

BALTIMORE
CATECHISM
ONE

Also known as
A CATECHISM
of CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE
NO. 1

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BALTIMORE CATECHISM ONE

*Prepared and Enjoined by Order of
The Third Plenary Council of Baltimore*

WITH PHONETICIZED WORDS,
AND WORD MEANINGS

QUESTIONS NUMBERED TO AGREE WITH
“EXPLANATION OF THE BALTIMORE CATECHISM”

With Prayers and Hymns



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P R A Y E R S

The Lord's Prayer

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

The Angelical Salutation

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.

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, Our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified; died, and was buried. He descended into Hell; the third day He arose again from the dead; He ascended into Heaven, sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of Saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

The Confiteor

I confess to Almighty God, to Blessed Mary, ever Virgin, to Blessed Michael the Archangel, to Blessed John the Baptist, to the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, and to all the Saints, that I have sinned exceedingly in thought, word and deed, through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault. Therefore, I beseech Blessed Mary, ever Virgin, Blessed Michael the Archangel, Blessed John the Baptist, the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, and all the Saints, to pray to the Lord our God for me.

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

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

An Act of Faith

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

An Act of Hope

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

An Act of Love

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

An Act of Contrition

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

The Blessing before Meals

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

Grace after Meals

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

The Manner in Which a Lay Person Is to Baptize in Case of Necessity

Pour common water on the head or face of the person to be baptized, and say while pouring it:

“I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”

N.B. Any person of either sex who has reached the use of reason can baptize in case of necessity, but the same person must say the words while pouring the water.

CATECHISM

KEY TO PRONUNCIATION

ā as in face	ě as in edge	û as in huge
â as in chocolate	ē as in baker	ŭ as in up
â as in dare	ī as in like	û as in burn
ǎ as in act	ĩ as in fin	ōō as in mood
ä as in farm	ō as in old	ōō as in brook
à as in tall	ô as in or	ou as in out
ē as in eve	ǒ as in oft	



LESSON FIRST

On the End of Man



A-pos'tles (ă-pōs''lz), the twelve men chosen by Christ to carry on His work.

Chief (chēf), the most important.

Com-posed' (kōm-pōzd'), made up of.

Cre-a'tor (krē-ā'tēr), the One who made all things out of nothing.

Crea'ture (krē'tūr), everything made by God out of nothing.

Creed (krēd), a list of the principal truths of faith in a few words.

End, the purpose for which we are made.

Serve (sērv), to do His holy will.

Soul (sōl), the spirit in man giving life to the body.

Wor'ship (wûr'ship), to pay God the honor due Him alone, to adore.

1. Q. Who made the world?

A. God made the world.

2. Q. Who is God?

A. God is the Creator of Heaven and earth, and of all things.

3. Q. What is man?

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

6. Q. Why did God make you?

A. God made me to know Him, to love Him, and to serve Him in this world, and to be happy with Him forever in Heaven.

9. Q. What must we do to save our souls?

A. To save our souls we must worship God by faith, hope, and charity; that is, we must believe in Him, hope in Him, and love Him with all our heart.

10. Q. How shall we know the things which we are to believe?

A. We shall know the things which we are to believe from the Catholic Church, through which God speaks to us.

11. Q. Where shall we find the chief truths which the Church teaches?

A. We shall find the chief truths which the Church teaches in the Apostles' Creed.

12. Say the Apostles' Creed.



LESSON SECOND

On God and His Perfections



Im-pos'si-ble (im-pös'ı-b'l), can not be done.	Per'fect (pér'fěkt), so good that nothing can be better.
In'fi-nite'ly (ın'fı-nıt'lı), beyond measure.	Per-fec'tions (pēr-fěk'shūnz), good qualities.
Mer'ci-ful (mūr'sı-fül), kind, and forgiving.	Se'cret (sē'krět), known only to myself.

13. Q. What is God?

A. God is a spirit infinitely perfect.

14. Q. Had God a beginning?

A. God had no beginning; He always was and He always will be.

15. Q. Where is God?

A. God is everywhere.

16. Q. If God is everywhere, why do we not see Him?

A. We do not see God, because He is a pure spirit and cannot be seen with bodily eyes.

17. Q. Does God see us?

A. God sees us and watches over us.

18. Q. Does God know all things?

A. God knows all things, even our most secret thoughts, words, and actions.

19. Q. Can God do all things?

A. God can do all things, and nothing is hard or impossible to Him.

20. Q. Is God just, holy, and merciful?

A. God is all just, all holy, all merciful, as He is infinitely perfect.



LESSON THIRD

On the Unity and Trinity of God



Dis-tinct' (dīs-tīnkt'), separate, different.	In'fi-nite (īn'fī-nīt), the most perfect possible.
Di-vine' Na'ture (dī-vīn' nā'tūr), that which is one in God.	Su-preme' (sū-prēm'), above all.
E'qual (ē'kwāl), another just as great and perfect as Himself.	Trin'i-ty (trīn'ī-tī), three in one.
	U'ni-ty (ū'nī-tī), being only one.

21. Q. Is there but one God?

A. Yes; there is but one God.

22. Q. Why can there be but one God?

A. There can be but one God, because God, being supreme and infinite, cannot have an equal.

23. Q. How many Persons are there in God?

A. In God there are three Divine Persons, really distinct, and equal in all things—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

24. Q. Is the Father God?

A. The Father is God and the first Person of the Blessed Trinity.

25. Q. Is the Son God?

A. The Son is God and the second Person of the Blessed Trinity.

26. Q. Is the Holy Ghost God?

A. The Holy Ghost is God and the third Person of the Blessed Trinity.

27. Q. What is the Blessed Trinity?

A. The Blessed Trinity is one God in three Divine Persons.

28. Q. Are the three Divine Persons one and the same God?

A. The three Divine Persons are one and the same God, having one and the same Divine Nature.

BALTIMORE
CATECHISM
TWO

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NO. 2

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LESSON FIRST

On the End of Man



A-pos'tles (ă-pŏs''lŷ), the twelve men chosen by Christ to carry on His work.

Chief (chēf), the most important.

Com-posed' (kŏm-pŏzd'), made up of.

Cre-a'tor (krē-ā'tēr), the One who made all things out of nothing.

Crea'ture (krē'tūr), everything made by God out of nothing.

Creed (krēd), a list of the principal truths of faith in a few words.

Cru'ci-fied (krū'sī-fīd), nailed hands and feet to a cross.

End, the purpose for which he was made.

Ev'er-last'ing (ěv'ēr-lăst'ing), that never comes to an end.

Free will, power to choose the right or wrong.

Know, to learn all we can about.

Serve (sērv), to do His holy will.

Soul, the spirit in man giving life to the body.

Spir'it (spĭr'īt), a living being which cannot be seen or touched.

Un'der-stand'ing (ŭn'dēr-stănd'-ing), the power of knowing right from wrong.

Wor'ship (wŭr'shĭp), to pay God the honor due Him alone, to adore.

