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# Instructions on Catholic Beliefs

By JOSEPH I. MALLOY, C.S.P.



# SIX INSTRUCTIONS ON CATHOLIC BELIEFS

*By*

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## LESSON I

### 1. How can we know that there is a God?

We can know there is a God by considering the world in which we live, for:

(a) Everything that exists in the world must have been placed here by Someone in the beginning;

(b) The order and harmony in the universe prove that there must be an Intelligent Power governing the world.

This Being Who had no beginning, and Who caused other things to live, and Who guides and rules the universe, we call God.

“The heavens show forth the glory of God, and the firmament declareth the work of His hands” (Psalms xviii. 2).

### 2. How many Persons are there in God?

In God there are Three Divine Persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; each Person is God and the Three Persons are equal in all things.

### 3. Why do we believe that there are Three Persons in one God?

Because it has been revealed to us in Holy Scripture, the Word of God; we believe it, therefore, on the authority of God.

“Going, therefore, teach ye all nations; baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost” (St. Matt. xxviii. 19).

“But when the *Paraclete* cometh, Whom I will send you from the *Father*, the Spirit of Truth, Who *proceedeth* from the Father, He shall give testimony of Me” (St. John xv. 26).

#### 4. Who is Jesus Christ?

Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, true God and true Man.

#### 5. What do we mean by the virgin birth of Christ?

We mean that His Mother Mary was always a virgin. St. Joseph was her legal husband and the guardian of Jesus and Mary, but Joseph and Mary always lived as brother and sister.<sup>1</sup>

“Behold a virgin shall be with child, and bring forth a Son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us” (St. Matt. i. 23).

#### 6. What do we mean by the Divinity of Jesus Christ?

We mean that He is truly God Who became Man for our salvation.

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

(a) The Prophets foretold that the Messias to come would be God:

“His Name shall be called Emmanuel,” that is, “God with us” (Isaias vii. 14; St. Matt. i. 23).

“God Himself will come and will save you” (Isaias xxxv. 4).

<sup>1</sup> See *The Question Box*, pp. 353-358.

(b) The miracles of Christ, especially His own Resurrection from the dead, prove His Divinity.

“You say ‘Thou blasphemeth,’ because I said I am the Son of God. If I do not the works of My Father, believe Me not; but if I do, though you will not believe Me, believe the works, that you may know and believe that the Father is in Me and I in the Father” (St. John x. 36-38).

(c) Jesus claimed to be God; this claim must be admitted, since He was honest and sane.

“I and the Father are One. . . . He that seeth Me seeth the Father also” (St. John x. 30; xiv. 9).

“The High Priest asked Him and said to Him: ‘Art Thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed God?’ And Jesus said to him, ‘I am.’ . . . Then the High Priest rending his garments saith: ‘You have heard the blasphemy, what think you?’ Who all condemned Him to be guilty of death” (St. Mark xiv. 61-64).

(d) The Apostles called Him God, and Jesus permitted them to do so.

St. Peter said: “Thou art Christ, the Son of the Living God” (St. Matt. xvi. 16).

St. Thomas: “My Lord and my God” (St. John xx. 28).

St. John: “The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, the glory as it were, of the Only-Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth” (St. John i. 14).

St. Paul: “Of whom (namely, the Israelites) is Christ according to the flesh, Who is over all things, GOD blessed forever, amen” (Romans ix. 5). “Christ Jesus, Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God” (Philip. ii. 5, 6).

**8. Who is the Holy Ghost?**

The Holy Ghost is the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity, equal to the Father and the Son, true God as They are.

“Going, therefore, teach ye all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost” (St. Matt. xxviii. 9).

“But Peter said: ‘Ananias, why hath Satan tempted thy heart that thou shouldst lie to the Holy Ghost? . . . Thou hast not lied to men but to God’” (Acts v. 3, 4).

**9. When did the Holy Ghost descend upon the Apostles?**

On Pentecost, ten days after the Ascension of our Lord, the Holy Ghost came upon the Apostles.

“And when the days of the Pentecost were accomplished, the Apostles were all together in one place. . . . And there appeared to them parted tongues as it were of fire, and it sat upon every one of them, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost” (Acts ii. 1-4).

**10. What was the effect of the coming of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles?**

(a) They were sanctified and strengthened so that they immediately began fearlessly to preach the doctrines of Christ.

