

Catechism of the Catholic Church: The Truths of Our Faith

(Numbers 897 through 1065 – Fourth Class: May 24, 2021 (*Deacon Tom Kempf*))

Christ's Faithful *continued* (897-945)

- The Lay Faithful

- **899** - Lay believers are in the **front line** of Church life; for them the Church is the animating principle of human society. Therefore, they in particular ought to have an ever-clearer consciousness not only of belonging to the Church, but of being the Church, that is to say, the community of the faithful on earth under the leadership of the Pope, the common Head, and of the bishops in communion with him. They are the Church.
- **900** - Their [lay faithful] activity in ecclesial communities is so necessary that, for the most part, the apostolate of the pastors cannot be fully effective without it.
- **905** - Lay people also fulfill their prophetic mission by evangelization, "that is, the proclamation of Christ by word and the testimony of life." For lay people, "this evangelization . . . acquires a specific property and peculiar efficacy because it is accomplished in the ordinary circumstances of the world. The **true apostle** is on the lookout for occasions of announcing Christ by word, either to unbelievers . . . or to the faithful.
- **909** - Moreover, by uniting their forces let the laity so remedy the institutions and conditions of the world when the latter are an inducement to sin, that these may be conformed to the norms of justice, favoring rather than hindering the practice of virtue. By so doing they will **impregnate culture** and human works with a moral value.
- **912** - The faithful should "distinguish carefully between the rights and the duties which they have as belonging to the Church and those which fall to them as members of the human society. They will strive to unite the two harmoniously, remembering that in every temporal affair they are to be guided by a Christian conscience, since no human activity, even of the temporal order, can be withdrawn from God's dominion.
- **913** - Thus, **every person**, through these gifts given to him, is at once the witness and the living instrument of the mission of the Church itself 'according to the measure of Christ's bestowal.

- The Consecrated Life
 - **915** - It is the profession of these counsels [poverty, chastity, and obedience], within a permanent state of life recognized by the Church, that characterizes the life consecrated to God.

The Communion of Saints (946-962)

- Communion in Spiritual Goods
 - **946** – The communion of saints is the Church.
 - **947** – . . . the riches of Christ are communicated to all the members, through the sacraments.
 - **948** – The faithful (sancti) are fed by Christ's holy body and blood (sancta) to grow in the communion of the Holy Spirit (koinonia) and to communicate it to the world.
 - **953** – Communion in charity. In the sanctorum communio, “None of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself.” “If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together. Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.” “Charity does not insist on its own way.” In this solidarity with all men, living or dead, which is founded on the communion of saints, **the least of our acts done in charity redounds to the profit of all. Every sin harms this communion.**
- The Communion of the Church of Heaven and Earth
 - **954** – The three states of the Church: “When the Lord comes in glory, and all his angels with him, death will be no more and all things will be subject to him. But at the present time some of his disciples are pilgrims on earth [**Church Militant**]. Others have died and are being purified [**Church Suffering**], while still others are in glory [**Church Triumphant**], contemplating ‘in full light, God himself triune and one, exactly as he is.’”
 - **956** – The intercession of the saints: “Being more closely united to Christ, those who dwell in heaven fix the whole Church more firmly in holiness.... **They do not cease to intercede with the Father for us**, as they proffer the merits which they acquired on earth through the one mediator between God and men, Christ Jesus.... So by their fraternal concern is our weakness greatly helped.”
 - **958** – Communion with the dead: “. . . **it is a holy and a wholesome thought to pray for the dead that they may be loosed from their sins**’ she offers her

suffrages for them.” Our prayer for them is capable not only of helping them, but also of making their intercession for us effective.

Mary – Mother of Christ, Mother of the Church (963-975)

- Mary’s Motherhood with Regard to the Church
 - **964** – Thus the Blessed Virgin advanced in her pilgrimage of faith, and faithfully persevered in her union with her Son unto the cross. There she stood, in keeping with the divine plan, enduring with her only begotten Son the intensity of his suffering, joining herself with his sacrifice in her mother’s heart, and lovingly consenting to the immolation of this victim, born of her: to be given, by the same Christ Jesus dying on the cross, as a mother to his disciple, with these words: **“Woman, behold your son.”**
 - **967** – By her complete adherence to the Father’s will, to his Son’s redemptive work, and to every prompting of the Holy Spirit, **the Virgin Mary is the Church’s model of faith and charity.** Thus she is a **“preeminent and . . . wholly unique member of the Church”**; indeed, she is the **“exemplary realization”** (typus) of the Church.
 - **968** – In a wholly singular way [Mary] cooperated by her **obedience, faith, hope,** and burning **charity** in the Savior’s work of restoring supernatural life to souls. **For this reason she is a mother to us in the order of grace.**
 - **969** – The Blessed Virgin is invoked in the Church under the titles of **Advocate, Helper, Benefactress,** and **Mediatrix.**
- Devotion to the Blessed Mother
 - **971** – “All generations will call me blessed”
- Mary – Eschatological Icon of the Church

