

# The Essentials of Roman Catholicism

A Compiled Catechism for Protestant Readers

Compiled and edited by  
David James

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*The Alliance for Biblical Integrity*



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This document is a compilation of direct quotations several Roman Catholic sources. Every effort has been made to preserve the contextual meanings of all quotations, and to present the Catholic position accurately. All statements in this document are direct quotations from Catholic sources, having the official approval of the Church's teaching magisterium, similar to that shown here (taken from The Question and Answer Catechism, by John A. Hardon, S.J.).

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The nihil obstat and imprimatur are official declarations that a book or pamphlet is free from doctrinal error. No implication is contained therein that those who have granted the nihil obstat and imprimatur agree with the contents, opinions, or statements expressed.

I have adopted the basic outline structure used by John Hardon in The Question and Answer Catechism, and have quoted a substantial amount of this catechism. In general, I have retained the question and answer format often found in catechisms in order to preserve the contextual sense and meaning of the material. However, I have included material from sources that do not follow this format as will be noted by the reader.

I have used the following abbreviations for citing quotations from the various Catholic sources:

- CA: Foy, Felician A. O.F.M., ed. Catholic Almanac 1983. Huntington, Indiana: Our Sunday Visitor, Inc., 1983.
- FCD: Ott, Ludwig. Fundamentals of Catholic Dogma. Edited in English by James Canon Bastible. Trans. from the German by Patrick Lynch. Rockford, Ill.: Tan Books and Publishers, Inc., 1960
- DVII: Abbott, Walter M., S.J. ed. The Documents of Vatican II. Piscataway, NJ: New Century Publishers, Inc., 1966.
- FC: Baker, Kenneth, S.J. Fundamentals of Catholicism. 3 vols. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1983.
- MC: Fox, Robert J. The Marian Catechism. Huntington, Indiana: Our Sunday Visitor, Inc., 1976.
- SJPC: Klopke, John R., C.P.P.S. Saint Joseph People's Catechism. New York: Catholic Book Pub. Co., 1979.
- QAC: Hardon, John A., S.J. The Question and Answer Catechism. Garden City, NY: Image Books, 1981.



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# INTRODUCTION: THE PURPOSE OF LIFE

**1. *Why did God make us?***

God made us to know him, love him, and serve him, and thereby reach heaven. (QAC, 25)

**2. *Why does God want us to know him, love him, and serve him?***

God wants us to know him because he is the eternal Truth; to love him because he is our most lovable Good; and to serve him because he is the sovereign Lord. (QAC, 25)

**3. *Where do we mainly learn what is the will of God and how are we to do it?***

We mainly learn God's will and how to fulfill it from the teaching of the Catholic Church. (QAC, 26)

**4. *What do we call a summary of Christian doctrine?***

We call a summary of Christian doctrine the catechism. (QAC, 26)

**5. *What does the catechism especially teach us?***

The catechism especially teaches us three things: 1) what we are to believe on the word of God as found in Scripture and Tradition; 2) what we are to do in order to love God by doing his will as expressed in the Commandments and Beatitudes; 3) what means of grace are available through the sacraments and prayer in order to serve God as we should. (QAC, 26)



PART ONE  
**CHRISTIAN BELIEF**



# I. GOD SPEAKS AND MAN LISTENS

## ***1. Divine Revelation***

### ***6. What is divine revelation?***

Divine revelation is the manifestation which God has made to us of what we should know about him and his will in our regard, and how we are to worship him. (QAC, 29)

### ***7. How has God revealed himself to us?***

God has revealed himself to us in two ways, naturally and supernaturally. (QAC, 29)

### ***8. What does natural revelation mean?***

Natural revelation is the knowledge that we acquire about God by human reason through the wonderful works of his creation. (QAC, 29)

### ***9. What is supernatural revelation?***

Supernatural revelation is the knowledge that God discloses in a special way about himself and beyond what we can know of him by our reason. (QAC, 29)

### ***10. How does revelation help us to know God better?***

Revelation helps us to know God better in two ways. It enables everyone to arrive at the knowledge of the one true God with ease, firm certainty, and without contamination of error. Moreover, revelation makes known to us the divine mysteries. (QAC, 30)

### ***11. How was revelation completed with the apostolic age?***

Revelation was completed with the apostolic age in that Christ is the fulfillment of all the prophecies before him, and his Incarnation is the perfect self-manifestation of God to the human race. (QAC, 31)

### ***12. Has there been any addition to the public revelation handed on by the apostles?***

No, there has not been any addition to the public revelation handed on by the apostles. The revelation of what the world needs to be saved and sanctified was completed with the death of the last apostle. (QAC, 31)

### ***13. Do we continue to receive supernatural revelation in modern times?***

We do not receive any new supernatural revelation. All the divine truths necessary for salvation were revealed by the end of the apostolic age, about A.D. 100. However, the Church will continue to teach and explain these truths until the end of time. (QAC, 31)

### ***14. What are private revelations?***

Private revelations are supernatural manifestations of hidden truths that God makes to private individuals for their own spiritual benefit or that of others. Well known in the lives of saints, private revelations differ from the public revelation in Scripture and Tradition in being helpful but not strictly necessary for our salvation. (QAC, 31)

### ***15. What is sacred doctrine?***

Sacred doctrine is the Church's authentic teaching of divine revelation. (QAC, 32)

### ***16. Is there a development of sacred doctrine?***

Yes, there is development of sacred doctrine in the Church's greater understanding of what God has once and for all revealed to the human race. (QAC, 32)

### ***17. Can this development ever contradict or cancel out what was formerly taught as sacred doctrine?***

No, true development builds on and advances the Church's doctrine of faith and morals but never contradicts or cancels out any of the previous official teaching. (QAC, 32)

### ***18. How, then, does this development of doctrine take place?***

Development of doctrine takes place in the minds of believers, under the guidance of the bishops in union with the bishop of Rome. (QAC, 32)

**19. How does this growth in understanding come about?**

This growth in understanding comes about in four ways, namely, through prayerful contemplation, through the study and research by scholars faithful to the Church's teaching, from the intimate sense of spiritual realities obtained from lived experience, and from the preaching of those who have received, along with their right of succession in the episcopate, the sure charism of truth. (QAC, 32)

**20.** The most important source of true doctrinal development is the preaching of the bishops . . . because the hierarchy is the divinely authorized guardian of revealed truth. (QAC, 32,33)

## **2. Divine Faith**

**21. What does divine faith mean?**

Divine faith is a voluntary assent of the mind in cooperation with grace by which we believe everything that God has revealed. (QAC, 33)

**22. Is divine faith naturally possible?**

No, divine faith is possible only because God gives us the grace to believe. Scripture tells us, by grace you have been saved, through faith, not by anything of your own, but by a gift from God (Ephesians 2:8). We are enabled to listen to the inspirations of the Holy Spirit, who enlightens the mind and moves the will and thus makes it possible for us to accept what God has revealed. (QAC, 34)

**23. What must a Catholic believe with divine faith?**

A Catholic must believe with divine faith the whole of revelation, which is contained in the written word of God and in the Sacred Tradition. (QAC, 34)

**24. Can a person be a Catholic if he believes most, but not all, the teachings of revelation?**

A person cannot be a Catholic if he rejects even a single teaching that he knows has been revealed by God. (QAC, 34)

**25. What will happen to those who lack "the faith necessary for salvation"?**

Those will not be saved who lack the necessary faith because of their own sinful neglect or conduct. As Christ declared, "He who does not believe will be condemned" (Mark 16:16). (QAC, 34)

**26. Is faith necessary for salvation?**

Yes, faith is necessary for salvation because "it is impossible to please God without faith, since anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and rewards those who try to find him" (Hebrews 11:6). (QAC, 34)

**27. How do we know the meaning of what God has revealed?**

We know the meaning of what God has revealed through the same teaching of the Church, with whom Christ promised to remain all days and to whom, through Peter and his successors, he gave the keys of knowledge to understand and explain the meaning of God's revealed truth. If Christ had not provided for interpreting divine revelation, he would have left the Church without protection against error and, contrary to his assurance, the gates of hell would prevail against her. (QAC, 35)

## **3. Mysteries of Christianity**

**28. Can we comprehend everything that God has revealed?**

We cannot comprehend all the truths of revelation because many of them are mysteries. (QAC, 35)

**29. What is a mystery?**

A mystery is a supernatural truth which is impossible for any creature to even conceive before revelation or to comprehend after it has been revealed. (QAC, 36)

**30. Why, then, have mysteries been revealed?**

God has revealed mysteries to offer us the means of reaching our supernatural destiny, which is heaven. All the mysteries can be summed up in the Holy Trinity, from whom we came; the Incarnation, Church, and the sacraments by which we are saved; and the face to face vision of the Holy Trinity for which we were made. (QAC, 36)

## 4. Sacred Scripture

**31. Where do we find the truths revealed by God?**

We find the truths revealed by God in Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition. (QAC, 37)

**32. How does Sacred Scripture compare with Sacred Tradition?**

Both Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition are the inspired word of God, and both are forms of divine revelation. Sacred Scripture is divinely inspired writing, whereas Sacred Tradition is the unwritten word of inspired persons. (QAC, 37)

**33. It is clear, therefore, that sacred tradition, sacred Scripture, and the teaching authority of the Church, in accord with God's most wise design, are so linked and joined together that one cannot stand without the others, and that all together and each in its own way under the action of the one Holy Spirit contribute effectively to the salvation of souls. (DVII, 118)**

**34. Why should the Bible be called the word of God?**

The Bible should be called the word of God because God so directs the mind, will, and other faculties of the sacred writer that he says only what God wants him to write and no more. (QAC, 37)

**35. Is God therefore the author of the Bible?**

Yes, God is the author of the Bible. (QAC, 37)

**36. Is God the only author of the Bible?**

No, . . . the human writer is also responsible for the Bible. (QAC, 37)

**37. Does the Bible contain any errors?**

No, the books of the Bible firmly, faithfully, and without error teach that the truth which God, for the sake of our salvation, wished to confide to Sacred Scripture. (QAC, 38)

**38. Therefore, since everything asserted by the inspired authors or sacred writers must be held to be asserted by the Holy Spirit, it follows that the books of Scripture must be acknowledged as teaching firmly, faithfully, and without error that truth which God wanted put into the sacred writings for the sake of our salvation. (DVII, 119)**

**39. Were the biblical writers protected from saying anything untrue?**

Yes, the Holy Spirit protected the biblical writers from writing any positive falsehood. (QAC, 38)

**40. Is the whole Bible and every part of it inspired?**

Yes, "all Scripture is inspired by God and can profitably be used . . ." (2 Timothy 3:16-17). (QAC, 38)

**41. How is the Bible to be interpreted?**

The Bible is to be interpreted in the spirit in which it was produced. As a divinely inspired document it must be treated with the reverence due to the word of God. As a humanly written document it may be studied as a literary composition. On both levels, however, it must be interpreted according to the mind and directives of the hierarchical Church. (QAC, 38)

**42. Where did the materials for the first eleven chapters of Genesis come from?**

They were simply borrowed and adapted from ancient Semitic traditions and tales. The chapters *illustrate* how man came to need God's saving action. (SJPC, 22)

**43. Aren't the first eleven chapters of Genesis an historical record of what happened during and after the world's creation?**

No, they are not. The author has no special knowledge of world history until he comes to the call of Abraham. In fact, we can identify some of his borrowings from ancient myths. What the first eleven chapters of Genesis do is picture by means of extremely ancient symbols "how it all began." (SJPC, 22)

**44. Do you mean that there actually weren't a Cain and Abel, a flood, and a Tower of Babel?**

As far as the religious message of Genesis is concerned, the literal reality of these stories is irrelevant. The author is writing a moral tale, not history. (SJPC, 29)

**45. How does the number of books differ in the Catholic and Protestant Bible?**

Most Protestant Bibles have seven fewer books than the Old Testament, namely Tobit, Judith, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, I and II Maccabees. These books were removed from the Bible on the grounds that their biblical character had been disputed in early Christian times. But they are included in the Catholic Bible because the Church, under the popes, has always considered them divinely inspired. (QAC, 39)

**46. Why are the books of the Bible said to be canonical?**

The books of the Bible are canonical because, according to the Church's decision (canon), they are to be regarded as inspired. They were written, whole and entire, with all their parts, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. (QAC, 40)

**47. Why should the Scriptures be read frequently?**

The Scriptures should be read frequently because they are a special source of grace, light for the mind and strength for the will, to all who read them with faith and devotion. (QAC, 40)

## **5. Sacred Tradition**

**48. What is Sacred Tradition?**

Sacred Tradition is the unwritten word of God that the prophets and apostles received through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and, under his guidance, the Church has handed on to the Christian world. (QAC, 41)

**49. How does Sacred Tradition differ from Sacred Scripture?**

Sacred Tradition differs from Sacred Scripture in that it is a living reality. It is the living memory . . . Sacred Scripture is rather a tangible and readable product. Both forms of inspiration, however, of persons and of writings, were completed with the death of the last apostle. Sacred Tradition, which is divine revelation in oral form, has been handed on by the Church's doctrine life and worship. (QAC, 41)

**50. Why is Sacred Tradition of equal authority with the Bible?**

The Bible and Sacred Tradition are of equal authority because they are equally the word of God; both derive from the inspired vision of the ancient prophets, and especially from the infinite wisdom of God incarnate who gave the apostles what he came down on earth to teach, through them, to all of mankind. (QAC, 42)

**51.** Sacred tradition and sacred Scripture form one sacred deposit of the word of God, which is committed to the Church. (DVII, 117)

**52. Who is authorized to interpret Scripture and Tradition?**

The Church's hierarchy, that is, the bishops under the pope, or the pope alone, is divinely authorized to decisively interpret Scripture and Tradition. (QAC, 42)

**53.** The task of authentically interpreting the word of God, whether written or handed on, has been entrusted exclusively to the living teaching office of the Church, whose authority is exercised in the name of Jesus Christ. This teaching office is not above the word of God, but serves it, teaching only what has been handed on . . . (DVII, 117,18)

**54. Couldn't a disciple of Jesus just read the Bible privately and learn all there is to know about Jesus' teachings?**

No, he could not. The Bible is not understandable apart from the Christian community which has pondered and lived its message down through the centuries. (SJPC, 21)

**55. Can Sacred Tradition ever be in conflict with Sacred Scripture?**

No, Sacred Tradition can never be in conflict with Sacred Scripture because the same Holy Spirit, working in the Church, is the source of both sources of revelation. Each source either adds to the other or explains the other, but they are never in contradiction. (QAC, 42)



## II. THE APOSTLE'S CREED

*First Article: "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth."*

### 1. Existence and Nature of God

56. *Who is God?*

God is a pure and infinitely perfect divine spirit, Creator of all things, and supreme master of heaven and earth. (QAC, 43)

57. Holy Mother Church holds and teaches that God, the origin and end of all things, can be known with certainty by the natural light of human reason from things that he created. (FC: Vol 2, 17)

58. *What are the principle internal attributes of God?*

The principle internal attributes of God are his unchangeableness and eternity. (QAC, 45)

59. *What are the main relative attributes of God?*

The main attributes of God are his omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, justice, wisdom, and goodness. (QAC, 45)

### 2. The Holy Trinity

60. *What is the principle mystery of our faith?*

The Blessed Trinity constitutes the very life of God and underlies all other mysteries of the faith, for example, the Incarnation, the Redemption, and the life of grace. (QAC, 46)

61. *What is the mystery of the Blessed Trinity?*

The mystery of the Blessed Trinity is the mystery of God in three really distinct Persons.

God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are the three divine Persons in one God. (QAC, 46)

62. *How are the three Persons one and the same God?*

The three persons are one and the same God because they have one and the same nature and substance. (QAC, 46)

63. *How are the three Persons really distinct from one another?*

The three Persons are distinct from one another in that the Father has no origin; the Son is begotten or proceeds from the Father alone; and the Holy Spirit proceeds or comes from both the Father and the Son. Yet, though truly distinct, the three Persons have one and the same divine nature. (QAC, 46,47)

64. *What divine activity in the world do we appropriate to God the Father, . . . God the Son, . . . God the Holy Spirit?*

The divine activity appropriated to God the Father is the creation of the universe.

. . . to God the Son is the work of redemption for the salvation of all men.

. . . to God the Holy Spirit is the work of sanctification of mankind through the communication of divine grace. (QAC, 47,48)

### 3. Creation and Divine Providence

65. *What is creation?*

Creation is the production by God of material and spiritual things in their whole substance, that is, "out of nothing."

By creation "out of nothing" we mean that God starts with no preexisting material and he parts with nothing of his own being in the act of creation. (QAC, 48)

66. Belief in the first article of the Creed, that God created all things out of nothing, is a basic truth of the Catholic religion. Anyone who denies that truth is certainly not a Catholic and not even a Christian. (FC: Vol 2, 124)
67. The materialistic doctrine of evolution . . . which assumes the eternal existence of uncreated material, and which explains the emergence of all living creatures . . . is contrary to Revelation. (FCD, 95)
68. The doctrine of evolution based upon the *theistic* conception of the world, which traces matter and life to God's causality . . . is compatible with the doctrine of Revelation. (FCD, 95)
69. The Church gives no positive decisions in regard to purely scientific questions, but limits itself to rejecting errors which endanger faith. (FCD, 92)
70. The Biblical account of the duration and order of Creation is merely a literary clothing of the religious truth that the whole world was called into existence by the creative word of God. (FCD, 93)

#### 4. Angels, Good and Bad

71. *Why are there good angels and bad angels?*

There are good angels and bad angels because some angels remained faithful to God when they were mysteriously tested by him, and some were unfaithful. (QAC, 51)

72. *What is a guardian angel?*

A guardian angel is a special messenger whom God gives to everyone to guide us through life.

We know that everyone has a guardian angel because it is implied in Scripture and found in the Church's constant Tradition. (QAC, 52)

73. *How do the guardian angels protect us from evil?*

Guardian angels protect us from evil by preserving us from temptation that would be too strong for us, by enlightening us on how to cope with the world, the flesh, and the devil; and by shielding us from physical evil that would bring spiritual harm.

The guardian angels never cease praying for us and present our own petitions before the throne of God. (QAC, 52)

74. *What is our duty toward the guardian angels?*

We are to venerate our guardian angels with great devotion, thank them for their constant care, ask them to help us, especially in time of temptation, and readily follow their inspirations. Already in the Old Testament the people were told by God, "I myself will send an angel before you to guard you as you go . . . Give him reverence . . ." (QAC, 52)

75. *What happened to the bad angels?*

The bad angels because of their disobedience were condemned to eternal punishment. (QAC, 53)

76. *What is the devil's work?*

His purpose is to seduce people because he wants to harm them spiritually and supernaturally, and, if possible, even eternally. (QAC, 53)

#### 5. Nature and Origin of Man

77. *What is man?*

Man is a creature composed of spirit and body. (QAC, 53)

78. *What is meant by spirit?*

By spirit is meant the immaterial soul. It is invisible only with the sense of the body. It can be seen with the eyes of the mind. (QAC, 53)

79. *How does man differ from mere animals?*

Man is a rational animal. He has a material body, but, unlike mere animals, his body is animated with a rational soul. Man has the use of reason. (QAC, 54)

**80. *What is man's soul?***

Man's soul is a spiritual, free, and immortal substance individually created by God and infused into the human body. (QAC, 54)

**81. *When is the soul created and infused into the body?***

The human soul is directly created by God. It is not produced by the parents. They provide the beginnings of the human body. But God has to individually make the soul out of nothing, and unite it with the body prepared by the parents. This uniting of the soul with the body is called infusion. The creation of the soul and its infusion into the body take place at the moment of conception. (QAC, 55)

**82. *What supernatural gifts did our first parents have before they sinned?***

Before they sinned, our first parents had sanctifying grace, which meant they had supernatural life, the virtues of faith, hope, and charity, and a right to enter heaven. These are called supernatural gifts because no creature has a claim to them. (QAC, 55)

**83. *What preternatural gifts did our first parents have before they sinned?***

Before they sinned, our first parents enjoyed bodily immortality and integrity. These are called preternatural gifts because they are special endowments that God can bestow on human beings, but they are not natural to man. (QAC, 55)

**84. *What must we hold regarding human evolution?***

Regarding human evolution we must hold that it is only a theory and not an established fact. Moreover, even if man's body evolved from a lower species, man's soul was immediately created by God out of nothing. And finally if there was such an evolution of the body, God would have to exercise his special providence over the process, so that the first man could not literally be generated by brute beasts. (QAC, 56)

**85.** The soul of the first man was created immediately by God, out of nothing. As regards the body, its immediate formation from inorganic stuff cannot be maintained with certainty. Fundamentally, the possibility exists that God breathed the spiritual soul into an organic stuff, that is into an originally animal body. (FCD, 94,95)

**86.** As everyone knows, modern theories of evolution which are now commonly taught even in our grade schools, in effect often contradict and deny the teaching of the Bible and the teaching of the Catholic Church. The most radical form of evolution says that all living things, including man, evolved by chance from inanimate matter. They go on to say that man, in both body and soul, evolved after millions of years from brute beasts. This theory must be categorically rejected by all Catholics, since it denies the direct creation of the human soul by God. For it is a dogma of the Catholic faith that each human soul is created immediately by God. So it is impossible for the whole man to evolve from inanimate matter through brute beasts. (FC: Vol 2, 140,141)

**87.** With regard to the creation of man's body, both the Bible and the Church allow for a broader interpretation. Its immediate formation from inorganic matter by God cannot be maintained with absolute certainty . . . Thus, a Catholic may hold a limited type of evolution; he may hold that the human body evolved up to a certain point. But he must hold that a special intervention of God in the evolutionary process was required for the production of the human spiritual soul, no matter what explanation is used for the origin of the human body. (FC: Vol 2, 140,41)

**88. *Could those who lived before Christ be saved?***

Yes, those who lived before Christ could be saved because of the foreseen merits of the Redeemer. The grace that Christ merited by his Passion and Death benefits all mankind, from our first parents after they sinned to the last human being until the end of time. (QAC, 56)

**89. *Does God give the grace of salvation to all human beings?***

Yes, God gives sufficient grace for salvation to all human beings. This means that even those who have not had the Gospel preached to them can reach heaven. They must be faithful to the inspirations of grace as manifested by reason and whatever form of revelation they have received. (QAC, 57)

## **6. Original Sin**

**90. *What is original sin?***

Original sin is first of all the sin that Adam who, as the ancestor of the human race, offended God and thereby lost the right to heaven for himself and his posterity. Original sin is also the loss of sanctifying grace that we inherit from Adam when we enter the world. (QAC, 57)

**91. *Just what was the original sin which affects the whole human race?***

It is difficult to say whether the author actually has a specific sin in mind. In fact the whole account is so highly symbolized that it is difficult to say what specific event the author has in mind. The symbols he uses point to the heart of all sin: the demonic urge to be a law unto oneself. That is what interiorly affects humankind and, through it, the whole world. (SJPC, 27)

**92. What were the effects of their sin on Adam and Eve?**

As a result of their sin, Adam and Eve lost all the gifts they had received over and above human nature. They especially lost the gift of sanctifying grace. (QAC, 57)

**93. Did Adam's sin affect only himself?**

No, as the Church teaches, Adam's sin was injurious not only to himself but also to his descendants, with the certain exception only of Jesus and Mary. (QAC, 58)

**94. What are the effects of original sin?**

As a result of original sin, we are conceived without the possession of sanctifying grace. (QAC, 58)

**95. How is original sin passed on from the time of Adam?**

Original sin is passed on by the father to his children, through human generation. (QAC, 58)

**96. Does original sin totally corrupt our human nature?**

Original sin does not totally corrupt our human nature. We are darkened in mind and weakened in will. But we are still capable of natural virtues and of freely cooperating with the grace of God. (QAC, 58)

**97. Is the absence of sanctifying grace the only effect of original sin?**

No, besides sanctifying grace, we also lost the gift of bodily immortality, which means we must suffer and die; and the gift of integrity, which explains why we have disorderly passions. (QAC, 58)

**98. How is original sin removed from our souls?**

Original sin, as the absence of sanctifying grace, is ordinarily removed by the sacrament of baptism. (QAC, 59)

## *Second Article: "Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord"*

### **1. The Incarnation**

**99. Who is Jesus Christ?**

Jesus Christ is the second Person of the Blessed Trinity whom the Father sent into the world to become a man of the virgin Mary in order to save the world from sin. (QAC, 59)

