

## THE CATECHISM EXPLAINED



# The Catechism Explained

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*Newly Annotated with Corresponding References to the  
Catechism of the Catholic Church*

REV. FRANCIS SPIRAGO

*Edited by*

REV. RICHARD F. CLARKE, SJ

TAN Books  
Gastonia, North Carolina

Nihil Obstat: Arthur J. Scanlan, S.T.D.  
Censor Librorum

Imprimatur: ✠ Patrick J. Hayes, D.D.  
Archbishop of New York  
New York  
October 18, 1921

Originally published in 1899 by Benzinger Brothers, New York. This edition is typeset from the 1921 edition with added notes.

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Cover design by Jordan Avery

ISBN: 978-1-5051-2299-2  
Kindle ISBN: 978-1-5051-2300-5  
ePUB ISBN: 978-1-5051-2301-2

Published in the United States by  
TAN Books  
PO Box 269  
Gastonia, NC 28053  
[www.TANBooks.com](http://www.TANBooks.com)

Printed in India

Dedicated to  
The Blessed Virgin Mary  
Mother of God



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### **PART III.**

#### **THE MEANS OF GRACE.**

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1. Every Catholic is bound, under pain of mortal sin, to hear the whole of one Mass devoutly every Sunday and holy day of obligation..... 664
2. To hear Mass on week-days, if possible, is a highly commendable practice, for it may be the means of gaining the greatest graces..... 666

#### 11. THE TIME WHEN MASS IS TO BE CELEBRATED.

1. The holy sacrifice of the Mass is generally to be celebrated between sunrise and noon, and at midnight on Christmas Eve..... 667
2. On Sundays and holydays of obligation the holy sacrifice of the Mass is offered at a convenient hour in all parish churches, and almost always on week-days also..... 667
3. No priest may, as a rule, say Mass more than once daily; but on Christmas Day and on All Soul's Day all priests are allowed to say three Masses. And by the permission of the bishop some parish priests who have a large congregation are allowed to duplicate, that is, say two Masses on the same day..... 667

## 12. THE PLACE WHERE MASS IS TO BE CELEBRATED.

1. The apostles offered the holy sacrifice on a table in a dwelling-house ..... 668
2. In the time of the great persecution of the Christians, the holy sacrifice was offered on the tombs of the martyrs in subterranean passages (the Catacombs) ..... 668
3. When the period of persecution was over, the holy sacrifice of the Mass was offered in churches upon altars of stone ..... 669

## 13. THE VESTMENTS AND SACRED VESSELS USED AT MASS.

1. The vestments which the priest wears in the celebration of Mass consist of (1), the amice; (2), the alb; (3), the girdle; (4), the maniple; (5), the stole; (6), the chasuble..... 672
2. The various portions of the sacerdotal vestments are commemorative of Our Lord's Passion, and also serve to remind the priest of the duties of his office ..... 673
3. The principal things which are used in saying Mass are: The chalice, the paten, and the missal ..... 673

## 14. THE COLORS OF THE VESTMENTS.

1. In the vestments worn by the priest at Mass, the Church makes use of five colors: white, red, green, purple, and black ..... 674
2. These colors not only depict the course of Our Lord's life on earth, but serve as a constant admonition to us to lead a pious life ..... 675

## 15. THE LANGUAGE OF THE MASS.

- In celebrating the holy sacrifice of the Mass the Church makes use of the Latin Language ..... 676
1. The Latin language is well adapted for the services of the Church, because it is both venerable and mysterious ..... 676
  2. The use of the Latin language in her services is most advantageous for the Church; it serves to maintain her unity and preserve her from many evils ..... 676



## 16. SINGING AT MASS.

1. The singing of which the Church makes use as an accompaniment to the Mass, is what is known as the Gregorian chant..... 678
2. In addition to the Gregorian chant we have in our churches congregational singing, hymns in which the people join. Instrumental music, as an accompaniment to the singing, is played on the organ, violin, or other musical instruments ..... 678

## 17. HEARING THE WORD OF GOD.

1. The Word of God is said to be the food of the soul, because it sustains the life and strength of the soul, as bread does that of the body ..... 681
2. Hence it is the duty of every Christian either to hear sermons frequently, or to read spiritual books and make a practical application of what he hears or reads..... 682
3. Those who are assiduous in hearing sermons or reading spiritual books, will not have great difficulty in attaining eternal salvation..... 684

## II. THE SACRAMENTS.

1. The sacraments are sensible signs instituted by Christ, by means of which the graces of the Holy Spirit are communicated to us ..... 685
2. Christ instituted seven sacraments: Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Eucharist, Penance, Extreme Unction, Holy Orders and Matrimony..... 687
3. By the three sacraments, Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders, there is imprinted upon the soul a certain spiritual and indelible mark or character, on account of which they cannot be repeated (Council of Trent, 7, 9) ..... 688
4. Two of the sacraments, Baptism and Penance, are instituted principally with the object of conferring sanctifying grace where it was not already given; the five others with the object of increasing that gift..... 688
5. Due preparation must be made before receiving the sacraments, in order to obtain the graces they convey..... 689

6. Supposing the priest who administers the sacrament to be unworthy, the graces of the Holy Spirit will still be communicated by means of the sacrament ..... 691

### I. BAPTISM.

1. This is what takes place at Baptism: Water is poured upon the head of the person to be baptized, and at the same time the words appointed by Our Lord are repeated; the person is thereby cleansed from original sin and all other sins, he is gifted with habitual and sanctifying grace, and becomes a child of God, an heir of heaven, and a member of the Church..... 692
2. Baptism acts spiritually as water does materially ..... 693
3. Baptism is indispensably necessary to salvation. Hence children who die unbaptized cannot enter heaven (Council of Trent, 7, 5) ..... 695
4. Hence it follows that parents ought to have their children baptized immediately after their birth, because new-born infants hover between life and death ..... 696
5. In case of necessity any one can administer baptism, and without the usual ceremonies ..... 696
6. If baptism by water is impossible, it may be replaced by the baptism of desire, or by the baptism of blood, as in the case of those who suffer martyrdom for the faith of Christ ..... 697
7. In the early ages of the Church solemn Baptism was administered on three days of the year: Holy Saturday, the eve of Whitsunday, and in the East on the eve of the Epiphany ..... 697

### 2. CONFIRMATION.

1. The ceremonial of Confirmation is as follows: The bishop lays his hands upon the candidates and anoints each one severally with chrism upon the forehead, with prayer; and those who are so anointed receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit, especially courage to profess their faith..... 702
2. The supernatural effect of Confirmation is similar to the natural effect of oil..... 703

3. Christians ought to be confirmed at the age when they pass from childhood to youth, because at that period temptations thicken around them, and they need strength of will to resist them ..... 705
4. The candidate for Confirmation ought previously to go to confession and, if possible, to holy communion; for to receive this sacrament one must be in a state of grace ..... 705
5. Confirmation is usually administered about Whitsuntide, as the bishop visits the whole of his diocese at intervals of a few years ..... 706

### 3. THE HOLY EUCHARIST.

#### INSTITUTION AND NATURE OF THE HOLY EUCHARIST.

1. The body of Christ under the appearance of bread, and the blood of Christ under the appearance of wine, is called the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar ..... 709
2. The presence of the body and blood of Christ under the appearance of bread and wine is a mystery, because our feeble reason cannot comprehend it..... 710
3. It is most true that under the species of bread, as also under the species of wine, Christ is present, God and man, whole and entire..... 711
4. Our Lord is present in every particle, however minute, of the consecrated bread and wine..... 712
5. Christ is present in the consecrated elements as long as the accidents of bread and wine remain ..... 712
6. The duties of the Christian in regard to the Holy Sacrament of the Altar are these; He ought to visit it frequently, to adore it, and to receive it..... 713

#### THE NECESSITY OF HOLY COMMUNION.

1. The Holy Sacrament of the Altar is the nourishment of our souls..... 715
2. We are bound under pain of mortal sin to communicate at least once a year, and that at Easter; also in case of dangerous illness. It is, moreover, the wish of the Church that the faithful should, if possible, receive holy communion on Sundays and holydays..... 717

THE EFFECTS OF HOLY COMMUNION.

