

## STUDY MATERIAL FOR STUDENTS IN PREPARATION FOR CONFIRMATION – 2012

### Basic Truths

**One God:** There is only one God. He had no beginning; He always was and always will be. He is unchangeable. He is all that is good, holy, merciful and just (fair).

### Blessed/Holy Trinity

In God there are 3 separate and distinct divine persons: The **Father**, the **Son** (Jesus), and the **Holy Spirit**. All are equal and together they form the One God. This Mystery is called “The Blessed/Holy Trinity.

**God the Father** is the first person of the Blessed Trinity.

**Jesus Christ** is the second person of the Blessed Trinity. He is **true God and true Man** -- a mystery called the Incarnation. The name JESUS means SAVIOUR, the name CHRIST means ANOINTED. He suffered and died on the cross for our sins and the sins of the whole world. This made it possible for us to enter heaven again since it was closed to us because of original sin. The sufferings of our Lord are called the PASSION of Jesus Christ. The Passion is recalled in the STATIONS OF THE CROSS.

**The Holy Spirit** is the third person of the Blessed Trinity. He proceeds from the Father and the Son and is equal to the Father and the Son. The Holy Spirit descended upon the Apostles in the form of tongues of fire on **PENTECOST**. (50 days after Easter)

**Church:** In order to carry on his teachings, **Jesus Christ established the church**. He appointed **Saint Peter** (the Apostle) as the first visible head of the church, the **first pope**. The Pope is the representative of Christ on earth. The current pope is Pope Benedict XVI. **Jesus is the invisible head of the Church**. When we speak of Church, we mean the Pope, the cardinals, bishops, priests and **all** the faithful followers.

God created out of nothing the entire universe and all living creatures in it. We human beings are the greatest of all his mortal creations. We are composed of two main parts: a material body that dies and a spiritual soul that lives forever. After death our souls will eventually be with God (Heaven), or separated from God (Hell), depending upon the kind of life we have led and the condition of our soul at the time of death.

**Original Sin:** The first sin committed by Adam & Eve. This original sin is passed on to every person born into the world. Before Adam & Eve sinned, they were filled with GRACE. Grace is a sharing of God’s own divine supernatural life.

**Mary, the Mother of Jesus and Jesus were the only persons conceived without Original Sin.**

Mary was conceived without sin. We call this the Immaculate Conception.

After her death, Mary was taken up into heaven, both body and soul. This event is called the Assumption

### CONFIRMATION

Confirmation is the full outpouring of the Holy Spirit once granted to the Apostles on Pentecost.

Confirmation unites us more firmly to Christ.

Confirmation gives us the strength of the Holy Spirit to spread and defend the faith.

Confirmation increases **the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit** in us:

**Wisdom, Understanding, Counsel, Courage, Knowledge, Piety and Fear (respect) of the Lord.**

The Bishop is the ordinary minister of the sacrament.

The Bishop anoints you with **Holy Chrism** which is olive oil mixed with balsam.

The Bishop says the following: “N., Be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit”. You answer: “Amen”.

The Bishop also says: “Peace be with you.” You answer: “And also with you.”

Confirmation binds us more closely to Christ and helps us bear witness to the Christian faith in word and deed.

## **Sacraments / Sanctifying Grace**

The sacraments are outward signs instituted and given to us by Jesus Christ. By receiving the sacraments we receive Sanctifying Grace. **Sanctifying Grace** is a gift from God, to share in God's divine nature (supernatural life), and to inherit eternal life (heaven). It gives us strength to live our lives as followers of Christ.

We receive GRACE by: receiving the sacraments, prayer, attending Mass, living a life pleasing to God.

## **The 7 Sacraments:**

**Baptism:** Original sin is removed from our souls by the Sacrament of Baptism. It also makes us children of God, members of Christ and His Church. Baptism imprints an indelible character on the soul of the recipient and **can be received only once**. In case of emergency, anyone, man or woman can validly baptize by pouring water over the head of the candidate while saying: “ (Name of candidate), I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.” Any adult baptized member of the Church has the mission to go and spread the Good News of Jesus Christ. Through baptism we have the right and the ability to go to heaven if we live by God's commandments.

**Holy Eucharist** (Communion) is the Body and Blood of Christ, given to us by Jesus at the Last Supper.

**Confirmation** Through the Sacrament of Confirmation God sends us His Holy Spirit to strengthen us and to help us live our lives in accordance with Christ's teachings.

**Reconciliation (Confession)** – This sacrament was instituted by Christ on Easter Sunday evening when he appeared to the Apostles, breathed on them and said: “Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them and whose sins you retain are retained.” **To make a good confession** we must truly be sorry for our sins, do penance, and decide not to do it again

**Holy Orders:** - This sacrament was instituted by Christ at the Last Supper. Only baptized men may receive the sacrament. Only bishops can confer this sacrament. Men receiving this sacrament dedicate themselves toward the salvation of others.

**Anointing of the Sick:** - Through this sacrament sick or dying people are strengthened with courage and peace to endure whatever sufferings are caused by disease or old age. It forgives all sins for which the sick person is truly sorry, sometimes it restores health; it prepares the sick person for the transition to eternal life.

