

95 CATECHISM QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Revised 2013

BIBLE

1. What is the Bible?

The Bible is the collection of books that relate God's revelation to the human race. It is the inspired word of God written by men and comprises the Old Testament and the New Testament.

2. Where did we get the Bible?

We have the Bible by the authority of the early councils of the Catholic Church which decided which writings were truly inspired by God. Therefore the Bible may rightly be said to be a Catholic book.

3. When there is dispute over what the Bible means to teach us about some matter of faith or morals, how do we know the right meaning?

Only the teaching authority of the Catholic Church can know what is true in faith and morals because Christ promised that the Holy Spirit would reveal all truth to the Church.

4. What is the teaching authority of the Church called?

The teaching authority of the Catholic Church is called magisterium.

5. What is Sacred Tradition?

Sacred Tradition is the oral, unwritten message that Jesus gave the Apostles. Some of it was written down and is found in apostolic documents that are not part of the Bible.

6. In what degree must we accept the Bible? In what degree Tradition?

One must accept the Bible and Tradition completely and equally because both are revealed by God.

GOD

7. What is the Blessed Trinity?

The Blessed Trinity means that in the one God there are three distinct and equal Persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

8. What do we mean by the equality and distinction of the divine Persons?

The three divine Persons are perfectly equal to one another because all are the one and infinitely perfect God. The three divine Persons are really distinct from one another. They are not three names for the same Person, nor are the three Persons blended into one another. This means:

The Father is not the Son. The Son is not the Holy Spirit. The Father is not the Holy Spirit.

CREATION

9. What are Angels?

Angels are pure spirits, without bodies, having intelligence and free will.

10. What are good angels; what are bad angels?

The good angels are those who remained faithful to God, and entered into the eternal happiness of heaven. The bad angels are those who turned against God and were cast into Hell. These are the fallen angels or devils.

11. What is a guardian angel?

A guardian angel is a good angel who has been assigned to each one of us by God to watch over, lead, guide, and protect each of us in all we do.

12. What is man? How is he like God?

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

Man is like God chiefly in the soul.

13. What was the condition of Adam and Eve before the Fall and after the Fall?

The original condition of Adam and Eve was that they were in perfect harmony with God, and were given sanctifying grace, which made them children of God and gave them the right to heaven. They were also free from sickness and death. After the Fall they were deprived of God's friendship and grace, they were subject to sickness and death, and their wills were inclined to sin.

14. What is the sin of Adam and Eve Called? How do we get it? How do we remove it?

The sin of Adam and Eve is called, Original Sin.

We all, children of Adam, come into the world with Original Sin.

It is removed when we are baptized.

15. *When we have Original Sin removed, what effects of it remain in us?*

The inclination to sin still remains in us because our nature was weakened by the Fall.

SIN

16. *What is the difference between temptation and sin?*

Temptation is a strong inclination or suggestion to sin which may come from the devil, from something outside us, or from our tendency toward evil as a result of Adam's fall. Sin is knowingly and willingly breaking the law of God, not merely the inclination to commit evil.

17. *Can temptation always be resisted?*

Temptation can always be resisted because God will not allow us to be tempted beyond our strength.

18. *What is mortal sin; what three elements are necessary to it?*

Mortal sin is a grievous offense against the law of God that deprives us of grace and leads to eternal death in hell. The three elements necessary to make a mortal sin are: First, the thought, desire, word, action or omission must be seriously wrong or considered seriously wrong; Second, the sinner must be mindful of the serious wrong; Third, the sinner must fully consent to it.

19. *What is venial sin; What makes up venial sin?*

Venial sin is a less serious offense against the law of God, which does not deprive the soul of sanctifying grace, and which can be pardoned even without sacramental confession.

There are two conditions that make up a venial sin: First, when the evil done is not seriously wrong; second, when the evil done is indeed seriously wrong, but the sinner sincerely (but falsely) believes it is only slightly wrong, or when he does not give full consent to it.

20. *What are the occasions of sin? What are the near occasions of sin?*

The occasion of sin is any person, place or thing which may lead us into sin. The near occasions of sin are all persons, places, or things that may likely lead us into sin.

21. *What are the main sources of the sins people commit?*

The main sources of the sins people commit are the seven capital sins: pride, avarice, envy, anger, lust, gluttony, and sloth.

JESUS CHRIST

22. Who is Jesus Christ? Is he a human person? How many natures has He?

Jesus Christ is the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, the Son of God who became man.

