

DOCTRINAL AND CATECHETICAL INFORMATION AND TEACHING POINTS

The Most Holy Trinity:

KEY CATECHETICAL POINTS TO BE MADE WHEN TEACHING ABOUT THE MOST HOLY TRINITY:

- The mystery of the Holy Trinity is the central mystery of Christian faith and life.
- The mystery of the Holy Trinity is the mystery of God in himself.
- It is the source of all the other mysteries of the Faith.
- It is the most fundamental and essential truth of the Faith.
- What we know about the Trinity has been revealed by God Himself.
- There is but one, true God.
- There are three persons in the one God and each of these persons is fully God.
- The three persons in the one God are: God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit. **Note: Terms such as God the Creator, God the Redeemer, and God the Sanctifier, do not say Who God is, but rather point to functions commonly attributed to one of the Divine Persons. (Note: While we commonly attribute certain works to one or another person of the Trinity, all three Divine Persons are involved in creation, redemption, and sanctification. The Divine Persons are distinct, but undivided). We have a responsibility to use the correct vocabulary, i.e. the vocabulary of the Church, when referring to the persons of the Trinity, and in all catechesis. We must not shy away from, or compromise, the language of the Most Holy Trinity, i.e. the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. This language we clearly see in Sacred Scripture! This language speaks to Who God is! Learning the correct terminology for God affects both our relationship with Him and with one another as sons and daughters of God the Father and brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ, in the Holy Spirit.**
- God has the fullness of all perfection. He is all-loving, all-merciful, all-just, all-knowing, all-powerful, ever-present, etc.
- Nobody made God. God always was, is now, and always will be.
- God made all things and He made them good.
- God made man and woman and He made them very good.
- Men and women (and boys and girls) are the greatest of all of God's creatures on earth. We are made in His image. We are to love God and each other because God is love. He loves us and He made us to love and to be loved.
- Because we are made in God's image, He gives human beings the ability to reason and we are given free will so that we can freely choose based on our reason.
- God shows us and tells us in different ways what is good and what is evil. He gives us His grace because He wants us to choose to be good and to be happy with Him forever.

THE INCARNATION AND NATIVITY OF OUR LORD:

For catechetical information on the Incarnation and Nativity of our Lord, click here:

- ❖ Jesus is true God and true man.
- ❖ He is the 2nd person of the Blessed Trinity in human flesh.
- ❖ He did not cease being God when he became man.
- ❖ He is still true God and true man and always will be.
- ❖ It was at the moment of the Incarnation that the Eternal Word of the Father took to Himself a human nature.
- ❖ Jesus is not a human person. He is a divine Person who has two natures – divine and human.
- ❖ He always had the divine nature.
- ❖ He did not always have a human nature.
- ❖ He took to Himself a human nature approximately two thousand years ago at the moment that our Blessed Mother, Mary, conceived Him by the power of the Holy Spirit.
- ❖ The theological term for the union of the divine nature and a human nature in the Second Person of the Holy Trinity is “the hypostatic union”.
- ❖ Jesus is not part God and part man. He is fully God and fully man.
- ❖ It is incorrect to say that Mary gave birth merely to the human nature of Jesus. Women do not give birth to natures, they give birth to persons. That is why we rightfully call Mary the Mother of God. *Hint – We should frequently refer to Mary as the Mother of God when we catechize. Like all truths regarding the Blessed Mother, it helps to show forth the truth about Jesus.
- ❖ There is not a human Jesus and a divine Jesus. Mary did not give birth to twins. Jesus is one Person, viz. the Second Divine Person, with two natures – divine and human.
- ❖ Jesus did not merely take the outer appearance of a man. He became man – like unto us in all things but sin.
- ❖ Jesus was born in a stable, into a poor family. Mother Theresa of Calcutta was fond of saying that the greatest power in the world is “the humility of God.”
- ❖ God the Son, Who first came into the world in poverty, will, when He comes again, come in glory.

- ❖ God became man to reconcile us to the Father, that we “might have life and have it to the full.” He became man to save us from sin and death, so that we may be happy with Him forever in heaven – in the love that never ends!
- ❖ For more, please see paragraph #'s 456 – 530 of the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

HOLY MASS AND THE SACRAMENTS

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Names Listed in the Catechism for the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist (cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church* #'s 1328-1332)

[These terms are rich in their theology and each points to a different aspect of the sacrament.]

- The Lord's Supper
- The Eucharist
- The Breaking of Bread
- The Eucharistic assembly
- The memorial of the Lord's Passion and Resurrection
- The Holy Sacrifice
- Holy sacrifice of the Mass
- The sacrifice of praise
- Spiritual sacrifice
- The pure and holy sacrifice
- The Holy and Divine Liturgy
- The Sacred Mysteries
- The Most Blessed Sacrament
- Holy Communion
- The holy things
- Bread of angels
- The bread from heaven
- The medicine of immortality
- Viaticum
- Holy Mass



CATECHESIS ON HOLY MASS

The following, submitted by Father William Waltersheid, Pastor of Saint Patrick Parish, Carlisle, is an excellent, concise description of the various parts of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. Please feel free to copy this for catechetical purposes.

Holy Mass: The Source and Summit

The Mass is the greatest prayer. The celebration of Mass makes present for us the Mystery of Christ's Passion, Death and Resurrection. It is the source and summit of our lives in Christ. Let us take a look at the parts of the Mass and deepen our understanding of this great treasure.

- The Sign of the Cross and the Greeting tells us who we are as we gather to enter into the Mystery of Our Lord's Death and Resurrection. We are the people of God signed by the Cross of Christ and given life in Baptism by God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
- The Penitential Rite gives us the opportunity to acknowledge our sinfulness as we approach the Sacrifice of Christ that destroys sin and brings us back into right relationship with God.
- The Gloria is a hymn that leads us to praise, glorify, adore, thank, and ask our Triune God for all we, His sons and daughters, need as we beg His mercy.
- The Opening Prayer or "Collect" collects the intentions of the people assembled and presents them to God by the priest who stands *in persona Christi* (in the person of Christ).
- In the Reading from the Old Testament we hear the story of God's covenant with His chosen people Israel and the revelation of Himself that speaks of His mercy and desire for their salvation.
- The Responsorial Psalm is the faithful's response of praise and thanksgiving to God's Word in the first Reading. It reminds us that we are not passive listeners to the Word; we are in a relationship of love with the Word of God.
- The Second Reading from the New Testament tells us of God's New and Eternal Covenant forged in the Blood of His Son who is the Word Made flesh.
- The Gospel is a proclamation of an event from the life of Our Savior. In the readings from Holy Scripture that are not taken from the Gospel, it is God who speaks to His people. But when the Gospel is proclaimed, it is specifically Christ Jesus, true God and true man, who speaks to us.
- The homily is a vital part of the liturgy of the Mass that explains the Holy Scriptures and instructs us in the Faith.
- The Profession of Faith (the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed) is the ancient formula of beliefs that unites the people assembled with the Universal Church of all ages in their expression of their Faith in Christ.
- The General Intercessions or Prayer of the Faithful offers prayers to God for the Church, the world, and the needs of people both living and dead.
- The Preparation Rite is the offering of the bread and wine brought to the altar by the priest on behalf of the people of God assembled. The people participate in the offering by virtue of their baptism into the priestly people of God.
- The Dialogue and Preface speak of the right of God to receive the dutiful worship of His people through Christ His Son. The *Sanctus* (Holy, Holy, Holy) is the prayer of praise and adoration taken from the book of the Prophet Ezekiel in which the seraphim ceaselessly

worship God. It tells us that the liturgy of heaven is united to the liturgy of the Church on earth.

