

ADJ 1866

Banahan, John S.  
Instructions...  
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*Instructions  
for*  
**MIXED  
MARRIAGES**

*by*

**REV. JOHN S. BANAHAN**

• **CATHOLIC**

**LUTHERAN • EPISCOPALIAN**

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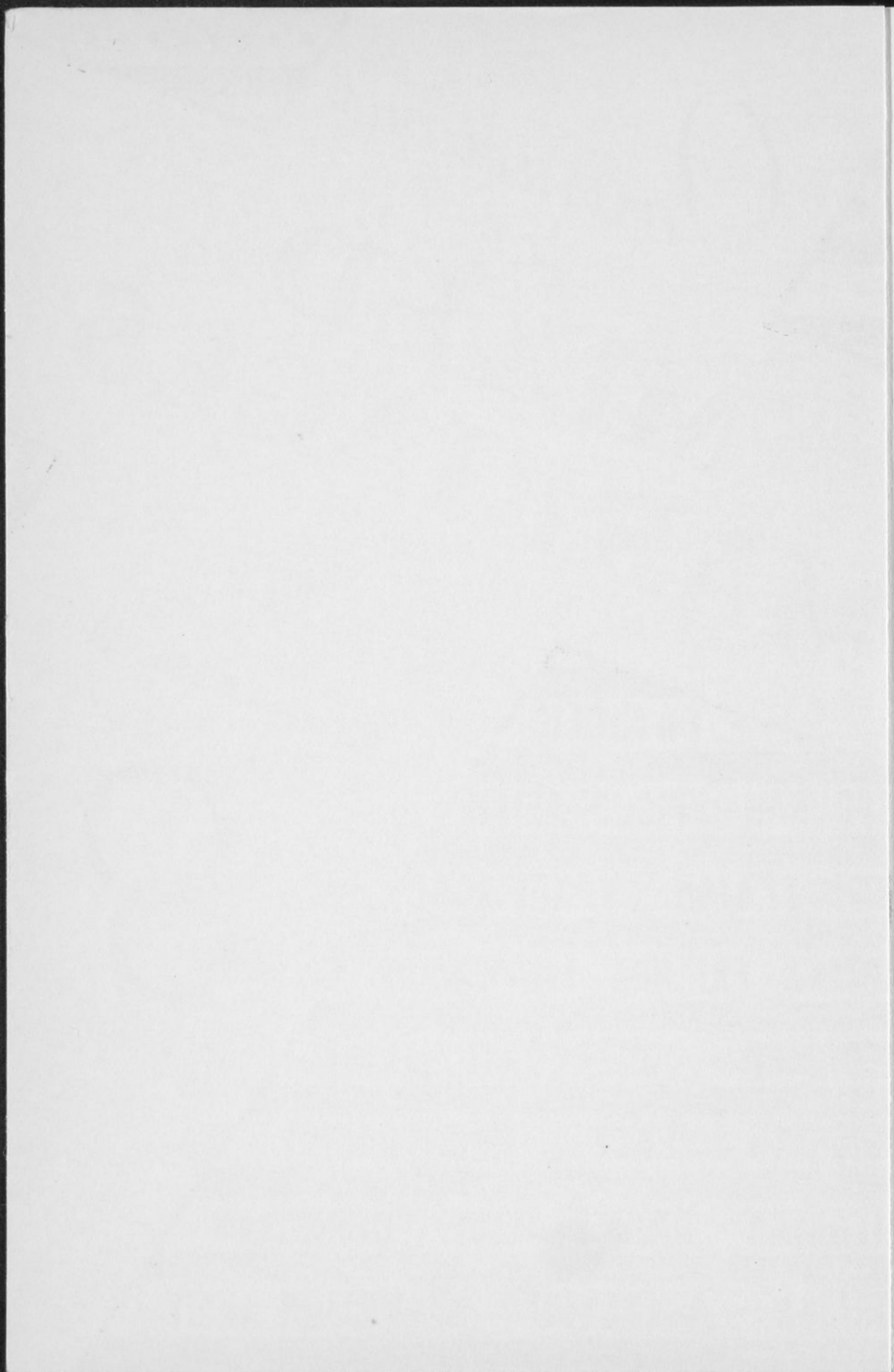
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*Instructions for*  
MIXED MARRIAGES

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR MIXED MARRIAGES**

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*Instructions for*  
**MIXED MARRIAGES**

**BY REV. JOHN S. BANAHAN**

**THE BRUCE PUBLISHING COMPANY  
MILWAUKEE**

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## *Acknowledgment*

No matter how simple his work every author needs help to bring his manuscript to press. Without the criticism and suggestions of Msgr. James Hardiman, Father John McAvoy, and Father George Halpin, all former associates at Holy Name Cathedral in Chicago, these instructions would still be just "a good idea." Without the assistance of Mrs. Colleen Lynch who brought neatly typed order to the chaos of pages of my scribbling this book would have been impossible. But the greatest debt of all is owed to the multitude of fine and generous men and women not of the Catholic Faith who have listened to these talks during the past eight years. It is to them, my many non-Catholic friends, that these pages are dedicated. I only hope that they have learned as much from me as I have from them. May God bless their homes and families wherever they are today.



Advertisement

The printer has done his work every other way but in  
being no manuscript to read. I know the printer and the  
printer of New York James Hartman. Father John McEvoy and  
Father George Hight. All former associates of Holy Name  
Cathedral in Chicago. These instruments would be just  
"a good deal". Without the assistance of Miss Cohen French  
and myself nearly equal to the state of paper at the  
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*Foreword: Rt. Rev. Msgr. Edward M.  
Burke, J.C.D.*

**CHANCELLOR OF ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO**

Those who have labored in Chanceries where the preponderance of business concerns itself with marriage, can give eloquent affirmation to the thesis that mixed marriages are dangerous. Proof in abundance is offered every day by the failure of many of these unions. Religion is a force to be reckoned with. Divergence of religious beliefs or total lack of religious interest of one party often proves the cause of marital breakups which fill the dockets of chancery matrimonial courts. The officials of these courts are priests whose chief concern is the salvation of souls and whose hearts are saddened when they are forced to view at close quarters these matrimonial failures.

We must, however, be realistic. Although we warn our congregations in season and out of season of this danger to marriage happiness we accept the fact that there are many mixed marriages. Although we strive ingeniously to provide our Catholic youth with pleasant places of recreation where they can meet one another we know this problem will continue. Our youth lives and works in a world thickly populated with those not of our Faith. It does not pay to inveigh madly against mixed social life. It is senseless to content ourselves with a condemnation of the times in which we live. We must face the fact that we will have mixed marriages so long as we live in an atmosphere of mixed religion.

It is most heartening to note that the author has avoided

the very common pitfall of treating this problem negatively. Working in the Cathedral parish of a large metropolis for the past seven years he has encountered mixed marriages by the hundreds. He is only too aware of their dangers. Knowing, however, that decrying an abuse does not eradicate it, he has attempted, and very successfully, to meet the problem from a positive viewpoint. Since there will be mixed marriages, he says in effect, let's remove the chance of their failure. This is best done by explaining the Church to the non-Catholic spouse. The appeal is made to the mind. He attempts to give the means to understand not only the thought processes of the Catholic party but also the very inner workings of his soul. Of such spiritual and intellectual explanations are happy marriages formed.

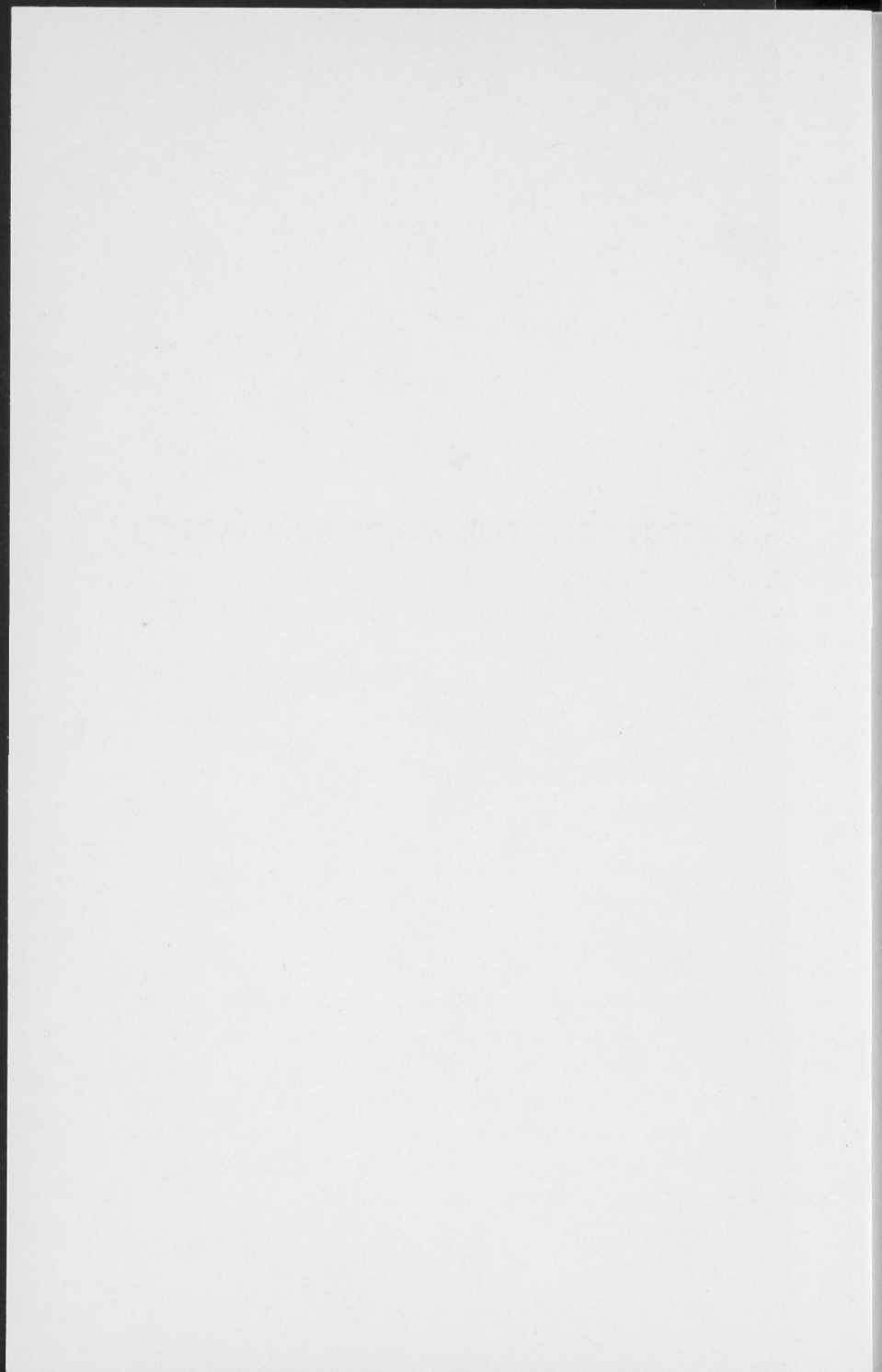
The author has made a very important contribution to a weighty and vexatious problem. His work is intended to supplement and not supplant the instructions being given by our priests. His approach may well encourage others to original thought and action. It is through these means that this threat to marital happiness may be vanquished.

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## INSTRUCTIONS FOR MIXED MARRIAGES



## INTRODUCTION

### *The Fly in the Ointment*

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The average bridal couple never realizes the awful truth until it is too late! Their wedding leaves them deafened by Mendelssohn, blinded by rice, and stupefied by emotion. It takes weeks or months for them to realize what they have done — they've married each other.

From now on they'll share the same plates, the same closet, and the same laundry line. They'll hang their toothbrushes from the same rack and use the same bar of soap. They'll put their knees under the same table and use the same silverware. Truly, there is no closer intimacy in all the world than marriage.

To the unmarried, this seems charming and desirable. But the "old pros," those who have been in the marriage game for fifteen or twenty years realize that such proximity bares defects. Every wrinkle, every blemish in one's character stands out under the microscopic inspection of the breakfast table. Traits and habits, formerly hidden, become as obvious as curlers or "five o'clock shadow." Only the very young and ingenuous enter marriage without realizing that cold cream and dirty socks are a part of the bargain. Still there are many of all ages who purchase their license without first trying to learn as much as possible about their intended spouses.

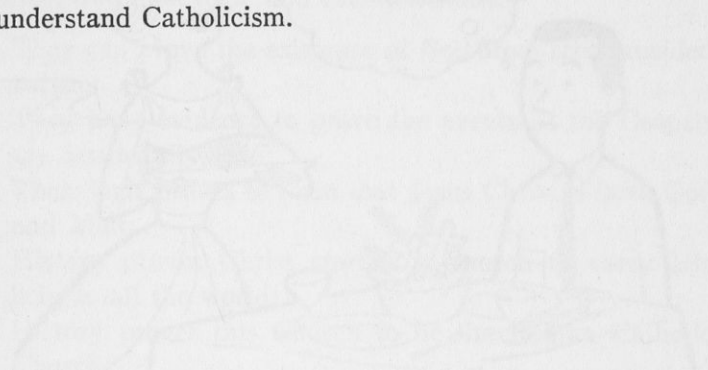
Widely divergent tastes in food or dress, incompatible social levels, family ties — all these are causes of marriage failure. But one of the most frequent circumstances to cast a fly in the ointment of marital happiness is a difference in religious belief. The marriage of a Catholic to one of a different faith often fails not because the non-Catholic doesn't change his religion but because he doesn't understand Catholicism. This booklet is an honest attempt to remove that hazard to your marriage. We ask you to read it carefully because you intend to spend the rest of your life under the same roof with a Catholic. That wise old man "Anonymous" once said: "All marriages are happy. It is the living together afterward that makes all the trouble." A groom with his mother-in-law's lipstick still damp upon his cheek who finds that he has married an idolater, would certainly wish he had been informed of the nature of Catholicism in advance. Catholics are no more idolaters than they are Martians, but married people should find this out before they cut the wedding cake. So give us a chance to talk to you. The more you understand your wife or husband, the happier you will be.

These pages contain no secrets to married happiness. There are no surprises intended for you. You will find only a summary of the belief of Catholics. Nor do we feel that these beliefs are the exclusive property of Catholicism. These doctrines belong to what is called "Truth," and therefore every human being has a right to them. Albert Einstein does not own the proposition that two plus two equal four. This belongs to every man because it is a part of "Truth." The DuPonts have no exclusive patent on the formula of water. It belongs to all of us because it is a part of "Truth." And since Catholicism is likewise a segment of this common heritage, you have a right to it. Look closely at the following chapters, for they belong to you. Most of the statements contained herein are believed



by all Christian Churches. And when you have finished, we predict that you will find many of your personal beliefs will coincide with ours.

This book is not, however, any subtle attempt to make you become a Catholic. As its title indicates, we wish only to increase your chances for marital happiness, to make sure that religion will not be a fly in the ointment for you. If someday you should express a desire to become a church member, we should be delighted. But we should be even more happy if we could add your name to the ever growing list of Americans who understand Catholicism.



## CHAPTER ONE

### *Why They Are Catholics*

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Each Friday in dining rooms and restaurants all over this land, thirty million people eat fish! For the most part, this evidences no particular fondness for the finny creatures, but it is rather a fulfillment of a religious tenet. Thirty million people abstain from eating meat on Friday because they are Catholics. You might think that people are Catholic because they were born that way. Their father's name was Murphy, Rogowski, or Ferrara and they inherited the religion of their parents. Now, this explains "How" such people came to be Catholics, but not "Why" they remain such. You will observe

that church entrances have swinging doors. It is easy to walk in, and just as easy to walk out! Nobody nails your shoes to the floor! We don't wish to intimate that Catholicism is an intolerable burden, but it does bring definite obligations into the lives of those who accept it! Yet millions shoulder these responsibilities year after year. No one forces them to remain Catholic but they do. We shall try to explain "Why."

They remain Catholic because they accept six propositions which they say they can prove, not from blind faith, not from authority, but from logic and common sense.

- a) They can prove the existence of God from their unaided reason;
- b) They have evidence to prove the events of the Gospels are historically true;
- c) Their logic proves to them that Jesus Christ is both God and Man;
- d) History proves Christ started a Church to carry His help to all the world;
- e) History proves this Church to be the Roman Catholic Church;
- f) Their logic shows them that God prevents this Church from error in its official teaching.

#### **A. REASON PROVES THERE IS A GOD**

That's logical, isn't it? If there weren't any God, churches would look mighty silly. We could close their doors and turn them into roller rinks or warehouses and they'd never be missed. For without God there would be no need for religion or worship. Most men, whether or not they are church members, believe in the existence of God, but not too many can explain simply why they do. Here is one reason why Catholics believe in the existence of God.

Close your eyes for a minute and use your imagination. You're riding in a streetcar. It's crowded. You're clinging to a leather strap and trying to fold your paper at the sports page. Suddenly you are aware of a strange sensation! Your right hip pocket, where your wallet usually nestles, is becoming lighter. It feels as though it were floating. You feel a slight movement, reach down quickly and find a strange hand in your pocket. Its owner, a small sparrowlike man, seems just as shocked as you are. He explains apologetically: "I don't know just what happened. I looked away for a minute and when I turned back, there it was in your pocket. It's really not my fault at all." Now, if you accept this implausible explanation you are much too gullible to live in any large metropolis and too illogical to read farther in this booklet.

All men accept this axiom: "Whatever begins to exist must have a cause." That slight movement you felt, that sensation of lightening, had to have a cause. You didn't have to think about it; almost instinctively you seized the hand in your pocket. By that action you demonstrated the principle of causality: "Whatever begins to exist must have a cause."

This is true of the eggs a farmer finds in his chicken house. It is true of the bass you catch in the brook. It is true of the knock you hear in your engine. It is true of you. Your parents caused you, just as they in turn were caused by their parents. Go back down the innumerable links of birth until you have reached the First Cause. He is the Cause of all things and is uncaused Himself. Many are His names: Jehovah, Allah, the Uncaused First Cause; generally, He is known as God.

Since we have come from Him, and since all things around us come from Him, we owe Him our gratitude. The same feeling of respect and thanksgiving which we are obligated to show to our parents, we are obligated to show to our God. This is religion: "The recognition and the fulfillment of the

debt of worship a rational creature owes to his Creator."