1. Q. Who made the world?

A. God made the world.

2. Q. Who is God?

A. God is the Creator of heaven and earth, and of all things.

3. Q. What is man?

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

- 4. Q. Is this likeness in the body or in the soul?**
A. This likeness is chiefly in the soul.
- 5. Q. How is the soul like to God?**
A. The soul is like God because it is a spirit that will never die, and has understanding and free will.
- 6. Q. Why did God make you?**
A. God made me to know Him, to love Him, and to serve Him in this world, and to be happy with Him forever in the next.
- 7. Q. Of which must we take more care, our soul or our body?**
A. We must take more care of our soul than of our body.
- 8. Q. Why must we take more care of our soul than of our body?**
A. We must take more care of our soul than of our body, because in losing our soul we lose God and everlasting happiness.
- 9. Q. What must we do to save our souls?**
A. To save our souls we must worship God by faith, hope, and charity; that is, we must believe in Him, hope in Him, and love Him with all our heart.
- 10. Q. How shall we know the things which we are to believe?**
A. We shall know the things which we are to believe from the Catholic Church, through which God speaks to us.
- 11. Q. Where shall we find the chief truths which the Church teaches?**
A. We shall find the chief truths which the Church teaches in the Apostles' Creed.

12. Q. Say the Apostles' Creed.

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



LESSON SECOND

On God and His Perfections



Im-pos'si-ble (ĩm-pös'ĩ-b'l), can not be done.	Per'fect (pēr'fekt), so good that nothing can be better.
In'fi-nite-ly (ĩn'fĩ-nĩt-lĩ), beyond measure.	Per-fec'tions (pēr-fěk'shũnz), good qualities.
Mer'ci-ful (mēr'sĩ-fũl), kind, and forgiving.	Se'cret (sē'krět), that which is known to myself only.

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A. We do not see God, because He is a pure spirit and cannot be seen with bodily eyes.

17. Q. Does God see us?

A. God sees us and watches over us.

18. Q. Does God know all things?

A. God knows all things, even our most secret thoughts, words, and actions.

19. Q. Can God do all things?

A. God can do all things, and nothing is hard or impossible to Him.

20. Q. Is God just, holy, and merciful?

A. God is all just, all holy, all merciful, as He is infinitely perfect.



LESSON THIRD

On the Unity and Trinity of God



Dis-tinct' (dĭs-tĭnkt'), separate, different.

Di-vine' (dĭ-vĭn'), having the nature of God.

Di-vine' Na'ture (nā'tūr), that which is one in God.

E'qual (ē'kwāl), another just as great and perfect as Himself.

In'fi-nite (ĭn'fĭ-nĭt), without limit.

Sub'stance (sŭb'stāns), the very heart of a thing.

Su-preme' (sŭ-prēm'), above all.

Trin'i-ty (trĭn'ĭ-tĭ), three in one.

U'ni-ty (ŭ'nĭ-tĭ), being only one.

21. Q. Is there but one God?

A. Yes; there is but one God.

22. Q. Why can there be but one God?

A. There can be but one God, because God, being supreme and infinite, cannot have an equal.

23. Q. How many Persons are there in God?

A. In God there are three Divine Persons, really distinct, and equal in all things—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

24. Q. Is the Father God?

A. The Father is God and the first Person of the Blessed Trinity.

25. Q. Is the Son God?

A. The Son is God and the second Person of the Blessed Trinity.

26. Q. Is the Holy Ghost God?

A. The Holy Ghost is God and the third Person of the Blessed Trinity.

27. Q. What do you mean by the Blessed Trinity?

A. By the Blessed Trinity I mean one God in three Divine Persons.

28. Q. Are the three Divine Persons equal in all things?

A. The three Divine Persons are equal in all things.

29. Q. Are the three Divine Persons one and the same God?

A. The three Divine Persons are one and the same God, having one and the same Divine Nature and substance.

30. Q. Can we fully understand how the three Divine Persons are one and the same God?

A. We cannot fully understand how the three Divine Persons are one and the same God, because this is a mystery.

31. Q. What is a mystery?

A. A mystery is a truth which we cannot fully understand.

BALTIMORE
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NO. 3

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THE LORD'S PRAYER

1. Q. Say the Lord's Prayer.

A. 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.

2. Q. Who made the Lord's Prayer?

A. Our Lord Himself made the Lord's Prayer for the use of His disciples and of all the faithful.

3. Q. Why is the "Our Father" the most excellent of all prayers?

A. The "Our Father" is the most excellent of all prayers because Our Lord Himself made it and because its petitions ask for all we can need for soul or body.

4. Q. How is the Lord's Prayer divided?

A. The Lord's Prayer is divided into seven requests or petitions. Three of these petitions refer to God's honor and glory, and the remaining four to our corporeal or spiritual wants.

5. Q. Whom do we address as "Our Father" when we say the Lord's Prayer?

A. When we say "Our Father" in the Lord's Prayer we address Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost united in the adorable Trinity.

6. Q. Why do we say “our” and not “my” Father?

A. We say “our” and not “my” Father to remind us that through our creation and redemption, we are all members of the great human family of which God is the Father; and that we should pray for and help one another.

7. Q. Why do we call God Father?

A. We call God Father because He does for us what a good father should do for his children. He gives us our existence; He protects us; He provides for us and teaches us; and because the name of “Father” fills us with love and reverence for Him, and with confidence in Him.

8. Q. Why do we say “Who art in Heaven” if God is everywhere?

A. We say “Who art in Heaven” to put us in mind: 1) that Heaven is our true home for which we were created; 2) that in Heaven we shall see God face to face as He is; 3) that Heaven is the place where God will be for all eternity, with the Blessed.

9. Q. What does “Hallowed be Thy Name” mean?

A. Hallowed means set apart for a holy or sacred use, and thus comes to mean treated or praised as holy or sacred. “Thy name” means God Himself and all relating to Him, and by this petition we ask that God may be known, loved and served by all.

10. Q. What do we ask for in the petition: “Thy kingdom come”?

A. In the petition “Thy kingdom come” we ask: 1) that God may reign in the souls of all men by His grace, so that they may attain eternal salvation; 2) that the true Church—Christ’s kingdom—may spread upon earth till all men embrace the true religion.

11. Q. Who do God's Will in Heaven?

A. In Heaven the angels and Saints do God's Will perfectly. They never disobey or even wish to disobey Him. In the petition, "Thy Will be done on earth as it is in Heaven," we pray that all God's creatures may imitate the angels and Saints in Heaven by never offending Him.

12. Q. What do we ask for by "our daily bread"?

A. In the petition for "our daily bread" we ask not merely for bread, but for all that we need for the good of our body or soul.

13. Q. Why do we say "daily"?

A. We say "daily" to teach us that we are not to be avaricious but only prudent in providing for our wants; and that we are to have great confidence in the Providence of God.

14. Q. What do "trespasses" mean?

A. "Trespasses" mean here injuries done or offenses given to another, and when God is the person offended, "trespasses" mean sins.

15. Q. What do you mean by "forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us"?

A. In this petition we declare to God that we have forgiven all who have injured or offended us, and ask Him to reward us by pardoning our sins.

16. Q. When may we be said to forgive those who trespass against us?

A. We may be said to forgive our enemies when we act and, as far as possible, feel toward them as if they had never injured us.