Holy communion acts spiritually, as bread and wine act materially .... 720

1. By holy communion we are united most closely to Christ. Our Lord says: "He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood, abideth in Me, and I in him" (John 6:57)..... 720
2. Holy communion imparts actual graces, and also maintains and increases sanctifying grace in the soul..... 720
3. The force of evil concupiscence is lessened by holy communion, and we are freed from venial sin by means of it..... 721
4. Holy communion often affords much refreshment to the soul..... 722
5. Holy communion sanctifies the body, and implants in it the germ of a future glorious resurrection..... 722

PREPARATION FOR HOLY COMMUNION.

1. We must make a suitable preparation of body and soul before receiving holy communion ..... 723
2. The manner in which we should prepare our soul is this: We must cleanse our souls from mortal sin by confession, perform good works, and adorn ourselves with the virtues ..... 723
3. Our body must be prepared for holy communion by fasting from midnight; by dressing in a neat and suitable manner, and by a reverent deportment at the time of communion ..... 726

BEHAVIOR AFTER RECEIVING HOLY COMMUNION.

After receiving communion we should make our thanksgiving, and proffer our petitions to almighty God, praying for the Pope, for the authorities, secular and ecclesiastical, for our relatives, friends, and benefactors, and for the holy souls in purgatory.....728

SPIRITUAL COMMUNION.

Spiritual communion consists in awakening within the heart a lively desire to receive holy communion..... 729

4. THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE.

THE NATURE AND THE NECESSITY OF PENANCE.

1. In the Sacrament of Penance the repentant Christian confesses his sins to a duly authorized priest, who, standing in the place

- of God, pronounces the absolution by means of which they are forgiven ..... 730
2. The Sacrament of Penance is indispensably necessary for those who have fallen into sin after Baptism, for without this sacrament they are unable to recover the justice they have lost (Council of Trent, 14, 1; 6, 29)..... 731
3. Let no one be deterred by a feeling of shame from confessing his sins; the priest dare not, under any pretext, reveal what is said in the confessional, and he is ever ready to receive the contrite sinner kindly..... 733
4. He who from a sense of shame conceals a mortal sin in confession, does not obtain forgiveness, but only adds to his other sins that of sacrilege; and exposes himself to the grave risk of dying impenitent..... 734

## THE CONFESSOR.

1. No priest can give absolution who has not received the faculties for hearing confessions from the bishop of the diocese..... 735
2. Priests who are duly authorized to hear confessions have not power to absolve from all sins, since there are certain sins which the Pope or the bishop has reserved to himself for judgment (Copuncil of Trent, 14, 11)..... 736
3. In the confessional the priest stands in the place of God; therefore the penitent is bound to yield him obedience..... 736
4. Under no possible conditions may the priest repeat anything out of the confessional..... 737
5. Every Catholic is perfectly free to choose his own confessor ..... 738

## THE EFFECTS OF PENANCE.

- By worthily receiving the Sacrament of Penance we obtain the following graces ..... 739
1. The guilt of sin is remitted and the debt of eternal punishment; yet there remains the debt of temporal punishment to be discharged..... 739
2. The Holy Spirit returns to the repentant sinner, and imparts to him sanctifying grace; and the merits of all the good works he

- formerly performed while in a state of grace are restored to him again..... 741
3. Through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit we obtain great peace of mind, nay, great consolations, if our conversion be sincere..... 742
4. The Holy Spirit imparts to us the strength necessary to overcome sin..... 742

#### THE WORTHY RECEPTION OF THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE.

In order to receive the Sacrament of Penance worthily, we must do as follows: ..... 743

1. We must examine our conscience, i.e., we must carefully consider what sins we have committed and not yet confessed ..... 744
2. We must truly repent of our sins, that is, we must grieve from our heart that we have offended God by them, and the thought of offending Him must be abhorrent to us..... 747

The means of awakening true contrition is to reflect that by our sins we have grievously offended the infinite majesty of God, and have displeased our loving Father, our greatest Benefactor..... 748

The consideration that we must expect the just judgments of God on account of our sins, also disposes us to true contrition ..... 750

Confession without contrition does not obtain the divine forgiveness ..... 751

3. We must make a firm resolution, that is, we must steadfastly determine with the help of God to desist from all sin, and to avoid the occasions of sin for the future ..... 752
4. We are under the obligation of confessing our sins, that is, we must secretly to the priest enumerate all the mortal sins of which we are conscious, accurately, simply, and humbly; with the number of times we have committed them, besides all that is necessary to make known the nature of the sin (Council of Trent, 14, 5, 7)..... 753
5. Satisfaction must be made: i.e., we must perform the penance enjoined upon us by the confessor ..... 755

The confessor generally enjoins upon the penitent, prayer, almsdeeds, and fasting as works of penance, in order that he may thereby discharge the temporal penalties, and weaken the power of evil tendencies (Council of Trent, 14, 8) ..... 755

We should, besides, make satisfaction by punishments voluntarily undertaken of ourselves; and also by bearing patiently the temporal scourges inflicted of God (Council of Trent, 14, 9) .....	757
The works of penance which we perform and the sufferings we bear patiently do not only cancel the temporal punishment due to our sins, but they contribute to the increase of our eternal happiness .....	758

## GENERAL CONFESSION.

1. By a general confession is meant confession of all the sins we have committed within a considerable period of time..... 758
2. A general confession is profitable because it produces in us greater self-knowledge, deeper humility, increased tranquillity of conscience, and obtains many graces from God..... 758
3. A general confession is indispensable, if an invalid confession has once been made; it is also advisable in the case of persons who are entering upon a new state of life, or who are in danger of death..... 759

## CONFESSION A DIVINE INSTITUTION.

1. Confession of sins was instituted by Our Lord, and has been the practice of the Church in all centuries ..... 759
2. The institution of confession affords us proof of the infinite mercy and wisdom of God ..... 761

## THE ADVANTAGES OF CONFESSION.

1. Confession is extremely useful both to individuals and to society in general..... 762

## THE SIN OF RELAPSE.

1. He who after his conversion relapses into mortal sin, is in danger of dying impenitent, because the devil acquires great power over him, and the influence of the Holy Spirit is lessened..... 763
2. If any one should relapse into mortal sin, let him forthwith repent and go to confession; for the longer penance is delayed, the more difficult, the more uncertain conversion will be..... 764
3. If, through frailty, we fall into venial sin, we must not be disquieted on that account, but humble ourselves before God..... 764

- 4. Since we cannot possibly continue in a state of grace until death without the special assistance of the Holy Spirit, let us fervently implore of God the grace of final perseverance..... 765

INDULGENCES.

