consent to them or to voluntarily expose ourselves to the danger of consenting to them. To avoid temptation, we should avoid dangerous companions, dangerous drinks, games, movies, and TV shows; and



we should pray often and receive the sacraments frequently (especially the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Eucharist).

#### **14. For what do we pray when we say, “But deliver us from evil, Amen”?**

In the seventh petition, “But deliver us from evil,” we ask God to show forth our victory over Satan by freeing us from past, present, and future evil and from the greatest of all evils, which is sin, and from eternal damnation, which is its penalty (CCC 2850–2854).

We say, “Deliver us from evil,” and not from *all* evils, because we should not pray to be exempt from all the evils of this life, but only from those that are not good for our souls. Therefore, we beg liberation from evil in general, that is, from whatever God sees as bad for us.

It is lawful to beg liberation from some particular evil, such as sickness, poverty, etc., *but always in submission to the will of God*, who sometimes ordains a particular affliction for the good of our soul. Such evils sometimes help us to do penance for our sins, to practice virtue (especially patience), and above all, to imitate Jesus Christ in our sufferings so as to have a greater share in His glory.

To obtain the graces asked for in the *Our Father*, we must recite it without haste and with attention. We should say the *Our Father* every day and often, because every day we need God’s help.

The “Amen” at the end of *Our Father* means “So be it” or “Thus do I pray” (CCC 2856).

## LESSON 3 THE “HAIL MARY” (or the *Angelic Salutation*)

### 1. What prayer do we usually pray after the Our Father?

After the *Our Father*, we usually say the *Angelic Salutation*, that is, the “Hail Mary,” through which we have recourse to the Blessed Virgin.

### 2. Why is the “Hail Mary” called the *Angelic Salutation*?

The Hail Mary is called the *Angelic Salutation* because it begins with the salutation addressed by the angel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary.



**Fig. 4.3.1 The Angel Gabriel Appeared to Mary (The Annunciation)**

And the angel said to her: “*Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee.*” (Luke 1:28).

**3. Whose words are those of the “Hail Mary”?**

The words of the Hail Mary are partly the angel Gabriel’s, partly St. Elizabeth’s, and partly the Church’s.

**4. Which are the words of the angel Gabriel?**

The words of the angel Gabriel are the beginning words: “Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee.” (Luke 1:28)

**5. When did the angel say these words to Mary?**

The angel said these words to Mary when he went to announce to her, by command of Almighty God, that God the Son would become man and that she was to be His mother (CCC 2676).

**6. Why do we greet the Blessed Virgin with the very words of the angel?**

In greeting the Blessed Virgin with the words of the angel, we congratulate her by recalling to mind the singular privileges and gifts that God granted her in preference to all other creatures.

**7. Which are the words of St. Elizabeth?**

The words of St. Elizabeth are these: “Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb” (Luke 1:42).

**8. When was it that St. Elizabeth said these words?**

Inspired by God, St. Elizabeth said these words when, three months before she gave birth to St. John the Baptist, she was visited by the Blessed Virgin, who already had the Baby Jesus in her womb.

**9. What do we intend to say with these words?**

In saying the words of St. Elizabeth, we praise the Virgin Mary for being the happiest of all women, and we also bless her son, Jesus, for being the source of her great dignity as Mother of God.





**Fig. 4.3.2 Mary Visited Her Cousin Elizabeth (The Visitation)**

“And she (Elizabeth) cried out with a loud voice, and said: *Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb...* For behold, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in my ears, the infant in my womb leaped for joy” (Luke 1:42, 44)



**10. Whose words are the remaining words of the “Hail Mary”?**

The remaining words, which begin with “Holy Mary, Mother of God,” have been added and used by the Church since the 15<sup>th</sup> century, but they became official during the time of Pope St. Pius V (the year 1568).

**11. What do we ask for in the second half of the prayer, which starts with “Holy Mary, Mother of God...”?**

In the second half of the “Hail Mary,” we beg the Blessed Virgin to protect us with her prayers during this life and especially at the hour of death, when we shall have greater need of them (CCC 2677).

**12. Why do we say the “Hail Mary” rather than any other prayer after the “Our Father”?**

Because the Blessed Virgin is our most powerful advocate with Jesus Christ. After having said the prayer taught to us by Jesus Christ, we pray to the Blessed Virgin to obtain for us the graces we have requested therein.

**13. Why is the Blessed Virgin so powerful?**

The Blessed Virgin is so powerful because she is the mother of Our Lord Jesus Christ. As a good son, Our Lord listens to His mother.

**14. What do the saints teach us about devotion to Mary?**

Regarding devotion to Mary, the saints teach us that those who are truly devoted to her are loved and protected by her with a most tender mother’s love and that, with her help, they are sure to find Jesus and obtain salvation.

**15. What form of devotion to Mary does the Church recommend in a very special manner?**

The devotion to the Blessed Virgin that the Church especially recommends is the Holy Rosary. See Appendix, *The Holy Rosary*.

## LESSON 4 ATTENDANCE AT HOLY MASS

### THE ESSENCE OF THE MASS

**1. Should the Holy Eucharist be considered only as a sacrament?**

No, the Holy Eucharist, besides being a sacrament, is also the permanent Sacrifice of the New Law, which Jesus Christ left to His Church to be offered to God by the hands of His priests.

**2. What, in general, does a sacrifice consist in?**

In general, a sacrifice consists in the offering of some sensible thing to God and in some way destroying it to acknowledge His supreme dominion over us, to atone for our sins, or to thank Him for His favors. In Old Testament times, Jewish sacrifices were of two kinds: an *unbloody* sacrifice, which consisted of destroying food or drink (such as first fruits, wine, etc.), and a *bloody* sacrifice, which consisted of killing and burning a victim, usually an animal (such as an ox, a lamb, a dove, etc.). In New Testament times, that is, when Christ came, Our Lord sacrificed His own life by dying on the cross for the forgiveness of our sins.

**3. Is Christ's sacrifice on the cross the one and only sufficient sacrifice in the New Law or the New Testament?**

Yes, the sacrifice of Christ on the cross is the one and only sufficient sacrifice of the New Law, inasmuch as through it Our Lord fully satisfied divine justice, acquired all the merits necessary to save us, and, on His part, fully accomplished our redemption. However, He applies the merits of His bloody sacrifice to us through the means instituted by Him in the Church, among which is the Holy Mass.

#### **4. What is the Mass?**

The Mass, which re-enacts Christ's actions during His last supper with the Apostles, is not just a banquet or a meal. It is primarily a *sacrifice*, which is why it is sometimes referred to as the Sacrifice of the Mass or the Sacrifice of the Eucharist. It is essentially the offering of the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ on our altars under the appearances of bread and wine, as thanksgiving and praise to the Father and as a memorial to Christ and His Mystical Body, the Church (CCC 1359–1365). Since the Church, as the Mystical Body of Christ, unites with Christ's offering, the Mass is also called the Sacrifice of the Church (CCC 1368).

#### **5. Is not the Mass also called the Sacrifice of the New Law?**

Yes, the Mass—or the Sacrifice of the Eucharist—is also called the Sacrifice of the New Law because it is *substantially the same* as the sacrifice of Christ on the cross. The same Jesus Christ who offered Himself on the cross is He who offers Himself on our altars at the hands of the priests (CCC 1367).

#### **6. What difference and relation exists between the Sacrifice of the Mass and Christ's sacrifice on the cross?**

Between the Sacrifice of the Mass and Christ's sacrifice on the cross, there is this difference and relation: on the cross, Jesus Christ offered Himself by shedding His blood and meriting for us, whereas on our altars, His same sacrifice on the cross becomes present to us *in an unbloody manner*, so that we, without actually seeing the shedding of His blood, are able to join ourselves to it and thereby receive the fruits of His passion and death. The Mass *makes present* for us the bloody sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross in an unbloody manner because, by virtue of the words of consecration, only the body of our Savior is made present under the species of bread, and only His blood under the species of wine, although, by natural concomitance, both body and blood are present in the whole, living, and real Jesus Christ who exists under each species (CCC 1366).

## 7. For what purposes is the Mass offered?

The Mass is offered to God for four purposes: (1) to honor and praise Him properly; (2) *to thank Him* for His favors; (3) to appease Him and make due satisfaction for our sins and to help the souls in Purgatory; and (4) to obtain all the graces necessary for us (CCC 1359–1361).



Fig. 4.4.1 Priest Celebrating Holy Mass

## 8. Who offers the Sacrifice of the Mass to God?

The principal offeror of the Sacrifice of the Mass is Jesus Christ, while the priest is only the minister who, *in the person of Jesus Christ*, offers the same sacrifice to the Eternal Father (CCC 1348). Therefore, the priest at Mass is not merely a president in an assembly of believers but is an *alter Christus*, another Christ who offers His sacrifice on the cross to the Father and who alone transforms bread and wine into His Body and Blood.

## 9. Who instituted the Mass or the Sacrifice of the Eucharist?

Jesus Christ instituted the Mass during His last supper with the Apostles when He changed bread and wine into His Body and Blood and told His Apostles to do the same in memory of His passion (CCC 1341).



## 10. What is the present order of the Mass?

The present order of the Mass is as follows (CCC 1348–1355; GIRM 43):

### Introductory Rites

- Entrance (All stand.)
- Greeting
- Penitential Act (“I confess to Almighty God...”)
- Glory to God in the highest (omitted during Advent and Lent)
- Collect

### Liturgy of the Word

- First Reading (All sit.) The first and second readings are read by a lector.
- Responsorial Psalm
- Second Reading—on Sundays and solemnities.
- Gospel Acclamation (All stand at the *Alleluia*.)
- Gospel Reading—This may be done only by an ordained minister (GIRM 59)
- Homily (All sit.) The homily may be done only by an ordained minister (CIC 767.1)
- Profession of Faith (“I believe in God...”)—on Sundays, solemnities, and special occasions (All stand.)
- Universal Prayer

### Liturgy of the Eucharist

- Presentation of the Gifts and Preparation of the Altar (All sit.)
- Prayer over the Offerings
- Eucharistic Prayer
  - Preface (All stand)
  - Holy, Holy, Holy
  - First half of the prayer, including the consecration (All kneel.)
  - Mystery of faith
  - Second half of prayer
- The Lord’s Prayer or the “Our Father” (All stand.)
- Sign of Peace
- Lamb of God
- Communion (All kneel. You may sit or remain kneeling during the period of silence following Communion.)
- Prayer after Communion (All stand.)

### Concluding Rites

- Optional announcements
- Greeting and blessing
- Dismissal

**11. Is the present order of the Mass different from the old order, which is the so-called “Traditional Latin Mass”?**

The present order of the Mass, also called the *Novus Ordo* or the New Mass, is *essentially* the same and just as valid as the old Traditional Latin Mass (TLM), which was the Mass celebrated before Vatican II. However, the Church’s experience since 1969 shows that the *implementation* of the New Mass *allowed* several innovations that led to liturgical abuses and irreverent worship that made many well-meaning Catholics clamor for the return of the old order, or the Traditional Latin Mass. In addition, many prayers of the old Mass, which express specifically Catholic beliefs—such as prayers to the Virgin Mary, the saints, and the poor souls in Purgatory—and those that remind us of the horror of sin and the reality of hell—have been revised or deleted in the *Novus Ordo* to make the Mass more acceptable to Protestants and contemporary people. These changes did not make the New Mass invalid, but the people’s faith appears to have been weakened by them.

**12. Despite the abuses by some in the practice of the *Novus Ordo*, is it still possible to give God reverent worship in the New Mass?**

Absolutely! With the cooperation of the parish priest, it is possible to celebrate the *Novus Ordo* Mass reverently using both traditional and newer inspirational songs rather than loud pop music with crazy dancing. Likewise, the practice of kneeling and receiving Holy Communion on the tongue is still actually recommended by the Vatican and is compatible with both the *Novus Ordo* and the TLM.

**13. To whom is the Holy Mass offered?**

The Holy Mass is offered to God alone, but it may be celebrated in honor of the Blessed Virgin and the saints.

**14. Who shares in the fruits of the Mass?**

The entire Church shares in the fruits of the Mass, but more particularly the priest, those who assist at Mass, and those for whom the Mass is offered, both living and dead (CCC 1371).

## THE WAY TO ASSIST AT MASS

### 15. What is required in order to assist at Holy Mass well and profitably?

To assist at Holy Mass well and profitably, two things are necessary: (1) modesty of person and (2) devotion of heart.

**Modesty of person** consists especially in being modestly dressed, maintaining silence and recollection, and observing proper posture (kneeling, standing, sitting) at appropriate times during the Mass (CCC 1387).

**True devotion** is best practiced by doing the following: (1) unite our intention with that of the priest and offer the Holy Eucharist to God for the ends for which it was instituted; (2) accompany the priest in each prayer and action of the Mass; (3) meditate on the passion and death of Jesus Christ and heartily detest our sins, which have been the cause of them; and (4) go to Communion or at least make an *Act of Spiritual Communion* when one is unable to receive the Eucharist sacramentally (CCC 1388).

### 16. How do you say the *Act of Spiritual Communion*?

*“My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Blessed Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot now receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.”*

— *A prayer of Saint Alphonsus Liguori*

Note: Acts of adoration and thanksgiving should also be said after the *Act of Spiritual Communion*, just as if one had received Holy Communion sacramentally. It is not necessary to rush out of the church as soon as the priest has given the final blessing.

## VESTMENTS USED AT MASS

### 17. What vestments or apparel does the priest use when celebrating Holy Mass?

The priest uses the amice, alb, cincture, stole, and chasuble when celebrating Holy Mass.



Fig 4.4.2 Vestments for Holy Mass



The *amice* is a rectangular piece of white linen cloth that covers the priest's shoulders and hangs both in front and on the back. However, it is only required to be used when the alb does not cover the priest's shirt or clothing.

The *alb* is the white tunic that covers the priest's whole body. Its use is required even when the priest is already wearing an external habit.

The *cincture*, or *girdle*, is a long rope-like cord that ties the alb and the stole at the waist. It symbolizes the virtue of chastity.