- The Eucharistic Prayer makes present the Mystery of Our Lord's Passion, Death and Resurrection. Christ's Sacrifice of the Cross, His offering to the Father of Himself for the salvation of the world is re-presented on the altar. At the words of consecration the bread and wine brought to the altar become the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ. The baptized are called to participate in the Sacrifice of Christ that is made present through the ministry of the ordained priest.
- The "Our Father" begins the Rite of Communion. We are faithful to Jesus' command to pray in the words He taught us. The priest prays for deliverance from evil, peace, and freedom from anxiety as we wait for the coming of Christ Our Savior in glory.
- The priest extends a greeting of Christ's peace to all present in the assembly. It is not a peace that the world can give but one that has been won at the price of the Cross. The faithful share a sign of peace with one another.
- The priest co-mingles a portion of the Sacred Host that he has broken in the chalice of the Precious Blood. The faithful sing the *Agnus Dei*. "Lamb of God, You take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us, grant us peace." Christ is the Lamb slain for our offenses, His Body broken and His Blood spilled for us. We beg His mercy and grace.
- The priest elevates the Sacred Host and Precious Blood and proclaims, "This is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. Happy are they who are called to His supper." We confess our unworthiness and ask for Healing that His Passion, Death, and Resurrection affords.
- The moment of Communion has arrived. The faithful go forward to receive His Sacred Body and Precious Blood. This reception of the Holy Eucharist effects communion between the individual and God and among the individual members of the Body of Christ.
- After the Communion Hymn a time of silence for personal prayer of thanksgiving follows. This, too, is a sign of unity among those who have received the Holy Eucharist. The Prayer after Communion is offered by the priest to bring the prayers of all into one expression.
- The priest then blesses the people in the name of the Holy Trinity and dismisses all to go forth to witness to Christ in the world.
- No one is a mere spectator at Mass. All of the baptized are invited to participate in the Sacred Mysteries by full, conscious, and active participation. This participation is not limited to external expression. It must also be an interior expression of faith and adoration. The Mass is an awesome treasure! It is Christ's work of salvation active in our midst.

CATECHETICAL CONTENT – THE MOST HOLY EUCHARIST

The following is some of the key content to cover when teaching about the Most Holy Eucharist:



- ❑ Teach the real, substantial presence of Christ Jesus in the Holy Eucharist
- ❑ Use precise terminology, e.g. Holy Eucharist, Holy Communion, Blessed Sacrament, Body and Blood of Christ.
- ❑ Use the concept of appearance and reality (substance and accidents) in an age-appropriate manner.
- ❑ Talk about Holy Mass as both a sacrifice and a banquet.
- ❑ Discuss the communion among the members of the Mystical Body of Christ that is effected by the reception of the Holy Eucharist. There is communion between those in heaven (Church Triumphant), those in Purgatory (Church Suffering), and the baptized on earth (Church Militant).
- ❑ Emphasize the importance of attending Mass every Sunday and Holy Day of Obligation. The holy days of obligation are as follows: Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God – January 1st, Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord – Thursday following the sixth Sunday of Easter, Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary – August 15th, Solemnity of All Saints – November 1st, Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception – December 8th, Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord (Christmas) – December 25th.
- ❑ Teach the following to encourage love and reverence for the Blessed Sacrament: holy silence in the Church except for the appropriate singing and responses during Holy Mass, genuflection toward the Blessed Sacrament when entering and leaving the Church, prayer before and after Holy Mass, not chewing gum or eating candy in church, remembering to fast for a minimum of one hour prior to receiving Holy Communion, folding hands when approaching to receive Holy Communion and on the way back to the pew afterward, making a conscious effort to remember who it is we are receiving when we approach to receive Holy Communion, a bow of the head as a sign of reverence to our Eucharistic Lord just prior to receiving Holy Communion (both before receiving the Sacred Host and, if one is receiving under both species, before drinking of the Precious Blood), a prayer of thanksgiving after receiving Holy Communion, and the practice of making a “spiritual communion” if one is unable to receive Holy Communion.
- ❑ Teach them to say “Amen,” after the priest, deacon, or extraordinary minister of Holy Communion says to them “The Body of Christ” or “The Blood of Christ” just before distributing Holy Communion to them.
- ❑ Teach children and teenagers, in an unbiased manner, that they may receive Holy Communion either on the tongue, or in the hand and teach them the proper way to do each. **Note:** In the case of intinction, the communicant must receive on the tongue.
- ❑ Encourage and give opportunities for Eucharistic adoration.
- ❑ Teach people to ask the Mother of God to help them to love and be devoted to Jesus in the Most Holy Eucharist. Our Blessed Mother was, the first “tabernacle” of the Lord Jesus (cf. Ecclesia de Eucharistia #55).
- ❑ Use sacramentals and encourage the giving of them as gifts. Employ a Marian dimension such as the Brown Scapular, the Miraculous Medal, or the Rosary. This illustrates in a wonderful way the reality of the Communion of Saints effected by the Holy Eucharist.
- ❑ Teach that there is no greater gift that we can receive in this world than the gift of our Incarnate Lord’s Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity in the Holy Eucharist. In this Sacrament of Love, we receive God in the Flesh, that is, Jesus, in His Totality as true God and true man.

THE CATECHISM ON EUCHARISTIC ADORATION



... “The Catholic Church has always offered and still offers to the sacrament of the Eucharist the cult of adoration, not only during Mass, but also outside of it, reserving the consecrated hosts with the utmost care, exposing them to the solemn veneration of the faithful, and carrying them in procession.”

- CCC 1378; Paul VI, MF 56

The tabernacle was first intended for the reservation of the Eucharist in a worthy place so that it could be brought to the sick and those absent, outside of Mass. As faith in the real presence of Christ in his Eucharist deepened, the Church became conscious of the meaning of silent adoration of the Lord present under the Eucharistic species. It is for this reason that the tabernacle should be located in an especially worthy place in the church and should be constructed in such a way that it emphasizes and manifests the truth of the real presence of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament.

- CCC 1379

MORE ON EUCHARISTIC ADORATION

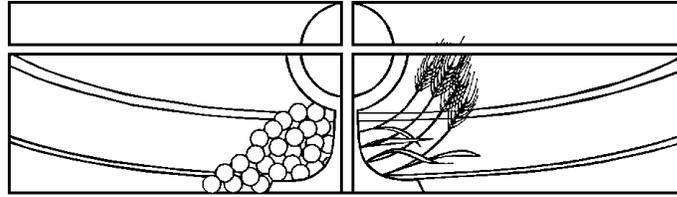
(The following was written by Pope John Paul II in his 2003 encyclical letter, **Ecclesia de Eucharistia**)

The worship of the Eucharist outside of the Mass is of inestimable value for the life of the Church. This worship is strictly linked to the celebration of the Eucharistic Sacrifice. The presence of Christ under the sacred species reserved after Mass – a presence which lasts as long as the species of bread and wine remain – derives from the celebration of the sacrifice and is directed toward communion, both sacramental and spiritual. It is the responsibility of pastors to encourage, also by their personal witness, the practice of Eucharistic adoration, and exposition of the Blessed Sacrament in particular, as well as prayer of adoration before Christ present under the Eucharistic species.

It is pleasant to spend time with him, to lie close to his breast like the Beloved Disciple (cf. Jn 13:25) and to feel the infinite love present in his heart. If in our time Christians must be distinguished above all by the “art of prayer,” how can we not feel a renewed need to spend time in spiritual converse, in silent adoration, in heartfelt love before Christ present in the Most Holy Sacrament? How often, dear brothers and sisters, have I experienced this, and drawn from it strength, consolation and support!