- 1. God has granted to the Church the power, after the reconciliation of the sinner with God, of changing the punishments yet remaining due to sin into works of penance, or of remitting them altogether ..... 767
- 2. The remission of the temporal punishment due to us on account of our sins is called an indulgence, and is obtained by the performance, while in a state of grace, of certain good works enjoined on us by the Church ..... 770
- 3. An indulgence is either plenary, when a full and entire remission of all the temporal punishment due to sin is gained, or partial, when only a portion of the temporal punishment is remitted..... 772
- 4. The Pope alone has power to grant indulgences which are for the whole Church; for in him alone jurisdiction over the whole Church is vested, and he is the steward of the Church's treasures..... 775
- 5. Indulgences may also be applied by way of suffrage to the suffering souls in purgatory, if this be expressly stated respecting the indulgence; a plenary indulgence is gained for them every time the holy sacrifice of the Mass is offered on a privileged altar ..... 776
- 6. The gaining of indulgences is most salutary (Council of Trent, 25), because we thereby keep far from us temporal evils, and are stimulated to the accomplishment of good works ..... 776

5. EXTREME UNCTION.

- 1. In administering Extreme Unction the priest anoints the Christian who is in danger of death with the holy oils upon the organs of his five senses, and prays over him; by means of which the spiritual and not infrequently the bodily malady of the sick man is cured..... 777
- 2. Extreme Unction acts spiritually as oil does materially; it strengthens, heals, and aids the soul to attain eternal salvation..... 778



3. Extreme Unction can only be administered to persons who are in danger of death; and they ought to receive it without delay for the sake both of their physical and spiritual health..... 780
4. Before being anointed the sick man ought to confess his sins, and receive holy communion; and afterwards the Papal blessing is generally given to him..... 781

## 6. HOLY ORDERS.

1. At the administration of Holy Orders the bishop lays his hands on the candidates for ordination, calls down upon them the Holy Spirit, anoints their hands, and presents the sacred vessels to them..... 782
2. The office of the priesthood, to which a man is raised by Holy Orders, is one of great dignity, but likewise one of no slight difficulty and of vast responsibility..... 783
3. The Sacrament of Holy Orders only confers the perpetual power, not the right, to exercise the functions of a priest. The newly ordained cannot therefore make use in any place of their sacerdotal powers, until they have received ecclesiastical authorization ..... 786
4. No one can be admitted to priest's Orders who has not attained the age of twenty-four years (Council of Trent, 23, 12)..... 787
5. Six other orders of ministry precede the priesthood, four lesser and two greater ..... 788
6. There are three degrees in the Sacrament of Orders: The consecration of deacons, priests, and bishops. These three constitute but one sacrament..... 788
7. It is the duty of the faithful to pray God to send them good priests ..... 789

## 7. MATRIMONY.

### THE INSTITUTION AND NATURE OF MATRIMONY.

1. God Himself instituted matrimony in the beginning of the world, for the procreation of the human race, and the mutual assistance of husband and wife ..... 790

- 2. Christian marriage is a contract between man and woman, binding them to an undivided and indissoluble partnership, and conferring on them at the same time grace to fulfil all the duties required of them ..... 791
- 3. Civil marriage is to be distinguished from Christian marriage, inasmuch as it is no sacrament, and consequently in the sight of God no true and real marriage for Catholics..... 792

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF MATRIMONY.

- 1. According to the ordinance of Christ, Christian marriage is strictly a union of two persons only, and it is indissoluble ..... 794

THE GRACES CONFERRED IN MATRIMONY.

The Sacrament of Matrimony confers upon Christians who embrace that state both an increase of sanctifying grace, and in addition the special graces necessary to enable them to discharge the duties required of them ..... 796

IMPEDIMENTS TO MATRIMONY.

- 1. A marriage can only be concluded in the absence of all impediments to it. The impediments may be such as nullify marriage, or such as render it unlawful..... 796

THE CELEBRATION OF MATRIMONY.

- 1. Marriage should be preceded by betrothal, publication of banns, and reception of Penance and Communion ..... 799
- 2. The Church expressly commands that the marriage of a Catholic to be valid must be contracted before the parish priest or the Ordinary of the place or a priest delegated by either of these and at least two witnesses ..... 802
- 3. Marriages are, as a rule, celebrated in the forenoon, in the house of God, with solemn ceremonies, and Mass is usually said at the same time..... 803

THE DUTIES OF THE MARRIED.

The following are the duties incumbent on married persons:

- 1. It is the duty of the wife to obey her husband, as the man is the head of the family, the representative of God..... 804

2. The husband and wife owe to each other love, fidelity, and mutual aid in all circumstances of their life ..... 805
3. It is the duty of both husband and wife to provide for their children, and train them in the fear and love of God..... 806

## MIXED MARRIAGES.

1. Mixed marriages, by which is understood the marriage of Catholics to non-Catholics, have always been disapproved of by the Church..... 810
2. The Church tolerates mixed marriages on three conditions..... 812
3. The Catholic who contracts a mixed marriage before a minister contracts no marriage at all, commits a mortal sin and cannot be admitted to the Sacraments ..... 813

## THE UNMARRIED STATE.

1. The unmarried state is better than the married, because those who do not marry have far more opportunity for attending to their spiritual welfare, and can attain a higher degree of glory hereafter ..... 814
2. Our Lord when on earth commended the state of virginity both by precept and example..... 815

## III. THE SACRAMENTALS.

Sacramentals are rites which have some outward resemblance to the sacraments instituted by Christ, but which are not of divine institution. The name is applied both to the blessing or consecration given by the Church, and to the objects blessed or consecrated..... 816

The blessing consists in this, that the minister of the Church invokes the divine benediction upon certain persons or things ..... 816

1. Consecration by the Church consists in this: That the ecclesiastic empowered for this purpose sets apart some person or some object, and dedicates him or it to the exclusive service of God..... 817
2. Our Lord sanctioned the use of sacramentals, but the rites themselves are an institution of the Church..... 818

3. The use of blessed or consecrated objects is profitable; for if used with pious dispositions, they increase our fear and love of God, remit venial sins, and preserve us from many temptations and from bodily harm; excepting such temptations and ills of the body as are for our spiritual welfare ..... 818
4. The sacramentals can, however, only be used with profit by person who are free from mortal sin, and who use them in a spirit of faith and confidence..... 819

#### IV. PRAYER.

##### I. THE NATURE OF PRAYER.

1. Prayer is the elevation of the heart to God..... 820
2. We may pray either in spirit only, or with the lips as well..... 821
3. Our prayers have a threefold object: That of praise, of supplication, and of thanksgiving..... 822

##### 2. THE UTILITY AND NECESSITY OF PRAYER.

1. By means of prayer we can obtain all things from God; but He does not always grant our petitions immediately ..... 823
2. By means of prayer sinners become just, and the just are enabled to continue in a state of grace ..... 826
3. By prayer we obtain the remission of the temporal penalty due to sin, and merit an eternal recompense ..... 827
4. He who never prays cannot save his soul; for without prayer he will fall into grievous sins..... 828

##### 3. HOW OUGHT WE TO PRAY?

If prayer is to be of utility to us, we must pray:

1. In the name of Jesus; that is, we must ask what is in accordance with Our Lord's desires..... 828
2. We must pray with devotion; that is, we must fix our thoughts on God when we pray..... 829
3. We must pray with perseverance, that is, we ought not to desist from prayer, if our petition is not immediately granted..... 830

4. We must pray with a pure heart; that is, our conscience must be free from grievous sin, or at any rate we must be in-penitential dispositions ..... 831
5. We must pray with humility; that is, we must acknowledge our own weakness and unworthiness ..... 831
6. We must pray with confidence, that is, with a firm conviction that of His infinite mercy God will grant what we ask, provided it will tend to His glory and to the true welfare of our souls ..... 832
7. We must pray with resignation to the will of God; that is, we must leave the granting of our petition entirely to God's good pleasure ..... 832

#### 4. WHEN OUGHT WE TO PRAY?

1. As a matter of fact we ought to pray continually, for Our Lord requires of us "always to pray and not to faint" (Luke 18:1) ..... 833
2. We ought to pray more especially every morning and evening, before and after meals, and when we hear the Angelus ..... 835
3. Furthermore we ought to pray in the hour of affliction, distress, or temptation, when entering upon an important undertaking, and when we feel an inspiration and desire to pray ..... 837