**100. How did Christ prove his divinity?**

Christ proved his divinity by the miracles he worked, especially rising from the dead after three days. He thus witnessed to the truth of his claims that he was one with the Father, that without him no one can be saved, and that he would come as the Lord of creation to judge the human race at the end of the world. (QAC, 60)

**101. What makes Christ different from other great religious teachers?**

Christ was (and remains) different from other great religious teachers because, unlike them, he worked undeniable miracles, especially his own predicted resurrection from the dead; he lived a life of outstanding holiness; he preached a doctrine that rested not on mere human logic but on divine authority that he personally claimed to possess; he not only enlightened the mind but also commanded the will of his followers to obey; inspired his disciples to follow him over the centuries even to martyrdom; and he founded a Church based upon his Gospel, that has remained unchanged for two thousand years, as the divinely established means of obtaining peace in this life and eternal happiness in the life to come. (QAC, 60)

**102. How did the Word of God become man in the person of Jesus Christ?**

The Word of God became man in the person of Jesus Christ through the Incarnation. This means that the second Person of the Trinity became united with our human nature, so that the man Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God. (QAC, 61)

**103. How are the divine and human natures united in Christ?**

The divine and human natures are united in Christ in such a way that he is one individual, at once true God and true man. This is the mystery of the Incarnation. (QAC, 61)

**104. What kind of union is this called?**

This union is called the hypostatic union, which means personal union. (QAC, 62)

## 2. True God and True Man

**105.** *Did Jesus realize all his life that he was divine?*

Jesus knew from the moment of his conception that he was divine. To suppose that his human soul only gradually came to know that he was divine would be to deny that he was true God and true man from the first instant of the Incarnation from his mother's womb. (QAC, 62)

**106.** *When Christ was on earth, did he use only his human nature?*

No, when Christ was on earth, he always used both his human and divine nature. In whatever he did, he acted as God and man. (QAC, 63)

**107.** *Since Christ assumed a human nature was he subject to sin?*

Even though Christ assumed a human nature he was not subject to sin because he was also God. Therefore he could not commit any personal sin, and he had no concupiscence, or unruly passions, which are a result of original sin. (QAC, 63)

## *Third Article: "Conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary"*

### **The Blessed Virgin Mary: Her Privileges and Relation to Christ and His Church**

**108.** *How was Jesus Christ conceived by the Holy Spirit?*

Jesus Christ was conceived by the Holy Spirit in that he had no human father, but only a human mother. Yet he was truly conceived in the womb of Mary by the miraculous operation of the Holy Trinity. (QAC, 65)

**109.** *Who is the blessed Virgin Mary?*

The blessed Virgin Mary is a humble daughter of the family of David, whom God chose to be the Mother of his Son. (QAC, 66)

**110.** *What were the main privileges of the blessed Virgin?*

The main privileges of the blessed Virgin were the divine maternity, her perpetual virginity, Immaculate Conception, bodily Assumption into heaven, and her role as Mother of the Church. (QAC, 66)

**111.** *Why is Mary truly the Mother of God?*

Mary is truly the Mother of God because she contributed everything to Christ's human nature that all mothers give to the fruit of their womb; and because she conceived and bore the eternal Son of God who, according to the flesh, became the Son of Mary. (QAC, 66)

**112.** *What relationship does Mary have to the Blessed Trinity?*

Mary is the first Daughter of God the Father. Mary is the Mother of God the Son. Mary is the Spouse of the Holy Spirit. (MC, 16)

**113.** *Was Mary the Daughter of Adam?*

Yes. Mary descended from Adam like everyone else in the human race. Our first parents were Adam and Eve. Jesus is like a new Adam. Mary is like a new Eve. (MC, 16,17)

**114.** *Was Mary always a Virgin?*

Yes, Mary was always a virgin. She was a virgin when she conceived and gave birth to Christ, and she remained a virgin all her life, even after Jesus was born. (QAC, 67)

**115.** *Why must we firmly believe in the Immaculate conception?*

We must firmly believe in the Immaculate conception because it is a dogma of the faith. In the words of Pope Pius IX, "We declare, pronounce, and define: the doctrine that maintains that the most blessed Virgin Mary in the first instant of her conception, by a unique grace and privilege of the omnipotent God and in consideration of the merits of Christ Jesus the Savior of the human race, was preserved from all stain of original sin, is a doctrine revealed by God." This doctrine is implied in the title which the angel Gabriel gave to Mary when he addressed her: "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you" (Luke 1:28, *Vulgate translation*). (QAC, 67)

**116.** *Did the Blessed Virgin give the world a sign to approve the Church's proclaiming her Immaculate Conception?*

Yes . . . Mary appeared to St. Bernadette in Lourdes, France, and said, "I am the Immaculate Conception." (MC, 19,20)

**117. Why did Christ preserve Mary from sin?**

Christ, as God, preserved Mary from sin because he wanted to do everything possible for her. He wanted to be conceived and born of a sinless Mother. (QAC, 67)

**118. What follows from Mary's freedom from original sin?**

Mary's freedom from original sin preserved her from all sinful passion or concupiscence and from every personal sin during the whole of her life. (QAC, 68)

**119. If Mary was without sin, did she need to be redeemed?**

Yes. Jesus Christ her Son, redeemed her, too. Jesus redeemed us all by His life, death and resurrection. Jesus redeemed His Mother so perfectly that at the very moment God made her soul He put sanctifying grace into it. (MC, 21)

**120. Can we speak then of Mary as having been cleansed from original sin?**

No. There was never any sin on her soul to be cleansed. (MC, 31)

**121. Was Mary, then, impeccable?**

Yes, Mary was impeccable. By a special privilege from God, she could not sin. (QAC, 68)

**122. Was Mary then worthy to be the Mother of God?**

Not by her own power. Mary was made like the rest of us, except that she was made full of grace. Mary was always loved by God more than all other angels and saints, or people taken together. Jesus Christ her Son merited for His Mother, her greatness. (MC, 35)

**123. What is meant by the Assumption of our Lady?**

By the Assumption of our Lady is meant that after her life on earth, she was assumed body and soul into the glory of heaven. (QAC, 68)

**124. On what grounds was Mary's Assumption defined by the Church?**

Mary's Assumption was defined by the Church because she was the Mother of God; she was free from all sin; her body was preserved in spotless chastity; and she shared in her Son's redemptive work in the world. (QAC, 68)

**125. Was Mary still living when she was assumed into heaven?**

It is commonly believed that Mary died, but immediately after death her body and soul were reunited and taken up to heaven. (QAC, 68)

**126. Why did the Church wait so long (1854 and 1950) to proclaim the dogmas of the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption?**

These two dogmas had always been true. But the Church grows in her clear realization of what is revealed truth, and this takes time. Moreover, these two Marian dogmas provide an effective means of leading the world to Jesus through his Mother. (QAC, 68,69)

**127. Does sinful mankind need a mediator with the Eternal Father?**

Yes, sinful mankind needs a mediator with the Eternal Father. Christ is the mediator. (QAC, 69)

**128. Who is the only mediator between God and man?**

Jesus Christ. "For there is only one God, and there is only one mediator between God and mankind, himself a man, Christ Jesus, who sacrificed himself as a ransom for them all" (1 Timothy 2:5-6). (QAC, 69)

**129. Why is Mary called our mediatrix?**

Mary is called our mediatrix first because she cooperated in a unique way with Christ in his redemptive labors on earth. She is also mediatrix because she continues to intercede for us who are still working out our salvation here on earth or suffering in purgatory. (QAC, 69)

**130. Why does Mary deserve the title "Mother of Divine Grace"?**

Mary deserves the title "Mother of Divine Grace" because Christ made her so exalted in holiness that on earth she merited a high place in heaven, and now on heaven is able to plead our cause with her Son more effectively than anyone else among the elect. (QAC, 69)

**131. What made Mary so powerful as to influence the saving of souls?**

Mary is the "Mother of divine grace" and "Virgin most powerful" because God willed that, under Christ, Mary should be above all others, most powerful with the Blessed Trinity. (MC, 39)

**132. Did Mary cooperate with Jesus in making atonement?**

Yes. Mary shared in the role of Jesus bringing peace (reconciliation) between His heavenly Father and mankind. (MC, 45)

**133. What did Vatican Council II say about Mary supporting Jesus' acts of redemption?**

The Pope and bishops of the world said that Mary by faith and love did the same things in her heart that Jesus did in His sufferings so as to save the world. (MC, 45)

**134. Did Mary then merit our salvation?**

Yes, but only secondarily. The sacrifice of Jesus' death on the cross was perfect atonement (reparation). Mary joined her sufferings to those of Jesus, suffering with Him, and meriting with Him and as dependent on Him, the salvation of the whole world. In this way Mary gives grace through her Immaculate Heart. (MC, 47)

**135. Do Catholics adore Mary?**

No. Only God is to be adored . . . Catholics venerate Mary. (MC, 49)

**136. Why did the past century need special emphasis on Mary?**

People were denying Jesus Christ as true God and true man. One can better understand Jesus and the Church, Christianity itself, by understanding Mary and her role in salvation. (MC, 51)

**137. How is Mary our Mother?**

Mary is our spiritual Mother in the order of grace. Jesus is the source of all grace. Mary is therefore the Mother of grace. (MC, 59)

**138. How is Mary the perfect model of the Church making offerings?**

At every holy sacrifice of the Mass we offer Jesus to God the Father . . . Beneath the cross Mary was offering Jesus to God the Father for the salvation of the world. (MC, 68)

**139. Does our Blessed Mother's relationship to us concern only her years on earth?**

No . . . Both Jesus and Mary live now in heaven in their bodies and souls. As king and queen in heaven, their concern for us continues at this very moment and always will. (MC, 100)

**140. Are Catholics required to believe that the blessed Virgin actually appeared at Lourdes and Fatima?**

Once the Church officially approves certain shrines it would be rash for a Catholic to question the actual appearance at such places. Moreover, numerous spiritual favors and demonstrated miracles are a sign of God's approval of the people's devotion at these and similar shrines. (QAC, 71)

## *Fourth Article: "Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried"*

### **The Passion, Death, and Burial of Jesus Christ**

**141. Why is it important to know that Christ actually died?**

It is important to know that Christ actually died in order to establish the fact of his bodily resurrection. (QAC, 72)

**142. Why did Christ wish to be buried?**

Christ wished to be buried in order to more firmly prove that he really died so that his Resurrection would be more credible and his victory over death more glorious. (QAC, 72)

**143. How did Christ suffer, as God or as man?**

Although the one who suffered was God become man, Christ's actual suffering was in his human nature. God as God cannot suffer but that is why he became man. (QAC, 72)

**144. What sins did Christ expiate?**

Jesus Christ "is the sacrifice that takes our sins away, and not only ours, but the whole world's" (1 John 2:2). He therefore made satisfaction for original sin and all other sins of the human race, from Adam to the end of the world. (QAC, 73)

**145. *Why could only Christ make full reparation for our sins?***

Only Christ could make full reparation for our sins because the heavenly Father demanded complete satisfaction for the sins of mankind. Sin is an offense against the infinite majesty of God and therefore may require a satisfaction of infinite value, if God wills it. Since God willed it so, only Christ, who is the infinite Lord, could give this satisfaction by suffering as a human being and offering his sufferings to the Father with a human will. (QAC, 73)

**146. *From what did Christ redeem us?***

Christ redeemed us from the guilt of sin, and thus reconciled us with his heavenly Father; from the punishment we deserved for sin, in this life and in the life to come; and from the power of the evil spirit who, because of sin, became as Christ said, "the prince of this world [that] is to be overthrown" (John 12:31). (QAC, 74)

**147. *What did Christ obtain for us by his Passion and Death?***

By his Passion and Death, Christ obtained for us the right to heavenly glory, the graces we need to remain in God's friendship and grow in sanctity, and the power to actually become more pleasing to God by resisting temptation and struggling with our fallen human nature. (QAC, 74)

**148. *Did Christ suffer and die only for those who will be saved?***

No, Christ suffered and died for all mankind without exception . . . Those who are not saved also receive sufficient grace for salvation through Christ's redemption. If they are not saved, it is not because Christ did not die for them but because they refused to cooperate with the grace he merited for them on Calvary. (QAC, 74)

**149. *How do Catholics commemorate the Passion and Death of Christ?***

Catholics commemorate the Passion and Death of Christ by their participation in the Sacrifice of the Mass, their observance of Fridays as obligatory days of penance in union with Christ's sufferings, their recitation of the sorrowful mysteries of the Rosary, and making the Way of the Cross. (QAC, 74)

## *Fifth Article: "He descended into hell, the third day he rose again from the dead"*

### **Christ's Descent into Limbo and His Resurrection**

**150. *What does it mean that Jesus "descended into hell"?***

Christ's descent into hell means that after Christ's death, his soul visited the souls of the just who died up to that time and were detained in the limbo of the Fathers. They were waiting admission to heaven as a result of the Savior's death on the Cross by which he redeemed the world. (QAC, 75)

**151. *Why were the souls of the just detained in limbo?***

They were detained in limbo because of sin. Heaven was first to be opened by Christ as the Redeemer. (QAC, 75)

**152. *What does it mean that on "the third day he rose again from the dead"?***

By this we mean that on the third day after his death Christ, by his own power, reunited his soul to his body. He rose again from the grave as he had foretold. (QAC, 75)

**153. *Did Christ actually rise from the dead in body and not merely raise the hearts of his followers in spirit?***

Christ actually rose from the dead in body because there were hundreds of witnesses to the fact; because this fact became the foundation of the early Christians, many of whom suffered martyrdom for their belief; and because no extraordinary fact of equal antiquity is better attested in provable history. (QAC, 76)

**154. *Why did Christ remain on earth in visible form for forty days after his Resurrection?***

Christ remained visibly on earth for forty days after his Resurrection to witness to the fact that he really arose from the dead, to strengthen the faith of the disciples, to complete his teaching and training of the apostles, to give the apostles the power of forgiving sins through the sacrament of penance, to confer on Peter the primacy as visible head of the Church, and to inspire Christians for all times with the desire to follow in his footsteps through the suffering in order to be one day united with him in glory. (QAC, 77)



## *Sixth Article: "He ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty"*

### **The Ascension of Christ and His Glorified Existence**

**155.** *What do we mean when we say that Christ ascended into heaven?*

Christ ascended into heaven in the sense that, forty days after the Resurrection, he left the earth in visible form to return to his heavenly Father in body and soul. Yet he remains on earth invisibly present as God and man, in the Blessed Sacrament of the altar. (QAC, 77)

**156.** *Christ is seated at the right hand of the Father. What does this mean?*

Christ is now seated at the right hand of the Father because he entered heaven by right of nature as God and by merit as the redeemer; he shares in the power of the Father to judge the living and the dead; and as Christ the king, he is the undisputed ruler of the universe. (QAC, 78)

**157.** *How is Christ present among us by his Real Presence?*

By his Real Presence, Christ is present not only by what he does, but by his actual existence in our midst. In the Eucharist he is present as the whole Christ, true God and true man, with his divinity and humanity, body and soul, human thoughts and emotions, with flesh and blood, and all the qualities of a living being. (QAC, 78)

**158.** *Is Christ present only in a symbolic or a spiritual sense in the Eucharist?*

Absolutely not. Christ is just as truly present in the Eucharist on earth as he is present at the right hand of the Father in heaven. The only difference is that on earth in the Eucharist we cannot see him with bodily eyes, but we believe with divine faith that he is really there. (QAC, 78)

## *Seventh Article: "From thence he shall come to judge the living and the dead"*

### **1. The General Judgment**

**159.** *What does the seventh article of the Apostle's Creed teach us?*

It teaches us that Jesus Christ will come at the end of time to judge the human race. It is called the Second Coming and was foretold by the angels on the day of his Ascension. (QAC, 79)

**160.** *How many kinds of judgments are there?*

There are two kinds of judgment: a particular judgment at the end of our own life, and a general judgment at the end of the world. (QAC, 79)

**161.** *What happens to us immediately after death?*

Immediately after death we shall be judged about our service of God and our moral conduct during life. This is called the particular judgment, and is promptly carried into effect. We are told in Scripture that "men only die once, and after that comes judgment" (Hebrews 9:27). (QAC, 79)

**162.** *On what is a person judged?*

A person is judged on the moral good and evil that he has done. (QAC, 79)

**163.** *What is the general judgment at the end of the world?*

The general judgment is a social judgment. We shall be judged as members of the human race, to reveal God's justice to those he condemns and his mercy to those who are saved. A deeper reason for the general judgment is to make manifest the chain of consequences of men's actions, even long after the actions were done, up to the end of time. (QAC, 80)

**164.** *Will the sentence pronounced at the general judgment differ from that of the particular judgment?*

The general judgment will not differ from the particular judgment except to give it solemn confirmation. (QAC, 80)

## 2. Eternal Punishment

**165.** *What are the two kinds of pain threatened to the wicked?*

The two kinds of pain threatened to the wicked are the loss of the beatific vision and the experience of pain from creatures. (QAC, 80)

**166.** *What is the main suffering of hell?*

The main suffering of hell is the pain of losing the vision of God for whose possession man was created. (QAC, 81)

**167.** *What is the further suffering in hell?*

A further suffering in hell is the pain of sense. This is caused by a creature outside the person and is described in divine revelation as fire. (QAC, 81)

**168.** *Who is in hell?*

Besides the evil spirits, those are in hell who die in the state of mortal sin. They are the unrepentant sinners. (QAC, 81)

**169.** *Why does an all-good God condemn his creatures to hell?*

God, who is all good, allows his creatures to condemn themselves to hell because he does not interfere with their freedom. They voluntarily choose to reject him and, in his justice, he permits them to remain separated from the God they rejected. (QAC, 81,82)

## 3. Purgatory

**170.** *What is purgatory?*

Purgatory is a state or condition in which the souls of the just, who die with stains of sin, are cleansed before they are admitted to heaven. This cleansing is necessary, for "nothing unclean may come into it . . ." (Revelation 21:27). (QAC, 82)

**171.** *What is meant by "stain of sin"?*

Stain of sin means the temporal punishment still due venial or forgiven mortal sins. If the punishment has not been satisfied before death, a person must suffer in purgatory to repay the debt owed to the divine Majesty. (QAC, 82)

**172.** *Are the souls in purgatory certain they are saved?*

Yes, the souls in purgatory are certain they are saved. It is for this reason that their suffering is only temporary. (QAC, 82)

**173.** *What kind of suffering do the souls in purgatory endure?*

The souls in purgatory endure two kinds of suffering: the pain of loss which is the temporary loss of the vision of God and the endurance of physical pain. The sufferings of purgatory are more intense than any suffering on earth. (QAC, 82)

**174.** *Do the souls in purgatory experience joy?*

Yes, the souls in purgatory experience intense spiritual joy because they are absolutely sure of their salvation. (QAC, 82)

**175.** *Can the souls in purgatory make satisfaction for their sins?*

No, the souls in purgatory cannot make satisfaction for their sins because satisfaction as merit is possible only during one's lifetime on earth. There is no true merit after death. (QAC, 82,83)

**176.** *Who may help the souls in purgatory?*

All who belong to the communion of saints can help the souls in purgatory, that is the faithful on earth, and the angels and the saints in heaven. (QAC, 83)

**177.** *How can the faithful on the earth help those souls in purgatory?*

The faithful on earth can help the souls in purgatory by their suffrages, that is, through the Sacrifice of the Mass, prayers, almsgiving, and every kind of good work. (QAC, 83)

**178.** *How do the angels and saints help the souls in purgatory?*

The angels and saints help the souls in purgatory not by way of merit or satisfaction but by their prayers and intercession with God. (QAC, 83)

**179.** *Are the faithful obliged to help the souls in purgatory?*

Yes, the faithful are obliged to help the souls in purgatory. It is at once a duty of justice and of charity. It is also a duty of personal interest since one day we may expect others to help us in the same way. (QAC, 83)

**180.** *How do we know there is a purgatory?*

In the Old Testament we are told that the Israelites prayed for the dead "that they might be released from their sin" (2 Maccabees 12:45). In the New Testament, Christ spoke of the sin of despair as not forgiven "either in this world or in the next" (Matthew 12:32), implying that certain faults are pardoned in the life to come. The Church's Tradition, expressed in her doctrine, explicitly teaches that there is a purgatory, that purgatory is temporary, and that the poor souls can be helped by the prayers and good works of the faithful, especially offering the Sacrifice of the Mass. (QAC, 83)

**181.** *Can we invoke the souls in purgatory?*

Yes, we can invoke the souls in purgatory and are encouraged to ask them with the confidence of being heard. They understand our needs and are grateful for the prayers and sacrifices we offer on their behalf. (QAC, 83)

**182.** *Can the souls in purgatory pray and obtain blessings for those on earth?*

It is certain that the souls in purgatory can pray and obtain blessings for those on earth, as they are united with the Pilgrim Church in the communion of saints. (QAC, 84)

## *Eighth Article: "I believe in the Holy Spirit"*

### **The Holy Spirit in the Trinity and His Mission in the World**

**183.** *Who is the Holy Spirit?*

The Holy Spirit is the third Person of the Blessed Trinity, true God with the Father and the Son. He proceeds in an eternal procession from the Father and the Son. (QAC, 84)

**184.** *What, then, is the role of the Holy Spirit in our lives?*

The role of the Holy Spirit is to sanctify us, as the very name "Holy" implies. (QAC, 85)

**185.** *How does the Holy Spirit sanctify us?*

The Holy Spirit sanctifies us by his presence in the souls of the just. This is the uncreated Grace of God. He also sanctifies us by enlightening our minds to know God by faith, and thus we are united with the mind of God. He finally sanctifies us by enabling us to do the will of God, and thus we are united with the Heart of God. This sharing in God's Being, Wisdom, and Love is our sanctification. (QAC, 85)

**186.** *How is the Holy Spirit related to the Church?*

The Holy Spirit is related to the Church as her source of life. Those who are baptized and believe in Christ are the Church's members and therefore her visible body; the Holy Spirit, who is the Spirit of Christ, is the Church's vital principle, that is he gives the Church her very life and, therefore her invisible soul. (QAC, 85)

## *Ninth Article: "The Holy Catholic Church; the communion of saints"*

### **1. Mystical Body of Christ**

**187.** *What is the Catholic Church?*

The Catholic Church is a society of all who have been baptized, profess the faith of Christ, and are governed by their bishops under one visible head, the bishop of Rome. (QAC, 86)

**188.** *What do we mean by the Church?*

By the Church we mean all those who, in faith, look upon Jesus Christ as the Author of Salvation and the goal of human destiny. By the Church we can also mean the particular church of one city or locality. Moreover, the word "church" is used to refer to the building or sacred edifice where people gather to worship God. (QAC, 87)

**189.** *When did the Church come into being?*

The Church first came into being when Christ expired on the Cross. He prepared the founding of the Church during his public ministry, and he established the Church as a visible society when he sent his Spirit on the apostles on Pentecost Sunday. (QAC, 87)

**190. How did Christ actually bring the Church into existence?**

Christ actually brought the Church into existence by his death on Calvary, by which he won the graces that, through the Church, would be communicated to all mankind. (QAC, 87)

**191. How did Christ proclaim the Church?**

Christ proclaimed the Church by pouring out on his apostles the Spirit promised by the Father. Hence the Church, endowed with the gifts of charity, humility, and self-denial, receives the mission of proclaiming and establishing among all peoples the kingdom of Christ and of God. The Church on earth is the seed and the beginning of the kingdom of heaven. (QAC, 87)

**192. What is the Mystical Body of Christ?**

The Mystical Body of Christ is the whole Christ, head and body, now existing as the Church militant on earth, the Church suffering in purgatory, and the Church triumphant in heaven. (QAC, 87)

**193. What is the Church militant?**

The Church militant is the Catholic Church on earth. She is called militant because her members must engage in struggle with the world, the flesh, and the devil, in order to win her heavenly reward. (QAC, 88)

**194. What is the Church suffering?**

The Church suffering is the society of the souls in purgatory who have merited heaven but must still expiate the temporal punishment due to their sins before they enter into glory. (QAC, 88)

**195. What is the Church triumphant?**

The Church triumphant is the society of saints in heaven who have successfully overcome temptations and trials during their mortal lives. She is called triumphant because, like Christ, her members have won the victory over sin. (QAC, 88)

## **2. Marks of the True Church**

**196. How can the Catholic Church be recognized as the true Church?**

The Catholic Church can be recognized as the true Church by certain distinctive marks. We believe in the one, holy, Catholic, and apostolic Church. (QAC, 88)

**197. What is meant by the saying that the Church is one?**

When we say that the Church is one we mean that there are two forms of unity in the Church: the Unity of Faith and the Unity of Communion.