The *stole* is the long silk band (about 4 inches wide) that goes around the neck and is crossed on the breast of the priest. It is a symbol of priestly authority and is, therefore, used only by deacons, priests, and bishops when performing a religious function, such as celebrating the Sacrifice of the Mass, administering the sacraments, or blessing sacramentals. However, its use is not required for the validity of the sacraments; for example, the absolution given by a priest who is not wearing a stole is still valid.

- A deacon wears the stole like a sash, the vestment resting on the left shoulder, passing across the breast, and ending at the right side.
- A priest wears the stole around the back of the neck and across the shoulders, where the two halves either cross each other on the breast or are simply allowed to fall straight down.
- A bishop wears the stole in the same way as the priest, but never crosses the stole in front.

The *chasuble* is the outermost vestment worn by the priest at Mass. It hangs from the shoulders in front and at the back. It symbolizes the “seamless garment” worn by Christ.

## 18. Why does the priest use different colors of chasuble at Mass, and what do these colors mean?

At Mass, the priest uses different vestment colors to reflect the spirit of the feast or the season of the liturgical year in which the Mass is celebrated. For example, white is used in the glorious feasts of Our Lord (Christmas, Easter, etc.), the Virgin Mary, and the saints; purple is used during Advent, Lent, and days of penance, such as the Triduum; red is used for Pentecost (to signify the fire of love granted by the Holy Spirit) and on the feast of martyrs who shed their blood for the Faith; green is used at Ordinary Time; and black is used for All Souls Day and Masses for the Dead (GIRM 346).

## 19. What are the seasons of the liturgical year?

The liturgical year consists of the following seasons (LYC):

- Advent** – four weeks before Christ’s birth. Color: purple
- Christmas Time** – from Christmas Day to the Epiphany. Color: white
- Ordinary Time** – from Epiphany to Ash Wednesday. Color: green
- Lent** – six-week period of penance from Ash Wednesday to Easter. Color: purple.
- Paschal Triduum** – consisting of Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday (the holiest three days of the Church’s year). Color: purple.
- Easter** – from Easter Sunday to Pentecost (or the descent of the Holy Spirit). Color: white
- Ordinary Time** – from Pentecost to the first Sunday of Advent. Color: green

Note that Ordinary Time is celebrated in two parts, one after Epiphany and the other after Pentecost. Hence, there are actually only six seasons in the liturgical year: Advent, Christmas, Ordinary Time, Lent, the Paschal Triduum, and Easter.

## LESSON 5 THE PRACTICE OF THE VIRTUES

### VIRTUES AND VICES IN GENERAL

#### 1. What is a supernatural virtue?

A supernatural virtue is a quality infused by God into the soul by which the soul acquires the inclination, facility, and promptness to know good and do it toward eternal life. Virtue is a good habit or disposition of the soul and is called “supernatural” if it is infused by God and proceeds from a supernatural motive, such as the glory of God.

#### 2. How many principal virtues are there?

The principal virtues are seven: three theological virtues (faith, hope, and charity) and four cardinal virtues (prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance). The three theological virtues are supernatural virtues; the four cardinal virtues are natural virtues. These will all be treated in the next sections of this lesson.

#### 3. What is vice?

Vice is the opposite of virtue. It is a bad habit or evil disposition of the soul to shirk good and do evil, arising from the frequent repetition of evil acts.

#### 4. What difference is there between a sin and a vice?

Between sin and vice, there is this difference: sin is a passing act, whereas vice is a bad habit contracted by continually falling into some sin.

#### 5. Are there different kinds of vices?

There are seven capital vices: pride, covetousness, lust, anger, gluttony, envy, and sloth. These vices will be treated in another section after the virtues.

## THE THEOLOGICAL VIRTUES

### **6. What are the theological virtues?**

The theological virtues are faith, hope, and charity.

### **7. Why are faith, hope, and charity called theological virtues?**

Faith, hope, and charity are called theological virtues because they have God as their immediate and principal object and are *infused* by Him. “Infused” means that they are not acquired by our personal efforts but come directly from Him.

### **8. How can the theological virtues have God as their immediate object?**

The theological virtues have God as their immediate object in this way: by faith, we believe in God and believe all He has revealed; by hope, we hope to possess Him; and by charity, we love God, and in Him, we love our neighbor and ourselves.

### **9. When does God infuse theological virtues into the soul?**

God, in His goodness, infuses theological virtues into the soul when He gives us His sanctifying grace. Hence, when receiving Baptism, we were enriched with these virtues and, along with them, with the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

### **10. Is it enough toward salvation to have received the theological virtues in Baptism?**

For one who has come to the use of reason, it is not enough to have received the infused, theological virtues in Baptism. It is also necessary to perform frequent acts of faith, hope, and charity.

### **11. When are we obliged to perform acts of faith, hope, and charity?**

We are obliged to make acts of faith, hope, and charity when we come to the use of reason, often during life, and when in danger of death.





**Fig. 4.5.1 Painting of Faith, Hope and Charity**

## FAITH

### **12. What is faith?**

Faith is a supernatural virtue, which God infuses into our souls and by which, relying on the authority of God Himself, we believe everything that He has revealed and which, through His Church, He proposes for our belief.

### **13. How do we know the truths God has revealed?**

We know the revealed truths by means of the Church, which is infallible in teaching these truths; that is, by means of the pope, the successor of St. Peter, and by means of the bishops, the successors to the Apostles, who were taught by Jesus Christ Himself.

### **14. Are we certain of the truths the Church teaches us?**

We are most certain of the truths the Church teaches because Jesus Christ promised that He would send the Holy Spirit. “He, the Holy Spirit... will teach you all things” (John 14:26).

### **15. By what sin is faith lost?**

Faith is lost by denying or voluntarily doubting even a single article proposed for our belief.

### **16. How is lost faith recovered?**

Lost faith is recovered by repenting of the sin committed and by believing anew all that the Church believes.

### **17. Can we comprehend all the truths of faith?**

We cannot comprehend all the truths of faith, because some of these truths are *mysteries* that are beyond our ability to comprehend.

### **18. What are some examples of the mysteries of our faith?**

Some examples are the mystery of the Blessed Trinity (the plurality of Persons in God’s one nature) and the mystery of the Incarnation (the plurality of natures in the one Person of Christ).

**19. Why must we believe in the mysteries of our Faith?**

We must believe in the mysteries of our Faith because they are revealed to us by God, who, being infinite Truth and Goodness, can neither deceive nor be deceived.

**20. Are mysteries contrary to reason?**

Mysteries are above reason but not contrary to reason, and even reason itself persuades us to accept the mysteries.

**21. Why can't mysteries be contrary to reason?**

The mysteries cannot be contrary to reason, because the same God who has given us the light of reason has also revealed the mysteries, and He cannot contradict Himself.

## **HOPE**

**22. What is hope?**

Hope is a supernatural virtue, infused by God into the soul, by which we desire and expect the eternal life that God has promised to His servants, as well as the means necessary to attain it.

**23. What grounds do we have to hope that God will give us Heaven and the means necessary to secure it?**

We hope that God will give us Heaven and the necessary means to attain it because the all-merciful God, through the merits of Our Lord Jesus Christ, has promised it to those who faithfully serve Him, and, being both faithful and omnipotent, He never fails in His promises.

**24. What are the conditions necessary to obtain Heaven?**

The conditions necessary to obtain Heaven are the grace of God, the practice of good works, and perseverance until death in His holy love.

**25. How is hope lost?**

Hope is lost as often as faith is lost, and it is also lost through the sins of despair and presumption.

**26. How is lost hope regained?**

Lost hope is regained by repenting of the sin committed and by inspiring anew confidence in divine goodness.

## **CHARITY**

**27. What is charity?**

Charity is a supernatural virtue infused into our souls by God, by which we love Him above all for His own sake and our neighbor as ourselves for the love of God.

**28. Why should we love God?**

We should love God because He is the Supreme Good, infinitely Good, and Perfect; and also because He commands us to do so and because of the many benefits we receive from Him.

**29. How are we to love God?**

We are to love God above all else, with our whole hearts, with our whole minds, with our whole souls, and with all our strength.

**30. What is meant by loving God above all other things?**

To love God above all other things means to prefer Him to all creatures, even the dearest and most perfect, and to be willing to lose everything rather than offend Him or cease to love Him.

**31. What is meant by loving God with our whole heart?**

To love God with our whole heart means dedicating all our affections to Him.



**32. What is meant by loving God with our whole mind?**

To love God with our whole mind means directing all our thoughts to Him.

**33. What is meant by loving God with our whole soul?**

To love God with our whole soul means dedicating to Him the use of all the powers of our soul.

**34. What is meant by loving God with all our strength?**

To love God with all our strength means striving to grow ever more and more in His love and to act so that all our actions have as their one motive the love of Him and the desire to please Him.

**35. Why should we love our neighbor?**

We should love our neighbor for the love of God, because God commands it and because every man is made in God's image.

**36. Are we obliged to love even our enemies?**

We are obliged to love even our enemies because they are also our neighbors and because Jesus Christ has made this love the object of an express command.

**37. What is meant by loving our neighbor as ourselves?**

To love our neighbor as ourselves means to wish and do for him, as far as possible, the good that we ought to wish for ourselves and not to wish or do for him any evil.

**38. When do we love ourselves as we ought?**

We love ourselves as we ought when we endeavor to serve God and place all our happiness in Him.

**39. How is charity lost?**

Charity is lost by mortal sin, but it is regained by making acts of love for God, by duly repenting, and by making a good confession.

## THE CARDINAL VIRTUES

### **40. Are there other virtues besides the theological virtues?**

Yes, and they are called *moral* virtues. Unlike theological virtues, which are infused by God, moral virtues are acquired through practice. The theological virtues perfect our faculties to attain God supernaturally, but the moral virtues perfect our will, our appetites, and our exterior actions. The chief moral virtues are prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance, and these are called *cardinal* virtues.

### **41. Why are prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance called cardinal virtues?**

Prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance are called cardinal virtues because all the other moral virtues are founded upon and hinge around them. In Latin, *cardo* means hinge.

### **42. What is prudence?**

Prudence is the virtue that directs each action towards its lawful end and consequently seeks the proper means in order that the action be well accomplished from all points of view and thereby pleasing to Our Lord.

### **43. What is justice?**

Justice is the virtue that disposes us to give everyone what belongs to him.

### **44. What is fortitude?**

Fortitude is the virtue that renders us courageous to the point of not fearing danger, not even death, for the service of God.

### **45. What is temperance?**

Temperance disposes us to control the inordinate desires that please the senses and makes us use temporal goods with moderation.

## OTHER MORAL VIRTUES

### **46. What are some of the other moral virtues in addition to the cardinal virtues?**

Some of the other moral virtues are filial piety, patriotism, obedience, veracity, patience, and, most importantly, religion.

Filial piety disposes us to honor and love our parents; patriotism disposes us to honor and love our country; obedience disposes us to do the will of our superiors; veracity (or truthfulness) disposes us to tell the truth; patience disposes us to bear trials and difficulties; and the virtue of religion, the highest of the moral virtues, disposes us to give God the worship that is due Him.

There are other moral virtues not listed above, such as those that are opposed to the capital vices. See below.

## THE CAPITAL VICES

### **47. What are the capital vices?**

The vices called capital are seven: pride, anger, lust, envy, gluttony, avarice, and sloth. These vices are best remembered by the acronym PALE GAS.

**Pride** is the inordinate desire for our own excellence or esteem.

**Anger** is an inordinate desire for revenge.

**Lust** is an inordinate desire for the pleasures of the flesh.

**Envy** is the sadness at another's good, thinking that it reduces our own excellence.

**Gluttony** is an inordinate desire for food or drink.

**Avarice**, also known as covetousness, is an inordinate desire for riches.

**Sloth** is the laziness of the mind and heart to pursue good things.



**Fig. 4.5.2 Judas Sells Christ to the Jews**

In his covetousness, Judas Iscariot betrays and sells Christ to the Jews for thirty pieces of silver. See Matt 26:14–16.



#### 48. Why are these vices called capital?

They are called capital (from the Latin *caput*, which means head) because they are the head and fount of many other vices and sins. For example,

**Pride** leads to vain glory, disobedience, boasting, hypocrisy, ambition, contention, arrogance, obstinacy, contempt for others, discord, and the inordinate love of novelties.

**Anger** leads to hatred, blasphemy, name-calling, clamor (raising the voice), cursing, threats, quarrels, and murder.

**Lust** leads to impulsiveness, self-love, fornication, infidelity, adultery, and immodest looks, touches, thoughts, or desires.

**Envy** leads to detraction, backbiting, tale-bearing, rash judgment, hatred, joy at our neighbor's misfortunes, and grief at our neighbor's prosperity.

**Gluttony** leads to drunkenness, loss of self-control, dullness of mind, vulgarity, talkativeness, and violence.

**Avarice** (or covetousness) leads to usury, treachery, fraud, perjury, theft, hoarding, restlessness, and insensibility to mercy.

**Sloth** leads to negligence, lack of devotion, aversion to God and holy things, and wandering of the mind after unlawful things.

#### 49. What moral virtues are opposed to the capital vices?

The moral virtues opposed to the capital vices are *humility* (the opposite of pride), *meekness* (the opposite of anger), *chastity* (the opposite of lust), *brotherly love* (the opposite of envy), *temperance* (the opposite of gluttony), *liberality* (the opposite of avarice or covetousness), and *diligence* or *zeal* (the opposite of sloth). Ordinarily, one overcomes the capital vices through the practice of their opposite virtues.

## LESSON 6 OBSERVANCE OF THE BEATITUDES



**Fig. 4.6.1 Jesus Giving the Eight Beatitudes**

### **1. Did Christ propose anything more besides the practice of the virtues?**

Yes, he recommended the observance of the Beatitudes (from the Latin *beatitudo*, which means happiness or blessedness). The Beatitudes are the qualities that describe those who possess happiness in this life and in the life to come. By striving to have these qualities, we can hope to be happy in this life and the next.