Notice! It is an obligation — it is a debt. It is not something that we do for amusement or recreation. We *owe* it to God. The average Catholic looks upon weekly church attendance as he looks upon paying his income tax. A few men pay their tax willingly. Some cheat a little. Some pay none. But all of them admit their debt to their country. And so with Catholics. Some cheat by coming late to Mass or by missing it entirely. Some act like the legendary Easter Bunny and appear in church only once every spring. But all of them admit that they owe worship to God. This is true religion: "The recognition and fulfillment of the debt of worship a rational creature owes to his Creator."

Thus far we have pointed out that each man has an obligation to worship God in some fashion. Each one of us is free to pick his own way. One burns incense in a temple; another chants psalms in a synagogue; another prays to Him in the beauty of the setting sun. All these men worship God equally, UNLESS God has chosen some particular way in which He wishes to be revered. *If* He has founded some Church, then each man has the obligation to seek it out and join it. If He has originated some particular act of worship then we must look for it. There is the oft-repeated conversation of the street corner agnostic who told the local priest: "Don't worry about me, Father. Both of us worship God but each in his own way." "Yes," replied the priest, "you worship Him in your way and I in His."

Catholics think that God has founded one definite cult. They think that other religions are deserving organizations, doing praiseworthy work, but that all of them are man-made. But besides these faiths of human origin, there is one that bears the stamp "Made in Heaven." This is the one constructed by God Himself, to which He wishes all mankind to belong. There

is a rather sardonic story of the business tycoon who says: "Don't give me any facts — I've already made up my mind." Have you already made up your mind? Well, if you haven't here are some facts that will interest you.

## B. THE GOSPELS ARE HISTORICALLY TRUE

The march of time was once stopped by a man who died the death of a criminal in a small province of the far-flung Roman Empire. His influence on the world was so great that men cast away their calendars and began to recalculate time as though it began on the day that he was born. We should expect to find the story of his life in the pages of history, and we do. There are four brief histories which point out how justified we are in resetting the mainsprings of the world to beat in harmony with the "Man who said He was God." They are called the Gospels.

The Bible is a record of the relationships between God and Man. It is not one great book but a collection of seventy-two different books written over a period of fourteen hundred years by fifty different men in three ancient languages, but all of them inspired by God. For present purposes, we are concerned only with the Four Gospels. Catholics believe that these are reliable historical documents. Error in writings of this nature would come from one of three causes:

- a) The historians were ignorant of the facts;
- b) The historians were liars;
- c) Since the accounts were written, someone had deleted or added to the record.

a) A literary perfectionist might criticize the Evangelists for their style of writing, but their knowledge of their subject is beyond reproach. There is no better qualification for the pro-

fession of historian than to be an eyewitness. Matthew and John were Apostles; Luke and Mark were close friends and confidants of the Twelve. These men were with Christ for three years seeing and hearing everything He said and did. As St. John himself writes: "I write of what was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our own eyes, what we have looked upon and our hands have handled: of the Word of Life."<sup>1</sup>

b) Any falsehood or fiction in the Gospels would have immediately been detected by the thousands of eyewitnesses who had been present at the events therein described. Thousands flocked to Christianity during its infancy despite the price they had to pay. These were people steeped in Judaic culture and religion. They had to reject their ancient customs and traditions and accept such revolutionary doctrines as Baptism, the Lord's Supper, and the forgiveness of sins. Their acceptance of these teachings brought them persecution, loss of property, and in many cases even death. No man will pay such a price for a belief of which he is doubtful. If those who were contemporaries of the Apostles accepted their veracity, it seems foolish for us who are separated from them by nineteen centuries to begin now to doubt them.

c) So far as is known, the originals of the Gospels have been lost or destroyed. Yet we are positive that we read today the same words laboriously scratched onto parchment years ago by the Evangelists. Our certainty rests on two tests. First, we possess thousands of early manuscripts, one copied from another. By studiously comparing them we find the deletion of a phrase in one text, the addition of a sentence in another. It has taken years of scientific study and research, but we finally arrived at a corrected script which is identical

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<sup>1</sup> 1 Jn. 1:1.

to that which was read in Apostolic Ages. Second, religious writers from the earliest days have quoted literally from the Gospels to prove their statements. Their works are extensive beginning with the year A.D. 90 and continuing for centuries. A recent English edition of their writings numbers seventy-five volumes. If you have sufficient patience you could go through these books one by one and find that the Gospel they studied and quoted in their day is identical with the one that we read today. It is still the same book, nothing added or deleted.

And because these Evangelists were "on the spot reporters," because they weren't lying, and because their stories have not been changed, Catholics think that the modern world possesses an accurate history of the words and actions of the "Man Who Said He Was God."

### C. JESUS CHRIST IS GOD

Contrary to common opinion, Christ is not "The Greatest Man Who Ever Lived." He was either more or less! Just a casual perusal of His life would show that:

- a) He said He was God;
- b) He acted as though He was God.

Therefore, He was either more than a great man or less!

He claimed to be God on a number of occasions, the most dramatic of which was His trial on the grounds of blasphemy. The high priest put Him under solemn oath saying:

I adjure thee by the living God that thou tell us whether thou art the Christ the Son of God. Jesus said to him, Thou hast said it. . . . Then the high priest tore his garments saying: He has blasphemed. . . . He is liable to death.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Mt. 26:63.



With an execution hanging over His head for such an admission, Christ still proclaimed His divinity. Second, He acted as God, asserting His divine authority and equality with God the Father and even forgiving sins:

Take courage, son, thy sins are forgiven thee.<sup>3</sup>

Therefore, Catholics believe that either Christ was the meanest man who ever lived or He was God. For a man would have to be much less than great to stoop to the wholesale deception of thousands of trusting, simple people. Confronted with this dilemma, the common sense of Catholics impels them to accept the straightforward statement of Jesus Christ and to say:

*TRULY THIS MAN IS GOD!*

#### **D. CHRIST STARTED A CHURCH**

It is natural for us to envy those who lived in Nazareth with Christ. Imagine how comforting it would be to have God for a neighbor. We could take our problems next door for a quick and trustworthy solution. Doubts about heaven could be easily dispelled by One who had lived there. Anxieties about good and evil could be solved by the One who separated good from evil. Actually, Christ did three things for His neighbors:

- a) He told them about heaven and made them enthusiastic about getting there;
- b) He commanded them to do certain things and avoid others that they might deserve to go to heaven;
- c) He enabled them spiritually to get into heaven.

Certainly we would be justified in complaining about God's justice unless He did the same three things for us. Unless the same helps were extended to us, we could say that God

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<sup>3</sup> Mt. 9:2.

avored the handful of people with whom He had personal contact over the rest of the human race. Actually, we would expect that a Just God would leave some sort of arrangement whereby we could receive the same three helps that He gave His neighbors. He did as we expected. He left behind Him a visible organization called a "church." The first officials of this church were the Apostles to whom He said:

Go into the whole world and preach my gospel to every creature.<sup>4</sup>

And He added this:

If he refuse to hear even the church, let him be to thee as the heathen and the publican. Amen I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound also in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed also in heaven.<sup>5</sup>

So even today His work of teaching, governing, and sanctifying the world continues through the efforts of the Apostles and their successors.

*By God's own order*, the world is taught by His Church:

Go therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.<sup>6</sup>

*By God's own order*, the world is governed by His Church:

He who hears you, hears me; and he who rejects you, rejects me; and he who rejects me, rejects him who sent me.<sup>7</sup>

*By God's own order*, the world is sanctified by His Church. Christ said this to His Apostles:

Receive the Holy Spirit; whose sins you shall forgive, they

<sup>4</sup> Mk. 16:15.

<sup>6</sup> Mt. 28:19.

<sup>5</sup> Mt. 18:17.

<sup>7</sup> Lk. 10:16.

are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained.<sup>8</sup>

### E. CHRIST'S CHURCH IS THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

At the present moment, there are at least two hundred and fifty denominations in the United States which claim to be founded by Christ. How do we find the needle in this denominational haystack? What should we look for? From all eternity the Infinite Intellect of God saw this difficulty and for that reason He marked the Church He founded. He gave the institution He started certain characteristics that would make it stand out in a crowd. The organization which He began was endowed with these four qualities: Unity, Holiness, Universality, and Apostolicity.

**Unity:** Christ spoke to His primitive Church saying:

I have other sheep too, which do not belong to this fold; I must bring them in too; they will listen to my voice; so that there will be one fold and one shepherd.<sup>9</sup>

This unity of which Christ spoke is found today in the Roman Catholic Church comprising four hundred and twenty million people all over the face of the earth who profess the same beliefs, worship at the same altar, use the same seven sacraments, and obey the same essential rules originating from the same ruler, the pope, who is the Vicar of Christ on earth.

**Holiness:** Christ wanted the members of His Church to be better morally than their neighbors:

You therefore are to be perfect, even as your heavenly Father is perfect.<sup>10</sup>

It is obvious that some Catholics are definitely less than holy.

<sup>8</sup> Jn. 20:22.

<sup>9</sup> Jn. 10:16.

<sup>10</sup> Mt. 5:47.

But this casts no shadow of doubt upon the authenticity of Catholicism. You see, the doctrines and practices of the Church can be compared to a diet. If a man is faithful to the instructions of his doctor, if he follows his diet plan carefully and patiently, he will succeed in losing weight. But he must follow the diet. If he adds other foods to his list, or if he falls off entirely after being faithful for several weeks, you will observe no change in his appearance. And Catholics, too, have been given a spiritual diet. They have a list of devotions and practices to be followed. In proportion to their faithfulness to these exercises, they accomplish the result — holiness. You will find in any parish some Catholics who are holy, some who are mediocre, and some who never go to church. Other churches likewise have “dietary plans” but none of them as complete or well balanced. Catholics have as exercises the Sacrifice of the Mass and the seven sacraments which may be used even daily. They are offered a great variety of devotional practices ranging from the Rosary, novenas, Stations of the Cross to the use of medals, statues, holy water, and the blessings of the Church. They have a choice of devotional literature encompassing the philosophical profundities of Aquinas and Bonaventure and the simple fiction of children’s stories. It is with some pride that we point to the completeness and efficiency of the “diet for holiness” that is outlined by the Catholic Church.

**Universality:** Christ did not want His Church to be an exclusive club. He wanted it to embrace all people, of all nations, and of all centuries. He said:

And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world, for a witness to all nations.<sup>11</sup>

Today its four hundred and twenty million members of every race, of every section of the world, will testify that it covers

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<sup>11</sup> Mt. 24:14.

the face of the earth. But even more important, it covers the face of history, for it has been in existence from the time of Christ. In a list of famous Catholics, there must be numbered: St. Clement, Bishop of Rome in A.D. 90; St. Justin, born in A.D. 100; St. Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons in A.D. 177; St. Augustine; St. Patrick; St. Bernard; St. Thomas Aquinas; Christopher Columbus; Marco Polo; Roger Bacon; Johann Gutenberg; Louis Pasteur; Geoffrey Chaucer; Michelangelo; Cellini; Albrecht Dürer; Da Vinci; Beethoven; Verdi; Liszt; Stradivarius; Haydn; Mozart. Their very names prove the universality of Catholicism. This Church has embraced all nations, all ages, and all the teachings of Christ. It is universal!

**Apostolicity:** A lamp's chief value is the illumination it casts. A faucet is useful only when it conveys water to us. And, a church is of value only if it brings God's helps and blessings from Him to us. Christ gave His powers to the Apostles saying:

Even as thou (the Father) hast sent me into the world, so I also have sent them into the world.<sup>12</sup>

These same powers have been passed on from successor to successor down to the present time. Today Roman Catholic priests perform their offices of teaching, baptizing, and forgiving sins by virtue of the powers they have received from an unbroken line of predecessors stretching back to the Apostles themselves. A lamp may appear to you to be perfect, but unless it is connected by unbroken wires to a dynamo, it will not light. The expensive plumbing in your home will be useless if there is a break somewhere between your house and the central water supply. And a man of the cloth may be most impressive in demeanor and dress, but unless he is connected by an unbroken line of predecessors to the Apostles, he cannot

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<sup>12</sup> Jn. 17:18.

bring you the DIRECT spiritual assistance of Jesus Christ. The pages of history will show that only the Roman Catholic Church can establish an unbroken line of succession from St. Peter and his comrades to us.

Since, therefore, Catholicism has unity, produces holiness, is universal in time and geography, and traces itself back in an unbroken line to Christ Himself, Catholics believe that they belong to the original Christian Church.

#### F. GOD PREVENTS HIS CHURCH FROM TEACHING ERROR

If God has established a Church to do His teaching, then He must protect it from error. Otherwise, we would have the contradiction of an All-Truthful God demanding that His creatures believe something erroneous. God might as well say:

If you don't believe that two and two are five, you cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

It is absurd to think that God would allow His Church to teach falsehoods and make a man's salvation dependent upon his acceptance of untruth. Thus, it is logical that God should prevent His Church from teaching error. This is what we mean by infallibility.

But infallibility does not mean that churchmen cannot commit sins; that churchmen cannot make mistakes about politics, economics, or even religion. It simply means that the brief and compact body of doctrines which is called the public and official teaching of the Catholic Church is protected by God from having any error mixed with it. George Bernard Shaw will never be considered a papal propagandist, yet he accepts infallibility as being completely logical:

Perhaps I had better inform my Protestant readers that the famous dogma of Papal Infallibility is by far the most

modest pretension of its kind in existence. Compared to our infallible democracies, our infallible medical councils, our infallible astronomers, our infallible judges, and our infallible parliaments, the Pope is on his knees in the dust confessing his ignorance before the throne of God, asking only that as to certain historical matters on which he has clearly more sources of information open to him than anyone else his decision should be taken as final.<sup>13</sup>

These are the words of George Bernard Shaw who agrees with Catholics that infallibility is not the terrible price we must pay to accept a religion. As a matter of cold fact, it is an advantage! In a world in which men can be positive about so few things, it is a distinct blessing to be able to trust the teachings of God's representative — the Catholic Church.

### IN CONCLUSION

Many of our neighbors say:

I want to go to God directly. I don't need any church. I just want to close my eyes and speak to Him from my heart.

Respectfully, we submit this thought to them: *their* desires and wishes are unimportant. What *is* important are the desires and wishes of God. Does God wish to come to His present-day creatures directly, or through a Church? And we submit that if God bothered to found such an institution, He certainly wants His creatures to use it. There are many occasions when a Catholic would rather pray to God directly, such as on rainy or cold Sundays when Church attendance is a physical trial. But they ask what does God want, and then say:

"Not my will but Thine be done."

They remember the story of the blind man who received his sight from Christ. To perform His miracle, our Lord spat into

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<sup>13</sup> "St. Joan" by George Bernard Shaw, page 49. Dodd, Mead and Co., 1945.

the dust at His feet and made a mud paste which He smeared over the darkened eyes. This brought light to the sightless one. But suppose this afflicted one was addicted to cleanliness and drew back from our Lord's hand saying:

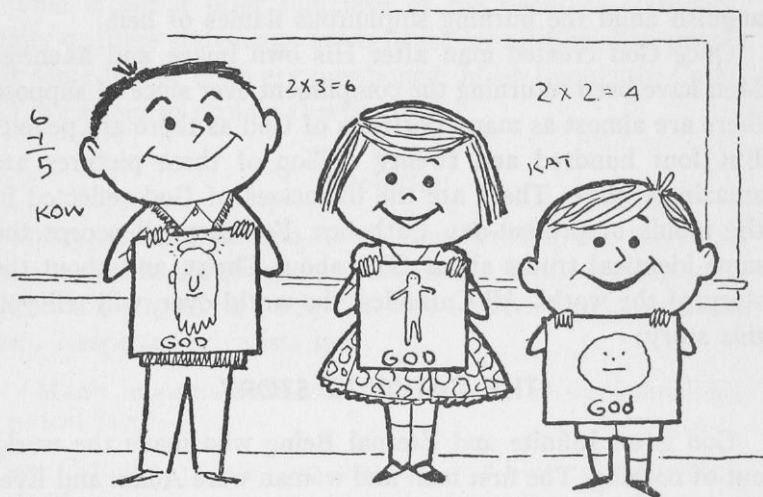
Keep that dirty mess off my face. You are all powerful. You don't need mud to give me my sight. Just say the word and I'll see.

Of course, he would be right. God doesn't need mud or clay to work a miracle any more than He needs a Church or a priest to save the souls of mankind. But even though He doesn't need these props, He wants to use them. This is His plan for us, just as it was the plan of God that the dampened dust of a Palestinian road should give sight to a blind man. Modern man could learn a lesson from this miracle. He should determine what *God* wants of man, not merely what man wants God to do.

Catholics believe that God wants them to be Catholics, and, in brief, this is why they remain Catholics.



## *What Catholics Believe*



Remember the story of the little girl in kindergarten who was observed one day busily drawing a picture while all of her classmates were napping? Her teacher was puzzled over this display of industry. So she asked:

“Honey, what is the picture you’re drawing?”

“It’s a picture of God,” came the quick reply.

“But no one knows what God looks like,” countered the teacher.

“Well, they will when I finish this picture,” said the young artist with an air of finality.

It's true! No one knows what God looks like, yet not only little girls but almost everyone has drawn his own picture of Him! One man thinks of Him as being terribly old and decrepit, clad in flowing robes and a long gray beard, tired and worn after many years of trying to guide mankind — a sort of a supernatural Mr. Chips! Another pictures Him as a harsh lawmaker, a hooded judge sentencing millions to eternal anguish amid the burning sulphurous flames of hell.

Once God created man after His own image and likeness. Men have been returning the compliment ever since! I suppose there are almost as many portraits of God as there are people. But four hundred and twenty million of these pictures are amazingly alike. These are the likenesses of God reflected in the minds of present-day Catholics. For they all accept the same identical truths about God, about Christ, and about the story of the world. All Catholics, the world over, will tell you this story:

### THE CATHOLIC STORY

God is an Infinite and Eternal Being who made the world out of nothing. The first man and woman were Adam and Eve. They offended God. From that moment on all mankind was barred from seeing God. This continued for thousands of years, until God Himself became man. As Jesus Christ, He lived and worked among men to give them a graphic example of how to use their lives. Finally, He even allowed Himself to be executed and He offered up His suffering and death in reparation for the sins of all the human race. It now remains for mankind to receive the merits earned for them by Jesus Christ. This application of graces is supposed to work through the means of the seven ceremonies or sacraments designed by God while He was here on earth. There is one sacrament called baptism intended to bring these merits to all men. If, through

sin, a man would throw away these graces, they could be re-gained through the use of another sacrament called penance. The other five sacraments are designed to intensify the effects of these merits in our souls and apply them to any special need we might have of them. Catholics believe their Church to be the divinely appointed custodian and dispenser of these ceremonies.