By Unity of the Faith we mean that those who belong to the Church believe the same faith proposed to them by the Church.

By the Unity of Communion we mean that the faithful are submissive to the authority of the bishops under the Roman Pontiff. (QAC, 88,89)

**198. What about the many "Churches" in Christianity today?**

The Catholic Church believes she is joined in many ways to the baptized in other "Churches" who are honored by the name of Christian. These other Christian bodies do not possess the marks of the one true Church in their fullness. They have these qualities of the one true Church in greater or lesser degree. Their members therefore enjoy more or less of the blessings which are available in their fullness only in the one true Church, founded by Christ, whose visible head on earth is the Roman pontiff. (QAC, 89)

**199. Who is the Roman pontiff?**

The Roman pontiff is the vicar of Christ, the successor of St. Peter and the visible head of the Church. (QAC, 90)

**200. Under Christ, does the pope have supreme authority over the whole Church on earth?**

Yes, under Christ, the pope has supreme authority over the whole Church on earth . . . He has supreme power over all the faithful and all the churches in everything pertaining to faith, morals, and divine worship. (QAC, 90)

**201. Are those guilty of heresy, schism, or apostasy totally severed from the Church?**

No, those guilty of heresy, schism, or apostasy are not severed from the bond of their baptismal character. But they are separated from the visible part of the Church, which includes the right to receive the sacraments, until they repent. (QAC, 91)

**202. Why is the Church apostolic?**

The Church is apostolic because her origin goes back to Christ's choice and ordination of the apostles; her doctrine has remained faithful to the teaching of the apostles; the pope and the bishops derive their authority in direct succession from Peter and the other apostles. It is especially this apostolic succession in the unbroken line over the centuries that witnesses to the oneness of the Catholic Church today with the Church originally founded by Christ on the apostles. (QAC, 91)

**203. How do we know that Christ wanted Peter to be the supreme head of the Church on earth?**

Everything the Savior said and did confirms this fact. Christ promised Peter he would make him the rock on which he would build the Church . . . After the Resurrection, Christ told Peter to feed his lambs . . . Christ foretold that he would strengthen the faith of Peter so that Peter in turn might strengthen the faith of his brethren among the apostles . . . Then after Christ's Ascension, Peter exercised the office of visible head of the Church, from Pentecost Sunday when he preached the first sermon, later worked the first miracle, and directed the work of evangelization . . . (QAC, 93)

**204. What is a bishop?**

A bishop is a successor of the apostles, who has received the fullness of Christ's priesthood.

The authority of the pope is universal, whereas the authority of bishops is local. Just as the pope is the pastor and head of the whole Church, so bishops who are ordinaries are the pastors and heads of their respective dioceses. (QAC, 94)

### **3. Sacrament of Salvation**

**205. Why did Christ establish the Church?**

Christ established the Church as a universal sacrament of salvation.

The Church is the universal sacrament of salvation as the divinely instituted means of conferring grace on all members of the human family.

The Church communicates grace to mankind by her teaching of revealed truth, her celebration of Mass and administration of the sacraments, her prayers and the practice of virtue by her members, and her guidance and government of faithful according to the will of God. (QAC, 97)

**206. Is the Church necessary for salvation?**

Yes, the Church is necessary for salvation. Christ himself declared that no one can be saved except through faith and baptism. He thereby affirmed the necessity of the Church, to which he entrusted the fullness of revelation and into which a person enters, as through a door, in the sacrament of baptism. (QAC, 98)

**207. For whom is there no salvation outside the Church?**

There is no salvation for those who, though incorporated in the Church by baptism, fail to persevere in sanctifying grace and die in a state of mortal sin. Those also are not saved who realize what they are doing but refuse to be baptized and accept the Church's means of salvation. (QAC, 98)

**208. Who are actually incorporated into the Church?**

Those who have been baptized by water in the name of the Holy Trinity are actually incorporated into the Church. (QAC, 98)

**209. Do baptized non-Catholics belong to the Catholic Church?**

Yes, everyone who is baptized by water in the name of the Trinity is a member of the Catholic Church. But only those enjoy full membership who profess the same Catholic faith, receive the same sacraments, and profess allegiance to the same bishops, as the successors of the apostles, under the sovereign pontiff of Rome.

The Catholic attitude toward Christians separated from Rome is to bring them to a complete sharing in the mystery of Christ.

The Catholic attitude toward non-Christians is to bring them the true faith, the blessings of baptism and the other sacraments, and to incorporate them in the Mystical Body of Christ.

Non-Christians can be saved through the Church according to their faith in whatever historical revelation they come to know and by their cooperation with the internal graces of the Holy Spirit which they receive. (QAC, 98,99)

**210.** . . . those who have not yet received the gospel are related in various ways to the People of God. In the first place there is the people to whom the covenants and the promises were given and from whom Christ was born according to the flesh (cf. Rom. 9:4-5). On account of their fathers, this people remains most dear to God, for God does not repent of the gifts He makes nor of the calls He issues (cf. Rom. 11:28-29). (DVII, 34)

**211.** . . . the plan of salvation also includes those who acknowledge the Creator. In the first place among these are the Moslems, who professing to hold the faith of Abraham, along with us adore the one merciful God, who on the last day will judge mankind. Nor is God Himself far distant from those who in the shadows and images seek the unknown God, for it is He who gives to all men life and breath and every other gift (cf. Acts 17:25-28), and who as the Savior wills that all men be saved (cf. 1 Tim. 2:4). (DVII, 35)

**212.** Those also can attain to everlasting salvation who through no fault of their own do not know the gospel of Christ or His Church, yet sincerely seek God and, moved by grace, strive by their deeds to do His will as it is known to them through the dictates of conscience. Nor does divine Providence deny the help necessary for salvation to those who, without blame on their part, have not yet arrived at an explicit knowledge of God, but who strive to live a good life, thanks to His grace. (DVII, 35)

#### **4. Teaching Authority and Infallibility**

**213.** *What is the Church's magisterium?*

The Church's magisterium is her universal teaching authority, her possession of light from God and therefore the divine right to teach all the faithful the truths of salvation. (QAC, 99)

**214.** *Is the Church's magisterium infallible?*

Yes, the Church's magisterium, which is vested exclusively in the successors of Peter and the other apostles, is infallible.

The pope and the community of bishops under the pope possess the gift of infallibility in teaching.

Infallibility is the immunity from error, excluding not only its existence but even its possibility. (QAC, 100)

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

The pope is infallible when he acts as the father and ruler of all the faithful. He enjoys the unique grace which protects him from error when he actually and specifically exercises the office of teacher of the universal Church and supreme judge in matters of faith and morals. (QAC, 100)

**216.** *What is the scope of infallibility?*

Papal infallibility is to preserve the flock of Christ from the poison of error. It covers two forms of teaching, i.e., of faith and morals. It may be a doctrine that is simply to be accepted by the mind as true, or a doctrine that is also to be acted upon by the will as good. It may be something revealed by God, like the Mystery of the Immaculate conception; or something knowable by reason, like the sinfulness of abortion or contraception. (QAC, 100)

#### **5. Communion of Saints**

**217.** *What is the communion of saints?*

The unity and cooperation of the members of the Church on earth with those in heaven and in heaven and in purgatory is the communion of saints. They are united in sharing one Mystical Body. And they cooperate by sharing their merits and prayers with one another, for the greater glory of God and the upbuilding of Christ's body which is his Church. (QAC, 102)

**218.** *Why are the members of the Mystical Body said to be saints?*

The members of the Mystical Body are said to be saints because, in the words of St. Paul, "What God wants is for you all to be holy" (1 Thessalonians 4:3). We are already sanctified in baptism and, by God's grace, are to grow in sanctity. Those in purgatory are in God's friendship, and the souls in heaven have reached their destiny. (QAC, 102)

**219.** *Whom does the Church honor as saints?*

Saints are persons who, in their life on earth, practiced extraordinary virtue that we are bidden to imitate. They now enjoy the beatific vision in heaven and are powerful intercessors for us before the throne of God. (QAC, 103)

**220.** *What is beatification . . . canonization?*

Beatification is the Church's declaration that a person who practiced heroic virtue may be venerated locally or by a limited number of people.

Canonization is the solemn declaration by the pope that the faithful should universally invoke a person as a saint. (QAC, 103)

## 6. Church and State

**221.** *What should be the relationship of Church and State?*

The Church and State differ in origin in that the Church was founded by a free act of God, while the State has its origin from man's natural needs and tendencies. They differ in purpose in that the Church aims to lead all men to eternal salvation, while the State exists to procure the temporal prosperity of its citizens. (QAC, 104)

**222.** *Does everyone have the right of religious freedom?*

Yes, everyone has the right to religious freedom. This means that no one may be coerced in any way to act against his religious convictions, nor be prevented from acting on these convictions, whether alone or in association with others. (QAC, 105)

## *Tenth Article: "The forgiveness of sin"*

### **The Mercy of God in the World Today**

**223.** *What sins can be forgiven?*

God forgives all sins without exception, provided we are truly repentant. (QAC, 106)

**224.** *What does the Catholic Church believe about the forgiveness of sins?*

She believes it is God's will that no one is forgiven except through the merits of Jesus Christ and that these merits are uniquely channeled through the Church he founded. (QAC, 106)

**225.** *How does the Church communicate the merits of Christ's mercy to sinners?*

The Church communicates Christ's mercy to sinners through the Mass and the sacraments, and all the prayers and good works of the faithful. (QAC, 106)

## *Eleventh Article: "The resurrection of the body"*

### **Death and Final Resurrection**

**226.** *Why must every human being die?*

We must all die because we have all sinned in Adam. (QAC, 107)

**227.** *What is death?*

Death is the separation of body and soul for a period of time. (QAC, 107)

**228.** *How long will the body remain in the earth?*

The body will remain in the earth until the day of final or general judgment. (QAC, 108)

**229.** *Are we still the same persons after the resurrection?*

Yes, although we are greatly changed for the better in our glorified state . . . (QAC, 109)

## *Twelfth Article: "And life everlasting. Amen."*

### **Heaven and the Four Last Things**

**230.** *Will the good and the wicked have the same life everlasting?*

No, the good will enter, as Christ promised, into eternal happiness, and the wicked into everlasting pain. (QAC, 110)

**231.** *What is the beatific vision?*

The beatific vision is a direct seeing of the Holy Trinity, with no creature standing between the soul and God. . . . it will produce intense happiness, such as only God has a right to enjoy but that he shares with those who enter heaven because they had served him faithfully on earth. (QAC, 110)

**232.** *Who are in heaven?*

Besides the angels, those now in heaven are the souls who entered eternity in the state of grace. They were either entirely free from temporal punishment due to sin when they died or, after death, were cleansed of this debt in purgatory. (QAC, 110)





PART TWO  
**LIVING THE  
CHRISTIAN FAITH**



# I. NORMS OF MORALITY

## 1. Human Responsibility

**233.** *If the risen Christ is the very grace of God, then is it true that salvation is the same as union with Christ?*  
Yes, union with Christ is the same as salvation. (SJPC, 58)

**234.** Is union with Christ the same as accepting him as my personal savior?  
Surely, the acceptance of salvation is a personal act which no one else can do for you. But it is not strictly a private affair. Those who would be disciples of Christ form a visible and identifiable community. (SJPC, 59)

**235.** *Is belief in Christ as savior enough to make one a member of this community of disciples?*  
No, it is not. Faith in Jesus is surely the essential component of Christian discipleship. But *baptism* is the visible ritual which initiates one into the community. (SJPC, 59)

**236.** *Is faith in what God revealed sufficient for salvation?*  
No, we must also keep his Commandments. As Christ himself told us, "If you wish to enter into life, keep the commandments" (Matthew 19:17). (QAC, 115)

**237.** It is the defined, dogmatic teaching of the Catholic Church that an adult cannot be justified without faith. The Council of Trent said that "faith is the beginning of man's salvation, the foundation and source of all justification . . ."

But what did the Council mean by "faith"? It certainly rejected the Lutheran notion of "fiducial faith", which is a confident trust in God through the saving merits of Jesus Christ. In Luther's view, that was all that was required. In the Catholic view, faith, in addition to being an act of trust in God, also has a dogmatic content that the mind must give assent to. Thus for Catholics faith consists in the firm acceptance of the divine truths of revelation on the authority of God who has revealed them. And Trent declared that fiducial faith alone is not enough to justify the sinner . . .

The Church teaches that even though faith (properly understood) is indispensable, still other virtuous acts are required for justification. (FC: Vol 3, 61)

**238.** *How do we keep the Commandments of God?*  
We keep the Commandments of God by living a good moral life . . . We live a good moral life by doing the will of God. (QAC, 115)

**239.** *How is the moral quality of our human acts determined?*  
The moral quality our human acts is determined from three sources: the object, the end or purpose, and the circumstances.

The object of the act is what we do . . . The end or purpose of the act is why we do it . . . The circumstances of a human act are the conditions under which it is performed. (QAC, 116)

**240.** *What is a morally good action?*  
A morally good action is one that leads us to heaven, and a morally bad action is one that leads us away from our eternal destiny. (QAC, 116,17)

**241.** *What are factors that diminish responsibility?*  
The factors that diminish responsibility are ignorance, emotion or passion, fear, past habits, and external force or violence. (QAC, 117)

## 2. Divine and Human Law

**242.** *What is divine law?*  
Divine law comes directly from God. By this law he directs all creatures in all their activities. Divine law may be called eternal, natural, or revealed, depending upon its particular form. (QAC, 119)

**243.** *What is meant by eternal law?*  
Eternal law is the divine reason that governs the whole universe. (QAC, 119)

**244. What is the natural law?**

The natural law is the law by which man comes to know the eternal law from created nature through the light of his native reason. (QAC, 119)

**245. What is revealed law?**

Revealed law is that by which man comes to know the eternal law through divine revelation. Revealed law spans the whole of God's special communication of his will . . . Among other revealed laws are the precept of baptism, the obligation to receive the sacraments of penance and the Eucharist, Christ's command to love our enemies, and his teaching about the indissolubility of Christian marriage. (QAC, 120)

**246. What is ecclesiastical law?**

Ecclesiastical law is an ordinance issued by legitimate authority in the Catholic Church. The legislators for the entire Church are the pope through the Roman Curia or an ecumenical council together with the pope. (QAC, 121)

### **3. The Decalogue**

**247. Are the Ten Commandments still binding under the New Law?**

Yes, Jesus himself confirmed the Ten Commandments when he said: "Do not imagine that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets. I have come not to abolish but to complete them . . ." He brought the Commandments to perfection in the sermon on the Mount. (QAC, 122)

**248. Is it necessary to keep the Commandments?**

Yes, it is necessary to keep the Commandments. For to break any of them willfully is to offend God and commit sin. (QAC, 122)

## **II. COMMANDMENTS OF GOD**

*First Commandment: I am Yahweh your God. You shall have no gods except me.*

### **1. The Worship of God**

**249. What does the first Commandment tell us?**

The first Commandment tells us that we are to worship the one, true, and living God and not allow any creature to replace God and his will in our lives. (QAC, 124)

**250. How is the worship of God put into practice?**

The worship of God is put into practice by adoration, prayer and sacrifice. (QAC, 125)

**251. Why must we pray?**

We must pray because prayer is absolutely necessary for salvation. We must also pray because God wants us to acknowledge his existence and complete reliance on him, to thank him for past favors received, to beg his mercy for having offended him by sin, and ask him for all the graces that we and others need. (QAC, 125)

**252. For whom should we pray?**

We should pray for anyone who has not yet reached eternal happiness, whether living or dead, for our parents, benefactors, friends, and even our enemies. We should pray for the Church, especially for the pope and bishops, for the faithful and for all mankind. (QAC, 126)

**253. Are superstition, vain observance, and idolatry serious sins?**

Yes, superstition, vain observance, and idolatry are by their nature serious sins. However, ignorance, bad example, or good faith may excuse a person from grave sin--as happens among people who have not been instructed in the true faith. (QAC, 127)

**254. How is the honor of God assaulted?**

The honor of God is assaulted by tempting God, sacrilege, and simony. To tempt God is to say or do something that tries to find out if God is all wise, almighty, or merciful; as when a person exposes his life to danger to find out if God will work a miracle to save him. Sacrilege is the contemptuous treatment of a person, place, or thing dedicated to God. Simony is the refusal to share, except for a price, such spiritual things as the sacraments, the Mass, blessings, relics, medals, or any object or service that confers supernatural benefits. (QAC, 128)

## **2. Veneration of Angels and Saints**

**255. Why is the veneration of angels and saints pleasing to God?**

The veneration of angels and saints is pleasing to God because in this way we praise him in the graces he bestowed upon his creatures and recognize his greatness in their holiness. (QAC, 128)

**256. How does the worship of God differ from the worship of angels and saints?**

The worship of God is adoration, that of angels and saints is veneration. Only God is to be adored; all others are to be honored as creatures whose dignity depends entirely upon God. (QAC, 129)

**257. Why do we venerate the blessed Mother above all the angels and saints?**

We venerate Mary above all the angels and saints because she is full of grace, the most perfect of creatures, the Mother of God and the Church, and the Queen of heaven and earth. (QAC, 129)

## **3. Veneration of Images and Relics**

**258. Of what use are sacred images and pictures?**

Sacred images and pictures remind us of the blessings that we have received from God and the saints. They inspire us to follow in their footsteps, to thank God for his great goodness to us, and to lead a holy life. (QAC, 129)

**259. Is there a danger of superstition in the use of sacred images?**

Yes, people can become superstitious in the use of sacred images. But this does not occur if the teachings of the Church are followed. (QAC, 129)

**260. Is the veneration of images, pictures, and relics lawful?**

The veneration of images, pictures, and relics is lawful because the honor paid to the image passes on to the one it represents. (QAC, 129)

## ***Second Commandment: You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.***

### **1. Blasphemy and Cursing**

**261. What is blasphemy . . . cursing?**

Blasphemy is any speech, thought, or action that show contempt for God. It is a very grave sin that admits of no light matter.

Cursing is to call down evil on someone or something. (QAC, 130)

**262. What is the greatest evil we can wish on anyone?**

The greatest evil we can wish on anyone is that a person be condemned to hell. (QAC, 130)

### **2. Vows, Oaths, and Adjurations**

**263. What does Catholic tradition associate with the second Commandment?**

Catholic tradition associates the making of vows and the taking of oaths with the second Commandment. (QAC, 131)

**264. What is a vow?**

A vow is a voluntary promise made to God to do something that is better than what we are obliged to do under the pain of sin.

Vows are covenants made with God, and not merely resolutions to oneself or promises made to another person. They are made with a view to obtaining divine grace as God's pledge in response to man's commitment. (QAC, 131,32)

**265. What is an oath?**

An oath is a reverent use of God's name when he is called upon to witness to the truth of what a person is saying. It is lawful to take an oath because swearing has been instituted as an assurance of sincerity. (QAC, 132)

**266. What is adjuration?**

Adjuration is the use of the name of God or of some sacred person or thing in order to strengthen a command or request.

Adjurations are permissible provided they are made with the right intention, and the circumstances warrant this kind of solemn invocation. (QAC, 132,33)

## *Third Commandment: Remember to keep holy the Lord's day.*

### **1. Sundays and Holydays: Mass Obligation**

**267. What does the third Commandment oblige us to do?**

The third Commandment obliges us to assist at Mass on Sundays and to abstain from all unnecessary servile work. (QAC, 133)

**268. Why was the Sabbath changed to Sunday?**

The Sabbath was changed to Sunday to commemorate the Resurrection of Christ from the dead on the first day of the week. (QAC, 133)

**269. What is the Church's teaching on the observance of Sunday?**

The Church teaches that on Sunday the faithful should assemble to participate in the Eucharist and hear the word of God. Sunday is to be a day of gladness and rest from work. The duty to assist at Mass is a grave obligation. (QAC, 133)

**270. Are we obliged to assist at Mass on any other days besides Sunday?**

Besides Sunday, we are obliged to assist at Mass on the holydays of obligation. These are special days set aside by the Church for the same reason that Sundays are to be kept holy. They are dedicated to the Lord and his saints to commemorate some outstanding mystery of the Faith. (QAC, 134)

### **2. Sunday as a Day of Rest**

**271. What kind of work is permitted on Sundays?**

So-called liberal work is permitted on Sunday, such as reading, writing, teaching, drawing, or music; common work, such as traveling, hunting, or fishing; daily necessities, like cooking, care of domestic animals; any work having immediate relation with the Church; and acts of charity, like care of the sick and work done for the poor.

**272. What kind of work is forbidden on Sundays?**

All servile work, such as field labor, mechanical and industrial work is forbidden on Sunday. Public sales and judiciary work are also forbidden. (QAC, 135)

**273. How serious is the sin of working on Sundays?**

It is a grave sin to work on Sunday in contempt of the law or when the work gives grave scandal to others. (QAC, 135)

## *Fourth Commandment: Honor your father and your mother.*

### **Obedience, Love, and Respect for Parents**

**274.** *Is the duty of love, respect, and obedience a grave obligation?*

Yes, the duty of love, respect, and obedience is a grave obligation and sins opposed to this duty are mortal in nature when the matter is serious. (QAC, 136)

**275.** *When is a son or daughter not bound to obey the parents?*

A son or daughter is not bound to obey the parents whenever they command something that is clearly against the Commandments of God or the Church, or when they are unreasonably opposed to the choice of one's state of life . . . (QAC, 136)

## *Fifth Commandment: You shall not kill.*

### **1. Justice and Charity**

**276.** *Did the people in the Old Testament respect human life?*

Yes, the people in the Old Testament had been forcefully taught to respect human life and avoid killing any innocent human beings, whether born or unborn. (QAC, 138)

**277.** *How does the New Law differ concerning the fifth Commandment?*

The New Law differs from the Mosaic Law regarding the fifth Commandment by its prohibition of interior feelings of hatred and anger and its stress on charity in helping and not only not harming the neighbor. (QAC, 138)

### **2. Ordinary and Extraordinary Means of Preserving Human Life**

**278.** *How are we obliged to care for our own life?*

We are obliged to use ordinary means to sustain our life because our body is a gift that God wants us to receive with gratitude. (QAC, 139)

**279.** *What are the extraordinary means of preserving life?*

The extraordinary means of preserving life are those that cannot be obtained or used without extreme difficulty in terms of pain, expense, or other burdening factors.

