

# THE BREAD OF LIFE CATHOLIC FELLOWSHIP, SYDNEY

‘ A Private Association of the Christian Faithful of Pontifical Right ’

## OUR COMMITMENT TO ONGOING FORMATION

PART ONE

Revised

### BEING CATHOLIC CHRISTIANS



Upnongoodground.com

*Popes Blessed John Paul II, Benedict XVI and Francis have affirmed the New Ecclesial Movements, Associations and Communities as the young face of the Church and that Christ and the Church expect much of them.*

*The Holy Spirit has called these New Ecclesial Entities to enrich the Church and its mission of New Evangelisation by continuing to:-*

- “ i. present the Gospel in depth,*
- ii. build and promote Christian community, and to*
- iii. prepare their members for witness to their faith in the public square.”*

*By undertaking the study the book “Catholic and Christian”, we show a willingness to be heralds of the New Evangelisation.*

*1 Peter 3:15-16*

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*Brian Wyer (Moderator)*

# *It Starts With Us*

## *The New Evangelization*

1. *is about re-evangelizing the world for Jesus Christ, starting with oneself:-*
2. *by having having a deep on-going personal encounter with Jesus Christ,*
3. *knowing the Catholic faith more deeply,*
4. *living that faith in our everyday circumstances,*
5. *and sharing the faith more successfully.*

*from The New Evangelization and You*

*Recent Popes have reminded us that the 'Church exists to Evangelise'.  
Blessed Pope John Paul II began the process of a New Evangelisation,  
with the power in proclamation and witness in lifestyle  
to the reality of the Person of Jesus Christ.*

*The heralds and bulwarks of this New Evangelisation are to be found in the  
New Ecclesial Movements and Communities,  
which have been raised-up by the Holy Spirit.*

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*Pope Francis commenting upon these New Ecclesial Movements and  
Communities, stated that they "are typically focused upon*

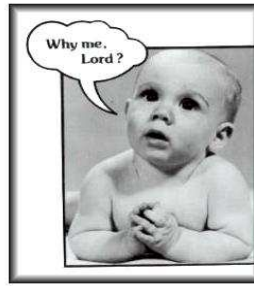
- i. presenting the Gospel in depth,*
- ii. building and promoting Christian community,*
- iii. and preparing their members to witness to their faith in  
the public square."*

*He stressed that "These New Movements and Associations  
are the young face of the Church  
and  
are a fruit of the Second Vatican Council"*

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*We ,in the BOLF, are one of these young faces of the Church. and,  
we are called upon to prepare each other as witnesses to our faith  
in the Public Arena*

*This study of the 'Catholic & Christian' Book is part of our response to the  
Pope's three (3) focuses (mentioned above)*



desicommments.com

## **'IS IT REALLY NECESSARY THAT YOU COMPLETE THIS STUDY?'**

**I do not believe that we can ask you to undertake the following study exercises of our Catholic Faith, without first addressing this basic question.**

The simplest answer is that Jesus Christ, through His Popes and Magisterium, is asking us to be heralds of the New Evangelisation across the whole World. In order to respond to this call, each Christian needs to be a living witness to their intimate relationship with Jesus Christ; to be well grounded in his/her faith and a burning desire to proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour to a desperate World. As Pope Francis said (18/4/13):

**'Do Christians today really believe in the power of their Baptism?  
Is it sufficient for evangelization?  
Or do we rather 'hope' that the priest and the bishop  
will do all of the evangelisation?**

**This way of seeing Christianity often carries with it the attitude of,  
'I was Baptised; I made my Confirmation and First Communion ...  
I have my identity card, alright.'  
And now, I will go to sleep quietly: I am now a Christian.'**

This study is thus aimed at refreshing our Catholic Christian beliefs, so that in our proclamation of the Jesus Christ and His Gospel, we may not be found wanting. In the words of Pope Benedict XVI:

'But how is it possible to reawaken the question of God in such a way that it becomes the fundamental question? Dear friends, if it is true that "Being Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a person" (*Deus Caritas Est*, n. 1), the question about God is revealed by the encounter with those who have the gift of faith, with those who have a vital relationship with the Lord. God comes to be known through men and women who know him: the path towards him passes concretely through those who have met him. Your role as faithful lay people is particularly important here.

As *Christifideles Laici* notes, this is your specific vocation: in the Church's mission "a particular place falls to the lay faithful, by reason of their 'secular character', obliging them, in their proper and irreplaceable way, to work towards the Christian animation of the temporal order" (n. 36).

You are called to bear a transparent witness to the importance of the question of God in every field of thought and action. In the family, at work, as well as in politics and in the economy, people of today need to see for themselves and to feel tangibly how with God, or without God everything changes.

Pope Benedict XVI Plenary Assembly of the Pontifical Council for the Laity: The Vatican - Nov 25<sup>th</sup> 2011



camblodge.wordpress.com

## *ARE YOU FEELING APPREHENSIVE ABOUT DOING THIS STUDY?*



imnotfluffy.com

*If you are, then this is perfectly understandable*

For many of us, these types of exercises fill us with dread.

We remember having had bad experiences with English lessons at school.

Perhaps it helps to know that the problem does not necessarily rest in us,  
but in the way that such lessons were taught.

When our heart is in the right place and in the Holy Spirit, then all things are possible;  
and we can confidently complete this book study.

With this in mind, I have tried to make it as simple as possible: framing questions so  
that some have pictorial clues, some with parts of words left to be filled-in  
and some as multi-choice responses to the questions

Please remember that our responses to the questions are meant to act as a focal point,  
so as to help us bring out, in written form,  
what it is that we believe concerning certain Catholic teachings.

Hopefully, by having our thoughts written-out, we may then find it easier to prayerfully  
seek the Holy Spirit's further revelation and so grow in understanding and confidence in  
our Catholic beliefs and practices.

This in turn, helps to equip us as heralds and witnesses to the Church's proclamation  
through its undertaking of a New Evangelisation.

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**Why not get together with others and do the study as a group.  
If you do this, then please hand-in your booklets separately.**

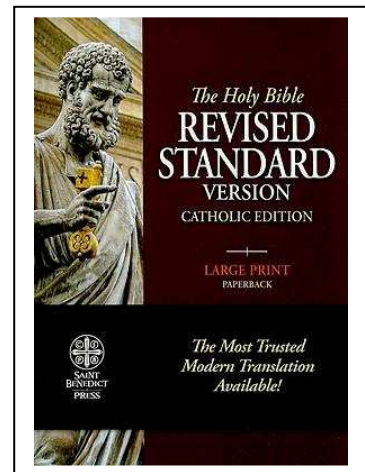
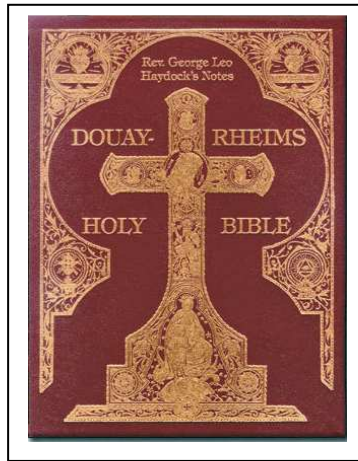
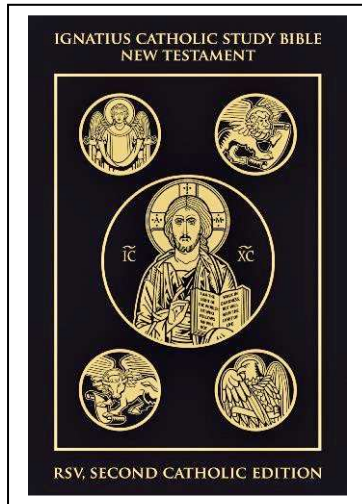


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— Brian



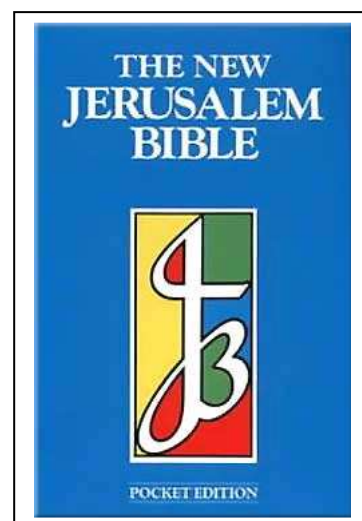
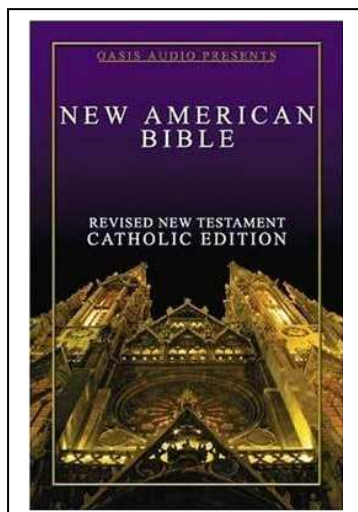
**IN DOING THIS STUDY, YOU WILL NEED TO HAVE  
A BIBLE AS A REFERENCE SOURCE.  
THEREFORE,  
IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT YOU USE A CATHOLIC VERSION**

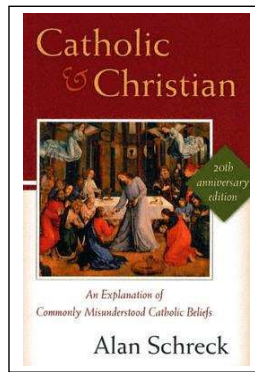


Why is it important that Catholics use a Catholic Edition of the Bible.