*This practice, repeatedly praised and recommended by the Magisterium, is supported by the example of many saints. Particularly outstanding in this regard was Saint Alphonsus Liguori, who wrote: “Of all devotions, that of adoring Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament is the greatest after the sacraments, the one dearest to God and the one most helpful to us.” The Eucharist is a priceless treasure: by not only celebrating it but also by praying before it outside of Mass we are enabled to make contact with the very wellspring of grace. A Christian community desirous of contemplating the face of Christ in the spirit which I proposed in the Apostolic Letters *Novo Millennio Ineunte* and *Rosarium Virginis Mariae* cannot fail also*

to develop this aspect of Eucharistic worship, which prolongs and increases the fruits of our communion in the body and blood of the Lord.



NOTABLE QUOTABLES ON THE MOST HOLY EUCHARIST

Because this bread and wine have been made Eucharist (“eucharisted,” according to an ancient expression), “we call this food Eucharist, and no one may take part in it unless he believes what we teach is true, has received baptism for the forgiveness of sins and new birth, and lives in keeping with what Christ taught.”

- St. Justin Martyr, *Apol. 1*, 66, 1-2: PG 6, 428

Our way of thinking is attuned to the Eucharist, and the Eucharist in turn confirms our way of thinking.

- St. Irenaeus, *Adv. Haeres. 4*, 18, 5: PG 7/1, 1028

It is not man that causes the things offered to become the Body and Blood of Christ, but he who was crucified for us, Christ himself. The priest, in the role of Christ, pronounces these words, but their power and grace are God’s. This is my body, he says. This word transforms the things offered.

- St. John Chrysostom, *prod. Jud. 1:6*: PG49, 380

... Could not Christ’s word, which can make from nothing what did not exist, change existing things into what they were not before? It is no less a feat to give things their original nature than to change their nature.

- St. Ambrose, *De myst. 9*, 50; 52: PL 16, 405-407.

The Church and the world have a great need for Eucharistic worship. Jesus awaits us in this sacrament of love. Let us not refuse the time to go to meet him in adoration, in contemplation full of faith, and open to making amends for the serious offenses and crimes of the world. Let our adoration never cease.

- Pope John Paul II, *Dominicae cenae*, 3.

The Eucharist thus appears as both the source and summit of all evangelization, since its goal is the communion of mankind with Christ and in him with the Father and the Holy Spirit.

- *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, 22.



BOOK REVIEWS ON THE MOST HOLY EUCHARIST

Our thanks to Mrs. Patty Price for the following book reviews. Mrs. Price is a Youth Minister at Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish, Lebanon.

Jesus Our Eucharistic Love by Fr. Stefano Manelli, Franciscan Friars of the Immaculate, Our Lady's Chapel, New Bedford, MA (www.marymediatrix.com).

Translated from Italian, this gem of a book is teeming with spiritual anecdotes on devotion to the "Sacrament of Love." It is filled with prayers for meditation before the Blessed Sacrament, stories of the saints, the importance of spiritual communions, the profound relationship between Jesus and his priests, Our Lady and much more. This book clearly shows that, as St. Augustine said, "God has given us everything in the Eucharist."

Praying in the Presence of Our Lord by Father Benedict Groeschel, CFR, Our Sunday Visitor, 200 Noll Plaza, Huntington, IN 46750.

This is a great little adoration companion. It is composed of very beautiful Eucharistic prayers, many of which have been said before the Eucharist for centuries. Scriptural references, reflections from popes and church documents, prayers for visits at various times of the day and powerful Eucharistic prayers of the saints. Father Groeschel has also included some of his own personal reflections.

Holy Communion by St. Peter Julian Eymard

The Real Presence by St. Peter Julian Eymard (available through JMJ Catholic Shop, Lebanon) "To be possessed by Jesus and to possess Him – that is the perfect reign of love." St. Peter Julian Eymard

St. Peter Julian Eymard (1811-1868) is known as the "priest of the Eucharist." He dedicated his entire life to prayer and preaching on the Eucharist. These two meditation books represent part of a small set of books filled with spiritual wisdom. These meditations are not meant to be read quickly or skimmed over. Rather, the reader should immerse him or herself in them during a long and leisurely visit to the Blessed Sacrament.

If Your Mind Wanders at Mass by Thomas Howard, Franciscan University Press, 1235 University Blvd. Steubenville, OH 43952. 1-888-333-0381.

A convert to Catholicism, Thomas Howard has a way with words and is a great Catholic apologist. This book takes a look at the parts of the Mass so we can think more deeply about them at the time we are experiencing them, in spite of distractions. If your mind wanders at Mass, this book will help you focus your attention.

Transforming Your Life Through the Eucharist by Father John Kane, Sophia Institute Press, Box 5284, Manchester, NH 03108. 1-800-888-9344 (www.sophiainstitute.com)

This is a wonderful book that really helps us understand in greater detail how the Eucharist can bring us to perfection. Father Kane helps us come to a deeper awareness of how much God loves us and wants to be with us in the Eucharist. Topics include reaching others through the Eucharist, possessing the joy of Christ, living each moment in God's presence and how you can find Christ through your crosses.

With Us Today – On the Real Presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist by Father John A. Hardon, SJ, Eternal Life, P.O. Box 787, Bardstown, KY, 40004-0787. 1-800-842-2871.

Father Hardon was one of the Church's most eloquent and eminent theologians. When asked one time about his priestly duties, Father Hardon replied that he "does odd jobs for the Vatican." Without a doubt, this is one of the most enlightening books ever written on the Eucharist and should be must reading for every catechist. Father Hardon thoroughly lays out the truth about the Eucharist and defends it against the errors of our day. This book helps us know, understand and love the Blessed Sacrament as well as instructing us on how to detect and confront the widespread errors that are hoodwinking many Catholics in the Church today.

The Lamb's Supper – The Mass as Heaven On Earth, Scott Hahn (available through JMJ Catholic Shop, amazon.com.)

This book instructs us on the Mass using its connection with the Book of Revelation. Very well written with chapter titles with a clever play-on-words-twist, *The Lamb's Supper* "helps us see the Mass with new eyes, pray the Liturgy with a renewed heart, and enter into Mass more fully, enthusiastically, intelligently and powerfully than ever before." Dr. Hahn takes a complex subject and presents it a way that gives us a rejuvenated worship experience.

THE EUCHARIST IN SCRIPTURE

Please permit me to recommend some biblical texts for teaching about the Holy Eucharist. These would include, but are certainly not limited to:

Matthew 26: 26-28

Mark 14: 22-24

Luke 22: 17-20

1 Corinthians 10: 14-17

1 Corinthians 11: 23-29

Luke 24: 30-35

John 6 – all of it



Besides the Bible and the Catechism of the Catholic Church (the primary resources for catechesis) may I suggest as teacher's resources, Pope John Paul II's 2003 encyclical letter entitled Ecclesia de Eucharistia (*The Church and its Relationship to the Eucharist*)? You can order this encyclical by contacting the Daughters of St. Paul at Pauline Books and Media, 50 Saint Pauls Avenue, Boston, MA 02130-3491. The encyclical can also be accessed through the Vatican website, [http:// www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va). Our Sunday Visitor, Inc. has some very good pamphlets on the Holy Eucharist – one entitled *Eucharistic Adoration*, ISBN: 1-59276-013-9 and one entitled *How To Celebrate the Year of the Eucharist*, ISBN 1-59276-135-6. If you would like to order either of these pamphlets please write to: Our Sunday Visitor, 200 Noll Plaza, Huntington, IN 46750, or call 1-800-348-2440.