This is but a brief summary of the belief of Catholics.<sup>1</sup> Many of these statements are believed by all Christian people, but some few of them are questioned. Most frequently Catholics are asked to explain these points:

### I. Evolution

Today, one's mother-in-law is considered a fair target for ridicule. But in the recent past, men spoke in disparaging terms of the ancestry of not only their own wives but of mankind itself. Respected scientists said:

Man's immediate descent from apes is an undoubted historical fact.<sup>2</sup>

When Catholics pointed out that this was illogical poppycock, their Church was smeared with the epithet, Enemy of Science. Since that day the fallible memory of man has forgotten the precise point of the argument and simply remembers that once Churchmen took up their pens against Science. In the interests of accuracy, let us make this clear. Occasionally, individuals from the field of Religion or Science will hurl words at each other over the legitimacy of some discovery, but never have the institutions themselves engaged in such warfare. Men may sometimes be in doubt as to the identity of truth and

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<sup>1</sup> Please confer the Appendix in the back of this booklet for a more complete outline of Catholic dogma.

<sup>2</sup> Ernest Haeckel, *Riddle of the Universe*, 1899.

therefore use arguments and discussion to further their knowledge. This does not involve the organizations they represent. On the contrary, Religion and Science cannot be opposed, for they serve the same Master — Truth.

Semantics is a new and welcome addition to the curriculum of modern colleges. It is the science of the meaning of words. One of its cardinal principles is that one word may have several meanings. "Ball" may refer to a dance or to the necessary tool of a tennis match. And thus with many words spelling is identical and meaning is equivocal. Such a word is "Evolution" which has as many definitions as the Hope Diamond has facets. Let us consider several of its interpretations:

1. Some men mean by Evolution, the process of change in a physical structure from a lower to a high form of existence. Such changes have been observed and are therefore no longer debatable. There is irrefutable evidence today demonstrating the origin of certain species of plants and animals from other pre-existing types. Catholicism neither denies nor contests this but accepts Evolution in this sense as being true and demonstrable.

2. Some mean by Evolution that the world made itself, that order did come from chaos purely by blind chance, that life arose from nothing without any assistance. This theory Catholics oppose on grounds of religion and of reason. Years ago, it was said by a cracker barrel philosopher:

"Ya cain't give what ya ain't got."

Regardless of its imperfect grammar, this statement applies equally to money, life, intelligence, or organization. The universe had to receive its perfections from someone who had them. The existence of the world cannot be logically explained without the postulate of a Creator.

3. There are some who believe that Evolution means the origin of mankind from some lower type of animal. Of course

it is possible that God could have taken the body of some animal, re-formed it and vivified it with a rational soul. But such a thing could not have happened by itself. Human souls don't make themselves. More than a hundred years ago the proponents of "spontaneous generation" of the simplest form of life — the microbe — were dealt a resounding defeat by the research of Louis Pasteur. The same thing applies to the more complex organisms and even more so to the mind and will of man. These things cannot make themselves. Evolution cannot replace the Deity!

The Church deserves to be the best friend of Science rather than its enemy. The world's first museum was founded at the Vatican. The first botanical garden was laid out by priests in Pisa in 1543. The first scientific society originated in a church in Naples in 1560. The first university in the Americas was chartered by Catholics in Peru in 1551. The first school in the United States was established by priests in St. Augustine, Florida, in 1600. The first hospital in America was begun by the Church in Mexico City in 1524. Most of the great universities of Europe were founded under Catholic auspices: Oxford; Cambridge; Heidelberg; Sorbonne; Vienna; Louvain; Cologne; Leipzig; Dublin; Bologna; Seville; Padua. Certainly the Church did not hinder its members from adding to scientific discoveries, as all of the following men were Catholics: the astronomer Copernicus; the naturalist Fabre; the physicist Galvani; the botanist Lamarck; the chemist Lavoisier; the physicians Linacre and Chauliac; the physiologist Schwann; the anatomist Fallopio; the electricians Coulomb, Volta, and Marconi. And the greatest discovery of evolutionary thought was the result of the work of a Catholic priest. Father Gregor Mendel experimented a century ago with the hybridization of garden peas. His work is now accepted by all scientists as being more than a theory. In fact, it is called the Mendelian

Law of Genetic Inheritance. It has completely replaced the Darwinian principle of Natural Selection and is accepted as one of the basic facts of modern biology. No one acquainted with the scientific endeavors of the past few centuries could ever say that the Catholic Church as an institution has been inimical to research or scientific discovery.

## II. Death

All men fear death—but not for the same reason. One fears that he will lose his body. Another worries that he will lose his possessions. The third trembles even more violently than these because he thinks that death may claim his soul. Perhaps these fears account for the great amount of attention given to death today. Observe the lengthy accounts of murders printed in the daily press. Examine the most popular of the pocket novels. You will find that they are concerned with a variety of murder and mayhem. Listen to an evening of radio or television and count the number of actors who are shot, strangled, or bludgeoned into eternity in the name of entertainment. Death fascinates modern man! There is perhaps no other subject except sex, in which we have an avid interest. Yet it remains a mystery to us, largely because we always ask the wrong question. For the query foremost in our minds is not: "What is Death?" but rather: "How Did It Happen?" We do not ask: "Where Is The Deceased Now That He No Longer Breathes?" but: "What Made Him Stop Breathing?" Catholicism attempts to rid its members of a fear of death by switching their attention from *how* it occurs to *what* it is.

What is death? We are told that it is the price of life. This answer is not found on pages of print whether sacred or civil, but rather in a famous piece of art which is called the Crucifix. Some two thousand years ago, on a tiny hill, outside a small

town far across the sea from us, the life of a man ran out of the wounds in his hands and feet and muddied the ground beneath him. The hill an unusual name — the Skull. The man's name is famous — Jesus Christ.

Now, a crucifixion is not inspiring, not romantic, not beautiful. It is an execution, an ugly depressing thing. There is the searing pain where black iron nails tear their way through muscle and flesh. There is the sting and smart of salty sweat in the raw patches on chest and back. There is the slow throbbing ache of the scourge. There is strangling thirst — flies — heat — spittle of rabble. There is the constant unblinking staring of the curious who have never seen a man killed.

Does this sound to you to be an apt subject for artists? Of course not: And yet this figure has occupied the talent of the greatest painters and sculptors of all times. The outstretched arms of Christ upon the cross have been reproduced in gold and silver, in ivory and ebony. This image hangs in homes and churches, in art galleries and museums. It is carried as a pocket piece. It is worn suspended from the neck. We see it everywhere, not because we are attracted by executions but because it is the explanation of death itself.

Jesus Christ lived upon the earth for thirty-three years. That's around twelve thousand days or two hundred and ninety thousand hours. But the most important thing that He did took only one second of all this time. In the years He spent among men He worked fabulous miracles. He gave to the world new and revolutionary ideas concerning the equality and essential value of each individual man. He instituted a Church which spread all over the world. He inspired the greatest selling book of all time. But in a life crammed with activity, He waited till the very last moment to perform its most important act. In that last second, He died — for us! For this reason did He come into the world — to die. For this reason did He

die — to gain the forgiveness of mankind's sins. And this is the reason that man must die even as Christ did, because man has sinned!

Once upon a time, this was not true. No one *had* to die. When Adam and Eve first walked the earth, God never intended that they would die, but merely one day walk into His Presence as easily as walking through a doorway into another room. But our first parents sinned; they defied God! And God punished His rebellious creatures and all their family by taking some of their privileges from them. From that moment on, all men who would see God would have to pay the price of death. It is an axiom of modern merchandising, if the product is good and desirable, the price will be high. Death is a high price — but it purchases eternal happiness!

### III. Sin

A rather cynical wit recently summarized the Catholic teaching on Original Sin in this fashion:

Adam ate the apple and the rest of the world suffered the tummy ache.

The glaring inaccuracy in this account is that we don't know whether Adam ate an apple, an orange, or a watermelon. Nor is it important whether or not he ate anything at all. The Third Chapter of the Book of Genesis can be restated in this fashion:

The most perfect man ever made turned upon his Creator and sought to overthrow him.

The exact words of temptation which caused Adam to offend God were these:

You shall be as gods.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Gen. 3:5.



It was pride — not hunger or curiosity that prompted the first rebellion. Adam who was endowed with an intellect far superior to all the combined great minds of world history — Adam who was blessed with will power stronger than bonds of steel — Adam who was created free of pain, hunger, and death — Adam freely chose to risk all of this in an attempt to become equal to or greater than God His Creator: This is the first and greatest sin of history, and therefore is called Original Sin.

It little matters whether Adam ate an apple, poisoned a city's water supply, or smothered a sleeping child. The enormity of his crime is not measured by the act itself but by the wealth of gifts that God has showered upon him. This was no ordinary man. This was the first and greatest of all men. He was not hurled into sin by the overwhelming strength of some passion. His was the cold-blooded, passionless crime of pride. With all his blessings, he desired even more; he desired that which was God's alone. This was the reason that God's punishment was so severe. No one has ever had less excuse for his crime than Adam had.

It has been said that the sins of a father are visited upon his children. This is most certainly true of Adam's family — the human race. Because of the sin of our progenitor freedom from pain, hunger, labor, and death vanished from creation. Because of Original Sin man lost the ability to earn the eternal vision of God as a reward for the good life. Because of Adam's crime the minds of all men were darkened and their wills weakened. Today, it is difficult but not impossible to be good. Just as in every man there is a tendency pulling him toward the ground which we call the Law of Gravity, so there is a tendency pulling him toward evil which is one result of Original Sin. Children are taught to compensate for the Law of Gravity and they learn to walk upright. This ability does not repeal the Law of Gravity or even shut it off. It remains in effect

as long as we live. Even after many years of walking upright a man may make a careless misstep, stumble, and the Law will act; he will fall. Just so with Original Sin. Every being is naturally drawn to evil and away from good. Moral education and training of the will through discipline and regulation can compensate this almost magnetic force, but will never destroy it. This is the reason that Catholics operate their own school system — because they feel religious education is necessary to subdue these untoward tendencies. Of course, they learn not to expect perfection of any man because even as in walking the best trained people may occasionally grow careless and fall, so too, they may be drawn into evil. It is a Catholic teaching founded on this conception of man's nature, that a saint is not a holy man but rather a man who keeps trying over and over to be holy. Sanctity is not synonymous with success but rather with repeated effort.

#### IV. Jesus Christ — the God-Man

It is a paradox that men can do things which are infinitely evil but they cannot perform acts which are infinitely good. Stradivarius can make a violin of magnificent quality, but any clumsy fool can crush it under his foot. Then only another Stradivarius can make a fiddle to replace it. In other words, man can perform an act which is infinitely evil because the offense of sin is calculated not only by the intrinsic nature of the act but also by the dignity of the person offended. If I strike my neighbor unjustly, I do wrong. If that neighbor happens to be our governor my crime is more serious. Not because I strike him any harder but because his position demands more respect of me. If I were to strike the President of the United States my act would be even more grievous because of his added dignity. Now imagine! Just suppose it

were possible for me to reach out and lift my hand in unjust anger against the infinite, almighty Deity. Then my sin would be infinitely evil because of His unlimited degree of perfection and worthiness. It is impossible for man to strike God physically but Adam and all his sons accomplish the same result when they consciously disobey any of the more important rules of conduct which He has established for them. Mankind's sins have given incalculable, infinite offense to God.

If a man pilfers your watch, your auto, or your wallet you have the right to demand restitution or to waive it. God likewise may either condone our sins or ask satisfaction for them. God could have dismissed our offenses; He could have brushed them aside. He could have written in the sky with a fiery finger:

*I FORGIVE ALL MANKIND. SIN NO MORE!*

This indelible message could have hung above the heads of all men for all time. He could have done this, but actually He didn't. Why? Perhaps He was afraid that if *He* would forget the sins of men, *they* would do likewise. To make sure that we would learn the evil enormity of sin, He demanded commensurate restitution.

Sin originally came into the world by the hand of one who represented the entire human race because he was the first man — Adam. If mankind would offer adequate restitution, we must find a member of the human race who can represent all men and perform an act which is infinitely good. This is impossible because the goodness of a man's acts is measured by his own nature. The virtuous actions of any man are always limited because his nature is limited. Only God can perform an act which is infinitely good. Now, this is the fact that brought God down from heaven to earth: to represent a group one must first be a representative of that group. One who would

represent our country must be a citizen of this nation. Thus, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, God Himself, took a body and a soul, was born into this world as a man, lived and worked for thirty-three years and finally suffered and died as a man. He offered all this: the humiliation of an Infinite Deity assuming the nature of His own creature, man, His years on earth, and particularly His sufferings and death at the hands of His creatures, as a superabundant recompense for the infinite evil wrought by the sins of Adam and all his children. Thus Jesus Christ was both God and Man simultaneously. He was both the prosecution and the defense in the trial of His sinful creatures. He was both the Victim and the High Priest in the great Sacrifice offered on Calvary so many years ago and forever commemorated in the Crucifix. He is the God-Man!

### V. The Blessed Virgin — the Mother of God

The main thing that I can't see in Catholicism is all that stuff about Mary. All this worship of her I just won't buy.

The speaker was a pleasant faced young Marine. He was engaged to a Catholic girl and thought that he ought to find out what arrangements should be made in order to be married. He had been referred to our parish by the local U. S. O. and was now cataloguing his objections to Catholicism.

We as Protestants, he continued, have the greatest respect for Mary, but we don't worship her. We think that she was just a woman. I mean she had no greater powers than the rest of us. She was just an ordinary human being. The only thing different about her was that she happened to be the mother of Jesus Christ.

This may surprise you, but this young man has summarized exactly what the Catholic Church teaches about Mary. For centuries we have honored this woman, not as some sort of

a lesser god, but simply because she was the Mother of Christ, and Catholics think that Christ was God! All of our reverence and devotion is founded on this statement: Mary is the Mother of God!

Now, of course, this does not mean that Mary is herself a god or that she is equal to God. It simply means that she has done for God what any mother has done for her children. The essence of motherhood is that a woman gives a body to her child. The soul is created by God in each individual case and infused into the body at conception. In the case of Mary, she provided a body for the Second Person of the Holy Trinity. This unity of body, soul, and divinity is called Jesus Christ. Therefore Mary is literally the Mother of God!

There are several conclusions from this fact. Certainly God would not choose for His Mother anyone except the most perfect of creatures. Therefore we regard it to be a logical conclusion that Mary was perfect.

It is axiomatic that the bond of love between child and parent is the strongest tie in human experience. Therefore, we would expect that God would be particularly moved by prayers or entreaties offered by His Mother. Throughout the past centuries, the beautiful custom has arisen among Catholics of asking Mary to present their petitions to almighty God. These people do not believe that Mary answers their prayers, but that the Deity grants their requests through Mary. Catholics do not pray *to* Mary, but *through* her to her divine Son — Jesus.

## VI. Purgatory!

Since Catholics believe that God is just, they must logically accept the existence of hell. And, since they also believe that God is Love, they must accept the existence of Purgatory.

Every woman who has ever been deserted by a faithless spouse — any foundling left on the steps of some hospital — knows that the only fit punishment for abandonment is abandonment itself. If this is true of the abandoned wife or of an abandoned baby, it is infinitely more true of an abandoned God. For if by sin we desert God and obdurately refuse to return to Him while we breathe the breath of this life, then at death it is meet and proper that God abandon us forever. Eternal abandonment is the definition of hell. The punishment fits the crime!

But what of those who only hesitate — who doubt — who turn away and then return to God? What of the errant but then repentant husband? What of the irresponsible but then remorseful parent? Is it just to punish them forever? Or is it just to punish forever those who err but now seek to return to God? Justice would demand for all of these, just a temporary separation from happiness. Temporary separation from God is the definition of Purgatory. Once again, the punishment fits the crime.

One hundred and sixty years before the first Christmas, the George Washington of Palestine, Judas Machabeus, led a handful of patriots against an army of Greeks who had oppressed his people, occupied his home, and profaned his temple. He boasted of an army equipped with sickles and rakes, clubs and a few rusty swords. He entered into a pitched battle with a professional army. And, he won a victory that he had no right to win. It was a victory won only by the direct assistance of God who protected every member of that valiant force from injury — except those who might sin during the course of the fighting. And so it was that after the clangor of arms had died, after the Greeks had fled the field in rout, the great Machabee searched the battle rubble for his men. And he found them! They were a pitiful few with the evidence of

their sin still upon them. It was the sin of pillage — of looting — of common thievery.

The world has forgotten the name of this battle. Even the name of Judas Machabeus has sunk into the misty depths of memory. But we still remember the words he spoke over the bodies of his dead friends. He gave orders that 12,000 drachmas be sent to the great Temple in Jerusalem that prayers and sacrifices be offered unceasingly for his comrades in arms. He said:

It is therefore a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead that they may be loosed from their sins.<sup>4</sup>

It has never since been voiced so well, this conviction that we all share, that some men are too good for hell and too bad for heaven. This is why the great Jewish general asked for prayers, because he believed that his men were to be punished for a time and then released to heaven. In heaven, men need not our intercession. In hell it will avail them nothing. From the mere fact that men pray for the dead they thereby admit the existence of Purgatory. Catholics believe that the broad chasm between the quick and the defunct can be bridged by their prayers. The extent of the assistance they send the dead is limited by the worthiness of their prayers and by the infinite Wisdom of God who applies the benefits of their acts to those for whom they pray. It gives man great consolation to know that he can reach across the grave to assist in some fashion those whom he loves so deeply.

### CONCLUSION

This chapter does not pretend to tell the complete story of Catholic teaching but simply to give a few paragraphs from

<sup>4</sup> 2 Mach. 12:46.

what must be an endless volume. For the teachings of Christ are endless because the questions, doubts, and problems of the human race are without end. As often as the Church is presented with some new query, it tries to answer it in the light of the teachings of the Master and His first followers — the Apostles. Thus, throughout the centuries the collection of religious truth and explanation has ever increased. It is the Church's hope that this growth will never cease for this is a constant proof that men of every age are striving toward an understanding of Divinity. And this is the mission of the Church to the world — to bring all men to an appreciation of and a love for — God.