We state this for at least these reasons:

1. A Catholic Bible contains the fullness of the Canon of Inspired Scripture.  
(With Protestantism, 7 books in the Old Testament have been removed)
2. A Catholic Bible has key passages that underpin Catholic Beliefs.
3. Important cross-references relating to Catholic beliefs are present.
4. Any footnotes will illuminate Catholic understandings and beliefs.





## **ONGOING FORMATION: PART ONE**

In this set of ongoing formation teachings, we will be pondering upon the basic beliefs and practices of the Catholic Church. As members of the Mystical Body of Christ, we will also be challenged to locate these beliefs and practices within our own personal calling and charism

**The essential text needed is:**

Alan Schreck 'Catholic & Christian –an Explanation of Commonly Misunderstood Catholic Beliefs': Servants Books, Ann Arbor. 2004



*brian wyer*

Bishop Anthony Fisher celebrating Sunday Eucharist with BOLF, April 2010

## *Welcome to this Study*

On behalf of the Moderators and the membership, of 'The Bread of Life Catholic Fellowship', we welcome you in this part of the discernment process, which you are undertaking, either, as one of the pre-requisites necessary before receiving an invitation to become a member of the Fellowship, or, as part of your ongoing formation as a Catholic.

You may think that it is strange, that as a Catholic, it is still necessary to undertake a set of Formation Teachings on the Catholic Faith and on the identity of the New Ecclesial Movements within the Church. The answer to why this is necessary will become evident as you progress through the series of Teachings.

What we can say at this point, is that such Formation finds its initiative in the Holy Spirit, who is the One who birthed the Church and the New Movements. As our recent Popes have stated, these Movements are a charism for the Church, who needs such charisms, working in harmony besides the Papacy, to revitalise and to empower the Church to effectively evangelise in a World, which is growing more and more hostile to Christianity and Christians.

In 1998, when Pope John Paul 11 called together the Bishops of the World and, at another venue and time, the leaders of the New Ecclesial Movements, to come to Rome and hear what the Holy Spirit is doing in the Church. One of His challenges was directed squarely at the New Movements, of which the 'Bread of Life Fellowship' is but one, when he stated that the Church today has two fundamental priorities in Evangelization: firstly, the "making of disciples" of Jesus Christ today by providing Catholics with a "solid and deep formation" and, secondly, to help each Catholic develop a "strong personal testimony."

Archbishop Rylko, President of the Pontifical Council for the Laity, said, in support of these priorities set by the Pope:

‘These are two areas in which the new ecclesial movements and new communities are producing stupendous fruits for the life of the Church. These groups have become true "laboratories of faith" and authentic schools of Christian life, holiness, and mission for thousands of Christians in every part of the world’.

Your undertaking these formation teachings is the result of, firstly, your response to the prompting from the Holy Spirit, and, secondly, a response in faith to answer this call by Pope John Paul 11 for solid formation in the Catholic Faith.

Before we can be God's effective faithful servants in the evangelisation of the World, we must receive from Him the Living Word, be transformed by that Word and be that Word to the World. These Formation teachings are, for most of us, a beginning point, as we begin to answer the challenge to evangelise.

World Youth Days, have brought home to us, so powerfully, the truth, that people, especially the young, will truly respond to the radical teachings of Jesus and make great sacrifices in such response. People are not receptive, nor should they, to a 'lite' brand of Christianity.

We are here to walk beside you as you undertake these Formation teachings.



Joseph Chircop  
Founding Moderator  
'Bread of Life Fellowship'



Brian Wyer  
Moderator  
'Bread Of Life' Fellowship

## INTRODUCTION

We have chosen Alan Schreck's book as our basic text for many reasons, of which the following lists but a few:

1. He has a heart, like that of Jesus, for unity amongst Christians (cf John 17:20ff)
2. His simple style makes it easier for readers to comprehend the content;
3. He addresses the confusion and uncertainty that so many Catholics have about their Church's teachings, beliefs and practices;
4. He also addresses the stress that many Catholics experience when others accuse them of not being Christian, even anti-Christian;
5. He provides a valuable contribution to our response to the call of Pope John Paul II to the Catholic Fraternity", who said that the Church today has two fundamental priorities of Evangelisation in the "making of disciples" Jesus Christ. He cited these priorities as providing
  - i. a "solid and deep formation" and
  - ii. a "strong testimony."

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Before we enter into this journey of revisiting the truths, beliefs and practices of our Catholic Church, we each need to prayerfully prepare ourselves. We need to do this because, in our humanity, we can presume that we 'know all of this old stuff' and approach our readings from the head and perhaps a hardened heart.

We also need to remember that by allowing the Holy Spirit to refresh us in our Catholic identity, we are being renewed by the Holy Spirit to be Jesus' witnesses in the World.

It helps me to approach any revisiting of our Catholic heritage by recalling the power and revitalisation of anniversaries. When we celebrate anniversaries (weddings, birthdays, Christmas, etc) we experience a newness in our relationships with others. We do not say 'Let us forget all of this anniversary stuff – we done it all before, it has no purpose or value'. We know from experience that this is not true.

Similarly, it is in the revisiting the central truths of our Catholic Faith, such as in these teachings, that we are refreshed and there is a release of the power and love of Jesus into our lives. Let the Holy Spirit inflame our love of Jesus as we experience Him in our Catholic Faith !

*Yours in Jesus Christ  
Brian Wyer  
BOLF Moderator*



## PROLOGUE: PERSPECTIVE ON CATHOLIC BELIEFS

In the prologue to his book, Alan Schreck explains three important principles that need to be understood before we can come to any real understanding of the beliefs of Catholic Christians. He also explains the origins of these principles.

Note: Read the suggested Scripture Texts **before** you answer the questions that follow them.

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### LET US BEGIN:



#### PRINCIPLE ONE: GOD REVEALS CHRISTIAN TRUTHS THROUGH THE HOLY

Suggested Bible readings: 2 Tim 3:16-17; John 16:12-15; Acts 11:27-28; Acts 21:10-12; Acts 15:28; Acts 20:22-23. 1 Cor 14:1-4 & 31

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**Question 1:** What are some of the ways in which God reveals His truth and guides His people?  
(See page 7 of the book)



- i. In the Scr \_\_\_\_\_
- ii. Through the Spir \_\_\_\_\_ Gi \_\_\_\_\_
- iii. By Teach \_\_\_\_\_ and Prea \_\_\_\_\_
- iv. In Christian Wor \_\_\_\_\_ & Litur \_\_\_\_\_
- v. Any other ways that you know? \_\_\_\_\_

**Question 2:** Why is it, that when the Holy Spirit's revelation and guidance comes to us, it must be discerned and 'tested' ?



Such revelation must be tested, as it may not be of the Holy Spirit but from:

- i. Sat \_ \_ or other dem \_ \_ \_;
- ii. A person's carn \_ \_ nature; or
- iii. The World's deceptive w \_ y \_.



**Question 3:** How is the revealed truth tested in the Church?



Through the Holy Spirit's guidance, the Leaders of the Catholic Church have tested revelation against.....

- i. The Written Word in the Bible  
and  
ii. Oral Tradition
- that has been passed-on to us  
through the Bishops of the  
Church by  
Apostolic Succession

**Question 4:** Why do Catholics believe that God's revelation is not limited to the Bible alone?



With Jesus, all revelation was complete. Jesus passed-on this revelation to His Apostles, who in turn passed it on to their successors. From this Oral Revelation by Jesus; part was written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and came to be recognized as the New Testament, and, the remainder has been passed-on as Oral Tradition. John 21: 24-25 states:

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## **PRINCIPLE TWO: THE INCARNATIONAL PRINCIPLE**

Suggested Bible readings: John 1:14; Phil 2:5-8; Mk 1:40-45;  
Mark 6:35-44; Mark 8:22-25; John 2:1-11 & 9:5-7 & 20:22

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**Question 1:** Why did Jesus become human? (See bottom of page 7 of the Book)



Answer:

**Question 2:** Write down a list of some of the specific aspects of Catholic Life and Belief that are based upon the 'Incarnational principle'. (See pages 7 & 8 of book)



mayjesuschristbepraised.com



Photo © Mary Ellen Mark



oxfam.org.a

- i. There are the Sac \_\_\_\_\_
- ii. There is the use of phys \_\_\_\_\_ obj \_\_\_\_\_
- iii. There is the use of human gest \_\_\_\_\_
- iv. There are fellow human beings set aside as Jesus' repre \_\_\_\_\_ so as to minister Jesus' Grace to us.
- v. There are fellow human-beings, who by their Christ-like lives encourage us to imit \_\_\_\_\_ them.
- vi. ....



conversantlife.com



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### **PRINCIPLE THREE: THE HIERARCHY OF TRUTHS**

This principle is extremely important not only  
for Catholics themselves but for authentic ecumenism.