### **2. What are the Beatitudes?**

The Beatitudes are the following (Matt 5:1–10):

1. Blessed (or happy) are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven;
2. Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the land;
3. Blessed are they who mourn, for they shall be comforted;
4. Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall have their fill;
5. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy;
6. Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God;
7. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God; and
8. Blessed are they who suffer persecution for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven.

### **3. Why did Jesus Christ propose the Beatitudes to us?**

Jesus Christ proposed the Beatitudes to us to make us detest the maxims of the world and to invite us to love and practice the maxims of the Gospel.

### **4. Who are they whom the world calls happy?**

The world calls happy those who abound in riches and honors, who lead a pleasant life, and who meet with no occasions of suffering.

**5. Who are the poor in spirit whom Jesus Christ calls happy?**

The poor in spirit are, according to the Gospel, those whose hearts are detached from riches; who make good use of riches should they have any; who do not seek them too eagerly if they have none; and who suffer the loss of such things with resignation when deprived of them.

**6. Who are the meek?**

The meek are those who act tenderly toward their neighbor, bear patiently with his defects, and accept the offenses and injuries they receive from him without contention, resentment, or vengeance.

**7. Who are they who mourn yet are called happy?**

They who mourn, yet are called happy, are those who suffer tribulations with resignation and who mourn over sins committed, over the evils and scandals that prevail in the world, over Paradise because it is so distant, and over the danger of losing it.

**8. Who are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness?**

They who hunger and thirst for righteousness are those who ardently desire to increase daily more and more in divine grace and in the exercise of good and virtuous works.

**9. Who are the merciful?**

The merciful are those who love their neighbor in God and for God's sake, who are compassionate toward his miseries, spiritual as well as corporal, and who endeavor to succor him according to their means and position.

**10. Who are the clean of heart?**

The clean of heart are those who retain no affection for sin and keep aloof from it, and who above all else avoid every sort of immodesty and impurity.



**11. Who are the peacemakers?**

The peacemakers are those who preserve peace with their neighbor and with themselves and who endeavor to bring about peace and concord between those who are at variance.

**12. Who are they who suffer persecution for righteousness' sake?**

They who suffer persecution for righteousness' sake are those who patiently bear derision, reproof, and persecution for the sake of the Faith and of the law of Jesus Christ.

**13. What do the various rewards promised by Jesus Christ in the Beatitudes denote?**

The various rewards promised by Jesus Christ in the Beatitudes all denote, under different names, the eternal glory of Paradise.

**14. Do the Beatitudes procure us only the glory of Paradise?**

The Beatitudes not only procure us the glory of Paradise but are also the means of leading a happy life, as far as this is possible here on Earth.

**15. Can those who follow the maxims of the world be called truly happy?**

No, because they have no true peace of soul and are in danger of being lost eternally.

## LESSON 7 THE WORKS OF MERCY AND OTHER RELIGIOUS PRACTICES

### 1. Besides attending Mass and receiving the sacraments, what else can we do to increase sanctifying grace and gain actual graces?

We can also increase sanctifying grace and gain actual graces by prayer, good works, and other religious practices.

### 2. What is prayer?

Prayer is speaking lovingly to God. This subject has already been discussed in previous lessons.

### 3. What is good work?

A good work is anything we do for the love of God, such as works of mercy.

### 4. What are the works of mercy?

There are two kinds: *corporal* and *spiritual* works of mercy. The corporal works of mercy are those that relieve our neighbor's material needs. The spiritual works of mercy are those that relieve our neighbor's spiritual needs (CCC 2447).

### 5. What are the corporal works of mercy?

The corporal works of mercy are these seven (CWM):

1. To feed the hungry
2. To give drink to the thirsty
3. To clothe the naked
4. To visit the imprisoned
5. To shelter the homeless
6. To visit the sick
7. To bury the dead



**Fig. 4.7.1 St. Francesca Romana Feeding the Hungry**

## **6. What are the spiritual works of mercy?**

The spiritual works of mercy are these seven (SWM):

1. To admonish the sinner
2. To teach the ignorant
3. To counsel the doubtful
4. To comfort the sorrowful
5. To bear wrongs patiently
6. To forgive all injuries
7. To pray for the living and the dead

## 7. Besides ordinary prayers and the works of mercy, what other practices may be observed to increase grace?

Besides ordinary prayers and the works of mercy, there are special religious *devotions* that may be practiced to increase grace. Devotions are **not** obligations but are practices recommended to increase grace and enhance our spiritual lives. Examples of these special devotions include the following:

1. The recitation of the Holy Rosary
2. Eucharistic Adoration (or Visits to the Blessed Sacrament)
3. The Stations of the Cross (or the Way of the Cross)
4. Novenas
5. Retreats
6. Processions

## 8. What is the Holy Rosary?

The *Holy Rosary* is a prayer consisting of a series of Hail Marys accompanied by a meditation on the life of Christ. It may be said privately or publicly. It is usually prayed silently or mentally when done privately, but is always prayed vocally when prayed with a group. The counting of the Hail Marys is aided by the use of beads that are strung together by a loop of thread or metal chain called a rosary. See the *Appendix to Part 4* for more on the Rosary.



**Fig. 4.7.2 A Rosary**



## 9. What is Eucharistic Adoration?

*Eucharistic Adoration* (sometimes referred to as *Visits to the Blessed Sacrament*) is the devotional practice of loving and adoring Jesus when the Sacred Host is exposed in the church or in a chapel. The Host is held on a stand called a monstrance. In most churches, the Blessed Sacrament is left exposed on the altar for some time after Mass so that the faithful can spend an hour or two with the Lord (RS 134–136). But in some churches or chapels, the Blessed Sacrament is exposed throughout the day and night for *perpetual adoration* by the faithful. The adorers in a community take turns visiting the Blessed Sacrament so that Our Lord is not left without company. Indeed, the Church forbids leaving the exposed Blessed Sacrament unattended, even for the shortest length of time (RS 138). The USCCB recommends that there always be at least two adorers when the Blessed Sacrament is exposed (PEBS).

For the common prayers used for the Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and Eucharistic Adoration, see the *Appendix to Part 4*. Note that the recitation of the Holy Rosary may also be made in front of the Blessed Sacrament (RS 137) because the Holy Rosary is actually not just about Mary but more about Jesus.

## 10. What are the Stations of the Cross?

The *Stations of the Cross*, also known as the *Via Crucis* or the *Way of the Cross*, is the devotional practice of meditating and praying on fourteen episodes depicting the passion of Christ from His condemnation to His burial. It is usually prayed during the Fridays of the year and during Holy Week. A short form of prayer for the *Stations of the Cross* may be found in the *Appendix to Part 4*.

## 11. What are novenas?

*Novenas* are devotions carried on for a period of *nine* days in order to honor God, the angels, or the saints, or to ask for special graces or favors. They are done privately at home or publicly in the church.

## 12. What are retreats?

*Retreats* are a series of spiritual exercises attended by a group of priests, nuns, or lay people whose purpose is to step back (or “retreat”) from the activities of day-to-day life in order to find time for reflection and union with God. Retreats are usually held in schools, churches, or retreat houses.

## 13. What are processions?

*Processions* are *public* forms of worship usually held (1) to celebrate important events in the life of Christ; (2) to give honor to Our Lord, the Virgin Mary, and the saints; (3) to commemorate particular doctrines of our faith; (4) to make reparation for public sins committed (such as when a church is vandalized or the Blessed Sacrament is desecrated); (5) to offer thanksgiving; or (6) to ask for special favors. In a procession, the bishop, priest, or other church leaders lead the faithful. The faithful, usually carrying lighted candles (if the procession is done at night), walk in an orderly manner while saying vocal prayers or chanting songs. Religious banners, flags, images, or statues (on vehicles or hand-carried) often leave the church, join the procession, and end back in the church.



**Fig. 4.7.3 A Procession in the City of Puy, France**

## LESSON 8 THE EVANGELICAL COUNSELS AND CHRISTIAN PERFECTION

### 1. What particular means has Jesus Christ recommended for attaining Christian perfection?

For attaining Christian perfection, Jesus Christ recommended the practice of the *evangelical counsels*: voluntary poverty, perpetual chastity, and perfect obedience (CCC 915).

*Voluntary poverty* is the renunciation of all material possessions for the love of God. *Perpetual chastity* is the renunciation of the right to marry, or it is the choice to remain a virgin for life. *Perfect obedience* is the complete subjection of one's will to that of a superior.

### 2. Why are they called evangelical counsels?

They are called “evangelical” because they are found in the Gospels. They are called “counsels” because they are an *invitation*, not a *command*. In other words, everyone is invited to observe them, but not everyone is obliged to keep them. God understands that not all can keep the evangelical counsels.

### 3. Then who is required to observe the evangelical counsels?

Only those who have bound themselves by vow to keep them, such as those in the *religious state*—the nuns, the sisters, and the brothers in various religious orders—are required to observe the evangelical counsels (CCC 1618).

### 4. What is the religious state?

The religious state is a permanent way of life by which the faithful, as members of a community or as individuals, bind themselves to observe the evangelical counsels by making vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience.

## 5. How do people in the religious state live a community life?

People who choose the religious state leave their families and live together with other religious in a convent, a monastery, or a priory.



Fig. 4.8.1 Dominican Sisters of Mary (Ann Arbor, Michigan)

## 6. Can people who live in the world also attain Christian perfection?

Yes, if they live not according to the spirit of the world but according to the spirit of Jesus Christ. In fact, many people in the world strive for Christian perfection simply by observing the commandments and practicing their faith. However, there are a few who, without actually entering the religious state, choose to become *lay members* of a particular religious order or institute. Instead of making solemn vows, lay members make simple *promises* and live their lives in accordance with the spirituality of the order with which they choose to associate. They do not live in a convent but in their own homes, and they also do not wear an external habit.



## **7. What is the difference between a lay member's promises and religious vows?**

The promises of a lay member of a religious order or institute are usually made *in accordance with his state in life as a secular person*. For example, his promise of poverty might mean that he would live a frugal life, but he does not necessarily renounce his right to own properties. He might promise to live a chaste life, but he does not renounce his right to marry and raise a family. He might also promise to obey the rules of the religious order or institute with which he is associated, but he does not totally renounce his will to the decisions of a superior. In other words, his promises are not as solemn as those of a religious vow. However, these promises are *serious*. In fact, once a lay member makes a promise, whether temporary or perpetual, he cannot be relieved of his obligations except by a dispensation from a major superior of the order to which he or she is associated. Still, some people choose to make these promises as lay members in order to live a fuller Christian life and benefit from the prayers and graces of the order they choose to join.

## **8. In what does sanctity or Christian perfection consist?**

Sanctity, or Christian perfection, consists in *conformity to God's will and union with God through sanctifying grace*. Although many saints are noted for performing miracles and marvelous deeds, the performance of miracles is not what constitutes sanctity or Christian perfection. A man may be granted the favor of performing miracles, but without sanctifying grace in his soul, he cannot be a saint or attain Christian perfection. On the other hand, there are those who have attained the summit of Christian perfection and have become saints without doing a single miracle in their lives. One example is St. Therese of the Child Jesus, also known as the "Little Flower of Jesus." She did not do anything marvelous in her life. In her doctrine, known as "The Little Way of Spiritual Childhood," she taught that one does not have to do any extraordinary deed to be a saint. All that is needed is for him to do his ordinary duties in life extraordinarily well.



**Fig. 4.8.2 St. Therese of the Child Jesus (1873–1897)**  
**Doctor of Confidence and Missionaries**

### **9. Does growth in Christian perfection happen in stages?**

Yes. Theologians speak of three stages in the spiritual life leading to Christian perfection. These are the *age of the beginner*, the *age of the proficient*, and the *age of the perfect*.

### **10. What characterizes the age of the beginner?**

In this stage, the beginner's prayer consists mostly of vocal and meditative prayers, in which the intellect and the imagination play a dominant role. The beginner avoids sin and exercises a lot of mortification to detach himself from worldly allurements and bodily pleasures. His aim is to liberate his soul from those things that attach him to the world and prevent him from attaining closer union with God. He might, at first, find success in his efforts because he sees himself praying more often and engaging more zealously in apostolic works. At the same time, however, he begins to develop some spiritual attachments to the sweetness and sensible consolation he receives in prayer and begins to develop a secret pride in the success of his apostolic works. Unfortunately, this attachment to the joys and sensible consolation he receives in prayer and the secret pride that lurks in his heart are also obstacles in his path to Christian perfection. God is a jealous lover. "The Lord your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God" (Deut 4:24). He wants to be loved, not for the sensible sweetness that He grants in prayers or the blessings of success that He gives to apostolic works, but for Himself alone. Unless the beginner gets rid of his spiritual attachments and secret pride, he cannot advance to the next stage of Christian perfection, which is the age of the proficient.

### **11. How, then, can a beginner advance to the next stage of Christian perfection, which is the age of the proficient?**

Generally, the beginner cannot, by himself alone, advance to the next stage of Christian perfection. God Himself has to purify him of his spiritual attachments and secret pride. St. John of the Cross calls this necessary purification the **night of the senses**. God performs this kind of purification by allowing temptations and misfortunes to fall on the beginner so that he may realize his weakness without God and that he may seek Him more purely and more ardently.



**Fig. 4.8.3 St. John of the Cross (1542–1591)**  
**Mystical Doctor**

There are three signs of this purification:

1. Instead of feeling sweetness in prayer and spiritual exercises, the beginner now gets a feeling of aridity and dryness in his soul. He no longer feels any comfort in his prayers, spiritual readings, and meditation. But his aridity is not the same as lukewarmness, because he remains ready and willing to serve God even more. Still, God allows this to happen to crush his spiritual “gluttony” so that he might seek Him more than the consolations that He gives him in prayers and meditations.
2. The beginner also suffers some failures and drawbacks in his apostolate. He begins to receive plenty of negative criticism, not only from strangers but also from his superiors, friends, and relatives. Again, God permits this to happen so that, seeing that his previous success was really more God’s work than his, he might realize his worthlessness without God.



3. Because of the absence of sensible consolation in prayer and the misfortunes that he meets in his apostolate, the beginner now suffers a painful anxiety that he is no longer praying well or serving God, although he strongly desires to do so. He now also finds it increasingly difficult to meditate and suffers a lot of distractions in prayer. Slowly, he finds it more and more comfortable to simply engage in a quiet prayer that consists in a restful contemplation of God's presence rather than the "noise" of mental meditations.