(b) They were given the “gift of tongues” to enable them to preach the Gospel to all nations.

“And they began to speak with divers tongues according as the Holy Ghost gave them to speak. . . . And they (the people) were all amazed and wondered, saying: ‘Behold, are not all these that speak Galileans? And how have we heard, every man, our own tongue wherein we were born?’” (Acts ii. 4-8).

## LESSON II

### 1. What does the Bible tell us about the origin of the world and of man?

The Bible tells us that God created the heavens and the earth and all that they contain, including man (Genesis i. and ii.).

### 2. What is man?

Man is a being composed of body and soul, and made to the image and likeness of God.

“And the Lord God formed man of the slime of the earth, and breathed into his face the breath of life, and man became a living soul” (Genesis ii. 7).

“And God created man to His own image” (*ibid* i. 27).

### 3. How is the soul like to God?

The soul is like to God because it is an immortal spirit, and because it has reason and free will.

The possession of a spiritual soul places man in a class apart from the lower animals; these have instinct and brute intelligence, but neither reason nor free will.

### 4. Why did God make man?

God made man to know Him, to love Him, and to serve Him in this world, and to be happy with Him forever in Heaven.

“The Lord hath made all things for Himself” (Prov. xvi. 4).

“The Lord thy God shalt thou adore and Him only shalt thou serve” (St. Matt. iv. 10).

“Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that which endureth unto life everlasting, which the Son of Man will give you” (St. John vi. 27).

**5. What was the original state of our first parents?**

Their original state was one of innocence and holiness, and they were blessed with great gifts.

“He created in them the science of the spirit, He filled their heart with wisdom. . . . And their eye saw the majesty of His glory, and their ears heard His glorious voice” (Ecclus. xvii. 6, 11).

**6. What command did God give to Adam and Eve?**

God commanded Adam and Eve not to eat of the fruit of a certain tree in Paradise.

“Of every tree of Paradise thou shalt eat; but of the tree of knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat; for in what day soever thou shalt eat of it thou shalt die the death” (Genesis ii. 16, 17).

**7. Did Adam and Eve obey this commandment?**

No, the devil tempted them to eat of this tree and they disobeyed God. This was the first, or, the Original Sin.

**8. What was the effect of this sin on our first parents and on all mankind?**

They lost their right to Heaven, they forfeited God’s friendship, they were doomed to suffering and death, and all their descendants share in these penalties, as they would have shared in their blessings if our first parents had remained faithful.

“By one man sin entered into this world, and by sin death; and so death passed upon all men in whom all have sinned” (Romans v. 12).

**9. Was anyone ever preserved from Original Sin?**

Yes, the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of Jesus

Christ. When God created her soul He endowed it with His grace and friendship. This privilege is called her Immaculate Conception.

**10. What are those sins called that man commits by his own will?**

They are called Actual Sins, and there are two kinds: Mortal and Venial Sins.

**11. What is Mortal Sin?**

Mortal means deadly. Mortal sin is any thought, word, action or omission (1) in itself seriously contrary to the law of God, (2) if we know the seriousness of the sin and (3) willfully and deliberately consent to it.

**12. What is Venial Sin?**

Venial Sin is a less serious offense against God which nevertheless displeases Him and often leads to Mortal Sin. It is called Venial because it is more easily pardoned than Mortal Sin.

**13. What is meant by temptation?**

Temptation, is anything that may lead us to commit sin.

**14. How are we saved from sin?**

By the Life and Sufferings and Death of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who is the Redeemer of mankind.

**15. What are the effects of the redemption by Jesus Christ?**

(a) Divine Justice was satisfied and complete atonement made for the sins of mankind.



(b) Man was reconciled with God and provided with the means of salvation. Man must exert himself to use these means.

“In Whom we have redemption through His Blood, the remission of sins” (Col. i. 14).

“With fear and trembling work out your salvation” (Philip. ii. 12).

### **16. How is Mortal Sin punished by God?**

We shall be judged immediately after death and if we die guilty of Mortal Sin and at enmity with God, our souls are condemned to Hell for all eternity.

“Depart from Me, you cursed, into everlasting fire, which was prepared for the devil and his angels. . . . And these shall go into everlasting punishment” (St. Matt. xxv. 41, 46).