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Most Catholics have never come across the term ‘The Hierarchy of Truths’.

In explaining what this term means, the following is as simply as I can make it.  
Before beginning, be assured that **a hierarchical list** of Christian Truths is non-existent:

There is not a list!



We are going to take time in exploring this Principle of the Hierarchy of Truths. We are doing this because every Christian is called to ecumenical pursuit (For example: John 17:20-23) and we Catholics need to be well grounded in our beliefs. Unfortunately, many Catholics have a poor grasp on the deposit of truths that abide in the Catholic Church. The cartoon above is an illustration of this fact.

Whenever we profess a false understanding of Catholic beliefs, we cause confusion and disorder amongst fellow Catholics and Protestant enquirers. The Holy Spirit builds upon truth and we must confess truth.

### **THE TERM: ‘The Hierarchy of Truths’**

During the Second Vatican Council (1962-5), when the Bishops formulated the Decree on Ecumenism, in part No 11, they employed the expression ‘The Hierarchy of Truths’. It is unfortunate that the term ‘hierarchy’ was used to describe this concept, for in our English Language the word conveys a structure, in which elements are presented in a range, from lowest to highest in order of importance. In our present context, this conclusion is not true.

Such an interpretation has sadly led many Catholic catechists, evangelists, apologists and others to believe that in the Deposit of Truth, which resides within the Catholic Church:

1. there are some truths that **are less true** than others;  
eg. The Teaching on Purgatory is less true than the Incarnation of Jesus.

and/or

2. there are some ‘truths’ that **Catholics can choose to ignore**, as being necessary to believe as part of their Catholic Faith.  
eg. The Perpetual Virginity of Mary does not have to be believed.

Such errors are often witnessed when we hear Catholics discussing beliefs with one another or with their Protestant friends. Eg. ‘Indulgences are out’; ‘Things about Mary no longer apply’;.... Our Catholic Truths have not been discerned and developed in isolation from Scripture – each Truth has Scriptural authenticity and is part of the organic whole of Truth, as revealed to His Church.

Since, The Holy Spirit cannot build bonds of ecumenism upon error, we then need to understand

1. What, in fact, are our Catholic Truths?
- and
2. How are they related one to another?

**IF YOU WANT TO GO DEEPER IN YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE 'HIERARCHY OF TRUTHS', THEN GO TO THE APPENDIX OF THIS BOOKLET.**

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**Question 1:** The Hierarchy of Truths is a list of Christian Truths from which we may choose only those that we prefer to accept.

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**TRUE**

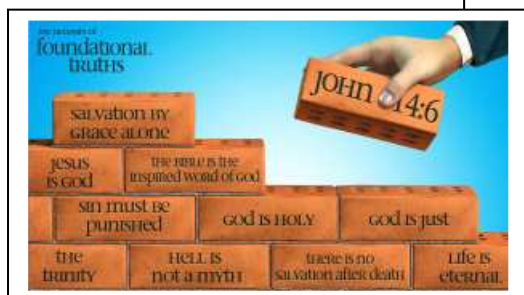
**OR**

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**FALSE**

**Question 2:** What is the reason that Catholics do not distinguish between ‘Christian Truths’ and ‘Catholic Truths’ ? (See lower part of page 9 of the Book)

ANSWER:



wordpress.com

**Question 3:** What is the Catholic belief in the ‘Full Gospel’? (See the bottom of page 11 of the book)

ANSWER:



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Hopefully these three principles studied will become clearer to you as we work through the book.  
The remaining chapters are much easier to understand.



## **CHAPTER ONE: GOD'S FREE GIFT IN JESUS CHRIST.**

This chapter reviews some basic Christian truths about the nature of God, His creation, the 'Fall' and God's plan of Salvation. Later in the chapter, Alan discusses the role of faith, good works and the Sacraments. Finally, Alan poses the question of whether a Christian can know that he/she is "saved"

Suggested Bible Readings: General: 1 Tim 2:3-4 & 4:10; 1 Thes 5:9  
Saviour: Acts 4:12  
Free Gift: Eph 2:8  
Faith & Salvation: Rom 10:9; Eph 2:10-20  
Works of love & salvation: Gal 5:6; Rom 2:2-11  
Sacraments & salvation: Rom 6:3-5; Jn 6:53-54  
The Church & salvation: Acts 2:43-47; Mt 18:15-17  
Knowledge & salvation: Ez 33:13-20; Mt 16:18-19

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**Question 1:** List the basic Christian truths about Salvation (mentioned on pages 16-19 of this chapter.)

**Question 2:** Is there any truth listed in this chapter that you find difficult to accept. Explain why.

**Question 3:** Do we only find salvation and reconciliation in Jesus Christ? (See top of page 20 of book)



**Question 10:** The Catholic Church teaches that we cannot know, with absolute certainty in this life, whether a person will be ‘saved’ or not. Write out what these verses state about this.

Rom 8:24 \_\_\_\_\_

1 Cor 1:18 \_\_\_\_\_

Rom 5:9 \_\_\_\_\_

**Question 11:** Why do Catholics believe that the Church in itself is an important means of our salvation?  
(Read mid-page 31 of the book)

- i. Because, it is in the church that a person has access to the ways by which he/she can come into contact with **J**\_\_\_\_\_ and thus be saved. Also, because **The H**\_\_\_\_\_ **S**\_\_\_\_\_ is, and always is, with the **Ch**\_\_\_\_\_.
- ii. Any other reason?

**Question 12:** Why does the Church refute any teaching that claims that only Catholics can be saved?  
(See bottom half of page 31)



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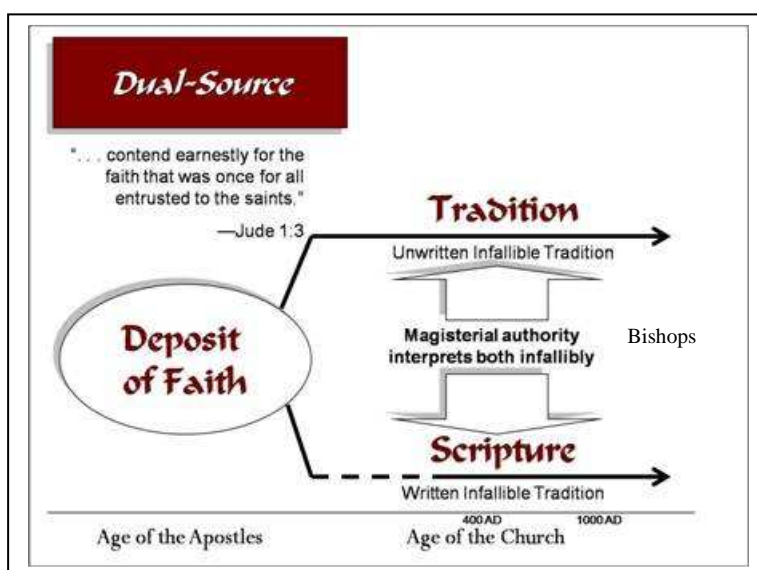


## CHAPTER TWO: WHERE DO CATHOLIC BELIEFS COME FROM?

This Chapter explains how Catholic Beliefs are founded upon three independent sources:

1. **The Bible** (Which, once canonised, became the norm for all future Christian beliefs);
2. **Authentic Christian Tradition** (Which enables Christians to live out and fully understand God's truth);
3. **The Living Teaching Authority of the Church** (Which faithfully proclaims, defends and interprets the Bible and Authentic Christian Tradition)

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 Some suggested Bible readings: 2 Tim 3:16-17; 1 Cor 15:3-4; 2 Thes 2:15; 2 Tim 3:2; Tit 1:9; Luke 1:1-4; Acts 15:1-29; Jn 16:12-13  
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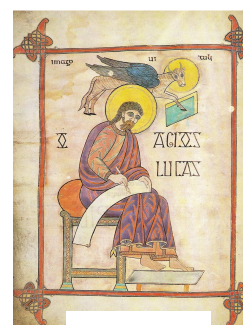
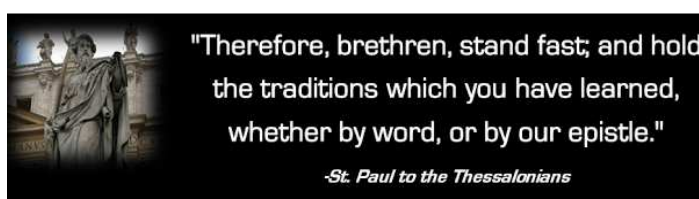
In the Second Vatican Council's document on divine revelation, *Dei Verbum* (Latin: "The Word of God"), the relationship between Tradition and Scripture is explained:

"Hence there exists a close connection and communication between sacred Tradition and sacred Scripture. For both of them, flowing from the same divine wellspring, in a certain way merge into a unity and tend toward the same end.