## *What Catholics Do in Church*

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### THE REASON FOR THE CEREMONIES

There is a world of difference between a man and a cigar store Indian! A human being is alive. He breathes; he eats; he walks; he talks. The wooden statue resembles a man only in general dimension and appearance. He can never replace a man because he is frozen into immobility. He cannot speak or breathe, desire or love.

This is at it should be, for God has not made all things to be identical copies of each other, but has designed a great step-ladder of creation. On the lowest rung we find the inanimate

things of the world: stones, earth, minerals. Only one step above God has made a great variety of flowers, vegetables, and growing things which is known as the level of plant life. A stage higher, we find all kinds of animals both domestic and wild. And above all these, crowning God's work of natural creation, we find mankind. Man not only possesses all the perfections of the lower levels of existence but has received two unusual gifts which are both a privilege and a burden — reason and free will. But, far above all created things, is another level of existence, that of God's. An abyss of infinite immensity separates God from all other things — the Creator from Creation. This highest stage of living is proper only to the infinite, eternal, and almighty Deity.

#### Levels of Existence

	GOD .....
	ANGELS .....
	MAN .....
	ANIMALS .....
	PLANTS .....
	MINERALS .....

Perhaps the most fundamental of all laws is this: God's creatures must exist on the level of creation on which He placed them. They will never be able to act as though they had the powers of things on the level above them. The bricks in an apartment house will never bloom in June as though they were some rare species of tulip. Nor will iris ever acquire the power of ambulation and rush into a warm cellar on the eve of the first frost. We may have many best sellers purporting to be the biographies of dogs or horses, but we will never have

a genuine autobiography by one of them. For such activities are beyond the natural powers of these creatures. They are above (*super*) their nature and are called, therefore, supernatural. A book-writing beagle, a running rosebush, a flowering corner stone, would all be supernatural beings.

But these things just don't happen! God's creatures stay on their own proper levels — with just one exception. The exception to the rule is mankind! You have heard it said that men are to see God in heaven. Did you ever stop to think how impossible that might be? To see, enjoy, and understand God, one must live on His level of existence. Hence, to some men God gives special equipment or ability to enable them to live on a level above themselves — on a supernatural level — on a divine level. This gift is called sanctifying grace. It is invisible, but real! It is mysterious but factual!

Since this supernatural ability cannot be perceived by our senses, how would a man know whether or not he possessed it? When we deal with other invisible materials, we recognize them through their packaging. Hydrogen or helium, though not apparent to the human eye can be recognized by the steel tanks in which they are shipped. Thus with Sanctifying Grace we recognize it through its containers, the seven sacraments. These ceremonies are the visible signs of the presence of the invisible ability God gives man to enable him to live on the divine level of His existence.

Today, when a Catholic receives the material sign of one of these sacraments, he believes that he receives a spiritual power which is hidden from his senses. This Sanctifying Grace raises him spiritually to God's level so that he can see and comprehend Him once he passes from this world. This supernatural life can be gained, re-gained if lost through serious sin, and increased in intensity, all through the seven sacraments.

## I. Baptism

Baptism is the first and most important sacrament. It is the gateway to all the others. One may not receive any of the others properly unless first baptized. It was designed by Christ to be the ordinary means of bringing Sanctifying Grace to all of mankind. It consists of washing the skin with water in the name of the Holy Trinity.

Going therefore teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.<sup>1</sup>

The Apostles took these words seriously. For when Peter addressed a great crowd only ten days after Christ had ascended into heaven, they asked, "What shall we do?" Peter replied:

Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins.<sup>2</sup>

And about three thousand were baptized. Philip baptized the eunuch, Paul baptized the Ephesians, the Corinthians, the families of Lydia, Crispus, Gaius, and Stephanus.<sup>3</sup>

Catholics have their children baptized when very young because they believe that this is the ordinary way for them to get to heaven. Christ said:

Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Spirit he cannot enter the kingdom of God.<sup>4</sup>

And, "He who believes and is baptized shall be saved."<sup>5</sup>

The Church has always practiced infant baptism from the

<sup>1</sup> Mt. 28:19.

<sup>2</sup> Acts 2:38.

<sup>3</sup> Acts 8:38; 19:5; 18:8; 16:14; 1 Cor. 1:14.

<sup>4</sup> Jn. 3:5.

<sup>5</sup> Mk. 16:16.

days of the Apostles down to today. St. Irenaeus wrote these words around the year of A.D. 190:

Christ came to save all men through Himself, all I repeat, who through Him are born again unto God: infants, children, youth, men and old age.<sup>6</sup>

Fifty years later, Origen wrote:

The Church has received from the Apostles the tradition to confer Baptism also upon little children.<sup>7</sup>

And the most prolific writer of early Christianity, St. Augustine said:

Whoever says that infants when they die are vivified in Christ without participation of His Sacrament, both opposes the Apostolic teaching and condemns the whole Church which hastens to baptize infants because it unhesitatingly believes that otherwise they cannot possibly be vivified in Christ.<sup>8</sup>

Ordinarily, Catholics expect their priests to perform their baptisms. But, they understand that anyone who has the use of reason and the correct intention can baptize. Particularly in case of an emergency one who is not of the same faith, or not baptized himself, can and should give this sacrament to those desiring it.

Baptism is conferred in any one of three ways: by immersion in water, by sprinkling with water, or by pouring water. Any one of these three is acceptable provided the water flows over the skin of the person. The words to be said while washing are:

I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

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<sup>6</sup> Irenaeus, *Adversus Her.*, 2.

<sup>7</sup> Origen, *Ep. Rom.*, 5.

<sup>8</sup> Augustine, *Ep. Jer.*, 28.

All these methods of baptism are very old as testified to in one of the earliest books on Christianity called "The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles" written around the year 90.

Now concerning Baptism thus shall you baptize. Baptize in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost in flowing water. But if you have no flowing water, then baptize in other (standing) water. And if it is impossible to do so in cold water, then use warm water. But if you have neither, then pour water on the head three times in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.<sup>9</sup>

One or two sponsors or godparents witness the baptism of the child and assume a share of the parents' responsibility for the spiritual life of the child. Because of this, the Church insists that such sponsors be practicing Catholics. How could they bear this duty intelligently unless they understood and practiced Catholicism themselves?

A Christian name — usually that of a Saint — is given to a child in baptism to enlist this saint as the child's patron in heaven and to give the infant an ideal which he may imitate. Many children today have no heroes except Davy Crockett or Captain Video. And although such mythical characters do typify certain natural attributes, certainly the saints of God far surpass them in depth and nobility of spirit. Every child should have his own patron saint and be taught to emulate him.

## II. Confirmation

The name "Confirmation" is derived from the Latin word *confirmare* meaning "to strengthen." This sacrament completes what baptism has begun. It increases the intensity of the supernatural life and enables a person to be strong and resolute in

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<sup>9</sup> *Didache*, Ch. 7.

the pursuit of the Christian ideal. One is usually confirmed sometime after receiving First Communion, between the ages of seven and fourteen. Ordinarily only a bishop confirms and he does so by first praying that the Holy Ghost descend on the one to be confirmed, then laying his hand on the person's head and anointing his forehead with holy oil in the form of the cross. As he does this he says these words:

I sign thee with the sign of the Cross, and I confirm thee with the chrism of Salvation, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

Although we do not possess the exact words Christ used in instituting this sacrament we are certain of its divine establishment because of the actions of the Apostles.

When the Apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent to them Peter and John. On their arrival they prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Spirit, for as yet he had not come on any of them, but they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit.<sup>10</sup>

It is also amply attested that St. Paul re-baptized and confirmed many of the followers of St. John the Baptist.<sup>11</sup>

Likewise throughout the history of the early Church down to modern days, this sacrament was accepted and used. Seventeen hundred years ago St. Cyprian wrote these words:

Our practice is that those who have been baptized in the Church should be presented to the bishops, that by our prayer and the imposition of hands they may receive the Holy Spirit.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Acts 8:14.

<sup>11</sup> Acts 19:1-7.

<sup>12</sup> St. Cyprian, *Epis.* 73.

### III. Holy Communion

Catholics believe that Holy Communion is the sacrament that contains Christ's true Body and Blood under the appearance of bread and wine. Christ becomes present under these forms when a priest offering the Sacrifice of the Mass says:

This is My Body. . . . This is the chalice of My Blood.

For purposes of clarity let us explain a few of the words used in discussing this sacrament. The Holy Eucharist (precious thing) or the Blessed Sacrament is a general term meaning Christ's Body and Blood under form of bread and wine. The Sacrifice of the Mass is a sacred action of worship in which a priest changes ordinary bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ and offers It to God in the name of those attending Church that day. And Holy Communion is the actual receiving of the Body and Blood of Christ under the form of bread.

Catholics are convinced that God is actually and literally present in Holy Communion because of the following Scriptural passage. Observe that the first people who doubted the authenticity of this sacrament were those who had been closest to Christ for two long years — His disciples! To a great multitude one day He addressed a lengthy discourse on the Holy Eucharist. This is a brief segment:

I am the living bread that has come down from heaven. If anyone eat of this bread he shall live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world. The Jews on that account argued with one another saying, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" Jesus therefore said to them, "Amen Amen, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood you shall not have life in you. He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has life everlasting and I will raise him up on the last day. For my



flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me and I in him!"<sup>13</sup>

Now, the reaction of His own followers who had seen Him work miracles and who had eaten and slept with Him constantly for years is startling. They refused to believe!

Many of his disciples when they heard this, said, "This is a hard saying. Who can listen to it?"<sup>14</sup>

But Christ did not water down His teaching for them. He offered no further explanation. He simply pointed out that any man needs the help of God to accept some of the startling truths of supernatural religion.

No one can come to me unless he is enabled to do so by my Father. From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him.<sup>15</sup>

When they left Him, He didn't call them back but instead He turned to the Apostles to see if they likewise wished to leave.

Jesus therefore said to the Twelve, "Do you also wish to go away?"<sup>16</sup>

It was Peter who spoke for them all as he likewise speaks for all Catholics:

Simon Peter therefore answered, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast words of everlasting life, and we have come to believe and to know that thou art the Christ, the Son of God."<sup>17</sup>

It was this illiterate fisherman who first voiced the thoughts of all Catholics on the subject of Holy Communion. The Church is filled with men who wonder just how God can perform such a miracle. Throughout the centuries, brilliant

<sup>13</sup> Jn. 6:52-56.

<sup>15</sup> Jn. 6:66-67.

<sup>17</sup> Jn. 6:69-70.

<sup>14</sup> Jn. 6:61.

<sup>16</sup> Jn. 6:68.

minds have evolved various theoretical explanations. But after all the books have been read and all the theories weighed, today's Catholic turns to his altar and says:

I still don't understand but since you say that you are there, and since you are God, then I, like Peter, believe that you are truly there.

This same philosophy has always been professed by the Church. At the turn of the first century, St. Ignatius, who lived in Antioch, wrote:

Let them (unbelievers) abstain from the Eucharist and prayer, because they do not profess that the Eucharist is the flesh of our Saviour.<sup>18</sup>

Seventy years later, these words of St. Justin were put on paper:

We take this not as ordinary bread or as ordinary drink, but we have been taught that just as Jesus Christ had flesh and blood, so also the food consecrated by the word of prayer coming from Him, is the Flesh and Blood of that Jesus.<sup>19</sup>

The early Church persisted in this same belief throughout its entire history. At the close of the fourth century, St. Ambrose said:

This which we consecrate is the body taken from the Virgin, the true flesh of Christ, which was crucified and buried; therefore it is really the sacrament of that flesh. In this sacrament Christ is present because it is the body of Christ.<sup>20</sup>

The belief of Catholics on this subject can be reduced to this statement:

Somehow, the Body of Christ is actually present in Holy Communion.

<sup>18</sup> St. Ignatius, *Smyrn.* 7.

<sup>19</sup> St. Justin, *Apol.*, 1:66.

<sup>20</sup> St. Ambrose, *De Myst.*, 9.

#### IV. Penance — Confession

Nobody — but *nobody* likes to go to confession! Not any more than they like to go to the dentist. But people do both these things because they have to. Catholics are convinced that God has appointed the confessional to be the means of forgiving their sins, and therefore they are obliged to use it.

##### Psychology of Sin

Before we say a word about the sacrament of penance, let us discuss just why people do sin! In every sin there are two elements, one good and the other evil. These are so united that they cannot be separated and by choosing one you actually take both. It is really only the good element that attracts us, but in pursuing the good we likewise must accept the bad. A man gazes at a poisoned glass of champagne. He is attracted by the bubbling wine, not the lethal potion it contains. But he knows that if he drains the goblet, saying he desires only champagne, he deceives himself for he cannot have one without the other. Similarly in any sin, such as adultery, there is an element of pleasure which is attractive and which obscures the fact that this is a deordination of human nature contrary to God's laws. By choosing that which is good and desirable in adultery, man implicitly chooses that which is bad. If we really did not want to sin, we would forego this pleasure. We would set aside the pursuit of this good for the sake of the pursuit of a greater good — God! Catholics are taught that sin has two faces of which we usually see only one. They strive to look deeply into the things they do to see if a thin veneer of pleasure and earthly happiness covers an insult to God and a misuse of any of the great gifts He has given man.

##### Process of Sin

There are three steps that must be taken before a man is held responsible by God for offending Him:

- a) *Temptation*: a sinful act appears before the mind of a man.
- b) *Consideration*: a man judges the action and realizes its wrongness. This can occur in a split second.
- c) *Decision*: this is the act of the man's will by which he decides to perform the evil act or abstain from it. Man never commits a sin until he reaches this stage. For sin is an act of a man's will freely deciding to do what his mind tells him is morally wrong. And conscience is actually nothing but a man's mind making a judgment about the right or wrongness of an action.

#### **Confession Is Natural**

Anyone who has observed the habits of mankind knows that we have a tendency to make mistakes. When a man dines he wears a napkin across his lap lest some error of judgment would deposit food on his clean suit. If he buys a lead pencil, he finds an eraser attached to one end. We hope that he will never have to use either napkin or eraser, but we know that he most probably will.

Likewise in his spiritual existence, God hopes for the best from all men, but He has prepared for the worst! He has established a spiritual eraser — the sacrament of penance. It was a few days after His Resurrection from the dead that Jesus came and stood in the midst of His Apostles and said to them:

Peace be to you. As the Father has sent Me, I also send you. When He had said this He breathed upon them and said to them: Receive the Holy Spirit; whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven them, and whose sins you shall retain they are retained.<sup>21</sup>

From these words, Catholics are convinced Christ gave to

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<sup>21</sup> Jn. 20:19.

the Apostles the power to forgive sins. And not only this, but he also gave them the power to judge whether or not our sins should be forgiven! "Whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven them, and whose sins you shall retain they are retained," were His words. But how could the Apostles be expected to decide whether a person should be forgiven unless they heard what the sinner had done and if he intended to try to improve? The Catholic accepts the confessional as being the place where this decision is made. It is Christ's own law court where crimes are heard and forgiven.

Those who belonged to the early Christian Church felt the same way about it. In the year A.D. 90 Christians read these words:

Thou shalt confess thy sins in the Church nor shalt thou approach prayer in a bad conscience.<sup>22</sup>

And,

When you come together on the Lord's Day, break bread and make the Eucharist after you have confessed your sins, that your sacrifice may be clean.<sup>23</sup>

One hundred years later, Tertullian wrote:

For confession is to be sorry and to weep, to come to the priests and to kneel before them.<sup>24</sup>

At almost the same time in another part of civilization St. Cyprian was saying:

I entreat you brethren that each one should confess his own sin while he is still in this world, while his confession may be received, while his satisfaction and the absolution given by the priest are still pleasing to the Lord.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>22</sup> *Didache*, 4:14.

<sup>24</sup> Tertullian, *Poen.*, 9.

<sup>23</sup> *Didache*, 14:1.

<sup>25</sup> St. Cyprian, *Laps.*, 28:29.

There are many whom Confession confuses. It is their impression that Catholics believe that men have the power to forgive sins. This is not true! Sin is an offense against God not man. Only the one offended, God, can forgive sins. The priest in his confessional only acts as an instrument of Christ. God forgives through the priest just as I can talk to a far distant place through the assistance of a telephone. I don't speak to a telephone but through a telephone. In the history of the Church, this point has been explained hundreds of times but never better than in the fourth century phraseology of St. Pacian:

You may say that only God can forgive sins. That is true. But what He does through His priests is also by His power. Or could only the Apostles do this? If so, then only His Apostles could baptize, only they give the Holy Spirit, only they cleanse the sins of nations. But if the power of washing (Baptism) and of chrism (Confirmation) descended to the bishops from them, then also the power of binding and loosing.<sup>26</sup>

Yet the confessional is not to be regarded as a supernatural washing machine which washes away a man's sins automatically. Penance requires the co-operation of the sinner in these two ways:

- a) He must sincerely regret having offended God;
- b) He must make a firm resolution to avoid the repetition of the same sins.

Therefore, this sacrament does not give a man a license to sin and say to each penitent, "come back as soon as you get dirty again." It demands a sincere effort to change one's life. This effort may possibly result in a failure, but it must be exerted. Otherwise the all-knowing God to whom we have con-

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<sup>26</sup> St. Pacian, *Ep.* 1.

fessed will recognize our insincerity and not forgive our sins even though we have confessed them. It is possible for a penitent to perpetrate a hoax upon an earthly confessor but not upon his omnipotent Creator.

### V. The Sacrament of the Sick — Extreme Unction

This ceremony is used by the Church for persons who are seriously ill. Its purpose is to give spiritual strength by forgiving any improperly confessed sins, mental comfort by its beautiful prayers, and sometimes even a return of physical well-being. The priest anoints the various senses of the body with holy oil saying:

Through this holy anointing and His tender Mercy, may God forgive you whatever sins you have committed by sight, hearing, smell, speech and action.