Article 10 “I BELIEVE IN THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS” (976-987)

- **976** – “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.”
- One Baptism for the Forgiveness of Sins
 - **977** – **Baptism is the first and chief sacrament of forgiveness** of sins because it unites us with Christ, who died for our sins and rose for our justification, so that “we too might walk in newness of life.”

- **978** – “When we made our first profession of faith while receiving the holy Baptism that cleansed us, the forgiveness we received then was so full and complete that there remained in us absolutely **nothing left to efface**, neither original sin nor offenses committed by our own will, **nor was there left any penalty to suffer** in order to expiate them.... Yet the grace of Baptism delivers no one from all the weakness of nature. On the contrary, **we must still combat the movements of concupiscence that never cease leading us into evil.**”
- **979** – In this battle against our inclination towards evil, who could be brave and watchful enough to escape every wound of sin? “If the Church has the power to forgive sins, then Baptism cannot be her only means of using the keys of the Kingdom of heaven received from Jesus Christ. The Church must be able to forgive all penitents their offenses, even if they should sin until the last moment of their lives.”
- **980** – It is through the sacrament of Penance that the baptized can be reconciled with God and with the Church:
Penance has rightly been called by the holy Fathers “a laborious kind of baptism.” **This sacrament of Penance is necessary for salvation for those who have fallen after Baptism**, just as Baptism is necessary for salvation for those who have not yet been reborn.

- The Power of the Keys

- **981** – [The Church] has received the keys of the Kingdom of heaven so that, in her, sins may be forgiven through Christ’s blood and the Holy Spirit’s action. **In this Church**, the soul dead through sin comes back to life in order to live with Christ, whose grace has saved us.
- **982** – **There is no offense, however serious, that the Church cannot forgive.** “There is no one, however wicked and guilty, who may not confidently hope for forgiveness, provided his repentance is honest.” Christ who died for all men desires that in his Church the gates of forgiveness should always be open to anyone who turns away from sin.
- **983** – Were there no forgiveness of sins in the Church, there would be no hope of life to come or eternal liberation. **Let us thank God who has given his Church such a gift.**

Article 11 “I BELIEVE IN THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY” (988-1019)

- **989** – If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit who dwells in you.

- **991** – Belief in the resurrection of the dead has been an essential element of the Christian faith from its beginnings.
- Christ’s Resurrection and Ours
 - **992** – The King of the universe will raise us up to an everlasting renewal of life, because we have died for his laws. One cannot but choose to die at the hands of men and to cherish the hope that God gives of being raised again by him.
 - **993** – To the Sadducees who deny it [the resurrection of the body] he answers, “Is not this why you are wrong, that you know neither the scriptures nor the power of God?” Faith in the resurrection rests on faith in God who "is not God of the dead, but of the living.”
 - **994** – It is Jesus himself who on the last day will raise up those who have believed in him, who have eaten his body and drunk his blood.
 - **996** – From the beginning, Christian faith in the resurrection has met with incomprehension and opposition. “On no point does the Christian faith encounter more opposition than on the resurrection of the body.”
 - **997** – *What is rising?* God, in his almighty power, will definitively grant incorruptible life to our bodies by reuniting them with our souls, through the power of Jesus’ Resurrection.
 - **998** – *Who will rise?* All the dead will rise, “those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of judgment.”
 - **999** – *How?* But someone will ask, “How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?” You foolish man! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. and what you sow is not the body which is to be, but a bare kernel ...What is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable... the dead will be raised imperishable... For this perishable nature must put on the imperishable, and this mortal nature must put on immortality.
 - **1000** – This "how" exceeds our imagination and understanding; it is accessible only to faith.
 - **1001** – *When?* Definitively “at the last day,” “at the end of the world.”
- Dying in Christ Jesus
 - **1004** – In expectation of that day, the believer’s body and soul already participate in the dignity of belonging to Christ. This dignity entails the demand that he should treat with respect his own body, but also the body of every other person, especially the suffering:
The body [is meant] for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. And God raised the Lord and will also raise us up by his power. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? You are not your own; So glorify God in your body.