Theologians call the above phenomena "passive purifications" because the beginner does not actively bring them about on his own but is merely a passive recipient of God's work in his soul. But, coming out of this "night of the senses," he enters the age of the proficient as a more humble, more prayerful, wiser, and ever more zealous servant of God.

## **12. What characterizes the age of the proficient?**

In this stage, the proficient does not merely avoid sin but practices the virtues. His prayer has changed from being mostly vocal and meditative to simply contemplative. His conversations with God come mostly from his heart rather than his mind. They are more affective than mental. However, contemplative prayer is a *gift* from the Lord, and no one receives this grace without passing through the passive purifications mentioned by St. John of the Cross.

Theologians here distinguish two grades of contemplative prayer: the prayer of recollection and the prayer of quiet.

1. The *prayer of recollection* consists in a *union of the mind with God* and is characterized by perfect attention to God and an utter forgetfulness of everything else. With this prayer, the proficient acquires a superior knowledge of God's intimate life, which cannot be attained even with years of assiduous study and spiritual reading.

2. The *prayer of quiet* consists in a *union of the will with God*, which sets the heart afire with love and fills the soul with ineffable delights that, according to Saint Teresa of Avila, produce in the soul great peace, tranquility, and sweetness.



**Fig. 4.8.4 Santa Teresa de Jesus of Avila (1515–1582)**  
**Doctor of Prayer**

Notwithstanding the great advantages that the proficient receives in prayer, he is still far from the age of the perfect. He still has some imperfections to overcome. He may, for example, be eager to practice the virtues, but a subtle egoism makes him perform spiritual practices in a manner that is not sufficiently detached. His secret egoism and self-love bind him to the Earth and prevent his soul from flying to the heights of sanctity and entering the age of the perfect.

### 13. How, then, can the proficient enter the age of the perfect?

Like the beginner who aspires to enter the age of the proficient, the proficient cannot purify himself of his defects and enter the age of the perfect without the help of Almighty God. God Himself needs to give him additional passive purifications—or what Saint John of the Cross calls the **dark night of the soul**—to break the last thin cord that still binds him to the world. St. Therese of the Child Jesus, who went through this process, said that words cannot express the darkness into which the soul is plunged during this night of the soul. In this purification, she was severely tempted against faith. At other times, she felt completely abandoned. Tauler, another mystical writer, says that sometimes the Holy Spirit creates a void in the interior of the soul. Yet, it is precisely on this frightful night that the proficient realizes his nothingness before God, and his egoism is crushed. Coming out of this “night of the soul,” the proficient then enters the age of the perfect like a silkworm that escapes out of its cocoon as a beautiful butterfly.

### 14. What characterizes the age of the perfect?

The age of the perfect is the summit of Christian perfection. At this stage, the perfect now lives as though God lives in him. He walks with a constant consciousness of God’s presence. His proper mode of prayer now is *infused contemplation*, which God generously grants to souls who eagerly seek Him in a sweet and loving friendship. Here theologians again distinguish two grades of infused contemplative prayer: the prayer of simple union and the prayer of transforming union.

1. The *prayer of simple union* consists in the union of all the faculties with God. It is a certain contact with God that some mystical writers call a “kiss.” In this prayer, all the soul’s faculties are united to God and, in a true sense, held captive. In this prayer, the perfect—now called a “mystic”—experiences a brief sleep or ecstasy during which God leaves a deep impression in his soul that he cannot forget.

2. The *prayer of transforming union* is the kind of contemplative prayer that culminates in what is known as a “mystical marriage of the soul with God.” In this prayer, the soul is transformed—or “deified,” so to speak—in the sense that it mystically becomes one with God Himself. He lives more by the divine life in him than by his natural life. He knows and understands God better than any theologian, in the same way that a lover understands his beloved better than anyone else. It is an understanding that results not from years of studying but from love.

Both of these prayers are *infused* by God, which means that God Himself is the one who brings the perfect into these states of prayer.

**15. When a person reaches the age of the perfect, does he or she still perform the lower grades of contemplative prayer, such as the prayer of recollection and the prayer of quiet?**

Yes, the saints who have attained the age of the perfect still pray the lower grades of contemplative prayer. Oftentimes, they pray vocally and meditatively, too, which are the proper modes of prayer for beginners. In fact, the perfect in religious communities continue to pray and meditate with their brothers or sisters in the convent. They do not abandon their prayers, such as the Liturgy of the Hours or the Rosary, on the excuse that they have already advanced in the way of perfection. Strictly speaking, the state of contemplation only happens to those who have passed through the passive purifications mentioned by St. John of the Cross. They are not something that you can just acquire and practice by yourself without God’s help. It is God Himself who leads a person to that state, and the person will not be able to resist it when God calls him to that state of prayer. Those who abandon their traditional prayers and the practice of meditation thinking that, by their efforts alone, they can force themselves to engage in the more advanced forms of contemplative prayer are deluding themselves. Instead of becoming true mystics, they end up becoming “mistakes” or false mystics.



## Appendix to Part 4

# My Little Treasury of Catholic Prayers



**Fig. A4.0.1 The Immaculate Heart of Mary**

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## THE SIGN OF THE CROSS

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

## OUR FATHER

Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

## HAIL MARY



**Fig A4.1 The Immaculate Conception**

Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. Amen.



## GLORY BE TO THE FATHER



**Fig. A4.2 The Blessed Trinity in Glory**

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

## THE APOSTLE'S CREED

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth; and 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; on the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into Heaven, and was seated at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

## **THE NICENE CREED**

(Commonly prayed during Holy Mass)

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth, and of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through Him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation He came down from Heaven, and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man. For our sake, He was crucified under Pontius Pilate, He suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into Heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and His kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic, and Apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins, and I look to the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Source: <https://www.usccb.org/prayers/nicene-creed>.

## **ACT OF FAITH**

O my God, I firmly believe that You are one God in three Divine Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. I believe that Your Divine Son became man and died for our sins, and that He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe these and all the truths that the Holy Catholic Church teaches because You have revealed them, who can neither deceive nor be deceived. Amen.

## **ACT OF HOPE**

O my God, relying on Your almighty power, infinite mercy, and Your promises, I hope to obtain pardon for my sins, the help of Your grace, and life everlasting through the merits of Jesus Christ, my Lord and Redeemer.

## **ACT OF CHARITY**

O my God, because You are all good and worthy of all love, I love You above all things with my whole heart and soul, and for love of You, I love my neighbor as myself. I forgive all who have offended me and ask pardon of all whom I have offended.

## **ACT OF CONSECRATION TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY**

I choose thee this day, O Mary, in the presence of the whole court of Heaven, as my Mother and Queen. I give and consecrate to thee as thy slave, my body and my soul, my interior and exterior possessions, including the merits of all my past, present, and future good actions; allowing you to dispose of me and of all that belongs to me, without any exception whatsoever, according to thy good pleasure, for the greater glory of God, in time and in eternity. Amen. — *St. Louis de Montfort*

## MORNING OFFERING



**Fig. A4.3 Oh, Jesus! Our Friend, Be Thou  
Our Guide and Our Protector**

Lord Jesus, I give You my hands to do Your work. I give You my feet to go Your way. I give You my eyes to see as You see. I give You my tongue to speak Your words. I give You my mind to think as You think. I give You my spirit so that You may pray in me. I give You my self so that You may grow in me. So that it is You, Lord Jesus, who lives and works and prays in me.

Source: *Catholic Prayer Book*, ed. Jacquelyn Lindsey, Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor, 2003, p. 136.



I offer You, dear Jesus,  
Each action of today;  
My prayers, my work, my sufferings  
Accept them now, I pray.

I offer You, dear Jesus,  
The moments as they pass;  
I join with feeble heart's desire,  
With Yours in Holy Mass.

And while Your heart, dear Jesus,  
For sinners ever pleads,  
I offer You, through Mary,  
A decade of her beads.

And to Your own, dear Jesus,  
My poor heart closely bind,  
In love and reparation  
For sins of all mankind.

Take then my gift, dear Jesus,  
Take all I have to give;  
Oh, would that I could give my life,  
Within Your heart to live.

Source: Fr. Lawrence G. Lovasik, *Treasury of Prayer*,  
Catechetical Guild Educational Society, 1954, pp. 17–18

## NIGHT PRAYER



**Fig. A4.4 The Boy Samuel**

Jesus Christ, my God, I adore You and thank You for all the graces You have given me this day. I offer You my sleep and all the moments of this night, and I beg of You to keep me without sin.

*(Now make an examination of conscience, and say the Act of Contrition.)*

I put myself within Your sacred side and under the mantle of Our Lady, my Mother. Let Your holy angels stand about me and keep me in peace; and let Your blessing be upon me. Amen. – *St. Alphonsus Liguori*

(The instruction in italics has been added to the original text.)

O God, I love Thee for Thyself  
 And not that I may heaven gain,  
 Nor yet that they who love Thee not,  
 Must suffer hell's eternal pain.

Thou, O my Jesus! Thou didst me  
 Upon the cross embrace;  
 For me didst bear the nails and spear  
 And manifold disgrace.

And griefs and torments numberless,  
 And sweat of agony:  
 Even death itself—and all for one  
 Who was Thine enemy.

Then why, O dearest Jesus Christ,  
 Should I not love Thee well:  
 Not for the sake of winning Heaven,  
 Or of escaping hell;

Not with the hope of gaining aught,  
 Not seeking a reward;  
 But, as Thyself hast loved me,  
 O ever-loving Lord?

Even so I love Thee, and will love,  
 And in Thy praise will sing;  
 Solely because Thou art my God  
 And my eternal king.

— *St. Francis Xavier*

This prayer may also be used before Holy Communion.  
 Source: Fr. Lawrence G. Lovasik, *Treasury of Prayer*,  
 Catechetical Guild Educational Society, 1954, pp. 95–96.

## PRAYER TO THE CHILD JESUS



Fig. A4.5 The Infant of Prague

Teach me, teach me, dearest Jesus,  
In Thine own sweet loving way,  
All the lessons of perfection  
I must practice day by day.

Teach me *meekness*, dearest Jesus,  
Of Thine own the counterpart;  
Not in words and actions only,  
But the meekness of the heart.

(Continue next page.)



Teach *humility*, sweet Jesus,  
 To this poor proud heart of mine,  
 Which yet wishes, O my Jesus,  
 To be modeled after Thine.

Teach me *fervor*, dearest Jesus,  
 To comply with every grace,  
 So as never to look backwards,  
 Never slacken in the race.

Teach me *poverty*, sweet Jesus,  
 That my heart may never cling  
 To whatever love might sever it  
 From my Savior and my King.

Teach me *chastity*, sweet Jesus,  
 That my every day may see  
 Something added to the likeness  
 That my soul should bear to Thee.

Teach *obedience*, dearest Jesus,  
 Such as was Thy daily food  
 In Thy toilsome earthly journey  
 From the cradle to the rood.

Teach *Thy heart* to me, dear Jesus,  
 In my fervent final prayer;  
 For all beauties and perfections  
 Are in full perfection there.

Source: Fr. Lawrence G. Lovasik, *Treasury of Prayer*,  
 Catechetical Guild Educational Society, 1954, pp. 83–84

## **GRACE BEFORE MEALS**

Bless us, Oh Lord, and these Thy gifts, which we are about to receive from Thy bounty through Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

## **GRACE AFTER MEALS**

We give You thanks, Almighty Father, for all Your benefits, You who live and reign, world without end. Amen.

## **PRAYER BEFORE STUDY**

Come, Holy Spirit, Divine Creator, true source of light, and fountain of wisdom! Pour forth Your brilliance upon my dense intellect; dissipate the twofold darkness that covers me: that of sin and ignorance. Grant me a penetrating mind to understand, a retentive memory, method and ease in learning, the lucidity to comprehend, and abundant grace in expressing myself. Guide the beginning of my work, direct its progress, and bring it to a successful completion. This I ask through Jesus Christ, true God and true man, who lives and reigns with You and the Father, forever and ever. Amen. – *St. Thomas Aquinas*

## **PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT**

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of Your faithful, and kindle in them the fire of Your love.

V - Send forth Your Spirit, and they shall be created.

R - And You shall renew the face of the Earth.

LET US PRAY. O God, who has taught the hearts of the faithful by the light of the Holy Spirit, grant that, by the gift of the same Spirit, we may always be truly wise and ever rejoice in His consolation. Through Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

## PRAYER TO SAINT MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL



**Fig. A4.6 Saint Michael the Archangel**

Saint Michael, the Archangel, defend us in battle. Be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray, and do you, O Prince of the heavenly host, by the power of God, cast into hell Satan and all the evil spirits who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.

## PRAYER TO OUR GUARDIAN ANGEL<sup>17</sup>



**Fig. A4.7 A Guardian Angel Watching a Boy Sleeping by the River**

Angel of God, my guardian dear,  
to whom His love entrusts me here,  
enlighten and guard, rule and guide me.  
Amen.

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<sup>17</sup> With partial indulgence, from the 1999 *Manual of Indulgences*, Other Concessions, Grants #18



## HAIL, HOLY QUEEN



**Fig. A4.8 Our Lady with a Crown of Stars**

Hail, Holy Queen, Mother of Mercy! Hail, our life, our sweetness, and our hope. To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve. To thee do we send up our sighs, mourning, and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn then, most gracious Advocate, thine eyes of mercy toward us; and after this our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary. Amen

V - Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God.

R - That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

LET US PRAY. O God, whose only begotten Son, by His life, death, and resurrection, has purchased for us the rewards of eternal life, grant, we beseech Thee, that by meditating upon these mysteries of the Most Holy Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary, we may imitate what they contain and obtain what they promise, through the same Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

## THE ANGELUS



**Fig A4.9 The Annunciation**

V- The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary.

R- And she conceived of the Holy Spirit. *Hail Mary....*

V- Behold the handmaid of the Lord.

R- Be it done unto me according to thy word. *Hail Mary....*

V- And the Word was made flesh.