In doing this, Catholics follow the practice of the Apostles who said:

Is anyone sick among you? Then 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 will raise him up, and if he be in sins they shall be forgiven them.<sup>27</sup>

Often this sacrament is referred to as "Last Rites." This gives one the impression that it is designed to help only those who are on their deathbeds. This is wrong. This Sacrament of the Sick was instituted to assist not only those who are dying but all those whose illness places them in danger of death. One should not wait till the last moment of life to call the priest for a Catholic. Nor should a Catholic conclude that he is dying if a priest offers this sacrament to him. It is intended to lighten the burden of illness.

<sup>27</sup> James 5:14.

This sacrament can be administered even to those who are apparently dead. Medical authorities do not believe that the soul leaves the body *immediately* after breathing or heartbeat ceases. It is commonly thought that the soul remains from one to four hours after this moment. It is possible for such a person to receive the effects of this sacrament even though pronounced dead. A priest should be called to attend any Catholic who dies suddenly. Of course the reception of this rite under such conditions does not guarantee the rewards of heaven for the deceased party. The effects of the sacrament are always limited by the mental and spiritual dispositions of the recipient. But it is not for us to judge whether or not such a party should be attended by the clergy. The Catholic allows God and God alone to pronounce eternal sentence upon the worst or best of humanity.

## VI. Holy Orders — The Priesthood

Catholics think that God gave certain powers to His Apostles, and they in turn transmitted them to other men. These powers are the ability to offer the Sacrifice of the Mass and to administer the various sacraments. The faculty to perform these actions validly is conferred through the reception of a definite visible sign called the sacrament of holy orders. One who receives this sacrament and these powers is called a priest. That Christ instituted this sacrament is shown by His words:

I will give thee the keys to the kingdom of Heaven; and whatever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.<sup>28</sup>

The Apostles used this sacrament immediately when they ordained Matthias to replace Judas Iscariot,

<sup>28</sup> Mt. 16:19.



to take the place in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas fell away . . . and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.<sup>29</sup>

And they continued this same practice;

And when they had ordained to them priests in every church, they commended them to the Lord in whom they believed.<sup>30</sup>

St. Paul likewise used this sacrament:

For this cause I left thee in Crete that thou shouldst set in order the things that are wanting, and should ordain priests in every city as also I appointed thee.<sup>31</sup>

The early church followed the same practice. St. Ignatius of Antioch wrote a few years before he died in A.D. 107:

The sacred functions should be performed by the bishop presiding in the place of God, and the priests taking the place of the Apostolic Senate.<sup>32</sup>

St. Clement of Alexandria who was a contemporary of the Apostles and who is mentioned in the New Testament<sup>33</sup> said:

The Apostles therefore constituted them, and thence made a disposition that when they died, other approved men should receive their ministry. Therefore those who were constituted by them or later by other chosen men with the whole church consenting, we should not relieve of their functions.<sup>34</sup>

Today's Catholic believes that his priest exercises the same sacramental functions as were performed by the Apostles. Since he receives his spiritual life from them he looks upon priests as being his spiritual parents and gives them the title of "Father." And the priest abandons everything to serve his

<sup>29</sup> Acts 13:2.

<sup>30</sup> Acts 14:22.

<sup>31</sup> *Epistle to Titus*, 1:5.

<sup>32</sup> St. Ignatius, *Magnes.*, 6.

<sup>33</sup> *Epistle to the Phillipians*, 4:3.

<sup>34</sup> St. Clement, *I. Ep. Cor.*, 42.

people. He does not marry, not because of any Biblical injunction but because he is free then to devote his entire attention to his work. He abandons that which is beautiful to give an example of self-denial to those whom he must lead. In his ears there ring the words of Jesus:

Everyone who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands for my name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold and shall possess life everlasting.<sup>85</sup>

### VII. Matrimony

Since matrimony is so important to those who read this booklet, we will not treat it here in any brief fashion. Instead, we shall devote the next two chapters to its explanation.

### THE HOLY SACRIFICE OF THE MASS

All of the sacraments are a part of Catholic life but the ceremony most often employed by Catholics is not a sacrament at all. This daily Church service is called the Mass. This name, "Mass," is really a nickname taken from the Latin phrase, "*Ite, Missa Est*" (*missa* means dismissal). It is more correctly called "The Holy Sacrifice." It is the re-presentation of the essential act of Christ's offering His life on Calvary for mankind. Its purpose is to apply the spiritual benefits of the cross to every man of all time. It is not a multiplication of different sacrifices but the renewal at different times and in different places of the one Sacrifice on Golgotha.

The Mass is somewhat similar to the great ocean waves that crash incessantly upon our Atlantic beaches. A man standing upon the shore looks out to sea and watches a wave a half mile distant rise into view for a moment and then vanish. It appears again and disappears ten yards closer to him. And

<sup>85</sup> Mt. 19:27.

again and again it comes into view until it hurls itself upon the sand at his feet. For all that distance, for all those appearances, it has been the same wave. Not one hundred similar but different waves, but the same one appearing over and over again in different parts of the sea. It is the same with the Sacrifice of the Mass. Christ upon the cross accepted death by execution in payment for the sins of mankind. Since that moment, that one act of acceptance of death has been brought back into the passing days and hours of the great river of time. That same identical act of God has been brought into each epoch of the history of man. The Mass is not a multiplication of acts, but one action frozen in eternity and liberated into the stream of time each time it is offered. What Catholics witness in their parish churches they believe was offered by Peter and Paul — by Augustine and Aquinas. It was offered by Martin Luther and witnessed by Henry VIII. It is the same identical action of Jesus Christ brought to the lives and times of all men. This is why Catholics show it such deep reverence. This is why it is the central act of our religious experience. The important part of the Sunday service is not the sermon, nor the singing, but the Mass.

Catholics believe that this Sacrifice was first offered at the Last Supper in Jerusalem the night before Christ was crucified. At this time, God drew up the essential structure of the Mass that we offer today. There are three intrinsic elements:

- a) The *Ofertory*: "Jesus took bread and blessed and broke . . ." "and taking a cup he gave thanks . . ."
- b) The *Consecration*: "This is my Body . . ." "This is my Blood of the new covenant which is being shed for many unto the forgiveness of sin . . ."
- c) The *Communion*: "He gave it to his disciples . . ."<sup>36</sup>

<sup>36</sup> Mt. 26:26.

Then He told those who were with Him at table to remember Him always by performing this Sacrifice again and again:

Do this in commemoration of me.<sup>37</sup>

Of course the Mass today seems much more complicated than the simple structure of the Last Supper. This is due to the multitude of ceremonies and prayers which have been added over the centuries to increase the beauty and the solemnity of the Sacrifice.

In one sense, everyone who attends the service draws benefit from the Mass. They not only witness this great act of almighty God but they are able to draw spiritual help from it. But each Mass can be offered for, or directed to the benefit of, any one particular person or group of persons either living or dead. The connection of the living with the deceased is not severed by a grave. We can still aid those we love with our prayers, our sacrifices, and our Mass. Bringing a Mass card to a wake is far more beneficial to the deceased than sending a bouquet of flowers.

As a remembrance of His life, Christ might have left us a great monument, or a picture, or work of sculpture, or even some sort of a passion play. Instead, Catholics are happy to believe that He left this Sacrifice, which is a part of Himself. Through their participation in the Mass, Catholics will be "with Him and in Him" so long as they are kept from Him in this alien land we call the world.

## CONCLUSION

You may have heard the story of the snippy moppet who was reproved by her mother for saying her night prayers inaudibly. "After all," the child retorted, "I don't see why you

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<sup>37</sup> Lk. 22:20.

are complaining. I wasn't talking to you!" This is rather blunt expression of an answer the Church gives to those who criticize her use of Latin, ancient vestments, and intricate ceremonials. Basically, she does such things to please God. Her services are designed as a gift to the Deity, not as entertainment for mankind. Anyone who is seriously interested will give some study to these services and will find them rich in beauty and deep in significance. One will find that repetition of bare and plain religious services makes for routine and monotony. But participating in the more involved ceremonials of Catholicism again and again only reveals more and more of their almost inexhaustible meaning and beauty. Neither Bach nor El Greco nor the liturgy of the Mass appeals to the superficial. Effort and time are required to appreciate lovely things whether at a concert hall, the museum, or the church. Do not let the intricacies of Catholic devotion dismay you. Whatever effort you make to understand them will be rewarded proportionately with an understanding of their true form and beauty.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### *When a Catholic Marries*



#### **MARRIAGE BELONGS TO MANKIND**

For the man who falls from the top of the Empire State Building, there is no turning back. It makes no difference whether he slipped or jumped into space. Once he has left the observation platform behind, he cannot return. Although some may consider this comparison odious, the same thing is true of marriage. Once we embark upon marital life, there is no return. It seems appropriate to recall that old vaudeville joke about the man who mistook an open elevator shaft for a staircase. As he was removed from the basement battered

and bruised, he was heard to remark: "There's not much traffic on them stairs, but watch out for that first step. It's a big one."

The basic Catholic philosophy on marriage may be summed up in this fashion: Any being gifted with reason and free will may be properly married. Thus, the Church accepts not only the marriages of her own members but also the valid and proper unions of any two people regardless of their religious affiliations. But once any man marries, the Church feels that he has entered what is ordinarily a lifelong contract. The corollary of this principle is a firm and resolute denial of the validity of divorces granted by the civil law of our country.

### DIVORCE

Ask any newly married couple as they turn from the minister, justice, or rabbi, just how long they intend to stay married? A year? Ten years? Twenty? Unanimously, they will state that they have taken each other until God may separate them. Thus, we have witnessed the public and solemn contract of two adult free agents mutually exchanging the rights and privileges of marriage as long as they both shall live. It is completely illogical for these same adults to say at a later date, ten years, ten months, or ten weeks later, "We aren't married any longer." It would not be illogical for them to say, "We don't wish to be married any longer," but wishes and facts are often contradictory. I may often wish I had a million dollars but wishing doesn't fill my bank account. The fact is that I don't have much wealth, and regardless of the wishes of a married couple the fact is that they have married for life.

Catholics believe that when two people marry properly, a relationship springs up between them somewhat akin to the relationship between a mother and her son. Imagine how

ridiculous it would be for a man to appear in a court of law and plead: "Judge, I no longer like my mother. She drinks. She is abusive. She squanders my money. Therefore I want to break this tie between us. Please declare to the world that she is no longer my mother." The court would probably hold such a plaintiff for psychiatric examination! But suppose this did not happen. Suppose the judge gravely prepared a formidable legal document and armed it with a heavy seal of red wax to announce to all society that he had dissolved the bond between a mother and her son! I am certain that many voices should be raised in anger, for humanity knows that no judge, no court, no legislature can sever this relationship. And humanity should be likewise informed that there is no civil power that can dissolve the bond between two properly married people. If we accept the meaning of divorce to be the dissolution of marriage with permission to enter a consequent marriage, then Catholics say there is no such thing. There are millions of men and women today who are caught in a web of wishful thinking. They have divorced themselves not from their spouses but from reality. Their attitude is:

"So long as I think I am divorced, I am."

Of course, the judgment of modern man has been clouded by the careless logic of his predecessors. His is a world of confusion and God will judge him accordingly. But the fact remains that no civil power can dissolve the proper marriage. This is not the man-made teaching of a man-made church. These are the words that God gave to a God-made Church for preservation and propagation:

Some of the Pharisees asked Him: "Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for any cause?" He answered, "Have you not read that the Creator from the beginning made them male and female and said: For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife, and the two



shall become one flesh? What therefore God has joined together let not man put asunder."<sup>1</sup>

This is not the teaching of one of the popes, but the words of God Himself which bind all men regardless of their creed.

A few hundred years ago, it was impossible for anyone to get a divorce anywhere. Church and State both agreed that the marriage contract was unassailable. But representations were made to civil law-making bodies that divorce be allowed only for the most serious of reasons. At that time, the State rather reluctantly agreed to grant divorces for adultery. After a number of years, it was pointed out that other reasons were also as serious as infidelity and thus divorce was allowed for physical cruelty. Later, there were added to the list desertion and nonsupport, mental cruelty and incompatibility. Nowadays, we can change our marriage partners almost as quickly as we can change our minds.

Now, although civil law today accepts the validity of divorce, the Church refuses to change the words of the Gospel and attempts to protect the sanctity of matrimony with a set of laws. In this she is something like the suburbanite whose prize possession is his front lawn. It is a thing of beauty — this carpet of grass, looking much like a piece of green velvet. But since it is bordered by a busy sidewalk, he protects it with a low wire fence. Occasionally, a pedestrian barks his shin against a fence post or tears a stocking on the wire. At such times, the homeowner rushes out to apologize and sympathize. He tries to make the injured one comfortable, but notice, he refuses to take down the fence. This protection remains! For he knows that the beauty of the lawn which is enjoyed by the entire neighborhood, would be soon disfigured by the feet of the careless public. Thus, with the beautiful institution

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<sup>1</sup> Mt. 19:3.

of matrimony. Unless it is protected by inexorable law it will be misused and disfigured by the human race. When it happens that a marital shipwreck occurs, the Church is quick to offer advice or sympathy, but she will never repeal the divine laws that protect marriage. First, she cannot, because this a law of God and not of man. Second, she will not, for without protective laws, men will trample marriage into an instrument of material pleasure. The Church will always carry out God's express wish:

What therefore God has joined together, let not man put asunder.<sup>2</sup>

### ANNULMENTS

Frequently, men define annulments as "Catholic divorces." This is incorrect. The difference between a divorce and a marriage declared null by the Church is the difference between a genuine and a counterfeit dollar bill. The good money is still worth one dollar even if it is torn in half. But the counterfeit is worth nothing whether it exists as a whole or has been torn into pieces. It is worthless because it never has been the briefest moment been a piece of genuine currency. Thus, in the case of marriage, a declaration of nullity is not the dissolution of the bond of marriage but a proclamation that this bond has never existed. It is the announcement that this contract from the moment of its supposed inception has been counterfeit. The two participants are declared not to be husband and wife any more because they never were husband and wife in the past.

Such decrees of nullity are awarded only when ample and substantial evidence may be offered to Church authorities show-

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<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

ing a flaw in the formation of the marriage contract. Grounds for such action might include:

1. *Previous Marriage.* A person who has been properly married cannot remarry during his consort's lifetime even though they may have obtained a civil divorce. This binds all men regardless of their religious belief. By way of example: Mary Smith wants to be married but she has been married to John Jones and is now divorced. However, it is established that John Jones has been previously married to Cora Brown. Certificates of marriage, divorce, and other documents prove that the wedding of John and Cora was valid and binding. Even though John had obtained a civil divorce he was not free to marry. Therefore, his subsequent marriage to Mary Smith is invalid and thus she is free to enter a proper marriage. The union is declared to be nonexistent because of a "*ligamen*" or tie of a previous marriage. No one should conclude that since the Church allows a second marriage in such a case that we approve of such actions. We are asked to judge here whether a contract was correctly carried out. We are not asked either to justify or condemn the petition. Such cases are decided completely on their legal merits and not on the moral qualities of the people involved.

2. *Improper Form.* For Catholics, marriage is one of the seven sacraments. It is not surprising to learn that Catholics are expected to receive this sacrament from one of their priests or else they are not considered married. Catholics do not receive the sacrament of baptism in a judge's chamber, nor Confirmation from a Justice of the Peace. They do not accept the sacrament of penance from the captain of a steamship nor Extreme Unction from the mayor of their city. For all these things they turn to their priests, and unless they have received them from a priest we do not think they have received them. And since marriage is likewise one of these seven

sacraments we do not consider it proper that a Catholic marry except in the presence of a Catholic priest. The Church respects the authority of judges, mayors, captains, and justices to witness the marriages of citizens but denies that they can represent the Catholic Church in its work of distributing the various sacraments. This is an example of a case that occurs with some frequency: Mary Smith wants to be married, but she has already been married to and divorced from John Jones. However, it can be proved by ample documentary evidence that she had been a practicing Catholic and that her marriage was not witnessed by any representative of the Church. Therefore, her marriage is declared counterfeit because it was not presided over by one who could witness properly the transmission of a sacrament of the Catholic Church.

3. *Force or Fear*. Marriage is invalid if it was entered into through force or grave fear unjustly inspired by some external agent. Consequently, a party is compelled to choose marriage in order to escape this fear. No other fear affects the validity of the contract even if it furnish the cause for marriage.

4. *Impotence*. As would be expected, if such a condition existed before the marriage ceremony, the person concerned would not be adjudged capable of entering the contract.

5. *Permanency*. If it can be proved adequately that one or both of the parties did not intend a permanent union at the time of the ceremony, then these people did not enter a true contract of marriage.

6. There are a number of other elements entering into the essential nature of marriage but they are of a technical nature and their explanation would be lengthy and confusing. One may assume that they are present in the average marriage ceremony. In case of doubt a priest in a local parish can explain them to you.

### NOT FOR SALE!

In some quarters, it is widely believed that annulments are bought and sold. If you are rich enough, it is thought you can always get an annulment. This is simply untrue! Either you have a good legal case, or you are wasting your time. Money doesn't enter into it at all. Several hundred years ago the biggest bribe in the history of the world was offered to the Church for an annulment. It was King Henry VIII who made the offer. His bargain was: one marriage declared invalid in exchange for millions, not of dollars, but of people. Unless Pope Clement VII would give it to him, Henry threatened to take all of the Catholics in his realm from the Church and start his own independent religious belief. This greatest of all bribes was refused and millions were lost to Catholicism — all because no man can buy an annulment!

### PRIVATE. KEEP OUT!

As you have observed, some of the grounds for declarations of nullity concern very personal and private matters (for example, impotence). Naturally, a couple who are separated for this reason do not wish to discuss the matter with anyone. The Church respects their desire for secrecy and makes no public utterance concerning them. But often friends cause embarrassment by their well-intentioned probing of the cause of the difficulty. Unfortunately, the badgered couple sometimes make up an explanation rather than air their intimate and personal problem. This leads to the belief that there are all kinds of simple reasons for an annulment. The best information on this subject can be obtained from the official representatives of the Church. If you wish to further your knowledge of this topic, we suggest that you consult some Catholic priest.

### SEPARATION

Although Catholicism is irrevocably opposed to divorce, we do recognize the fact that certain marital situations may arise that render marriage intolerable. Although it is impossible for the unfortunate couple to obtain a divorce, they are allowed to separate. But, they remain married to each other. The obligation of support still rests upon the husband, but the couple are permitted to take up separate residences.

