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LEARN OF ME

First Lessons in Catechism

BY

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LEARN OF ME

In these first lessons in Catechism it is intended that the child shall give the sense of the answers without being required to repeat them word for word.

Prayers

To be learned by heart

Our Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

The Angel's Greeting

Hail Mary, full of grace! the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Gloria

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified; died, and was buried. He descended into hell; the third day He arose again from the dead: He ascended into heaven, sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of Saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

The Confiteor

I confess to Almighty God, to blessed Mary, ever Virgin, to blessed Michael the Archangel, to blessed John the Baptist, to the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, and to all the Saints, that I have sinned exceedingly in thought, word and deed, through my fault,

through my fault, through my most grievous fault. Therefore I beseech blessed Mary, ever Virgin, blessed Michael the Archangel, blessed John the Baptist, the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, and all the Saints, to pray to the Lord our God for me.

May the Almighty God have mercy on me, and forgive me my sins, and bring me to everlasting life. Amen.

May the Almighty and merciful Lord grant me pardon, absolution, and remission of all my sins. Amen.

An Act of Faith

O my God! I firmly believe that Thou art one God in three Divine persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; I believe that Thy Divine Son became man, and died for our sins, and that He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe these and all the truths which the Holy Catholic Church teaches, because Thou hast revealed them, who canst neither deceive nor be deceived.

An Act of Hope

O my God! relying on Thy infinite goodness and promises, I hope to obtain pardon of my sins, the help of Thy grace, and life everlasting, through the merits of Jesus Christ, my Lord and Redeemer.

An Act of Love

O my God! I love Thee above all things, with my whole heart and soul, because Thou art all-good and worthy of all love. I love my neighbor as myself for the love of Thee. I forgive all who have injured me, and ask pardon of all whom I have injured.

An Act of Contrition

O my God! I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee, and I detest all my sins, because I dread the loss of heaven and the pains of hell, but most of all because they offend Thee, my God, who art all-good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve, with the help of Thy grace, to confess my sins, to do penance, and to amend my life.

*Chapter I.***God**

1. Who made the world?

God made the world. He made the sun and the moon and the stars. He made the trees and the flowers, the fruits and the vegetables. He made the fishes that swim in the sea. He made the birds in the tree-tops that sing and build nests. He made the elephants and the lions, the horses and the dogs and everything else.

2. Who made God?

Nobody made God. He was always alive and He will never die. He is the only one that always lived and there never was anything until God made it.

3. How does God make things?

God makes things out of nothing. He has only to wish for a thing. He is so strong that there is nothing He cannot do.

4. What does God look like?

God is more beautiful than any one I have ever seen. He is more beautiful than any one that has ever lived.

5. Where is God?

God is everywhere. He is closer to me than any one can ever be. He is in every place in the whole world. If I could swim like a fish or fly like an eagle or travel beyond the stars, I could find no place where God is not.

6. Can you see God?

I cannot see God now because He has no body, but after I die, I shall be able to see Him.

7. Is God always near you?

God is always near me. He is with me day and night. He sees everything I do. He hears everything I say. He knows everything I think.

8. Does God think of you often?

God never stops thinking of me. He loves me more than any one in the whole world ever loved any one else. He has my place all ready for me in Heaven.

9. Is there more than one God?

No. There is only one God and yet God is three Persons. The name of the first Person is the Father, the name of the second Person is the Son, and the name of the third Person is the Holy Ghost. The Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Ghost is God, but the Father is not the Son and the Son is not the Holy Ghost, and still there is only one God.

Chapter II

The Angels

1. What are angels?

Angels are God's messengers. There are millions and millions of angels. God made them out of nothing. The angels have no bodies, but they are much stronger and much more beautiful than any man in the whole world.

2. What do the angels do?

They live with God in Heaven and carry His messages. As soon as a baby is born, God sends one of His angels to take care of it. I have an angel by my side. He has never left me since I was born and when I die, he will carry my soul back to God. My angel loves me and watches over me and tries to keep me away from sin.

3. Were there ever any bad angels?

Yes. Once about one-third of the angels turned against God and the good angels fought them and there was a great battle in Heaven. The bad angels were beaten and thrown out of Heaven. They fell into Hell which is a prison filled with fire.