We do not have to use extraordinary means to keep alive because God does not demand what is beyond the ordinary power of most people to fulfill. (QAC, 139)

### **3. Murder, Genocide, and Organ Transplant**

**280.** *What is murder?*

Murder is the direct and deliberate taking of an innocent person's life. (QAC, 140)

**281.** *Why is human life sacred?*

Human life is sacred because it begins by the creative act of God; it is capable of knowing and loving God; it has been redeemed by the Passion and Death of the Son of God, and is destined to possess God for all eternity. (QAC, 140)

**282.** *When does human life begin?*

Human life begins at the moment of conception. (QAC, 140)

**283.** *What is genocide?*

Genocide is the deliberate and systematic destruction of a race or class of people on real or alleged grounds of their being harmful to society. (QAC, 140)

**284. How does the Church look upon the transplanting of vital organs?**

The Church looks favorably upon the transplanting of vital organs provided the loss of such organs does not deprive the donor of life itself. (QAC, 141)

#### **4. Abortion and Sterilization**

**285. What is abortion?**

Abortion is the direct expelling from the mother's womb of a living fetus that cannot live outside the womb even with the most extraordinary medical care. The Church has always held that abortion, as the deliberate killing of an unborn child, at any time after conception, is a grave sin. (QAC, 141)

**286. Is the Catholic Church the only religious body that condemns abortion?**

No, many other religious bodies like the Eastern Orthodox Churches, the Orthodox Jews, and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, also condemn abortion. (QAC, 142)

**287. What is sterilization?**

Sterilization is the permanent or temporary removal or making inactive of any reproductive organ for the purpose of inducing sterility. Direct or contraceptive sterilization is done with the deliberate intent of avoiding conception. Direct sterilization is a grave sin because it means the unjustified loss of the sacred of procreation conferred on a person by God. (QAC, 143)

#### **5. Suicide**

**288. Why is suicide a grievous sin?**

Suicide is a grievous sin because it is opposed to our nature and to the charity we owe ourselves; because it is a scandal to society and the loss of one of its members, and especially because it is an injustice to God, who alone has the right to give life and to take it away. (QAC, 144)

**289. How does the Church view a suicidal death?**

The Church views direct suicide as an evil in itself and, therefore, no circumstances can ever justify it . . . Suicides are deprived of Church burial unless, as generally happens, they were not fully responsible for their action. (QAC, 144)

#### **6. Euthanasia and Capital Punishment**

**290. What is euthanasia?**

Euthanasia has two meanings. It is the deliberate termination of human life for the purpose of ending useless pain; and it is the killing of an innocent person who is considered a burden to society. (QAC, 144)

**291. Why does Catholic Christianity condemn euthanasia?**

Catholic Christianity condemns euthanasia because it is a grave crime against justice, both human and divine. Man is only a steward of his life, and the life of others is their most precious possession of which no one under God may deprive them. (QAC, 145)

**292. Who are disqualified from the right to human life?**

Disqualified from the right to human life are those judged to be a grave menace to society, such as criminals and unjust aggressors from whom we may protect ourselves. (QAC, 145)

**293. Who has the right to inflict capital punishment?**

The right to inflict capital punishment is invested in public authority. No private person has the right to put a criminal to death. (QAC, 145)



## *Sixth and Ninth Commandments: You shall not commit adultery. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.*

### **1. External and Internal Sins Against Chastity**

**294.** *How are the sixth and ninth Commandments related?*

The sixth and ninth Commandments are related in that they forbid respectively external and internal sins against chastity. (QAC, 148)

**295.** *What are external sins against chastity?*

External sins against chastity are any words, actions, or gestures consciously performed to arouse or indulge sexual pleasure except between husband and wife in their legitimate marital relations. (QAC, 148)

**296.** *What are internal sins against chastity?*

Internal sins against chastity are sexual thoughts, desires, or feelings deliberately aroused or indulged, except by husband and wife in their relationships; also included are intentions and desires to perform external sins of unchastity. (QAC, 149)

### **2. Virtue of Chastity, Meaning and Practice**

**297.** *Why are Christians to be chaste?*

A Christian is to be chaste because his body does not belong exclusively to him and because it has been elevated by grace to be the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit. (QAC, 149)

**298.** *What is the Church's position on premarital sexual relations?*

The Church teaches that all noncapital relations are a serious deviation from divine law. (QAC, 149)

**299.** *Why is sexual experience in marriage sacred?*

Sexual experience in marriage is sacred because it is divinely intended to encourage married people to fulfill their marital obligations and help them grow in mutual love. (QAC, 151)

### **3. Unnatural Sex Experience: Masturbation, Homosexuality, and Contraception**

**300.** *What sexual experiences are unnatural?*

The sexual experiences that are unnatural are masturbation and homosexuality. (QAC, 152)

**301.** *Why is contraception sinful?*

Contraception is sinful because the conjugal act is of its very nature designed for the purpose of procreating children. Therefore, those who deliberately interfere with the natural act of procreation do that which is essentially immoral and contrary to the will of God. (QAC, 153)

**302.** *Why is contraception morally inseparable from abortion?*

Contraception is morally inseparable from abortion because selfish indulgence of sex can become murderous. People who practice contraception are strongly tempted to resort to legalized abortion if an unwanted child is conceived. (QAC, 154)

### **4. Natural Family Planning**

**303.** *What is periodic continence?*

Periodic continence is abstinence from marital intercourse, for legitimate reasons, during the days each month when the wife is naturally fertile. (QAC, 155)

**304.** *How is the exclusion of children justified in natural family planning?*

The exclusion of children is justified because the means used are legitimate. (QAC, 156)

## *Seventh and Tenth Commandments: You shall not steal. You shall not covet anything that belongs to your neighbor.*

### **1. Stealing, Dishonesty, and Gambling**

**305.** *Who are guilty of theft or robbery?*

Not only robbers and thieves but all those who 1) advise or assist them; 2) buy, sell, or keep stolen goods; 3) do not return what they have found or borrowed; 4) do not pay their just debts; and 5) beg without need and thus defraud those who are really poor. (QAC, 158)

**306.** *What is a necessary purpose of amendment after theft?*

A necessary purpose of amendment after theft is the willingness to make restitution. Without it, forgiveness cannot be expected. (QAC, 160)

**307.** Gambling is permissible if there is no fraud, and if all who participate have basically the same chance of winning. (QAC, 160)

### **2. Social Justice**

**308.** *What is social justice?*

Social justice is the virtue which regulates the mutual relations between human individuals and society. (QAC, 161)

**309.** *What are two wrong extremes of social justice?*

The two wrong extremes of social justice are individualism, which denies or minimizes the social or public character of the right of private property; and collectivism, which rejects or minimizes the private and individual character of ownership. (QAC, 161)

**310.** *What does the Church say about the great disproportion between the very rich and the very poor?*

Concerning the great disproportion between the very rich and the very poor, the Church says that the rich must share or give some of their wealth to the poor. In doing this, they are not making a gift of their possessions but handing out what already belongs to the poor. (QAC, 162)

### **3. Greed**

**311.** *What is greed?*

Greed is the inordinate desire to possess material things. It is the basis of covetousness which leads to stealing. (QAC, 163)

**312.** *Why is covetousness sinful?*

Covetousness is sinful because evil thoughts and desires defile the human heart; in this case they are against the divine commandment to be satisfied with what we possess or can justly acquire. (QAC, 163)

## *Eighth Commandment: You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.*

### **1. Telling the Truth**

**313.** *What does the eighth Commandment forbid?*

The eighth Commandment directly forbids telling an untruth about another person, whether the untruth is told in a court of law or in personal matters. Indirectly it forbids all deliberate lying (cf. Proverbs 12:22. (QAC, 164)

**314.** *How sinful is lying?*

Lying is traditionally held to be a venial offense against God. It may, however, become grave under certain circumstances, such as telling a lie under oath or denying one's religion as a Catholic. (QAC, 165)

## 2. Keeping Secrets

**315.** *What is our responsibility to keep secrets?*

Natural and promised secrets may not be revealed unless keeping the knowledge hidden would cause grave damage or injury. Entrusted secrets must be kept unless the grave harm caused by withholding the information is imminent. Should one reveal a secret unjustly, the gravity of the sin depends on how serious the matter is. (QAC, 169)

**316.** *What is meant by the seal of confession?*

By the seal of confession is meant the absolute obligation to keep secret whatever is disclosed in sacramental confession. (QAC, 169)

## 4. Detraction, Calumny, Rash Judgment, and Vengeance

**317.** *What is calumny?*

Calumny, sometimes called slander, differs from detraction in that what is said or attributed to the person is not true. (QAC, 170)

**318.** *How sinful is calumny?*

Calumny is by its nature a mortal sin. It immediately attacks truth, justice, and charity. It is venial only when the matter is light. (QAC, 170)

# III. THE BEATITUDES

## 1. The New Covenant

**319.** *What are the Beatitudes?*

The Beatitudes are God's covenant with his chosen people in the New Testament. He promises not only heaven in the world to come but joy on earth. In the Beatitudes, Christ explains how the joy foretold by the angels at Bethlehem is to be attained. (QAC, 172)

**320.** *How many Beatitudes are there?*

There are eight Beatitudes which our Lord proclaimed in his Sermon on the Mount. They may be called the eight commandments of the New Law. Each commandment carries the promise of a distinctive form of happiness. (QAC, 172)

**321.** *Is it possible to practice the Beatitudes?*

It is possible for any faithful, no matter what their state in life, to practice the Beatitudes. But they must pray and trust in God. (QAC, 172)

## 2. Eight Sources of True Happiness (The Beatitudes)

# IV. COMMANDMENTS OF THE CHURCH

## *Principle Obligations of Catholics*

**322.** *Are we obliged to keep only the Commandments of God?*

We are also to keep the commandments of the Church, which are called the precepts of the Church. (QAC, 177)

**323.** *What obedience do we owe the laws of the Church?*

The obedience we owe the laws of the Church is not merely external conformity but internal submission of will. It is not enough to keep the letter of the law; we must understand the spirit of the law and put it into practice. (QAC, 177)

**324. What are the principle commandments of the Church?**

1. To keep holy the day of the Lord's Resurrection: to worship God by participating in Mass every Sunday and holy day of obligation; to avoid those activities that would hinder renewal of souls and body, e.g., needless work and business activities and unnecessary shopping.
2. To lead a sacramental life: to receive Holy Communion frequently and the sacrament of penance regularly—minimally to receive the sacrament of penance at least once a year between the First Sunday of Lent and Trinity Sunday.
3. To study Catholic teaching in preparation for the sacrament of penance, the Eucharist, and confirmation; to be confirmed; and then to continue to study the Catholic faith.
4. To observe the marriage laws of the Church: to give religious training (by example and word) to one's children; to use parish schools and religious educational programs.
5. To strengthen and support the Church, one's own parish community and parish priests, the worldwide Church and the Holy Father.
6. To do penance, including abstaining from meat and fasting on appointed days.
7. To join the missionary spirit and apostolate of the Church. (QAC, 178)

**325. What rights does the Church have regarding the Commandments of God and her own precepts?**

The Church has the right to interpret the Commandments of God and her precepts for the faithful. She is divinely authorized to protect the faithful from misinterpretation of the divine and ecclesiastical laws. She is to watch over the observance of the Decalogue and her own precepts. And she may legitimately punish those who are disobedient, for example, by excluding them from the sacraments, from Christian burial, and, in extreme cases, even from visible communion with the rest of the faithful. (QAC, 178)

**326. Are these the only commandments of the Church?**

No, there are many other laws of the Church, of which these are only the more common ones that affect most of the people. A complete collection of the Church's laws, unified and synthesized, is the Code of Canon Law. (QAC, 179)

## V. KNOWLEDGE OF GOD'S WILL

### *Meanings, Types and Formation of Conscience*

**327. How much does each person know God's will in all circumstances of life?**

Each person knows God's will individually through the voice of conscience. (QAC, 180)

**328. What kind of conscience is necessary for growth in Christian virtue?**

To grow in Christian virtue, our conscience should be alert to fulfill the divine will, not only in matters of strict obligation, but in whatever would be pleasing to God. (QAC, 180)

**329. What is a hardened conscience?**

A hardened conscience judges that either all or certain grave sins are trivial or not wrong at all. It is acquired by the habit of sinning mortally, until a person's mind make virtue out of vice. (QAC, 182)

## VI. VIOLATION OF GOD'S WILL

### *1. Capital Sins: Pride, Lust, Anger, Covetousness, Envy, Sloth, and Gluttony*

**330. What is sin?**

Sin is the willful transgression of a divine law, that is, we knowingly and freely go beyond the limits that God has imposed on our moral liberty. (QAC, 183)

**331.** Genuine sin in the Bible is always described as *rebellion* against God. The sinner casts away God's graciousness in Christ and chooses to be a law unto himself. (SJPC, 163)

**332.** *But surely not everything sinful is also a rebellion against God?*

Obviously not. The Bible speaks of understandable and forgivable offenses which even the righteous commit . . . From this, Christian moralists evolved the distinction between mortal and venial sin. (SPJC, 163, 64)

**333.** *What sins are the basis of all human failings?*

The sins that are the basis of all human failings are the capital sins

The common origin of all capital sins is original sin. (QAC, 183)

**334.** *What is the difference between sin and vice?*

Sin is an evil action, whereas vice is an evil habit. Therefore it is possible to commit a sin against a certain virtue without having the vice as opposed to the virtue. (QAC, 185)

## ***2. Personal Sins, Mortal and Venial***

**335.** *How many kinds of personal sin are there?*

There are two kinds of personal sin. Actual and habitual. Actual sin is any deliberate thought, word, deed, or omission contrary to God's eternal law. (QAC, 186)

**336.** *How are actual sins classified in their effect on the soul?*

Actual sins are either mortal or venial sins, depending on whether or not they deprive a person of supernatural life or not. (QAC, 186)

**337.** *What is mortal sin?*

Mortal sin is an actual sin that destroys sanctifying grace in the soul. It is called mortal since it causes the supernatural death of the soul. (QAC, 186)

**338.** *What are the conditions for mortal sin?*

There are three conditions for mortal sin. First, the matter or what is done must be seriously wrong, either in itself or because of the circumstances . . .; or because of the purpose . . . Second, there must be clear awareness of the serious nature of the act at the time it is performed. And third, there is full consent of the will, so that a person deliberately wants to do what he knows is gravely sinful. (QAC, 186)

**339.** *What are the effects of mortal sin?*

The effects of mortal sin are the loss of divine friendship, past supernatural merits, and the right to enter heaven unless the sinner repents. (QAC, 186)

**340.** *How can the supernatural life of the soul be restored?*

The supernatural life of the soul, lost by mortal sin, can be restored by the sacrament of penance or by a perfect act of contrition. In the sacrament of penance a person confesses the mortal sin(s) and receives absolution from the priest. In a perfect act of contrition, the person is sorry for having offended God who is all good and deserving of our love; and resolves to confess the mortal sin(s) in the sacrament at his earliest convenience. (QAC, 186, 87)

**341.** *What is a venial sin?*

Venial sin is an offense against God that does not deprive the sinner of sanctifying grace. (QAC, 187)

**342.** *Why are some sins called venial?*

Some sins are called venial from the Latin word *venia*, which means "pardon." A person in venial sin still has the principle of supernatural life that allows healing (or pardon) from within . . . They may best be called harmful sins, compared to those that are deadly or mortal. (QAC, 187)

**343.** *When does a person commit a venial sin?*

A person commits a venial sin when he transgresses a divine law that is not grave, or when he transgresses a grave precept but without awareness of its gravity or full consent. (QAC, 187)

**344. What are the effects of venial sin?**

Venial sin darkens the mind in its perception of virtue, and weakens the will in its pursuit of holiness, lowers one's resistance to temptation, and causes a person to deviate from the path that leads to heavenly glory. (QAC, 187)

**345. What is the deepest distinction between mortal and venial sin?**

The deepest distinction between mortal and venial sin lies in the imperfection of human character as it conditions our freedom of choice . . . Thus venial sin does little harm because we allow for it. (SJPC, 183)

**346.** Looking at the distinction from one angle, it is a difference of *magnitude*. (SJPC, 164)

### ***3. Occasions of Sin, Temptation, Situation Ethics and Fundamental Option***

**347. What is meant by occasion of sin?**

An occasion of sin is any external circumstance—a person, place, or thing—that of its own nature or because of man's weakness inclines and leads one to sin. (QAC, 188)

**348. What is habitual sin?**

Habitual sin is the sinful state of the soul resulting from actual sin.

There are two kinds of habitual sin. More properly, habitual sin refers to the state of soul in unrepented mortal sin. Habitual sin, however, may also mean the weakened state of soul of a person, with unforgiven venial sins, who is still in the grace of God. (QAC, 189)

**349. How are the principles of Christian morality objective?**

The principles of Christian morality are objective because they are independent of the personal judgment of each person. Right and wrong do not only exist in the mind. (QAC, 190)

**350. What is the theory of the fundamental option?**

The theory of the fundamental option holds that the only mortal sin a person can commit is to choose to reject God. No matter how objectively grave a sin may be, e.g., adultery, it is not a mortal sin unless a person makes a radical decision (fundamental option) against serving God. (QAC, 190)

**351. What is the Church's teaching on the fundamental option?**

The Church's teaching on the fundamental option is that mortal sin, which is opposed to God, does not consist only in explicit resistance to the divine commandment of charity . . . It is not man who decides what deprives man of divine friendship. (QAC, 190)

## **VII. THE VIRTUES**

### ***1. Theological Virtues***

**352. What is a virtue?**

A virtue is a good habit, as opposed to vice, which is a bad habit. (QAC, 191)

**353. What are the theological virtues?**

They are the infused virtues of faith, hope and charity, which supply for the mind and will what neither faculty has of itself, namely the salutary knowledge, desire and love of God and his will that will lead to heaven. (QAC, 191)

**354. How are the infused virtues diminished or even lost?**

Infused virtues are diminished by not performing acts of faith, hope, and charity, and by venial sin; depending on the virtue, they are lost when a person commits a mortal sin. Thus supernatural charity is lost by every mortal sin, hope is lost by the sin of despair, and faith by a grave sin of disbelief in whatever God has revealed. (QAC, 192)

## **2. Faith as a Virtue**

**355.** *Is the virtue of faith necessary for salvation?*

Yes the virtue of faith is absolutely necessary for salvation because no one can be saved without sanctifying grace; and sanctifying grace cannot exist without habitual faith. (QAC, 193)

**356.** *How can the gift of faith be lost?*

The gift of faith can be lost by neglecting what we are bound to believe; by not making an honest effort to understand what we believe and why; by not performing acts of faith, through internal belief and external profession of what we believe; and by failing to strengthen our faith through the sacraments of penance and the Eucharist and through constant prayer. (QAC, 193)

## **3. Supernatural Hope**

**357.** *Is the virtue of hope necessary?*

Yes the virtue of hope is necessary because it is the link between faith and charity. We must believe (with the mind) in something before we can hope (with the will) to obtain it. (QAC, 195)

**358.** *Is hope sufficient for salvation?*

The virtue of hope is not sufficient for salvation. It must be animated by supernatural charity. (QAC, 195)

**359.** *How do we sin by presumption?*

We sin by presumption by acting as though we can save ourselves without God's help . . . At the other extreme it reflects the mistaken notion that God will save us in spite of ourselves with the consequent postponement of conversion. (QAC, 195)

## **4. Love of God and Our Neighbor**

**360.** *Why is charity a supernatural virtue?*

Charity is a supernatural virtue because it is not naturally acquired but specially infused into the soul at baptism. It is also supernatural because it enables us to do what is naturally impossible. (QAC, 196)

**361.** *What does charity toward God involve?*

We must love God above all other things, and be ready to lose everything rather than offend him. Charity toward God, expressed by frequent acts of love, is necessary for salvation. (QAC, 196)

## **5. Moral Virtues: Prudence, Justice, Fortitude and Temperance**

**362.** *What are the moral virtues?*

They are those virtues whose immediate object is not God, the final end of all things, but human activities that lead one to God. They are acquired virtues because they are normally developed by human effort, and facility is achieved through repetition. But the moral virtues . . . are also called cardinal virtues, because they are primary in human conduct. (QAC, 200)

**363.** *How do the cardinal virtues guide our moral actions?*

The cardinal virtues guide our moral actions by keeping our faculties in order: prudence is for the mind, justice is for the will, temperance controls the urge to want what is pleasant and fortitude enables us to bear what is painful. (QAC, 203)

# VIII. GIFTS AND FRUITS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

## **1. Seven Gifts or Instincts of the Divine Indwelling**

**364.** *What are the gifts of the Holy Spirit?*

The gifts of the Holy Spirit are supernatural habits which perfect the soul beyond the virtues, making it ready and responsive to divine grace. (QAC, 204)

**365. How many gifts of the Holy Spirit are there?**

There are seven gifts of the Holy Spirit: wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord. (QAC, 204)

## **2. Twelve Fruits or Benefits of God's Friendship**

**366. What are the fruits of the Holy Spirit?**

The fruits of the Holy Spirit are the result of his presence in a believing soul, much as the produce of a tree is the evidence of its fruit-bearing quality. (QAC, 205)

**367. What fruits of the Holy Spirit make us more perfect interiorly . . . and exteriorly?**

The fruits of the Holy Spirit that make us more perfect interiorly are charity, joy, peace . . . patience and longanimity.

The fruits that make us more perfect exteriorly are goodness, benignity, mildness, and fidelity . . . modesty, continence, and chastity . . . (QAC, 206)

# IX. CHRISTIAN PERFECTION

## **1. The Call to Holiness**

**368. Who are called to become holy?**

All Christians, regardless of their age, ability or rank in society are called to become holy. (QAC, 207)

**369. Why are Christians called to become holy?**

All Christians are called to become holy because this is why God became man, not only to redeem us from sin but also to lead us to become perfect. (QAC, 207)

## **2. States of Perfection**

**370. What are the states of perfection?**

The states of perfection are mainly religious communities and secular institutes. Their principle purpose is to witness to holiness. (QAC, 208)

**371. Who are religious?**

Religious are men and women who are called to follow Christ with greater liberty, and to imitate him more closely by practicing the evangelical counsels. They voluntarily consecrate their whole lives to God, according to the different charisms of each founder of a religious institute as accepted and approved by the Church's hierarchy under the holy see. (QAC, 209)

**372. What is the religious state?**

The religious state is a state of perfection that consists of four essential elements: a fixed or stable mode of life, community living, observance of the evangelical counsels, and profession of the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. (QAC, 209)

## **3. Laity and the Lay Apostolate**

**373. Scripture speaks of the royal priesthood of the laity. Does this mean they are equal to ordained priests?**

No, the laity are not equal to ordained priests. Their royal priesthood refers to the privilege received at baptism to offer themselves, with Christ, in the Eucharist Sacrifice and to obtain from Christ the graces he confers on the Church as his Mystical Body. (QAC, 211)

**374. What is the special task of lay people in the Church?**

The special task of the laity is to make the Church present and fruitful in the world. It is through them that she can become the salt of the earth. Incorporated into Christ by baptism, they share in their own way the priestly, prophetic, and kingly office of the Savior. Their lives of sacrifice help to sanctify the whole people of God; they proclaim Christ and teach him by word and example; and they are in a position to bring others to Christ as parents and leaders in the family and civil society. (QAC, 211)



PART THREE  
**SOURCES OF THE  
CHRISTIAN LIFE**



# I. DIVINE GRACE

## 1. Meaning and Kinds

**375. What is grace?**

Grace is a supernatural gift that, through the merits of Jesus Christ, God freely bestows on human beings in order to bring them to eternal life. Nature is what we are born with and into, when we enter this world; grace is what we still need to enter heaven in the world to come. (QAC, 215)

**376. Why do we say that divine grace is available to all?**

Divine grace is available to all because Christ died for all mankind. All are in fact called to the same destiny, which is heaven. The Holy Spirit offers everyone the possibility of salvation. Even the most hardened sinner receives at least the grace to pray and ask for God's help. (QAC, 216)

**377. What is justification?**

Justification is the passing from a state of sin to the state of grace and adoption as children of God. (QAC, 216)

**378. What are the further effects of justification?**

Besides the divine indwelling, through justification we receive the created gift of habitual or sanctifying grace. (QAC, 216)

## 2. Sanctifying or Habitual Grace

**379. What is habitual or sanctifying grace?**

Habitual or sanctifying grace is a supernatural quality that dwells in the human soul, by which a person shares in the divine nature, becomes a temple of the Holy Spirit, a friend of God, his adopted child, an heir to the glory of heaven, and able to perform actions meriting eternal life. (QAC, 217)

**380. Is sanctifying grace necessary to reach heaven?**

Yes, sanctifying grace is absolutely necessary for everyone, even for infants, to reach heaven and the eternal vision of God. (QAC, 217)

**381. Can sanctifying grace be increased?**

Yes, sanctifying grace is increased by every good action we perform in the state of grace. Every act of virtue, every prayer, every reception of the sacraments by a person already in the friendship of God increases that person's habitual or sanctifying grace. (QAC, 217)

**382. Can sanctifying grace be lost or lessened in the soul?**

We lose sanctifying grace by committing mortal sins. This means the soul is spiritually dead because it is no longer united with God. Sanctifying grace is lessened in the soul through giving in to temptation by committing venial sins. (QAC, 217)

**383. How is sanctifying grace regained?**

Sanctifying grace is regained by sincere sorrow for the sins committed, and receiving the sacrament of penance or anointing. (QAC, 217)

## 3. Actual Graces

**384. What is actual grace?**

Actual grace is a supernatural help from God by which he enlightens a person's mind and moves the will to do good and avoid evil for the sake of eternal life. Unlike sanctifying grace, actual grace is not a quality that dwells in the soul. It is rather a holy thought or desire from God that leads a person to perform a supernatural action that is naturally impossible to do. (QAC, 218)

**385. Is actual grace necessary?**

Yes, actual grace is necessary for a person to recover sanctifying grace that has been lost by mortal sin. It is also necessary for those in a state of grace to perform actions pleasing to God and leading to heaven. (QAC, 219)