### **17. How is Venial Sin punished in the Future Life?**

Venial Sin and all grave sins forgiven but not completely atoned for in this life, are punished for a time in Purgatory.

“Amen I say to thee, thou shalt not go out from thence till thou pay the last farthing” (St. Matt. v. 26).

### **18. Can we help the souls in Purgatory?**

Yes; we can help the souls in Purgatory by our prayers, and especially by the Sacrifice of the Mass.

“Making a gathering, Judas Machabeus sent twelve thousand drachms of silver to Jerusalem for sacrifice to be offered for the sins of the dead. . . . It is therefore a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from sins” (2 Mach. xii. 43-46).

### **19. How are those who love and serve God faithfully rewarded in the Future Life?**

(a) Those who die in the friendship of God and

who have completely atoned for all sins, go at once to Heaven, a place of everlasting happiness in the Presence of God.

(b) All the souls in Purgatory will eventually be admitted into Heaven.

“The eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for them that love Him” (1 Cor. ii. 9).

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### LESSON III.

#### 1. How many churches did Christ establish?

Christ established only one Church, and this one Church was commissioned to teach all that He taught, and to teach with His authority.

“Jesus coming spoke to the Apostles, saying ‘All power is given to Me in Heaven and in earth. Going, therefore, teach ye all nations . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world’ (St. Matt. xxviii. 18-20).

#### 2. Whom did Christ make the Visible Head of His Church?

Christ made St. Peter the Visible Head of His Church.

“And I say to thee, that thou art Peter (or a rock), and upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give to thee the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven” (St. Matt. xvi. 18, 19).

#### 3. Who is the successor of St. Peter?

The Pope, the Bishop of Rome, is the successor of St. Peter who was the first Bishop of Rome.

**4. What do we mean when we say that the Pope is infallible? <sup>2</sup>**

We mean that when the Pope teaches officially (“*ex cathedra*”), as the Supreme Head of the Church of Christ, for the whole Church, on a question of faith or morals, he is so guided by the Holy Spirit that he cannot make a mistake in this teaching.

“He that heareth you, heareth Me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth Me, and he who despiseth Me, despiseth Him that sent Me” (St. Luke x. 16).

**5. How do we know that the Pope is infallible?**

We know that the Pope is infallible because:

- (a) He is the foundation stone, as Peter was, of the Church of Christ, against which “the gates of hell” can never prevail (*Cf.* St. Matt. xvi. 18).
- (b) Christ promised that the Holy Spirit would teach His Church all truth, and would abide with it forever (St. John xiv. 16; xvi. 13). But if the divinely appointed head of the Church could teach error in expounding the doctrines of Christ, this promise would be broken, and there would be no security for the members of the Church.

Jesus said: “I have prayed for thee (Peter) that thy faith fail not, and thou being once converted, confirm thy brethren” (St. Luke xxii. 32).

**6. What marks must the True Church of Christ have?**

It must be Apostolic, Universal, Holy and United.

**7. How is the Catholic Church Apostolic?**

The Church’s history goes right back to the

<sup>2</sup> *The Question Box*, pp. 168-187.

Apostles and to Christ Himself, and the Church has kept the authority and the teachings of the Apostles by an unbroken succession of Bishops.

**8. How is the Catholic Church Universal?**

It is not restricted to any particular nations or races; its mission is to "all nations." It teaches "all things whatsoever Christ commanded" the Apostles to teach. It will continue to teach "all days even to the consummation of the world" (St. Matt. xxviii. 19, 20). That is why it is called "Catholic," which means "Universal."

**9. How is the Catholic Church Holy?**

It is Holy because it teaches a holy doctrine, because it offers to all its members effective means to acquire personal holiness, and because so many thousands of its members in all ages have, in fact, attained great holiness of life.

**10. How is the Catholic Church United, or One?**

It is One, because all Catholics agree in One Belief, all have the same Sacrifice and Sacraments, and all are united under One Head.

**11. With what authority does the Catholic Church teach?**

With the authority given by Jesus Christ to His Apostles and which they passed on to their successors.

"He that heareth you, heareth Me" (St. Luke x. 16).

"If he will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and publican" (St. Matt. xviii. 17).