No, Jesus Christ is not a human person but a divine Person; Jesus is God.

Jesus Christ has two natures: The nature of God and the nature of man.

23. What is the Incarnation?

The Incarnation means that the Son of God became man.

24. Who is Jesus' mother? Who is Jesus' father?

The Blessed Virgin Mary is the mother of Jesus.

Only God the Father is the Father of Jesus. Saint Joseph was the guardian, or foster father, of Jesus.

25. What is the Redemption?

The Redemption means that Jesus Christ offered his sufferings and death as a sacrifice to make up for the sins of all humanity. By the redemption, Christ gained for man the right to be children of God and heirs of heaven.

26. What is the Immaculate Conception? What does it mean?

The Immaculate Conception was the special privilege granted by God to the Blessed Virgin Mary whereby she was free from original sin from the first moment of her life.

Due to a special grace of God, Mary never committed any sin her whole life long.

27. What do the words "he descended into hell" mean?

The descent into hell means that the soul of Jesus, after his death on the cross, descended to the place of rest where the souls of the just had been waiting for him. He did not go to the place of the damned.

GRACE, VIRTUE, GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

28. What is sanctifying grace? What terms do the Scriptures use for it?

Sanctifying grace confers on our souls a new life, that is, a sharing in the life of God Himself.

The bible sometimes calls it 'life', 'living water' or 'light'.

29. *What is actual grace?*

Actual grace is a supernatural help of God which enlightens our mind and strengthens our will to do good and to avoid evil.

30. *How do we get sanctifying grace? How do we increase it?*

We receive and increase sanctifying grace through the worthy reception of the sacraments and through prayer and other good works.

31. *What are the three theological virtues? Explain each.*

The three theological virtues are, Faith, Hope and Charity.

Faith is the virtue by which we firmly believe all the truths God has revealed, on the word of God revealing them, who can neither deceive nor be deceived.

Hope is the virtue by which we firmly trust that God, who is all-powerful and faithful to His promises, will in His mercy give us eternal happiness and the means to obtain it.

Charity is the virtue by which we love God above all things for His own sake, and our neighbor as ourselves for the love of God.

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

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

33. *What is moral virtue? What are the four cardinal (or main) virtues? Give examples of other moral virtues.*

Moral virtues are habits that help us to lead good lives by treating persons and things in the right way, that is, according to the will of God.

The four cardinal virtues are prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance.

Other examples of the moral virtues are honesty, courage, self-control, and purity.

THE CHURCH

34. What is the Church? Who founded it? How many true churches are there?

What is the relationship between other churches and the true Church? The Church is the congregation of all baptized persons united in the same true faith, the same sacrifice, and the same sacraments, under the authority of the Pope and the bishops in union with him. The Church is the Mystical Body of Christ. Jesus Christ founded the Church.

There is only one true Church, the Catholic Church. Other churches have a greater or lesser participation in the fullness of truth and grace that is found only in the Catholic Church.

35. Who is St. Peter? Who are his successors?

St. Peter is the Apostle chosen by Christ to be the head, or first Pope, of the Church He founded.

The Popes who have been chosen over the centuries succeed St. Peter. They are Christ's representatives on earth as the lawful successors of St. Peter and visible heads of the Church.

36. Who are the apostles? Who are their successors?

The Apostles were men selected by Christ and sent to preach the Gospel to the world, to forgive sins, and to celebrate the sacraments.

Their successors are the bishops.

37. What are the four identifying marks by which you can be sure of the true Church?

The four identifying marks are One, Holy, Catholic (or universal), and Apostolic.

38. What is infallibility? To what matters does it extend?

Infallibility is a guarantee of truth which excludes error, given by Christ to His Church.

Infallibility is limited to matters of faith and moral teaching. The official teachings of the Pope are infallible.

39. The Church teaches that there is no salvation outside the Catholic Church. What does this mean?

When we say, "Outside the Church there is no salvation," we mean that Christ made the Catholic Church a necessary means of salvation

and commanded all to enter it, so that a person must be connected with the Church in some way to be saved.

40. *What is excommunication?*

Excommunication is a penalty by which the Church cuts one off from the sacraments and from union with the Church; an excommunicated person loses his rights but not his obligations.

41. *What is apostasy? What is heresy?*

Apostasy is the rejection of Christianity.

Heresy is the denial of one or more truth of the Catholic Faith. These are mortal sins.