#### 5. WHERE OUGHT WE TO PRAY?

1. We can and ought to pray in every place, because God is everywhere present ..... 837
2. The house of God is the place specially set apart for prayer ..... 838
3. A solitary place is also suitable for prayer ..... 838

#### 6. FOR WHAT OUGHT WE TO PRAY?

1. We ought to implore of God many things and great things; benefits not appertaining to time so much as to eternity ..... 839
2. We ought more especially to beseech almighty God to grant us such things as are conducive to His glory, and to our salvation, and in no wise to ask for what will only serve to gratify our earthly desires ..... 839

7. MEDITATION.

- 1. Meditation, i.e., contemplative prayer, consists in dwelling upon the truths of religion, in order to awaken within our minds good resolutions ..... 840
- 2. Meditation is a most excellent method of prayer, but it must not be pursued to the exclusion of vocal prayer ..... 840
- 3. By means of meditation we obtain actual graces, and advance rapidly on the path of perfection ..... 841

*THE MOST IMPORTANT PRAYERS.*

*The Our Father.*

- 1. The Our Father takes precedence of all other prayers; it is especially distinguished by its power, its simplicity and its comprehensiveness ..... 841
- The Our Father consists of an address, seven petitions, and the word Amen ..... 842
- 2. The address places the soul in the right disposition for prayer; it awakens within us confidence in God and raises our thoughts to Him ..... 842
- 3. In the first petition we pray that God may be glorified ..... 843
- 4. In the next three petitions we ask for these blessings: Eternal salvation, grace to fulfil the divine will, and the possession of those things which are indispensable to the maintenance of our earthly existence ..... 843
- 5. In the next three petitions we pray that three evils may be averted from us: The evil of sin, the evil of temptation, and those evils which are prejudicial to life ..... 844
- 6. The word Amen is the answer of God to the suppliant; in this place it is equivalent to the words: Be assured that thy prayer is heard ..... 844

*The Ave Maria.*

- 1. The *Ave Maria* consists of three parts: The salutation of the archangel Gabriel, the greeting of Elizabeth, and the words of the Church ..... 845
- 2. The *Ave Maria* is a most potent prayer, and one which is full of meaning ..... 846

*The Angelus.*

The Angelus is a prayer which is to be recited morning, noon, and night, when the bell rings, in honor of the Mother of God and in adoration of the mystery of the Incarnation..... 849

*The Rosary.*

1. The Rosary is a prayer in which the Our Father, followed by ten Hail Marys, is repeated five or fifteen times, accompanied by meditation on the life, the Passion, and the exaltation of the Redeemer..... 850
2. The Rosary owes its origin to St. Dominic..... 851
3. The Rosary is well pleasing to God, because of its humility, and because it is an imitation of the unceasing song of praise sung by the angels ..... 851
4. The Rosary is a most useful devotion, for by it we obtain great graces and sure help in time of trouble; many indulgences are besides attached to it ..... 852

*The Litany of Loretto and the Salve Regina.*

The Litany of Loretto is a form of prayer in which the most glorious titles are given to the Mother of God, and her intercession is unceasingly implored ..... 853

*THE PRINCIPAL DEVOTIONAL EXERCISES.*

1. There are ordinary and extraordinary practices of devotion..... 854
2. The regular services held in the parish church on Sundays and holydays both in the forenoon and the afternoon, as well as week-day services, belong to the ordinary practices of devotion..... 854
3. Processions, pilgrimages, the Way of the Cross, Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, and Missions, belong to the extraordinary practices of devotion ..... 855

*Processions.*

1. Processions are a solemn religious ceremony, during which prayers are recited in common by those who take part in them ..... 855

The ceremonial observed in our Christian processions is intended to portray the truth that we have not here a lasting city, but we seek one to come (Heb. 13:14) .....	855
2. The Church holds processions either for the purpose of setting before us more forcibly certain events in the life of Christ, certain doctrines of the faith, or in order to obtain speedy help from God; on these occasions an opportunity is afforded us of testifying in a public manner our faith and our loyalty to the Church .....	856
3. The following processions form part of the ritual of the Church everywhere.....	856
The procession on the feast of the Purification .....	856
The procession on Palm Sunday.....	857
The procession on Holy Saturday.....	857
The procession on the feast of Corpus Christi.....	857
The procession on St. Mark's Day .....	858
The procession on the three Rogation days.....	858

*Christian Burial.*

1. Christian burial is a solemn service accompanied by special ceremonies, in which the remains of a departed Catholic are carried in procession to the place of interment.....	859
2. The special ceremonies customary at Christian obsequies are all significant of our prayer that God may have mercy on the soul of the deceased .....	859
3. Christian obsequies are conducted with so much solemnity, because it is well pleasing to God that we should show reverence to the mortal remains of those who have departed this life in the grace of God .....	860
4. Cremation is condemned by the Church as being an abominable abuse.....	860
5. Christian burial is denied to the unbaptized, to non-Catholics, and to Catholics who are known to have died in mortal sin .....	862



*Pilgrimages.*

1. Pilgrimages are journeys made to sacred places, to petition God for miraculous assistance ..... 863
2. The places of pilgrimage are either the holy places in Palestine, spots sacred to the holy apostles, or shrines of the blessed Mother of God..... 863
3. The object for which, as a rule, Christian people visit places of pilgrimage, is to beseech the divine assistance in seasons of deep affliction, or to fulfil a vow ..... 865
4. A visit to some place of pilgrimage leads many to a complete amendment of life..... 866

*The Way of the Cross.*

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## PUBLISHER'S NOTE

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*The Catechism Explained* by Fr. Francis Spirago, edited by Fr. Richard F. Clarke, S.J., is such a well-known Catholic classic that it hardly needs any introduction. The book was written for three specific uses—to serve the *preacher* as a source book for sermons, the *catechist* as a thorough explanation of the catechism, and *parents* as a complete statement of the entire Faith, to assist them in instructing their children. Written to achieve these objectives, the book specifically does not contain technical language so that it is not difficult to understand. But it *is* large, it *is* thorough, and it *is* interesting! Plus, there is no other book quite like it. A person has only to think of a Catholic subject he wants information on, look it up in *The Catechism Explained*, and there he will find a number of pages explaining this or that aspect of the Faith with a thoroughness that is truly enlightening—the more so because the treatment is always supported by pertinent quotations from Scripture and/or the Fathers and Doctors of the Church to reinforce what is being said. Although first published in 1899, the writing style and truths transcend their era so that they are still beneficial to all Catholics now, and the result is an amazing picture of the Catholic Faith, showing its reasonableness, comprehensiveness, beauty and charm—not to mention the challenge it presents to Catholics to live up to its teachings.

It is with great pleasure, therefore, that we are reissuing *The Catechism Explained* and have added footnotes directing readers to the appropriate paragraphs of the 1992 *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. We are convinced that every Catholic adult should own a copy—whether he be a priest, for his sermon writing; or a catechist,

to help him know and teach the Catechism better; or a parent, to help with the instruction of his or her children; or any other Catholic, simply to enable him to know his faith more fully. For this book fulfills a unique role in Catholic literature. It is a book, therefore, that should always be ready at hand in every Catholic home and office, because only through steady use and reference will it achieve the tremendous results it was designed to achieve—and which it most certainly will achieve if used on a continuing basis.