R- And dwelt among us. *Hail Mary....*

V- Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God.

R- That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

LET US PRAY. Pour forth, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy grace into our hearts; that we, to whom the incarnation of Christ, Thy Son, was made known by the message of an angel, may, by His passion and cross, be brought to the glory of His resurrection. Through the same Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

Note: Traditionally, the *Angelus* is said at 6 a.m., 12 noon, and 6 p.m.

## **PRAYER BEFORE CONFESSION**

O my God, I come before You to beg of You the grace to make a good confession. I wish to confess my sins and obtain forgiveness for them through the merits of Your most precious blood. From the bottom of my heart, I detest all my sins. I humbly beg You by the merits of Your precious blood and by the intercession of the Virgin Mary, Your most sorrowful mother, to forgive me my sins and to have mercy on me. Amen.

## **ACT OF CONTRITION**

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee, and I detest all my sins because I dread the loss of Heaven, and the pains of hell. But most of all because they offend Thee, my God, who art all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve, with the help of Thy grace, to confess my sins, to do penance and to amend my life. Amen.

## **PRAYER AFTER CONFESSION**

O almighty and most merciful God, I give You thanks with all the powers of my soul for this and all other mercies, graces, and blessings bestowed on me, and prostrating myself at Your sacred feet, I offer myself to be henceforth forever Yours. Let nothing in life or death ever separate me from You! I renounce with my whole soul all my treasons against You and all the abominations and sins of my past life. I renew my promises made in Baptism, and from this moment on, I dedicate myself eternally to Your love and service. Grant that for the time to come, I may detest sin more than death itself and avoid all such occasions and companies that have unhappily brought me to it. This I resolve to do with the aid of Your divine grace, without which I can do nothing. Amen.



## PRAYERS BEFORE HOLY COMMUNION



**Fig. A4.10 The Holy Eucharist**

“Lord, I am not worthy that You should enter under my roof.” The thought of my unworthiness makes me cry out, “Depart from me, O Lord, for I am a sinner,” but Your kind invitation to approach Your holy table encourages me and dispels all my fears. Come, take possession of a heart that wishes to belong to You alone. Jesus, come!

Let not the partaking of Your Body, Lord Jesus Christ, which I, though unworthy, dare to receive, turn against me for judgment and condemnation, but according to Your mercy, let it be profitable to me for the protection and healing of soul and body, who with God the Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, live and reign, God, world without end. Amen.

Give me my daily Bread,  
 O God, the Bread of strength!  
 For I have learnt to know  
 How weak I am at length.  
 As child I am so weak,  
 As child I must be fed;  
 Give me Your grace, O Lord,  
 Oh, be my daily Bread.

Give me my daily Bread,  
 In bitter days of grief.  
 I sought earth's poisoned feasts  
 For pleasure and relief;  
 I sought her deadly fruits,  
 But now, O God, instead,  
 I ask Your healing grace;  
 Oh, be my daily Bread.

Give me my daily Bread,  
 To cheer my fainting soul;  
 The Feast of comfort, Lord,  
 And peace to make me whole;  
 For I am sick of tears,  
 The useless tears I shed;  
 Now give me comfort, Lord,  
 Oh, be my daily Bread.

Give me my daily Bread,  
 The Bread of Angels, Lord,  
 For me, so many times,  
 Broken, betrayed, adored:  
 Your Body and Your Blood—  
 The Feast that You have spread.  
 O come—my life, my all—  
 To be my daily Bread!

Source: Fr. Lawrence G. Lovasik, *Treasury of Prayer*,  
 Catechetical Guild Educational Society, 1954, p. 108

## ACT OF SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there, and I unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen. – *St. Alphonsus Liguori*

## PRAYERS AFTER HOLY COMMUNION

### *Anima Christi*

Soul of Christ, sanctify me.  
 Body of Christ, save me.  
 Blood of Christ, inebriate me.  
 Water from the side of Christ, wash me.  
 Passion of Christ, strengthen me.  
 O good Jesus, hear me.  
 Within Thy wounds, hide me.  
 Suffer me not to be separated from Thee.  
 From the malicious enemy, defend me.  
 At the hour of my death, call me.  
 And close to Thee, bid me  
 That with Thy saints I may praise Thee  
 forever and ever. Amen.

What has passed our lips as food, O Lord, may we possess in purity of heart, that what is given to us in time be our healing for eternity. May Your Body, O Lord, which I have eaten, and Your Blood, which I have drunk, cleave to my very soul, and grant that no trace of sin be found in me, whom these pure and holy mysteries have renewed. You who live and reign, world without end. Amen.

Source: <https://www.catholic.org/prayers/prayer.php?p=42>

***En Ego, O bone et dulcissime Iesu***

Behold, O kind and most sweet Jesus, I cast myself upon my knees in Thy sight, and with the most fervent desire of my soul, I pray and beseech Thee that Thou wouldst impress upon my heart lively sentiments of faith, hope, and charity, with true contrition for my sins and a firm purpose of amendment; while with deep affection and grief of soul I ponder within myself and mentally contemplate Thy five wounds, having before my eyes the words which David the prophet put on Thy lips concerning Thee: “My hands and My feet they have pierced, they have numbered all My bones.”

Note: A plenary indulgence is gained during any Friday of Lent when this prayer is devoutly recited *before a crucifix* after Holy Communion (MI Grants 8.1.2).

## VISITS TO THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

Note: A plenary indulgence may be gained by visiting and adoring the Blessed Sacrament for at least a half hour (MI Grants 7.1.1).

A partial indulgence may be gained after a shorter visit and any approved prayer to Jesus is recited, such as *Adoro te devote*, the prayer *O sacrum convivium*, or the *Tantum ergo* (see below).

### ***O Sacrum Convivium***

*O sacrum convivium, in quo Christus sumitur, recolitur memoria passionis ejus, mens impletur gratia et futurae gloriae nobis pignus datur.*

English Translation: O sacred banquet, in which Christ is received, the memory of His Passion is renewed, the mind is filled with grace, and a pledge of future glory is given to us.



### *Adoro Te Devote*

Godhead here in hiding whom I do adore  
Masked by these bare shadows, shape and nothing more.  
See, Lord, at Thy service low lies here a heart  
Lost, all lost in wonder at the God Thou art.

Seeing, touching, tasting are in Thee deceived;  
How says trusty hearing? that shall be believed;  
What God's Son has told me, take for truth I do;  
Truth himself speaks truly or there's nothing true.

On the cross Thy godhead made no sign to men;  
Here Thy very manhood steals from human ken:  
Both are my confession, both are my belief,  
And I pray the prayer of the dying thief.

I am not like Thomas, wounds I cannot see,  
But I plainly call Thee Lord and God as he:  
This faith each day deeper be my holding of,  
Daily make me harder hope and dearer love.

O Thou, our reminder of the Crucified,  
Living Bread, the life of us for whom he died,  
Lend this life to me, then; feed and feast my mind,  
There be Thou the sweetness man was meant to find.

Like what tender tales tell of the Pelican,  
Bathe me, Jesus Lord, in what Thy bosom ran—  
Blood that but one drop of has the pow'r to win  
All the world forgiveness of its world of sin.

Jesus whom I look at shrouded here below,  
I beseech Thee, send me what I thirst for so,  
Some day to gaze on Thee face to face in light  
And be blest forever with Thy glory's sight. Amen.

— *St. Thomas Aquinas*

—

This English translation by Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844–1889)  
may be chanted in the tune of its Latin counterpart.

***Tantum Ergo (During the Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament)***



**Fig. A4.11 The Blessed Sacrament**

*Tantum ergo Sacramentum  
Veneremur cernui,  
Et antiquum documentum  
Novo cedat ritui;  
Praestet fides supplementum  
Sensuum deféctui.*

*Genitori, Genitoque  
Laus et jubilátio,  
Salus, honor, virtus quóque,  
Sit et benedíctio:  
Procedénti ab utróque  
Compar sit laudátio.  
Amen.*

Down in adoration falling  
Lo! the Sacred Host we hail;  
Lo! o'er ancient forms departing  
Newer rites of grace prevail;  
Faith for all defects supplying  
Where the feeble senses fail.

To the everlasting Father,  
And the Son who reigns on high,  
With the Holy Spirit proceeding  
Forth from each eternally,  
Be salvation, honor, blessing  
Might and endless majesty!  
Amen.

— *St. Thomas Aquinas*

(Continue next page.)

- V. You gave them Bread from Heaven,  
 R. Containing in itself all sweetness.

LET US PRAY. O God, who under this wonderful sacrament, has left us a memorial of Your passion, grant us, we beseech You, that we may so venerate the sacred mysteries of Your Body and Blood that we may ever feel within us the fruit of Your redemption. You who live and reign world without end. Amen.

Note: “Tantum Ergo” is usually prayed and sung in Latin. The English translation given on the right of the page is not a very literal translation, but it has been used for many years in churches because it could be sung with the same tune as its Latin original.

### **The Divine Praises**

Blessed be God.  
 Blessed be His Holy Name.  
 Blessed be Jesus Christ, true God and true Man.  
 Blessed be the Name of Jesus.  
 Blessed be His Most Sacred Heart.  
 Blessed be His Most Precious Blood.  
 Blessed be Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament of the altar.  
 Blessed be the great Mother of God, Mary most holy.  
 Blessed be her Holy and Immaculate Conception.  
 Blessed be her Glorious Assumption.  
 Blessed be the name of Mary, Virgin and Mother.  
 Blessed be St. Joseph, her most chaste spouse.  
 Blessed be God in His angels and in His saints.

## THE HOLY ROSARY



**Fig. A4.12 The Virgin Mary Giving the Rosary to St. Dominic**

Note: The Holy Rosary is a meditation on the life of Christ. The meditation is divided into several parts called “mysteries.” The original Rosary consisted only of the Joyful, Sorrowful, and Glorious Mysteries, with five mysteries in each set. In 2002, Pope John Paul II added another set of five optional mysteries, known as the Luminous Mysteries. Although not included in the original set of mysteries, the episodes contained in the Luminous Mysteries belong to the tradition of the Church and may be recited with devotion like all the other mysteries.



## THE MYSTERIES OF THE HOLY ROSARY

### Joyful Mysteries

1. The Annunciation
2. The Visitation of Mary to Elizabeth
3. The Birth of Jesus in Bethlehem of Judea
4. The Presentation of Jesus in the Temple
5. The Finding of Jesus in the Temple

### Intentions

Humility  
Fraternal charity  
Poverty of spirit  
Obedience  
Zeal for the Lord

### The Luminous Mysteries (optional)

1. Our Lord's Baptism in the Jordan
2. The Wedding at Cana
3. The Proclamation of the kingdom
4. The Transfiguration
5. The Institution of the Eucharist

Conversion of sinners  
Kindness  
Wisdom  
Piety and holiness  
Devotion to Jesus

### The Sorrowful Mysteries

1. The Agony of Jesus in the Garden
2. The Scourging of Jesus at the Pillar
3. The Crowning of Jesus with Thorns
4. The Carrying of the Cross
5. The Crucifixion and Death of Jesus

Sorrow for sin  
Spirit of penance  
Meekness  
Patience and fortitude  
Forgiveness of sins

### The Glorious Mysteries

1. The Resurrection of Jesus
2. The Ascension of Jesus into Heaven
3. The Descent of the Holy Spirit
4. The Assumption of Mary into Heaven
5. The Coronation of Our Lady in Heaven

Faith  
Hope  
Charity  
Purity of heart  
Confidence in Mary

Note: The intentions suggested for each mystery may be modified to suit each person's special needs.

## WHICH DAYS THE MYSTERIES ARE PRAYED

The **Joyful** Mysteries are prayed on Mondays and Thursdays, and on *Sundays of Advent until Lent*.

The **Sorrowful** Mysteries are prayed on Tuesdays and Fridays, and *Sundays in Lent*.

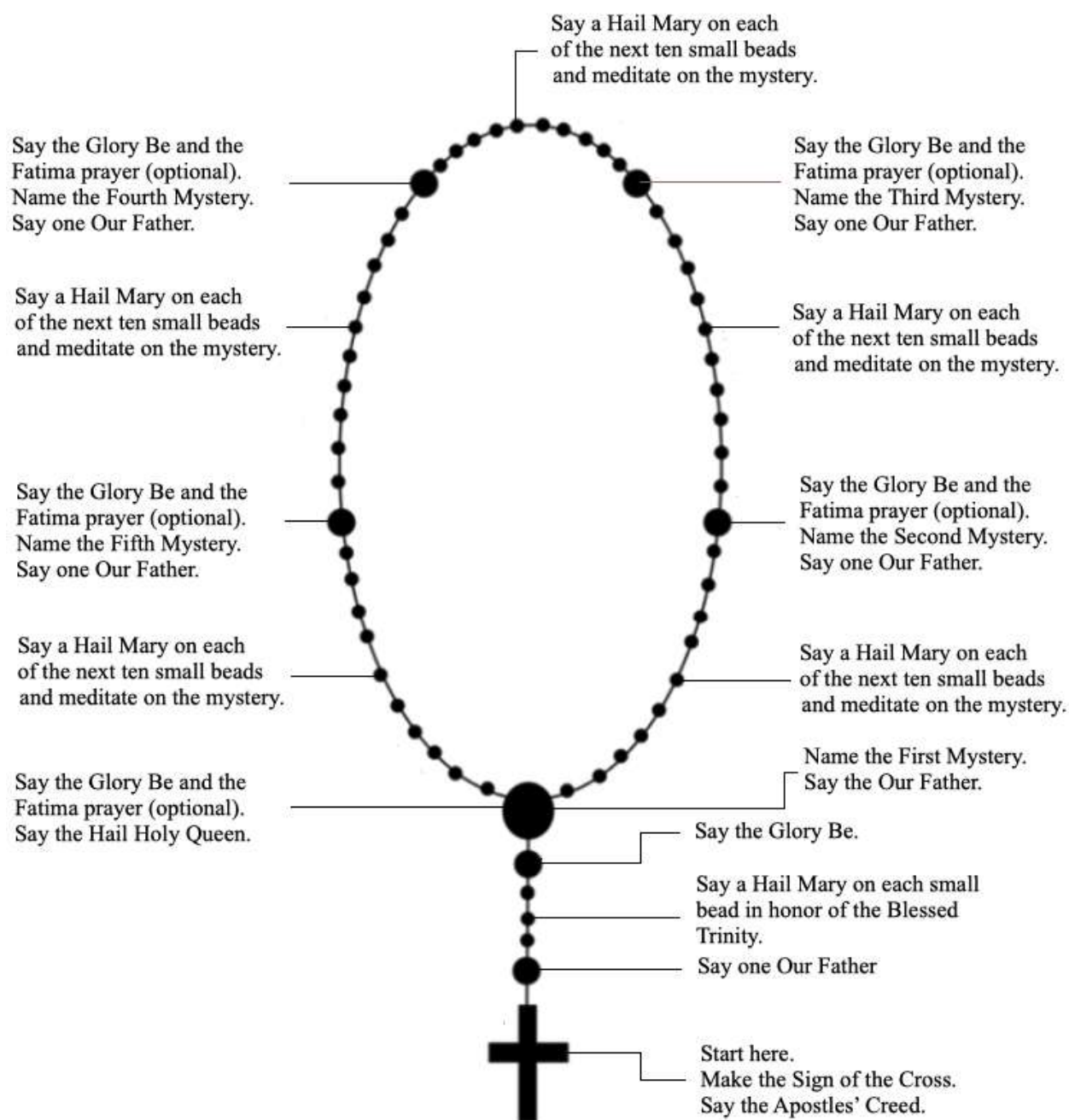
The **Glorious** Mysteries are prayed on Wednesdays and Saturdays, and on *Sundays after Easter until Advent*.