FRUITS / EFFECTS OF THE SACRAMENTS:

BAPTISM

- Forgiveness of original sin and all personal sins.
- Birth into new life (sanctifying grace), becoming an heir to heaven.
- Adoption as son / daughter of God the Father.
- Become a member of Christ Jesus and a sharer in His priesthood and are incorporated into the Church, the Body of Christ.
- Become a temple of the Holy Spirit and receive his seven-fold gifts.
- Reception of the theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity.
- Receive on the soul an indelible spiritual character, which consecrates the baptized person for Christian worship. Because of the character, Baptism cannot be repeated.

CONFIRMATION

- Perfects baptismal grace.
- Roots us more deeply in the divine filiation.
- Incorporates us more firmly into Christ.
- Strengthens our bond with the Church and associates us more closely with her mission.
- Helps us to bear witness to the Christian faith in words accompanied by deeds.
- Like Baptism, imprints an indelible spiritual character mark (character) on the Christian's soul and thus can only be received once.

HOLY EUCHARIST

- Communion with the Body and Blood of Christ increases the communicant's union with the Lord.
- Forgives the communicants venial sins.
- Preserves the communicant from grave sins.
- Since it strengthens the bonds of charity between the communicant and Christ, it also reinforces the unity of the Church as the Mystical Body of Christ.
- Sustains our strength along the pilgrimage of this life.
- Makes us long for eternal life and unites us even now to the Church in heaven, the Blessed Virgin Mary and all the saints.

PENANCE

- Reconciliation with God by which the penitent recovers grace.
- Reconciliation with the Church.
- Remission of the eternal punishment incurred by mortal sins.
- Remission, at least in part, of temporal punishments resulting from sin.
- Peace and serenity of conscience, and spiritual consolation.
- An increase of strength for the Christian battle.

ANOINTING OF THE SICK

- The uniting of the sick person to the passion of Christ, for his own good and that of the whole Church.
- The strengthening, peace, and courage to endure in a Christian manner the sufferings of illness or old age.

- The forgiveness of sins, if the sick person was not able to obtain it through the sacrament of Penance.
- The restoration of health, if it is conducive to the salvation of the sick person's soul.
- The preparation for passing over to eternal life.

HOLY ORDERS

- Recipient by a special grace of the Holy Spirit is configured to Christ as Priest, Teacher, and Pastor, of whom the ordained is made a minister, so that he may serve as Christ's instrument for the Church.
- By ordination one is enabled to act as a representative of Christ, Head of the Church, in his triple office of priest, prophet, and king.
- As with Baptism and Confirmation, this share in Christ's office is granted once for all. Holy Orders, like Baptism and Confirmation, confers an indelible spiritual character and cannot be repeated or conferred temporarily.

MATRIMONY

- Signifies the union of Christ and the Church.
- Gives the spouses the grace to love each other with the love with which Christ has loved his Church.
- The grace of the sacrament thus perfects the human love of the spouses, strengthens their indissoluble unity, and sanctifies them on the way to eternal life.

Unity, indissolubility, and openness to children are essential to marriage. See Code of Canon Law #1055, #1050, #1061.

VOCABULARY

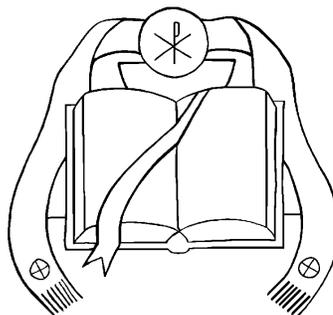
A phrase that catechists should know is *ex opere operato*. Literally this means, “from the work performed.” Practically speaking, this means that the grace given in the sacraments is not determined by the virtue (or lack thereof) of either the minister or the recipient of the sacrament. As long as no obstacle is placed in the way, every sacrament that is properly administered confers the grace intended by the sacrament. For example, if a man (we shall call him Herbert) goes to the Sacrament of Penance and makes a good confession and receives absolution, Herbert’s sins are forgiven whether the priest hearing his confession is a great saint or a great sinner. The point to be made here is that God, in His unfathomable mercy, does not make His divine mercy, present in the sacraments, primarily dependent on us. “The Potter” realizes that we have “feet of clay”, but he desires to mold and strengthen this clay in the fire of His divine love.

THE THREE DEGREES OF HOLY ORDERS

Deacons – From the Greek “diakonos.” A third degree of the sacrament of Holy Orders, after bishop and priest. The deacon is ordained not to priesthood, but for ministry to service. Deacons are ordained to assist the bishop and priests in the celebration of the divine mysteries...

Deacons do the following:

- Proclaim the Gospel
- Preach
- Distribute Holy Communion



- Baptize
- Assist at and bless marriages (when permitted)
- Preside over funerals
- Dedicate themselves to the various ministries of charity

Priests – From the Greek “presbyteroi”, meaning “elder.” A second degree of Holy Orders after bishop. Presbyters or priests are co-workers with their bishops and form a unique sacerdotal college or “presbyterium” dedicated to assist their bishops in priestly service to the People of God (CCC 1567). Through the ministry of priests, the unique sacrifice of Christ on the cross is made present in the Eucharistic sacrifice of the Church (CCC 1554, 1562).

Priests can do all that is noted above under what Deacons do, plus the following:

- ❑ Acting in the person of Christ, they make present and apply the unique sacrifice of Christ offering Himself for all as a spotless victim to the Father. That is they make present and apply the Eucharistic sacrifice.
- ❑ Hear Confession and give absolution
- ❑ Celebrate the sacrament of Anointing of the Sick
- ❑ May in certain cases, as determined by universal and particular law, confirm, though bishops are the ordinary ministers of Confirmation.

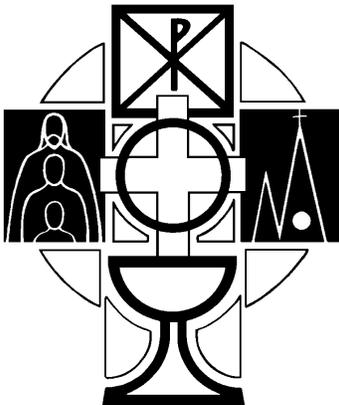
Bishops – from the Greek, “episcopoi”, meaning “overseer”. A bishop is one who has received the fullness of Holy Orders, which makes him a member of the Episcopal college and a successor of the apostles. He is the shepherd of a particular church entrusted to him.

Bishops can do all that deacons and priests do, plus he:

- Can ordain priests and deacons
- Receives through Episcopal consecration the offices of teaching, sanctifying, and ruling the people of his diocese

MORE IMPORTANT TEACHINGS

It is important in catechesis to know answers to questions that are viewed as “controversial” within our present culture. One of these issues regards who may be ordained to the ministerial priesthood. Our Holy Father, Pope John Paul II clearly enunciated the Church’s constant teaching in his 1994 document Ordinatio Sacerdotalis. I quote here from the document itself:



“Although the teaching that priestly ordination is to be reserved to men alone has been preserved by the constant and universal tradition of the Church and firmly taught by the magisterium in its more recent documents, at the present time in some places it is nonetheless considered still open to

debate, or the Church's judgment that women are not to be admitted to ordination is considered to have a merely disciplinary force. Wherefore, in order that all doubt may be removed regarding a matter of great importance, a matter which pertains to the Church's divine constitution itself, in virtue of my ministry of confirming the brethren (cf. Luke 22:32) I declare that the Church has no authority whatsoever to confer priestly ordination on women and that this judgment is to be definitively held by all the Church's faithful" (Ordinatio Sacerdotalis 4).