**386.** *How do we know that grace is absolutely necessary for salvation?*

We know that grace is absolutely necessary for salvation from the teaching of Christ and the Church. We can also conclude to the need of grace from the fact that our human faculties of themselves are capable only of natural acts. (QAC, 219)

#### **4. Human Freedom and Merit**

**387.** *What is supernatural merit?*

Supernatural merit is that quality of a good act which gives the one who performs it the right to be rewarded by God, in this life and in the life to come. (QAC, 220)

**388.** *What can we merit supernaturally?*

We can supernaturally merit for ourselves an increase of sanctifying grace and the infused virtues, actual graces and a title to them, the right to enter heaven if we die in the divine friendship and an increase of happiness in heaven. (QAC, 220)

**389.** *Can a person perform good works while in mortal sin?*

A person in mortal sin can perform good works. Although these good actions do not merit heaven, yet with the help of actual grace they dispose a sinner for a return to God's friendship. (QAC, 221)

**390.** *What is the grace of final perseverance?*

The grace of final perseverance is the grace of actually dying in the friendship of God and therefore reaching heaven. This grace cannot be strictly merited but must earnestly be prayed for. Thus, every Our Father is a prayer for the grace of final perseverance; and in every Hail Mary we ask, 'Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death'. (QAC, 221)

**391.** *What is the main purpose of human freedom?*

The main purpose of our human freedom is to cooperate with the graces that God gives to us. (QAC, 221)

## II. THE SACRAMENTS IN GENERAL

### ***Institution by Christ, Number, Administration, and Reception***

**392.** *What is a sacrament?*

A sacrament is a sensible sign, instituted by Jesus Christ, which confers the grace it signifies. (QAC, 223)

**393.** *What is a sensible sign?*

A sensible sign is something perceived by the senses that leads one to know something else not perceived by the senses. For example, the pouring of water in baptism is perceived by the senses. This signifies the internal cleansing of the soul from sin, which is known only by faith. (QAC, 223)

**394.** *How are sacraments signs?*

They are signs in two ways: they indicate externally what takes place within the soul of the one receiving the sacrament, and they actually produce the grace they signify. (QAC, 224)

**395.** *How many sacraments did Christ institute?*

Christ instituted seven sacraments, namely, baptism, confirmation, Holy Eucharist, penance, orders, matrimony, and anointing of the sick. (QAC, 224)

**396.** *Why did Christ institute the sacraments?*

Christ instituted the sacraments because he instituted the New Law. The demands of his law . . . require extraordinary grace that only he can give. He confers this grace on his followers mainly through the sacraments, as indispensable means of salvation and sanctification. (QAC, 225)

**397.** *Why are there seven sacraments?*

We must be born in the life of grace by baptism, strengthened in this life by confirmation, nourished to sustain the supernatural life by the Eucharist, healed by the sacrament of penance, guided in the supernatural society of the Church by priests who receive sacred orders, the church is perpetuated by the sacrament of matrimony, and we are prepared for eternity by the sacrament of anointing. (QAC, 225)

**398. Are the sacraments necessary for salvation?**

According to the God has willed that we be saved, the sacraments are necessary for salvation. Not all the sacraments, however, are equally necessary for everyone. Two of the sacraments, baptism and the Eucharist, on the words of Christ are absolutely necessary, at least by desire. (QAC, 226)

**399. Why are faith and the state of grace not required to confer the sacraments validly?**

Faith and the state of grace are not required to confer the sacraments validly because the sacraments communicate grace in virtue of the rite itself. (QAC, 226)

**400. What conditions are necessary for the valid reception of a sacrament?**

For the valid reception of a sacrament adults must have the intention to receive because no one can be sanctified without the consent of his will. For infants and those who never had the use of reason the intention is supplied by the Church. (QAC, 227,28)

**401. What is the sacramental character?**

The sacramental character is a permanent, spiritual sign, imprinted on the soul, which makes it impossible to repeat the sacrament. (QAC, 228)

**402. Which of the sacraments imprint a character?**

Baptism, confirmation, and sacred orders imprint the sacramental character. They establish a person in a perpetual state proper to the sacrament. Thus baptism gives a place in the family of Jesus Christ, confirmation enlists us in the army of the Savior, and sacred orders constitutes certain men as ministers of Jesus Christ, to consecrate his body and blood, offer Mass, and forgive sins in his name. (QAC, 228)

## III. THE SEVEN SACRAMENTS

### ***Baptism***

#### **1. Meaning and Conferral**

**403. What is baptism?**

Baptism is the sacrament of spiritual rebirth. Through the symbolic action of washing with water and the use of appropriate ritual words, the baptized person is cleansed of all his sins and incorporated into Christ. (QAC, 230)

**404. What does the word baptism mean?**

The word baptism literally means immersion, in the sense of dipping under water. It also means to bathe. (QAC, 230)

**405. When should baptism be received?**

Baptism should be received as soon after birth as is conveniently possible, certainly within a month. (QAC, 231)

**406. What is the sign of baptism?**

The sign of the sacrament of baptism is the external pouring of the water or immersion into water, along with the invocation of the Holy Trinity. (QAC, 231)

#### **2. Spiritual Effects**

**407. What are the effects of baptism?**

The effects of baptism are the removal of the guilt of sin and all punishment due to sin, conferral of the grace of regeneration and the infused virtues, incorporation into Christ and his Church, receiving the baptismal character and the right to heaven. (QAC, 232)

**408. *What sins does baptism take away?***

Baptism remits the guilt of all sins, that is, it takes away all sins, whether original sin as inherited from Adam at conception, or actual sin as incurred by each person on reaching the age of reason. No matter how frequent, or how grave the actual sins may be, their guilt is all removed at baptism. (QAC, 232)

**409. *What penalties does baptism remove?***

Baptism removes all the penalties, eternal and temporal, attached to original and actual sin. (QAC, 232)

**410. *What is the grace of regeneration?***

The grace of regeneration infuses into our souls the life of grace that Christ won for us by his Death and Resurrection. It is the new birth of which Christ spoke to Nicodemus . . . (QAC, 232,33)

**411. *Do all baptized persons belong to the Church?***

All baptized persons belong to the Church. (QAC, 233)

**412. *Does a baptized person always remain a Christian?***

A baptized person always remains a Christian because the baptismal character confers a permanent relationship with Christ. (QAC, 234)

**413. *Does baptism restore us to the state in which Adam was created?***

Baptism does essentially restore us to the state in which Adam was created . . . but baptism does not give back to us the special gifts possessed by our first parents. (QAC, 234)

### **3. Ceremonies, Sponsors, Ritual Changes, and Catechumens**

**414. *What is solemn baptism?***

Solemn baptism is conferred when all the liturgical ceremonies prescribed by the Church are performed. (QAC, 234)

**415. *What must be the dispositions of a person being baptized after reaching the age of reason?***

A person being baptized after reaching the age of reason must believe in the basic truths of the Christian faith, be sorry for his sins, at least out of fear of God's just punishments, and sincerely want to receive baptism. (QAC, 235)

**416. *Why should the child receive the name of a saint at baptism?***

The child should receive the name of a saint at baptism because it symbolizes newness of life in Christ and entrance into the Christian community. The saint whose name is taken at baptism thus becomes a heavenly patron who exercises special lifelong care over the one baptized with his or her name. (QAC, 236)

**417. *What is the parent's duty regarding baptism?***

Parents are gravely bound to see that no child should die without baptism. (QAC, 236)

**418. *What are catechumens?***

Catechumens are persons, especially in mission countries, who are being instructed in the Catholic faith in preparation for baptism and admission into the Church. (QAC, 237)

### **4. Necessity for Salvation**

**419. *Is baptism of water necessary for salvation?***

It is commonly taught by the Church that baptism of water is necessary for salvation for those who have not reached the use of reason. (QAC, 238)

**420. *What is baptism of desire?***

Baptism of desire is the implicit desire for baptism of water by a person who makes an act of perfect love of God, based on faith and with a sincere sorrow for one's sins. (QAC, 238)

**421. *Is baptism of desire a sacrament?***

Baptism of desire is not a sacrament; it does not imprint the baptismal character or enable a person to receive the other sacraments. Nevertheless, it does confer sanctifying grace. (QAC, 238)

**422. *When is baptism invalid?***

Baptism is invalid when true natural water is not used; when the water does not touch the body of the one being baptized; when the entire form is not pronounced or a different form is used; when the form is not pronounced as the water is being poured or is not pronounced by the one pouring the water. (QAC, 238)

## ***Confirmation***

### **Nature, Administration, and Sacramental Effects**

**423. *What is the sacrament of confirmation?***

Confirmation is the sacrament of spiritual strengthening. It is the sacrament in which, through chrism and the imposition of hands together with the use of certain sacred words, a baptized person receives the Holy Spirit, is strengthened in grace, and signed as a soldier of Christ. (QAC, 240)

**424. *How is the sacrament of confirmation conferred?***

The sacrament of confirmation is conferred through the anointing with chrism on the forehead, which is done by laying on of the hand, and through the words Receive the seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit. Anointing with chrism along with the second imposition of the hand (during the anointing) are essential. (QAC, 240,41)

**425. *What are the effects of confirmation?***

Confirmation increases the possession of divine life, confers actual graces, a special sacramental grace, and gives a unique sacramental character. The divine life becomes more resilient, and better able to resist dangers and overcomes opposition to its existence and growth. Confirmation gives us grace to fulfill Christ's command: You must therefore be perfect . . . (QAC, 242)

**426. *What is the responsibility of every baptized person who is confirmed?***

Every baptized person who is confirmed has a mission to bring others to Christ. Baptism and confirmation confer the grace of zeal to convert unbelievers to the Christian faith and to make strong believers of those who are now weak. (QAC, 243)

**427. *When is confirmation administered in the Western Church?***

In the Western Church, confirmation is administered to baptized persons after they have reached the age of reason and normally after they have for some time been receiving the sacrament of penance and the Holy Eucharist. (QAC, 244)

## ***Eucharist***

### **1. The Real Presence**

**428. *What is the center of the whole Catholic liturgy?***

The center of the whole Catholic liturgy is the Eucharist. The Eucharist is most important in the life of the Church because it is Jesus Christ. It is the Incarnation continued in space and time. The other sacraments and all the Church's ministries and apostolates are directed toward the Eucharist. (QAC, 244)

**429. *What is the sacrament of the Eucharist?***

The Eucharist is a sacrament which really, truly, and substantially contains the body and blood, soul, and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ under the appearances of bread and wine. It is the great sacrament of God's love in which Christ is eaten, the mind is filled with grace, and a pledge is given to us of future glory. (QAC, 244,45)

**430. *Is the Eucharist necessary for salvation?***

The Eucharist is necessary for salvation, to be received either sacramentally or in desire . . . Those who, through no fault of their own, do not realize this can receive the necessary grace to remain in God's friendship through other means. (QAC, 245)

**431. *Is only the substance of Christ's human nature present in the Eucharist?***

Christ is present in the Eucharist not only with everything that makes him man, but with all that makes him this human being. He is therefore present with all his physical properties, hands and feet and head and human heart. He is present with his human soul, thoughts, desires, and human affections. (QAC, 246)

**432. *How does Christ become present in the Eucharist?***

Christ becomes present in the Eucharist by means of transubstantiation. Transubstantiation is the term used to identify the

change that takes place at the consecration. (QAC, 246)

**433.** *What remains of the bread and wine after consecration?*

After consecration, nothing remains of the bread and wine except their external properties. Their substance becomes the living body and blood of Christ. (QAC, 246)

**434.** *Is Jesus Christ contained under each particle of the species of bread and wine?*

Yes, it is a matter of faith that Jesus Christ is contained under each particle of the species of bread and wine. No matter how great the number of parts into which the species are divided, the whole Christ is present in every portion. (QAC, 246)

**435.** *Is Jesus Christ present in the Eucharist as long as the species remain?*

Yes, Jesus Christ is present in the Eucharist as long as the species remain. Therefore, we worship the Blessed Sacrament as we would worship the person of Jesus himself. (QAC, 246,47)

**436.** *How is Christ's obedience seen in the Eucharist?*

Christ's obedience is seen in the Eucharist in that he obeys promptly and perfectly the words of consecration spoken by the priest at Mass. The moment these words are pronounced, Christ becomes present on the altar. Moreover, he allows himself to be placed where those who handle the Eucharist wish him to be. (QAC, 248)

## 2. The Mass

**437.** *Is the Sacrifice of the Cross the only perfect sacrifice?*

The Sacrifice of the Cross is the only perfect sacrifice, in which the one offered and the one offering the sacrifice is God himself. (QAC, 253)

**438.** *How is the Sacrifice of the Cross continued on earth?*

The Sacrifice of the Cross is continued on earth through the Sacrifice of the Mass. (QAC, 253)

**439.** *What is the Sacrifice of the Mass?*

The Sacrifice of the Mass is the true and properly called Sacrifice of the New Law. It is the Sacrifice in which Christ is offered under the species of bread and wine in an unbloody manner. The Sacrifice of the altar, then, is no mere empty commemoration of the Passion and Death of Jesus Christ, but a true and proper act of sacrifice. Christ, the eternal High Priest, in an unbloody way offers himself a most acceptable Victim to the eternal Father, as he did upon the Cross. (QAC, 254)

**440.** *How does the Mass re-present Calvary?*

The Mass re-presents Calvary by continuing Christ's sacrifice of himself to his heavenly Father. In the Mass, no less than on Calvary, Jesus really offers his life to his heavenly Father. (QAC, 254)

**441.** *Is the Mass then truly the same Sacrifice as Calvary?*

The Sacrifice of the Mass is substantially the same as the Sacrifice of the Cross. However, the Mass differs from the Sacrifice of the Cross in the following ways: *In the manner of offering:* on the Cross Christ offered himself alone and directly. In the Mass he offers himself along with us through the ministry of the priests; *By reason of the Victim:* on the Cross his humanity was visible while in the Mass Christ's humanity is hidden; *By reason of effects:* on the Cross Christ merited once for all the price of Redemption for a fallen mankind. On the altar nothing new is merited, but now the satisfaction and merits of the Cross are applied to us. (QAC, 255)

**442.** *Does the Mass detract from the one, unique Sacrifice of the Cross?*

The Mass in no way detracts from the one, unique Sacrifice of the Cross because the Mass is the same Sacrifice as that of the Cross, to continue on earth until the end of time . . . The Mass, therefore, no less than the Cross, is expiatory for sins; but now the expiation is experienced by those for whom, on the Cross, the title of God's mercy has been gained. (QAC, 256)

**443.** *To whom do we offer the Sacrifice of the Mass?*

We offer the Sacrifice of the Mass to God alone. However, we also celebrate the Mass in honor of the angels and saints. (QAC, 257)

**444.** *What are the ends or purposes for which we offer the Mass to God?*

We offer the Mass to God as a sacrifice of adoration to his divine majesty; as a sacrifice of thanksgiving for all the benefits we have received from him; as a sacrifice of expiation for the sins we have committed in offending him; and as a sacrifice of petition, to obtain from his bounty all that we need for ourselves, for all the living on earth and the souls in purgatory. (QAC, 257)



**445. What are the graces conferred by the Mass as a sacrament?**

The graces conferred by the Mass as a sacrament are twofold. Through the Mass we obtain forgiveness for venial sins and the remission of temporal punishment still due for past sins; we also obtain for ourselves and others the grace of repentance and the desire to expiate offenses against God. Looking to the future, the Mass is the single most effective source of grace by which Christ distributes the blessings of Calvary. (QAC, 258)

**446. For whom may the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass be offered?**

The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass may be offered for all the living, whether they are in the state of grace or estranged from God; and for the dead, that is, those who died in God's grace and yet have sins to atone in purgatory. (QAC, 258)

**447. Is the Sacrifice of the Mass of infinite value?**

The Sacrifice of the Mass is of infinite value, no less than that of the Cross. However, the merit received depends on a person's dispositions. (QAC, 259)

### **3. Holy Communion**

**448. What is Holy Communion?**

Holy Communion is the sacrament in which we receive the body and blood of Jesus Christ as the spiritual nourishment of our souls. (QAC, 259)

**449. What are the effects of Holy Communion?**

The spiritual effects of Holy Communion are an increase of sanctifying grace, a title to actual grace, forgiveness of venial sin as to guilt and the penalty due to sin, preservation from mortal sin, and reception of the special sacramental grace of Holy Communion. (QAC, 259)

**450. What is the difference between strictly necessary and praiseworthy dispositions for Holy Communion?**

The one strictly necessary disposition for Holy Communion is to be free from mortal sin. It is praiseworthy, however, to be free also from venial sins, especially those which are fully deliberate. Moreover, it is highly desirable that a person also be free from all deliberate attachment to anything sinful. (QAC, 260)

**451. What does it mean to receive Christ unworthily?**

To receive Christ unworthily means to receive him when a person knows he is burdened with an unforgiven mortal sin. (QAC, 260)

**452. May a person who has a mortal sin on his souls receive Holy Communion?**

A person who has a mortal sin on his souls may not receive Holy Communion . . . As the Church teaches, No one who is conscious of being guilty of mortal sin, however repentant he may feel, may receive Holy Communion until he has received sacramental absolution. (QAC, 260,61)

**453. Must we confess venial sins before receiving Holy Communion?**

We need not confess venial sins before receiving Holy Communion although it is useful to do so. By purifying the soul, the sacrament of penance removes many obstacles that prevent the soul from receiving precious benefits from Holy Communion. (QAC, 261)

**454. What is Holy Communion as viaticum?**

Holy Communion as viaticum is the reception of the Holy Eucharist by one who is in probable danger of death. (QAC, 262)

**455. Is it obligatory to receive viaticum?**

Yes, the faithful who are in danger of death from any cause whatsoever are obliged to receive Holy Communion as viaticum. (QAC, 262)

## **Penance**

### **1. Institution, Necessity, and Forms**

**456. What is penance?**

Penance means repentance or satisfaction for sin. It is also a virtue, and one of the sacraments instituted by Christ. (QAC, 263)

**457. *Why is the virtue of penance necessary?***

The virtue of penance is necessary for a sinner to be reconciled with God. If we expect his forgiveness, we must repent. Penance is also necessary because we must expiate and make reparation for the punishment which is due for our sins. (QAC, 263)

**458. *What is the sacrament of penance?***

Penance is the sacrament instituted by Christ in which sinners are reconciled with God through the absolution of the priest. (QAC, 263)

**459. *When did Christ institute the sacrament of penance?***

Christ instituted the sacrament of penance as his first gift to the Church on Easter Sunday night . . . He said to the apostles, . . . For those whose sins you forgive, they are forgiven; for those whose sins you retain, they are retained (John 20:19-23). (QAC, 264)

**460. *What did Christ mean by this?***

When Christ spoke these words, he meant that the apostles and their successors should not only declare that a person's sins are forgiven, but actually have the power to forgive in his name. By these words, he also gave them the right to withhold absolution. (QAC, 264)

**461. *Is the sacrament of penance necessary?***

Yes, the sacrament of penance is necessary for all who have fallen into mortal sin after baptism. If the sacrament cannot actually be received, the desire for its reception suffices. But then a person must make an act of perfect contrition. (QAC, 264)

**462. *Do all bishops and priests have the power to forgive sins?***

All bishops and priests have the power to forgive sins or absolve sins. Christ conferred this power on the apostles, and on the bishops and priests who would succeed them. (QAC, 264)

**463. *Should children receive the sacrament of penance before first Communion?***

Yes, children should receive the sacrament of penance before their first Communion, although it is assumed they have not committed any mortal sins. This is the firm teaching of the Church. (QAC, 266)

## **2. Requirements of the Penitent: Sorrow, Confession, and Satisfaction**

**464. *What should a person do immediately after falling into mortal sin?***

Immediately after falling into mortal a person should make an act of perfect contrition and have the intention of confessing the sin as soon as possible. (QAC, 267)

**465. *Can venial sin be forgiven even though mortal sins are not forgiven?***

Venial sins cannot be forgiven if the mortal sins have not been remitted. A person must be in a state of grace to merit divine mercy for his venial sins. (QAC, 267)

**466. *What is contrition?***

Contrition is an interior sorrow of the soul and aversion for past sins, with the firm determination of not sinning again. (QAC, 269)

**467. *What is perfect contrition?***

Perfect contrition is sorrow for sin whose motive is the love of God. It remits mortal sins even before actually receiving the sacrament of penance, provided there is a real desire to receive the sacrament. (QAC, 269)

**468. *Is perfect contrition necessary?***

Perfect contrition is necessary for salvation for all sinners who cannot receive the sacraments of baptism, penance, or anointing. (QAC, 269)

**469. *Why is confession an act of self-accusation?***

Confession is an act of self-accusation because it is the actual telling of what we have done wrong. It is not a simple admission of guilt nor a mere act of confidence in God's mercy. (QAC, 271)

**470. *How must the accusation be made?***

The accusation of one's sins to the priest must be made vocally or orally, that is by the spoken word. If vocal confession is impossible, it is permissible and encouraged to write out one's sins, but this is not strictly necessary. (QAC, 271)

**471.** *Should a person go to Holy Communion often if he has no mortal sin on his soul?*

Yes, every Catholic is encouraged to receive Holy Communion frequently, even daily. In this way, grace is received to keep out of mortal sin and to grow in the supernatural life. (QAC, 273)

**472.** *Why does the priest assign a special penance to be said or done after confession?*

The priest assigns this penance as partial satisfaction for the sins that were confessed and remitted. (QAC, 274)

**473.** *Why must satisfaction be made for sins already forgiven?*

Satisfaction must be made for sins already forgiven because normally some--and even considerable--temporal punishment is still due, although the guilt has been removed. (QAC, 275)

**474.** *How do we know that temporal punishment may still be due after sins have been forgiven?*

It has been the Church's constant teaching that guilt of sins can be removed and yet temporal punishment may still be due. The doctrine is based on divine revelation and underlies the Church's whole penitential discipline, including the practice of granting partial or plenary indulgences. (QAC, 275)

**475.** *What is the purpose of satisfaction for sins?*

Satisfaction for sins is expiatory, remedial, and spiritually beneficial to the sinner. (QAC, 275)

**476.** *How is satisfaction expiatory?*

Satisfaction is expiatory by making up for the failure in love of God which is the root cause of sin, by voluntarily suffering to make up for the self-indulgence, and by enduring pain in reparation for the harm or disorder caused by the commission of sin. (QAC, 275)

**477.** *How can we make satisfaction for our sins?*

We make satisfaction for our sins by every good act we perform in the state of grace, but especially by prayer, penance, and the practice of charity . . . Penance for sin is not only bodily, like fast and abstinence, but also spiritual, like restraining curiosity or conversation and avoiding otherwise legitimate recreation. (QAC, 276)

**478.** *What is sacramental satisfaction?*

Sacramental satisfaction is the penitential work imposed by a confessor in the confessional in order to make up for the injury done to God and atone for the temporal punishment due to sin already forgiven. (QAC, 276)

**479.** *What kind of punishment is due to venial sin?*

Venial sins carry only temporal punishment either in this life or in purgatory. (QAC, 277)

**480.** *What kind of punishment is due to mortal sin?*

Mortal sin always carries the penalty of eternal punishment, which is always taken away with the remission of guilt, even when unexpiated temporal punishment may still be due. (QAC, 277)

**481.** *How can we make up for sin?*

We can make up for sin through the sorrows and trials of life, including the pain of death, or through the purifying penalties in the life beyond. Sin can also be expiated through indulgences. (QAC, 277)

### **3. Indulgences: Meanings, Kinds, Conditions for Gaining**

**482.** *What is an indulgence?*

An indulgence is the remission through the merits of Jesus Christ and his Church of the temporal punishment still due forgiven sins. (QAC, 278)

**483.** *How many kinds of indulgences are there?*

There are two kinds of indulgences: plenary and partial. A plenary indulgence removes all the temporal punishment due to sin; a partial indulgence removes some or part of the temporal penalties still owed to God after he forgives our sins. (QAC, 278)

**484.** *What does it mean to apply an indulgence?*

An indulgence is said to be applied when the person who performs the prescribed work asks God to transfer its expiatory value to someone else. It cannot be transferred to other living persons but may be applied to the souls in purgatory, either in general or to anyone in particular. (QAC, 278)

**485.** *Can a person gain a plenary indulgence for himself during his lifetime?*

Yes, a person can gain a plenary indulgence in his lifetime. However, only God knows for certain when a plenary indulgence is actually gained because only he knows whether a person's dispositions are adequate. (QAC, 278)