# EDITOR'S NOTE TO THE 2022 EDITION

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To make this nineteenth-century text more accessible to the twenty-first-century reader, only miniscule changes have been made, most having to do with style: the titles of the books of Scripture have been updated to reflect current usage (e.g., 1 Chronicles in place of 1 Paralipomenon) and the spelling of common biblical names were revised to their more familiar Hebrew versions (e.g., Noah in place of Noe; Joshua in place of Josue). The most important editorial addition to Fr. Spirago's text is the inclusion of footnotes directing readers to the appropriate paragraphs of the 1992 *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, where readers will find the most recent, magisterial articulation of the Church's faith. Additional footnotes have also been provided to indicate where, since Fr. Spirago's writing in 1899, the Church has further clarified elements of Divine Revelation, such as the solemn definition of the Blessed Virgin Mary's Assumption into Heaven, or made changes to Church discipline such as the necessity to fast from midnight before receiving Holy Communion or the absolute prohibition of cremation. At all times the editor has sought to maintain the integrity of Fr. Spirago's original text. In a handful of instances, however, substitutions for antiquated terminology were necessary to successfully convey his meaning to today's reader.





## PREFACE

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This Catechism is suited to the needs of the day, and may either be placed in the hands of the people, or employed as a manual for the use of Priests and Catechists. The small print is the part adapted for popular reading or for catechetical instruction. The author thinks it necessary to give the following explanation of the plan of the book.

1. This Catechism is divided into three parts: The first part treats of *faith*, the second of *morals*, the third of *the means of grace*. In the first part Our Lord appears in His character of Teacher; in the second in His character of King; and in the third in His character of High Priest. And since this Catechism proposes as its primary object to answer the question, for what purpose are we here upon earth, thereby emphasizing and giving prominence to man's high calling and destiny, it is especially suited to the present day, when the pursuit of material interests, self-indulgence and pleasure, engrosses the attention of so many. This Catechism is in fact nothing more nor less than an abstract of Our Lord's teaching, and may be called a guide book for the Christian on the road to heaven. First the goal of the traveler is indicated, and then the means whereby he is to reach his destination. In the first part we are told what is to be done by the use of the understanding: we must seek to attain to the knowledge of God by believing the truths He reveals; in the second part we are told what is to be done by the aid of the will: we must submit our will to the will of God by keeping the commandments; in the third part we are told what we must do in order to enlighten our understanding and strengthen our will, which have been respectively obscured and weakened by original sin: we must obtain the grace

of the Holy Spirit through use of the appointed means of grace, for by the grace of the Holy Spirit the understanding is enlightened and the will strengthened. Thus a close connection exists between the different parts of this Catechism. Each part is subdivided and arranged to form a whole, so that the connection between and the coherence of all the truths of religion are plainly apparent. This is a very important point. For the more clearly we perceive the manner in which the truths of religion are linked together, the easier will it be for us to apprehend each one singly. The Catechism is a marvelously connected system of revealed truth. If Catholics were thoroughly acquainted in their childhood with the fundamental truths of religion; if they were taught to see how all the different parts of this divine edifice combine to form one beautiful structure, the darts of hell would have no power to injure them.

2. The large print in this Catechism is the scaffolding, or skeleton; it contains all the essential truths of religion. The small print might, as a matter of fact, be omitted; but in that case there would be nothing calculated to touch the heart and kindle the flame of charity towards God and one's neighbor, and is not this the effect which every good hand-book of religion, every good sermon, every good catechetical instruction ought to produce? We already possess in abundance catechisms and religious manuals which appeal only to the intellect; books which do not aim at the warmth of expression and the fervent, persuasive eloquence which appeal to the heart, the force and vivifying power which affect the will through the influence of the Holy Spirit.

3. This Catechism aims at cultivating, to an equal extent, all the three powers of the soul: the understanding, the affections, and the will. It does not therefore content itself with mere definitions. The principal object proposed in it is not to teach men to philosophize about religion, but to make them good Christians who will delight in their faith. Consequently questions of scholastic theology, doctrines debated among divines, are either omitted altogether or merely receive a passing mention. The author has endeavored to divest religious teaching of the appearance of learning, and

to present it in a popular and simple form. Technical terms, in which almost all religious manuals abound, even those intended for children, are carefully eliminated from his pages since, while useful and necessary for seminarians and theologians, they are out of place in a book intended for the laity. Popular manuals of religion ought to be couched in plain and simple language, like that used by Our Lord and the apostles, easy of comprehension; for what we need is something that will touch the heart and influence the will, not cram the mind with knowledge unattractive to the reader. The present book is, moreover, not an adaptation of catechisms already in use, but an original work, intended for practical purposes. Attention may also be called to the fact that the teaching of the Church is not presented in a dry, abstract form, but is rendered attractive and interesting by illustrations, comparisons, and quotations from well-known writers. Thus there is no danger that it will be thrown aside as unreadable. The extracts from the writings of the Fathers are not always given *verbatim*, the idea alone being in many cases borrowed, as a literal rendering of the language employed, beautiful and forcible as it is, might prove rather misleading than edifying to the young and unlearned. The same may be said of some passages taken from Holy Scripture. What is of paramount importance in a book of this nature is to make use of expressions that are clear and intelligible. The writings of the Fathers are quoted mainly to elucidate and illustrate, not to prove the truths that are enunciated.

4. In preparing this Catechism for publication, the author has kept in view his purpose of assisting the teacher. To this end he has made it his endeavor to arrange his matter according to a clear and methodical system; to place his ideas in logical sequence, and to clothe them in simple language composed of short sentences. All the several branches of religious teaching—the Catechism, Bible history, the liturgy, controversy, ecclesiastical history—have been comprehended in one course of instruction, which has unquestionably the effect of enhancing the interest and appealing to the understanding as well as to the heart and the will. The old-fashioned form

of embodying the instruction to be given in question and answer has not been followed. That form is not sufficient, and needs further elaboration. Faith comes by hearing, not by questioning only. A knowledge of all the truths of our holy religion is not so universal that they can be thoroughly learned by question and answer: they must be regularly taught by oral instruction. This form of teaching calls for the exercise of more thought; question and answer, moreover, do nothing towards simplifying the truths to be imparted, or rendering them more intelligible to the learner.

5. The state of society and the spirit of the age have also been taken into consideration in the preparation of this book. The writer has endeavored in the first place to combat the self-seeking, pleasure-loving materialism of the day. This appears in the opening part and also in the fact that the moral law is enlarged upon at great length. It was not deemed sufficient merely to enumerate the several virtues and vices—virtue is depicted in all its beauty and excellence, vice in all its hideousness and malice—at the same time the remedies for the different vices are added. Furthermore, precepts of great importance, suited to the exigencies of the time, far from being passed over, are elaborately explained. Under the heading of the Third Commandment the obligation of work and the Christian view of labor are treated, in accordance with the directions of the Council of Trent. Under the Fourth Commandment our duty towards the Pope and the ruler of our country, the duty of Catholics in regard to elections is expounded. Under the Fifth Commandment the nature of human life and the sinfulness of injuring one's health for the sake of vanity or pleasure are shown. Under the Tenth Commandment, a plain statement is made of Socialistic and democratic principles; and after this, the proper use to be made of money and the duty of almsgiving are set forth. Prominence is given to the works of mercy, which Our Lord declares to be essential to salvation, and which are an amplification of the Decalogue; while under the occasions of sin, the evils of the day, the exaggerated craving for excitement and pleasure, love of dress, the desire to be fashionable,

besides society papers, objectionable plays, etc., are duly censured. Charity to God and one's neighbor, a virtue too rare in the present day, is treated at some length, and a considerable space is also devoted to the consideration of the Christian's attitude in regard to affliction and poverty, the duty of gratitude, the deceitful nature of earthly possessions and earthly enjoyments, and the necessity of self-conquest. Also in matters such as civil marriage, cremation, Catholic congresses, Passion plays, etc., it cannot be alleged that this Catechism is not fully up to date.