St. Paul wrote to his Disciple, Timothy: "These things I write to thee . . . that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the Church of the Living God, the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Tim. iii. 14, 15).

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## LESSON IV

### 1. What are the Sacraments?

The Sacraments are external means instituted by Christ to give grace to those receiving them.

### 2. What is meant by Grace?

Grace is a supernatural gift of God freely bestowed on us for our salvation and sanctification.

*Sanctifying* or habitual grace makes the soul holy; *actual* grace is a transitory help which God gives us to perform a good act.

### 3. Name the Seven Sacraments.

(1) Baptism, (2) Penance ("Confession"), (3) Holy Eucharist ("The Lord's Supper"), (4) Confirmation, (5) Extreme Unction (The Last Anointing), (6) Holy Orders (The Priesthood, etc.), and (7) Matrimony.

### 4. What is Baptism?

Baptism is the Sacrament which removes Original Sin from our souls and makes us Christians.

### 5. Is Baptism necessary for salvation?

Baptism is necessary for salvation, for Jesus Christ declared: "Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God" (St. John iii. 5).

“He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved”  
(St. Mark xvi. 16).

**6. What is the Sacrament of Penance?**

Penance, or Confession, is the Sacrament in which the sins committed after we have been baptized are forgiven.

**7. When did Christ institute the Sacrament of Penance?**

On the evening of the first Easter, the day of His Resurrection, Christ appeared to His Apostles, who were gathered in an upper room, and said to them: “ ‘Peace be to you. As the Father hath sent Me, I also send you.’ When He had said this He breathed on them and He said to them: ‘Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained’ ” (St. John xx. 21-23).

**8. What must we do to obtain forgiveness of our sins in the Sacrament of Penance?**

We must do five things: (1) Prepare by making an examination of our conscience. (2) Have sorrow for our sins. (3) Resolve never again to commit sin. (4) Confess our sins to the priest. (5) Perform the penance which the priest gives.

**9. What is the Examination of Conscience?**

The Examination of Conscience is an earnest effort to recall to mind all the sins we have committed in thought, word and deed, and by omission since our last Confession.

**10. What do we mean by contrition or sorrow for our sins?**

Contrition is a sincere sorrow for having offended God, and a hatred for the sins we have committed, with a firm purpose of sinning no more.

**11. Will God forgive any of our sins if we have not sorrow for them?**

God will not forgive any of our sins, whether Mortal or Venial, if we have not true sorrow for them.

“The Lord is nigh to them that are of a contrite heart, and He will save the humble of spirit” (Psalm xxxiii. 19).

“Go, and now sin no more” (St. John viii. 11).

**12. What sins are we bound to confess in Confession?**

We are bound to confess *all* our Mortal Sins, and to tell the number of times we have committed each sin.

**13. If we are not guilty of any Mortal Sins, what sins do we confess?**

We confess our Venial Sins and imperfections, especially any habitual faults.

**14. What is meant by the Penance which the priest gives us in Confession?**

The Penance is usual certain prayers, to be said after the Confession, which help to satisfy for the “temporal punishment” due for our sins.



**15. What is meant by Temporal Punishment?**

It is punishment we must suffer for a time, as distinguished from eternal punishment; this temporal punishment must be borne either in this life or in the next life in Purgatory.

**16. What is an Indulgence? <sup>3</sup>**

An indulgence is the release, either in whole or in part, from the temporal punishment due for sin, granted by the authority of the Church.

**17. What is the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist?**

It is the Sacrament which contains the true Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, together with His Soul and Divinity, under the appearances of bread and wine.

**18. Why do Catholics believe that Christ changed bread and wine into His Own Body and Blood at the Last Supper?**

(a) Because His words plainly indicate this. He said, "This *is* My Body," not, "This represents My Body."

(b) Christ had promised His Body and Blood as food and drink: "The Bread that I will give is My Flesh for the life of the world.' The Jews therefore strove among themselves saying, 'How can this man give us His Flesh to eat?' Then Jesus said to them: 'Amen, amen, I say unto you, except you eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His Blood, you shall not have life in you'" (St. John vi. 52-54).

<sup>3</sup> See *The Question Box*, pp. 293-299.