4. What are devils?

Devils are the bad angels who were thrown out of Heaven. They have been in Hell ever since they sinned and they will never get out. They are very ugly now and always on fire. They hate God and are always cursing and go through the world trying to make people sin.

5. Did God reward the good angels?

Yes. They had never seen God, but now He let them see Him face to face.

*Chapter III***The First Man and Woman**

1. Who was the first man?

Adam was the first man. God made his body out of clay and breathed into it a soul. And God adopted Adam by clothing his soul in sanctifying grace.

2. Who was the first woman?

Eve was the first woman. God made Eve's body out of one of Adam's ribs whilst he was asleep and breathed into it a soul. God adopted Eve too. Adam and Eve were very beautiful.

3. When did God make Adam and Eve?

God made them after He had made the trees and the fishes and the birds and all the other animals.

4. Where did Adam and Eve live?

They lived in a beautiful garden called the Garden of Paradise. They were as happy as could be.

5. What did God tell Adam and Eve?

He told them that everything in the garden was for them but that He did not want them to touch the apples on one tree in the middle of the garden. God told them that if they ate one of those apples, they would get sick and some day die and that they would not be His children any longer.

6. Did Adam and Eve obey God?

No. They ate the fruit and lost sanctifying grace. This was their first sin and they had to leave the garden.

7. What did Adam's and Eve's sin bring into the world?

It brought sickness and trouble and wars and sin and death. No one would die if Adam and Eve had not sinned.

8. What do we call the sin we get on account of Adam's and Eve's sin?

We call it **original sin**.

9. Were you God's adopted child when you were born?

No, but I should have been if Adam and Eve had not sinned. On account of their sin I was born with original sin on my soul because I am their child.

10. What was the worst part of Adam's and Eve's sin?
The worst part was that it hurt God Who is so good and it closed Heaven so that no one could go there.
11. What did God tell Adam and Eve as they left the garden?
He told them that some day He would send some one to open the gates of Heaven again.

Chapter IV.

Myself

1. Who made you?
God made me too. He made my eyes so I can see, my ears so I can hear, and my tongue so I can talk.
2. What keeps you alive?
My soul keeps me alive. It is in my body, but I can not see it. When it leaves my body, I shall die.
3. When will your soul die?
My soul will never die.
4. Then where will your soul go when it leaves your body?
If I am good, it will go to Heaven and live with God and the angels. It is much nicer in Heaven than it is here. In Heaven I can do whatever I like and I can have everything I want and it will never come to an end.
5. Does everybody go to Heaven?
No. Bad people go to Hell and live with the devils and burn in dreadful fire forever.
6. Is your body worth more than your soul?
No, my soul is worth much more than my body. No matter what I do for my body, it will die anyway. But if I take care of my soul, I shall be happy forever in Heaven and if I do not take care of my soul, I shall suffer forever in Hell.
7. How can you take care of your soul?
By going to Mass and saying my prayers and keeping sins off my soul, and by loving God and doing things to please Him.
8. When is it good to pray?
Every morning and night and often during the day. Whenever I am near committing a sin and whenever I am in danger or in trouble, I should ask Our Lord to help me.

*Chapter V***Jesus the Son of God**

1. Has God sent any one yet to open Heaven?

Yes, He sent His Son long ago.

2. Who is God's Son?

He is God, the second Person. He is the same God as the Father and the Holy Ghost.

3. How did He come?

He came as a little baby. He left Heaven and was born a baby in a stable on the first Christmas night.

4. Did the Son of God have any mother when He was a baby?

Yes, He had a mother and her name is Mary. Sometimes we call her the Blessed Virgin. She is the greatest person God ever made. She is greater than all men. She is greater than all the angels. She never had original sin on her soul like us and as long as she lived, she never did the smallest thing that was wrong. God made her so pure and so holy because He wanted her to be His Mother when He came on earth.

5. Did the Son of God have a father when He was a baby?

No, He had no earthly father. But St. Joseph was His foster-father and took good care of Him.

6. What did the Blessed Virgin call her little Son?

She called Him Jesus. Sometimes we call Him Christ or Our Lord or the Savior or the Redeemer.

7. Is Jesus Christ both God and man?

Yes, Jesus is both God and man. The Son of God was always God, the second Person. But He was not always man. He only became man when He came on earth and took Mary for His Mother.