17. Q. What is temptation?

A. A temptation is anything that incites, provokes, or urges us to offend God.

18. Q. What is the best means of overcoming temptation?

A. The best means of overcoming temptation is to resist its very beginning, by turning our attention from it; by praying for help to resist it; and by doing the opposite of what we are tempted to do.

19. Q. Does God tempt us to sin?

A. God does not tempt us to sin; but He permits us to be tempted to try our fidelity or punish our pride; and to give us an opportunity of meriting rewards for ourselves by overcoming the temptations.

20. Q. Can we always resist temptation?

A. We can always resist temptation if we wish, for God always gives us sufficient grace and never permits us to be tempted above our strength.

21. Q. Is it a sin to be tempted?

A. It is not a sin to be tempted, because we cannot prevent it. It is sinful only to consent or yield to the temptation or needlessly expose ourselves to it.

22. Q. From what do our temptations come?

A. Our temptations come either from the devil, our spiritual enemy, or from the world; that is, the wicked persons, places, or things in the world; or from the flesh; that is, our body with its strong passions and evil inclinations.

23. Q. Should we seek temptation for the sake of overcoming it?

A. We must not expose ourselves to temptation, but, on the contrary, carefully avoid it, yet resist it bravely when it assails us.

24. Q. From what evil do we ask to be delivered?

A. We ask to be delivered from every evil of body and mind, but particularly to be delivered from sin, which is the greatest of all evils.

25. Q. What does “Amen” mean?

A. “Amen” means, “so be it” and expresses a desire that the petition may be granted.

26. Q. What does Christian mean?

A. A Christian is a baptized person who professes to believe all that Christ has taught, and to do all that He has commanded as necessary for our salvation.



THE ANGELICAL SALUTATION

27. Q. Say the Angelical Salutation (Hail Mary).

A. 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.

28. Q. What is a salutation?

A. A salutation is the customary words or actions by which the people of a country greet one another.

29. Q. Why is this salutation called angelical?

A. This salutation is called angelical because it was given by an angel.

30. Q. What does “hail” mean?

A. “Hail” means, “I wish you health.” It is an exclamation of respectful greeting.

31. Q. How is the “Hail Mary” divided?

A. The “Hail Mary” is divided into two parts. The first part, made by the angel Gabriel and St. Elizabeth, contains the praises of the Mother of God; and the second part, added by the Church, begs her intercession for sinners.

- 32. Q. Why is the “Hail Mary” usually placed after the Lord’s Prayer?**
- A. The “Hail Mary” is usually placed after the “Our Father” because it is an inspired prayer, the most excellent after the Lord’s Prayer, and also that the Blessed Mother may, by her powerful intercession, aid us in obtaining what we ask.
- 33. Q. Who was St. Elizabeth?**
- A. St. Elizabeth was the mother of St. John the Baptist and the cousin of the Blessed Virgin.
- 34. Q. What answer did the Blessed Virgin make to the words of St. Elizabeth?**
- A. The Blessed Virgin answered St. Elizabeth in the words of the beautiful Magnificat.
- 35. Q. What is the Magnificat?**
- A. The Magnificat is the splendid canticle or hymn in which the Blessed Virgin praises God and returns Him thanks for the great things He has done for her. It is usually sung at Vespers in the Church.
- 36. Q. Why do we address Mary as “full of grace”?**
- A. We address Mary as “full of grace” because she was never guilty of the slightest sin, was endowed with every virtue, and was blessed with a constant increase of grace in her soul.
- 37. Q. Why do we say “the Lord is with thee”?**
- A. We say “the Lord is with thee,” for besides being with her as He is with all His creatures on account of His presence everywhere, and as He is with the good on account of their virtue, He is with Mary in a very special manner on account of her dignity as Mother of His Son.

38. Q. Why is Mary called “blessed amongst women”?

A. Mary is called “blessed amongst women” on account of her personal holiness, her great dignity as Mother of God, and her freedom from original sin.

39. Q. Why is Mary called “holy”?

A. Mary is called “holy” because one full of grace and endowed with every virtue must be holy.

40. Q. Why do we need Mary’s prayers at the hour of death?

A. We need Mary’s prayers at the hour of death because at that time our salvation is in greatest danger, and our spiritual enemies most anxious to overcome us.

41. Q. Why do we say the “Hail Mary”?

A. We say the “Hail Mary” to put us in mind of the Incarnation, and to show our devotion to the Mother of God, and our confidence in her assistance.

42. Q. In what form of prayer is the “Hail Mary” most frequently repeated?

A. The “Hail Mary” is most frequently repeated in the recitation of the Rosary or beads.

43. Q. What is the Angelus?

A. The Angelus is a prayer giving a brief history of the Incarnation.

44. Q. Say the Angelus.

- A. The angel of the Lord declared unto Mary. And she conceived of the Holy Ghost. Hail Mary, etc. Behold the handmaid of the Lord. Be it done unto me according to Thy Word. Hail Mary, etc. And the Word was made flesh. And dwelt among us. Hail Mary, etc. Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God! 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.

45. Q. At what time is the Angelus usually said?

- A. The Angelus is said in the evening, in memory of the Incarnation; in the morning, in memory of the Resurrection, and at noon in memory of the Passion of Our Lord.

46. Q. What does “the Word was made flesh” mean in the Angelus?

- A. “The Word” means the second person of the Blessed Trinity, and “made flesh” means became man.

47. Q. What is the Litany of the Blessed Virgin?

- A. The Litany is a form of prayer in which we address our Blessed Lady by many beautiful titles, such as Mother of God, Virgin Most Pure, Refuge of Sinners, etc., asking her after each to pray for us.

48. Q. Are there any other Litanies in use besides the Litany of the Blessed Virgin?

- A. Besides the Litany of the Blessed Virgin there are other Litanies in use, especially the Litany of the Saints, the Litany of the Holy Name of Jesus, the Litany of the Sacred Heart, etc.

BALTIMORE CATECHISM FOUR

Also known as
An EXPLANATION
of the BALTIMORE CATECHISM

Or
BALTIMORE CATECHISM
NO. 4

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BASIC CATHOLIC PRAYERS

The Lord's Prayer

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

This is the most beautiful and best of all prayers, because Our Lord Himself made it. (*Matt. 6:9; Luke 11:2*). One day when He was praying and explaining to His Apostles the great advantages of prayer, one of them said to Him: “Lord, teach us to pray.” Then Jesus taught them this prayer. It contains everything we need or could ask for. We cannot see its full meaning at once. The more we think over it, the more clearly we understand it. We could write whole pages on almost every word, and still not say all that could be said about this prayer. It is called “**the Lord’s**,” because He made it, and sometimes the “**Our Father**,” from the first words.

We say “**Our**,” to show that we are all brethren, and that God is the Father of us all, and therefore we pray not for ourselves alone but for all God’s children.