**Matrimony:** - Christ instituted this sacrament at the wedding feast of Cana and through his teaching that the union of a man and woman in marriage should be permanent until death.

**Sacraments of Initiation:** *Baptism, Holy Eucharist and Confirmation* are the three Sacraments of Initiation, which make us full members of the Catholic Church.

## **Sin:**

Sin is always an offense against God, a refusal to accept God's will and often an offense against another human person.

The sin we inherited from Adam & Eve is called **Original Sin**.

The sins we commit ourselves are called **Actual Sins**.

## **Two types of actual sin:**

**Mortal Sins:** are serious sins that destroy our relationship with God. For a sin to be mortal, three conditions apply: a) The object of the sin is of a serious matter, b) the knowledge that the act is seriously wrong, c) the deliberate consent to commit the sin. Mortal sin destroys the life of sanctifying grace in us and makes us incapable of eternal life (heaven) until the sin is forgiven.

**Venial Sins:** are less serious sins. They weaken our relationship with God, but do not destroy it.

**Free Will**: God does not make Heaven automatic for us. Instead, He gave us the gift of Free Will, which enables us to do as we wish and to choose one thing from another. This means that we will be responsible for all our actions. God wants us to come to him freely and not be forced. If we choose to do good God will reward us for this with eternal life.

**The Four Marks of the Catholic Church** are:

**One** - one in Christ

**Holy** - by our actions we show the love of God to those around us

**Catholic** – means Universal, the Church is for everyone; we leave no one out

**Apostolic** – the teachings of Jesus were handed down to us by the Apostles

**Mass/Liturgy**:

The two main parts of the Mass are the **Liturgy of the Word** and the **Liturgy of the Eucharist**. (The word **liturgy** means: a public religious celebration.)

**The Liturgy of the Word** includes

1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading and the Gospel

The Homily and General Intercessions (Prayers of the Faithful).

**The Liturgy of the Eucharist** includes:

- a) The **Offertory**: the presentation of bread and wine
- b) The **Consecration**: the priest changes the bread and wine into the body and blood of Jesus Christ.
- c) **Communion**: we receive the Body and Blood of Christ.

One hour before receiving Holy Communion we abstain from all food and drink. Only water and medicine are allowed.

At the Last Supper with His Apostles, Christ offered bread and said: “This is my body which will be given up for you” and he took the cup of wine and said: “This is the cup of my blood, the blood of the new and everlasting covenant. It will be shed for you and for all so that sins may be forgiven. Do this in memory of me.”

Today, the Mass is the re-celebration of the Last Supper. By the power given the Priest, the bread and wine are truly transformed into Christ’s body and blood during the **Consecration** of the Mass. This is the bloodless sacrifice of Christ all over again. Christ is truly, really and substantially present in the Holy Eucharist.

**Bible**: The Bible is the inspired word of God. It has two parts:

1. The **Old Testament** – covering the period up to the birth of Jesus
2. The **New Testament** – covering the period of Jesus on earth and the lives of the Apostles.

**The Precepts/Laws of the Church**:

1. Attend Mass on Sundays and Holy days.
2. Confess your sins at least once a year.
3. Receive Holy Communion at least during the Easter season.
4. Observe the Holy Days of Obligation.
5. Observe the days of fasting and abstinence.
6. Contribute to the support of the Church

**The Beatitudes:**

Blessed are the poor in spirit, the kingdom of heaven is theirs.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the land.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for what is right, for they shall be satisfied.

Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you when they revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad for your reward is great in heaven.

**The Stations of the Cross** is a devotion recalling the fourteen prominent events that took place from the time of Jesus' trial under Pontius Pilate till his death and burial on Calvary.

1. Jesus is condemned to death.
2. Jesus carries his cross
3. Jesus falls for the first time.
4. Jesus meets his afflicted mother.
5. Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus carry his cross.
6. Veronica wipes the face of Jesus.
7. Jesus falls the second time.
8. Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem
9. Jesus fall the third time.
10. Jesus is stripped of his garments.
11. Jesus is nailed to the cross.
12. Jesus dies on the Cross.
13. Jesus is taken down from the cross.
14. Jesus is buried in the tomb.

The resurrection of Jesus on the third day - Easter Sunday - is often added as the 15<sup>th</sup> station.

**Study the 10 Commandments!**

God gave the 10 Commandments to Moses on Mt. Sinai. (Know them by heart)

**The two greatest commandments:** Jesus Christ said these are above all other commandments:

1. Love God with all your heart, mind, soul and strength.
2. Love your neighbor as yourself.

**Works of Mercy** are performed by persons in a state of sanctifying grace.

**The Corporal works of mercy are:**

1. Feed the hungry
2. Give drink to the thirsty
3. Shelter the homeless
4. Cloth the naked
5. Visit the sick
6. Visit the imprisoned
7. Bury the dead

**The Spiritual works of mercy are:**

1. To warn the sinner
2. To instruct the ignorant
3. Counsel the doubtful
4. Comfort the sorrowful
5. Bear wrongs patiently
6. Forgive all injuries
7. Pray for the living and the dead