(c) The Apostles understood that Jesus meant His words literally. St. Paul writes: "The chalice of benediction which we bless, is it not the Communion of the Blood of Christ? And the bread which we break, is it not the partaking of the Body of the Lord? . . . Therefore whosoever shall eat this bread or drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the Body and of the Blood of the Lord. . . . For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, not discerning (*i. e.*, not recognizing) the Body of the Lord" (1 Cor. x. 16; xi. 27-29).

(d) It was the belief of Christians from the time of Christ till the Sixteenth Century, namely, till the beginning of Protestantism.

### **19. What is the Mass?**

The Mass is the Sacrifice of the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, really present in the Holy Eucharist, and offered to God through the ministry of the priest. (See *The Visible Church*, pp. 86-118.)

### **20. When must Catholics attend Mass?**

Catholics must attend Mass on all Sundays and Holydays of Obligation, unless they are prevented by some grave reason.

### **21. Why is the Mass said in Latin?**

(a) Because Latin was the official language in a large part of the civilized world when Christianity was established.

(b) The use of Latin preserves the uniformity of the Mass in different countries and different

times, and makes it certain that no errors creep into the words of the Mass. Several other languages are used, however, in saying Mass. (See *The Visible Church*, p. 266.)

**22. What is Holy Communion and how do Catholics prepare for it?**

Holy Communion is the receiving of our Lord Jesus Christ in the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist. Catholics must be in the state of sanctifying grace and must also be fasting from the preceding midnight.

“Whosoever shall eat this bread or drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the Body and of the Blood of the Lord” (1 Cor. xi. 27).

**23. What is meant by the State of Grace?**

It means being free from any serious sin that would destroy the friendship of God in our souls.

**24. What is the Sacrament of Confirmation, and who confers this Sacrament?**

Confirmation is the Sacrament in which a baptized person receives the special grace and strength of the Holy Ghost. This Sacrament is conferred by a Bishop.

“When Peter and John were come they prayed for them (the Samaritans), that they might receive the Holy Ghost; for He was not as yet come upon any of them, but they were only baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid their hands upon them and they received the Holy Ghost” (Acts viii. 15-17).

**25. What preparation is necessary for receiving Confirmation?**

One must (a) be in the state of grace and be fully instructed in the principal doctrines of Catholic Faith.

(b) Select a Christian name different from one's baptismal name, which the Bishop uses in confirming.

(c) Arrange for a sponsor as in Baptism.

**26. What is the Sacrament of Extreme Unction?**

Extreme Unction, or, the Last Anointing, is the Sacrament given to those in danger of death, to prepare their souls for eternity.

**27. What does the Bible say of Extreme Unction?**

"Is any man sick among you? Let him bring in the priests of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the Name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith shall save the sick man, and the Lord shall raise him up, and if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him" (Epistle of St. James v. 14, 15).

**28. What is the Sacrament of Holy Orders, and who administers this Sacrament?**

Holy Orders is the Sacrament by which Bishops and priests of the Church receive the power and grace to perform their sacred offices. Only a Bishop can confer Holy Orders.

**29. What is a Cardinal, and what are the duties of Cardinals?**

Cardinal is a dignity conferred on Bishops or priests, making them Princes of the Church. Cardinals elect the Pope and assist and advise the Pope in governing the Church.

**LESSON V**

**1. By whom was Matrimony instituted?**

Matrimony was instituted by God Himself, when He created the first man and woman, and declared that "a man shall leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they shall be two in one flesh" (Gen. ii. 24).

**2. Was Matrimony always a Sacrament?**

No; the Sacraments were instituted by Jesus Christ. Before His coming into the world, Matrimony was only a sacred contract.

**3. How do we know that Matrimony is a Sacrament?**

St. Paul says that the marriage of a man and a woman is like the union between Christ and His Church, and again he says: "This is a great Sacrament, but I speak in Christ and in the Church" (Eph. v. 25-32).

**4. What, then, is Matrimony in the Catholic Church?**

Matrimony is a Sacrament by which two single persons, man and woman, are married to each other, and receive grace from God to discharge the duties of their state faithfully until death.

**5. What are the laws of the Catholic Church regarding Matrimony?**

- (a) Catholics should not marry non-Catholics.
- (b) They may not marry very near relatives, as first or second cousins, uncle, aunt, nephew or niece.

(c) It is forbidden to have the Nuptial Mass for a wedding during the seasons of Lent and Advent.