Separation is a very important decision to make. Very often the embattled marriage partners are too close to the source of their trouble for them to recognize it. Therefore, the Church insists that such an estranged couple seek the advice of a priest before entering a civil court. This priest will perform the duties of a marriage counselor. He will use all manner of persuasive means to effect a reconciliation. His efforts may continue over a period of months. Finally, if all attempts fail, permission will be given to separate. This is in no sense to be construed as permission to remarry. Only God can dissolve this union which will endure until death.

But what of those who knowingly ignore all of this procedure and enter civil courts without consulting the Church? Individuals who institute such actions are not allowed to receive Confession or Holy Communion until they have a conference with proper ecclesiastical authorities and receive their approval.

Those who are married by a Catholic priest are reminded of the sacredness and indissolubility of the bond of matrimony by the words which he addresses to them at the beginning of the ceremony.

Dear friends in Christ: As you know, you are about to enter a union which is most sacred and most serious, a union which was established by God Himself. By it, He gave to man a share in the greatest work of creation, the work of

the continuation of the human race. And in this way He sanctified human love and enabled man and woman to help each other live as children of God, by sharing a common life under His fatherly care.

Because God Himself is thus its author, marriage is of its very nature a holy institution, requiring of those who enter into it a complete and unreserved giving of self. But Christ our Lord added to the holiness of marriage an even deeper meaning and a higher beauty. He referred to the love of marriage to describe His own love for His Church, that is, for the people of God whom He redeemed by His own blood. And so He gave to Christians a new vision of what married life ought to be, a life of self-sacrificing love like His own. It is for this reason that His Apostle, St. Paul, clearly states that marriage is now and for all time to be considered a great mystery, intimately bound up with the supernatural union of Christ and the Church, which union is also to be its pattern.

This union then is most serious, because it will bind you together for life in a relationship so close and so intimate, that it will profoundly influence your whole future. That future, with its hopes and disappointments, its successes and its failures, its pleasures and its pains, its joys and its sorrows, is hidden from your eyes. You know that these elements are mingled in every life, and are to be expected in your own. And so not knowing what is before you, you take each other for better or for worse, for richer or for poorer, in sickness and in health, until death.

Truly, then, these words are most serious. It is a beautiful tribute to your undoubted faith in each other, that recognizing their full import, you are nevertheless so ready and willing to pronounce them. And because these words involve such solemn obligations, it is most fitting that you rest the security of your wedded life upon the great principle of self-sacrifice. And so you begin your married life by the voluntary and complete surrender of your individual lives in the interest of that deeper and wider life you are to have in common. Henceforth you will belong entirely to each other; you will be one in mind, one in heart, and one in affections. And whatever sacrifices

you may hereafter be required to make to preserve this common life, always make them generously. Sacrifice is usually difficult and irksome. Only love can make it easy; and perfect love can make it a joy. We are willing to give in proportion as we love. And when love is perfect the sacrifice is complete. God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son; and the Son so loved us that He gave Himself for our salvation. "Greater love than this no man hath that a man lay down his life for his friends."

No greater blessing can come to your married life — pure conjugal love, loyal and true to the end. May then this love with which you join your hands and hearts today never fail, but grow deeper and stronger as the years go on. And if true love and the unselfish spirit of perfect sacrifice guide your every action, you can expect the greatest measure of earthly happiness that may be allotted to man in this vale of tears. The rest is in the hands of God. Nor will God be wanting to your needs; He will pledge you the lifelong support of His graces in the holy sacrament which you are now going to receive.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Marriage Ritual used in Catholic churches.



CHAPTER FIVE

*What a Catholic Wishes To Avoid  
in Marriage*

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Tall stories are not the exclusive property of Texans. Men have enjoyed stretching the truth at least as long as they have been able to write. One of the earliest prototypes of Paul Bunyan was a character of Greek mythology named Cyclops. He was a tremendous giant employed in Vulcan's blacksmith shop to forge thunderbolts for Zeus to hurl down from the heavens at the mortals who might defy him. He was a being of gigantic size and immeasurable strength. He was gifted

with acute senses. And his only defect was that he had but one eye placed squarely in the midst of his forehead. This weakness was fatal. For he was brought to his knees by one far smaller in stature than he who was clever enough to deprive him of his eyesight. Thus being blinded, his great strength was useless.

In a way, modern man is an image of Cyclops. For though he possesses two eyes and two ears, he has only one intellect. It is this mind of his that gives man the power to look deep into things and understand them. And yet today millions of men have suffered a cyclopean wound. Their mind's eye is blinded. They are deprived of the vision that their intellect should give them.

Tiny objects can deprive us of sight. A cinder or a cataract are infinitesimal but nonetheless they can blind us. And there are things less substantial than these which can darken the light of the mind. A strong emotion has this ability. Quite commonly men are blinded by anger, love, or desire. The company of those blinded by desire is perhaps the largest in world history. Among its membership are such men as Adolf Hitler, Joseph Stalin, and Benito Mussolini. Now, these three men were not the incarnate devils that the cartoonists of the past decade pictured them. They were men of at least ordinary intelligence who were blinded with their desire for power. Desire of wealth can lead men to steal. Desire for liquor can cause drunkenness. Desire for property can bring men to murder. Whenever men are ruled by their desires they become something less than men. Animals have no higher faculties than their desires. But men have within them the spark of divinity — the ability to think and will. The more a man is influenced by his thoughts, the more a man is he. Now, marriage has been made for man not for animals, and when men forget this the slow cancer of unhappiness threatens their lives.

One of the most prominent signs that man has forgotten his nature is the practice of artificial birth control. Everyone knows that Catholics aren't supposed to use birth prevention devices, but few realize that this applies likewise to the rest of the world. Catholics are not the only ones forbidden to steal or murder. No one should do these things. They are not "Catholic Sins" any more than is artificial birth prevention.

Before we go much farther, let us point this out. There is nothing wrong with birth control! The word "control" implies the correct use of mind and will. It implies that a man acts like a man and not as a blind animal force. The Church favors such control! She encourages men to practice control of their lives, of their faculties, and of their desires. But a further question is just how this control is to be achieved. A man has a right and duty to clothe and feed his family. Suppose he chooses a career of armed robbery to accomplish this end. Certainly the Church would try to dissuade him from adopting such a means of livelihood. But it would be the means that she would criticize, and not the purpose for which he steals. Likewise, with birth prevention by artificial means, she criticizes the measures adopted, not the policy of control of marital relations. The Church has never commanded her members to have two, twelve, or twenty children. The size of a family is something to be determined by husband and wife, not by pastor or bishop. But what the Church says is this: It is improper to use the human faculty of procreation and then deliberately exclude and frustrate its natural purposes by some artificial means. There are three reasons for this condemnation:

### I. Reason Tells Us That This Is Wrong

Nothing that exists in this world is evil. Everything is good. The use of things is not wrong, but the *misuse* of things is.

A Cadillac in itself is good. But if I drive it at top speed through a crowded street and bring injury and death to several bystanders, my actions are evil. The auto is still good, but I have misused it. Or, if I employ a shotgun to shoot not pigeons but people, then the misuse of this weapon is something evil.

Of course, we cannot determine if a thing is misused unless we know its correct use. This is true of the smallest atom and the largest skyscraper. They all have a proper purpose and a correct usage. Our eyes, our ears, and our voices all are designed for definite purposes. When we frustrate these purposes, we do wrong. For instance, our voices have been given us that we might communicate honestly and truthfully what we are thinking. Every time we read a paper or listen to a news analyst, we accept this principle. We trust men to tell us what they think is true. But when we tell a deliberate lie, then we consciously frustrate the purpose for which the power of speech was given us. We have misused this tremendous faculty; we have thereby done wrong.

Paramount among the wonderful activities man is capable of is procreation. Besides the powers to think and will which are replicas of God's faculties, He has given man the ability to co-operate with Him in creating new life. These generative powers are given to all normal men and women for the purpose of perpetuating the human race. It is axiomatic that those who bring such life into existence should assume responsibility for it. And since this obligation is not a light one, mankind must be encouraged to assume it and be rewarded for doing so.

Thus God has attached to this faculty a deep and instinctive drive and a unique physical pleasure. These things are normal and good. There is nothing evil or warped about sex instinct or pleasure. Only their misuse is wrong. Did you ever start to cross a street, then barely see the flicker of an approaching

vehicle and find that you have automatically, without thinking at all, jumped back to the safety of the curbstone? If you have had this experience, then you witnessed the subconscious drive all men have of self-preservation. Equal to this in unrelenting intensity is the drive for self-perpetuation, more popularly identified as the sex instinct. This leads mankind to discount the burdens of parenthood and to co-operate again and again with God in bringing human life to exist for all eternity. Besides this, parents experience a unique reward called sexual pleasure. These feelings are attached to the use of the generative faculty. And although all of our senses bring us pleasure, they do not match in any way the sensations evoked by the use of the creative faculty. This is proportionate because none of the others involve us in such tremendous responsibilities. Thus instinct and pleasure co-operate to encourage men to use their generative powers. But observe, the purpose of these faculties is the production of new life, not pleasure. Therefore, when a man deliberately excludes the proper purpose and makes this godlike act of procreation an act of mere pleasure, he does wrong.

Among the sins of man there is no parallel of this. A crime it approximates is an opprobrious custom of the ancient past. In the days when Roman culture had flowered and then began to decay the aristocracy built huge and lovely villas in renowned spas such as Pompeii. There they lived in over-nourished luxury. It was then that the practice of all night dinner parties began, made up of twenty or thirty of the richest courses imaginable. And since the human body could not consume such quantity and variety of food, the guests would occasionally retire to a room adjacent to the dining area where they would regurgitate and then return to continue feasting. Such a practice appalls the modern man whose acts

parallel the sins of the Romans when he practices artificial birth prevention to enjoy the pleasures of marriage while excluding its proper purpose.

Do not misunderstand! The Church does not say that those who practice planned parenthood today are degenerate. She does not say that they are decadent. But she does say that the two actions are equivalent and that people today can be excused only because they lack the proper information or have not thought deeply on the question. Reason, if correctly employed, should tell all men that this practice is morally wrong.

## II. The Bible Tells Us That It Is Wrong

Most Christians today believe in Holy Scripture. Some believe it to be the inspired Word of God, as do Catholics. Others at least admit it to be a collection of profound truths of dubious authorship. But most Christians believe that the statements of the Bible are true.

In the very first book of Holy Writ we find a passage which deals clearly and specifically with this practice. In the Book of Genesis, we can read the tragic story of Onan. In the early days of history, the Jews were a nomadic group with no fixed land to call their own. One of their sociological problems was the care of widows and orphans. In their primitive society, there was no employment suitable for women who had lost their husbands. Therefore, a law was passed requiring the deceased's brother to marry the widow and care for her and her children. This misfortune befell Onan, and it is recounted that as a result of his dissatisfaction with this regulation he proceeded to practice artificial birth prevention with his new wife. The very next verse of Holy Scripture recounts: "Therefore the Lord slew him because he did a detestable thing."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Gen. 38:10.

Notice the two points of this citation:

- a) God *detests* this practice. In other words, He regards it as sinful.
- b) He detests it to such an extent that He *slew* Onan in punishment. Therefore, this practice cannot be regarded as something merely mischievous or naughty, but as something which is very seriously wrong. Catholics call it mortal sin.

This is not the only mention of artificial birth prevention in the Bible, for the Book of Tobias and certain of the Pauline Epistles<sup>2</sup> abound in instructions on the nature of marriage. However, if you are one who accepts the truth of the biblical quotations the story of Onan should be sufficient.<sup>3</sup>

### III. The Church Says It Is Seriously Wrong

A clergyman is as prone to error as the butcher, the baker, or the candlestick maker. Even when said clergyman is a priest, bishop, or even pope, he can still blunder. But the first chapter of this booklet mentioned that there was a percentage of religious teaching that was guaranteed to be true by no less an authority than God Himself, acting through His own institution of which He has said: "He who hears you, hears me."<sup>4</sup> In twenty centuries, this organization has occasionally made public and official statements and given the world assurance that they were true. Among these infallible statements is listed the condemnation of artificial birth control as being a serious sin. There is as much possibility that ecclesiastical teaching

<sup>2</sup> Tob. 6:16; Rom. 1:26.

<sup>3</sup> St. Augustine writes: "Marital relations even with a lawful wife, are unlawful and degrading when the conception of a child is deliberately frustrated. This was the sin of Onan, and God struck him dead because of it" (*De Adulterio*, 2:12).

<sup>4</sup> Lk. 10:6.

on this subject will change as there is that the Church's opposition to murder will change. Birth prevention has always been practiced; it has always been wrong. Possibly it always will be practiced, and if so, it always will be wrong!

### WHY?

There are various reasons why people indulge in this practice. Let us enumerate three classes:

- a) Those Who Are Selfish. There are married folk who prefer a new Frigidaire or Ford to a filled bassinet. There are wives who fear to lose their figures. There are couples who treasure their adult privacy overmuch. Of course, people who have such a warped and dwarfed appreciation of human life should never be allowed to be parents. Their unborn children are fortunate for there is nothing more pitiful than to be an unwanted child. To them we cite the words of our Saviour who spoke thus to those who maltreated children: "It were better for him to have a great millstone hung around his neck, and to be drowned in the depths of the sea."<sup>5</sup>
- b) Those Who Cannot Afford Children. There are several varieties of this excuse.
  1. There are the teen-agers who marry though penniless and unemployed! This should not be allowed to happen. Parents, clergy, and judiciary should close ranks in an attempt to prevent boys and girls from entering marriage without the proper financial resources. The mistake having been made, these same authorities should be just as solicitous and co-operative in providing these couples with temporary subsidies.

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<sup>5</sup> Mt. 18:6.



2. There are those who confuse luxuries and necessities. Some parents feel that their families should be limited to the few whom they can afford to send to college or finishing school. Little do they realize that their children may not wish to attend the schools selected for them. The child that remains unborn might have been the one to treasure and use well the education and physical advantages wasted by the living. Benjamin Franklin was the eighth child of his parents. There were six in the Washington family, and Abraham Lincoln had seven brothers and sisters. The Jeffersons numbered ten, the Madisons twelve, the Longfellows eight, and the Beethovens twelve. There were eight Shakespeares, twelve Tennysons and Scotts, and nine Carlyles. God bestows talent and genius where He wills; it is not arrived at by selective breeding!

3. Those who actually have a serious financial problem. To these the Church will give sympathy, encouragement, and assistance. Sometimes priests are criticized for their interest in trade unionism and collective bargaining. Their policy is founded on the belief that a man cannot live the moral life the Church demands of him unless he receives wages proportionate to his obligations and dignity as the head of a household. Empty bellies make poor Christians. The Church is realistic enough to know that greed and avarice can affect union leaders as well as the rest of mankind. She knows that her concern for her people can be twisted by the unscrupulous. But she will continue to use every possible means to enable parents to afford their families.

Remember the famous fairy tale of Cinderella? In the closing chapter, the Prince comes searching his kingdom for the owner of the dainty glass slipper. He proffers it to

one of the ugly sisters who lives with Cinderella, who in an effort to make her foot fit the shoe, cuts off her toes! This is a dreadful way to acquire footwear of the proper size, but it is rather reminiscent of what occurs each year in many American homes. Because the size of the family won't fit the current budget, the family is pared down a member or two. The Church suggests an alternative solution. Instead of decreasing the family, why can't men increase their budgets? Perhaps this is more difficult than purchasing prophylactics at the corner drugstore, but the Church attempts to give the *correct* solution and not just the easiest one. What is right is very often difficult!

- c) Those Who Are Told That Pregnancy Will Endanger Their Lives. The sympathy and solicitude of the Church is aroused by the plight of these worried husbands and wives. But while she understands the concern of these couples the Church points out that medical opinion is not infallible. We all know of women who have defied their physician's orders and safely raised large families. We do not therefore recommend wholesale rebellion against all medical authority, but merely point out that sometimes a doctor's diagnosis is incorrect and sometimes perhaps God Himself suspends the laws He has made for us. Very great wonders have been worked by the sincere prayers of ordinary husbands and wives.

However, there certainly are some cases when it is not safe for a woman to become a mother. What suggestions does the Church make to a married couple troubled with such a burden? The only remedy that can be suggested to such people is a life of virtuous abstinence. This is impossible except for couples who accept the philosophy that God has made them for eternal

happiness and earthly problems are the price we pay for everlasting felicity. It was impossible for Peter to walk on the waters of the Sea of Galilee until God gave him that ability. God can likewise give married couples the strength to live lives of complete abstinence if such people would devoutly ask it of Him.

### RHYTHM

There is yet another type of birth control to be considered. It is called by various names: the safe period, the Rhythm theory, or the Ogino-Knaus theory. For years the medical profession has known that women were more liable to conceive children at certain periods of the month. But it was only in 1933 that this fact was accurately charted. This achievement was the work of Dr. Kyusaku Ogino of Japan and Dr Hermann Knaus of Austria. Their conclusions were arrived at independently but almost simultaneously. They definitely showed that women have a periodic rhythm of fertility and sterility. Therefore, Rhythm is the abstention from intercourse during periods when a couple think that they may conceive children.

This practice is neither approved nor condemned by the Church. There is no deliberate frustration of our faculties, so it is not evil in itself. But Rhythm can easily be misused. If employed for selfish reasons, it is a sin. If it endangers the fidelity of either marriage partner, it is likewise sinful. But for serious reasons involving health or finances it is allowable. It is suggested that the couple contemplating its use consult with a priest to determine whether they have sufficient cause to employ it. Then the advice of a competent physician should be employed to determine their particular cycle. Finally, it should be remembered that this cycle is frequently disturbed

and is not always reliable. Frequently, wives practicing Rhythm become pregnant.

### A NASTY WORD!

The Church has something further to say about a nasty word and a nasty practice, that of abortion. Technically, this is the deliberate expulsion of an inviable fetus. In other words, an unborn child is purposely brought into the world before it is sufficiently formed to live by itself. It is distinguished from a miscarriage in which there is no intention of this happening but occurs accidentally.