We say “**Father**,” because God really is our Father. We do not mean here by Father the First Person of the Blessed Trinity, but the Blessed Trinity itself—one God. What does a father do for his children? He gives them their natural existence, provides them with food and clothing, teaches, protects, and loves them, shares with them all

that he has, and when he dies leaves them his possessions. Now, in all these ways, and in a much truer sense, God is our Father. He created us and gives us all that is necessary to sustain life. He gives light, heat, and air, without any one of which we could not live. He provides for us also food and clothing, and long before we need or even think of these things God is thinking of them. Did you ever reflect upon just how much time and trouble it costs to produce for you even one potato, of which you think so little? About two years before you need that potato, God puts it into the mind of the farmer to save the seed that he may plant it the following year. In the proper season he prepares the ground with great care and plants the seed. Then God sends His sunlight and rain to make it grow, but the farmer's work is not yet ended: he must continue to keep the soil in good condition and clear away the weeds. In due time the potato is taken from the ground, brought to the market, carried to your house, cooked and placed before you. You take it without even thinking, perhaps, of all this trouble, or thanking God for His goodness. This is only one article of food, and the same may be said of all the rest. Your clothing is provided for you long before you need it. The little lamb upon whose back the wool is growing, from which your coat is someday to be made, is even now far away on some mountain, growing stronger with the food God gives it till you need its wool. The little pieces of coal, too, that you so carelessly throw upon the fire were formed deep down in the earth hundreds of years ago. God produces all you use because He foresees and knows you will use it. Moreover He protects us from danger; He teaches us by the voice of our conscience and the ministers of His Church, our priests and Bishops. He loves us too, as we may learn from all that He does for us, and from the many times He forgives us our sins. He shares what He possesses with us. He has given us understanding and a free will resembling His own. He has given us immortality, i.e., when once He has created us, we shall exist as long as Himself—that is, forever. When Our Lord died on the Cross, He left us His many possessions—His graces and merits, the holy Sacraments, and Heaven itself.

It is surely, then, just and right to call God Father. Our natural fathers give us only what they, themselves, get from God. So even what they give us also comes from Him.

Before the time of Our Lord, the people in prayer did not call God Father. They feared Him more than they loved Him. When He spoke to them—as He did when He gave the Commandments to Moses—it was in thunder, lightning, and smoke. (*Ex.* 19). They looked upon God as a great and terrible king who would destroy them for their sins. He sent the deluge on account of sin, and He destroyed the wicked city of Sodom with fire from Heaven. (*Gen.* 7, 19). They called Him Jehovah, and were afraid sometimes even to pronounce His name. But Our Lord taught that God, besides being a great and powerful king—the Ruler of the universe and Lord of all things—is also a kind and good Father, who wishes His children not to offend Him because they love Him rather than because they fear Him, and therefore He taught His disciples and all Christians to call God by the sweet name of Father.

“Who art in Heaven.” The Catechism says God is everywhere. Why then do we say, “Who art in Heaven,” as if He were no place else? We say so to remind us, first, that Heaven is our true home, and that this world is only a strange land in which we are staying for a while to do the work that God wishes us to do here, and then return to our own home; second, that in Heaven we shall see God face to face and as He is; third, that Heaven is the place where God will be for all eternity with the blessed.

“Hallowed” means made *holy* or *sacred*. Halloween is the name given to the evening before the feast of All Hallows or All Saints.

“Thy kingdom come.” This petition contains a great deal more than we at first see in it. In it we ask that God may reign in our hearts and in the hearts of all men by His grace in this life, and that we and all men may attain our eternal salvation, and thus be brought to reign forever with God in Heaven—the kingdom of His glory. As the Church on earth is frequently called the kingdom of Christ, and as all the labors of the Church are directed to the salvation of souls, we pray also in this

petition that the Church may be extended upon earth, that the true religion may be spread over the whole world, that all men may know and serve the true God and cheerfully obey His holy laws; that the devil may have no dominion over them. While saying this petition we may have it in our minds to pray even for particular ways in which the true religion can be spread; for example, by praying that the missionaries may meet with success and all the missions prosper; that priests and Bishops may be ordained to preach the Gospel; that the Church may overcome all her enemies everywhere, and the true religion triumph.

“Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven.” In Heaven all the angels and Saints obey God perfectly; they never offend Him; so we pray that it may be on earth as it is in Heaven, all men doing God’s Will, observing His laws and the laws of His Church, and living without sin.

“Give us this day our daily bread.” In this petition “bread” means not merely bread, but everything we need for our daily lives; such as food, clothing, light, heat, air, and the like; also food for the soul, i.e., grace. If a beggar told you that he had not tasted bread for the whole day, you would never think of asking him if he had eaten any cake, because you would understand by his word bread all kinds of food. We say **“daily,”** to teach us not to be greedy or too careful about ourselves, and not to ask for unnecessary things, but to pray for what we need for our present wants.

“And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.” “Trespasses” means here our sins, our offenses against God. When we trespass we enter places we should not, or where we are forbidden to go. So when we sin we go where we should not go, viz., out of the path of virtue that leads to God, and into the way of vice that leads to the devil.

“As we forgive them.” We take this to mean: we forgive others who have offended us, and for that reason, God, You should forgive us who have offended You. Our Lord told a beautiful parable, i.e., a story by way of illustration, to explain this. (*Matt.* 18:23). A very rich

man had a servant who owed him a large sum of money. One day the master asked the servant for the money, and the poor servant had none to give. Now the law of the country was, that when anyone could not pay his debts, all that he had could be sold and the money given to the one to whom it was due, and if that was not sufficient, he and his wife and his children could be sold as slaves. The servant, knowing this, fell on his knees and begged his master to be patient with him, and to give him time and he would pay all. Then his master was moved to pity, granted not only what he asked, but freed him from the debt altogether. Afterwards when this servant, who had just been forgiven the large sum, was going out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a very small sum of money, and taking hold of him by the throat, demanded payment. Now, this poor servant, having nothing to give just then, implored his assailant to be patient with him and he would pay all. But the hard-hearted servant—though he himself had a little while before asked and obtained the very same favor from his own master—would not listen to the request or wait longer, but went and had his fellow servant cast into prison till he should pay the debt. The other servants, seeing how unforgiving this man was who had himself been forgiven, went and told all to their master, and he, being angry at such conduct, had the unforgiving servant brought back and cast into prison.

“And lead us not into temptation.” “Temptation” means a trial to see whether we will do a thing or not. Here it means a trial made by some person or thing—the devil, the world, or our own flesh—to see whether we will sin or not. God does not exactly lead us into temptation; but He allows us to fall into it. He allows others to tempt us. We can overcome any temptation to sin by the help or grace that God gives us. Therefore we ask in this petition that God will always give us the grace to overcome the temptation, and that we may not consent to it. A temptation is not a sin. It becomes sin only when we are overcome by it. When we are tempted we are like soldiers fighting a battle: if the soldiers are conquered by their enemy, they are disgraced; but if they

conquer their enemy, they have great glory and great rewards. So, when we overcome temptations, God gives us a new glory and reward for every victory.

“Deliver us from evil.” From every kind of evil, and especially the evil of being conquered by our spiritual enemies, and thus falling into sin, and offending God by becoming His enemy ourselves. It would be a sin to seek temptation, though we have a reward for resisting it when it comes.