42. *What would it mean to deny just even one article of the Catholic faith knowingly?*

To deny even one article of the Catholic faith knowingly would be a heresy and a grave sin against the virtue of Faith.

43. *What is a priest? What is a Sister? What is the consecrated laity?*

A **Priest** is a mediator between God and man. Having received Holy Orders a priest takes the place of Christ, the High Priest and can offer Mass, forgive sins, and perform the other sacraments of the Church.

A **Sister** is woman religious, living by an approved rule of life.

Consecrated lay men and women are bound by vows to Christ and remain unmarried for His sake while living among others in the world.

44. *What is the communion of saints and what is the relationship between them?*

The communion of saints is the sharing of grace among all members of Christ's Church, whether they are on earth, in purgatory, or in heaven.

The relationship between them is that members of the Church are able to help each other through prayer in the communicating of spiritual benefits.

45. *What is the resurrection of the body?*

The resurrection of the body is the rising of the human body united with the soul on the last day of time. It will bring the body to a state of perfection and glory.

46. *What is the Assumption?*

The Assumption is the taking up into heaven of the body and soul of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

47. *How many judgments will God give us?*

There are two judgments. The first is called the particular judgment which takes place after one's death. The second is called the general judgment and will take place at the end of the world with men and women from all time.

48. *What is purgatory? How do people get there? How do they get out of there?*

Purgatory is a place of temporary punishment for souls that die in the state of grace but who must be purified of venial sin or of any temporary punishment still due to their sins before they can enter heaven.

49. *Will people in hell ever get out?*

No, the punishment of hell is eternal.

50. *What is necessary for one to get to heaven?*

One must die in the state of grace, and be completely free of all punishment due to sin.

COMMANDMENTS

51. *What are the two commandments of Jesus?*

The two commandments of God are: You shall love the Lord your God with your whole heart, and with your whole soul, and with your whole mind, and with your whole strength; and, You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

52. *What are the ten commandments? (by number and in order)*

The Commandments of God are:

1. I am the Lord your God; you shall not have strange gods before Me.
2. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.
3. Remember to keep holy the Lord's day.
4. Honor your father and your mother.
5. You shalt not kill.
6. You shalt not commit adultery.

7. You shalt not steal.

8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

9. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.

10. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.

53. *What is sacrilege? What kind of sin is it? Give examples of it.*

A sacrilege is the irreverent treatment, or mistreatment, of sacred persons, places, or things; it is also the reception of any of the sacraments unworthily. It is a mortal sin.

Examples of sacrilege are knowingly receiving Holy Communion in mortal sin; or knowingly not confessing all of one's mortal sins in confession.

54. *What is a relic? Are sacred images permitted to be venerated?*

A relic is the body, or part of the body, of a saint. It is also anything, such as clothing, associated with the saint which the Church honors because of the sanctity of the person while on earth.

Sacred images may be venerated. It is a good practice to do this.

55. *What kind of sin is it to miss Mass on Sunday (or Saturday evening) through one's own fault?*

It is a mortal sin against the third commandment to miss Mass on the days when attendance is obligatory.

56. *What are some spiritual duties of parents towards their children?*

Spiritual duties of parents towards their children are to teach the Catholic faith and good morals, and to protect them from spiritual harm.

57. *Discuss abortion (and its penalties); illegal drugs; alcoholic drink.*

Abortion is a very grave sin and excommunicates one from the Church. The use of illegal drugs is always sinful. Alcoholic drink is sinful only when consumed to excess or when one is forbidden to take it.

58. *Discuss purity and sins opposed to it (e.g. adultery, fornication; impurity with one's own body; pornography; immoral music or movies, contraception, immodesty).*

Sins against purity that are fully willed (must understand this) are always mortal sins.

59. *Discuss sins of stealing, including immoral business practices,*

cheating in buying and selling and shopping and income tax.

These sins are mortal if the amount stolen or its value equals or exceeds what is about the worth of a daily wage.

60. *What is restitution? Is it necessary for forgiveness of sins?*

Restitution is the obligation to pay back whatever is stolen or damaged. It is necessary to have at least the intention of restitution for one to be forgiven.

61. *Discuss perjury; slander; detraction.*

Perjury means lying while under an oath to tell the truth. It is always a mortal sin.

Slander means telling a lie about one's character.

Detraction means telling a truth about another's moral failings or weaknesses.

Slander and detraction may be mortal sins depending on the amount of damage done to one's reputation.