**486.** *What dispositions are necessary to gain a plenary indulgence?*

To gain a plenary indulgence, one must be free from all attachment to any sin at all, even venial sin. He must also receive the sacraments of penance and Holy Communion, and pray for the intentions of the Holy Father. (QAC, 279)

**487.** *How often can a plenary indulgence be gained?*

A plenary indulgence can be gained only once a day except by those who are on the point of death. (QAC, 279)

**488.** *Can a plenary indulgence purify a soul for immediate entrance into heaven?*

Yes, depending on the person's disposition, a plenary indulgence can purify a soul for immediate entrance into heaven without suffering the pains of purgatory. (QAC, 280)

## **Marriage**

### **1. Contract, Covenant, and Sacrament**

**489.** *What is Christian marriage?*

Christian marriage is a sacrament instituted by Jesus Christ, who raised the natural contract of wedlock to a supernatural covenant between God and the marrying spouses. (QAC, 280)

**490.** *Are all marriages equally indissoluble?*

No, not all marriages are equally indissoluble. An absolutely indissoluble marriage is a sacramental union, between two baptized persons, who enter a valid marital contract, and then seal the marriage by legitimate (not contraceptive) conjugal intercourse. (QAC, 283)

### **2. Disposition, Effects, and Obligations**

**491.** *What are the proper dispositions for the sacrament of marriage?*

The proper dispositions for the sacrament of marriage are adequate preparation by a virtuous Christian life; great prudence in the choice of one's marriage partner; purity of intention in desiring to do God's will; sufficient knowledge of one's faith and of the responsibilities of marriage; the state of grace and earnest prayer for a happy married life. (QAC, 284)

**492.** *What are the obligations of the married couple?*

The mutual obligations of the married couple are that they love each other with a fruitful, chaste, patient, devoted, and supernatural love until death. (QAC, 285)

**493.** *Can a natural nonsacramental marriage ever be dissolved?*

Yes, a natural marriage between nonbaptized persons can be dissolved by what is known as the Pauline privilege. (QAC, 286)

### **3. Mixed Marriages, Banns, and Impediments**

**494.** *What is the Church's position on mixed marriages?*

The Church is aware that mixed marriages, precisely because they admit differences of religion, do not generally help to foster unity among Christians . . . However, the Church is also conscious that people have a natural right to marry and beget children. She tries to make such arrangements that, while respecting these rights, the principles of divine law are carefully observed. (QAC, 287)

**495.** *What must the Catholic partner in a mixed marriage promise to do?*

The Catholic partner in a mixed marriage must be ready to remove all dangers of falling away from the faith. He or she is gravely bound to make a sincere promise to do everything possible to have all the children baptized and brought up in the Catholic Church. (QAC, 288)

**496. What are the bans of marriage?**

The bans of marriage are public proclamations informing the faithful that a marriage is to be contracted by a certain couple. They are published to find out whether there are any impediments to the marriage. The faithful are gravely bound in justice and charity to make known any major impediments to a projected marriage. (QAC, 289)

## ***Holy Orders***

### **1. Institution, Reception, Effects**

**497. What is the sacrament of orders?**

Orders is a sacrament of the New Law by which a share in the spiritual powers of Christ's ministry is conferred together with the grace to perform worthily the duties of one's office in the Church. (QAC, 289,90)

**498. When did Christ institute the sacrament of orders?**

Christ actually instituted the sacrament of orders at the Last Supper. After he had consecrated the bread and wine, and changed them into his own body and blood, he told the apostles to do this as a memorial of me (Luke 22:19). By this he was conferring on the apostles and their successors the principle power of this sacrament, namely to consecrate and offer his body and blood in the Sacrifice of the Mass. (QAC, 290)

**499. Why is a priest once ordained always a priest?**

A priest once ordained is always a priest because the Catholic Church believes that the priestly character is indelible and therefore unchangeable. You are a priest of the order of Melchizedek, and for ever (Psalms 110:4), is applied by the Church to all who are ordained to the priesthood. (QAC, 291)

### **2. Deacons, Priests, and Bishops**

**500. How many different sacred orders are there?**

There are three different sacred orders: deacons, priests, and bishops. (QAC, 292)

**501. What are the main functions of a deacon?**

The main functions of a deacon are: to administer baptism solemnly; to be a custodian and distributor of the Eucharist; in the name of the Church, to assist at and to bless Christian marriages; to bring Viaticum to the dying; to read the Sacred Scripture to the faithful; to instruct and exhort the people; under the priest, to preside over the worship and prayer of the faithful; to administer sacramentals; and to officiate at funeral and burial services. (QAC, 292,93)

**502. What is the basis for clerical celibacy?**

The basis for clerical celibacy is the example of Christ and his apostles. In the words of the Second Vatican Council: By means of celibacy, priests profess before men their willingness to be dedicated with undivided loyalty to the task entrusted to them, namely, that of espousing the faithful to one husband and presenting them as a chaste virgin to Christ (Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests, 16). (QAC, 294)

**503. What is the primary ministry of a priest?**

The primary ministry of a priest is to consecrate and offer the Holy Eucharist, and to forgive sins. In this, priests differ from deacons who do not receive the power to consecrate the Eucharist, offer Mass, or forgive sins by sacramental absolution. (QAC, 294)

**504. What is the role of bishops in the Catholic Church?**

Bishops have been designated by the Holy Spirit to take the place of the apostles as pastors of the faithful and, together with the bishop of Rome and subject to his authority, they are commissioned to perpetuate the word of Christ, the eternal Shepherd of souls (cf. Vatican Council II, Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops, 2). (QAC, 295)

**505. Does the pope possess a power of order superior to that of the bishop?**

The pope does not possess a power of order superior to that of the bishop because the pontificate is not a special order. Upon election, however, the pope has, by divine right, as successor of St. Peter, the primacy of jurisdiction over the universal Church. This entitles him to the exercise of supreme authority over the whole hierarchy. (QAC, 296)

## ***Anointing of the Sick***

### **Meaning, Recipients, Effects, and Ritual Changes**

**506.** *What is the sacrament of anointing?*

The sacrament of anointing is a sacrament of the New Testament instituted by Christ to give the sick spiritual assistance, strengthen their supernatural life, and if need be, forgive their sins. Moreover, if God wills it, anointing restores physical health to the body of the Christian who is seriously ill. (QAC, 297)

**507.** *Can the sacrament be conferred on unconscious people?*

The sacrament can be conferred on the sick, even though they have lost the use of their senses or reason, if as believers they would likely have asked for the holy anointing while they were in possession of their faculties. (QAC, 299)

**508.** *What are the spiritual effects of anointing?*

The spiritual effects of anointing are: forgiveness of the guilt of unremitted sin, even grave sin for which the person had at least imperfect sorrow; remission of the temporal punishment still due for remitted sin, to such a degree that the expiation can be complete; supernatural patience to bear with the sufferings of one's illness; extraordinary confidence in God's mercy, which a person certainly needs when he faces eternity; and special infusion of moral courage to resist temptations of the devil. (QAC, 300)

**509.** *Is the sacrament of anointing necessary for salvation?*

The sacrament of anointing is not strictly necessary for salvation because a person can be saved by the sacrament of penance. But for a person who is physically unable to confess his sins, or even give some sign of sorrow, anointing may be the only way he can be saved. This assumes he has unconfessed grave sins on his soul which the sacrament of anointing certainly removes provided at some time the person had, in faith, been sorry for his sins at least out of fear of God's punishments. Like the sacrament of penance, anointing remits the guilt and eternal penalty of mortal sin with only sincere imperfect contrition. (QAC, 302)

## **IV. SACRAMENTALS**

### ***1. Meaning, Conditions, and Kinds***

**510.** *What are sacramentals?*

Sacramentals are objects or actions the Church uses in order to confer blessings on the faithful through the merits of the Mystical Body of Christ. (QAC, 304)

**511.** *How do sacramentals differ from sacraments?*

Sacraments differ from sacramentals in three ways: in institution, cause, and effectiveness. Unlike the sacraments, sacramentals were not directly instituted by Christ but by the Church. Unlike the sacraments in which Christ confers grace through the sacrament itself, they are forms of prayer that obtain grace through the merits of the Church and depend on the dispositions of the person who uses the sacramentals. And unlike the sacraments, they do not really produce the extraordinary and distinctive grace they signify . . . (QAC, 304,5)

### ***2. Sacred Actions, Words, Objects***

**512.** *What does the Church attach to sacred actions, words, and objects?*

The Church attaches a ritual blessing to sacred actions, words, and objects. As a result, they become sacramentals. (QAC, 305)

**513.** *Name some sacramental actions that are standard Catholic practice?*

Among sacramental actions are genuflecting and kneeling, folding one's hands in prayer, making the sign of the cross over one's self or another person or some object, bowing the head, and sprinkling with holy water. (QAC, 305)

### ***3. Liturgical Year, Feasts and Fasts***

**514.** *What is sacred time?*

Sacred time refers to the liturgical year and its seasons, the feasts and fasts of the Catholic Church. It is a periodic reminder to keep alive and deepen our realization of the truths of the faith. (QAC, 307)

**515.** *What are the five liturgical seasons of the Church?*

The five liturgical seasons of the Church are: Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, and Pentecost. (QAC, 308)

### ***4. Liturgy of the Hours, Fast and Abstinence***

**516.** *What is the liturgy of the hours?*

The liturgy of the hours is the public prayer of the Church for sanctifying the day by praising God. It is also known as the Divine Office. (QAC, 314)

**517.** *Why is the practice of fast and abstinence a unique sacramental?*

Fast and abstinence is a unique sacramental because it partakes of sacred time and place and because its foundation lies deep in Christian revelation. Moreover, throughout the Church's history it was assumed that doing penance was a necessary condition for salvation. (QAC, 314,15)

**518.** *What are the prescribed norms for Fridays as days of penance?*

All Fridays of the year are prescribed days of penance. This is a grave obligation. They also remain days of abstinence from meat and meat products. But the faithful have the choice of substituting some other external form of penance, instead of abstinence on the Fridays outside of Lent. The substituted penance should be at least as penitential as abstinence. (QAC, 315)

## **V. PRAYER**

### ***1. Motives, Vocal and Mental***

**519.** *What is meant by vocal prayer?*

In vocal prayer, the words used are determined beforehand. They are the words of someone else, with which those who pray identify themselves in spirit. (QAC, 317)

**520.** *What is public vocal prayer?*

Public vocal prayer is recited or sung out loud by several people praying together. When this prayer is prescribed by the Church for public service by the faithful, it is liturgical prayer. (QAC, 317)

**521.** *What is mental prayer?*

In mental prayer, the words used are not determined or prescribed. Those who pray mentally express themselves spontaneously, according to the sentiments of their own mind and heart. (QAC, 317)

### ***2. The Lord's Prayer***

**522.** *What is the most excellent of all prayers?*

The most excellent of all prayers is the Our Father, or the Lord's Prayer. (QAC, 318)

**523.** *Why is the Our Father called the Lord's Prayer?*

It is called the Lord's Prayer because it was given to us by Christ our Lord, who commanded us to say it (Matthew 6:9-13; Luke 11:1-4). (QAC, 318)

**524.** *Why do we say our and not my Father?*

We say our Father because, unlike the Savior, we cannot say my Father since there is only one natural Son of God who became man in the person of Christ. Moreover, in this way we affirm that God is the Father of the whole human race, that we are all his children and should therefore love one another as brothers and sisters in God. (QAC, 319)

### **3. The Hail Mary**

**525. What is the Hail Mary?**

The Hail Mary is a combination of two prayers: a prayer of praise of our Lady and a prayer of petition for her help. (QAC, 321)

**526. What is the prayer of petition in the Hail Mary?**

The prayer of petition was added by the Church, asking our Lady, Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen. (QAC, 321)

**527. Why do we address Mary with the words full of grace?**

We address her in this way because, conceived without sin, she was, already at the Annunciation, the holiest of human persons; she was chosen to become the mother of the Author of all grace; and she was destined to become the Queen of the angels and saints in heavenly glory. (QAC, 321)

### **4. Glory Be to the Father**

**528. What is the best-known prayer to the Holy Trinity?**

The best-known prayer to the Holy Trinity says: 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. (QAC, 322)

### **5. Favorite Prayers: Morning and Evening, Angelus, Grace at Meals, Rosary, Sacred Heart, Way of the Cross, Novenas**

## VI. LITURGY

### **Public Worship, Necessity, Principal Forms, Church Authority**

**529. What is the liturgy?**

The liturgy is the public worship given to God by the whole Mystical Body, that is, by Christ the Head and the faithful who are his members. (QAC, 327)

**530. How are the liturgy and worship related?**

Liturgy is the highest form of worship, because it glorifies God publicly as the origin and destiny, not only of man individually but of mankind as a society, and the worship is given officially, by the Church and under her divinely established authority. (QAC, 327)

**531. What are the benefits of the liturgy?**

Through the liturgy, grace is received by those who participate, the Church is sanctified, and divine blessings are conferred on the living and the dead. (QAC, 331)



# **APPENDICES**



## APPENDIX A: Salvation

Presented in this appendix is a summary of the teachings of the Catholic Church specifically with reference to salvation. The appendix consists of two parts—the first, with true statements concerning salvation and the second, presenting erroneous doctrine. It is the author's intention that the Catholic view not be misrepresented by such a presentation, while providing the student with a concise survey of Catholic soteriology. The order of presentation of the various teachings is designed to help the student logically think through the material and recognize some of the more important implications arising from it.

### TRUTH ABOUT SALVATION

1. . . . it is God's will that no one is forgiven except through the merits of Jesus Christ . . . (QAC, 106)
2. Jesus Christ is the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity whom the Father sent into the world to become Man of the Virgin Mary in order to save the world from sin. (QAC, 59)
3. Grace is the supernatural gift, that through the merits of Jesus Christ, God freely bestows upon human beings in order to bring them to eternal life. (QAC, 215)
4. Divine grace is available to all because Christ died for all mankind. The Holy Spirit offers everyone the possibility of salvation. (QAC, 215)
5. . . . faith is absolutely necessary because no one can be saved without sanctifying grace . . . (QAC, 193)
6. By sanctifying grace Jesus lives in us and we live in Jesus. (MC, 44)
7. Justification is the passing from a state of sin to a state of grace and adoption as children of God. (QAC, 216)
8. The sacrifice of Jesus' death on the cross was perfect atonement . . . (MC, 47)
9. Jesus is the source of all grace. (MC, 59)

### ERROR ABOUT SALVATION

1. *Is faith in what God revealed sufficient for salvation?*  
No, we must also keep His commandments. (QAC, 115)
2. *How do we keep the commandments of God?*  
We keep the commandments of God by living a good moral life. (QAC, 115)
3. *Are we obliged to keep only the commandments of God?*  
We are also to keep the commandments of the Church . . . (QAC, 177)
4. *What is a sacrament?*  
A sacrament is a sensible sign, instituted by Jesus Christ, which confers the grace it signifies. (QAC, 223)
5. *Are the sacraments necessary for salvation?*  
According to the way God has willed that we be saved, the sacraments are necessary for salvation. (QAC, 225)
6. *What is baptism?*  
Baptism is the sacrament of spiritual rebirth. Through the symbolic action of washing with water and the use of the appropriate ritual words, the baptized person is cleansed of all his sins and incorporated into Christ. (QAC, 230)
7. *What are the effects of baptism?*  
The effects of baptism are the removal of the guilt of sin and all punishment due to sin, conferral of the grace of regeneration and the infused virtues, incorporation into Christ and His Church, receiving the baptismal character and the right to Heaven. (QAC, 232)

**8. What sins does baptism take away?**

Baptism remits the guilt of all sins, that is, it takes away all sins . . . (QAC, 232)

**9. What penalties does baptism remove?**

Baptism removes all the penalties, eternal and temporal, attached to original sin and actual sin. (QAC, 232)

**10. How does baptism incorporate us into Christ?**

By baptism we become members of Christ's mystical body, which is the Church. (QAC, 223)

**11. When should baptism be received?**

Baptism should be received as soon after birth as is conveniently possible, certainly within a month. (QAC, 231)

**12. Are sponsors required for valid baptism?**

At least one sponsor is required for baptism. (QAC, 236)

**13. What is the sacrament of confirmation?**

Confirmation is the sacrament of spiritual strengthening. It is the sacrament in which, through chrism and imposition of hands together with the use of certain sacred words, a baptized person receives the Holy Spirit, is strengthened in grace, and signed as a soldier in Christ. (QAC, 240)

**14. Is the belief in Christ as Savior enough to make one a member of this community of disciples?**

No, it is not. Faith in Jesus is surely the essential component of Christian discipleship. But baptism is the visible ritual which initiates one into the community. (SJPC, 59)

**15. Does this mean that one must belong to the Church in order to be united with Christ?**

Yes, it does. Union with Christ is accomplished by quite visible and identifiable means. (SJPC, 59)

**16. Did Mary cooperate with Jesus in making atonement?**

Yes. Mary shared in the role of Jesus in bringing peace (reconciliation) between his heavenly father and mankind. (MC, 45)

**17. What did Vatican Council II say about Mary supporting Jesus' acts of redemption?**

The Pope and Bishops of the world said that Mary by faith and love did the same things in her heart that Jesus did in his sufferings so as to save the world. (MC, 45)

**18. Did Mary then merit our salvation?**

Yes, but only secondarily. The sacrifice of Jesus' death on the cross was perfect atonement (reparation). Mary joined her sufferings with those of Jesus, suffering with him, and meriting with him and dependent upon him, the salvation of the whole world. In this way Mary gives grace . . . Jesus won our salvation first. Mary helped Jesus. (MC, 47)

**19. . . . St. Bernardine . . . attributes to Mary jurisdiction over all graces without exception**

(NCE, Vol. 9, 223-227)

**20.** The Church teaches that apart from special revelation no one can count himself among the definitely saved, yet authentic devotion to Our Lady requires such fidelity to God's will and inspires such hope in the promises of Christ the savior as to be called by the Saints a "sign of predestination." (NCE, Vol. 9, 351)

**21. Is the Eucharist necessary for salvation?**

The Eucharist is necessary for salvation, to be received either sacramentally or in desire. (QAC, 245)

**22. Is the sacrament of anointing (formerly extreme unction) necessary for salvation?**

The sacrament of anointing is not strictly necessary for salvation because a person can be saved by the sacrament of penance. But for the person who is physically unable to confess his sins, or even give some sign of sorrow, anointing may be the only way he can be saved. This assumes he has unconfessed grave sins on his soul which the sacrament of anointing certainly removes provided that at some time the person had in faith, been sorry for his sins at least out of fear of God's punishments. Like the sacrament of penance, anointing remits the guilt and eternal penalty of mortal sin with only imperfect contrition. (QAC, 301-302)

**23. . . . What is sin?**

Sin is the choice to act against one's informed conscience. (SJPC, 162)

**24. Does it equally follow that a person could disobey God's commandments without sinning?**

Yes, it is possible. (QAC, 162)

**25. But aren't some things always sins, no matter what?**

Some things are always wrong, no matter what. But . . . a person can do wrong without necessarily sinning. (SJPC, 162)

**26. Does the Bible add any new notion to sin beyond just following one's informed conscience?**

Yes. Genuine sin in the Bible is always described as a rebellion against God. (SJPC, 163)

**27. But surely everything sinful is not a rebellion against God?**

Obviously not. The Bible speaks of understandable and forgivable offenses which even the righteous commit. From this, Christian moralists evolved the distinction between mortal and venial sin. (SJPC, 163,64)

**28. What is the distinction between mortal and venial sin?**

. . . it is a difference of magnitude. Mortal sin breaks the relation of grace; venial sin weakens the relation of grace. (SJPC, 164)

**29. What is the deepest distinction between venial and mortal sin?**

The deepest distinction . . . lies in the imperfection of human character as it conditions our freedom of choice. Thus venial sin does little harm because we allow for it. Mortal sin, on the other hand, is a choice to do evil inexplicable in the light of ordinary human frailties . . . (QAC, 186)

**30. What is mortal sin?**

Mortal sin is an actual sin that destroys sanctifying grace in the soul. It is called mortal since it causes the supernatural death of the soul. (QAC, 186)

**31. What are the effects of mortal sin?**

The effects of mortal sin are the loss of Divine friendship, past supernatural merits, and the right to enter Heaven unless the sinner repents. (QAC, 186)

**32. How can the supernatural life be restored?**

The supernatural life of the soul, lost by mortal sin, can be restored by the sacrament of penance or by a perfect act of contrition. In the sacrament of penance a person confesses the mortal sin(s) and receives absolution from the priest. In a perfect act of contrition, the person is sorry for having offended God who is all good and deserving of our love; and resolves to confess the mortal sin(s) in the sacrament at his early convenience. (QAC, 186,7)

**33. What is venial sin?**

Venial sin is an offense against God that does not deprive the sinner of sanctifying grace. (QAC, 187)

**34. Why are some sins called venial?**

Some sins are called venial from the Latin word *venia* which means 'pardon.' A person in venial sin still has the principle of supernatural life that allows healing or pardon from within. (QAC, 187)

**35. What is penance?**

Penance means repentance or satisfaction for sin. (QAC, 263)

**36. What is the virtue of penance?**

Penance is the supernatural virtue that inclines a person to detest his sins because they have offended a loving God . . . (QAC, 263)

**37. Why is the virtue of penance necessary?**

The virtue of penance is necessary for a sinner to be reconciled with God. If we expect his forgiveness, we must repent. Penance is also necessary because we must expiate (atone) and make reparation for the punishment which is due for our sins. (QAC, 263)

**38. What is the sacrament of penance?**

Penance is the sacrament instituted by Christ in which sinners are reconciled with God through the absolution of the priest. (QAC, 263)

**39. When did Christ institute the sacrament of penance?**

. . . on Easter Sunday night. He said to the apostles, ". . . for those whose sins you forgive, they are forgiven; for those whose sins you retain, they are retained." (QAC, 264)

**40. What did Christ mean by this?**

. . . he meant that the apostles and their successors should not only declare that a person's sins are forgiven, but they actually

have the power to forgive in his name. (QAC, 264)

**41. *Is the sacrament of penance necessary?***

Yes. The sacrament of penance is necessary for all who have fallen into mortal sin after baptism. If the sacrament cannot actually be received, the desire for its reception suffices. But then a person must make an act of perfect contrition. (QAC, 264)

**42. *Do all priests have the power to forgive sins?***

All bishops and priests have the power to forgive sins or absolve sins. (QAC, 264)

**43. *Can venial sin be forgiven even though mortal sins are not forgiven?***

Venial sins cannot be forgiven if the mortal sins have not been remitted. A person must be in a state of grace to merit Divine mercy for his venial sins. (QAC, 267)

**44. *If only venial sins are confessed must a person repent of all of them?***

For valid absolution a person must be sorry for at least one venial sin. (QAC, 267)

**45. *Is it necessary to confess the exact number of our sins?***

It is necessary to confess the exact number of mortal sins. If the exact number cannot be recalled we must tell the number as nearly as possible. Regarding venial sins it is good to confess for how long they were committed.. (QAC, 272)

**46. *Should we confess the circumstances surrounding our sins?***

Yes, we should confess the circumstances surrounding our mortal sins and such details as substantially affect the nature of the sins. (QAC, 273)

**47. *Must we confess grievous sins forgotten in a preceding confession?***

We must confess grave sins forgotten in a previous confession . . . (QAC, 273)

**48. *Are we obliged to answer the questions asked by the priest in confession?***

We are obliged to answer the questions asked us by the priest if they concern confession. (QAC, 274)

**49. *May a priest in a court of justice make known what he learned in the confessional?***

A priest in a court of justice may not make known what he learned in the confessional. If he is questioned, he must declare that he knows nothing of the subject in question. (QAC, 275)

**50. *What is perfect contrition?***

Perfect contrition is sorrow for sin whose motive is the love of God. It remits mortal sins even before actually receiving the sacraments of penance, provided there is a real desire to receive the sacrament. (QAC, 269)

**51. *Is perfect contrition necessary?***

Perfect contrition is necessary for salvation for all sinners who cannot receive the sacraments of baptism, penance, or anointing. (QAC, 269)

**52. *What is the purpose of the satisfaction for sins?***

Satisfaction must be made for sins already forgiven because normally some - even considerable - temporal punishment is still due, although the guilt has been removed. (QAC, 275)