“Amen” means, *be it so*. May all we have asked be granted just as we have asked it.

The Angelical Salutation

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.

Next in beauty to the Lord’s Prayer comes this prayer. It is made up of three parts:

“Hail, full of grace! the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou amongst women” was composed by the angel Gabriel, for these are the words he used when he came to tell the Blessed Virgin that she was selected to be the Mother of God (*Luke 1:28*). All her people knew that the Redeemer promised from the time of Eve down to the time of the Blessed Virgin was now to be born, and many good women were anxious to be His mother, and they believed the one who would be selected the most blessed and happy of all women.

“The Lord is with thee” by His grace and favor, since you are the one He loves best. He is with all His creatures, but He is with you in a very special manner.

After the visit of the angel, the Blessed Virgin went a good distance to visit her cousin, St. Elizabeth, who was the mother of St. John the

Baptist (*Luke* 1:39). When St. Elizabeth saw her, she, without being told by the Blessed Virgin what the angel had done, knew by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost what had taken place, and said to the Blessed Virgin: **“Blessed art thou amongst women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb.”** That is “blessed” because, of all the women that have ever lived or ever shall live, you are the one selected by God to be the mother of His Son and Our Redeemer, and blessed is that Son Himself. This is the second part of the prayer. The third part, from **“Holy Mary”** to the end, was composed by the Church.

“Hail.” This was the word used by the people of that country in saluting one another when they met. We say when meeting anyone we know, “Good day,” or “How do you do?” or some such familiar expression used by all in salutation. So these people, instead of saying, “Good day,” etc., said “Hail,” i.e., I wish you health, I greet you, etc. The angel did not say **“Mary,”** because she was the only one present to address.

“Full of grace.” When anything is full it has no room for more. God’s grace and sin cannot exist in the same place. Therefore when the Blessed Virgin was full of grace, there was no room for sin. So she was without any sin and gifted with every virtue.

“Holy Mary,” because one full of grace must be holy.

“Mother of God,” because her Son was true God and true man in the one person of Christ, Our Lord.

“Pray for us,” because she has more power with her Son than all the other Saints.

“Sinners,” and therefore we need forgiveness.

“At the hour of our death” especially, because that is the most important time for us. No matter how bad we have been during our lives, if God gives us the grace to die in His friendship, we shall be His friends forever. On the other hand, no matter how good we may have been for a part of our lives, if we become bad before death, and die in that state, we shall be separated from God forever, and be condemned to eternal punishment. It would be wrong, therefore, to live in sin, with a promise that we shall die well, for God may not give us the grace or

opportunity to repent, and we may die in sin if we have lived in sin. Besides this, the devil knows how much depends upon the state in which we die, and so he perhaps will tempt us more at death than at any other time; for if we yield to him and die in sin, we shall be with him forever—it is his last chance to secure our souls.

Besides the Hail Mary there is another beautiful prayer on the same subject, called the **Angelus**. It is a little history of the Incarnation, and is said morning, noon, and evening in honor of Our Lord's Incarnation, death, and Resurrection. It is made up of three parts. The first part tells what the angel did, viz.: "The angel of the Lord declared unto Mary. And she conceived of the Holy Ghost." After saying these words, we say one Hail Mary in honor of the angel's message. The second part tells what Mary answered, viz.: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord. Be it done unto me according to thy word." We say another Hail Mary in honor of Mary's consent. The third part tells how Our Lord became Man, viz.: "And the Word was made flesh. And dwelt among us." The "Word" means here the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity; and "made flesh" means, became man. Then another Hail Mary is said in honor of Our Lord's goodness in humbling Himself so much for our sake. After these three parts we say: "Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God! that we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ"; and, finally, we say a prayer in honor of Our Lord's Incarnation, Passion, and Resurrection. This beautiful prayer is said three times a day in all seminaries, convents, and religious houses. The time for saying it is made known by the ringing of a bell called the "Angelus bell." In many parishes the church bell rings out the Angelus. In Catholic countries the people stop wherever they are and whatever they are doing, and bowing their heads, say the Angelus when they hear its bell. It is a beautiful practice and one most pleasing to our Blessed Lord and His holy Mother. Good Catholics should not neglect it.

I might mention here another kind of prayer often said in honor of Our Blessed Mother. It is the **Litany**. In this form of prayer we call Our Lady many beautiful names which we know are most dear to her, asking

her after each one to pray for us. We address her first by names reminding her that she is the Mother of God and has therefore great influence with her divine Son. We say: Mother of Christ, Mother of Our Creator, Mother of Our Redeemer, etc., pray for us. Next we remind her that she is a virgin and should take pity on us who are exposed to so many temptations against holy purity. We call her Virgin most pure, Virgin most chaste, etc., and again ask her to pray for us. Lastly we call her all those names that could induce her to hear us. We say: Health of the sick, Refuge of sinners, Help of Christians, pray for us.

In addition to the Litany of the Blessed Virgin, we have the Litany of the Holy Name of Jesus, the Litany of the Blessed Sacrament, the Litany of the Sacred Heart, the Litany of St. Joseph, and many others—all made up in the same form. We have also the Litany of all the Saints, in which we beg the help and prayers of the different classes of Saints—the Apostles, martyrs, virgins, etc.

The Apostles' Creed

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

A creed is a definite list or summary of all the things one believes. The “Apostles’ Creed” is therefore a list or collection of all the truths the Apostles believed. The “Apostles” were the twelve men that Our Lord selected to be His first Bishops. We know they were Bishops

because they could ordain priests and consecrate other Bishops. They lived with Our Lord like a little family during the three and a half years of His public life; they went with Him and learned from Him wherever He preached. Besides these He had also His disciples, i.e., followers who went with Him frequently but did not live with Him. Our Lord wished His doctrine to be taught to all the people of the world, and so He told His Apostles that they must go over the whole world and preach in every country. During the life of Our Lord and for a short time after His death they preached in only one country, viz., Palestine—now called the Holy Land—in which country the Jews, up to that time God’s chosen people, lived. Since the Apostles were to preach to all nations, the time came when they must separate, one going to one country, and another to another. In those days there were no steamboats or railroads, no post offices, telegraph offices, telephones, or newspapers. If the Apostles wished to communicate with anyone they had either to go to the place themselves or send a messenger. By walking or riding it might have taken them months or years in those days to make a journey that we can make now in a few days; and for an answer to a message which we can get now by telegraph in a few hours they might have had to wait months. The Apostles knew of all these inconveniences, and before leaving the places they were in pointed out the chief truths that all should know and believe before receiving Baptism, that Christian teachers who should come after them might neglect nothing—just as we use catechisms containing the truths of religion, for fear the teachers might forget to speak of some of them. There are “twelve articles” or parts in the Apostles’ Creed, and each part is meant to refute some false doctrine taught before the time of the Apostles or while they lived. Thus there were those—as the Romans—who said there were many gods; others said not God, but the devil created the earth; others taught that Our Lord was not the Son of God: and so on for the rest. All these false doctrines are denied and the truth professed when we say the Apostles’ Creed.