62. *What are the precepts (laws) of the Church?*

1. To assist at Mass on all Sundays and holy days of obligation.
2. To fast and to abstain on the days appointed.
3. To confess our sins at least once a year.
4. To receive Holy Communion during the Easter time.
5. To contribute to the support of the Church.

63. *What is fasting? What is abstinence? When are these obligatory?*

Fasting is to take no food or liquid for a certain time. On fast days only one full meal is allowed, but one or two smaller meals may be taken, if needed for strength. Fasting is binding on those from ages 18 to 60. Abstinence is refraining from doing something, especially from eating certain foods. A day of abstinence is one on which we are not allowed to eat meat. All Fridays and Ash Wednesday are days of abstinence. Abstinence from meat is obligatory for Catholics who have passed their fourteenth year.

64. *What happens when a Catholic marries outside the Catholic Church, i.e. apart from the law of the Church? Can the divorced remarry?*

A Catholic who marries outside the Catholic Church (e.g. by a judge or a Protestant minister) commits sin and is not married at all.

A divorced Catholic is not allowed to remarry while his spouse is still living.

SACRAMENTS

65. *What is a sacrament?*

A sacrament is an outward sign instituted by Christ to give grace.

66. *What are the names of the seven sacraments?*

The names of the seven sacraments are: Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Eucharist, Penance, Anointing of the Sick, Holy Orders, and Matrimony.

67. *Which sacraments can be received only once?*

Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders can only be received once. A man, however, may receive each of the three degrees of Holy Orders.

68. *How is baptism given? What does baptism do for you?*

Baptism is given in this way: the one baptizing pours water over the forehead 3 times of the one to be baptized, saying, "I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."

Baptism gives us the new life of sanctifying grace by which we become children of God and heirs of heaven.

69. *What is confirmation? Who usually gives it?*

Confirmation is the sacrament through which the Holy Spirit enables us to profess our faith as strong and perfect Christians and soldiers of Jesus Christ.

The bishop is the usual minister of Confirmation.

70. *What is chrism?*

Holy chrism is a mixture of olive oil and balm, blessed by the bishop on Holy Thursday.

71. *What is the Eucharist? When was it first given?*

Holy Eucharist is a sacrament and a sacrifice. In the Holy Eucharist, under the appearance of bread and wine, Jesus Christ is contained, offered, and received.

The institution of this most Blessed Sacrament of Holy Eucharist was on Holy Thursday at the Last Supper, the night before He died.

72. *Who consecrates the Eucharist? How is it consecrated? What materials are necessary for it?*

The priest consecrates the Eucharist.

It is consecrated by the words spoken at the time of the consecration during the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass: “This is my body...” and “This is my blood...”.

The materials that are necessary are pure wheat bread and wine made from grapes.

73. *What is transubstantiation?*

Transubstantiation is the change of the entire substance of the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ.

74. *Is the whole Christ present in the Eucharist? In each form? In each part of each form?*

The whole Christ is present Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity in the Eucharist.

Jesus Christ is whole and entire under the appearance of bread and under the appearance of wine and under every particle of each form that can be recognized as such.

75. *Why do we genuflect and why do we kneel in the church?*

We genuflect to pay our reverence and respect to God who is present in the Most Blessed Sacrament of Holy Eucharist reserved in the tabernacle.

76. *What is the Mass?*

The Mass is the sacrifice of the New Law in which Christ, through the ministry of the priest, offers Himself to God in an unbloody manner under the appearances of bread and wine.

77. *What is meant by sacrifice?*

A sacrifice is the offering of a victim by a priest to God alone, and the destruction of it in some way to acknowledge that He is the Creator of all things.

78. *What are the conditions for receiving Communion?*

The conditions for receiving communion are:

One must be free from mortal sin, to have a right intention, and to obey the Church’s laws on the fast required before Holy Communion (one hour from all food and drink, except water).

79. *What is a monstrance?*

A monstrance is a sacred vessel in which the host is held and displayed for the purpose of exposition and adoration of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

80. *What is absolution (in the sacrament of penance)?*

Absolution is the freeing from sin by God through the priest.

81. *Is it sufficient to tell our sins privately to God for obtaining forgiveness?*

Confession of mortal sins is always necessary. By prayer one may be forgiven venial sins. Mortal sin may also be forgiven by an act of perfect contrition but must always include the intention to go to confession.

82. *What is an examination of conscience?*

Examination of conscience is a sincere effort to call to mind all the sins we have committed since our last worthy confession.