- i. For sacred Scripture is the word of God, inasmuch as it is consigned to writing, under the inspiration of the divine Spirit.
- ii. To the successors of the apostles, sacred Tradition hands on in its full purity God's word, which was entrusted to the apostles by Christ the Lord and the Holy Spirit. "Thus, by the light of the Spirit of truth, these successors can in their preaching preserve this word of God faithfully, explain it, and make it more widely known.
- ii. Consequently it is not from sacred Scripture alone that the Church draws her certainty about everything which has been revealed. Therefore both sacred Tradition and sacred Scripture are to be accepted and venerated with the same devotion and reverence."



faithformation.com



Bjws.com

**QUESTION 1: Why do Catholics believe that the Bible is the Inspired Word of God?**



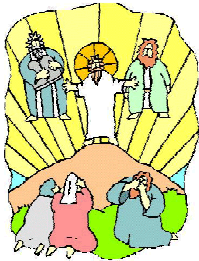
oneway2day.wordpress.com

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**QUESTION 2: Why do Catholics believe that, besides the Bible, there are other sources of God's revelation? (Read page 44 of the Book)**



truthinlove.com

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**QUESTION 3: What does the Catholic Church teach about the meaning of Tradition? (Read page 46f)**



goodbooksforyoungsouls.blogspot.com

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**QUESTION 4: The Bible mentions the importance of tradition in communicating God's truth. Here are two such texts: Write them down -**

1 Cor 15: 3-4 \_\_\_\_\_

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1 Cor 11:23 \_\_\_\_\_

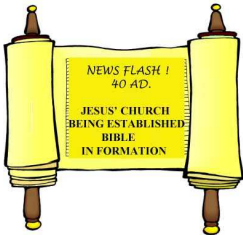
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St Ignatius Bishop of Antioch

**QUESTION 5:** What early Christian writings testify to the importance of Bishops in handing-on and defending the authentic teaching of the Apostles about Jesus?



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**QUESTION 6:** Why do Catholics consider the Bible as the Book of the Church?



ANSWER: \_\_\_\_\_

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socrates58.blogspot.com

**QUESTION 7:** Why is that the Catholic Church believes that it is Bishops alone who have been given the final authority to interpret the Bible and Christian tradition?



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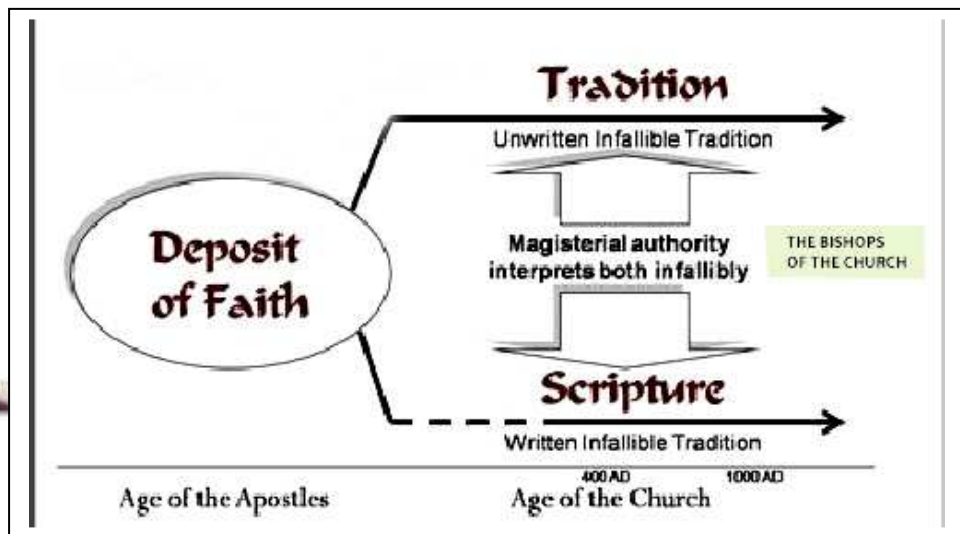
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thesacredpage.com

**QUESTION 8:** What do you understand by the following statement, which is contained within the ‘Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation (No. 10)?

Like three leading instruments in God’s “symphony” of his revelation, Scripture, Tradition, and the Magisterium play distinctive roles in God’s plan of revealing himself to his people. **Each contributes in a particular way to making God’s revelation known, working in harmony with the other two.** As Vatican II taught, “It is clear, therefore, that Sacred Tradition, Sacred Scripture, and the teaching authority of the Church, in accord with God’s most wise design, are so linked and joined together that one cannot stand without the others, and that all together and each in its own way under the action of the one Holy Spirit contribute effectively to the salvation of souls.”



ANSWER:

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**QUESTION 9:** Finally, taking time to record what impact that this chapter has had upon your understanding of the Catholic belief in Tradition?

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### CHAPTER THREE: THE CHURCH: HOW CATHOLICS UNDERSTAND IT



typepad.com

Scripture reveals that God has chosen to save mankind,  
not as isolated individuals,  
but as a people.

In the New Testament, the specific name, given to  
‘the people of God’ is the ‘Church’.

This chapter examines what it means that the Church is  
ONE, HOLY AND CATHOLIC.

Some suggested Bible readings:

**Where the word ‘church’ is used:** Mt 16:18; 18:17; Col 1:18; Eph 2:22; Acts 8:1

**The Church is one:** Jn 17:20-23; Eph 4:3-6; Phil 1:27 & 2:2; 1 Cor 1:11-13

**Church is holy:** 1 Peter 2:9-10; 2 Cor 4:7; Mt 6:12 & 9:13; Eph 5:25-27; Rev 19:7-8

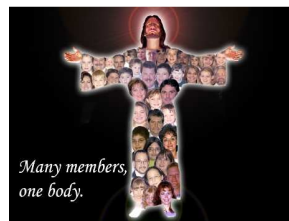
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**QUESTION 1:** What is the biblical evidence for the Catholic belief that God’s Will was to form a Church ?

**QUESTION 2:** List some of the images that are used to describe the Church?



12rf.com



flockofchristministries.com

ANSWER:



**QUESTION 3:** Why do Catholics believe that it is the Will of God that there be only ONE church of Jesus Christ?



[middlebibletown.com](http://middlebibletown.com)

**QUESTION 4:** In what way was the one original church of Jesus Christ seen to be ‘catholic’ or universal ?



**QUESTION 5:** What was the meaning of the phrase ‘the catholic church’ that emerged in the Second and Third Centuries?

**QUESTION 6:** Why was the title ‘catholic church’ eventually attached to a particular group of Christians? And when did this first happen?

**QUESTION 7:** Why does the Catholic Church today believe that the divisions among Christians are objectively sinful?



[theyouthforjesus.com](http://theyouthforjesus.com)

According to the World Christian Encyclopedia (year 2000 version), global Christianity had 33,820 denominations with 3,445,000 congregations/churches composed of 1,888 million affiliated Christians.



**QUESTION 8:** What is 'ecumenism'? What is its main objective?



mondayvatican.com

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**QUESTION 9:** Must all Catholics today be committed to fostering ecumenism? Give reasons.



sadaka.ie

**QUESTION 10:** Why is it incorrect to label some Christian bodies as 'true churches' and others as 'false churches'?



lawinfo.com

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**QUESTION 12:** In what way does the Catholic Church speak about the differences between the Catholic Church and other Christian Churches and ecclesial communities?



**QUESTION 13:** How can Catholics claim to be a holy Church and yet embrace sinners?



escapetoreality.com

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## CHAPTER FOUR: LEADERSHIP & AUTHORITY IN THE BODY OF CHRIST

In this chapter we look at the origin and the development of authority and leadership roles within the Body of Christ – the Church.

Also discussed within this chapter is the importance of the role of bishops as successors of the Apostles.

**Some suggested Bible readings:** Mt 28:16-20; Jn 20:21-23; Thess 5:12-13; 1 Cor 12:27-28; Eph 4:11-12; Phil 1:1-1; 1 Tim 3:1-13 & 5:17; Titus 1:5 & 7:9; 2 Tim 4:1-4; 1 Peter 5:1-5; Heb 13:17; Col 1:28-29

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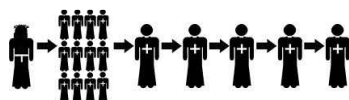
*“If someone does not hold fast to this unity of Peter, can he imagine that he still holds the faith? If he desert the chair of Peter upon whom the Church was built, can he still be confident that he is in the Church?” – Cyprian,*



The title of Pope, (Pappa) bestowed upon the Bishop of Rome, was first mentioned by St Ennodius in 521AD.



**QUESTION 1:** Catholics profess that the Church is ‘apostolic’ – what three meanings of this term are discussed in this chapter? (Read page 75)



sothl.com

1. That being Mis\_\_\_\_\_
2. That of Ap\_\_\_\_\_ Su\_\_\_\_\_
3. The defence and proclamation of \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**QUESTION 2:** What Biblical evidence is there that Jesus gave His Apostles authority to lead the Church?



dailytimewithgod.com

**QUESTION 3:** According to the Biblical and Catholic teaching, how was apostolic authority passed-on by the Apostles?



**QUESTION 4:** What do the New Testament and the Early Christian writings tell us about the leadership roles of bishops, presbyters and deacons?