One year later, on October 25, 1995, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, stated that the Pope's teaching in Ordinatio Sacerdotalis "requires definitive assent, since, founded on the written Word of God, and from the beginning constantly preserved and applied in the tradition of the Church, it has been set forth infallibly by the ordinary and universal magisterium (cf. Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Lumen Gentium 25:2)" (Response of Oct. 25, 1995).

FIRST AND PRIMARY EDUCATORS

Dear Fathers, Brothers, Sisters,

The right and duty of parents to give education is essential since it is connected with the transmission of human life; it is original and primary with regard to the educational role of others, on account of the uniqueness of the loving relationship between parents and children; and it is irreplaceable and inalienable, and therefore incapable of being entirely delegated to others or usurped by others... (Familiaris Consortio, 36). These words from our late Holy Father, John Paul II, put in succinct terms the rights and awesome responsibility that parents have in educating their children – in virtue and in the Faith.

It is with joy and best wishes for a blessed and peaceful summer that I dedicate this edition of the ORE to parents in their role as the primary catechists of their children. This tremendous task of parents in passing on the truth in love to their children is carried out in concert with the Church. While our present-day culture is in so many ways a "culture of death," we are not a people without hope. It is in and through the renewal of the family, the Domestic Church, that the culture can and must be renewed. May Jesus, Who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, pour out His grace on our families, and on families everywhere, so that our society may be transformed into A Culture of Life, A Civilization of Love.

Jim Gontis



THE IMPORTANCE OF BRINGING YOUNG CHILDREN TO HOLY MASS

Jesus said, “Let the children come to me, and do not prevent them; for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.” - Mt. 19: 14. When we bring our children to Holy Mass, we are bringing our children (as well as ourselves) to Jesus!

Here are a few practical tips for nurturing a desire in our children for God and the Gift He has given us of Himself in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass:

1. Bring them and keep bringing them – be consistent.
2. If possible, sit close to the front.
3. Try to get to Mass a little ahead of time and stay a few minutes after.
4. Use common sense in terms of noise – not too quick to jump if there is some very “light” noise or murmuring, (they are children, not adults), but if baby is wailing or child is “throwing a fit,” take him/her to the cry room or vestibule.
5. My opinion is that it is best to leave the toys at home. If they need their blanket that’s fine (and quiet). If they must have something else, maybe a colorful Bible book or book on a saint, or, better yet, on the Mass.
6. Teach them about the parts of the Mass – especially what happens at the Consecration! The better we learn it and the more faithful we are, the better we will be able to teach our children. Start young and stay at it. Sometimes it might not seem like they are getting it at all, but they will probably get a lot more than we realize and surprise us from time to time. **Note: The more prayerful and faithful that we are, the more pre-disposed we will be to tap into the tremendous graces that are available to us in the Mass and the better able we will be to communicate the faith to our children.**
7. Teach them to bless themselves with holy water and to genuflect toward Jesus in the tabernacle when entering or leaving the Church. We should not expect them to just learn this on their own, but we need to teach them over, and over, and over, and over, and over again, with the utmost patience.
8. Teach them about the parts of the Church, e.g. tabernacle, stories on stained glass windows, altar, crucifix, baptismal fonts, etc.

9. Don't let the Mass be the only time they pray or that they see you pray. Minimally, there should be family prayer together each day at meal times and before bed. Optimally, also in the morning and at other appropriate times.
10. Children should learn the "standard" prayers, e.g. Sign of the Cross, Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be, Prayer to Guardian Angel, etc. Good also to have some brief extemporaneous prayer (prayers of thanksgiving are good here) and some singing. "Lex orandi, Lex credendi – Roughly translated, "how we pray is how we believe."
11. When your children are old enough to begin to understand, go over the Mass readings before Sunday Mass and talk to them about the main points contained in the readings. This will help the children to pay attention better during Mass and it will help the parents, too.
12. Patience is crucial. Always a balance between an appropriate firmness so that the children learn boundaries and proper behavior, but also a certain and appropriate "light-heartedness." Remember we want them to learn their Faith, but also to love it. If they love it, they are more likely to want to learn more about it and practice it for the "long-haul" and vice versa.
13. Don't speak disrespectfully of the Mass, the Church, the clergy, the homily, etc. This sets a bad example for the children and can eventually, in later years, lead to them to be cynical about the Faith.
14. If the priest is greeting the people after Mass, bring the children to say hello to him.
15. Try to attend Mass at the time that is best for the children. This will also make things easier on you and everyone will be happier.
16. Try to make the entirety of the Lord's Day a day of prayer to and worship of God, a family time, and, as much as possible, a peaceful, unhurried time.
17. Persevere, Persevere, Persevere, Persevere, Persevere, Persevere, Persevere!!!

BENEFITS OF BRINGING CHILDREN TO MASS

- The grace being poured out
- Helps to develop a love and fascination for sacred things
- When brought to Mass frequently, children more quickly learn the language of the Faith
- Behavior at Mass gets better when they are taken from an early age and become used to going
- The Faith becomes *interwoven into the "fabric" of their lives*
- A love for and hungering after the Real Presence of Jesus in the Holy Eucharist

NOTABLE QUOTABLES ON MARRIAGE & FAMILY LIFE

- *Then God said: "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and the cattle, and over all the wild animals and all the creatures that crawl on the ground."*

God created man in his image, In the divine image he created him; male and female he created them.

God blessed them, saying: "Be fertile and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it. Have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and all the living things that move on the earth."

- Genesis 1: 26 –28

- *The Lord God said: "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a suitable partner for him." So the Lord God formed out of the ground various wild animals and various birds of the air, and he brought them to the man to see what he would call them; whatever the man called each of them would be its name. The man gave names to all the cattle, all the birds of the air, and all the wild animals; but none proved to be the suitable partner for the man.*

So the Lord God cast a deep sleep on the man, and while he was asleep, he took out one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. The Lord God then built up into a woman the rib that he had taken from the man. When he brought her to the man, the man said:

*"This one, at last, is bone of my bones
and flesh of my flesh;
This one shall be called 'woman,'
For out of 'her man' this one has been
Taken."*

That is why a man leaves his father and mother and clings to his wife, and the two of them become one body.

-Genesis 2: 18-25

- *Children too are a gift from the Lord, the fruit of the womb, a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the children born in one's youth. Blessed are they whose quivers are full. They will never be shamed contending with foes at the gate.*

-Psalm 127: 3-5

- *Whoever denigrates marriage also diminishes the glory of virginity. Whoever praises it makes virginity more admirable and resplendent. What appears good only in comparison with evil would not be truly good. The most excellent good is something even better than what is admitted to be good.*

-St. John Chrysostom, De virg. 10, 1: PG 48, 540

- *How can I ever express the happiness of a marriage joined by the Church, strengthened by an offering, sealed by a blessing, announced by angels, and ratified by the Father? . . . How wonderful the bond between two believers, now one in hope, one in desire, one in discipline, one in the same service! They are both children of one Father and servants of the same Master, undivided in spirit and flesh, truly two in one flesh. Where the flesh is one, one also is the spirit.*

-Tertullian, Ad uxorem. 2, 8, 6-7: PL 1, 1412-1413

- Children are the supreme gift of marriage and contribute greatly to the good of the parents themselves. God himself said: "It is not good that man should be alone," and "from the beginning [he] made them male and female", wishing to associate them in a special way in his own creative work, God blessed man and woman with the words: "Be fruitful and multiply." Hence, true married love and the whole structure of family life which results from it, without diminishment of the other ends of marriage, are directed to disposing the spouses to cooperate valiantly with the love of the Creator and Savior, who through them will increase and enrich his family from day to day.