83. *What is contrition? Explain the two kinds of contrition.*

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

The two kinds of contrition are perfect contrition, and imperfect contrition. Perfect contrition is when we are sorry for our sins because sin offends God whom we love above all things for His own sake. Imperfect contrition is when we are sorry for our sins because they are hateful in themselves or because we fear God's punishment.

84. *Does communal penance substitute for confession? Explain?*

No, communal penance may only be received in unusual circumstances. To receive forgiveness in this way, one must intend to confess later any mortal sins that were forgiven.

85. *What happens if we forget a sin in confession? What happens if we deliberately withhold a sin in confession?*

If without our fault we forget to confess a mortal sin, we are forgiven and may receive Holy Communion. The mortal sin must yet be confessed at the next confession when it is recalled.

If we deliberately withhold a sin in confession no sins we have confessed are forgiven; moreover, we commit another mortal sin of sacrilege.

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

By the seal of confession is meant that the priest is bound never to reveal any sin that has been confessed to him.

87. *How do we make up for the punishment due to our sins once they have been forgiven?*

We can make up for the punishment due to our sins by performing the penance imposed after confession and by prayer, attending Mass, fasting, almsgiving, the works of mercy, the patient endurance of sufferings, and indulgences.

88. *What is an indulgence?*

An indulgence is the remission of all or some of the temporal punishment due to our sins.

89. *What is the purpose of the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick?*

The purpose of the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick is to give health and strength to the soul, and sometimes to the body, when we are in danger of death from sickness, accident, or old age.

90. *What are the three degrees of the sacrament of holy Orders?*

The three degrees of Holy Orders are those of deacon, priest, and bishop.

91. *What is the reason that God gave us marriage?*

God gave us the sacrament of marriage to create new human life and for a man to love his wife as Christ loves the Church and for a woman to love her husband as the Church submits to Christ. Man and woman freely bind themselves for life in a marriage and receive the grace from God to discharge their duties.

92. *What is a sacramental? Give examples of sacramentals.*

Sacramentals are holy things or actions which the Church uses to obtain spiritual and temporal favors from God. Sacramentals include blessings given by priests and bishops; holy water, blessed objects.

93. *Say these prayers and acts from memory:*

The Our Father

The Hail Mary

The Glory be to the Father

The Apostles Creed

The Act of Contrition & concluding dialogue for confession

Outline the Form of Confession

Names of the 20 Mysteries of the Rosary

Hail, Holy Queen

Act of Faith

Act of Hope

Act of Love

94. *What are the holy days of obligation (that is, days when one is obliged to go to Mass)?*

Besides Sundays, the holy days of obligation are:

Christmas day (December 25); the Maternity of Mary (January 1); the Assumption of Mary (August 15); All Saints' Day (November 1); The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary (December 8).

95. *You must have completed the following. Indicate the dates when these works have been done:*

A. I have said four rosaries, that is, all twenty decades, at least once each on these dates:

1. _____ 2. _____
3. _____ 4. _____

B. I made the fourteen Stations of the Cross on _____.

C. I have witnessed and participated in Exposition and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament on _____.

D. I have been given a tour of the church to see the confessional, the altar and its furnishings, the vestments and vessels on _____.

Important Terms Every Catholic Should Know

I Words about the Liturgy and Prayer

ADORATION

Adoration is the worship given to God alone. veneration is the homage given to angels and saints.

ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament refers to praying before Jesus present in the Holy Eucharist.

ADVENT

Advent is the season of four weeks before Christmas.

AGNUS DEI

Agnus Dei is Latin for “Lamb of God,” a title for Jesus.

ALB

An alb is the long white vestment the priest wears under the chasuble.

ANGELUS

The Angelus is a prayer usually said at noon and six o’clock.

ASCENSION

The Ascension was the day Jesus went up into heaven, forty days after Easter.

ASH WEDNESDAY

Ash Wednesday day marks the beginning of Lent when ashes are put on one’s forehead.

ASPERGES

The *asperges* is the sprinkling of the people with holy water by the priest during Mass.

AVE MARIA

Ave Maria is Latin for “Hail Mary”.

BENEDICTION

Benediction is the ceremony in which the priest blesses the people with the Holy Eucharist in the monstrance.

CASSOCK & SURPLICE

Cassock is the long black garment worn by priests and by altar boys. The surplice is the shorter white garment that goes over the cassock.

CATHEDRAL

A cathedral is the church of the bishop of a diocese.

CHASUBLE

A chasuble is the outer vestment of various colors worn by the priest for Mass.