**QUESTION 5:** In the early New Testament Church, why was the bishop so important in each local church's life?

**QUESTION 6:** In the early Church what were the primary responsibilities of the local Bishop?

**QUESTION 7:** In the early Church, how did the bishops preserve Church unity?

**QUESTION 8:** What is an ecumenical council?



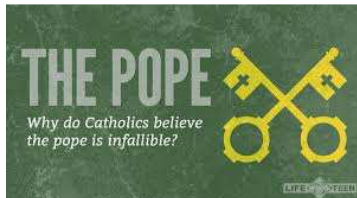
**QUESTION 9:** What foundational scripture verse (saying of Jesus) points most clearly to the role of the Holy Spirit in enabling the Apostles and their successors to make decisions in matters not specifically addressed by Jesus or the Bible?



ocarm.org

**QUESTION 11: When are Catholic Bishops considered by the Catholic Church to be infallible in Christian teaching?**

( It helps us to understand that to be infallible is to simply utter the truth. Each of us speaks infallibly every day. Eg. When I say '2x4=8' I am speaking an infallible mathematical truth. When I state that the nearest star to Earth is the Sun, then I have made an infallible astronomical truth. So, when a Pope says that what he is about to pronounce to be infallible, it means that what he says is **TRUTH!**.)



lifeteen.com



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**CHAPTER FIVE: THE POPE: A CHIEF SIGN OF THE CHURCH'S UNITY**



stpeterslist.com

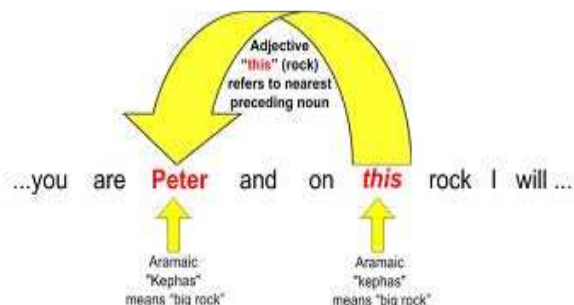
Catholics believe that God has given the Pope a special gift of infallibility for his crucial responsibility in teaching and interpreting the Word of God. This chapter discusses the origins and the proper understanding of this special gift.

Some suggested Bible readings: Mt 16:18-19; Lk 22:31-32; Jn 21:15-19

Mt 16:13-17; Acts 2:14-36; Acts 4:8ff

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**QUESTION 1: What is the significance of Jesus giving Simon a new name: ie, 'Peter' or 'Rock'?**  
( See book pages 92-93)



ANSWER:

catholicbridge.com

**QUESTION 2:** What special authority did Jesus confer upon Peter in Mt 16:19 and Jn 21:15-19?



catholic.org

ANSWER:



**QUESTION 3:** What other New Testament evidence is there to confirm Peter's role as leader of the Church, even after Jesus' death and resurrection? (See Book pages 89 & 90)



d4nations.com

Answer:

**QUESTION 4:** God intended the Petrine role of leadership to continue in the Church by allowing the development of the pattern of leadership set by Jesus to emerge in the early Church (See pages 93-4) Is this

TRUE

☐

OR

FALSE

☐

**QUESTION 5:** Summarise how Christian leaders and martyrs, in the early Church, recognised the Bishop of Rome, as the supreme leader of the Church? (See pages 95-98)



vision.org



calledtocommunion.com



Bishop Ireneaus




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**QUESTION 6:** Over the centuries, Popes have had to deal with their own personal failings: How then should we respond to these circumstances? (See bottom of page 100)



hbctoronto.org

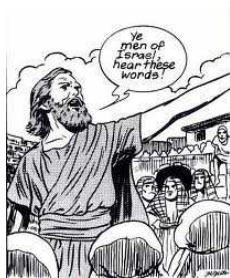
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**QUESTION 7:** What is the basis of Catholic beliefs in the Pope's infallibility in teaching?  
(See pages 101-2)



-bishoppete.blogspot.com

**QUESTION 8:** Under what specific conditions is a papal statement considered infallible by Catholics?  
(See page 102)

<b><u>Infalible, Definitive Teachings</u></b>			
<b>Acts</b>	<i>"Defining Acts"</i>		<i>"Non-Defining Acts"</i>
<b>Magisterium</b>	Extraordinary Magisterium		Ordinary Universal Magisterium
<b>Authority</b>	Pope ( <i>Ex Cathedra</i> )	Ecumenical Council of Bishops	Bishops United with Pope
<b>Speaking As</b>	Pope (in capacity as St. Peter's succesor alone)	Bishops (in capacity as Apostles' successors)	Pope (in capacity as Head of the Ordinary Magisterium)
<p>Note: Both defining and non-defining acts can be infalible. Whether something is defining or non-defining relates to the subject matter only and not its level of authority.</p>			

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_



**QUESTION 9:** Why do you think that the gift of infallibility has been given to the Church?  
(See top of page 104 - Lk 10:16 & Mt 18:18)




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ocarm.org

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## CHAPTER SIX: THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

This chapter discusses the Person of the Holy Spirit and His activity in the Church and in our individual lives.



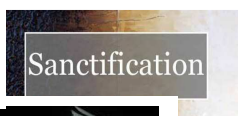
pastorpub.com

Also discussed are such issues as the meaning of being 'baptised in the Holy Spirit' and how it is legitimate for Catholics to receive such a gift.

**Some suggested Bible readings:** Acts 1:5 & 8; Acts 2:1-4 & 37-39; Acts 10:44-48; Acts 19:1-7; Jn 3:5; Jn 7:37-39; Jn 16:7-15; Jn 20:22-23; Lk 3:16,21,22; Rom 5:5; Rom 8:1-27; Gal 5:16-18 & 22-25; 1 Cor 12:3-13; Eph 4:3-6; Is 11\_2-3

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**QUESTION 1:** Why is the Holy Spirit so important in the life of the Church and in the life of individual Christians?



Answer:



**QUESTION 2:** Where in the New Testament does it indicate that a person receives the Holy Spirit through water baptism?

**QUESTION 2:** What are some of the signs of the Holy Spirit's work and presence in the life of an individual Christian?

<i>Gifts of the Holy Spirit</i> 1 Cor 12:1-11	<i>Fruits of the Holy Spirit</i> Galatians 5:22
Revelation Knowledge	Love
Discernment of Spirits	Joy
Wisdom	Peace
Prophecy	Patience (Longsuffering)
Interpretation of Tongues	Kindness
Tongues	Goodness
Faith	Faithfulness
Miracles	Gentleness
Healing	Self-Control

**QUESTION 4:** What is the Catholic understanding of 'being born again' or being 'baptised in the Holy Spirit'?



**QUESTION 5:** Beside the sacraments, how may the Holy Spirit enter or work in a person's life?

**QUESTION 6:** How do we distinguish and know of the presence of the Holy Spirit in our life?

**QUESTION 7:** What did Isaiah and the Apostle Paul say are the gifts of the Holy Spirit that are available to Christians? (See Isaiah 11)

**QUESTION 8:** According to St Paul, what is the primary purpose of the gifts of the Holy Spirit



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## CHAPTER SEVEN: THE SACRAMENTS

This chapter examines the biblical roots and the historical development of each of the seven sacraments and their importance for Catholics today.



americancatholic.org

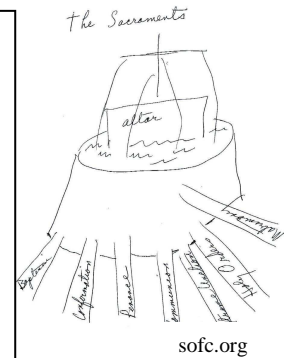
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**QUESTION 1:** Why is the image of the sacraments as channels of God's grace an appropriate one?



elusions.com

Answer:



sofc.org

**QUESTION 2:** Why are the sacraments meaningless when detached from Jesus Christ and faith in Him?

**QUESTION 3:** Why are the sacraments a good example of God's 'incarnational' way of relating to mankind?



stmaryshamilton.org.au

**QUESTION 4:** Why does Jesus use visible signs and objects to confer His grace?

## THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM:



stjohnscolton.org

Some suggested Bible readings: Mt 28:19; Jn 3:5; 1 Peter 3:20-21; Titus 3:5; Acts 2:38; 1 Cor 12:12-13;  
Rom 6:1-4 & 10-11

On Infant Baptism (taken as possible pertinent references): Acts 2:39; 1 Cor 1:16; Acts 10:48a;  
Acts 16:15 & 21 & 33; Acts 18: 8; Col 2:11-12; Mk 10:13-16

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**QUESTION 1:** What is the biblical evidence for the importance of baptism?

**QUESTION 2:** What three effects (results) of Baptism are stated in the New Testament?

**QUESTION 3:** What evidence in scripture is there for Infant Baptism?

**QUESTION 4:** Why do Catholics believe that a person only needs to be baptised once?

\*\*\*\*\*

## THE SACRAMENT OF THE EUCHARIST

**QUESTION 1:** Why do Catholics believe in the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist?

**QUESTION 2:** Why is it that only the priest or the bishop presides at the Mass?

**QUESTION 3:** How does each Catholic participate in a ‘priestly’ way in the celebration of Mass?

**QUESTION 4:** Why do Catholics not believe that Jesus is ‘re-sacrificed’ at each Mass?

**QUESTION 5:** What does the Catholic Church teach about inter-communion with other Christian Denominations?

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### **SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION:**

Suggested Bible readings: Mk 2:7; Lk 7:49; Mt 16:18-19; Mt 18:18; Jn 20:22-23

**QUESTION 1:** What is the biblical basis for Catholics going to a priest to confess their sins?

**QUESTION 2:** Does confession of one’s sins to a priest replace having to ask God’s forgiveness directly?

**QUESTION 3:** What are some of the blessings that a Catholic receives when they confess their sins in the Sacrament of reconciliation?