**53. *How can we make satisfaction for our sins?***

We make satisfaction for our sins by every good act we perform in the state of grace, but especially prayer, penance, and the practice of charity. (QAC, 276)

**54. *What is the sacrament of satisfaction?***

Sacramental satisfaction is the penitential work imposed by a confessor in the confessional in order to make up for the injury done to God and atone for the temporal punishment due to sin already forgiven. (QAC, 276)

**55. *What kind of punishment is due venial sin?***

Venial sins carry only temporal punishment either in this life or in Purgatory. (QAC, 277)

**56. *What kind of punishment is due mortal sin?***

Mortal sin always carries with it the penalty of eternal punishment . . . (QAC, 277)

**57. *How can we make up for sin?***

We can make up for sin through the sorrows and trials of life, including the pain of death, or through the purifying penalties

in the life beyond. Sin can also be expiated through indulgences. (QAC, 277)

**58. How do indulgences remove temporal punishment?**

Indulgences remove temporal punishment through the Church's right to dispose the merits of Christ to her members. (QAC, 278)

**59. How many kinds of indulgences are there?**

There are two kinds . . . a plenary indulgence removes all the temporal punishment due to sin; a partial indulgence removes some or part of the temporal penalties still owed to God after he forgives our sins. (QAC, 278)

**60. Can a person gain a plenary indulgence for himself during his lifetime?**

Yes . . . however, only God knows for certain when a plenary indulgence is actually gained. (QAC, 278)

**61. On what does the value of an indulgence depend?**

. . . the value of an indulgence depends on what we do and how well we do it. (QAC, 279)

**62. What dispositions are necessary to gain a plenary indulgence?**

To gain a plenary indulgence, one must be free from all attachments to any sin at all, even venial sin. He must also receive the sacraments of penance and Holy Communion, and pray for the intentions of the Holy Father. (QAC, 279)

**63. What prayers are to be said for the intention of the Holy Father?**

At least one Our Father and one Hail Mary are required. (QAC, 279)

**64. How often can a plenary indulgence be gained?**

A plenary indulgence can be gained only once a day except by those who are on the point of death. (QAC, 279)

**65. What is necessary to gain a plenary indulgence at the point of death?**

. . . three conditions are required. The person must be in the state of grace, at least through an act of perfect contrition; should have been in the habit of reciting some prayers during his lifetime; and have at least the implicit intention to gain final remission of all temporal punishment due to sin. It is a laudable practice to use the crucifix to dispose oneself for gaining this plenary indulgence. (QAC, 279,80)

**66. Can a plenary indulgence purify a soul for immediate entrance into Heaven?**

Yes, depending on the persons disposition . . . (QAC, 280)

**67. What does it mean to apply an indulgence?**

An indulgence is said to be applied when the person who performs the prescribed work asks God to transfer its expiatory value to someone else. It cannot be transferred to other living persons, but may be applied to the souls in Purgatory, either in general or to anyone in particular. (QAC, 278)

**68. What about someone who dies truly repentant but who has not atoned for all his sins?**

Such a departed soul needs purgation in order to experience the blessed communion of the Son and Father in the Holy Spirit. This is the Catholic doctrine of Purgatory solemnly defined at the second council of Lyons (1274). The roots of the doctrine lie in the constant practice of the Church of praying for the departed. (SJPC, 129)

**69. What is Purgatory?**

Aside from the existence of such a state, the tradition of the church is not consistent. Perhaps the safest thing to say is that Purgatory is a state in which the deceased person works free of the consequences of sin. What he must learn are the lessons of Christian discipleship he failed to learn during life. (SJPC, 129)

**70. How does one pray for the departed?**

Surely, having masses celebrated for the departed is the most efficacious prayer for them. Personal prayer for the departed can take two forms: (A) Begging God's indulgence for them; (B) Doing good works in their memory. Any indulgence, prayer or work can be applied to a departed person, especially if it is one he failed to do, is a most acceptable and Christian prayer for him. (SJPC, 130)

**71. Why did Christ establish the Church?**

Christ established the Church as a universal sacrament of salvation. (QAC, 96)

**72. How is the Church the universal sacrament of salvation?**

The Church is the universal sacrament of salvation as the divinely instituted means of conferring grace on all members of the human family. (QAC, 96)

**73. How does the Church communicate divine grace to mankind?**

. . . by her teaching of revealed truth, her celebration of mass and administration of the sacraments, her prayers and the practice of virtue by her members, and her guidance and government of the faithful according to the will of God. (QAC, 97)

**74. Is the Church necessary for salvation?**

Yes, the Church is necessary for salvation. (QAC, 98)

**75. For whom is there no salvation outside the Church?**

There is no salvation for those who, though incorporated in the church by baptism, fail to persevere in sanctifying grace and die in a state of mortal sin. Those also are not saved who realize what they are doing but refuse to be baptized and accept the Church's means of salvation. (QAC, 98)

**76. Do baptized non-Catholics belong to the Catholic Church?**

Yes . . . but only those enjoy full membership who profess the same Catholic faith . . . (QAC, 98)

**77. Does this mean there is no other way of being a Christian except in the Church?**

There is no other way. (SJPC, 59)

**78. How can non-Christians be saved?**

Non-Christians can be saved through the Church according to their faith in whatever historical revelation they come to know and by their cooperation with the internal graces of the Holy Spirit which they receive. (QAC, 99)

**79. How is the non-Church member's salvation connected with the Church?**

One promising line of thought connects the salvation of the non-Church member with the prayer of the Church. (SJPC, 65)



## APPENDIX B: Glossary of Catholic Terms\*

**Ablution:** A term derived from Latin, meaning washing or cleansing, and referring to the cleansing of the hands of a priest celebrating Mass, after the offering of gifts; and to the cleansing of the chalice with water and wine after Communion.

**Absolution:** The act by which an authorized priest, acting as an agent of Christ and minister of the Church, grants forgiveness of sins in the sacrament of penance. The essential formula of absolution is: “I absolve you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.”

**Adoration:** The highest act and purpose of religious worship, which is directed in love and reverence to God alone in acknowledgment of his infinite perfection and goodness, and of his total dominions over creatures.

**Apostolic Succession:** Bishops of the Church, who form a collective body or college, are successors to the Apostles by ordination and divine right; as such, they carry on the mission entrusted by Christ to the Apostles as guardians and teachers of the deposit of faith, principle pastors and spiritual authorities of the faithful.

**Archdiocese:** An ecclesiastical jurisdiction headed by an archbishop. An archdiocese is usually a metropolitan see, i.e., the principal one of a group of dioceses comprising a province...

**Beatification:** A preliminary step toward the canonization of a saint. It begins with an investigation of the candidates’ life, writings and heroic practice of virtue, and the certification of at least two miracles worked by God through his intercession. If the findings of the investigation so indicate, the pope decrees that the Servant of God may be called *Blessed* and may be honored locally or in a limited way in the liturgy. Additional procedures lead to canonization.

**Beatific Vision:** The intuitive, immediate and direct vision and experience of God enjoyed in the light of glory by all the blessed in heaven. The vision is a supernatural mystery.

**Canonization:** An infallible declaration by the pope that a person, who died as a martyr and/or practiced Christian virtue to a heroic degree, is now in heaven and is worthy of honor and imitation by all the faithful. Miracles are not required for martyrs. A saint is worthy of honor in liturgical worship throughout the universal Church. The Church regards all persons in heaven as saints, not just those who have been officially canonized.

**Catechumen:** A person preparing in a program of instruction and spiritual formation for baptism and reception into the Church.

**Cathedra:** A Greek word for chair, designating the chair or seat of a bishop in the principle church of his diocese, which is therefore called a cathedral.

**Censures:** Spiritual penalties inflicted by the Church on baptized persons for committing certain serious sins, which are classified as crimes in canon law, and for being obstinate therein. Excommunication, suspension and interdict have been the censures in force since the time of Innocent III (1234).

**Charisms:** Gifts or graces given by God to men for the good of others and the Church. Examples are special gifts for apostolic work, prophecy, healing, discernment of spirits, the life of evangelical poverty, here-and-how witness to faith in various circumstances of life.

**Communion of Faithful Saints:** The communion of all the People of God—on earth, in heavenly glory, in purgatory—with Christ and each other in faith, grace, prayer, and good works.

**Concupiscence:** Any tendency of the sensitive appetite. The term is most frequently used in reference to desires and tendencies for sinful sense pleasure.

**Confession:** Sacramental confession is the act by which a person tells or confesses his sins to a priest who is authorized to give absolution in the sacrament of penance.

**Dulia:** A Greek term meaning the veneration of homage, different in nature and degree from that given to God, paid to the saints. It includes honoring the saints and seeking their intercession with God.

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\*The entries in this glossary have been quoted and adapted from the Catholic Almanac: 1983, (pp. 324-366)

- Easter Duty:** The serious obligation binding Catholics of Roman Rite, by a precept of the Church, to receive Holy Communion during the Easter time; in the U.S. from the first Sunday of Lent to Trinity Sunday.
- Excommunication:** A penalty or censure by which a baptized person is excluded from the communion of the faithful, for committing and remaining obstinate in certain sins specified in canon law and technically called crimes. As by baptism a person is made a member of the Church in which there is a communication of spiritual goods, so by excommunication he is deprived of the same spiritual goods until he repents and receives absolution. Even though excommunicated, a person is still responsible for the normal obligations of a Catholics.
- Faith, Rule of:** The norm or standard of religious belief. The catholic doctrine is that the belief must be professed in the divinely revealed truths in the Bible and tradition interpreted and proposed by the infallible teaching authority of the Church.
- Fast, Eucharistic:** Eating and the drinking of any liquids except water are prohibited for one hour before the reception of Holy Communion. By the way of exception, the period of fasting is 15 minutes for the sick and aged, even though not confined to bed or a home, and those caring for them who wish to receive Communion with them but cannot fast for an hour without inconvenience.
- Forgiveness of Sin:** Catholics believe that sins are forgiven by God through the mediation of Christ in view of the repentance of the sinner and by means of the sacrament of penance.
- Freedom, Religious:** The Second Vatican Council declared that the right to religious freedom in civil society “means that all men are to be immune from coercion on the part of individuals or of social groups and of any human power, in such wise that in religious matters no one is to be forced to act in a manner contrary to his own beliefs.”
- Genuflection:** Bending of the knee, a natural sign of adoration or reverence, as when persons genuflect with the right knee in passing before the tabernacle to acknowledge the Eucharistic presence of Christ.
- Grace:** A free gift of God to men (and angels), grace is a created sharing or participation in the life of God. It is given to men through the merits of Christ and is communicated by the Holy Spirit. It is necessary for salvation. The principal means of grace are the sacraments (especially the Eucharist), prayer and good works.
- Hail Mary:** A prayer addressed to the Blessed Virgin Mary; also called the *Ave Maria*... and the Angelic Salutation. In three parts, it consisted of the words addressed to Mary by the Archangel Gabriel on the occasion of the Annunciation, in the Infancy Narrative.
- Host, the Sacred:** The bread under whose appearance Christ is and remains present is a unique manner after the consecration which takes place during Mass.
- Hyperdulia:** The special veneration accorded the Blessed Virgin Mary because of her unique role in the mystery of Redemption, her exceptional gifts of grace from God, and her preeminence among the saints. Hyperdulia is not adoration; only God is adored.
- Icons:** Byzantine-style paintings or representations of Christ, the Blessed Virgin and other saints, venerated in the Eastern Churches where they take the place of statues.
- IHS:** In Greek, the first three letters of the name of Jesus--Iota, Eta, Sigma.
- Indulgence:** According to *The Doctrine and Practice of Indulgences*...an indulgence is the remission before God of the temporal punishment due for sins already forgiven as far as their guilt is concerned, which a follower of Christ--with the proper dispositions and under determined conditions--acquires through the intervention of the Church. An indulgence is partial or plenary, depending on whether it does away with either part or all of the temporal punishment due for sin. Both types of indulgences can always be applied to the dead by way of suffrage; the actual disposition of indulgences applied to the dead rests with God.
- In Sin:** The condition of a person called spiritually dead because he does not possess sanctifying grace, the principle of supernatural life, action and merit. Such grace can be regained through repentance.

**Judgment:** (1) Last or final judgment: Final judgment by Christ, at the end of the world and the general resurrection.

(2) Particular judgment: The judgment that takes place immediately after a person's death, followed by entrance into heaven, hell or purgatory.

**Keys, Power of the:** Spiritual authority and jurisdiction of the Church, symbolized by the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Christ promised the keys to St. Peter, as head-to-be of the Church (Mt. 16:19), and commissioned him with full pastoral responsibility to feed his lambs and sheep (Jn. 21:15-17). The pope, as the successor of St. Peter, has this power in a primary and supreme manner. The bishops of the Church also have this power, in union with and subordinate to the pope.

**Limbo:** The limbo of the fathers was the state of rest and natural happiness after death enjoyed by the just of pre-Christian times until they were admitted to heaven following the Ascension of Christ. Belief in this matter is stated in the Apostle's Creed. The existence of a limbo for unbaptized persons of infant status--a state of rest or natural happiness--has never been formally defined.

**Merit:** In religion, the right to a supernatural reward for good works freely done for a supernatural motive by a person in the state of and with the assistance of grace. The right to such a reward is from God, who binds himself to give it. Accordingly, good works, as described above, are meritorious for salvation.

**Miracles:** Observable events or effects in the physical or moral order of things, with reference to salvation, which cannot be explained by the ordinary operation of laws of nature and which, therefore, are attributed to the direct action of God. (The transubstantiation--i.e., the conversion of the whole substance of bread and wine, their sensible appearance alone remaining into the Body and Blood of Christ in the act of the Consecration at Mass--is not an observable event. Traditionally, however, it has been called a miracle.)

**Missal:** A liturgical book of Roman Rite also called the *Sacramentary*, containing the celebrant's prayers of the Mass, along with the general instructions and ceremonial directives.

**Novena:** A term designating public or private devotional practices over a period of nine consecutive days; or, by extension, over a period of nine weeks, in which one day a week is set aside for the devotions.

**Original Sin:** The sin of Adam (Gn. 2:8-3:24), personal to him and passed on to all men as a state of privation of grace. Despite this privation and the related wounding of human nature and weakening of natural powers, original sin leaves unchanged all that man himself is by nature. Original sin is remitted by baptism and incorporation in Christ, through whom grace is given to persons.

**Papal Election:** The pope is elected by members of the College of Cardinals in a secret conclave or meeting convened ordinarily in secluded quarters of the Vatican Palace between 15 and 20 days after the death of his predecessor. Cardinals under the age of 80, totaling no more than 120, are eligible to participate in papal election.

**Penance:** The spiritual change or conversion of mind and heart by which a person turns away from sin, and all that it implies, toward God, through a personal renewal under the influence of the Holy Spirit. Penance involves sorrow and contrition for sin, together with other internal and external acts of atonement. It serves the purposes of reestablishing in one's life the order of God's love and commandments, and of making satisfaction to God for sin.

**Preternatural Gifts:** Exceptional gifts, beyond the exigencies and powers of human nature, enjoyed by Adam in the state of original justice: immunity from suffering and death, superior knowledge, integrity or perfect control of passions. These gifts were lost as the result of original sin; their loss, however, implied no impairment of the integrity of human nature.

**Punishment Due for Sin:** The punishment which is a consequence of sin. It is of two kinds:

(1) Eternal punishment of hell, to which one becomes subject by the commission of mortal sin. Such punishment is remitted when mortal sin is forgiven.

(2) Temporal punishment is a consequence of venial sin and/or forgiven mortal sin; it is not everlasting and may be remitted in this life by suffering in purgatory.

**Purgatory:** The state or condition in which those who have died in a state of grace, but with some attachment to sin, suffer for a time before they are admitted to the glory and happiness of heaven. In this state and period of passive suffering, they are

purified of unrepented venial sins, satisfy and demands of divine justice for temporal punishment due for sins, and are thus converted to a state of worthiness of the beatific vision.

**Relics:** The physical remains and effects of saints, which are considered worthy of veneration inasmuch as they are representative of persons in glory with God. First class relics are parts of bodies of saints, and instruments of their penance and death; second class relics are objects that had some contact with their persons.

**Rosary:** A form of mental and vocal prayer centered on the mysteries or events in the lives of Jesus and Mary. Its essential elements are meditation on the mysteries and the recitation of a number of decades of Hail Marys, each beginning with The Lord's Prayer. The complete Rosary, called the Dominican Rosary, consists of 15 decades. In customary practice, only five decades are usually said at one time. Rosary beads are used to aid in counting the prayers without distraction.

**Sacred Heart, Enthronement:** An acknowledgment of the sovereignty of Jesus Christ over the Christian family, expressed by the installation of an image or picture of the Sacred Heart in a place of honor in the home, accompanied by an act of consecration.

**Saints, Cult of:** The veneration, called *dulia*, of holy persons who have died and are in glory with God in heaven; it includes honoring them and petitioning them for their intercession with God. Liturgical veneration is given only to saints officially recognized by the Church; private veneration may be given to anyone thought to be in heaven. The veneration of saints is essentially different from the adoration given to God alone; by its very nature, however, it terminates in the worship of God.

**Seal of Confession:** The obligation of secrecy which must be observed regarding knowledge of things learned in connection with the confession of sin in the sacrament of penance.

**Shrine, Crowned:** A shrine approved by the Holy See as a place of pilgrimage. The approval permits public devotion at the shrine and implies that at least one miracle has resulted from devotion at the shrine.

**Sign of the Cross:** A sign, ceremonial gesture or movement in the form of a cross by which a person confesses faith in the Holy Trinity and Christ, and intercedes for the blessing of himself, other persons, and things.

**Species, Sacred:** The appearances of bread and wine (color, taste, smell, etc.) which remain after the substance has been changed at the Consecration of the Mass into the Body and Blood of Christ.

**Stigmata:** Marks of the wounds suffered by Christ in his crucifixion, in hands and feet by nails, and side by the piercing of a lance. Some persons, called stigmatists, have been reported as recipients or sufferers of marks like these. The Church, however, has never issued any infallible declaration about their possession by anyone, even in the case of St. Francis of Assisi whose stigmata seem to be the best substantiated and may be commemorated in the Roman-Rite liturgy. Ninety percent of some 300 reputed stigmatists have been women.

**Transubstantiation:** "The way Christ is made present in this sacrament (Holy Eucharist) is none other than by the change of the whole substance of the bread into his Body, and the whole substance of the wine into his Blood (in the Consecration at Mass)...this unique and wonderful change the Catholic Church rightly calls transubstantiation" (encyclical *Mysterium Fidei* of Paul VI, Sept. 3, 1965). The first official use of the term was made by the Fourth Council of the Lateran in 1215. Authoritative teaching on the subject was issued by the Council of Trent.

**Viaticum:** Holy Communion given to those in danger of death.

APPENDIX C

**Are You Catholic or Protestant?\***  
*A Test of Faith*

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For each of the ten pairs of statements, circle the correct one.

1. (a) God gives man a right standing with Himself by mercifully accounting him innocent and virtuous.  
(b) God gives man a right standing with Himself by actually making him an innocent and virtuous person.
2. (a) God gives man a right standing with Himself by placing Christ's goodness and virtue to his credit.  
(b) God gives man a right standing with Himself by putting Christ's goodness and virtue into his heart.
3. (a) God accepts the believer because of the moral excellence found in Jesus Christ.  
(b) God makes the believer acceptable by putting the moral excellence of Jesus Christ's into his life.
4. (a) If a Christian becomes "born-again" (experiences changes in his character), he will achieve a right standing with God.  
(b) If a sinner achieves a right standing with God by faith, he will experience changes in his character.
5. (a) We achieve a right standing with God by faith in Christ alone.  
(b) We achieve a right standing with God by living out our faith in Christ.
6. (a) We achieve a right standing with God through Christ living out His life of obedience in us.  
(b) We achieve a right standing with God by accepting the fact that He obeyed the law perfectly for us.
7. (a) We achieve a right standing with God by following Christ's example, through the help of His enabling grace.  
(b) We follow Christ's example because His life has given us a right standing with God.
8. (a) God first counts us as good in His sight, then He gives us His Spirit to make us good.  
(b) God first gives us His Spirit to make us good, then He can pronounce that we are good in His sight.
9. (a) It is Christ's intercession on our behalf which gives us favor in the sight of God.  
(b) It is Christ's helping us to be faithful which that gives us favor in God's sight.
10. (a) Through faith in the work of Christ, we can fully satisfy the demands of the Ten Commandments.  
(b) Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we can fully satisfy the demands of the Ten Commandments.

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\*\*Adapted from a class handout by Prof. Ron Blue, "Contemporary Roman Catholicism," Dallas Theological Seminary, May 1987.



# Evangelicals & Catholics Together:

## The Christian Mission in the Third Millennium

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*The following statement is the product of consultation, beginning in September 1992, between Evangelical Protestant and Roman Catholic Christians. Appended to the text is a list of participants in the consultation and of others who have given their support to this declaration.*

### Introduction

We are Evangelical Protestants and Roman Catholics who have been led through prayer, study, and discussion to common convictions about Christian faith and mission. This statement cannot speak officially for our communities. It does intend to speak responsibly from our communities and to our communities. In this statement we address what we have discovered both about our unity and about our differences. We are aware that our experience reflects the distinctive circumstances and opportunities of Evangelicals and Catholics living together in North America. At the same time, we believe that what we have discovered and resolved is pertinent to the relationship between Evangelicals and Catholics in other parts of the world. We therefore commend this statement to their prayerful consideration.

As the Second Millennium draws to a close, the Christian mission in world history faces a moment of daunting opportunity and responsibility. If in the merciful and mysterious ways of God the Second Coming is delayed, we enter upon a Third Millennium that could be, in the words of John Paul II, "a springtime of world missions." (Redemptoris Missio) As Christ is one, so the Christian mission is one. That one mission can be and should be advanced in diverse ways. Legitimate diversity, however, should not be confused with existing divisions between Christians that obscure the one Christ and hinder the one mission. There is a necessary connection between the visible unity of Christians and the mission of the one Christ. We together pray for the fulfillment of the prayer of Our Lord: "May they all be one; as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, so also may they be in us, that the world may believe that you sent me." (John 17) We together, Evangelicals and Catholics, confess our sins against the unity that Christ intends for all his disciples. The one Christ and one mission includes many other Christians, notably the Eastern Orthodox and those Protestants not commonly identified as Evangelical. All Christians are encompassed in the prayer, "May they all be one." Our present statement attends to the specific problems and opportunities in the relationship between Roman Catholics and Evangelical Protestants. As we near the Third Millennium, there are approximately 1.7 billion Christians in the world. About a billion of these are

Catholics and more than 300 million are Evangelical Protestants. The century now drawing to a close has been the greatest century of missionary expansion in Christian history. We pray and we believe that this expansion has prepared the way for yet greater missionary endeavor in the first century of the Third Millennium. The two communities in world Christianity that are most evangelistically assertive and most rapidly growing are Evangelicals and Catholics. In many parts of the world, the relationship between these communities is marked more by conflict than by cooperation, more by animosity than by love, more by suspicion than by trust, more by propaganda and ignorance than by respect for the truth. This is alarmingly the case in Latin America, increasingly the case in Eastern Europe, and too often the case in our own country. Without ignoring conflicts between and within other Christian communities, we address ourselves to the relationship between Evangelicals and Catholics, who constitute the growing edge of missionary expansion at present and, most likely, in the century ahead. In doing so, we hope that what we have discovered and resolved may be of help in other situations of conflict, such as that among Orthodox, Evangelicals, and Catholics in Eastern Europe. While we are gratefully aware of ongoing efforts to address tensions among these communities, the shameful reality is that, in many places around the world, the scandal of conflict between Christians obscures the scandal of the cross, thus crippling the one mission of the one Christ. As in times past, so also today and in the future, the Christian mission, which is directed to the entire human community, must be advanced against formidable opposition. In some cultures, that mission encounters resurgent spiritualities and religions that are explicitly hostile to the claims of the Christ. Islam, which in many instances denies the freedom to witness to the Gospel, must be of increasing concern to those who care about religious freedom and the Christian mission. Mutually respectful conversation between Muslims and Christians should be encouraged in the hope that more of the world will, in the oft-repeated words of John Paul II, "open the door to Christ." At the same time, in our so-called developed societies, a widespread secularization increasingly descends into a moral, intellectual, and spiritual nihilism that denies not only the One who is the Truth but the very idea of

truth itself. We enter the twenty-first century without illusions. With Paul and the Christians of the first century, we know that "we are not contending against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places." (Ephesians 6) As Evangelicals and Catholics, we dare not by needless and loveless conflict between ourselves give aid and comfort to the enemies of the cause of Christ. The love of Christ compels us and we are therefore resolved to avoid such conflict between our communities and, where such conflict exists, to do what we can to reduce and

eliminate it. Beyond that, we are called and we are therefore resolved to explore patterns of working and witnessing together in order to advance the one mission of Christ. Our common resolve is not based merely on a desire for harmony. We reject any appearance of harmony that is purchased at the price of truth. Our common resolve is made imperative by obedience to the truth of God revealed in the Word of God, the Holy Scriptures, and by trust in the promise of the Holy Spirit's guidance until Our Lord returns in glory to judge the living and the dead. The mission that we embrace together is the necessary consequence of the faith that we affirm together.