6. In its present form this Catechism is intended primarily for the use of Priests and Catechists; it will save them much time in preparing their instructions, as they will find examples, comparisons, and explanations ready to hand. By abridging the small print it will also serve as a school-catechism. When instructing beginners the Catechist must confine himself to the large print; it will be sufficient for children of moderate abilities to know and understand that thoroughly. It is, and ever will be, the basis upon which the whole structure of religious knowledge, raised by oral instruction, will rest. In after years what is wanted will not be so much an increase of theological knowledge, as a lucid explanation of the truths already learned, and further proofs are added for the sake of deepening religious conviction.

The small print may be considerably abridged for use in schools, but it must not be left out altogether, as it will serve to recall to the minds of the children the truths they have been taught. It contains also many useful suggestions for the Catechist on subjects of importance which must hold a place in his instructions. Moreover, parents who go through the Catechism with their children at home will be compelled to read the small print, and thus, with no effort on their part, they will obtain a more intimate knowledge of Christian doctrine.

It is most important in these days of unbelief that the school should be the means of reviving a Christian spirit in the family. Hence it is advisable that the Catechist should take the chief points

and the plan of his instruction from a book, and it should not be left to each individual to propound what truths he pleases. Besides, it is desirable that the catechumens themselves should have the essential part of the instruction placed before them in black and white; for it is a known fact that what is not seen by the eye is not long retained by the memory. If the impression received, the feelings excited, the resolutions called forth are to be permanent, they must be re-awakened by reading the Catechism. Thus the Catechism becomes not merely a class book, but a book of spiritual reading, to be taken up again and re-read in after years. Hence we see what a wide sphere of usefulness the books used in our schools may have. Ought a book whose influence is so extensive, which contains the most important of all teaching, present that teaching in a dry, uninteresting form, or give a scanty outline, the mere framework of the truths of religion?

In publishing an English translation of this manual of Christian truth, it is hoped that it may find as hearty a welcome among English-speaking nations as the original did in the author's own country. He ventures to hope that it may greatly promote the glory of God and the salvation of souls. In order to secure the blessing of God upon his labors, he dedicated the work to the Immaculate Mother of God; and it cannot be doubted that the blessings of the Most High rests upon it, for although at the outset it encountered formidable obstacles, it has since had an unexpectedly widespread and rapid circulation.

# DEVOTIONS

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## I. PRAYERS AND PRECEPTS OF THE CHURCH

### *1. The Sign of the Cross*

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

### *2. The Lord's Prayer, or 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.

### *3. The Angelical Salutation, or Hail Mary*

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

### *4. The Apostles' Creed*

<sup>(1)</sup>I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth; <sup>(2)</sup>and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, Our Lord: <sup>(3)</sup>Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, <sup>(4)</sup>suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified; died, and was buried. <sup>(5)</sup>He descended into hell; the third day He arose again from the dead;

<sup>(6)</sup>He ascended into heaven, sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father almighty; <sup>(7)</sup>from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.<sup>1</sup> <sup>(8)</sup>I believe in the Holy Spirit; <sup>(9)</sup>the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, <sup>(10)</sup>the forgiveness of sins, <sup>(11)</sup>the resurrection of the body, <sup>(12)</sup>and the life everlasting. Amen.

### ***5. The Two Precepts of Charity (Mark 12:30–31)***

(1). Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind, and with thy whole strength.

(2). Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

### ***6. The Ten Commandments of God (Exod. 20:1–17)***

(1). Thou shalt have no strange gods before Me. [That is to say, thou shalt believe in the one true God alone, and not worship any other.]

(2). Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain. [That is, thou shalt not utter the name of God irreverently.]

(3). Thou shalt keep holy the Sabbath day. [Under the Christian Dispensation the Sunday.]

(4). Thou shalt honor thy father and thy mother, that thou mayst be long-lived upon the land which the Lord thy God will give thee.

(5). Thou shalt not kill.

(6). Thou shalt not commit adultery.

(7). Thou shalt not steal.

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

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

(10). Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, nor his servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is his.

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<sup>1</sup> Author's Note: That is to say, those who are alive at the Last Day, and who, as a matter of course, must die before the final judgment; besides those who died previously; or it may also mean the redeemed and the reprobate.



### ***7. The Six Precepts of the Church***

*(These are an amplification of the Third Commandment of God.)*

- (1). To hear Mass on Sundays and holydays of obligation.
- (2). To fast and abstain on the days appointed.
- (3). To confess at least once a year.
- (4). To receive the Holy Eucharist during the Easter time.
- (5). To contribute to the support of our pastors.
- (6). Not to marry persons who are not Catholics, or who are related to us within a forbidden degree of kindred, nor privately without witnesses, nor to solemnize marriage at forbidden times.

## II. PRAYERS WHICH MAY BE USED DAILY AT DIFFERENT TIMES

### ***1. A Morning Prayer***

Thy goodness, O my God, and might,  
Have brought me to this morning's light.  
Keep and preserve me every hour,  
From sorrow, sin, temptation's power.  
Grant me Thy blessing, Lord, this day,  
On all I think, or do, or say.

### ***2. A Night Prayer***

When to rest I lay me down  
God's protecting love I own;  
Hands and heart to Him I raise,  
For His gifts I give Him praise.  
The ill that I this day have done,  
Forgive me, Lord, for Thy dear Son.  
Thou, Who hast kept me through the day,  
Watch o'er me through this night, I pray.

### ***3. An Act of Good Intention (Bl. Clement Hofbauer)***

Let my object ever be  
 To give glory, Lord, to Thee;  
 If I work, or if I rest,  
 May God's holy name be blest.  
 Grant me grace my all to give  
 Unto Him by Whom I live;  
 Jesus, for Thy help I plead:  
 Mary, for me intercede.

### ***4. Grace before Meals***

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

### ***5. Grace after Meals***

We give Thee thanks, O Lord, for these and all Thy gifts, which of Thy bounty we have received, and may the souls of the faithful, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

### ***6. Prayer for One's Parents***

O my God, I commend my parents to Thee; protect them, and spare them long to me, and requite them for all the good that they have done to me.

## III. PRAYERS TO BE SAID AT DIFFERENT TIMES WHEN THE CHURCH BELL IS HEARD

### ***1. The Angelus (Morning, noon, and evening)***

V. The angel of the Lord declared unto Mary.  
 R. And she conceived of the Holy Spirit. Hail Mary, etc.  
 V. Behold the handmaid of the Lord:  
 R. Be it done unto me according to Thy word. Hail Mary, etc.

V. And the Word was made flesh.

R. And dwelt amongst us. Hail Mary, etc.

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

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

### *Let us Pray*

Pour forth, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy grace into our hearts; that we to whom the Incarnation of Christ Thy Son was made known by the message of an angel, may, by His Passion and cross, be brought to the glory of His resurrection; through the same Christ Our Lord. Amen.<sup>2</sup>

### ***2. Prayer in Commemoration of Our Lord's Passion, to be said at three o'clock on Fridays***

I bless Thee, O Thou Lord of heaven!

Whose life for sinful man was given.

Let not Thy cross and bitter pain

Have been for me borne all in vain.

### ***3. Prayer for the Souls in Purgatory, to be said when the Church Bell is Tolled or after the Evening Angelus***

Thy mercy, Lord, we humbly crave

For souls whom Thou didst die to save.