8. What did Jesus do on earth?

He lived with His Mother and St. Joseph. When He grew up, He became a carpenter and worked hard. And when St. Joseph died, He took care of the Blessed Virgin until He was thirty years old. Then He had to leave her and go from city to city and tell the people how to get to Heaven. Everywhere He went, the

people crowded around Him and He cured all the lame and the blind and the sick.

Chapter VI

The Death of Jesus

1. How did Jesus open Heaven for us?
By giving up His life for us and dying.
2. Did Jesus die?
Yes, He died when He was thirty-three years old.
3. How did Jesus die?
The Jews nailed Him to a cross and made Him hang from it for three hours until He died.
4. Why did the Jews kill Jesus?
They were jealous of Him and hated Him because He was so good and all the people loved Him.
5. Could not Jesus have saved Himself since He is God?
Yes, but He wanted to die for us because He had made up His mind to do the greatest thing He could for us.
6. On what day did Jesus die?
He died on Good Friday.
7. Did the gates of Heaven open when Jesus died?
Yes, as soon as Jesus died, they opened and they will never close again.

Chapter VII

Jesus Comes Out of the Grave Alive

1. Did Jesus' soul go right to Heaven when He died?
No, His soul went to a place called Limbo. There all the good people who had died were waiting for Heaven to open. Jesus stayed with them until early Sunday morning. Then His soul went back to His body. He was alive once more and body and soul passed through the solid rock of the grave.
2. How did Jesus look when He came from the grave?
He was all beautiful and He still had the marks of the wounds made in His hands and feet by the nails and in His side by the spear.

3. On what day did Jesus come from the grave alive?

On Easter Sunday.

4. Where did Jesus go after He was risen?

He stayed on earth for forty days and often went with the Apostles and other people so that all would know that He was really alive. Then one day when a great crowd was with Him, He began to rise slowly in the air. He went back to Heaven and with Him went all the good people that had died.

5. On what day did Jesus go back to Heaven?

On Ascension Thursday.

6. Will your body ever come alive again once you are dead?

Yes, at the end of the world everyone's soul will go into his body which God will bring back from the dust into which it has fallen. Then the bodies of those who are in Heaven will be very beautiful, but the bodies of those who are in Hell will be very ugly.

Chapter VIII

Jesus' Church

1. Who were the Apostles?

They were twelve men that Jesus picked out from all the people. He made them priests and bishops of His Church.

2. Did Jesus make a Church?

Yes, He did before He went back to Heaven.

3. Why did Jesus make a Church?

To take us to Heaven.

4. What Church did Jesus make?

He made the Catholic Church.

5. How many churches did Jesus make?

He made only one Church, so there never can be more than one because no one but Jesus can make a Church.

6. But there are many churches that are not Catholic churches. Who made them?

Different people made them long after Jesus had gone back to Heaven. They made them because they did not want to do what the Catholic Church told them to do.

7. Are not all churches good?

No, there is only one real Church, the one Jesus made. People can make toy robins but only God can make a real robin that is alive; and people can make churches, but only God can make a real Church that can take me to Heaven.

8. If the Catholic Church is the only real Church, why is not everyone a Catholic?

Because some do not know any better and some do not want to mind the Church.

Chapter IX.

Baptism

1. Were you a Catholic as soon as you were born?

No, because I was born with original sin on my soul.

2. Are you a Catholic now?

Yes, because when I was a baby, the priest baptized me and that washed away original sin and made me God's adopted child.

3. How did the priest baptize you?

He poured water on my head and said whilst the water was pouring: "I baptize thee in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost."

4. If you had died when you were a baby, where would you be now?

If I had died after I was baptized, I should be in Heaven, but if I had died without being baptized, I should be in Limbo. It is very nice in Limbo, but nobody can see God there and nobody can ever leave and go to Heaven.

5. But did not Jesus' soul go into Limbo when He died?

Yes, but that was a different Limbo. The people in that Limbo all went to Heaven later.

6. Why can no one go to Heaven unless he is baptized?

Because on account of Adam's sin, no one has sanctifying grace in his soul until he is baptized. And no one can go to Heaven without sanctifying grace.

Chapter X.