The **Luminous** Mysteries are optional and are prayed in the church when the congregation is praying them. They are usually prayed on Thursdays.

## HOW TO PRAY THE ROSARY (See the diagram on the next page.)

1. Start from the crucifix. While holding the crucifix, make the *Sign of the Cross* and then recite the *Apostles' Creed*.
2. Recite the *Our Father* on the medal.
3. On each of the three small beads, recite a *Hail Mary* in honor of the Blessed Trinity.
4. Recite the *Glory Be* on the next large bead.
5. Announce the first mystery and recite the *Our Father* on the medal.
6. On each of the next ten small beads (called a decade), recite a *Hail Mary* while meditating on the mystery.
7. On the next large bead, recite the *Glory Be*. The Fatima prayer (optional) may also be said. (See next page.)
8. Each succeeding decade is prayed in a similar way. Recite the *Our Father*, ten *Hail Marys* (while meditating on the mystery), the *Glory Be*, and the optional Fatima prayer.
9. When the fifth mystery is completed, the Rosary is concluded with the *Hail, Holy Queen*.

Note: A plenary indulgence is gained when at least five decades are prayed vocally, meditatively, and continuously in a church, or at home with the family or any group of people who have gathered together to pray the Rosary. Of course, all other conditions for gaining a plenary indulgence must also be fulfilled. (MI Grants 17.1.1)



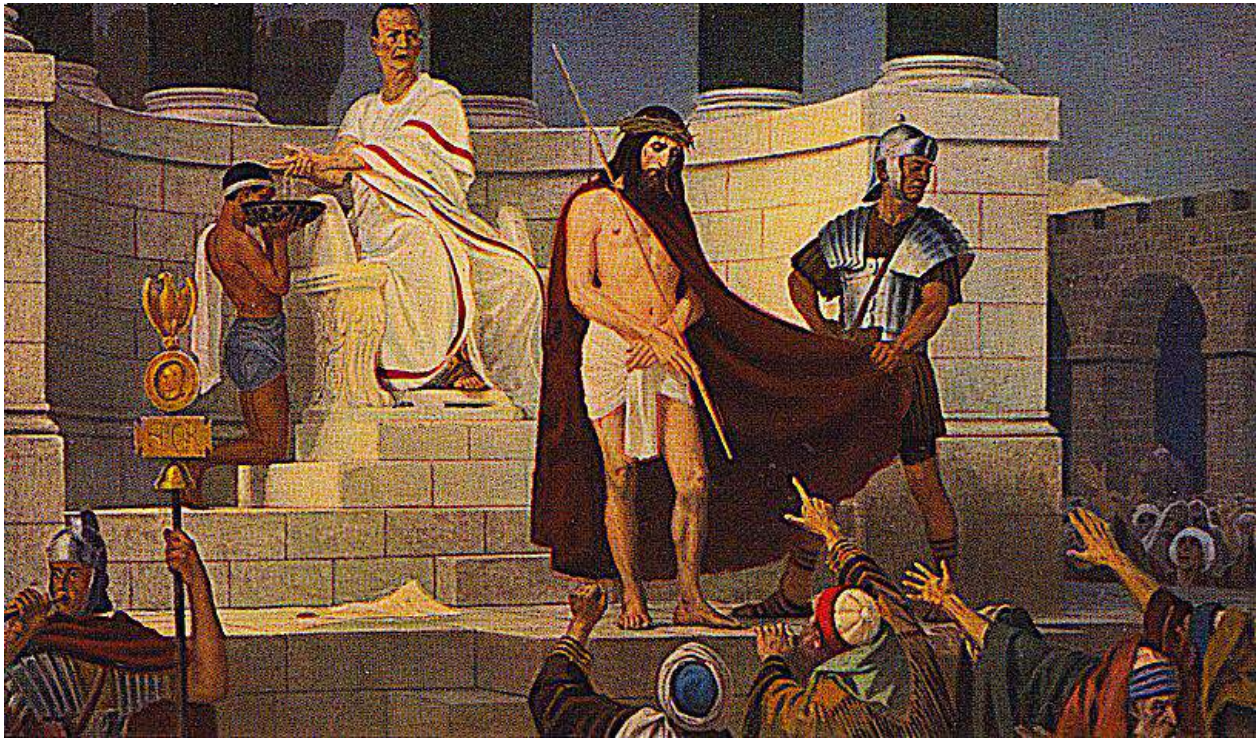
## The Fatima Prayer

O my Jesus, forgive us our sins; save us from the fires of hell; lead all souls to Heaven, especially those who are in most need of Your mercy.



# THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS

## FIRST STATION Jesus is Condemned to Death



**Fig. A4.13 Jesus is Condemned to Death**

### PRAYER

V. We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You;  
 R. Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.  
 (Genuflect at the word “because” and arise at “You have redeemed the world.”)

It was for our sins, O Jesus, that You were condemned to suffer. Grant that we may detest our sins and, by this repentance, obtain Your mercy and pardon.



## SECOND STATION

### Jesus is Burdened with the Cross

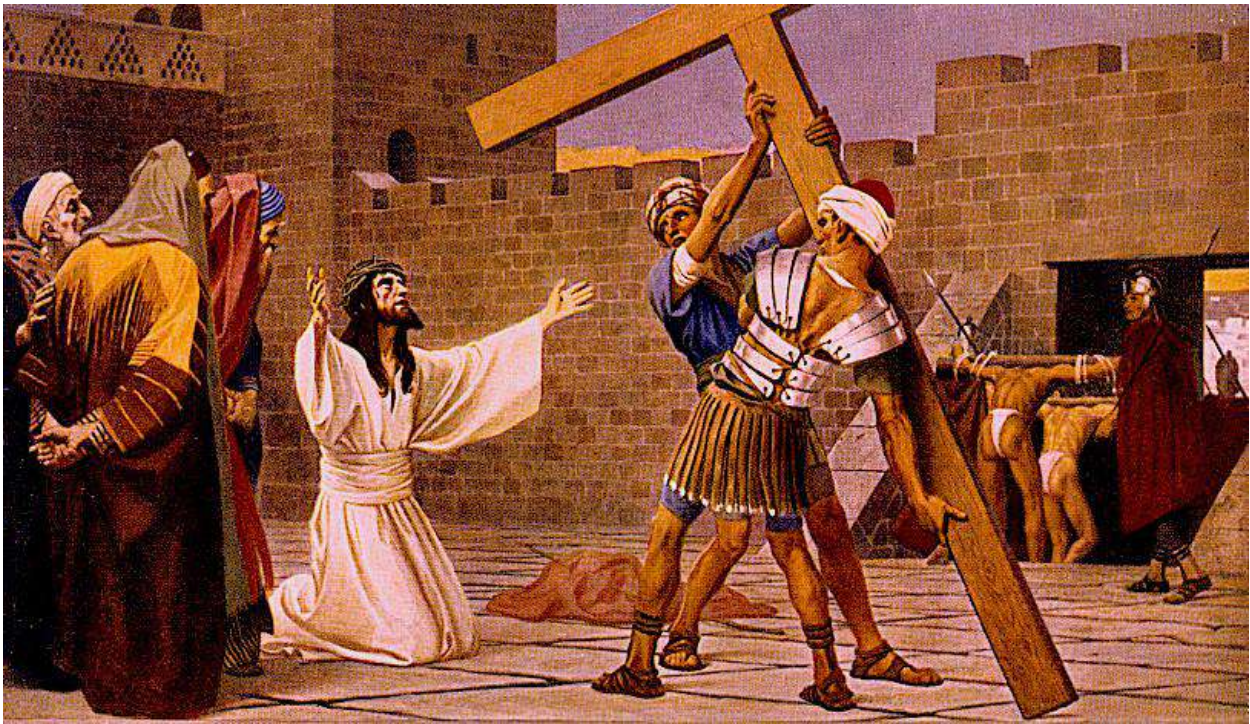


Fig. A4.14 Jesus is Burdened with the Cross

### PRAYER

V. We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You;

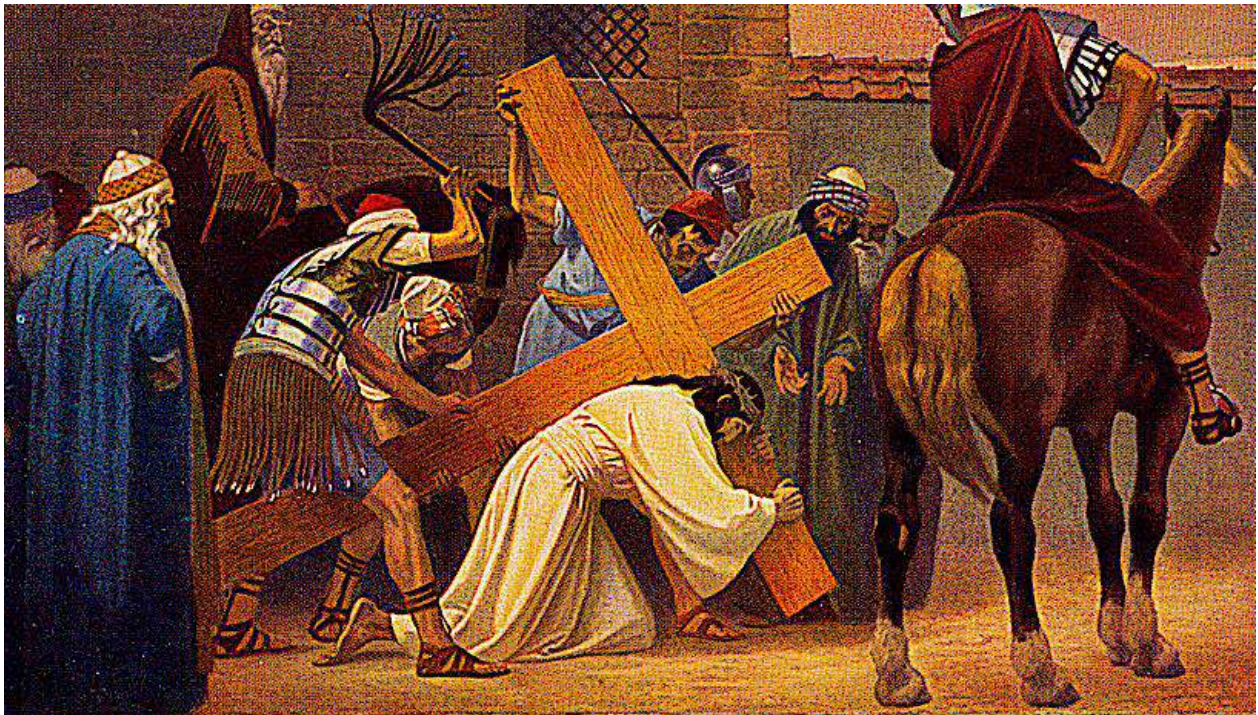
R. Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

(Genuflect at the word “because” and arise at “You have redeemed the world.”)

O Jesus, grant us, by virtue of Your cross, that we may accept the difficulties of our state with meekness and cheerful submission. May we always be ready to take up our cross and follow You.