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<sup>2</sup> Author's Note: An indulgence of one hundred days may be gained each time that the Angelus is said kneeling (except on Saturday evening and on Sunday, when it is said standing), and a plenary indulgence, once a month, on the usual conditions, if it has been said daily for a whole month. Those who are reasonably prevented from saying the prayers kneeling, or who cannot hear the bell, are still able to gain the indulgence if the prayers are duly recited.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Indulgentiarum doctrina* (1967), the apostolic constitution of Pope St. Paul VI, reorganized the discipline of indulgences. Norm 4 of the constitution eliminated any determination of days or years and established that all such indulgences would henceforth be designated as "partial" indulgences. (See also CCC 1471). Indulgences are administered through the Apostolic Penitentiary, and the reader is directed to its *Enchiridion Indulgentiarum: Norma et Concessioniones*, or *Handbook on Indulgences*.

Suffering amidst the cleansing fire,  
 To see Thy face they yet aspire.  
 Grant them, O Lord, a swift release,  
 And bring them where all pain shall cease.

Eternal rest give unto all the faithful departed, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace. Amen.

#### ***4. Prayers to be Said when the Bell is Rung at Mass***

*When the priest, standing at the foot of the altar, begins the prayers of the Mass, make the sign of the cross, direct your intention, and commence your prayers. At the Gospel stand up and cross yourself on forehead, lips, and breast.*

#### ***5. Prayer at the Offertory***

Accept, O Lord, this sacrifice, which, in union with the priest, I offer to Thy divine majesty, together with all I have and all I am. Mercifully pardon my sins, and grant that I may find acceptance in Thy sight.

#### ***6. At the Consecration***

*Kneel down, bless yourself, clasp your hands, and fixing your eyes upon the altar, say:*

Flesh of Christ, hail, sweet oblation,  
 Sacrifice for our salvation;  
 On the cross a victim slain.  
 Bread of angels, ever living,  
 Health and hope to mortals giving.

*Remain upon your knees, motionless, until the bell rings again at the elevation of the chalice. Then bless yourself again, and say:*

O fount of love, good Jesus, Lord,  
 Cleanse us, unclean, in Thy all-cleansing blood;  
 Of which one single drop for sinners spilt,  
 Can free the entire world from all its guilt.

### ***7. At the Communion***

*When the bell rings, bless yourself, strike your breast, and say with the priest:*

Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst enter under my roof; say but the word, and my soul shall be healed.

*Bless yourself again here, and also when the priest gives the blessing. At the last Gospel do the same as when the first was read.*

## IV. DEVOTIONS FOR CONFESSION AND COMMUNION

### ***1. The Form for Confession***

*Kneeling down in the confessional, make the sign of the cross when the priest gives you his blessing; then say the first part of the Confiteor, and accuse yourself of the sins you have committed since your last confession, following the order of the Ten Commandments, the precepts of the Church, and the seven deadly sins. After having confessed all that you can remember, conclude with these or similar words:*

For these and all the sins of my past life I am heartily sorry, because I have thereby offended my Father in heaven and deserved His chastisements. I purpose amendment for the future, and humbly ask pardon of God and absolution and penance of you, Father.

*Listen attentively to the instructions the priest gives you, especially in regard to the penance he sets you. When he gives you absolution and his blessing, bless yourself; then go to the altar to give thanks to God for*

*having granted you forgiveness of sin, and perform the penance enjoined on you.*

## ***2. Acts of the Three Theological Virtues***

(1). *An Act of Faith.* I believe that there is one God, and that in this one God there are three persons. That the Son of God was made man for us, that He died upon the cross, rose again from the dead and ascended into heaven. I believe that the Son of God will come again at the Last Day, and call all men to judgment. I believe this because Christ is the Son of God and therefore can neither deceive nor be deceived; and because He has confirmed His teaching by many miracles. Moreover I believe whatever the Catholic Church by Christ's authority proposes to us to be believed; I believe it because the Catholic Church is guided and defended against error by the Holy Spirit; and because even down to the present day God corroborates by miracles the truths which the Catholic Church teaches. O God, increase my faith.

(2). *An Act of Hope.* O my God, I hope that after death Thou wilt admit me to everlasting happiness, and that Thou wilt give me here such means as are essential to the attainment of that happiness. I trust that Thou wilt grant me for this end the grace of the Holy Spirit, such temporal good things as are necessary to me, pardon of sin, help in time of need, and a gracious answer to my petitions. I hope this, because Thou, Who art almighty and all-bountiful and ever-faithful to Thy promises, hast promised these things to me, and because Jesus Christ, my Lord and Saviour, has merited them for me by His cruel death upon the cross. O God, increase my hope.

(3). *An Act of Charity.* My God, I love Thee with my whole heart, and above all things, because Thou art supreme beauty and perfection, because Thou art my greatest benefactor and Thy love for me is infinite. I will, therefore, think of Thee in all my actions; I will avoid even the slightest sins; I will give thanks to Thee for all Thy benefits and for all

Thou givest me to suffer, and I will love my neighbor because he is Thy child and made after Thy image. O God, increase my charity.<sup>3</sup>

### ***3. An Act of Contrition***

O God of infinite majesty, I, a sinner, have offended against Thee. Thou art my heavenly Father; Thou hast given Thy Son for me, and hast lavished innumerable benefits upon me, and yet I have grieved Thee. Thou art a just God; I know that Thou dost leave no sin unpunished, and yet I was so ungrateful as to offend Thee. I am exceedingly sorry for having sinned; I will henceforth avoid sin and keep Thy commandments. Grant me Thy pardon, and receive me again as Thy child.

### ***4. Renewal of Baptismal Vows***

I thank Thee, O my God, for having made me Thy child by holy Baptism. I desire this day to renew the covenant then made with Thee: I promise to renounce all the sinful pleasures of the world, to believe and to follow the teaching of the Gospel. I hope for Thy grace to enable me to do this, and after death to enter into eternal felicity.

## V. DEVOTIONS TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

### ***1. Prayer to the Holy Spirit***

To Thee, O Holy Spirit, we cry  
 Thou highest gift of God most high:  
 Enlighten us with light divine,  
 Keep far from us the foe malign.  
 Strengthen the weakness of our will,

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<sup>3</sup> Author's Note: As often as acts of the three theological virtues are made, either by the use of this formula, or in the words our own devotion may suggest, an indulgence of seven years and seven quarantines may be gained; and for daily repetition of these acts a plenary indulgence once a month is granted, on the usual conditions. Also a plenary indulgence at the hour of death.

Help us our duty to fulfil;  
Give solace to the troubled breast,  
And after death, eternal rest.

## *2. Hymn to the Holy Spirit*

Come, O Creator, Spirit blest!  
And in our souls take up Thy rest;  
Come, with Thy grace and heavenly aid,  
To fill the hearts that Thou hast made.

Great Paraclete! to Thee we cry  
O highest gift of God most high!  
O fount of life, O fire of love,  
And sweet anointing from above!

Thou in Thy sevenfold gifts art known;  
The finger of God's hand we own;  
The promise of the Father Thou,  
Who dost the tongue with power endow.

Kindle our senses from above,  
And make our hearts o'erflow with love;  
With patience firm and virtue high,  
The weakness of our flesh supply.

Far from us drive the foe we dread,  
And grant us Thy true peace instead;  
So shall we not, with Thee for guide,  
Turn from the path of life aside.

Oh, may Thy grace on us bestow  
The Father and the Son to know,



And Thee through endless time contest,  
Of both the eternal Spirit blest.

All glory while the ages run  
Be to the Father and the Son  
Who rose from death; the same to Thee,  
O Holy Spirit, eternally. Amen.<sup>4</sup>

## VI. SPECIAL PRAYERS

### *1. The Salve Regina*

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 towards 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.

*V.* Make me worthy to praise thee, holy Virgin.

*R.* Give me strength against thine enemies.

*V.* Blessed be God in His saints.

*R.* Amen.

We fly to thy protection, O holy Mother of God! Despise not our petitions in our necessities, and deliver us from all dangers, O ever glorious and blessed Virgin. Reconcile us with thy Son, commend us to thy Son, present us to thy Son!