Sin

1. Will all who have been baptized go to Heaven?

Yes, unless they lose sanctifying grace. The only way they

can do that is by doing some very great sin. Very great sins are called mortal sins. It is better to die than to get one of them on my soul because just one of them is enough to send me to Hell. No one can make me commit a mortal sin if I do not want to. To commit a mortal sin I must know a thing is very bad and make up my mind to do it anyway.

2. What would be a mortal sin?

To kill a person or to steal a hundred dollars or to do some other very bad things.

3. Are all sins mortal sins?

No, sins that are not as big as mortal sins are called venial sins.

4. Name some venial sins.

To disobey my parents, to tell little lies, to steal pennies, to get angry.

5. If you die with even just one mortal sin on your soul, where will you go?

To Hell forever.

6. If you die with venial sins on your soul, where will you go?

To Purgatory. There I shall burn in fire until my soul gets white as snow. Then I shall go to Heaven.

7. Can you help the souls that are in Purgatory now?

Yes. If I pray for them, they will go to Heaven sooner.

Chapter XI.

Confession

1. If you get a sin on your soul, can you ever get it off?

Yes, no matter how many sins I have and no matter how big they are, I can get them all washed off if I make a good confession.

2. What is confession?

Confession is telling my sins to a priest because he can take them away.

3. How do you go to confession?

I go to church and ask Our Lord to help me with my con-

fession. Then I try to remember my sins and then I make myself sorry for them and promise Our Lord to try my best not to commit them any more.

4. What sins do you try to remember?

If I have never been to confession, I try to remember all the sins of my whole life. But if I have been to confession before, I only try to remember all the sins I have committed since my last good confession.

5. Do you try to remember just the *kinds* of sin you have committed?

No, I try to remember *how many times* I have committed each kind of sin.

6. How do you make yourself sorry for your sins?

I think how good Jesus has been to me and how He loves me with His whole heart, and how He died just so I could go to Heaven and I think how my sins hurt Him and drove the nails into His poor hands and feet. Then I tell Him that I am very sorry and will do my best never to hurt Him again.

7. Then what do you do?

Then I say the act of contrition very carefully.

8. What is the most important part of confession?

Being sorry for my sins. God will not take away my sins if I am not sorry for them. If I make up my mind to do my best not to sin again, then I am sorry.

9. When you go into the confessional, what do you do?

I make the sign of the cross and say: "Bless me, Father, for I have sinned." Then I say how long it is since my last confession and then I tell my sins and how many times I did each one.

10. What sins do you have to tell?

I have to tell only big sins or mortal sins if I have any, but it is better to tell all my venial sins too.

11. What is a bad confession?

Leaving out a mortal sin on purpose or not being sorry for *every* mortal sin.

12. If any one makes a bad confession, what must he do?
Go to confession again and tell the priest what he did.
13. If you get frightened in confession or are ashamed to tell some of your sins, what should you do?
Just tell the priest that I am frightened or ashamed to tell some of my sins and he will help me.
14. When you have told all your sins, what do you do?
I listen to the priest and then whilst he takes away my sins, I say the act of contrition.
15. When the priest has finished, what do you do?
I leave and say my penance which is the prayers the priest told me to say.
16. If you forget a mortal sin in confession, what must you do?
Tell it the next time and say that I forgot it. But my confession is all right and the sin is gone if I meant to tell it.

Chapter XII.

The Mass

1. What did Jesus do the night before He died?
He ate supper with His twelve Apostles for the last time.
2. When supper was over, what did Jesus do?
He took up the bread that was left on the table. It was made out of just flour and water. Then he blessed it and broke it and gave it to His Apostles and said: "Take and eat. For This is My Body."
3. What happened when Our Lord said, "This is My Mody"?
The bread in His hands was changed into His Body and the Apostles ate not bread but Our Lord's own Body.
4. Then what did Jesus do?
He took a cup of wine mixed with a little water and He blessed it and gave it to His Apostles and said: "Take and drink. For This is My Blood."
5. What happened when Our Lord said: "This is My Blood"?
The wine in the cup was changed into His own Blood and the Apostles drank not wine but Our Lord's precious Blood.
6. Then what did Our Lord do?

He told the Apostles that they must change bread into His Body and wine into His Blood just as He had done.

7. Does some one change bread and wine into our Lord's Body and Blood now?

Yes, every priest does when he says Mass.