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### **THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION**

Some suggested Scripture readings: Acts 1:8; Acts 8:14-17; Acts 19:1-7

**QUESTION 1:** What is the biblical basis for the sacrament of confirmation?

**QUESTION 2:** With what expectation do you embrace the sacrament of confirmation, especially, with respect to the gifts?



## THE ANOINTING OF THE SICK:

Suggested Bible Readings: Mk 6:13; James 5:14-15

**QUESTION 1:** What is the biblical basis for the anointing of the sick?

**QUESTION 2:** For whom is this sacrament especially administrated?

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## THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY ORDERS

Suggested Bible readings: Jn 20:21-23; Mt 28:16-20; Acts 6: 5-6; 1Tim 4:14-16;

1 Peter 2:9; 2Tim 1:6-7; Ps 110:4

Deaconesses: Rom 16:1; 1 Tim 3:11

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**QUESTION 1:** What are some of the biblical origins of the sacrament of Holy Orders?



[olfatima.ca](http://olfatima.ca)

**QUESTION 2:** By what date was the threefold structure of ordained ministry (bishop-priest-deacon) universally accepted in the early Church?

**QUESTION 3:** What is the reason and the biblical precedent for the discipline of priestly celibacy in the Roman Catholic Church?

**QUESTION 4:** Why have priests and bishops always been male?



[.squidoo.com](http://squidoo.com)

**QUESTION 5:** What is the biblical precedent for calling priests ‘father’?

**QUESTION 6:** What are the most important responsibilities of a priest?

**QUESTION 7:** List some of the most important ministries that women have held in the Catholic Church (Note: Women were appointed to carry-out Deacon-like duties, but they were never ordained as such ie. Deaconess )

## THE SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY

Suggested Bible readings:  
Mt 19:4-6 & 8-9; Eph 5:21-32



stjoegold.org



arthuride.wordpress.com



onefleshmarriage.com

**QUESTION 1:** Why do Catholics consider matrimony a sacrament?

**QUESTION 2:** What constitutes an annulment ?

**QUESTION 3:** What is the Catholic understanding of separation and divorce?

**QUESTION 4: In light of such teachings and Scripture as below:, why then does the Catholic Church forbid divorce?**

The Church is the Bride of Christ: he loved her and handed himself over for her.  
He has purified her by his blood and made her the fruitful mother of all God's children.  
(Catechism of the Catholic Church 808)



**It is important that you read: Eph 5: 21-32**



catholic.org



**CHAPTER EIGHT: THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS**

This chapter explains the reality that all believers in Jesus Christ form a vast united family of God called ‘the family of God’.

This chapter also explains the meaning and the proper use of images and the relics of the saints in the prayer of Catholics.

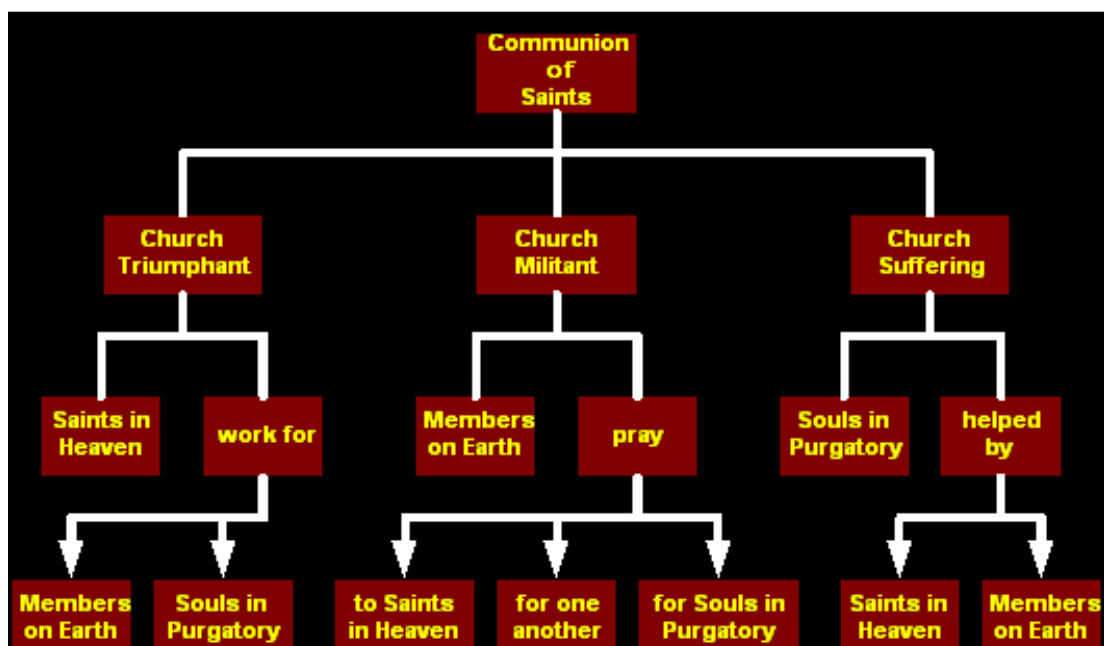
**Some Biblical readings:** Sirach 44:1-15; Heb 11; Phil 3:17; Eph 2:19-20; Rom 12:5; Lk 20:34-38; Lk 23:43; Mk 9:4; Rev 6:9-11; Rev 7:13-15

**Prayer or intercession of saints:** Rev:4; 2 Mac 15:11ff; 1 Tim2:1; Col 4:3; Rom 15:30-32; Jas 5:13-18; 1 Jn 5:16

**Prayer for the departed:** 2 Mac 12:43-45

**Relics of Saints:** Acts 19:11-12

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**QUESTION 1:** Who is included in the New Testament usage of the word ‘saint’



**QUESTION 2:** Explain what is meant by the words from the Apostles' Creed: **'I believe in the communion of saints'**.

**QUESTION 3:** In what ways can the saints in heaven assist us here on Earth? Give the biblical precedent for this.

**QUESTION 4:**      **a. Do Catholics worship the saints in heaven?**

**b. If not, how then do Catholics approach the saints in heaven?**

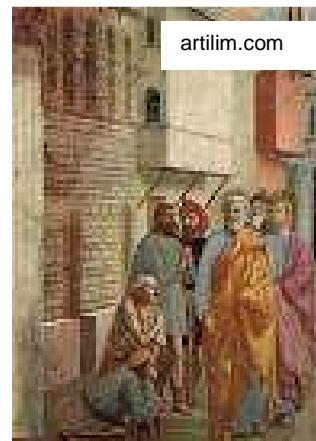
**QUESTION 5:** What is to be a Catholic's proper use, in their prayer, of images and relics of saints?

**QUESTION 6:** What is the process by which Catholics come to recognise the exceptional holiness (sainthood) of certain departed Christians?



stlouiscatholic.blogspot

Answer:



## Healed by Peter's shadow

## CHAPTER NINE: MARY



This chapter studies the Bible's teaching about Mary and how the Catholic Church understands this teaching in light of centuries of Christian prayer and reflection.

This chapter also discusses Mary's role as a messenger and explores the possible reported apparitions of Mary in recent times.

Some Bible readings: Gn 3:15; Mt 1:22-23; Lk 1:26-56; Lk 2:1-7; Jn 2:1-12; Jn 19: 25-27; Acts 1:14; Rev 12:1-6

**QUESTION 1:** What are the Catholic teachings and the Biblical revelations that make it clear that Mary is neither to be worshipped nor to be seen as in competition with Jesus?

**QUESTION 2:** How would you explain what Catholics mean when they use the traditional titles given to Mary: eg. 'Mother of God' ?

**QUESTION 3:** From whom does Jesus draw ALL of His humanity?

**QUESTION 4:** Why is it that Mary did not have other children besides Jesus?

**QUESTION 5:** What does the 'Immaculate Conception' of Mary mean?

**QUESTION 6:** How does Mary's assumption into Heaven foreshadow our own bodily resurrection?

**QUESTION 7:** Why do Catholics address Mary with the exultation 'Hail Mary'?

**QUESTION 8:** What purpose do such things as scapulars, medals and statues of Mary have in the devotional life of Catholics?



**QUESTION 9:** What is the Catholic Church's official position on the reported apparitions of Mary?

**QUESTION 10:** In what ways was Mary very 'normal' in her experience of life?

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**LET US PAUSE HERE TO GAIN SOME DEEPER INSIGHTS INTO WHY WE PRAY TO MARY**



womenofhonor.com



denisefait.com



tldm.org

King David was very wise when he provided help for his son, Solomon, who was to rule as the next king. David could not decree that Solomon's wife be the Queen, as Solomon had numerous wives and concubines- Selecting any one of these women would take even more wisdom than he already had.

King David provided a line of succession from one king to the next – this line would provide a person, who had gained much wisdom and experience with one king, to share with the next king. This person was determined to be the mother of the current king. So it was that Bathsheba, the mother of Solomon, was destined to become the first of a line of Queen Mothers to help their sons rule.