**6. Why does the Church oppose the marriage of Catholics to Non-Catholics?**

Because religion should enter into our everyday lives, and if husband and wife are not agreed about their religion and the moral principles that follow from religion there is grave danger to the harmony of wedded life. If there are children it is more difficult for them to adhere strictly to the Catholic Church if one loved parent belongs to another church.

**7. Does the Church ever permit Catholics to marry Non-Catholics?**

Yes; but a Special Dispensation must be obtained from the Bishop for such a marriage and the ceremony does not take place in the church but in the rectory or other suitable place. Such a marriage is called a Mixed Marriage.

**8. What promises must be made by those wishing to contract a Mixed Marriage?**

Both parties to this proposed marriage must declare that they consider this marriage binding until death. They must both promise that there is to be only one marriage ceremony, *viz.*, the Catholic ceremony, and that *all* children born of the marriage shall be baptized and brought up in the Catholic Faith. In addition, the non-Catholic must promise that there will be no interference with the Catholic freely practicing his or her religion.

**9. Why does the Catholic Church insist that a true Marriage Contract cannot be broken except by death?**

Because this is the clear teaching of Holy Scripture. The words of Jesus Christ and of St. Paul are emphatic on this subject.

**10. Did not Christ permit Divorce and Remarriage for Infidelity?**

No, He did not. His words, as recorded by St. Matthew are: "And I say to you, that whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery; and he that shall marry her that is put away, committeth adultery" (St. Matt. xix. 9, and *cf.* St. Matt. v. 32). These words permit a separation where there has been infidelity but those separated cannot marry again.

**11. How do we know that is the meaning of these words?**

Because the words *can* have this meaning, and there is a general principle of Bible interpretation that when one passage of Holy Scripture is ambiguous or hard to understand, you *must* read it in the light of parallel or related texts.

**12. Have we parallel and related texts that are clear?**

Yes. The Gospels according to St. Mark and St. Luke both contain the incident where Christ spoke on this subject. St. Mark says: "And in the house again His disciples asked Him concerning the same



thing. And He saith to them: 'Whosoever shall put away his wife and marry another, committeth adultery against her; and if the wife shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery' " (St. Mark x. 10-12). St. Luke says: "Everyone that putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery; and he that marrieth her that is put away from her husband, committeth adultery" (St. Luke xvi. 18). St. Paul is just as clear and emphatic: "But to them that are married, not I but the Lord commandeth that the wife depart not from her husband. And if she depart that she remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband. And let not the husband put away his wife" (1 Cor. vii. 10, 11). Again: "For the woman that hath a husband, whilst her husband liveth is bound to the law. But if her husband be dead she is loosed from the law of her husband. Therefore, whilst her husband liveth, she shall be called an adulteress, if she be with another man; but if her husband be dead, she is delivered from the law of her husband, so that she is not an adulteress if she be with another man" (Romans vii. 2, 3). There is no possibility of misunderstanding these texts of two Gospels and two Epistles.

### **13. Who are the ministers of the Sacrament of Matrimony?**

The man and the woman expressing their consent to take each other as husband and wife, are the ministers of the Sacrament. The priest is the official and necessary witness for the marriage of a Catholic.

**14. How must Catholics be married?**

They must be married in the presence of the pastor of the bride and two other witnesses, and they must be in the state of grace. If another priest is to officiate, the pastor's consent must be obtained.

**15. Are the marriages of Protestants valid in the eyes of the Catholic Church?**

Marriages of baptized Protestants, contracted in a legal manner before minister or magistrate, are regarded as the valid Sacrament of Matrimony by the Catholic Church, and can be broken only by the death of one of the parties.

**16. What are the obligations imposed by the Sacrament of Matrimony?**

The husband and wife must live together in mutual love, fidelity and patience, and must put no obstacles in the way of fulfilling the primary purpose of marriage, which is the begetting of children.

**17. Why is the Catholic Church opposed to Birth Control?**

It is not the Catholic Church, but nature and the God of nature that prohibit birth control by any unnatural act or by the use of contraceptives. The Catholic Church is opposed to the practice because it is intrinsically immoral and an offense against nature. In the first Book of the Bible we read of the man Onan, who has given the name to a degrading sin, and we are told that "the Lord slew him because he did a detestable thing" (Genesis xxxviii.