Just as in the Lord's Prayer we do not see all its meaning at first, so in the Apostles' Creed we find many beautiful things only after thinking carefully over every word it contains.

"I believe," without the slightest doubt or suspicion that I might be wrong.

"In God" by the grace that He gives me to believe and have full confidence in Him.

"God," to show that there is only one.

"The Father," because He brought everything into existence and keeps it so (see Explanation of the Lord's Prayer).

"Almighty," i.e., having all might or power; because He can do whatever He wishes. He can make or destroy by merely wishing.

"Creator." To create means to make out of nothing. God alone can create. When a carpenter makes a table, he must have wood; when a tailor makes a coat, he must have cloth. They are only makers and not creators. God needs no material or tools. When we make anything, we make it part by part; but God makes the whole at once. He simply wills and it is made. Thus He said in the beginning of the world: "Let there be light; and light was made." For example, suppose I wanted a piano. If I could say, "Let there be a piano," and it immediately sprang up without any other effort on my part, although neither the wood, the iron, the wire, the ivory, nor anything else in it ever existed till I said, "Let there be a piano," then it could be said I created a piano. No one could do this, for God alone has such power.

"Heaven and earth" and everything we can see or know of.

"Jesus Christ." Our Lord is called by many names, but you must not be confused by them, for they all mean the same person, and are given only to remind us of some particular thing connected with Our Lord. He is called **"Jesus,"** which signifies Saviour, and **"Christ,"** which means anointed. He is called the "Second Person of the Blessed Trinity," and when we call Him "Our Lord" we mean the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity after He became man. He is called the "Messias" and the "Son of David" to show that He is the Redeemer

promised to the Jews. Also at the end of all our litanies He is called the “Lamb of God,” because He was so meek and humble and suffered death so patiently. In the Litany of the Holy Name of Jesus we will find many other beautiful names of Our Lord, all having their special signification.

“His only Son,” to show that God, the First Person of the Blessed Trinity, was His real Father. We are called God’s children, but we are only His created and adopted children.

“Who was conceived,” i.e., He began to exist by the power of the Holy Ghost in the womb of His Mother, the Blessed Virgin.

“Suffered.” We shall see in the explanation of the Passion what He suffered.

“Under” means here, at the time a man named Pontius Pilate was governor. If anyone were put to death today in this country, we should say he was executed *under* Governor or President so-and-so. **“Crucified,”** i.e., nailed to a cross. We say **“died,”** because Our Lord is the Giver of Life, and no one could take His life away unless He allowed it. Therefore we say He died, and not that He was killed, to show that He died by His own free will and not against His will.

“Was buried.” This we say to show that He was really dead; because if you bury a man who is not really dead he must die.

“Hell” here does not mean the place where the damned are, but a place called “Limbo” You know that when our first parents sinned, Heaven was closed against them and us, and no human being could be admitted into it till after the death of Our Lord; for He by His death would redeem us—make amends for our fall and once more open for us Heaven. Now from the time Adam sinned till the time Christ died is about four thousand years. During that time there were at least some good men, like Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David, and others, in the world, who tried to serve God as best they could—keeping all the divine laws known to them, and believing that the Messiah would some day come to redeem them. When, therefore, they died they could not go to Heaven, because it was closed against them. They could not go to

Hell, because they were good men. Neither could they go to Purgatory, because they would have to suffer there. Where could they go? God in His goodness provided a place for them—Limbo—where they could stay without suffering till Our Lord reopened Heaven. Therefore, while Our Lord's body lay in the sepulchre, His soul went down into Limbo, to tell these good men that Heaven was now opened for them, and that at His Ascension He would take them there with Him.

“The third day.” Not three full days, but the parts of three days, viz., Friday afternoon, Saturday, and Sunday morning.

“He arose” by His own power: and this was the greatest of all Our Lord's miracles. Some others, like the prophets and Apostles, have, by the power God gave them, raised the dead to life; but no dead person ever raised himself. Our Lord is the first and only one to do this, and by so doing, showed they could not take away His life unless He wished to give it up; for since He could always take back His life, how could they destroy it?

“He ascended” forty days after His Resurrection.

“Right hand of God.” We know God is a pure spirit having no body; and if He has no body He can have no hands. Why then do we say right hand? When the President of the United States invites anyone to dine at his house, he makes the invited guest sit at his right hand, and thus shows his respect by giving him the place of highest honor.

When Our Lord ascended into Heaven, He went up in the human body He had upon earth, and His Father placed Him as man, in His glorified body, in the place, after His (the Father's) own, the highest in Heaven; but remember, only as man, because as God He is equal to His Father in all things.

“From thence”—that is, from the right hand of God.

“To judge.” To examine them, to pronounce sentence upon them; to reward them in Heaven or punish them in Hell.

“The living and the dead.” We may take this in a double sense. As the general judgment will come suddenly and when not expected, all will be going on in the world as usual—some attending to business,

others taking their ease as they do now, or as they were doing when the deluge came upon them. Just when the judgment is about to take place, God will destroy the earth; and then all those living in the world will perish with its destruction and then be judged. The “dead” means, therefore, all those who died before the destruction of the world, and the “living” all those who were on earth when the time of its destruction came. Or the “living” may mean also those in a state of grace, and the “dead” those in mortal sin; for God will judge both classes.

“Holy Ghost,” i.e., the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity. Ghost is an old word meaning spirit. When persons say that a ghost appeared, they mean that the spirit of some dead person appeared. These stories about ghosts are told generally to frighten children or timid persons. If those who thought they saw a ghost always examined what they saw, they would find that the supposed ghost was something very natural; probably a bush swayed by the wind, or a stray animal, or perhaps some person trying to frighten them. Ghost here does not mean the spirit of a dead person, but the Holy Spirit, which is the proper name for the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity.

“The communion of Saints.” There are three parts in the Church. We have, first, the **Church Militant**, i.e., the fighting Church, made up of all the faithful upon earth, who are still fighting for their salvation. The Holy Scripture tells us our life upon earth is a warfare. We have three enemies to fight. First, *the devil*, who by every means wishes to keep us out of Heaven—the place he once enjoyed himself. The devil knows well the happiness of Heaven, and does not wish us to have what he cannot have himself; just as you sometimes see persons who, through their own fault, have lost their situation trying to keep others out of it.

Our second enemy is *the world*. This does not mean the earth with all its beauty and riches, but the bad people in the world with their false doctrines; some telling us there is no God, Heaven, or Hell, others that we should pay no attention to the teaching of the Church or the laws of God, and advising us by word and example to resist our lawful superiors

in Church or State and give free indulgence to our sinful passions.

The third enemy is our own *flesh*. By this we mean our concupiscence, that is, our passions, evil inclinations, and propensity to do wrong. When God first created man, the soul was always master over the body, and the body obedient to the soul. After Adam sinned, the body rebelled against the soul and tried to lead it into sin. The body is the part of our nature that makes us like the brute animals, while the soul makes us like to God and the angels.

When we sin, it is generally to satisfy the body craving for what it has not, or for that which is forbidden. Why did God leave this concupiscence in us? He left it, first, to keep us humble, by reminding us of our former sins, and, secondly, that we might overcome it and have a reward for the victory.