- **1005** – To rise with Christ, we must die with Christ: we must “be away from the body and at home with the Lord.” In that “departure” which is death the soul is separated from the body. It will be reunited with the body on the day of resurrection of the dead.
- **1010** – Because of Christ, Christian death has a positive meaning: “For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.”

Article 12 “I BELIEVE IN LIFE EVERLASTING” (1020-1060)

- The Particular Judgment
 - **1021** – Death puts an end to human life as the time open to either accepting or rejecting the divine grace manifested in Christ. . . each [of us] will be rewarded immediately after death in accordance with his works and faith.
 - **1022** – Each man receives his eternal retribution in his immortal soul at the very moment of his death, in a particular judgment that refers his life to Christ: either entrance into the blessedness of heaven – through a purification or immediately, – or immediate and everlasting damnation.
- Heaven
 - **1023** – Those who die in God's grace and friendship and are perfectly purified live for ever with Christ.
 - **1024** – Heaven is the ultimate end and fulfillment of the deepest human longings, the state of supreme, definitive happiness.
 - **1026** – By his death and Resurrection, Jesus Christ has “opened” heaven to us. . . . He makes partners in his heavenly glorification those who have believed in him and **remained faithful** to his will.
- The Final Purification, or Purgatory
 - **1030** – All who die in God's grace and friendship, **but still imperfectly purified**, are indeed assured of their eternal salvation; but after death they undergo purification, so as to achieve the holiness necessary to enter the joy of heaven.
 - **1031** – As for certain lesser faults, we must believe that, before the Final Judgment, there is a purifying fire. He who is truth says that whoever utters blasphemy against the Holy Spirit will be pardoned neither in this age nor in the age to come. From this sentence we understand that certain offenses can be forgiven in this age, but certain others in the age to come.
 - **1032** – “Therefore [Judas Maccabeus] made atonement for the dead, that they might be delivered from their sin.” . . . From the beginning the Church has honored the memory of the dead and offered prayers in suffrage for them, above all the Eucharistic sacrifice, so that, thus purified, they may attain the

beatific vision of God. The Church also commends almsgiving, indulgences, and works of penance undertaken on behalf of the dead.

- Hell

- **1033** – We cannot be united with God unless we freely choose to love him. But we cannot love God if we sin gravely against him, against our neighbor or against ourselves. . . . To die in mortal sin **without repenting and accepting** God's merciful love means remaining separated from him for ever by our own free choice. This state of definitive self-exclusion from communion with God and the blessed is called “hell.”
- **1035** – The teaching of **the Church affirms the existence of hell and its eternity**. Immediately after death the souls of those who die in a state of mortal sin descend into hell, where they suffer the punishments of hell, “eternal fire.”
- **1036** – “**Enter by the narrow gate**; for the gate is wide and the way is easy, that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. For the gate is narrow and the way is hard, that leads to life, and those who find it are few.”
- **1037** – **God predestines no one to go to hell**; for this, a willful turning away from God (a mortal sin) is necessary, and persistence in it until the end.

- The Last Judgment

- **1038** – The resurrection of all the dead, “of both the just and the unjust,” will precede the Last Judgment. This will be “the hour when all who are in the tombs will hear [the Son of man’s] voice and come forth, those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of judgment.” Then Christ will come “in his glory, and all the angels with him Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate them one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will place the sheep at his right hand, but the goats at the left.... and they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”
- **1039** – In the presence of Christ, who is Truth itself, the truth of each man's relationship with God will be laid bare.

- The Hope of the New Heaven and the New Earth

- **1045** – For man, this consummation will be the final realization of the unity of the human race, which God willed from creation and of which the pilgrim Church has been “in the nature of sacrament.” Those who are united with

Christ will form the community of the redeemed, “the holy city” of God, “the Bride, the wife of the Lamb.”

- **1048** – “We know neither the moment of the consummation of the earth and of man, nor the way in which the universe will be transformed. The form of this world, distorted by sin, is passing away, and we are taught that God is preparing a new dwelling and a new earth in which righteousness dwells, in which happiness will fill and surpass all the desires of peace arising in the hearts of men.”

“AMEN” (1061-1065) “I believe”