8-10). Marriage demands self-control on the part of both husband and wife. <sup>4</sup>

## LESSON VI

### I. Name the Ten Commandments

1. I am the Lord thy God. Thou shalt not have strange gods before Me. Thou shalt not make to thyself a graven thing, nor the likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, nor of those things that are in the waters under the earth. Thou shalt not adore them nor serve them.

2. Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain.

3. Remember thou keep holy the Sabbath day.

4. Honor thy father and thy mother.

5. Thou shalt not kill.

6. Thou shalt not commit adultery.

7. Thou shalt not steal.

8. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

9. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife.

10. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's goods.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> "Nor are those considered as acting against nature who in the married state use their right in the proper manner, although on account of time, or of certain defects, new life cannot be brought forth" (Encyclical of Pope Pius XI on *Marriage*, December 31, 1930, N. C. W. C. Edition, p. 23).

<sup>5</sup> There is a difference between the Catholic and the Protestant numbering of the Commandments: The Protestant arrangement divides our First Commandment into First and Second and combines our Ninth and Tenth into their Tenth.

**2. What are we told to do by the First Commandment?**

We are commanded to adore God alone.

**3. How do we adore God?**

Through the practice of the exercises of Religion, by humble prayer, and, for Catholics, by the Sacrifice of the Mass.

**4. Do Catholics break the First Commandment by having crucifixes and statues in their churches and homes?**

No, because they do not adore these. God does not forbid the mere making of images, but the adoring of them after they are made: "Thou shalt not adore them, nor serve them" (Exod. xx. 5).

The text of the Ten Commandments is in the Book of Exodus xx. 1-17. In this same Book God commands the making of the images of two Angels: "Thou shalt make also two cherubims of beaten gold on the two sides of the oracle," *i. e.*, the Ark of the Covenant (Exod. xxv. 18).

**5. What is forbidden by the Second Commandment?**

It is forbidden to use the Name of God in any profane or irreverent way, as by cursing and blasphemy.

**6. What obligation does the Third Commandment impose on Catholics?**

To keep holy the Lord's Day which in the Christian Calendar is Sunday, by attending Mass and by abstaining from unnecessary labor and business.

"And on the first day of the week, when we were assembled to break bread, Paul discoursed with them" (Acts xx. 7).

**7. What is ordained by the Fourth Commandment?**

(a) To love and respect our parents, and to obey them in all that is not sinful.

(b) To respect and obey every lawful authority both religious and civil.<sup>6</sup>

“Hear the instruction of thy father and forsake not the law of thy mother” (Prov. i. 8).

“Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is just; ‘Honor thy father and thy mother,’ which is the first commandment with a promise” (Eph. vi. 1, 2).

“Let every soul be subject to higher powers, for there is no power but from God; and those that are, are ordained of God” (Romans xiii. 1).

**8. What is forbidden by the Fifth Commandment?**

(a) It is forbidden unjustly to take the life of a human being.

(b) It is forbidden to take the life of a unborn child.

(c) Hatred, anger, jealousy, quarreling, excessive drinking are forbidden, because these may lead to killing, or may injure ourselves and others.

“Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer” (1 John iii. 15).

“You have heard that it was said to them of old, ‘Thou shalt not kill’; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the Judgment. But I say to you, that whosoever is angry with his brother shall be in danger of the Judgment” (St. Matt. v. 21, 22).

**9. When is it permitted to take the life of another?**

(a) When lawful authority commands it in punishment for grave crimes.

<sup>6</sup> This Catholic doctrine that we are obliged in conscience to obey the just laws of the land is the best answer to the charge that a Catholic cannot be a good citizen.

(b) In a just war.

(c) In self-defense, in order to save one's life, or the life of another unjustly attacked.

**10. Is it permitted to take one's own life?**

No. Suicide is a grave sin. We have no dominion over our own life.

"For it is Thou, O Lord, that hast power of life and death" (Wisdom xvi. 13).

**11. What is the sin of Adultery?**

Adultery is the sin of a married person who is unfaithful to his or her marriage vow.

"But he that is an adulterer, for the folly of his heart, shall destroy his own soul" (Prov. vi. 32).

**12. Does this Commandment apply to anyone besides married people?**

Yes, it forbids fornication by unmarried persons, and all actions alone or with others, that are contrary to chastity, decency, and modesty.