8. How does the priest say Mass?

He has a round piece of bread on a little gold plate and a great many pieces in a large gold cup. These pieces of bread are very thin and just made of flour and water and are called hosts. And the priest has wine mixed with water in another gold cup. He blesses the bread and wine and offers them to God.

In the middle of the Mass, the priest says over the bread: "This is My Body" and at once each host is changed into the whole of Jesus, but it still looks like bread. Then the priest says over the wine: "This is My Blood" and at once the wine is changed into the whole of Jesus but it still looks like wine.

At the end of the Mass, the priest receives the sacred Body of Jesus and drinks His precious Blood.

Chapter XIII.

Holy Communion

1. Can you receive the Body and Blood of Jesus, too?

Yes, every time I go to Holy Communion.

2. How do you go to Holy Communion?

I go to the altar-railing and the priest puts on my tongue a sacred Host.

3. What is the sacred Host?

It is Jesus.

4. Is there any bread in the sacred Host?

No, it only looks like bread and tastes like bread. But at Mass the priest changed the bread into the Body and Blood of Jesus.

5. How often can you go to Holy Communion?

Once a day. But I must have no mortal sin on my soul and I must take nothing to eat or drink after twelve o'clock at night.

6. Would it be wrong to go to Holy Communion if you had just venial sins on your soul?

No, but I should try not to have any venial sins on my soul.

7. What do you do when the priest puts the sacred Host on your tongue?

I swallow it as soon as I can. When I go back to my place, I put my head down and talk to Jesus or just think about Him. Then I stay in church and pray about ten minutes after Mass is over.

8. What is the greatest thing anybody in the whole world can do?

Go to Mass and go to Holy Communion.

CHAPTER XIV

Confirmation

1. Who is the Holy Ghost?

He is God, the third Person. He is the same God as the Father and the Son.

2. What does the Holy Ghost do?

He takes care of the Catholic Church and makes us good.

3. When did the Holy Ghost come to the Catholic Church?

Ten days after Jesus went to Heaven, He sent the Holy Ghost to take care of His Church. The Apostles were praying together, when all of a sudden the house they were in shook as though there was a strong wind. Then over each one's head there was a flame of fire and the Holy Ghost came into their souls.

4. Were the Apostles different after the Holy Ghost came to them?

Yes, they loved God very much more and they now remembered everything Our Lord had taught them and they were never again afraid to stand up for Jesus and even to die for Him.

5. When will the Holy Ghost come to you?

When I am confirmed.

6. How will you be confirmed?

The bishop will ask the Holy Ghost to come to me. Then he will make the sign of the cross on my forehead with holy oil.

7. Why will the bishop make the sign of the cross on your forehead?

To let me know that I must always be proud of Jesus' cross and proud that I am a Catholic and that I must always stand up for my religion.

8. What else will the bishop do?

He will gently strike me on the face to let me know that I must be ready to suffer anything, even to die, for the sake of Christ.

9. What must you do when you are confirmed?

I must pray to the Holy Ghost and ask Him to make me love God very much and to hate sin very much.

10. Would it be right to receive Confirmation with a mortal sin on your soul?

No, it would be a great sin. But it would not be wrong if I had venial sins on my soul. Still I ought to try not to have any sins.

How to Think of My Sins

When I find a sin I have done, I must think how many times I have done it.

1. Have I missed Mass on Sunday through my own fault?

2. Have I tried to think of God when I prayed or have I let myself think about playing and other things? (If my thoughts get away without my fault, it is not a sin).

3. Have I sworn or cursed?

4. Have I disobeyed my parents? Have I talked back at them? Have I called them names? Have I struck them?

5. Have I been very angry?

6. Have I had bad thoughts? (No sin if I try not to think of them. When they come, I must try to put them out of my head, say some little prayer as: "Jesus and Mary, help me," and try to get busy at something.) Have I said bad words or taught them to others? Have I done bad things by myself or with others? Have I looked at bad things? Bad pictures? Have I listened to bad talk?

7. Have I stolen money, cakes, fruit, candy or anything else? Have I broken or hurt what belongs to others? Have I given back things I have borrowed?

8. Have I said mean things about others? Have I told bad things about them? Have I had mean thoughts? Have I told lies?

9. Have I eaten meat on Friday? (No sin if I forget)

10. Is there anything else I have done or anything that worries me?