Everyone agrees that criminal abortion is deplorable. This is the expulsion of the inviable child to prevent scandal or embarrassment. It is an illegal practice indulged in by questionable doctors usually under poor medical conditions. The Catholic Church has for centuries deplored sin, but is noted for her love and consideration of sinners. Her agencies are most anxious to provide care for unmarried mothers whenever they can be contacted. Their aim is assistance not judgment, help not criticism. Regardless of its parents, any child has a right to see and hear the things of this world before he departs into eternity.

But there is another type of abortion which society approves and the Church condemns. It is usually called therapeutic because its purpose is medical. It is employed in many hospitals to avoid difficult pregnancies or births. But against such a practice the Church points out that an unborn child is a human being and has a right to live, feel, think, and even vote. An unborn child is not some inferior form of vegetation which adults can brush off their coats as they do dandruff. Such an infant is just as much a human being as is a member of Congress. His rights are equal to ours. If we would live with

our consciences we must recognize these rights to liberty, to the pursuit of happiness, and to life itself.

One of the most widespread canards to blacken the reputation of a public institution is that which says that the Catholic Church would prefer the life on an unborn child to that of its mother. Now this is sheer nonsense! Hollywood may show this happening in one of its "B Budget Movies," but it never happens in the delivery rooms of any Catholic hospital. There is no time during the birth of a child that the obstetrician pulls down the sterile mask from his mouth and says in rolling tones of doom, "We now must choose between the life of Marilyn Monroe and that of her baby." This may happen on celluloid but never in operating rooms. Nor does the Church say that it ever should happen. For, the supposition of this dilemma is the teaching that baptism is necessary to enter heaven. Those not acquainted with hospital practice do not know that children can be baptized even before they are born. Such a procedure is called intra-uterine baptism. Or even if the child were apparently to die in the process of birth it could still receive the effects of baptism even though there was no apparent respiration or heartbeat. Hence, it would be ridiculous to claim that the Church desires the life of an infant more than its mother because an infant needs to be baptized.

All of the teaching of the Catholic Church on Medical Ethics can be boiled down to this: "When a doctor diagnoses the existence of some diseased tissue in a patient's body he may remove it by surgical operation. But the excision of healthy organs for the express purpose of rendering a person sterile, or a direct surgical attack on a living but unborn child is forbidden." This principle is not the sole property of Catholics but is shared by the medical profession. It is a laudable tradition of doctors to look with esteem upon a certain medical authority of centuries past. They make his ideals theirs. All

over the world they accept and honor the Oath of Hippocrates:

I swear by Apollo Physician, by Asclepius, by Health, by Panacea, and by all the gods and goddesses, making them my witnesses, that I will carry out, according to my ability and judgment, this oath and this indenture. . . . I will use treatment to help the sick according to my ability and judgment, but never with a view to injury and wrongdoing. Neither will I administer a poison to anybody when asked to do so, nor will I suggest such a course. Similarly, I will not give to a woman a pessary to cause abortion. But I will keep pure and holy both my life and my art.

Like sterling silver, ideals are prone to tarnish. Contact with society is the atmosphere which inclines to darken the high principles of any man. Even doctors will occasionally forget the wisdom of Hippocrates. In an effort to assist the medical profession to maintain its lofty principles the Church has built many hospitals and staffed them with priests, brothers, and nursing sisters. It is the duty of these religious to alleviate the suffering of the patients and to insure the high moral conduct of the medical staff. Catholics are recommended to attend these hospitals not because they are superior in equipment or skill (although they certainly equal other hospitals in such matters) but because they will receive treatment based upon ancient and morally respectable regulations. They will be treated as children of God, made by Him to live eternally.

### CONCLUSION

The married life that a Catholic wishes to share with you is one that can be observed only by men and women of high character. The love that binds you together must be more than physical attraction or compatibility of temperament. It must be a true love which desires unselfishly to do all manner of good to and for one's spouse. St. Paul speaks of this in

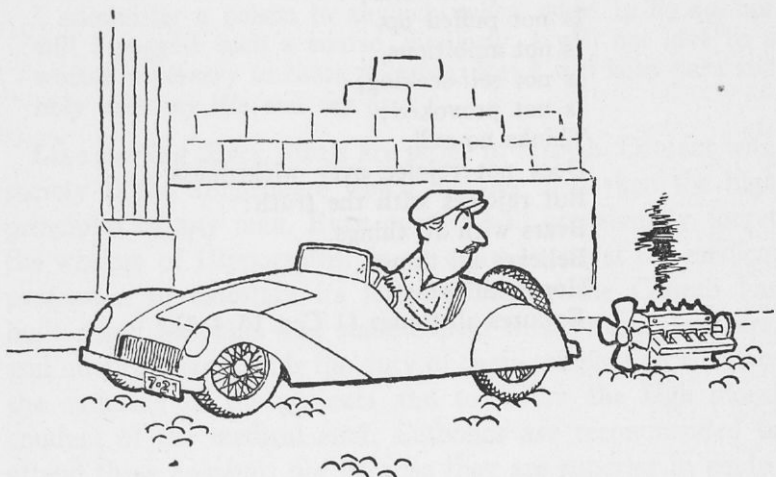
one of his many letters. Those who contemplate marriage should measure their affection for each other with this classic description of love:

Love is patient,  
Is kind;  
Love does not envy;  
Is not pretentious,  
Is not puffed up,  
Is not ambitious,  
Is not self-seeking,  
Is not provoked;  
Thinks no evil,  
Does not rejoice over wickedness,  
But rejoices with the truth:  
Bears with all things,  
Believes all things,  
Hopes all things,  
Endures all things (1 Cor. 13:4-7).

## CHAPTER SIX

### *What a Catholic Must Do*

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#### **WANT TO BE HAPPY?**

Every man who purchases a new car experiences disappointment when he reads the regulations attached to the steering wheel. He is cautioned to drive slowly, to change motor oil frequently, and to bring in the machine for frequent checkups. The new owner may ignore these rules and barrel away from the display room with the speed of a scalded cat. He may tear up the regulations and ignore the checkups. But if he does, he hurts only himself. For these rules were made by those who constructed the car and understand automotive limitations.



Their purpose is to insure the motorist's enjoyment, not to decrease it. A driver who ignores these instructions will enjoy his machine, for a while, but then burned out bearings and scored cylinders will begin to plague him. His pleasure will cease, because he has not obeyed the rules. Rules are made to prolong our happiness, not to destroy it.

The same is true of the rules made by God for the conduct of the human race. Morality is not a series of senseless regulations made by a tyrannical Deity simply to demonstrate His superiority to man. The Creator knows the structural abilities and weaknesses of His creatures. To insure their well-being and happiness he has engraved upon the hearts of all the Ten Commandments. Perhaps they are not always couched in the formal language of the stone tablets given to Moses. But every man from the primitive aborigine of Australia to the erudite don of Oxford knows that it is wrong to murder or steal or blaspheme. We all recognize our obligations to our parents, our country, and our neighbors. We know that we should be honest and truthful. In brief, all men know the gist of the Ten Commandments even though they may break them quite frequently. Catholics are taught that some Commandments are more important than others.

The same is true in civil law. In our city, there is one ordinance forbidding homicide and another forbidding trespassing on the grass of our public parks. No one judges these to be of equal value. One is far more important than the other. So with the Commandments, there is as much difference between criminal abortion and telling a lie as there is between murder and walking on a public flower bed. Sins against the more serious Commandments are known to Catholics as mortal sins. Less important offenses are identified as venial sins. Penalties for sins differ just as penalties for crimes are varied. We are punished more seriously for grand larceny than we

are for violating a no parking zone. The punishment for unrepented mortal sins is the loss of the vision of God for all eternity. Serious sin loses for men the faculty called supernatural life and renders a person incapable of enjoying heaven. Venial sins do not lose this ability for us, do not extinguish sanctifying grace, but they do hinder and impede the spiritual life of the soul. They may be compared to the barnacles that encrust the hull of an ocean-going vessel. Such growths will never sink a steamship but they will keep it from operating properly. Quite possibly this loss of efficiency may contribute to the eventual foundering of the boat. Likewise, although venial sin does not directly cause the loss of supernatural life it may so impede the workings of the soul that it will fall easily into mortal sin. Therefore, the Catholic attempts to rid himself of all sin both mortal and venial through regular reception of the sacraments of penance and Holy Communion.

In general, there is no great difference between the Commandments that Catholics obey and those accepted by the rest of the world. In broad outline, these are the obligations of Catholics:

### THE FIRST COMMANDMENT: WORSHIP OF GOD

**"I am the Lord thy God. Thou shalt not have strange gods before Me."**

**Positive:** Man has the obligation of worshipping God. This means that we must acknowledge God as the Supreme Being, Creator and Father of all on whom everything depends for its existence.

*Types of Worship:* The *whole* man was created by God; therefore the *whole* man must worship Him.

- a) *In Soul:* through prayer which means the directing of our life and activities to God. There are four basic

divisions to this: adoration, thanksgiving, penance, and petition.

- b) *In Body*: through a religious ritual which would include such ceremonies as kneeling, bowing, genuflecting, singing, and the use of materials such as holy water, and blessed palm.
- c) *Privately*: through a man's personal devotions.
- d) *Socially*: because man is naturally a gregarious being he should do all things in company with his neighbors. Therefore, he has the obligation of group prayer together with other members of society.

**Negative:** These practices are forbidden.

1. *False worship*: some men make gods of created things such as money, power, or fame. If this is the sole and supreme concern of their lives, if they neglect God for these things, they are guilty of a form of idolatry.
2. *Superstition*: this is attributing to created things powers that belong to God alone. A popular species of this is Spiritism which is an attempt to communicate with spirits, either the souls of departed humans, or evil spirits who are controlled by the devil. Normally, such things are fraudulent. Fortunetelling, astrology, crystal gazing, all fall in the same general category. These are the words of Holy Scripture concerning such things:

Neither let there be found among you anyone that consulteth soothsayers, or observeth dreams and omens. Neither let there be any wizard, nor charmer, nor anyone that consulteth pythonic spirits, or fortune-tellers, or that seeketh the truth from the dead. For the Lord abhorreth all these things.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Deut. 18:10.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR MIXED MARRIAGES

3. *Faith*: one sins against the virtue of faith by denying or seriously doubting any of the official and essential teachings of God or His Church, or by active participation in a religion which contradicts the teachings of God's Church. (Taking active part in non-Catholic religious worship is wrong, but this does not necessarily forbid attendance at weddings and funerals in denominational churches.)
4. *Hope*: there are two sins against this virtue. A man may have too much hope and therefore be presumptuous, or he may have too little hope and fall into despair.
5. *Charity*: this means more than giving money to the poor. We may offend against charity by leading others to sin by our suggestions, scandal, or bad example.
6. *Sacrilege*: this is the deliberate and contemptuous misuse of holy persons, places, or things, such as desecrating a church, cemetery, or sacred vessels.

## THE SECOND COMMANDMENT: GOD'S NAME

"Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain."

**Positive:** We manifest our reverence for God's name by our careful use of it or by bowing our head when we do pronounce it. "Blessed be the name of the Lord."<sup>2</sup>

**Negative:**

1. *Profanity*: using God's name without respect or reason. Ordinarily, a venial sin.
2. *Blasphemy*: insulting God in word or deed. Ordinarily, a mortal sin.
3. *Perjury*: telling a lie while under oath. It is a mortal

<sup>2</sup> Ps. 112:2.

sin by which we call upon God to witness as the truth what we know to be a lie.

4. *Cursing*: in which we call upon God to inflict some evil on our neighbor (injury, misfortune, death, damnation). It is a mortal sin only if seriously intended.
5. *Breaking Vows*: A vow is a solemn promise made to God to do something pleasing to Him. To be binding it must be made freely about some action which is lawful and possible.

### THE THIRD COMMANDMENT: THE LORD'S DAY

**"Remember that thou keep holy the sabbath day."**

To insure the regular worship of God, a certain day has always been set aside as the Lord's day, a day of worship and rest. In the Old Testament, the Sabbath was kept on the last day of the week (Saturday). But in the early Church the Apostles changed it to Sunday, the first day of the week, in honor of Christ's Resurrection and the descent of the Holy Ghost on Pentecost:

On the first day of the week, when we had met for the breaking of the bread . . .<sup>3</sup>

**Positive:** The Church has prescribed for Catholics the way in which God is to be worshiped on Sunday, namely by attending the Sacrifice of the Mass.

- a) *Who?* All Catholics over the age of seven.
- b) *When?* On all Sundays plus six holydays (Christmas, New Year's Day, Ascension of Christ, Assumption of Mary, All Saints' Day, and the Immaculate Conception).
- c) *What?* They must be physically present at the cere-

<sup>3</sup> Acts 20:7.

mony. Radio and television do not substitute for actual attendance.

- d) *Excuse?* Only a serious reason excuses one from this obligation, such as physical or moral impossibility (sickness, great distance, bad weather, employment, care of children, advanced pregnancy, military duty, travel).

**Negative:** Catholics may not do unnecessary "servile work" on Sunday. By this regulation is forbidden any form of manual labor such as farming, crafts, trades, and skilled labor. The purpose of this is to leave man free to worship God and obtain necessary bodily rest. Necessary household tasks or work which is chiefly mental or recreational such as writing, studying, typing, or embroidering are permitted. Excused from this precept are those engaged in work necessary for public welfare and health, such as the transportation, communications and medical fields; also police, druggists, and restaurant employees.

### THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT: OUR PARENTS AND SUPERIORS

"Honor thy father and mother."

**Positive:** This Commandment enjoins obedience and respect for proper authority whether of Family, Church, or State.

**Negative:**

- a) Children are obliged to *obey* their parents in all commands that are not evidently sinful or irrational until they are twenty-one. But they are always obliged to give *respect* and reverence to them regardless of their age.

- b) Parents must care not only for the physical but also for the intellectual and moral needs of their children. There is more to rearing a family than merely feeding and clothing them. The mind and will and soul itself is the charge of father and mother. Serious neglect of any of these needs is a serious sin.
- c) Citizens owe proper obedience and respect to civil law and authority. They are obliged to support their government by paying their just taxes and defending it with their lives when it is unjustly attacked. However, devotion to the State can be exaggerated. When men regard their nation as being more important than the individual, they err. They pervert the natural order that government exists for the benefit of the citizen; the importance of the individual man is never subordinate to the interests of the State.

### THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT: RIGHTS TO LIFE

**"Thou shalt not kill."**

**Positive:** Life is a gift of God. We do not own it. It is not ours to dispose of as we wish. We must care for it as "stewards" to whom God has entrusted a precious treasure. Only God owns life and has the right to give or take it.

**Negative:**

- a) Murder, suicide, deliberate abortion, and euthanasia (mercy killing) are forbidden under mortal sin.
- b) Mutilation (removal of a limb or organ) is permitted only when the diseased condition of that organ endangers the life or health of the patient.
- c) Drunkenness, to the state where a man no longer has the use of his reason or senses, is a mortal sin.

- d) Anger or hatred may be mortal sins if the evil we wish upon others is grave and is meant deliberately.

### THE SEVENTH AND TENTH COMMANDMENTS: RIGHTS TO PERSONAL PROPERTY

**"Thou shalt not steal."**

**"Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's goods."**

**Positive:** It is an inherent right of each man that he may acquire and possess for his personal and exclusive use, certain material things. That men live in peace with one another, they must respect this right.

**Negative:**

- a) Theft is always a sin. The gravity of the offense is measured by the value of the stolen object, and the financial circumstances of the person from whom it was taken.
- b) The sin of theft may not be forgiven unless:
1. The thief return what was stolen or its equivalent.
  2. Or has the intention to make restitution as soon as possible.
  3. But the identity of the thief need not be made public.
- c) To damage another's property deliberately, maliciously, mischievously, or through irresponsible carelessness is equivalent to stealing.
- d) To desire another's property so strongly that we wish to deprive him of it is the sin of envy. By this we question the justice and wisdom of God in distributing worldly goods and talents among mankind.



**THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT: THE TRUTH**

**"Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor."**

**Positive:** God has given men the power to speak in order that they may communicate the work of their minds to each other. Unless men can accept each other's veracity, this communication will fail for lack of trust.

**Negative:**

- a) *A lie:* is to conceal the truth deliberately from someone who has a right to know it. In itself, it is a venial sin, but circumstances may make it more serious (perjury, denial of our religious belief).
- b) *Calumny:* is to injure one's reputation by lying about him.
- c) *Detraction:* is to injure one's reputation by telling the truth about him (gossip columnists).
- d) On rare occasions, we may reveal another's faults, but only for a serious reason, and to someone in authority (police, doctor, attorney).

**THE SIXTH AND NINTH COMMANDMENTS: THE PRIVILEGES OF MARRIAGE**

**"Thou shalt not commit adultery."**

**"Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife."**

We should not be ashamed of the fact that human beings reproduce themselves and that this gives them great pleasure. God has given all of us the faculties to bring new humans into existence, the urge to use these faculties and the pleasures attached to their use. This urge or instinct and these pleasures were given us to provide us with the proper stimulus and

rewards for assuming the burdens of parenthood. Common sense should indicate that this instinct may be followed only in the state of matrimony where the proper spiritual, physical, and intellectual care may be provided for the fruit of these faculties. Therefore, the use of this generative faculty outside the married state is forbidden.

But most human beings today suffer from confusion in their thinking on this subject. It is a truism that every human being is blessed with a sex instinct similar to our instinct for self-preservation. Both of these instincts are quite normal. The one leads us to eat three times a day. The other leads the average man to marry and raise a family. Today the second of these urges has run amuck and this is mankind's fault. How far we have strayed from the truth, how badly we have perverted this instinct, might appear more plainly through the following example. Suppose a new theater opens in the burlesque belt of a large city and advertises a distinctive new type of entertainment. Opening night, the house is oversold! The orchestra blares a brassy fanfare and as the curtains part the Master of Ceremonies steps in front of the footlights. He holds in his hands a large covered silver tray. The houselights are extinguished except for one powerful spotlight glaring down from overhead. And then to the majestic strains of "Pomp and Circumstance," he uncovers his tray and shows to his audience a delectable piece of lemon meringue pie. This is the new show! Perhaps you think it strange that the mere sight of food be regarded as entertainment! But wouldn't it be even more strange if the audience greeted such a performance with thunderous applause and ear piercing whistles?

The application is obvious, isn't it? It is not our instinct for food that has been perverted, but our sex instinct. It is not food that is displayed for the sake of amusement but rather bodies. Now, there is nothing wrong with a man who

likes food or even admires its appearance, but there is something awry with the mind of a man who would fill his room with pictures of baked hams or legs of lamb!