CIBORIUM

The ciborium is a vessel that contains the hosts given in Holy Communion.

CONFITEOR

Confiteor is the Latin word for the prayer “I confess.”

CONSECRATION

The consecration is the moment in the Mass when the priest changes bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ.

COPE

The cope is the long cape which the priest wears for Benediction and for processions.

CORPORAL

The corporal is a small folded cloth placed on the altar on which the chalice and paten are placed.

CORPUS CHRISTI

Corpus Christi means “Body of Christ” and refers to the special day when Jesus is especially honored in the Holy Eucharist.

CREDO

Credo means “I believe” and is the creed which is recited after the homily for Sunday Mass.

MEA CULPA

Mea culpa is Latin for “through my fault” which is said during the *Confiteor*.

DEACON

A deacon is one who assists the priest at Mass and who may baptize, give the homily and distribute Holy Communion.

DEO GRATIAS

Deo gratias in Latin means “Thanks be to God.”

DIVINE OFFICE

The divine office is a series of psalms and other prayers said daily by priests, religious, and by some lay people.

DOMINUS VOBISCUM

Dominus vobiscum is Latin for “The Lord be with you.”

EASTER DUTY

Easter duty refers to the obligation of every Catholic to receive Holy Communion worthily at least once a year, during the Easter season.

EPIPHANY

Epiphany is the day the magi came to visit the Infant Jesus.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

The Eucharistic Prayer is the prayer the priest says after the *Sanctus*.

EXORCISM

An exorcism is the prayer of the Church said over someone who is possessed by the devil.

FIRST FRIDAY

The first Friday of each month is dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and people are encouraged to receive Holy Communion on that day to make up for sin.

FORTY HOURS

The Forty Hours Devotion is the time when the Holy Eucharist is solemnly exposed for adoration.

GAUDETE SUNDAY

Gaudete means ‘rejoice’ and refers to the Mass of the third Sunday of Advent.

GLORIA

The *Gloria* is the “Glory to God in the highest” which is sometimes said at Mass after the Kyrie.

GLORIA PATRI

Gloria Patri means “Glory be to the Father.”

GOOD FRIDAY

Good Friday is the day Jesus died on the cross.

GREGORIAN CHANT

Gregorian chant is the special Latin music of the Roman Catholic Church.

HOLY THURSDAY

Holy Thursday was the day of the Last Supper when Jesus instituted the Holy Eucharist, suffered the agony in the garden and was arrested

HOLY WEEK

Holy Week is the time between Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday.

HUMERAL VEIL

A humeral veil is the shawl a priest uses for carrying the Blessed Sacrament.

INTROIT

The introit is the Gregorian chant sung during the entrance procession for Mass.

LAETARE SUNDAY

Laetare means ‘be joyful’ and refers to the Mass of the Fourth Sunday of Lent.

LAUDS

Lauds is the morning prayer of the divine office.

LENT

Lent is the period forty days before Easter when prayer, fasting and other good works are encouraged.

LITANY

A litany is a prayer which consists of short phrases which are answered by a repeated response.

LITURGICAL COLORS

White or gold is the color for feasts. Violet is the color for Advent, Lent and sometimes funerals. Red is the color for Masses of the Holy Spirit and of martyrs. Green is the color for ordinary time. Black is the color for funerals and Masses of the dead.

LITURGY

The word liturgy refers to the official worship of the Church and to the administration of the sacraments.

MAGNIFICAT

Magnificat means “it magnifies,” the first words of a prayer of praise first spoken by the Virgin Mary.

MAY & OCTOBER

May is the month dedicated to the honor of the Virgin Mary. October is the month of Her Holy Rosary.

MITER

A miter is the pointed headdress worn by a bishop.

MONSTRANCE

A monstrance is the standing vessel used to display the Holy Eucharist for adoration.

NOTRE DAME

Notre Dame are two French words meaning “Our Lady.”

OFFERTORY

The offertory is the part of the Mass when the priest with the people offers bread and wine that will become the Holy Eucharist.

OREMUS

Oremus is a latin word which means “let us pray.”

O SALUTARIS

O salutaris is the first Latin hymn sung for Benediction.

PASCHAL TIME

Paschal time means the Easter season.

PATEN

The paten is the metal plate upon which the host is placed. It is also the name of the flat plate held by the altar boys during time of Holy Communion.

PATER NOSTER

Pater noster means “Our Father” in Latin.