**FACT 1:** Queens of the Old Testament were the mothers of the Kings, not one the wives or concubines.

Next we come to see that Queen Mother Bathsheba was the Old Testament [type of Mary](#)

**FACT 2:** Mary is the Queen Mother of Jesus.

Let us see how Jesus has graced a Queen Mother to help with His Kingship.

[Kings 1:16](#) Here is Bathsheba, as the wife of King David: "[Bathsheba bowed herself](#), and [Worshipped the king](#). And the king said to her: What is thy will?"

NOTE: Bathsheba, who was just one of King David's wives, bowed to her husband.  
[She was subordinate to him.](#)

[1Kings 2:19](#) Here is Bathsheba again later, but **as the mother of King Solomon** (2Samuel 12:24) :

"So Bathsheba went to King Solomon, to speak to him **on behalf of Adonijah**.  
And **the king rose to meet her, and bowed down to her**; then he sat on his throne, and had a seat brought  
for the king's mother; and **she sat on his right**."

Also in 1Kings 2:19, by sitting on the right side of the King, the Queen mother was **a symbol of authority**.

Since the Blessed Virgin Mary is the mother of the King of Kings, this makes her the Queen Mother.

[1Kings 2:20](#) 'Then she said, "I have one small request to make of you; **do not refuse me**."  
And the king said to her, "**Make your request, my mother; for I will not refuse you**."

The King will not refuse a request from his mother.

Now let us go to the New Testament where we Mary, [the Mother of Jesus](#).

[Now, Jesus is the King of Kings and Mary is His Queen Mother](#)- this is the end of the Solomon lineage of such relationships between a King and his mother.

So, we have, **the King of Kings and Lord of Lords** (1Timothy 6:15), **who will not refuse a request from His mother** (John 2:1-10). Consider what happened at the Wedding in Cana.

I HOPE THAT THIS HAS HAD A PROFOUND EFFECT UPON  
HOW JESUS WOULD HAVE US RELATE TO MARY

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## CHAPTER TEN: MAN'S DESTINY IN CHRIST

This chapter explores the biblical evidence for the reality of heaven, purgatory and hell.

Also, this chapter discusses the meaning of the Second Coming of Jesus the Christ  
and the Last Judgement of all people.

Suggested Biblical readings:

**Heaven:** Mt 19:28-29; Mt 22:1-14; Mt 25:1-13; Lk 14:16\_24; Rev 19:7-9; 1 Cor 13:12

**Hell:** Mk 9:46-48; Mt 7:13-14; Mt 13:30; Mt 18:7-9; Mt 22:13; Mt 24:40-41 & 51; Mt 25:30; Lk 3:17; Lk 16:19-31;  
Lk 19:10; Jn 3:17-21; Rom 2:4-8

**Purgatory:** Rev 21:27; Is 6:1-7; 1 Cor 3:11-15; 2 Mac 12:43-45;

**Second Coming:** Dan 7:13-14; Mt 24; Mk 13; Lk 21; Acts 1:11; 1 Thes 4:16-17; 2

Thes 2:1-12; 1 Cor 15:22-28; Rom 11:25-32; 1 Tim 4:1-3; 2 Tim 3:1-8; 2 Pet 3:3-14; 1 Jn 2:18-22

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**QUESTION 1:** Why should Christians look forward to death and the 'end times' with hopeful expectation?

**QUESTION 2:** What does the Bible tell us about heaven?

**QUESTION 3:** Does Hell exist? What is it like? Will anyone go there?



**QUESTION 4:** What is the basis for the Catholic belief in Purgatory?

**QUESTION 5:** What does each of the four truths about the Second Coming of Jesus mean to you?



wordpress.com

**Truth1:** Jesus will return to Earth as the Glorified ‘son of man’ to judge mankind and bring human history to an end.

**Truth 2** The Second Coming of Jesus will be unmistakable

**Truth 3:** No one will know the time or the date.

**Truth 4:** Christians ought to be always prepared for the Second Coming.

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We trust that you have found these teachings and studies to be both interesting and challenging. In our undertaking of these formation teachings, we recall that, as members of the BOLF, these teachings and studies are an essential component of our response to Pope John Paul 11’s challenge to us to become people of sound formation in our Catholic Faith, so that the Holy Spirit may use us as instruments for universal evangelisation

*Brian Wyer – Moderator BOLF*

## APPENDIX

### THE HIERARCHY OF TRUTHS

You may wonder why I am devoting so much time to this topic. The main reasons are:

- i. firstly, we need to be assured that each of our Catholic Beliefs is anchored firmly in the Scriptures. Most Protestants believe that Catholics have simply ‘invented’ many of their doctrines, without any recourse to the Bible. This is simply not true. Clarifying this misconception removes a massive barrier to ecumenism.
- ii. secondly, we need to be assured that our Deposit of Faith, which resides in its fullness within the Catholic Church, is an organic reality. Each and every truth is primarily related to other truths and together they make up the One Body of Truth, as revealed by Jesus.
- iii. thirdly, it is essential that in our catechetics we present our Catholic beliefs in such a way that each ‘new’ truth is firmly shown to be anchored in an already established truth, which sheds light upon the ‘new’ truth being presented.

So, let us delve into this so called ‘Hierarchy of Truths’.

Our Catholic Truths have not been discerned and developed in isolation from Scripture – each Truth has Scriptural authenticity and is part of the organic whole of Truth, as revealed by Jesus to His Church.

In view of the three reasons given above, we then need to understand

1. What, in fact, are our Catholic Truths?

and

3. How are they related one to another?

In answering these questions, let us begin with what we call the Deposit of Faith residing in the Catholic Church. Jesus made it very clear to His Apostles that He had passed-onto them all that His Father had revealed to Him. He also told His Apostles that they could not absorb all of this revelation at once, so, The Holy Spirit would come and over time would make these revelations clearer.

‘15. I no longer call you slaves, because a slave does not know what his master is doing. I have called you friends,<sup>6</sup> because **I have told you everything I have heard from my Father.** 16. It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will remain, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name he may give you’

Jn 15:15-16 NAB

‘25. “I have told you this while I am with you. 26 **The Advocate, the Holy Spirit that the Father will send in my name--he will teach you everything and remind you of all that (I) told you.**’

Jn 14:25-26 NAB

12 **"I have much more to tell you, but you cannot bear it now.** 13 <sup>5</sup> But when he comes, the Spirit of truth, he will guide you to all truth. He will not speak on his own, but he will speak what he hears, and will declare to you the things that are coming. 14 He will glorify me, because he will take from what is mine and declare it to you. 15 Everything that the Father has is mine; for this reason I told you that he will take from what is mine and declare it to you.  
Jn 16:12-15 NAB

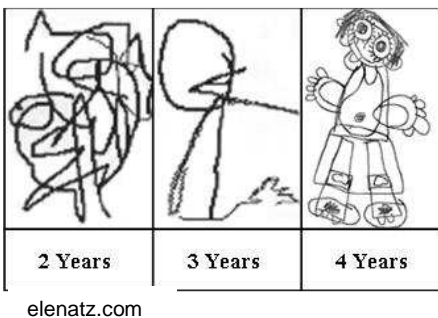
In simply terms, when Jesus birthed His Church through the power of the Holy Spirit, He had already Deposited within it, the treasure-house of Truth. As the Infant Church grew, it became more and more aware of the truths that Jesus had given to it.

The Church, through the guidance, teaching and power of the Holy Spirit, came to awareness that there are Foundational Truths given to it and that these shed light and understanding upon each and all of the subsequent truths of our Faith.

The Five Foundational Truths are:

1. **The Blessed Trinity: God is an eternal loving communion of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit**
2. **The Person of Jesus: A divine person who took on human nature in the Incarnation**
3. **The Paschal Mystery: the suffering, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ**
4. **The Dignity of the Human Person: we are made in the image and likeness of God**
5. **The Church: the Body of Christ brought to life in the Holy Spirit**

To help us better understand this very important principle, let us begin with a simple analogy: **our own body.**



When we are born, we have very little awareness of our own body. As we grow, we become increasingly aware of our body. We see this in children's drawings, which begin to show in more detail, parts of their body.

We gradually begin to experience the various relationships between parts of our body and, we come to understand,

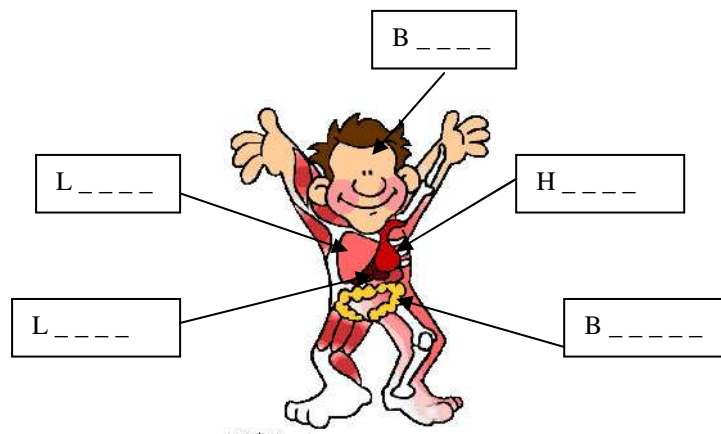
that we have essential parts (organs), upon which our whole body depends for function and life itself.