The responsibility for the present shameful perversion of the sex instinct is shared by two types of people. Those who promote this confusion by their words, and those whose silence allows it to flourish. As for the first class, we have nothing but contempt for those who foster this misunderstanding out of a desire for money. Upon the escutcheon of their dishonor you will find words: "It Is Commercial"; that is, if people will buy it, if they will read it, if they will sing it, or if they will laugh at it, then sell it to them. Men of this nature are found among those who author pocket sized books of smut, or television playlets, or popular songs. They are found in the vast throng of entertainers who judge their success solely by their applause. They are guilty of consciously perverting the minds of the impressionable youth of the nation. Men of this nature would betray their country, their wives, and their children. They would even betray the God that gives breath to their lungs and life to their bodies. We cannot influence them. For them we should have the silent contempt of a Christ for a sinful Herod.

But to those who bring this to pass by their silence we have this to say: You who are entering the vocation of parenthood, hear this. We have inherited this shame from our parents who ignored the existence of this instinct. Generally speaking, we stand today in the presence of parents who have been silent on the subject. Will you who will be parents remove the curse of muteness which has allowed the world to smear and dishonor sex with sacrilegious hands? It will be your duty to teach your children the beauty and goodness of sex. Children can learn biology and anatomy in school but the loveliness and desirability of this instinct is taught most convincingly by

those who partake of the happiness of matrimony.

This is a historical fact! Many centuries ago, when God created the world, He built the first little red schoolhouse. It was not called P.S. 143, not called St. Gabriel's School. The first schoolhouse was a home belonging to Adam and Eve! The first teachers were parents. God did not found at that time a religious order of teaching sisters or a congregation of brothers. He did not tell the high priest Melchisedech to open a Sunday School. Instead, He gave to the first parents, and to each parent ever since, the heavy and sobering burden of being the educators of their own children.

Because the make-up of human society is no longer primitive but has developed into a terribly complicated structure, we now have schools to assist, but not to replace mothers and fathers. It is impossible for a man to come home from his daily work and find time to teach his children the intricacies of French irregular verbs or of advanced calculus. Therefore, magnificent school systems have been developed to teach children the subjects which the parents cannot. But these institutions are not able to take the responsibility for education even if you wish to give it to them. Specifically, there is only one instructor on sex education who can perform this task capably and with authority, and that is you — the modern parent.

There are those who would protest their inability to speak on this subject because of lack of knowledge or preparation. As a matter of fact, the necessary preparation is minute. It consists of a little reading and conversation but mostly thought and meditation. If you are happily married, then explain your happiness to your children. Examine your own heart and mind and tell them what gives you pleasure. If you have sufficient intelligence to earn a living in the jungle of modern commerce, if you have ingenuity enough to keep house in our electronic

world, then you have the ability to explain the secret of your marital happiness to your children.

Some parents use the following explanation: God created angels directly, just as He made Adam and Eve. He made them as an artist makes a statue or a mechanic a machine, part by part. But God allows the rest of mankind to make themselves. In doing this, they imitate God, they co-operate with Him in an act of creation, the greatest thing that any man can do. Each person carries within himself little cells of life. To start a new life, a man and woman join these cells and God makes a soul to be connected with this new person. The action by which these cells are joined is called the marriage act because it is to be performed only by those who are married to each other. Then this person, the baby lives within the mother until it is strong enough to live alone. At this time, it leaves the mother and is born. God gave to each human being a certain desire to bring new people into the world, but this is to be used by married people because only they are able to care properly for children.

Catholics believe that thoughts, words, and actions designed to arouse the pleasures of marriage, if used outside of marriage or by the unmarried, are serious sins. Therefore, idle day-dreaming on this subject, obscene stories, or necking and petting are considered mortal sins.

### A FINAL WORD

If you squeeze an orange too hard, the bitterness of the rind mixes with the juice and spoils it. Just so with marriage, sometimes we squeeze too hard in an effort to extract its happiness. This contract is designed to give only a limited amount of joy and felicity. Unlimited happiness will be achieved only by those men who see God in the life to come.

Men who try to get too much from marriage gain only failure. Sometimes they try again through civil divorce and remarriage. Often they fail again. They will never succeed even though they acquire as many wives as an Oriental potentate. They are looking for something that marriage cannot bring them. Perfect happiness, complete peace and comfort will come only from union with God. Eventually, experience teaches this to all men. It has been said that experience is a harsh pedagogue but some men will have no other. We hope that this is not true and that those who read these pages have learned that marriage is not merely an instrument of man's pleasure. It is designed by God to be a means of salvation!

When God was here on earth, He described heaven as being a great mansion which each man prepared for himself by his life here on earth. Notice this! Heaven is a mansion, not a pup tent that a man throws up with a few hours prayer. It's a mansion, not a spiritual Quonset Hut that a man can erect with a week or two of pious living. It is a mansion, the timbers and stones of which are the months and years that make up man's exile from God here on earth. The manner in which we accept the tribulations of this life, the way we face the troubles and discomforts of daily living, these are the brick and mortar of the mansions of heaven. Thus marriage is not meant to be heaven itself, but only the means by which we earn heaven. The adjustments we must make to live at peace with our spouses earn us eternal reward. The discomforts of raising a family, of living within a budget, of paying bills, these things earn heaven for mankind. One might say that the road to heaven is paved with Pabulum and baby oil, with Q Tips and vaporizers, with chicken pox and scarlet fever. The patient acceptance of the trials of married life can make saints of parents. They need never wear a hair shirt; last

year's coat or dress will do as well. They can skip all-night prayer vigils, and sit instead in trembling anxiety beside the crib of a sick child. They can dispense with the vow of poverty and earn sustenance and livelihood for those whom God places in their charge. Heaven is large enough for the ascetic Carthusian monk, the dedicated Carmelite nun, and likewise for the husbands and wives, mothers and fathers, who follow no more lofty a star than that which is found in kitchen and nursing.

If you would be happily married, remember this: Marriage is not the goal of life, but only one of the roads leading to that goal. Whether you are Catholic or not, together with all mankind, you are drawn each day closer to your destiny. Some day you will reach the goal for which you were made — union with your Creator. Do not approach Him with empty hands. Offer to Him the pains and sacrifices of your life. You may find that marriage has done more than bring you happiness on earth. It is possible that marriage may earn you happiness for all eternity in heaven!

## APPENDIX

### *The Catholic Story*

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1. Before the world came to be, God existed from all eternity, infinitely wise, powerful, and loving.
2. God created all things out of nothing: angels, the world, and mankind because he is infinitely good, and it is the nature of goodness to diffuse itself. Therefore, the reason that men are on earth today is to enjoy happiness with God in heaven tomorrow. God made us to share His Goodness and Beauty with us forever.
3. Before God created men, He made angels who are entirely spiritual beings having no bodies but minds and wills far superior to ours. To determine their gratitude God tested them. Some of them failed this test and were banned from ever seeing God. This causes them intense unhappiness and remorse and is the chief pain of hell. These fallen angels are known today by the name of devils and their only pleasure is to distract men from God and cause them to fail the tests which God sends them.
4. After God completed the material universe, He made the first man and woman, Adam and Eve. From these two the entire human race has sprung.
5. The world was a paradise in those days. There were no such things as pain or hunger or any sort of discomfort. This was the world that God intended for all of us.



6. But Adam and Eve "declared war against God!" Possessing brilliant intellects and immensely powerful wills they nonetheless broke the only commandment that He gave them. Their motive was pride! It was their desire to be as great as God Himself!
7. As a punishment, God weakened the wills and darkened the intellects of all men. He allowed pain, discomfort, death, and the necessity to labor to afflict us. And in all men there arose a tendency *toward* evil and away from good.
8. As a further punishment, God decreed that no man should have the happiness of seeing Him face to face until the gates of heaven would be reopened. Those who lived a good and holy life would be rewarded but they would not see God. Those who lived unrepented evil lives would join the fallen angels in eternal banishment.
9. This is called Original Sin. The sin was the first one ever committed by the human race. Its effects are inherited by every human being. Today people are touched by Original Sin by being born into an imperfect world, equipped with an imperfect will and intellect.
10. Today it remains impossible for any man to enter heaven unless in some way he receives the effects of Baptism, either of Water or of Blood or of Desire.
11. But God promised to Adam and Eve that a Redeemer would come into the world after many years and buy back for the human race the right and ability to see God face to face in heaven.
12. God continued to communicate with mankind by revealing certain things to prophets, who in turn announced these truths to their fellow men. Many of these revelations of God to man are contained in the book called the Bible.
13. The Bible clearly tells us that there are three Persons in

- God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. They are equal to each other in all things. Yet there are not three gods but only one God because they have in common only one Divine Nature.
14. Thousands of years after the Original Sin of Adam, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity became a human being while still remaining Divine. Thus, Jesus Christ is one Person having two distinct natures. He is God-Man.
  15. Mary is truly the Mother of God, because she did for God what any mother does: gave a body to her Son. This was done in a miraculous fashion by the direct intervention of God, so that she remained a Virgin even after the birth of her son. This is called the Virgin Birth. St. Joseph, therefore, was only the foster father and guardian of the Infant Christ.
  16. Mary was "our tainted nature's solitary boast," to quote the words of the poet Wordsworth. She was preserved free of Original Sin and any of its effects from the very first moment of her existence and she remained free of any sin during her whole life. This privilege of the Immaculate Conception was granted her because of the close physical contact she had with God in being His mother.
  17. Jesus Christ remained on earth for thirty-three years. The first thirty he lived in seclusion at Nazareth in Judea. The final three He lived publicly, teaching the length and breadth of Palestine, training followers and organizing a Church.
  18. He worked a great number of startling miracles to which He appealed as proof of His Divinity. He finally allowed Himself to be seized by His enemies, condemned to death for blasphemy, tortured, and crucified. He offered these sufferings in reparation for all the sins that the human race had committed and would commit.

19. This offering of His life for us was an action of infinite merit. By it Christ established a great storehouse of grace which the human race can draw upon to attain eternal salvation. For just because Christ died for us does not mean that we all automatically go to heaven. We are all required to believe in God and perform good works. Each of those good acts of ours will gain for us a certain amount of the merits which Christ stored up for us by His sufferings and death.
20. Three days after His death, He arose from the grave and rejoined His followers for a period of forty days. He instructed them in how His Church should be organized, and finally ascended from their midst out of sight into the heavens.
21. At the present time, Christ is in heaven where He judges each man as soon as he dies. Some members of the human race go directly to heaven, some directly to hell, and some are detained temporarily for punishment before entering heaven. Such souls are said to be in Purgatory.
22. The Apostles obeyed His commands literally and set up a church body with Peter as its head. This same institution has continued through periods of alternate persecution and prosperity down through the years until today. Catholics believe that they are members of that original Apostolic Church.

## *Review Questions*

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### **Chapter One**

1. Which six propositions do Catholics think are the logical foundation of their belief?
2. What well-known scientific axiom proves the existence of God?
3. Do Catholics think religion is a debt or a free will offering of affection?
4. Do Catholics think all churches are of equal value in God's estimation?
5. What three possibilities could account for the presence of error in the Gospels?
6. What two reasons do Catholics have for thinking Christ was God?
7. Do you think Christ intended His organization to end when He left the earth?
8. Are there any qualities in the Church of the Gospels that we could look for in the denominations of today?
9. Does infallibility mean that the pope never makes a mistake?

### **Chapter Two**

1. Do Catholics think that their Church opposes scientific research?
2. Are Evolution and Religion ever compatible?
3. Why do Catholics think Christ suffered and died?
4. Do Catholics think that Adam ate a real apple?
5. Do Catholics worship Mary?
6. Is a place of temporary punishment for sin logical or not?

### Chapter Three

1. What do Catholics mean by the phrase "supernatural life"?
2. Which do they think is the most important of all the seven sacraments?
3. What is the reason for having godparents when a child is baptized?
4. Why do Catholics want their children to have Christian names?
5. Which sacrament extends and completes the work of baptism?
6. Do Catholics think that God is really present in Holy communion or just there in some symbolic way?
7. Why do Catholics go to Confession to have their sins forgiven instead of approaching God directly?
8. Is Extreme Unction or "Last Rites" only for those who are dying?
9. Why don't priests marry?
10. Which are the three most important parts of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass?

### Chapter Four

1. Does the Catholic Church recognize as valid only the marriages of her members?
2. For how long a time does the average couple, irrespective of their religion, intend to stay married?
3. Do Catholics think that the civil courts have the power to dissolve marriages and permit remarriages?
4. Was it always possible to get a divorce in a civil court?
5. Are annulments the same as divorces?
6. How much does an annulment cost?
7. Is a separation the same as a divorce?
8. May a Catholic obtain a civil separation without first obtaining the permission of his Church?

### Chapter Five

1. What thing most frequently blinds a man's reason?
2. Which is wrong, Birth Control or Birth Prevention?
3. Is Birth Prevention forbidden only to Catholics?
4. List the three reasons why Catholics think Birth Prevention is sinful.
5. Are there any exceptional cases where the use of Birth Prevention is permitted?
6. Do Catholics ever approve of direct abortion?
7. In a choice between a mother and her child, does the Church demand that we save the infant in order that it might be baptized?
8. Do Catholics ever approve of operations whose sole purpose is to sterilize?

### Chapter Six

1. Are the Commandments designed to limit or extend our earthly happiness?
2. What is the difference between a mortal and a venial sin?
3. May Catholics have their horoscopes read?
4. May Catholics attend weddings and funerals in non-Catholic churches?
5. Are Catholics ever justified in missing Mass on Sunday?
6. Must Catholic children give strict obedience to their parents all during their lives?
7. May a Catholic ever discuss publicly someone's personal faults?
8. Which are the two strongest instincts that humans have?
9. Who has the primary responsibility of the education of children, the church or the parents?
10. Is the sole purpose of marriage the pursuit of earthly happiness?

PRAYERS APPROPRIATE FOR MEMBERS OF ANY  
RELIGIOUS FAITH

O God who by the light of the Holy Ghost dost instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant us by the same Holy Spirit to love and relish what is right and just and constantly to enjoy His comforts. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Lord, make me an instrument of Thy peace: where there is hatred let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; and where there is sadness, joy.

O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console, to be understood as to understand, to be loved as to love; for it is in giving that we receive, it is in pardoning that we are pardoned, and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

— Francis of Assisi

Dear Jesus, help me to spread Thy fragrance everywhere I go. Flood my soul with Thy spirit and life; penetrate and possess my whole being so utterly that all my life may be only a radiance of Thine; shine through me and be so in me that every soul I come in contact with may feel Thy presence in my soul. Let them look up and see no longer me, but only Jesus.

— John Henry Newman

## PRAYERS OFTEN SAID BY CATHOLICS

**The Sign of the Cross**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

**Grace Before Meals**

Bless us, O Lord, and these Thy gifts, which we are about to receive from Thy bounty, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Grace After Meals**

We give Thee thanks, O Lord, for all Thy benefits, who livest and reignest, forever; and may the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God rest in peace. Amen.

**The Our Father**

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name; Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

**The Hail Mary**

Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

**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 life everlasting. Amen.



**Glory Be to the Father**

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.

**Act of Contrition**

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee, and I detest all my sins, because of Thy just punishments, 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 sin no more and to avoid the near occasions of sin.

**PRAYERS AFTER LOW MASS**

Hail Mary, etc. (*three times*)

**Hail, Holy Queen**

Hail, holy Queen, Mother of Mercy; our life, our sweetness, and our hope! To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve; to thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn, then, most gracious advocate, thine eyes of mercy toward us; and after this our exile show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus; O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary!

V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

**Let Us Pray**

O God, our refuge and our strength, look down in mercy on Thy people who cry to Thee; and by the intercession of the glorious and immaculate Virgin Mary, Mother of God, of St. Joseph her spouse, of Thy blessed Apostles and Peter and Paul, and of all the saints, in mercy and goodness hear our prayers for the conversion of sinners, and for the liberty and exaltation of our holy Mother the Church. Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

Holy Michael, the archangel, defend us in battle; be our safeguard against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray: and do thou, Prince of the heavenly Host, by the power of God thrust down to hell, Satan and all wicked spirits, who wander through the world for the ruin of souls. Amen.

Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, have mercy on us! (*three times*)

## HYMNS SUNG DURING BENEDICTION

**O Salutaris Hostia**

O Salutaris Hostia!  
 Quae coeli pandis ostium;  
 Bella premunt hostilia,  
 Da robor fer auxilium.

O Saving Victim! opening wide  
 The Gate of Heaven to man below!  
 Our foes press in from every side;  
 Thine aid supply, Thy strength  
 bestow.

Uni trinoque Domino  
 Sit sempiterna gloria,  
 Qui vitam sine termino  
 Nobis donet in patria.  
 Amen.

To Thy great Name be endless praise,  
 Immortal Godhead; One in Three!  
 O grant us endless length of days  
 In our true native land with Thee.  
 Amen.

**Tantum Ergo**

Tantum ergo Sacramentum  
 Veneremur cernui,  
 Et antiquam documentum  
 Novo cedat ritui;  
 Praestet fides supplementum  
 Sensuum defectui.

Down in adoration falling,  
 Lo! the Sacred Host we hail!  
 Lo! o'er ancient forms departing,  
 Newer rites of grace prevail;  
 Faith for all defects supplying  
 Where the feeble senses fall.

Genitori Genitoque  
 Laus et jubilatio.  
 Salus, honor, virtus quoque  
 Sit et benedictio,  
 Procedenti ab utroque  
 Compar sit laudatio.  
 Amen.

To the Everlasting Father  
 And the Son, who reigns on high,  
 With the Holy Ghost, proceeding  
 Forth from each eternally,  
 Be salvation, honor, blessing,  
 Might and endless majesty.  
 Amen.

**Holy God**

Holy God, we praise Thy name!  
 Lord of all, we bow before Thee!  
 All on earth Thy scepter claim,  
 All in heav'n above adore Thee;  
 I: Infinite Thy vast domain;  
 Everlasting is Thy reign. :I

Hark! the loud celestial hymn  
Angel choirs above are singing!  
Cherubim and seraphim,  
In unceasing chorus praising,  
I: Fill the heavens with sweet accord:  
Holy! Holy! Holy Lord! :I

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