-Vatican II Constitution Gaudium et spes (The Church in the Modern World 48)

- The family may be regarded as the cradle of civil society, and it is in great measure within the circle of family life that the destiny of states is fostered.

-Pope Leo XIII: Sapientiae Christianae

- The family is more sacred than the state, and men are begotten not for the earth and for time, but for heaven and eternity.

-Pope Pius XI: Castii connubi

- Conjugal love involves a totality, in which all the elements of the person enter – appeal of the body and instinct, power of feeling and affectivity, aspiration of the spirit and of will. It aims at a deeply personal unity, a unity that, beyond union in one flesh, leads to forming one heart and soul; it demands indissolubility and faithfulness in definitive mutual giving; and it is open to fertility. In a word it is a question of the normal characteristics of all natural conjugal love, but with a new significance which not only purifies and strengthens them, but raises them to the extent of making them the expression of specifically Christian values."

-Pope John Paul II – Familiaris Consortio 13

St. Joseph, Patron Saint of Families

St. Joseph is considered by many theologians to be the second greatest human person who has ever lived, after the Blessed Virgin Mary. (Jesus is, of course, a Divine Person, Who has both the Divine Nature and a human nature). What we know of St. Joseph from the Bible is found almost exclusively in Matthew 1 and in Luke 1 and 2. He was a carpenter by trade and is referred to in Scripture as "a righteous man" – Mt. 1:19. He is an exemplar of justice, obedience, purity, faithfulness, and charity. Joseph is the patron saint of husbands, fathers, virgins, family life, and happy death. In the 19th century, Blessed Pope Pius IX named him Patron of the Universal Church. His name was included in the Roman Canon by Blessed Pope John XXIII. The litany of St. Joseph is one of only five litanies that are approved by the Holy See for use in public worship.

St. Joseph, Pray for Us!

For the Litany of St. Joseph, click below:

<http://www.ewtn.com/Devotionals/Litanies/joseph.htm>

For Pope John Paul II's Apostolic Exhortation On the Person and Mission of St. Joseph (*Redemptoris Custos*), click below:

http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_jp-ii_exh_15081989_redemptoris-custos_en.html

The Catechism on Christian Marriage, Openness to Fertility, and the Protection of the Unborn

The Goods and Requirements of Conjugal Love

1643 "Conjugal love involves a totality, in which all the elements of the person enter - appeal of the body and instinct, power of feeling and affectivity, aspiration of the spirit and of will. It aims at a deeply personal unity, a unity that, beyond union in one flesh, leads to forming one heart and soul; it demands indissolubility and faithfulness in definitive mutual giving; and it is open to fertility. In a word it is a question of the normal characteristics of all natural conjugal love, but with a new significance which not only purifies and strengthens them, but raises them to the extent of making them the expression of specifically Christian values."¹⁵⁰

The unity and indissolubility of marriage

1644 The love of the spouses requires, of its very nature, the unity and indissolubility of the spouses' community of persons, which embraces their entire life: "so they are no longer two, but one flesh."¹⁵¹ They "are called to grow continually in their communion through day-to-day fidelity to their marriage promise of total mutual self-giving."¹⁵² This human communion is confirmed, purified, and completed by communion in Jesus Christ, given through the sacrament of Matrimony. It is deepened by lives of the common faith and by the Eucharist received together.

1645 "The unity of marriage, distinctly recognized by our Lord, is made clear in the equal personal dignity which must be accorded to man and wife in mutual and unreserved affection."¹⁵³ Polygamy is contrary to conjugal love which is undivided and exclusive.¹⁵⁴

The fidelity of conjugal love

1646 By its very nature conjugal love requires the inviolable fidelity of the spouses. This is the consequence of the gift of themselves which they make to each other. Love seeks to be definitive; it cannot be an arrangement "until further notice." the "intimate union of marriage, as a mutual giving of two persons, and the good of the children, demand total fidelity from the spouses and require an unbreakable union between them."¹⁵⁵

1647 The deepest reason is found in the fidelity of God to his covenant, in that of Christ to his Church. Through the sacrament of Matrimony the spouses are enabled to represent this

fidelity and witness to it. Through the sacrament, the indissolubility of marriage receives a new and deeper meaning.

1648 It can seem difficult, even impossible, to bind oneself for life to another human being. This makes it all the more important to proclaim the Good News that God loves us with a definitive and irrevocable love, that married couples share in this love, that it supports and sustains them, and that by their own faithfulness they can be witnesses to God's faithful love. Spouses who with God's grace give this witness, often in very difficult conditions, deserve the gratitude and support of the ecclesial community.¹⁵⁶

1649 Yet there are some situations in which living together becomes practically impossible for a variety of reasons. In such cases the Church permits the physical separation of the couple and their living apart. The spouses do not cease to be husband and wife before God and so are not free to contract a new union. In this difficult situation, the best solution would be, if possible, reconciliation. The Christian community is called to help these persons live out their situation in a Christian manner and in fidelity to their marriage bond which remains indissoluble.¹⁵⁷

1650 Today there are numerous Catholics in many countries who have recourse to civil divorce and contract new civil unions. In fidelity to the words of Jesus Christ - "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another, commits adultery against her; and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery"¹⁵⁸ The Church maintains that a new union cannot be recognized as valid, if the first marriage was. If the divorced are remarried civilly, they find themselves in a situation that objectively contravenes God's law. Consequently, they cannot receive Eucharistic communion as long as this situation persists. For the same reason, they cannot exercise certain ecclesial responsibilities. Reconciliation through the sacrament of Penance can be granted only to those who have repented for having violated the sign of the covenant and of fidelity to Christ, and who are committed to living in complete continence.

1651 Toward Christians who live in this situation, and who often keep the faith and desire to bring up their children in a Christian manner, priests and the whole community must manifest an attentive solicitude, so that they do not consider themselves separated from the Church, in whose life they can and must participate as baptized persons:

They should be encouraged to listen to the Word of God, to attend the Sacrifice of the Mass, to persevere in prayer, to contribute to works of charity and to community efforts for justice, to bring up their children in the Christian faith, to cultivate the spirit and practice of penance and thus implore, day by day, God's grace.¹⁵⁹

The openness to fertility

1652 "By its very nature the institution of marriage and married love is ordered to the procreation and education of the offspring and it is in them that it finds its crowning glory."¹⁶⁰

Children are the supreme gift of marriage and contribute greatly to the good of the parents themselves. God himself said: "It is not good that man should be alone," and "from the beginning (he) made them male and female"; wishing to associate them in a special way in his own creative work, God blessed man and woman with the words: "Be fruitful and multiply." Hence, true married love and the whole structure of family life which results from it, without diminishment of the other ends of marriage, are directed to disposing the spouses to cooperate valiantly with the love of the Creator and Savior, who through them will increase and enrich his family from day to day.¹⁶¹

1653 The fruitfulness of conjugal love extends to the fruits of the moral, spiritual, and supernatural life that parents hand on to their children by education. Parents are the principal and first educators of their children.¹⁶² In this sense the fundamental task of marriage and family is to be at the service of life.¹⁶³

1654 Spouses to whom God has not granted children can nevertheless have a conjugal life full of meaning, in both human and Christian terms. Their marriage can radiate a fruitfulness of charity, of hospitality, and of sacrifice.