The second branch of the Church is called the **Church Suffering**. It is made up of all those who have gone through this world and are now in Purgatory.

Some of them while on earth fought well, but not as well as they could have done; they yielded to some temptations, fell into some small sins, received some slight wounds from their spiritual enemies, or they have not satisfied God entirely for the temporal guilt due to their great sins; therefore they are in Purgatory till they can be completely purified from all their sins and admitted into Heaven.

The last or third branch of the Church is called the **Church Triumphant**, and is made up of the angels and all those who have lived at one time upon earth and who are now in Heaven with God, enjoying their rewards for overcoming their spiritual enemies and serving God while upon earth. They are triumphant or rejoicing because they have reached their heavenly home.

You must not think that those only are saints who have been canonized by the Church and whose names are known to us; for all in Heaven are saints, as we also shall be if admitted into that happy eternity. God wishes all to be saints, for He wishes all to be saved. You know we can pray to the Saints and ask their help and prayers; but how

could we know that certain men or women are really in Heaven? We can know it when the Church canonizes them, and thus gives proof that they were great spiritual heroes in the service of God and can be more confidently appealed to on account of their eminent sanctity and powerful intercession.

Therefore the Church by canonization tells us for certain that such and such persons are truly in Heaven. But might not the Church be deceived like ourselves?

No! For Christ has promised to be always with His Church, and the Holy Ghost is ever directing her, so that she cannot err in faith or morals. If the Church made us pray to persons who are not saints, she would fall into the worst of errors, and Our Lord would have failed to keep His promise—a saying that would be blasphemous, for Christ, being God, is infinitely true and could not deceive or be deceived. To canonize, therefore, does not mean to make a saint, but to declare to the whole world that such a one was a saint while upon earth. After death we cannot merit, so our reward in Heaven will be just what we have secured up till the moment of our death; hence holiness is acquired in the Church Militant.

How does the Church canonize a saint? Let us suppose some good man dies, and all his neighbors talk about his holy life, how much he did for the poor, how he prayed, fasted, and mortified himself. All these accounts of his life are collected and sent to Rome, to the Holy Father or to the Cardinals appointed by him to examine such statements. These accounts must show that the good man practiced virtue in a more than ordinary manner, that he either performed some miracles while he lived, or that God granted miracles after his death through his intercession.

These accounts are not examined immediately after his death, but sometimes after a lapse of 50 years or more, so that people might not exaggerate his good works because they knew him personally.

When these accounts are examined, one is appointed to prevent, if he can, the canonization. He is sometimes called the devil's advocate,

because it is his business to find fault with all the accounts and miracles, and prove them false if possible. This is done to make certain that all the accounts are true and the miracles real. If everything is found as represented, then the good man is declared Venerable, later beatified, i.e., called Blessed, and still later canonized, i.e., declared a Saint. If he is only beatified, he can be honored publicly only in certain places or by certain persons; but if he is canonized, he can be honored throughout the whole Church by all the faithful.

Thus we understand the three branches of the one true Church—the Church Militant, i.e., all those who are on earth trying to save their souls; the Church Suffering, those in Purgatory, having their souls purified for Heaven; and the Church Thumphant, those already in Heaven.

The “**communion of Saints**” means that these three branches of the Church can help one another. We help the souls in Purgatory by our prayers and good works, and the Saints in Heaven pray for us. But “communion of Saints” means still more. Let us take an example. Suppose there are in a family, living together, a mother and three sons. The eldest son earns a large salary, the second son enough to support himself, and the youngest very little. They give their earnings to their mother, who from the combined amounts provides for the wants of all and draws from the large salary of the eldest to supply the needs of the youngest. Thus he who has too little for his support is—through his mother—aided by the one who has more than he needs. Now, the Church is our mother, and some of her children—the great Saints—were rich in good works and did more than was necessary to gain Heaven, while others did not do enough. Then our mother, the Church, draws from the abundant satisfaction of her rich children to help those who are poor in merit and good works. The greatest treasure she has to draw from for that purpose is the more than abundant merits of Our Lord and the superabundant satisfaction of the Blessed Virgin and the greatest Saints. Our Lord could have redeemed us all by the least suffering, and yet He suffered dreadful torments, and even shed His blood and died for us. The Blessed Virgin never sinned, yet

she performed many good works and offered many prayers. Therefore “communion of Saints” means, also, that we all share in the merits of Christ and in the superabundant satisfaction of the Blessed Virgin and of the Saints; also in the prayers and good works of the Church and of her faithful and pious children.

“The forgiveness of sins,” i.e., by the Sacrament of Penance, through the power that God gave His priests; also by Baptism.

“The resurrection of the body,” i.e., on the last day (*Matt.* 24:29; *Luke* 21:25). When on the last day, at the General Judgment, God’s angel sounds the great trumpet, all the dead will arise again and come to judgment, in the same bodies they had while living. But you will say: If their bodies are reduced to ashes and mixed with the earth, or if parts of them are in one place and parts in another, how is this possible? Very easily, with God. If He in the beginning could make all the parts out of nothing, with how much ease can He collect them scattered here and there! When God made man He gave him a body and a soul, and wished them never to be separated. Man was to live here upon earth for a time, and then be taken up into Heaven, body and soul, as Our Lord is there now. But when man sinned, in punishment God commanded that he should die; i.e., that these two dear friends, the body and the soul, should be separated for a time. Death is caused by the separation of the soul from the body. The body and soul together make a man, and neither one alone can be called a man. A dead body is only part of a man. At the resurrection every soul will come from Heaven, Purgatory, or Hell, to seek its own body; they will then be united again as they were in life, never to be separated—to be happy together in Heaven if they have been good upon earth, or miserable together in Hell if they have been bad upon earth.

“Life everlasting”—either, as we have said, in Heaven or Hell. There was a time when we did not exist but it can never be said of us again we do not exist. When once we have been created, we shall live as long as God Himself, i.e., forever. When we have lived a thousand years for every drop of water in the ocean; a thousand years for every

grain of sand on the seashore; a thousand years for every blade of grass and every leaf on the earth, we shall still be existing. How short a time, therefore, is a hundred years even if we live so long—and few do—compared with all these millions of years! And yet it depends upon the time we live here whether all these millions of years in the next world will be for us years of happiness or of misery. The whole life of a man extends through the two worlds, viz., from the moment of his creation through all eternity; and surely the little while he stays upon earth must seem very short when, after spending a million years in the next world, he looks back to his earthly life. There is a good example to illustrate this. If you stand on a railroad, and look away down the track for about a mile, it will seem to you that the rails come nearer and nearer, till at last they touch. It seems so on account of the distance, for where they seem to touch they are just as far apart as where you are standing. So, also, when you look back from eternity, the day of your birth and the day of your death will seem to coincide, and your life on earth appear nothing. Then, if you are among the lost souls you will think, What a fool I was to make myself suffer all this long eternity for that silly bit of earthly pleasure, which is of no benefit to me now! And this thought will serve only to make you more miserable. But, on the other hand, if you look back from a happy eternity, you will wonder at God's goodness in giving you so much happiness for so short a service upon earth.