## **We Affirm Together**

Jesus Christ is Lord. That is the first and final affirmation that Christians make about all of reality. He is the One sent by God to be Lord and Savior of all: "And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." (Acts 4) Christians are people ahead of time, those who proclaim now what will one day be acknowledged by all, that Jesus Christ is Lord. (Philippians 2) We affirm together that we are justified by grace through faith because of Christ. Living faith is active in love that is nothing less than the love of Christ, for we together say with Paul: "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." (Galatians 2) All who accept Christ as Lord and Savior are brothers and sisters in Christ. Evangelicals and Catholics are brothers and sisters in Christ. We have not chosen one another, just as we have not chosen Christ. He has chosen us, and he has chosen us to be his together. (John 15) However imperfect our communion with one another, however deep our disagreements with one another, we recognize that there is but one church of Christ. There is one church because there is one Christ and the church is his body. However difficult the way, we recognize that we are called by God to a fuller realization of our unity in the body of Christ. The only unity to which we would give expression is unity in the truth, and the truth is this: "There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father

of us all, who is above all and through all and in all." (Ephesians 4) We affirm together that Christians are to teach and live in obedience to the divinely inspired Scriptures, which are the infallible Word of God. We further affirm together that Christ has promised to his church the gift of the Holy Spirit who will lead us into all truth in discerning and declaring the teaching of Scripture. (John 16) We recognize together that the Holy Spirit has so guided his church in the past. In, for instance, the formation of the canon of the Scriptures, and in the orthodox response to the great Christological and Trinitarian controversies of the early centuries, we confidently acknowledge the guidance of the Holy Spirit. In faithful response to the Spirit's leading, the church formulated the Apostles Creed, which we can and hereby do affirm together as an accurate statement of scriptural truth:

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again 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 the life everlasting. Amen.

## **We Hope Together**

We hope together that all people will come to faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. This hope makes necessary the church's missionary zeal. "But how are they to call upon him in whom they have not believed?

And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without a preacher? And how can men preach unless they are sent?" (Romans 10) The church is by nature, in all



places and at all times, in mission. Our missionary hope is inspired by the revealed desire of God that "all should be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth." (1 Timothy 2) The church lives by and for the Great Commission: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age." (Matthew 28) Unity and love among Christians is an integral part of our missionary witness to the Lord whom we serve. "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." (John 13) If we do not love one another, we disobey his command and contradict the Gospel we declare. As Evangelicals and Catholics, we pray that our unity in the love of Christ will become ever more evident as a sign to the world of God's reconciling power. Our communal and ecclesial separations are deep and long standing. We acknowledge that we do not know the schedule nor do we know the way to the greater visible

unity for which we hope. We do know that existing patterns of distrustful polemic and conflict are not the way. We do know that God who has brought us into communion with himself through Christ intends that we also be in communion with one another. We do know that Christ is the way, the truth, and the life (John 14) and as we are drawn closer to him-walking in that way, obeying that truth, living that life-we are drawn closer to one another. Whatever may be the future form of the relationship between our communities, we can, we must, and we will begin now the work required to remedy what we know to be wrong in that relationship. Such work requires trust and understanding, and trust and understanding require an assiduous attention to truth. We do not deny but clearly assert that there are disagreements between us. Misunderstandings, misrepresentations, and caricatures of one another, however, are not disagreements. These distortions must be cleared away if we are to search through our honest differences in a manner consistent with what we affirm and hope together on the basis of God's Word.

## We Search Together

Together we search for a fuller and clearer understanding of God's revelation in Christ and his will for his disciples. Because of the limitations of human reason and language, which limitations are compounded by sin, we cannot understand completely the transcendent reality of God and his ways. Only in the End Time will we see face to face and know as we are known. (1 Corinthians 13) We now search together in confident reliance upon God's self-revelation in Jesus Christ, the sure testimony of Holy Scripture, and the promise of the Spirit to his church. In this search to understand the truth more fully and clearly, we need one another. We are both informed and limited by the histories of our communities and by our own experiences. Across the divides of communities and experiences, we need to challenge one another, always speaking the truth in love building up the Body. (Ephesians 4) We do not presume to suggest that we can resolve the deep and long-standing differences between Evangelicals and Catholics. Indeed these differences may never be resolved short of the Kingdom Come. Nonetheless, we are not permitted simply to resign ourselves to differences that divide us from one another. Not all differences are authentic disagreements, nor need all disagreements divide. Differences and disagreements must be tested in disciplined and sustained conversation. In this connection we warmly commend and encourage the formal theological dialogues of recent years between Roman Catholics and Evangelicals. We note some of the differences and disagreements that must be

addressed more fully and candidly in order to strengthen between us a relationship of trust in obedience to truth. Among points of difference in doctrine, worship, practice, and piety that are frequently thought to divide us are these:

- The church as an integral part of the Gospel or the church as a communal consequence of the Gospel.
- The church as visible communion or invisible fellowship of true believers.
- The sole authority of Scripture (*sola scriptura*) or Scripture as authoritatively interpreted in the church.
- The "soul freedom" of the individual Christian or the Magisterium (teaching authority) of the community.
- The church as local congregation or universal communion.
- Ministry ordered in apostolic succession or the priesthood of all believers.
- Sacraments and ordinances as symbols of grace or means of grace.
- The Lord's Supper as eucharistic sacrifice or memorial meal.
- Remembrance of Mary and the saints or devotion to Mary and the saints.
- Baptism as sacrament of regeneration or testimony to regeneration.

This account of differences is by no means complete. Nor is the disparity between positions always so sharp as to warrant the "or" in the above formulations. Moreover, among those recognized as Evangelical

Protestants there are significant differences between, for example, Baptists, Pentecostals, and Calvinists on these questions. But the differences mentioned above reflect disputes that are deep and long standing. In at least some instances, they reflect authentic disagreements that have been in the past and are at present barriers to full communion between Christians. On these questions, and other questions implied by them, Evangelicals hold that the Catholic Church has gone beyond Scripture, adding teachings and practices that detract from or compromise the Gospel of God's saving grace in Christ. Catholics, in turn, hold that such teachings and practices are grounded in Scripture

and belong to the fullness of God's revelation. Their rejection, Catholics say, results in a truncated and reduced understanding of the Christian reality. Again, we cannot resolve these disputes here. We can and do affirm together that the entirety of Christian faith, life, and mission finds its source, center, and end in the crucified and risen Lord. We can and do pledge that we will continue to search together-through study, discussion, and prayer-for a better understanding of one another's convictions and a more adequate comprehension of the truth of God in Christ. We can testify now that in our searching together we have discovered what we can affirm together and what we can hope together and, therefore, how we can contend together.

## **We Contend Together**

As we are bound together by Christ and his cause, so we are bound together in contending against all that opposes Christ and his cause. We are emboldened not by illusions of easy triumph but by faith in his certain triumph. Our Lord wept over Jerusalem, and he now weeps over a world that does not know the time of its visitation. The raging of the principalities and powers may increase as the End Time nears, but the outcome of the contest is assured. The cause of Christ is the cause and mission of the church, which is, first of all, to proclaim the Good News that "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation." (2 Corinthians 5) To proclaim this Gospel and to sustain the community of faith, worship, and discipleship that is gathered by this Gospel is the first and chief responsibility of the church. All other tasks and responsibilities of the church are derived from and directed toward the mission of the Gospel. Christians individually and the church corporately also have a responsibility for the right ordering of civil society. We embrace this task soberly; knowing the consequences of human sinfulness, we resist the utopian conceit that it is within our powers to build the Kingdom of God on earth. We embrace this task hopefully; knowing that God has called us to love our neighbor, we seek to secure for all a greater measure of civil righteousness and justice, confident that he will crown our efforts when he rightly orders all things in the coming of his Kingdom. In the exercise of these public responsibilities there has been in recent years a growing convergence and cooperation between Evangelicals and Catholics. We thank God for the discovery of one another in contending for a common cause. Much more important, we thank God for the discovery of one another as brothers and sisters in Christ. Our cooperation as citizens is animated by our convergence as Christians. We promise one another that we will work to deepen, build upon, and expand

this pattern of convergence and cooperation. Together we contend for the truth that politics, law, and culture must be secured by moral truth. With the Founders of the American experiment, we declare, "We hold these truths." With them, we hold that this constitutional order is composed not just of rules and procedures but is most essentially a moral experiment. With them, we hold that only a virtuous people can be free and just, and that virtue is secured by religion. To propose that securing civil virtue is the purpose of religion is blasphemous. To deny that securing civil virtue is a benefit of religion is blindness. Americans are drifting away from, are often explicitly defying, the constituting truths of this experiment in ordered liberty. Influential sectors of the culture are laid waste by relativism, anti-intellectualism, and nihilism that deny the very idea of truth. Against such influences in both the elite and popular culture, we appeal to reason and religion in contending for the foundational truths of our constitutional order. More specifically, we contend together for religious freedom. We do so for the sake of religion, but also because religious freedom is the first freedom, the source and shield of all human freedoms. In their relationship to God, persons have a dignity and responsibility that transcends, and thereby limits, the authority of the state and of every other merely human institution. Religious freedom is itself grounded in and is a product of religious faith, as is evident in the history of Baptists and others in this country. Today we rejoice together that the Roman Catholic Church-as affirmed by the Second Vatican Council and boldly exemplified in the ministry of John Paul II-is strongly committed to religious freedom and, consequently, to the defense of all human rights. Where Evangelicals and Catholics are in severe and sometimes violent conflict, such as parts of Latin America, we urge Christians to embrace and act upon the imperative of religious freedom. Religious freedom will not be respected by the state if it is not respected by Christians or, even worse, if Christians attempt to

recruit the state in repressing religious freedom. In this country, too, freedom of religion cannot be taken for granted but requires constant attention. We strongly affirm the separation of church and state, and just as strongly protest the distortion of that principle to mean the separation of religion from public life. We are deeply concerned by the courts' narrowing of the protections provided by the "free exercise" provision of the First Amendment and by an obsession with "no establishment" that stifles the necessary role of religion in American life. As a consequence of such distortions, it is increasingly the case that wherever government goes religion must retreat, and government increasingly goes almost everywhere. Religion, which was privileged and foundational in our legal order, has in recent years been penalized and made marginal. We contend together for a renewal of the constituting vision of the place of religion in the American experiment. Religion and religiously grounded moral conviction is not an alien or threatening force in our public life. For the great majority of Americans, morality is derived, however variously and confusedly, from religion. The argument, increasingly voiced in sectors of our political culture, that religion should be excluded from the public square must be recognized as an assault upon the most elementary principles of democratic governance. That argument needs to be exposed and countered by leaders, religious and other, who care about the integrity of our constitutional order. The pattern of convergence and cooperation between Evangelicals and Catholics is, in large part, a result of common effort to protect human life, especially the lives of the most vulnerable among us. With the Founders, we hold that all human beings are endowed by their Creator with the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. The statement that the unborn child is a human life that-barring natural misfortune or lethal intervention-will become what everyone recognizes as a human baby is not a religious assertion. It is a statement of simple biological fact. That the unborn child has a right to protection, including the protection of law, is a moral statement supported by moral reason and biblical truth. We, therefore, will persist in contending-we will not be discouraged but will multiply every effort-in order to secure the legal protection of the unborn. Our goals are: to secure due process of law for the unborn, to enact the most protective laws and public policies that are politically possible, and to reduce dramatically the incidence of abortion. We warmly commend those who have established thousands of crisis pregnancy and postnatal care centers across the country, and urge that such efforts be multiplied. As the unborn must be protected, so also must women be protected from their current rampant exploitation by the abortion industry and by fathers who refuse to accept responsibility for mothers and children. Abortion on demand, which is the current rule in America, must be recognized as a

massive attack on the dignity, rights, and needs of women. Abortion is the leading edge of an encroaching culture of death. The helpless old, the radically handicapped, and others who cannot effectively assert their rights are increasingly treated as though they have no rights. These are the powerless who are exposed to the will and whim of those who have power over them. We will do all in our power to resist proposals for euthanasia, eugenics, and population control that exploit the vulnerable, corrupt the integrity of medicine, deprave our culture, and betray the moral truths of our constitutional order. In public education, we contend together for schools that transmit to coming generations our cultural heritage, which is inseparable from the formative influence of religion, especially Judaism and Christianity. Education for responsible citizenship and social behavior is inescapably moral education. Every effort must be made to cultivate the morality of honesty, law observance, work, caring, chastity, mutual respect between the sexes, and readiness for marriage, parenthood, and family. We reject the claim that, in any or all of these areas, "tolerance" requires the promotion of moral equivalence between the normative and the deviant. In a democratic society that recognizes that parents have the primary responsibility for the formation of their children, schools are to assist and support, not oppose and undermine, parents in the exercise of their responsibility. We contend together for a comprehensive policy of parental choice in education. This is a moral question of simple justice. Parents are the primary educators of their children; the state and other institutions should be supportive of their exercise of that responsibility. We affirm policies that enable parents to effectively exercise their right and responsibility to choose the schooling that they consider best for their children. We contend together against the widespread pornography in our society, along with the celebration of violence, sexual depravity, and antireligious bigotry in the entertainment media. In resisting such cultural and moral debasement, we recognize the legitimacy of boycotts and other consumer actions, and urge the enforcement of existing laws against obscenity. We reject the self-serving claim of the peddlers of depravity that this constitutes illegitimate censorship. We reject the assertion of the unimaginative that artistic creativity is to be measured by the capacity to shock or outrage. A people incapable of defending decency invites the rule of viciousness, both public and personal. We contend for a renewed spirit of acceptance, understanding, and cooperation across lines of religion, race, ethnicity, sex, and class. We are all created in the image of God and are accountable to him. That truth is the basis of individual responsibility and equality before the law. The abandonment of that truth has resulted in a society at war with itself, pitting citizens against one another in bitter conflicts of group

grievances and claims to entitlement. Justice and social amity require a redirection of public attitudes and policies so that rights are joined to duties and people are rewarded according to their character and competence. We contend for a free society, including a vibrant market economy. A free society requires a careful balancing between economics, politics, and culture. Christianity is not an ideology and therefore does not prescribe precisely how that balance is to be achieved in every circumstance. We affirm the importance of a free economy not only because it is more efficient but because it accords with a Christian understanding of human freedom. Economic freedom, while subject to grave abuse, makes possible the patterns of creativity, cooperation, and accountability that contribute to the common good. We contend together for a renewed appreciation of Western culture. In its history and missionary reach, Christianity engages all cultures while being captive to none. We are keenly aware of, and grateful for, the role of Christianity in shaping and sustaining the Western culture of which we are part. As with all of history, that culture is marred by human sinfulness. Alone among world cultures, however, the West has cultivated an attitude of self-criticism and of eagerness to learn from other cultures. What is called multiculturalism can mean respectful attention to human differences. More commonly today, however, multiculturalism means affirming all cultures but our own. Welcoming the contributions of other cultures and being ever alert to the limitations of our own, we receive Western culture as our legacy and embrace it as our task in order to transmit it as a gift to future generations. We contend for public policies that demonstrate renewed respect for the irreplaceable role of mediating structures in society—notably the family, churches, and myriad voluntary associations. The state is not the society, and many of the most important functions of society are best addressed in independence from the state. The role of churches in responding to a wide variety of human needs, especially among the poor and marginal, needs to be protected and strengthened. Moreover, society is not

the aggregate of isolated individuals bearing rights but is composed of communities that inculcate responsibility, sustain shared memory, provide mutual aid, and nurture the habits that contribute to both personal well-being and the common good. Most basic among such communities is the community of the family. Laws and social policies should be designed with particular care for the stability and flourishing of families. While the crisis of the family in America is by no means limited to the poor or to the underclass, heightened attention must be paid those who have become, as a result of well-intended but misguided statist policies, virtual wards of the government. Finally, we contend for a realistic and responsible understanding of America's part in world affairs. Realism and responsibility require that we avoid both the illusions of unlimited power and righteousness, on the one hand, and the timidity and selfishness of isolationism, on the other. U.S. foreign policy should reflect a concern for the defense of democracy and, wherever prudent and possible, the protection and advancement of human rights, including religious freedom. The above is a partial list of public responsibilities on which we believe there is a pattern of convergence and cooperation between Evangelicals and Catholics. We reject the notion that this constitutes a partisan "religious agenda" in American politics. Rather, this is a set of directions oriented to the common good and discussable on the basis of public reason. While our sense of civic responsibility is informed and motivated by Christian faith, our intention is to elevate the level of political and moral discourse in a manner that excludes no one and invites the participation of all people of good will. To that end, Evangelicals and Catholics have made an inestimable contribution in the past and, it is our hope, will contribute even more effectively in the future. We are profoundly aware that the American experiment has been, all in all, a blessing to the world and a blessing to us as Evangelical and Catholic Christians. We are determined to assume our full share of responsibility for this "one nation under God," believing it to be a nation under the judgment, mercy, and providential care of the Lord of the nations to whom alone we render unqualified allegiance.

## **We Witness Together**

The question of Christian witness unavoidably returns us to points of serious tension between Evangelicals and Catholics. Bearing witness to the saving power of Jesus Christ and his will for our lives is an integral part of Christian discipleship. The achievement of good will and cooperation between Evangelicals and Catholics must not be at the price of the urgency and clarity of Christian witness to the Gospel. At the same time, and as noted earlier, Our Lord has made clear

that the evidence of love among his disciples is an integral part of that Christian witness. Today, in this country and elsewhere, Evangelicals and Catholics attempt to win "converts" from one another's folds. In some ways, this is perfectly understandable and perhaps inevitable. In many instances, however, such efforts at recruitment undermine the Christian mission by which we are bound by God's Word and to which we have recommitted ourselves in this statement. It

should be clearly understood between Catholics and Evangelicals that Christian witness is of necessity aimed at conversion. Authentic conversion is-in its beginning, in its end, and all along the way-conversion to God in Christ by the power of the Spirit. In this connection, we embrace as our own the explanation of the Baptist-Roman Catholic International Conversation (1988):

Conversion is turning away from all that is opposed to God, contrary to Christ's teaching, and turning to God, to Christ, the Son, through the work of the Holy Spirit. It entails a turning from the self-centeredness of sin to faith in Christ as Lord and Savior. Conversion is a passing from one way of life to another new one, marked with the newness of Christ. It is a continuing process so that the whole life of a Christian should be a passage from death to life, from error to truth, from sin to grace. Our life in Christ demands continual growth in God's grace. Conversion is personal but not private. Individuals respond in faith to God's call but faith comes from hearing the proclamation of the word of God and is to be expressed in the life together in Christ that is the Church.

By preaching, teaching, and life example, Christians witness to Christians and non-Christians alike. We seek and pray for the conversion of others, even as we recognize our own continuing need to be fully converted. As we strive to make Christian faith and life-our own and that of others-ever more intentional rather than nominal, ever more committed rather than apathetic, we also recognize the different forms that authentic discipleship can take. As is evident in the two thousand year history of the church, and in our contemporary experience, there are different ways of being Christian, and some of these ways are distinctively marked by communal patterns of worship, piety, and catechesis. That we are all to be one does not mean that we are all to be identical in our way of following the one Christ. Such distinctive patterns of discipleship, it should be noted, are amply evident within the communion of the Catholic Church as well as within the many worlds of Evangelical Protestantism. It is understandable that Christians who bear witness to the Gospel try to persuade others that their communities and traditions are more fully in accord with the Gospel. There is a necessary distinction between evangelizing and what is today commonly called proselytizing or "sheep stealing." We condemn the practice of recruiting people from another community for purposes of denominational or institutional aggrandizement. At the same time, our commitment to full religious freedom compels us to defend the legal freedom to proselytize even as we call

upon Christians to refrain from such activity. Three observations are in order in connection with proselytizing. First, as much as we might believe one community is more fully in accord with the Gospel than another, we as Evangelicals and Catholics affirm that opportunity and means for growth in Christian discipleship are available in our several communities. Second, the decision of the committed Christian with respect to his communal allegiance and participation must be assiduously respected. Third, in view of the large number of non-Christians in the world and the enormous challenge of our common evangelistic task, it is neither theologically legitimate nor a prudent use of resources for one Christian community to proselytize among active adherents of another Christian community. Christian witness must always be made in a spirit of love and humility. It must not deny but must readily accord to everyone the full freedom to discern and decide what is God's will for his life. Witness that is in service to the truth is in service to such freedom. Any form of coercion-physical, psychological, legal, economic-corrupts Christian witness and is to be unqualifiedly rejected. Similarly, bearing false witness against other persons and communities, or casting unjust and uncharitable suspicions upon them, is incompatible with the Gospel. Also to be rejected is the practice of comparing the strengths and ideals of one community with the weaknesses and failures of another. In describing the teaching and practices of other Christians, we must strive to do so in a way that they would recognize as fair and accurate. In considering the many corruptions of Christian witness, we, Evangelicals and Catholics, confess that we have sinned against one another and against God. We most earnestly ask the forgiveness of God and one another, and pray for the grace to amend our own lives and that of our communities. Repentance and amendment of life do not dissolve remaining differences between us. In the context of evangelization and "reevangelization," we encounter a major difference in our understanding of the relationship between baptism and the new birth in Christ. For Catholics, all who are validly baptized are born again and are truly, however imperfectly, in communion with Christ. That baptismal grace is to be continually reawakened and revived through conversion. For most Evangelicals, but not all, the experience of conversion is to be followed by baptism as a sign of new birth. For Catholics, all the baptized are already members of the church, however dormant their faith and life; for many Evangelicals, the new birth requires baptismal initiation into the community of the born again. These differing beliefs about the relationship between baptism, new birth, and membership in the church should be honestly presented to the Christian who has undergone conversion. But again, his decision regarding communal allegiance and participation must be

assiduously respected. There are, then, differences between us that cannot be resolved here. But on this we are resolved: All authentic witness must be aimed at conversion to God in Christ by the power of the Spirit. Those converted- whether understood as having received the new birth for the first time or as having experienced the reawakening of the new birth originally bestowed in the sacrament of baptism-must be given full freedom and respect as they discern and decide the community in which they will live their new life in Christ. In such discernment and decision, they are ultimately responsible to God, and we dare not

interfere with the exercise of that responsibility. Also in our differences and disagreements, we Evangelicals and Catholics commend one another to God "who by the power at work within us is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think." (Ephesians 3) In this discussion of witnessing together we have touched on difficult and long-standing problems. The difficulties must not be permitted to overshadow the truths on which we are, by the grace of God, in firm agreement. As we grow in mutual understanding and trust, it is our hope that our efforts to evangelize will not jeopardize but will reinforce our devotion to the common tasks to which we have pledged ourselves in this statement.

## Conclusion

Nearly two thousand years after it began, and nearly five hundred years after the divisions of the Reformation era, the Christian mission to the world is vibrantly alive and assertive. We do not know, we cannot know, what the Lord of history has in store for the Third Millennium. It may be the springtime of world missions and great Christian expansion. It may be the way of the cross marked by persecution and apparent marginalization. In different places and times, it will likely be both. Or it may be that Our Lord will return tomorrow. We do know that his promise is sure, that we are enlisted for the

duration, and that we are in this together. We do know that we must affirm and hope and search and contend and witness together, for we belong not to ourselves but to him who has purchased us by the blood of the cross. We do know that this is a time of opportunity-and, if of opportunity, then of responsibility-for Evangelicals and Catholics to be Christians together in a way that helps prepare the world for the coming of him to whom belongs the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

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