[150](#) FC 13.

[151](#) ___ Mt 19:6; cf. ___ Gen 2:24.

[152](#) FC 19.

[153](#) GS 49 # 2.

[154](#) Cf. FC 19.

[155](#) GS 48 # 1.

[156](#) Cf. FC 20.

[157](#) Cf. FC 83; ___ CIC, cann. 1151-1155.

[158](#) ___ Mk 10:11-12.

[159](#) FC 84.

[160](#) GS 48 # 1; 50.

[161](#) GS 50 # 1; cf. ___ Gen 2:18; ___ Mt 19:4; ___ Gen 1:28.

[162](#) Cf. GE 3.

[163](#) Cf. FC 28.

For more information on the Sacrament of Matrimony, including: *Marriage in God's Plan*, the *Celebration of Marriage*, *Matrimonial Consent*, the *Goods and Requirements of*

Conjugal Love, and the *Domestic Church*, click here:
http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/_P50.HTM

For information on the 6th commandment, including: *Male and Female He Created Them*, the *Vocation to Chastity*, the *Love of Husband and Wife*, and *Offenses Against the Dignity of Marriage*, click here: http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/_P83.HTM

For information on the 5th commandment, including: *Respect for Human Life*, *Respect for the Dignity of Persons*, and *Safeguarding Peace*, click here:
http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/_P83.HTM

To see Pope John Paul II's Apostolic Exhortation, *Familiaris Consortio*, click here:
http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_jp-ii_exh_19811122_familiaris-consortio_en.html

To see Pope Paul VI's Encyclical *Humanae Vitae* (*On Human Life*), click here:
http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/paul_vi/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-vi_enc_25071968_humanae-vitae_en.html

THE IMMACULATE, EVER VIRGIN MOTHER OF GOD



THE HOLY ROSARY

KEY CATECHETICAL POINTS TO BE MADE WHEN TEACHING ABOUT THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

This section was kindly contributed by Father William J. Waltersheid, Pastor of St. Patrick Parish, Carlisle.

- Teach that Mary is the Mother of God. (Since Jesus is God Incarnate, and Mary is His Mother, then it naturally follows that Mary is the Mother of God).
- Teach that Mary is perpetually a virgin. (She is virgin before, during, and after the birth of Jesus).
- Teach that from the first moment of her conception, Mary was preserved from sin.
- Teach that Mary was assumed body and soul into heaven when the course of her earthly life was completed.
- Teach that Mary's role in the Church is inseparable from her union with Christ and flows directly from it.
- Teach that Mary is our Mother in the order of grace.
- Teach that Mary is Queen in the Kingdom of God.

- Teach that because of her maternal charity, Mary is invoked under many titles by the Church including Advocate, Helper, Benefactress, and Mediatrix - cf. Vatican II's Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (Lumen Gentium), Chapter 8, #62.

Note – For those teaching about Our Lady, it will be an invaluable help to read the relevant sections from the Catechism of the Catholic Church, as well as Lumen Gentium Chapter 8.

“With the Rosary, the Christian people sits at the school of Mary and is led to contemplate the beauty of the face of Christ and to experience the depths of his love. Through the Rosary, the faithful receive abundant grace, as though from the very hands of the Mother of the Redeemer.”

Pope John Paul II: Rosarium Virginis Mariae, #1

POSSIBLE ROSARY INTENTIONS

I have included here some possible rosary intentions for the various mysteries of the Rosary, in the hope that this might be helpful. Some of these suggested intentions are traditional ones, which I have seen in various literature, others are intentions which are fruits or virtues which seem evident to me based on the Scripture passages that I have highlighted. There are repeat intentions for a number of mysteries. Prior to reading through these intentions, you may find it helpful to read the listed Scripture passages. Many of these events / mysteries can be also be found in other Gospel accounts than those here listed, e.g. the Baptism of Jesus, the Agony in the Garden, etc. **Note:** While the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary and her Coronation are not explicitly written in Scripture, those passages which are listed beside these passages are commonly viewed as implicit references to these great mysteries. In 1950, Pope Pius XII wrote in an ex Cathedra statement, “*Finally the Immaculate Virgin, preserved free from all stain of original sin, when the course of her earthly life was finished, was taken up body and soul into heavenly glory, and exalted by the Lord as Queen over all things, so that she might be the more fully conformed to her Son, the Lord of lords and conqueror of sin and death.*” (Munificentissimus Deus)

JOYFUL MYSTERIES- Said on Mondays and Saturdays

1. **The Annunciation** (Luke 1: 26-38) - For the grace of humility; For the grace of obedience to the will of God; For unwed mothers and their children; For purity; For holy resignation to the will of God
2. **The Visitation** (Luke 1: 39-45) – For charity toward my neighbor; For my relatives; For openness to the work of the Holy Spirit; For doing God’s will without unnecessary delay; For the health of children in the womb; For true devotion to Mary, For an increase of the gift of Fear of the Lord; For poverty in spirit
3. **The Nativity** (Luke 2: 1-14) – For the poor; For the homeless and those with inadequate housing; For those who lack sufficient clothing; For an end to abortion; For those who have



been displaced from their homeland; For greater trust in God; For the praise of God; For humility

4. **The Presentation** (Luke 2: 22-38) – For an increase in the virtue of obedience; For purity; For the grace to give what we can; For the grace to speak the truth; For interior peace; that we may see the Lord’s salvation; for willingness to be signs of contradiction to the culture of death; for a willingness to open our hearts to Mary; for a spirit of prayer and fasting; for a spirit of thanksgiving toward God
5. **Finding of the Child Jesus in the Temple** (Luke 2: 41-52) – For the safe return of children who have been lost or abducted; to listen honestly and openly to the guidance of the Pastors of the Church; to have a greater knowledge and understanding of Jesus; for freedom from anxiety; that we will be busy about the Lord’s business; for reverence for the House of God; for a spirit of obedience of children toward their parents and of parents toward the proper authorities; for a greater interior life; for an increase in the gift of wisdom

LUMINOUS MYSTERIES- Said on Thursdays

1. **Baptism of Jesus** (Matthew 3:13-17) – For a fuller flowering of the graces we received in Baptism; for love and devotion to God the Father; for openness to the Holy Spirit; for a greater appreciation of the mystery of the Blessed Trinity
2. **Wedding at Cana** (John 2:1-12) - That we will allow Mary to lead us to Jesus; For holy marriages; that young people will listen to Jesus and do whatever He tells them; that young people will choose the vocation that God wants them to choose; that we will help those who are in difficult situations
3. **Proclamation of the Kingdom of God and the Call to Conversion** (Mark 1:14-15) – For true repentance for our sins; for trust in God; to keep the 10 commandments; to live out the Beatitudes; for forgiveness of enemies; for faithful marriages; for a true spirit of prayer; that we never condemn another; to follow the Golden Rule; that we do the will of the Father
4. **Transfiguration** (Matthew 17: 1-8) - That we will listen to Jesus; that we will not be afraid; that one day we will reign with Christ in glory; that our lives will please our Father in heaven
5. **Institution of the Eucharist** (Luke 22: 14-20)- For a greater knowledge, love, and devotion to Jesus in the Most Blessed Sacrament; for a great increase of priests; for the holiness of priests; for more reverence at Holy Mass