### THIRD STATION Jesus Falls the First Time



**Fig. A4.15 Jesus Falls the First Time**

#### PRAYER

V. We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You;

R. Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

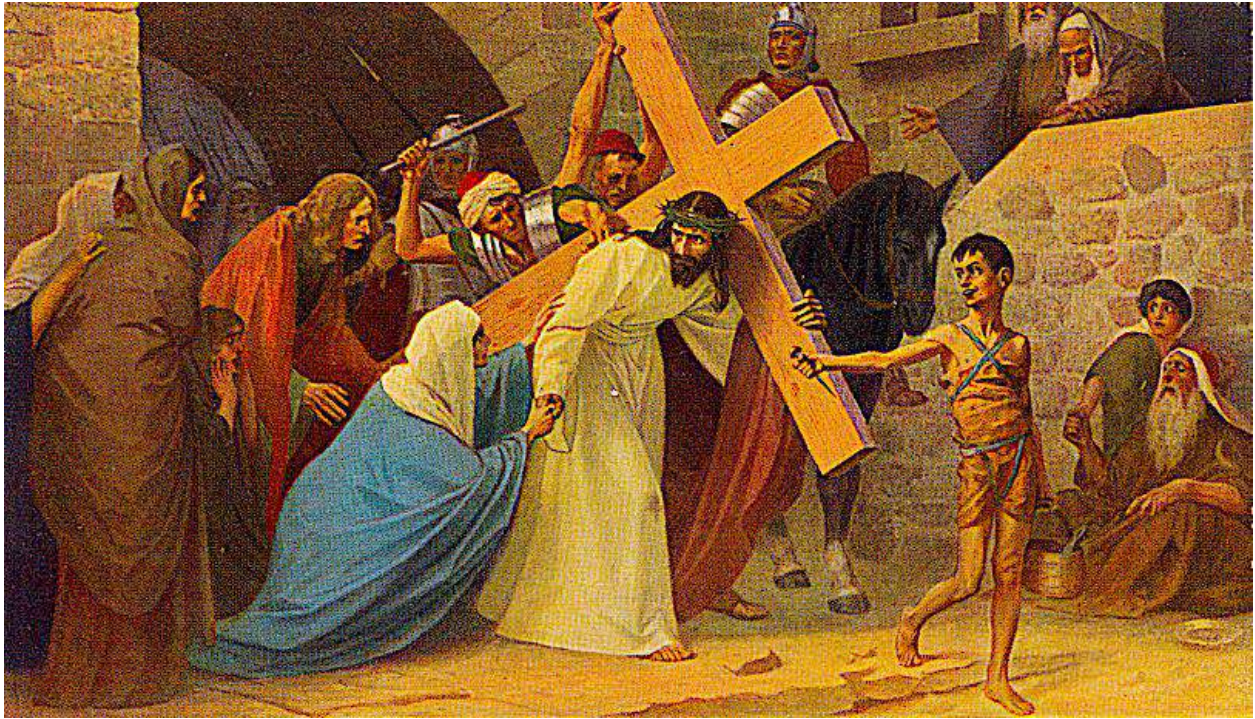
(Genuflect at the word “because” and arise at “You have redeemed the world.”)

O Jesus, it was for our sins that You bore the heavy burden of the cross and fell under its weight. May the thought of Your sufferings make us watchful over ourselves and save us from falling into sin.



## FOURTH STATION

### Jesus Meets His Sorrowful Mother



**Fig. A4.16 Jesus Meets His Sorrowful Mother**

V. We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You;

R. Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

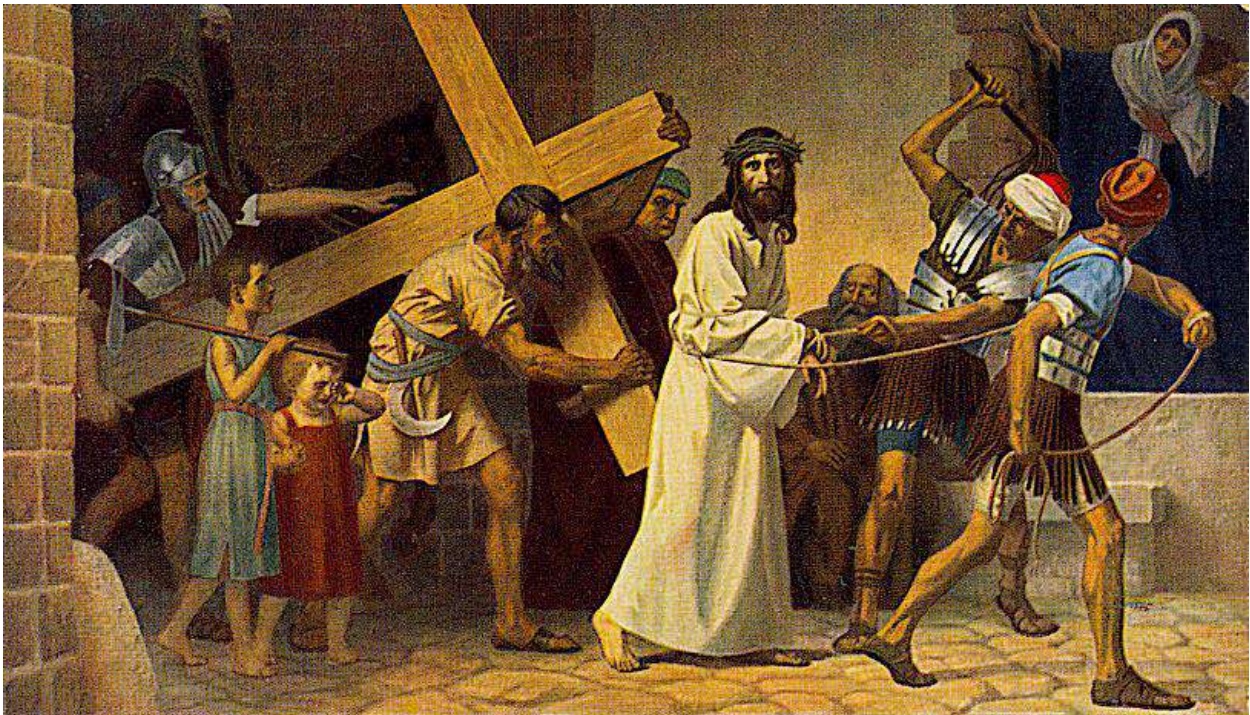
(Genuflect at the word “because” and arise at “You have redeemed the world.”)

O Jesus, by the compassion that You felt for Your mother, have compassion on us and give us a share in her intercession. Our most afflicted Mother, intercede for us, that through the sufferings of Your son, we may bear with courage the sorrows of this life.



## FIFTH STATION

### Simon of Cyrene Helps Jesus to Carry the Cross



**Fig. A4.17 Simon of Cyrene Helps to Carry the Cross**

V. We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You;

R. Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

(Genuflect at the word “because” and arise at “You have redeemed the world.”)

O Jesus, just as Simon relieved You of Your burden, inspire us also to console You by our prayers of reparation and love.



## SIXTH STATION

### Veronica Wipes the Face of Jesus



**Fig. A4.18 Veronica Wipes the Face of Jesus**

V. We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You;

R. Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

(Genuflect at the word “because” and arise at “You have redeemed the world.”)

O Jesus, may the contemplation of Your holy face enkindle in our hearts a more fervent love for You, and may Your image be imprinted on our minds and souls until we are transformed into Your likeness.



## SEVENTH STATION

### Jesus Falls a Second Time



**Fig. A4.19 Jesus Falls a Second Time**

V. We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You;

R. Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

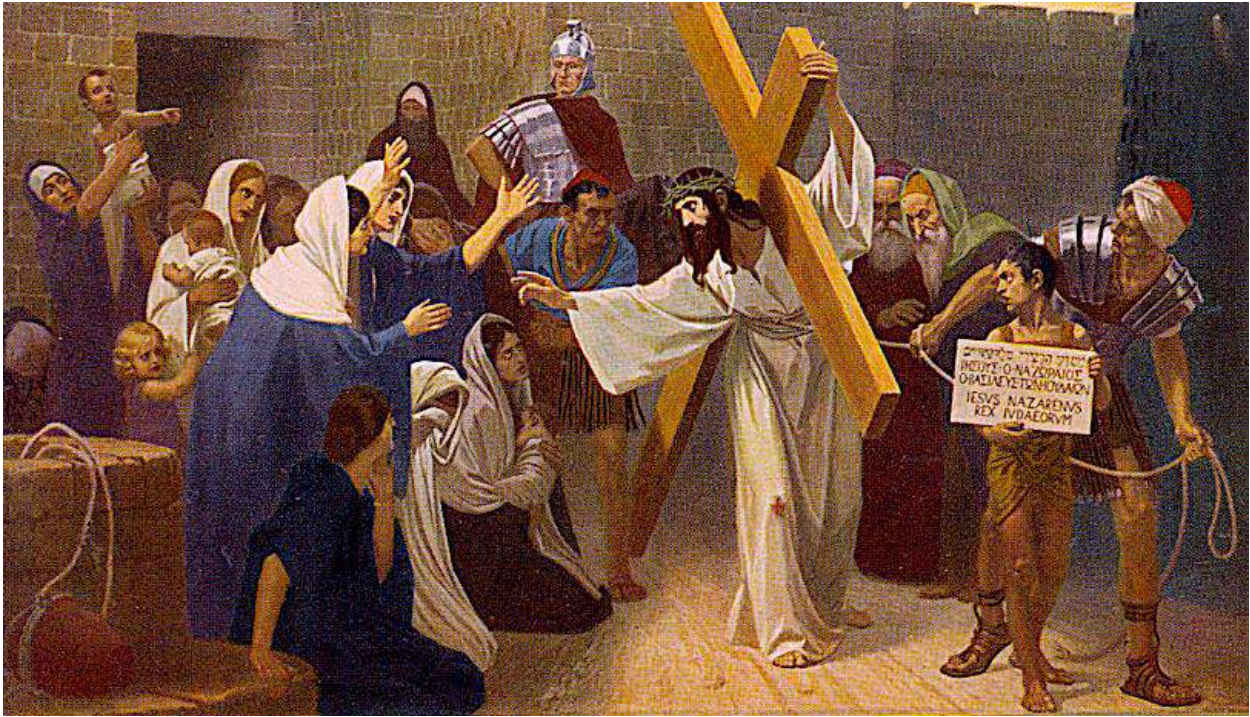
(Genuflect at the word “because” and arise at “You have redeemed the world.”)

O Jesus, our repeated falls into sin have added to the burden that You carried for our redemption. As You are weakened by the weight of our sins, we are the cause of this second fall. Please give us the strength never to offend You again.



## EIGHTH STATION

### Jesus Speaks to the Women of Jerusalem



**Fig. A4.20 Jesus Speaks to the Women of Jerusalem**

V. We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You;  
 R. Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.  
 (Genuflect at the word “because” and arise at “You have redeemed the world.”)

O Jesus, just as You instructed the women of Jerusalem, please instruct us in the ways of virtue and help us to escape the dreadful judgements prepared for all who reject or neglect You in this life.



## NINTH STATION

### Jesus Falls the Third Time



**Fig. A4.21 Jesus Falls the Third Time**

V. We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You;

R. Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

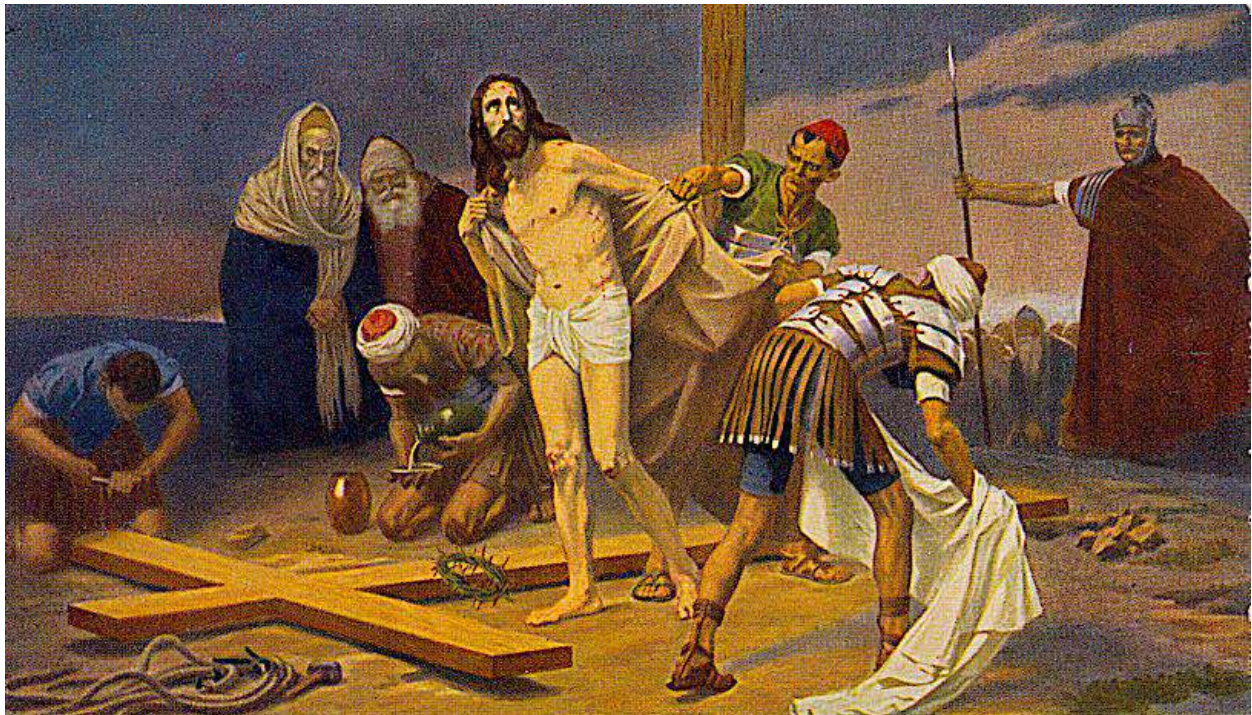
(Genuflect at the word “because” and arise at “You have redeemed the world.”)

O Lord Jesus! We entreat You, by the merits of this third most painful fall, to pardon our frequent relapses and our long continuance in sin. May the thought of Your sufferings grieve us and move us to make frequent acts of love and reparation.



## TENTH STATION

### Jesus Is Stripped of His Garments



**Fig. A4.22 Jesus Is Stripped of His Garments**

V. We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You;

R. Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

(Genuflect at the word “because” and arise at “You have redeemed the world.”)

O Jesus, by the pain You suffered in having Your clothing torn from Your bleeding body, please strip us of all conceit and pride, and instruct us in the ways of humility, purity of intention and simplicity of heart.



## **ELEVENTH STATION**

### **Jesus Is Nailed to the Cross**



**Fig. A4.23 Jesus Is Nailed to the Cross**

V. We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You;

R. Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

(Genuflect at the word “because” and arise at “You have redeemed the world.”)

As You were nailed to the cross, O Jesus, fasten our hearts there also, so that they may be united to You until death.

## TWELFTH STATION

### Jesus Dies on the Cross



**Fig. A4.24 Jesus Dies on the Cross**

V. We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You;

R. Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

(Genuflect at the word “because” and arise at “You have redeemed the world.”)

O Jesus, we devoutly embrace the holy cross whereon You loved us even unto death. We thank You for Your sacrifice, and we desire to love You as much as You love us.