PIETÀ

Pietà means “pity” and refers to an image of the Virgin Mary holding the body of Jesus after His death.

PILGRIMAGE

A pilgrimage is a journey made to a sacred place.

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

The Prayer of the Faithful is a series of petitions said at Mass after the Creed.

PRECEPTS OF THE CHURCH

The Precepts of the Church are rules of the Church which bind all Catholics.

PREFACE

The Preface is the prayer the priest says or sings before the Sanctus.

PULPIT

The pulpit is the place from which the Scriptures are read and the homily is given.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

The responsorial psalm is the song after the first reading of the Mass.

REGINA CAELI

Regina Caeli means “Queen of Heaven” and refers to the prayer said in place of the Angelus during Paschal time.

RELIC

A relic is part of the body or clothing of a canonized saint. It may also be a cloth touched to these.

SABBATH

Sabbath is the day of worship and rest in which needless physical work or conducting business is forbidden.

SACRISTY

The sacristy is the room where the priest or altar boys vest and prepare for Mass.

SALVE REGINA

Salve Regina are the Latin opening words of the prayer, “Hail, Holy Queen.”

SANCTUARY

The sanctuary is the area in the church surrounding the altar.

SANCTUS

The Sanctus is the prayer “Holy, holy, holy” used at Mass.

SCAPULAR

A scapular is a sacramental made of two small pieces of blest cloth joined by a cord and worn around the neck. There are many kinds of scapulars, the most common of which is the brown Carmelite scapular.

SPIRITUAL BOUQUET

A spiritual bouquet is a gift of prayers, Masses, and other good works offered on behalf of another person.

STOLE

A stole is the narrow vestment worn by priests around the neck, or by deacons from the left shoulder and crossed to the right side at the waist.

SURPLICE

The surplice is the waist-length white garment worn by priests or altar servers.

TABERNACLE

The tabernacle is the container which houses the Holy Eucharist.

TANTUM ERGO

Tantum ergo is the second Latin hymn sung for Benediction.

TE DEUM

The *Te Deum* is a festive hymn of praise often sung in thanksgiving.

TEMPORAL PUNISHMENT

Unlike the everlasting punishment of hell, temporal punishment refers to the penalty for sin that has an end.

THURIBLE

The thurible is a vessel used to burn incense.

TRANSFIGURATION

The Transfiguration was the momentary shining of light from the body of Jesus during His earthly life.

VESPERS

Vespers is the solemn evening prayer of the Church.

VIATICUM

Viaticum is the final Holy Communion given to the dying.

II Words about Doctrine

APOSTASY/HERESY

Apostasy is the grave sin of abandoning belief in Jesus Christ. Heresy is the sin of refusing to accept any of the teachings of the Church.

ASTROLOGY

Astrology is the grave sin of believing in the magical powers of the stars.

BEATIFIC VISION

The beatific vision refers to seeing of God in heaven.

BISHOP

A bishop is an ordained successor to the apostles and who has the fullness of Holy Orders.

BLASPHEMY

Blasphemy is the mortal sin of speaking about God or holy persons and things in a disrespectful manner.

CANONIZATION

Canonization is the Pope's infallible decree that someone is a saint in heaven.

CANON LAW

Canon law is the collection of the official laws of the Catholic Church.

CAPITAL SINS

The Capital Sins are seven inclinations which lead one to sin. They are pride, covetousness, lust, anger, gluttony, envy and sloth. They are sometimes called the seven Deadly Sins.

CARDINAL VIRTUES (4)

The cardinal Virtues are the four principal moral virtues: prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance.

CHASTITY

Chastity is another name for purity.

CLERGY/LAITY

Clergy refers to men in Holy Orders: bishops, priests, and deacons. Laity refers to all other baptized persons.

DOGMA

A dogma is a teaching which all Christians must believe.

ENCYCLICAL (LETTER)

An encyclical is one written by the Pope and which contains some aspect of Church teaching.

EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

The examination of conscience refers to thinking over the sins one has committed.

EXCOMMUNICATION

Excommunication is a penalty imposed by the Church for very grave sins which separate a person from the Church.

FASTING

Fasting means limiting for religious reasons the amount of food that one eats. Two days of the year are obligatory fast days for those between the ages of 21-70, Ash Wednesday and Good Friday.

FOUR LAST THINGS

The four last things are death, judgment, heaven and hell.

JUDGMENT

There are two judgments after death: the **Particular Judgment** which takes place immediately after one dies, and the **General Judgment** which will take place at the end of the world and which will include all humanity.