The Confiteor

I CONFESS to Almighty God, to Blessed Mary ever Virgin, to Blessed Michael the Archangel, to Blessed John the Baptist, to the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, and to all the Saints, that I have sinned exceedingly, in thought, word, and deed, through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault. Therefore I beseech Blessed Mary ever Virgin, Blessed Michael the Archangel, Blessed John the Baptist, the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, and all the Saints, to pray to the Lord our God for me.

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

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

This is another beautiful prayer. In it we can imagine that we are permitted to enter Heaven. What do we see there? God, the Blessed Virgin, the thousands of angels, the Apostles, all the Saints, martyrs, confessors, doctors and virgins. They cease singing God's praises, as we enter, and fix their eyes upon us. Our guardian angel conducts us before the great throne of God, and we kneel down in the presence of the whole court of Heaven, to acknowledge our sins and faults, while all listen attentively. Touched by so sublime a sight and the thought of having offended a God of so much glory, we begin our accusation of ourselves. We fix our eyes first upon God, and say: **"I confess,"** i.e., accuse myself, **"to Almighty God."** Then we look upon the rest of the blessed, and say: **"to the Blessed Mary ever Virgin,"** etc. Thus we call the whole court of Heaven to be a witness of the fact that we **"have sinned,"** not lightly, but **"exceedingly,"** i.e., very greatly, and in three ways: **"in thought,"** by thinking of things sinful and forbidden; **"in word,"** by lies, curses, slanders, etc.; **"in deed,"** by every bad action that we have committed; and each of us can say: I have done all this **"through my fault,"** i.e., willingly and deliberately; and it was not a small fault, but an exceeding great fault, because God was helping me by His grace to overcome temptations and avoid bad thoughts, words, and actions, and I would not accept His help, but willingly did what was wrong. What am I to do, therefore? Will God pardon all these offenses if I alone ask Him, seeing that all the angels and Saints know that I have thus offended Him? What shall I do? I will ask them to help me by their prayers, and to beg God's pardon for me. He may grant their prayers, especially those of the Blessed Mother and of the Saints, when He would not grant mine. **"Therefore I beseech the Blessed Mary ever Virgin,"** etc., **"to pray to the Lord our God for me."**

When we kneel down to say the *Confiteor*, if we could imagine what I have just described to take place, how well we should say it! With what attention, respect, and sorrow we should ask the prayers of the Saints! When we say the *Confiteor*, and indeed any prayer, we say it in the presence of God, and of the whole court of Heaven, though we are not in Heaven and cannot see God. The angels and Saints do hear us and will pray for us. When, therefore, you are saying the *Confiteor*, imagine that you see all I have described, and you will never say it badly.

An Act of Faith

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

An “act,” i.e., a profession, of faith. The whole substance of the act of faith is contained in this: I believe all that God has revealed and the Catholic Church teaches. We might mention one by one all the truths God has revealed, i.e., made known to us, and all the truths the Catholic Church teaches as revealed by God. For example, we might say, I believe in the Holy Trinity, in the Incarnation of Our Lord in the Holy Eucharist, in the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin, in the infallibility of the Pope, and so on, till we write an act of faith twenty pages long, and yet it would all be contained in the words: I believe all God has revealed and the Catholic Church teaches. Hence we find in prayerbooks and catechisms acts of faith differing in length and words, but they are all the same in substance and have the same meaning. The act of faith in our Catechism gives a few of the chief

truths revealed, that it may be neither too short nor too long, and that all may learn the same words.

An Act of Hope

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

The substance of this act is: I hope for Heaven and the means to obtain it. The means by which I will obtain it are the pardon of my sins by God, and the grace which He will give me in the reception of the Sacraments and in prayer, by which grace I will be able to know Him, love Him, and serve Him, and thus come to be with Him forever. Here again we could make a long act by mentioning all the things we hope for; viz., a good death, a favorable judgment, a place in Heaven, etc.

An Act of Love

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

The substance of this act is: I love God above all things for His own goodness, and my neighbor as myself for the sake of God. An act of love and an act of charity are the same thing with different names. We are accustomed to call such things as the giving of alms or help to the poor, the doing of some good work that we are not bound to do for another, charity. Surely there are many motives that may induce persons to help others in their distress; but what is the chief Christian motive, if it be not the love we bear our brother-man because he is,

like ourselves, a child of God, and the desire we have to obey God, who wishes us to help the needy? The sufferings of others excite our pity, and the more we love them the more sorry are we to see them suffer. Thanks to God for all His mercies to us; He might have made us, instead of this man, poor and in suffering, but He has spared us and afflicted him; we know not why God has done so, and therefore we help him, moved by these considerations even when we feel he is not deserving of the help, because we know his unworthiness will not prevent God from rewarding our good intention. We may be charitable to our neighbor by saying nothing hurtful about him, by never telling his faults without necessity, etc. Therefore real charity, in its widest sense, and love are just the same.

An Act of Contrition

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

The substance of this act is: O my God! I am very sorry for all my sins, because by them I have offended Thee, and with Thy help, I will never sin again. It is well to know what the acts contain in substance, for we can use these short forms as aspirations during the day, when we probably would not think of saying the long forms. A fuller explanation of the qualities of our contrition will be given in Lesson Eighteen.

The Blessing before Meals

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

Grace after Meals

WE GIVE Thee thanks for all Thy benefits, O Almighty God, Who livest and reignest forever. And may the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

“**Grace**” means thanks. We saw in the explanation of the Our Father how God provides us with all we need, and most frequently with food. It is the least we can do, therefore, to thank Him for it, when it is just placed before us. We should thank Him also after we have eaten it and found it good, pleasing, and refreshing. When God provides us with food He thereby makes a kind of promise that He will allow us to live awhile longer and give us strength to serve Him. How shameful it is, then, to turn God’s gifts into a means of offending Him, as some do by the sin of gluttony! Again, it is very wrong to murmur and be dissatisfied with what God gives us. He does not owe us anything, and need not give unless He wishes. What would you think of a beggar of this kind? He comes to your door hungry, and you, instead of simply giving him some bread to appease his hunger, take him into your house and give him a good dinner, new clothing, and some money. Now, instead of being thankful, suppose he should complain because you did not give him a better dinner, finer clothing, and more money, and should look cross and dissatisfied; what would you think of him? Would you not be tempted to turn the ungrateful fellow out of your house, with an order never to come again, telling him he deserved to starve for his ingratitude? We are not quite as ungrateful as the beggar when we neglect grace at meals, because in saying our daily prayers we thank God for all His gifts, our food included, and hence it is not a sin to neglect grace at meals. But do we not show some ingratitude when we murmur, complain, and are dissatisfied with our food, clothing, or homes? God, even when we are ungrateful, still gives; hence His wonderful goodness and mercy to us.

*The Manner in which a Lay Person
Is to Baptize in Case of Necessity*

POUR common water on the head or face of the person to be baptized, and say while pouring it: “I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”

N. B. Any person of either sex who has reached the use of reason can baptize in case of necessity.