"Do not err; neither fornicators, nor idolators, nor adulterers . . . shall possess the Kingdom of God" (1 Cor. vi. 9, 10).

"Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are fornication, uncleanness, immodesty, luxury . . . revelings, and such like; of the which I foretell you, as I have foretold to you, that they who do such things shall not obtain the Kingdom of God" (Gal. v. 19-21).

**13. What is forbidden by the Commandment, "Thou Shalt Not Steal?"**

(a) It is forbidden to take what justly belongs to another.

(b) It is forbidden to destroy or injure the property or possessions of another.

**14. How does this Commandment apply to employers and employees?**

Employers are obliged to give a just, living wage to all who work for them, and employees are obliged to give a just return in time and labor for their salary or wage.

**15. If we break this Commandment what reparation must we make?**

We are obliged to give back anything we have taken, and to repair any damage we have caused.

**16. What is the meaning of the Eighth Commandment?**

It means that we must not tell lies, especially lies about other people.

**17. What is forbidden by this Commandment?**

It is forbidden to injure another's honor and reputation by calumny or detraction.

**18. Define Calumny and Detraction.**

(a) Calumny is the attributing of faults and misdeeds to another of which he is *not* guilty.

(b) Detraction is the telling of the faults and misdeeds of another thus hurting his reputation.

"The whisperer and the double-tongued is accursed, for he hath troubled many that were at peace" (Eccus. xxviii. 15).

"Hast thou heard a word against thy neighbor? Let it die within thee, trusting it will not burst thee" (Eccus. xix. 10).



**19. What is forbidden by the Ninth Commandment?**

All sensual, impure thoughts and desires are forbidden; such things are sinful if they are willfully and deliberately kept in one's mind.

"I say to you that whosoever shall look on a woman to lust after her, hath already committed adultery with her in his heart" (St. Matt. v. 28).

**20. What is forbidden by the Tenth Commandment?**

It is forbidden to envy the good fortune of another, and to desire seriously to have what belongs to another.

The Ninth and Tenth Commandments repeat the Sixth and Seventh, but refer to thoughts rather than to actions.

**21. What are the Precepts of the Church?**

(1) To hear Mass on Sundays and Holydays of Obligation.

(2) To fast and abstain on days appointed.

(3) To go to Confession at least once a year.

(4) To receive Holy Communion during the Easter time.

(5) To contribute to the support of the parish church and school.

(6) To observe the marriage laws of the Church.

(7) Not to read forbidden books.

**22. In the Second Precept of the Church what is meant by Fasting?**

Fasting means eating only one full meal a day, namely dinner; breakfast and lunch (or supper) must be light repasts.

"But the days will come when the Bridegroom (Christ) shall be taken away from them; then shall they fast in those days" (St. Luke v. 35).

**23. What is meant by Abstaining?**

Abstaining means not eating meat.

**24. What are the Days of Abstinence?**

Every Friday unless a Holyday falls on Friday, the Ember Days, and the Eves or Vigils of some of the Holydays.

**25. What is meant by Easter Time?**

In the United States it is the period of time between the first Sunday of Lent and Trinity Sunday; that is, fourteen weeks. All Catholics must receive Holy Communion at least once during this time. This is called the "Easter Duty."

Trinity Sunday is the Sunday after Pentecost.

**26. Why are we obliged to support our parish church and school?**

Because in the United States churches and parish schools receive no Government support, and must be maintained by the people through collections and donations.

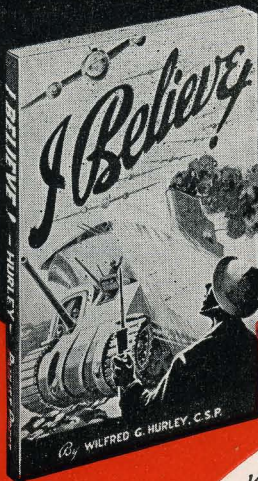
**27. What books does the Church forbid us to read?**

Such books as the Church judges harmful to our faith or morals she forbids, either by name, or by her general laws against dangerous reading.

**28. What are Sacramentals?**

Sacramentals are any blessings, ceremonies, or religious articles instituted by the Church for our use, in order to increase our devotion and to aid in our salvation.





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