IDOLATRY

Idolatry means the worship of false gods.

INDEFECTIBILITY

Indefectibility means that the Catholic Church can never be destroyed but will endure for all time.

INDULGENCES

An indulgence is a grant from the Church which removes temporal punishment due to sin. A Plenary Indulgence remits all punishment. A Partial Indulgence remits some of the punishment.

LIMBO

Limbo is the place where those who have no mortal sins but were never baptized are thought to go after death.

MAGISTERIUM

Magisterium refers to the Church's authority to teach men the truths of faith and morals.

MARTYR

A martyr is one who was killed because of his Christian faith.

MARRIAGE VOWS

Marriage vows are the words which join a husband and wife in the lifelong union.

PERJURY

Perjury is the mortal sin of telling a falsehood while under oath.

GRACE, KINDS OF

Sanctifying or habitual grace means being without mortal sin and in a state of friendship with God. **Actual** grace is word for the different kinds of help that God sends us.

III Words on the Bible

ABRAHAM

Abraham is the father of the chosen people and of all Christian believers.

ADAM & EVE

Adam and Eve are the first human beings God created.

ALPHA & OMEGA

Alpha and *Omega* are two Greek words which mean 'the beginning' and the end.' This is one of the titles for Jesus.

APOCALYPSE

The Apocalypse, or Book of Revelation, is the last book of the bible.

APOSTLE

An apostle is one of the twelve men chosen by Christ to be the foundation of the Church.

ARK OF THE COVENANT

The Ark of the Covenant was a sacred container which originally housed the tablets of the Ten Commandments.

BEATITUDES

The Beatitudes are eight sayings of Jesus, each of which begins with the word “Blessed.”

CAIN & ABEL

Cain and Abel were the first children of Adam and Eve. Cain killed his brother Abel.

CALVARY

Calvary is the name of the place where Jesus was crucified. (See also *Golgotha*.)

DE PROFUNDIS

De profundis are Latin words meaning “Out of the Depths” the first words of a psalm from the Old Testament.

DECALOGUE

Decalogue is another name for the Ten Commandments.

EVANGELISTS

The evangelists were the men who wrote the four Gospels: Saints Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

GARDEN OF EDEN

The Garden of Eden is the paradise where Adam and Eve lived before they sinned.

ELIJAH

Elijah was one of the great prophets of the Old Testament.

EVANGELIZE

To evangelize means to share our Catholic faith with others.

EXODUS

The Exodus was the release of the Israelites from slavery in Egypt.

GABRIEL

Gabriel is the name of the Archangel who announced to Mary that God had chosen Her to become the Mother of His Son.

GEHENNA

Gehenna is another word for hell.

GENESIS

Genesis is the name of the first book of the bible. It begins with the words, "In the beginning..."

GETHSEMANI

Gethsemani is the name of the garden where Jesus began suffering His Passion.

GOLGOTHA

Golgotha, or place of the skull, is the name of the place where Jesus was crucified. (See also *Calvary*.)

GOOD FRIDAY

Good Friday is the day Jesus died on the cross for our redemption.

JERUSALEM

Jerusalem is the capital city for the Jews in the Holy Land.

MAGI

The magi are the wise men who came to visit the Infant Jesus and who offered Him gold, frankincense and myrrh.

MANNA

Manna is the name of the miraculous bread that fell from the sky to feed the Israelites in the desert.

MESSIAH

Messiah is a title for Jesus which means 'the Anointed One.'

NATIVITY

The Nativity refers to the day Jesus was born, December 25th.

OLD TESTAMENT / NEW TESTAMENT

The two parts of the bible are the Old Testament, before the time of Jesus, and the New Testament, the time of Jesus and the early Church.

PARABLE

A parable is a story used to teach a religious truth.

PARACLETE

Paraclete or Advocate is another name for the Holy Spirit.

PASSION

The Passion of Christ refers to His sufferings and death.

PATRIARCH

Patriarch is a term of the Old Testament used to refer to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

PENTATEUCH

The Pentateuch refers to the first five books of the Old Testament: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy.

PENTECOST

Pentecost is the day when the Holy Spirit, in the form of tongues of fire, descended upon Mary and the Apostles.

PSALM

A psalm is a religious poem of the Old Testament. There are one hundred fifty psalms.

TOWER OF BABEL

The Tower of Babel was a building begun by men but never completed because God confused their speech.

YAHWEH

Yahweh is one of the holy names for God in the Old Testament.