In fact, we can appreciate that our growth is an organic one.



Let us, by doing these few exercises, keep this idea simple as simple as possible:

1. **Label the figure below, showing some of the essential organs that we need to remain alive.**





2. **There is an enormous number of important parts and organs in our body that are necessary, but not essential, for us to live our daily life. List some examples.**

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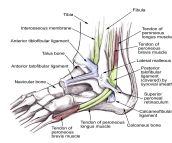


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God, in creating us, obviously meant that we are given every part of ourselves to be able to live a full and abundant life. Our body is an organic whole – that is each and every organ/part is in some varying degree of relationship with every other organ/part.

Considering, say, our foot, would any one of us state that, while each and every part of our foot is not essential to us being alive, that we would, however, willingly discard some of our foot bones or sinews.

Of course not !



**Continuing with this analogy, it is important for us to note that:**

1. No matter how small a part of us is, that part is essential to the overall coordinated-relationships existing between each and every other part of our body; and that,
2. The least important parts of our body ultimately draw their purpose and function, in the whole of our body, from their special relationship with one or more of our essential-to-life organs

Sadly, in life, either through birth or accident or disease, we may be deprived of one of our lesser body organs/parts. Or, we may simply take a body part so much for granted, that we fail to appreciate its relationship to our well-being. eg. Our big-toe. If we break our big-toe, what is mostly considered a minor part of our body, now suddenly has an effect on our whole person. And does this pain register in one of our essential organs? Of course it does – the brain.



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Now, hopefully, we can appreciate my analogy of our own body.



1. From infancy to adulthood, we have gradually come to understand the inter-relationship and dependency of each part of our body, especially upon our essential-to-life organs. An example of this would be that when we seek to understand the importance of our sight, we would, firstly, seek to understand its functioning within AN ESSENTIAL ORGAN viz.our brain.



2. The Church from its 'infancy to adulthood' has gradually come to understand the inter-relationship and dependency of each truth upon other truths and, especially, that in all they are centred upon the set of Foundational Truths. An example of this would be when the Church was seeking to understand Mary's part in Salvation; it went firstly to AN ESSENTIAL FOUNDATIONAL TRUTH viz. The Incarnation of Jesus.

### SO WHAT DOES OUR ANALOGY TELL US?

<p>The term, The Hierarchy of Truths, first came into being when it was used at the Second Vatican Council (1962-5), in 'The Decree on Ecumenism' (No 11). The intention behind the use of this term was to remind Catholics, that when entering into dialogue with non-Catholics, it must be made clear that Catholics have not formulated certain doctrines of Faith without recourse to Scripture and the Foundational Truths. eg. The Ever-Virginity of Mary. The processes of Christian Unity have been severely hampered by Catholics themselves believing that they can simply 'pick and choose' which Church Doctrines to believe.</p> <p>We feast upon the Banquet as a whole: and not as if it was a smorgasbord.</p>	
IN THE HUMAN BODY	IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH
There is our <u>whole</u> Body	There is the <u>whole</u> body of revealed Truth, called the Deposit of Faith
<p>i. Within our body <u>there exists central and essential organs/parts</u> eg. Our heart; our brain; our lungs;....</p>	<p>i. Within the Catholic Church <u>there exists central and essential revealed truths</u> regarding our Salvation. eg. The Holy Trinity; The Incarnation of Jesus; etc. (Read the Nicene Creed)</p>
<p>ii. <u>There also exists</u> many organs/parts, while not being central and essential to our existence, are necessary and cluster around their respective central organs/parts of our body for their meaning and purpose</p> <p>eg. Our big-toe; our arm; our eyes;....primarily are related to our brain.</p>	<p>ii. Within the Catholic Church <u>there also exists</u> other Christian Truths, such as those concerning: Mary; Purgatory; Indulgences and the Communion of Saints. For Catholics, these truths, while not being central to the Gospel message, are nonetheless true and to be believed. These truths are clustered around and draw their truth from their respective central truths for their meaning. eg. The belief that Mary is the Mother of God, draws its truth from the central truth of the Incarnation of Jesus.</p>
<p>Understanding the Deposit of Truth, as truths that have emerged out of the central and essential Truths held by most orthodox Christians, <b>helps in the process of ecumenical dialogue.</b></p> <p>It can be shown that Catholics have not made-up certain doctrines of Faith without any recourse to Scripture and the central foundational truths of Christianity. The less important-to-salvation truths are not extra baggage that Catholics carry around: they are each essential to the Full Gospel being believed and lived.</p> <p>After all, truth is always truth no matter what.</p>	

## THE HIERARCHY OF TRUTHS EXPANDED



fotosea

MMMMmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmm !!!!!  
Still somewhat confused?

OK !

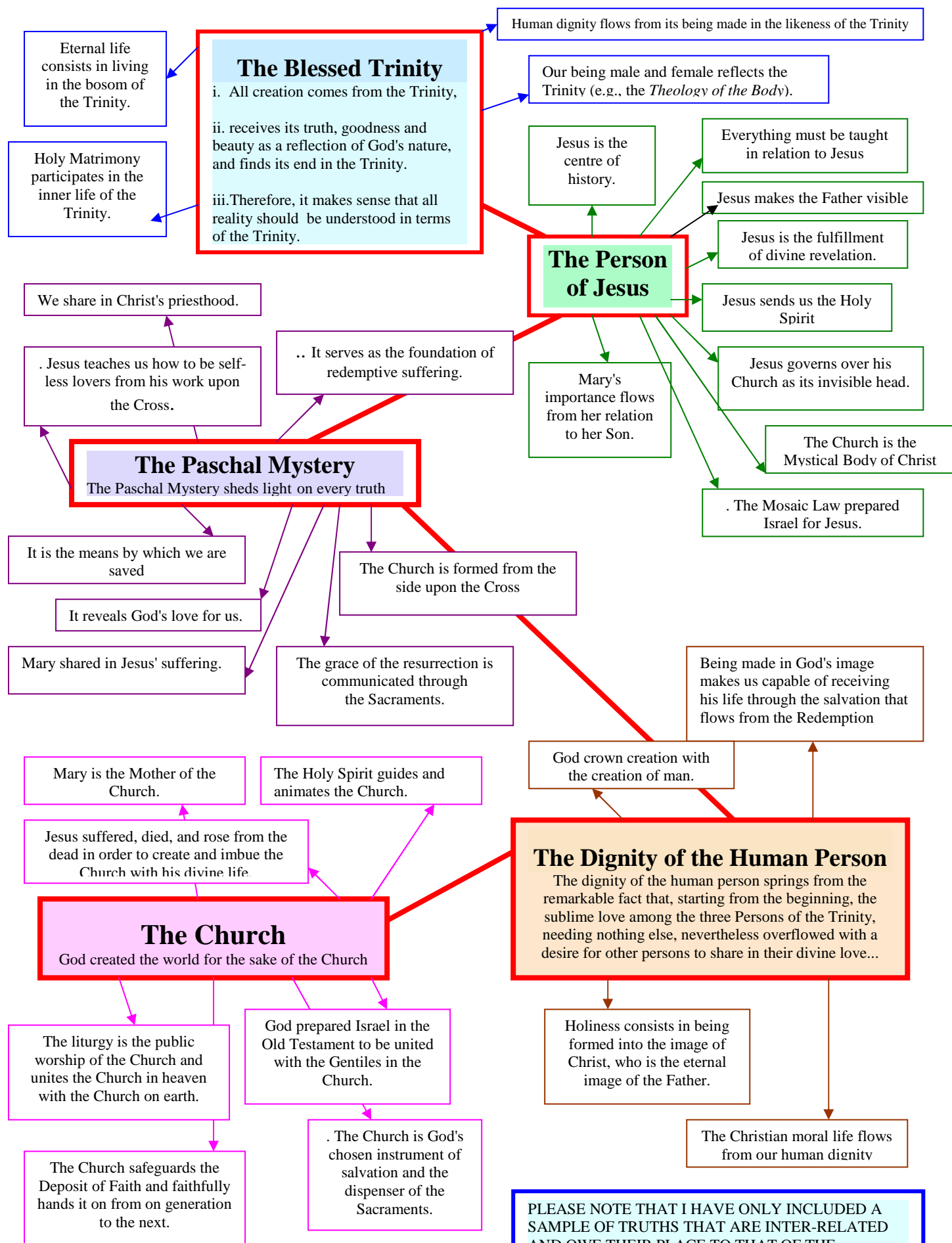
**Hopefully, the diagram on the next  
page may help.**

(Do not get too 'picky' about the arrows)



ron.leishman

TRY TO SEE THE TRUTHS OF OUR FAITH AS BEING BIRTHED FROM THE FOUNDATIONAL TRUTH ON THE BLESSED TRINITY. EVERYTHING ELSE THEN FLOWS FROM THIS AND RELATES BACK TO IT.



PLEASE NOTE THAT I HAVE ONLY INCLUDED A SAMPLE OF TRUTHS THAT ARE INTER-RELATED AND OWE THEIR PLACE TO THAT OF THE FOUNDATIONAL TRUTH – THE BLESSED TRINITY.

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