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<sup>4</sup> Author's Note: An indulgence of three hundred days may be gained each time this hymn is said, and a plenary indulgence once a month.—Pius VI, 1796.

## ***2. The Memorare***

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that any one who fled to thy protection, implored thy help and sought thy intercession, was left unaided. Inspired with this confidence, I fly unto thee, O Virgin of virgins, my Mother; to thee I come; before thee I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in thy mercy hear and answer me. Amen.<sup>5</sup>

## ***3. The Holy Rosary***

The Creed is repeated first, then one Our Father and three Hail Marys, followed by Glory be to the Father, etc. Fifteen decades are then said, each decade consisting of one Our Father and ten Hail Marys, and ending with a Glory be to the Father.

The Mysteries of the Rosary are:

The five Joyful Mysteries, which may be said chiefly from Advent to Lent, or on Mondays and Thursdays.

(1), The Annunciation, (2), The Visitation, (3), The Nativity of Our Lord, (4), The Presentation of Our Lord in the Temple, (5), The Finding of the Child Jesus in Jerusalem.

The five Sorrowful Mysteries, which may be said chiefly during Lent, or on Tuesdays and Fridays.

(1), The Prayer and Agony of Our Lord in the Garden, (2), The Scourging, (3), The Crowning with Thorns, (4), The Carrying of the Cross, (5), The Crucifixion.

The five Glorious Mysteries, which may be used chiefly from Easter until Advent, or on Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays.

(1), The Resurrection of Our Lord, (2), The Ascension, (3), The Descent of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles, (4), The Assumption of

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<sup>5</sup> An indulgence of three hundred days may be gained each time the *Memorare* is said; and a plenary once a month, on the usual conditions, by those who repeat it daily.

the Blessed Virgin into Heaven, (5), The Coronation of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Thus each chaplet of the Rosary consists of the Creed, six Our Fathers, six Glorys and fifty-three Hail Marys.<sup>6</sup>

#### *4. Prayer to St. Joseph*

Glorious Joseph, kind father and friend,  
Humbly to thee myself I commend;  
Keep me, watch over me, help and defend.  
By virtue's path lead to the heavenly land,  
And in my last hour be thou near at hand.

#### *5. Prayer to Our Guardian Angel*

Holy angel, guardian mine,  
Given me by love divine;  
Day and night watch over me,  
From harm, from sin, let me be free.  
By a pious life I fain  
Would eternal joys attain.

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<sup>6</sup> The beads must be blessed and the indulgences attached by a priest who has the powers. If this he duly done the faithful can gain an indulgence of one hundred days for every Creed, Our Father, and Hail Mary, each time the Rosary is recited.



# GENERAL SURVEY

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## PART I

We are on earth for the purpose of giving glory to God, and thereby working out our eternal salvation. We are to attain our end by the following means.

**We must strive to acquire the knowledge of God through faith in the truths which He has revealed.**

Here we speak of the knowledge of God, of revelation, of faith, the motives of faith, the opposite of faith, the confession of faith; and finally of the sign of the cross.

An explanation is given of the twelve articles of the Apostles' Creed.

Art. 1. The existence of God, His being, His attributes, His triune nature, the creation of the world and divine providence, angels and men, original sin; the promise of a Redeemer, the expectation of a Redeemer.

Art. 2–7. Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God; Himself God and Our Lord. The Incarnation, the life of Christ.

Art. 8. The Holy Spirit and the doctrine of grace.

Art. 9. The Catholic Church, its institution, development, and divine maintenance. The supreme Head of the Church, the hierarchy, the notes of the Church. In the Church alone is salvation. Church and State. The communion of saints.

Art. 10. Forgiveness of sins.

Art. 11–12. Death, the particular judgment, heaven, hell, purgatory the resurrection of the dead, the final judgment.

At the close of the Apostles' Creed mention is made of the good things which we hope for from God. The nature of Christian hope is considered, its advantages and what is opposed to it.

## PART II

**We must keep the commandments of God. These are:  
The two precepts of charity.**

The precept of charity towards God, which is set forth more fully in the first four commandments of the Decalogue.

In His character of sovereign King God requires from us: In the First Commandment worship and fidelity; in the Second, reverence; in the Third, service; in the Fourth, respect towards His representatives.

The precept of charity towards one's neighbor. By this we are forbidden to injure our neighbor. In the Fifth Commandment we are forbidden to injure his life; in the Sixth, his innocence; in the Seventh, his property; in the Eighth, his reputation; in the Ninth and Tenth, his household.

We are also commanded to help him in time of need by the performance of the works of mercy.

The commandments of the Church are an amplification of the Third Commandment of the Decalogue.

After the consideration of the love of God, the love of the world is spoken of.

After the consideration of the love of one's neighbor, the love of one's friends, of one's enemies, of one's self is enlarged upon; after the consideration of the First Commandment, the veneration of the saints, the oath born of religion and otherwise; under the Third Commandment of God, the obligation of labor; under the first commandment of the Church, the ecclesiastical year; under the Fourth Commandment of God, the Christian's duty towards the Pope and chief ruler, and the obligations resting on those who are in authority;

under the Fifth Commandment of God, the treatment of animals; and under the works of mercy, the right use of money, the duty of gratitude, and the spirit of poverty.

The fulfilling of the commandments consists in the practice of good works and the exercise of virtue, as well as the abandonment of sin and vice; finally, in the avoidance of everything that might lead to sin, temptation to sin, and occasions of sin.

The most important virtues are those which are called the seven capital virtues, the opposites to which are the seven deadly sins.

In order to obey the commandments strictly we must make use of the means for attaining perfection. The general means are intended for all; the special means, the three evangelical counsels, are only for individuals.

By walking in this way we shall enjoy happiness even on earth.

The precepts which Christ gave us in the Sermon on the Mount, and which are called the eight beatitudes.

In order to believe revealed truth and to keep the commandments, we require the assistance of divine grace, and this we can obtain by the use of the means of grace.

### PART III

**We must make use of the means of grace. These are: The holy sacrifice of the Mass, the sacraments, and prayer.**

Before entering upon the subject of the sacrifice of the Mass, sacrifice in general and the sacrifice of the cross are considered. In treating of the holy sacrifice of the Mass the points explained are: The institution, the nature, the parts, and the ceremonies of the Mass; the relation of the Mass to the sacrifice of the cross, the benefits derived from the Mass, the manner of offering it, devotions during Mass, the obligation of hearing Mass, the time and place of celebrating Mass, the vestments and vessels used at Mass, the color of the vestments, the language used in the Mass, and the musical

accompaniment of the Mass. The duty of hearing the word of God next follows; then the doctrine of the sacraments in general and of each individually. Under the Sacrament of the Altar the institution and nature of the sacrament are considered, likewise the reception of the sacraments and the fruits produced thereby, the preparation before receiving communion and the subsequent thanksgiving, and also spiritual communion. Under the Sacrament of Penance the points considered are: The institution, nature, and necessity of penance; the office of the confessor, the effects of the Sacrament of Penance. The worthy reception of the sacrament (in its five parts), general confessions, the institution and excellence of confession, the sin of relapse, and the doctrine of indulgences. Under matrimony, the institution and nature of marriage are treated of, the duties of married people, mixed marriages, and the single state. Hereupon follows the teaching concerning sacramentals.

In treating of prayer an explanation is given of the nature, the use, the necessity, the time, the place, the object of prayer and of contemplation. Furthermore explanations are given of the most important prayers (the Lord's Prayer and prayer to the Mother of God); the principal public services morning and evening, processions, pilgrimages, the Way of the Cross, Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, missions, Catholic congresses, Passion plays, and religious associations. The latter include third orders, confraternities, and charitable societies.