## THIRTEENTH STATION

### Jesus Is Laid in the Arms of His Holy Mother



**Fig. A4.25 Jesus Is Laid in the Arms of His Holy Mother**

V. We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You;

R. Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

(Genuflect at the word “because” and arise at “You have redeemed the world.”)

We grieve with you, O Mary, for the sorrow you experienced as you examined the wounds on the body of your dear son. By these sacred wounds may we obtain mercy and pardon for our sins.



## FOURTEENTH STATION

### Jesus Is Laid in the Tomb



Fig. A4.26 Jesus Is Laid in the Tomb

V. We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You;

R. Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

(Genuflect at the word “because” and arise at “You have redeemed the world.”)

O Jesus, someday our bodies will also be placed in a tomb. Freed from the bonds of this Earth, may we then be received into Heaven by You and Your holy mother, so that we may praise and love You for all eternity. Amen.

## Picture Credits and Sources

### **Fig. 4 Christ the Good Shepherd**

Artist: Bartolomé Esteban Murillo (1617–1682)

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bartolomé\\_Esteban\\_Perez\\_Murillo\\_-\\_Christ\\_the\\_Good\\_Shepherd\\_-\\_WGA16374.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bartolomé_Esteban_Perez_Murillo_-_Christ_the_Good_Shepherd_-_WGA16374.jpg)

### **Fig. 4.1.1 The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is an Example of Public Prayer**

Photo by Jan-Erik Løken, CC BY–SA 4.0 license

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Palmsunday\\_mass,\\_St.\\_Franciskus\\_Xaverius,\\_Catholic\\_church,\\_Arendal,\\_Norway.\\_Pater\\_Sigurd\\_Markussen.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Palmsunday_mass,_St._Franciskus_Xaverius,_Catholic_church,_Arendal,_Norway._Pater_Sigurd_Markussen.jpg)

### **Fig. 4.1.2 Improper and Proper Praying Posture**

Poor Praying Posture. Free photo by Kateřina Hartlová from Pixabay.com

<https://pixabay.com/photos/girl-childhood-teddy-bear-4485720/>

Good Praying Posture: <https://www.christiansupplies.co.nz/product/PR028/print-two-children-praying/> (The store site has a Pinterest button, indicating that its product ad image may be shared for non-commercial use.)

### **Fig. 4.2.1 Christ Teaching the Apostles How to Pray the “Our Father”**

A watercolor painting by James Tissot (1836–1902)

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Brooklyn\\_Museum\\_-\\_The\\_Lord%27s\\_Prayer\\_\(Le\\_Pater\\_Noster\)\\_-\\_James\\_Tissot.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Brooklyn_Museum_-_The_Lord%27s_Prayer_(Le_Pater_Noster)_-_James_Tissot.jpg)

### **Fig. 4.2.2 Accepting God’s Will in Good Times and Bad**

An old picture found in many places on the Internet without provenance.

<https://www.turnbacktogo.com/the-lords-prayer-in-pictures/>

### **Fig. 4.3.1 The Angel Gabriel Appeared to Mary (The Annunciation)**

Artist: Philippe de Champaigne (1602–1674)

<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/438724>

### **Fig. 4.3.2 Mary Visited Her Cousin Elizabeth (The Visitation)**

Artist: Miguel Cabrera (1695–1768)

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:La\\_Visitación\\_-\\_Miguel\\_Cabrera.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:La_Visitación_-_Miguel_Cabrera.jpg)

### **Fig. 4.4.1 Priest Celebrating Holy Mass**

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:US\\_Navy\\_031006-N-9742R-002\\_Lt.\\_Cmdr.\\_Allen\\_R.\\_Kuss,\\_the\\_Roman\\_Catholic\\_priest\\_aboard\\_USS\\_Enterprise\\_\(CVN\\_65\)\\_administers\\_the\\_Sunday\\_evening\\_Catholic\\_Mass\\_service.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:US_Navy_031006-N-9742R-002_Lt._Cmdr._Allen_R._Kuss,_the_Roman_Catholic_priest_aboard_USS_Enterprise_(CVN_65)_administers_the_Sunday_evening_Catholic_Mass_service.jpg)

**Fig. 4.4.2 Vestments for Holy Mass**

Adapted from an illustration found in Bishop Louis LaRavoire Morrow, *My Catholic Faith*, (My Mission House, Kenosha, WI, 1963), p. 296

<https://archive.org/details/B-001-014-327/page/n299/mode/2up>

**Fig. 4.5.1 Painting of Faith, Hope and Charity**

Artist: Julius Schnorr von Carolsfeld (1794–1872)

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Schnorr\\_von\\_Carolsfeld\\_-\\_Glaube,\\_Liebe,\\_Hoffnung.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Schnorr_von_Carolsfeld_-_Glaube,_Liebe,_Hoffnung.jpg)

**Fig. 4.5.2 Judas Sells Christ to the Jews**

Artist: James Jacques Joseph Tissot (1836–1902)

<https://www.dappledthings.org/deep-down-things/19127/holy-week-illustrated-by-james-tissot-wednesday>

**Fig. 4.6.1 Jesus Giving the Eight Beatitudes**

Artist: Ivan Makarov (1822–1897)

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Sermon\\_on\\_the\\_Mount\\_by\\_I.Makarov.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Sermon_on_the_Mount_by_I.Makarov.jpg)

**Fig. 4.7.1 St. Francesca Romana Feeding the Hungry**

Artist: Giovanni Battista Gaulli (1639–1709)

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Baciccio-Saint\\_Francesca\\_Romana\\_Giving\\_Alms.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Baciccio-Saint_Francesca_Romana_Giving_Alms.jpg)

**Fig. 4.7.2 A Rosary**

Photo courtesy of Jacek Halicki, license CC BY-SA 4.0

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:2023\\_R%C3%B3%C5%BCaniec.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:2023_R%C3%B3%C5%BCaniec.jpg)

**Fig. 4.7.3 A Procession in the City of Puy, France**

The procession, made on April 22, 1630, was held in thanksgiving to the Blessed Virgin Mary for her intercession in delivering the city from the plague that took the lives of more than ten thousand inhabitants the previous year.

Photo by Daniel Villafruela, license CC BY-SA 3.0

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Cath%C3%A9drale\\_Notre\\_Dame\\_du\\_Puy\\_en\\_Velay-Procession-20130324.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Cath%C3%A9drale_Notre_Dame_du_Puy_en_Velay-Procession-20130324.jpg)

**Fig. 4.8.1 Dominican Sisters of Mary (Ann Arbor, Michigan)**

From an article in *Integrated Catholic Life*<sup>TM</sup> by Sarah Reinhard, 2014. A Pinterest button is placed near the image, indicating that the image may be shared for non-commercial use.

<http://www.integratedcatholiclife.org/2014/12/reinhard-sr-joseph-andrew-and-her-orders-new-rosary-album/>

**Fig. 4.8.2 St. Therese of the Child Jesus (1873–1897)**

<https://www.sttheresecarmel.org/our-patron-st--th-r-se>

**Fig. 4.8.3 St. John of the Cross (1542–1591)**

Artist: Unknown

<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Johncross5.jpg>**Fig. 4.8.4 Santa Teresa de Jesus of Avila (1515–1582)**

Artist: Jusepe de Ribera (1591–1652)

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Santa\\_Teresa\\_de\\_%C3%81vila.\\_\(Museo\\_del\\_Prado\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Santa_Teresa_de_%C3%81vila._(Museo_del_Prado).jpg)**Fig. A4.0.1 The Immaculate Heart of Mary**

Artist: Unknown. A photo of the Immaculate Heart of Mary in my bedroom.

**Fig. A4.1 The Immaculate Conception**

Artist: Mariano Salvador Maella (1739-1819)

Source: Palacio Real de Aranjuez (1779), Colección privada de Carlos III.

Found at Pinterest.com: <https://br.pinterest.com/pin/690176711620952119/>**Fig. A4.2 The Blessed Trinity in Glory**

Artist: Carlo Dolci (1616–1686)

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Carlo\\_Dolci\\_-\\_The\\_Trinity\\_in\\_Glory\\_-\\_59.009\\_-\\_Rhode\\_Island\\_School\\_of\\_Design\\_Museum.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Carlo_Dolci_-_The_Trinity_in_Glory_-_59.009_-_Rhode_Island_School_of_Design_Museum.jpg)**Fig. A4.3 Oh, Jesus! Our Friend, Be Thou Our Guide and Our Protector**

CC BY–NC–ND 3.0 license

Attribution: Holy Card Heaven, <http://holycardheaven.blogspot.com>Source: <http://imagesofthegoodshepherd.blogspot.com/>**Fig. A4.4 The Boy Samuel**

Artist: Joshua Reynolds (1723–1792)

<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:InfantSamuel.jpg>**Fig. A4.5 Infant of Prague**

My own photo of the statue of the Infant in my bedroom.

**Fig. A4.6 Saint Michael the Archangel**

Artist: Luca Giordano (1634–1705)

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Fa\\_Presto\\_-\\_St.\\_Michael\\_-\\_Google\\_Art\\_Project.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Fa_Presto_-_St._Michael_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg)**Fig. A4.7 A Guardian Angel Watching a Boy Sleeping by the River**

Artist: Melchior Paul von Deschwanden (1811-1881)

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Melchior\\_Paul\\_von\\_Deschwanden\\_Schutzengel\\_bewacht\\_den\\_Schlaf\\_eines\\_Kindes.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Melchior_Paul_von_Deschwanden_Schutzengel_bewacht_den_Schlaf_eines_Kindes.jpg)**Fig. A4.8 Our Lady with a Crown of Stars (cropped)**

Artist: Carlo Dolci (1616–1686)

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Dolci\\_Madonna\\_p1070185.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Dolci_Madonna_p1070185.jpg)



**Fig. A4.9 The Annunciation**

Artist: Luca Giordano (1634–1705)

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The\\_Annunciation\\_MET\\_DT404.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_Annunciation_MET_DT404.jpg)

**Fig. A4.10 The Holy Eucharist**

<https://wallpapersafari.com/w/1rAKtM>

**Fig. A4.11 The Blessed Sacrament**

A free photo from Leonardo Zanini

<https://www.pexels.com/photo/symmetrical-photograph-of-host-in-gold-monstrance-9317320/>

**Fig. A4.12 The Virgin Mary Giving the Rosary to St. Dominic**

Artist: Luca Giordano (1634–1705)

Photo by Sailko, CC BY-SA 3.0

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Luca\\_giordano,\\_madonna\\_del\\_rosario,\\_1657,\\_Q492.JPG](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Luca_giordano,_madonna_del_rosario,_1657,_Q492.JPG)

**Fig. A4.13 Jesus is Condemned to Death**

Artist: Gemälde von Gebhard Fugel (1863–1939)

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Fugel\\_Kreuzweg\\_01.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Fugel_Kreuzweg_01.jpg)

**Fig. A4.14 Jesus is Burdened with the Cross**

Artist: Gemälde von Gebhard Fugel (1863–1939)

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Fugel\\_Kreuzweg\\_02.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Fugel_Kreuzweg_02.jpg)

**Fig. A4.15 Jesus Falls the First Time**

Artist: Gemälde von Gebhard Fugel (1863–1939)

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Fugel\\_Kreuzweg\\_03.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Fugel_Kreuzweg_03.jpg)

**Fig. A4.16 Jesus Meets His Sorrowful Mother**

Artist: Gemälde von Gebhard Fugel (1863–1939)

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Fugel\\_Kreuzweg\\_04.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Fugel_Kreuzweg_04.jpg)

**Fig. A4.17 Simon of Cyrene Helps to Carry the Cross**

Artist: Gemälde von Gebhard Fugel (1863–1939)

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Fugel\\_Kreuzweg\\_05.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Fugel_Kreuzweg_05.jpg)

**Fig. A4.18 Veronica Wipes the Face of Jesus**

Artist: Gemälde von Gebhard Fugel (1863–1939)

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Fugel\\_Kreuzweg\\_06.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Fugel_Kreuzweg_06.jpg)

**Fig. A4.19 Jesus Falls a Second Time**

Artist: Gemälde von Gebhard Fugel (1863–1939)

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Fugel\\_Kreuzweg\\_07.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Fugel_Kreuzweg_07.jpg)

**Fig. A4.20 Jesus Speaks to the Women of Jerusalem**

Artist: Gemälde von Gebhard Fugel (1863–1939)

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Fugel\\_Kreuzweg\\_08.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Fugel_Kreuzweg_08.jpg)**Fig. A4.21 Jesus Falls the Third Time**

Artist: Gemälde von Gebhard Fugel (1863–1939)

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Fugel\\_Kreuzweg\\_09.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Fugel_Kreuzweg_09.jpg)**Fig. A4.22 Jesus Is Stripped of His Garments**

Artist: Gemälde von Gebhard Fugel (1863–1939)

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Fugel\\_Kreuzweg\\_10.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Fugel_Kreuzweg_10.jpg)**Fig. A4.23 Jesus Is Nailed to the Cross**

Artist: Gemälde von Gebhard Fugel (1863–1939)

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Fugel\\_Kreuzweg\\_11.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Fugel_Kreuzweg_11.jpg)**Fig. A4.24 Jesus Dies on the Cross**

Artist: Gemälde von Gebhard Fugel (1863–1939)

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Fugel\\_Kreuzweg\\_12.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Fugel_Kreuzweg_12.jpg)**Fig. A4.25 Jesus Is Laid in the Arms of His Holy Mother**

Artist: Theophile Marie Francois Lybaert (1848–1927)

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Theophile\\_Lybaert\\_-\\_Jesus%27\\_body\\_is\\_removed\\_from\\_the\\_cross.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Theophile_Lybaert_-_Jesus%27_body_is_removed_from_the_cross.jpg)**Fig. A4.26 Jesus Is Laid in the Tomb**

Artist: Theophile Marie Francois Lybaert (1848–1927)

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Theophile\\_Lybaert\\_-\\_Jesus\\_is\\_laid\\_in\\_the\\_tomb\\_and\\_covered\\_in\\_incense.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Theophile_Lybaert_-_Jesus_is_laid_in_the_tomb_and_covered_in_incense.jpg)