SORROWFUL MYSTERIES- Said on Tuesdays and Fridays

1. **The Agony in the Garden** (Luke 22: 39-46) – for true contrition for our sins; for steadfast friends; that we will pray with vigilance; for resignation to the will of the Father and perfect trust in Him as our loving Father; that we will not be tested beyond our strength; that God’s perfect will be accomplished in us; for protection from those who would betray us; for devotion to our Guardian Angel
2. **The Scourging at the Pillar** (John 19:1) – For perseverance in time of trial; for the virtue of purity

3. **Crowning with Thorns-** (John 19: 2-3) For moral courage; that our intellect will be well formed in the truth; that we will recognize and honor Jesus as King of kings and Lord of lords; for the healing of those who have been abused; for peace
4. **Carrying of the Cross** (Luke 23: 26-32)- For patience; that God will send us people to console us in our sufferings and that we will be a comfort to others in theirs; for those who are mocked; that we will never succumb to a “mob mentality”; that the image of Jesus will be fixed in our hearts; that we will go to Confession if we fall into sin; that we will not fall victim to despair; for the healing of those who have been victims of violent crime
5. **The Crucifixion-** (23: 33-49) For final perseverance; for the salvation of all people; for forgiveness of our enemies; that we will accept Mary as our mother; that we will “thirst for souls”; that we will recognize that Jesus is the Son of God; that our culture will be consistently pro-life by enacting laws against abortion, euthanasia, and the application of capital punishment; that we will die to evil habits; that at the moment of death, we will trustingly commend our souls to the Father, through Jesus; for Divine Mercy for the whole world.

GLORIOUS MYSTERIES- Said on Sundays and Wednesdays

1. **The Resurrection** (Matthew 28: 1-10) For an increase in the virtue of faith; for greater belief in the Resurrection of the Body; that we will proclaim the good news of the Risen Lord
2. **The Ascension-** (Matthew 28: 16-20 and Acts 1: 6-12) For an increase in the virtue of hope; that missionaries will be fruitful evangelizers of the Catholic Faith throughout the world; that the New Evangelization bears tremendous fruit; that all who teach the Faith do so faithfully and with confidence in the Lord Jesus;
3. **Descent of the Holy Spirit-** (Acts 2) For an increase in the virtue of charity; for the conversion of sinners and of the lukewarm; that we will realize that The Holy Spirit is always with His Church; that we will prepare ourselves for the day when Jesus will come again
4. **The Assumption** (Revelation 11: 19 – 12: 1) For the grace of a happy death; that one day, our bodies like Mary’s, will be raised up in glory
5. **The Coronation-** (Revelation 12: 1) That we will recognize and honor Mary’s Queenship, that we will be devoted and faithful children of Mary

OUR LADY’S SCAPULAR

Many of you may wear the Brown Scapular as a sign of your devotion to our Blessed Mother. You may also have fond memories of having received your first Scapular as a child, perhaps at the time of your First Holy Communion.

The traditional origin of the Scapular dates back to A.D.1251 when St. Simon Stock, who was the general superior of the Carmelite Order, received the Scapular from the Mother of God during an apparition. She promised her special help in life and in death to those who would, with devotion, wear the Scapular.

On July 16, 2003, at the liturgical memorial of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, Pope John Paul II, speaking at his summer residence in Castel Gandolfo, Italy said:

“I hope the scapular will be for everyone, especially the faithful who wear it, a help and a defense in times of danger, a seal of peace and a sign of Mary’s care.”

It is important that those who wear the scapular be invested in it. It is a beautiful sign of devotion to Mary and a topic worthy of catechesis.

Finally, it is important to note that once a person is invested in the Brown Scapular and receives the concomitant blessing, when he/she gets scapulars later, they do not need to be blessed. That is, the first blessing that takes place with the investiture of the Scapular, in effect, provides the blessing for all future brown scapulars.

TOTAL CONSECRATION TO JESUS THROUGH MARY

A practice to be highly recommended is the Total Consecration to Jesus through Mary according to St. Louis Marie de Montfort. This exercise, which lasts 33 days (34 if one counts the actual day of consecration) and generally is concluded on a Marian feast day, has proven for many to be most beneficial to their spiritual lives. To find books which will lead you through the consecration, see your local Catholic bookstore.

Regarding the consecration, Pope John Paul II wrote the following in his encyclical Mother of the Redeemer (Redemptoris Mater):

“...Marian spirituality, like its corresponding devotion, finds a very rich source in the historical experience of individuals and of the various Christian communities present among the different peoples and nations of the world. In this regard, I would like to recall, among the many witnesses and teachers of this spirituality, the figure of Saint Louis Marie Grignon de Montfort, who proposes consecration to Christ through the hands of Mary, as an effective means for Christians to live faithfully their baptismal commitments. I am pleased to note that in our own time, too, new manifestations of this spirituality and devotion are not lacking.” (RM #48)

A priest friend of mine, who often speaks about this consecration, relates that it was recommended to him by a nun when he was a young priest and was going through a particularly difficult assignment while teaching at something akin to a reform school for teenage girls. He credits this total consecration for helping him through that difficult time and for helping him in many situations throughout his years as a priest.

On a personal note, my wife Eva and I have made this consecration several times together, and we both believe that it has borne fruit in our lives.

CATECHETICAL TIP

It is important to remember that the primary reason that it is important to get close to Mary is that she helps us greatly in getting close to Jesus. Also, the better we understand Mary, the better we will understand her Son. This ties into the catechetical tip which I have heard on several occasions. The tip is: **when catechists speak / teach about the Blessed Mother, they should frequently use the term Mother of God, because that title, defined by the Church at the Ecumenical Council of Ephesus in A.D. 431, tells us so much about who Jesus is, and, by extension, who we, the baptized, are!**

SAINTS / COMMUNION OF SAINTS

HEROES AND FRIENDS

In an age in which it can seem as though there is a dearth of true role models, it is, perhaps, important to point out that the Church has many role models whom she holds up as being most worthy of emulation. They are the saints! It is important to teach children young and old, early and often, about the powerhouse of spiritual treasure found in these flesh and blood models of Christian virtue.

There are several extremes to be avoided when teaching the saints:

One extreme is to present their lives in such a way in which the primary focus is on mystical phenomena, which may or may not have taken place in their lives. For example, there are many accounts regarding some saints, which have more to do with popular legend than with fact. This can make one's teaching about this or that saint appear to lack credibility, and beyond that, it can cause a student to not look at a saint as a model, because the saint may seem to be too "out there." We must keep in mind that the primary criteria for sainthood is the practice of virtue to a heroic degree. The practice of virtue usually takes place through living out the ordinary circumstances of life in a holy way.

Another extreme would be to present the saint in a less-than-flattering light, perhaps focusing too much on some weakness that a saint is purported to have had. Several saints that come to mind here are St. Mary Magdalene, St. Paul, and St. Augustine. Sometimes these saints are presented in a somewhat facile way in which the sins of their youth and young adulthood are stressed beyond the virtue that they exemplified once they came to conversion. I think that part of the problem here is the mistaken idea that by showing or teaching in-depth about a person's sinfulness, we are presenting them in a "more human" light. Actually, far from making us more human, sin deforms our humanity. That is, it makes us less human. "How is this?", you might ask, since "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." The answer is that God did not make human beings to sin. In fact, Jesus bids us "Be perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect." So, contrary to

popular opinion, the more virtuous we become, the more human we are acting, because it is by acting virtuously that we are being who we were created to be. This is why it is the sinless Mary who is the model human person. Nobody, not one of us, has to sin. While we always want to emphasize God's Divine Mercy if and when we do sin, we also want to help students to realize that we ought not have a defeatist mentality and just give in to sin. God gives us the grace and freedom that we need to do good and avoid evil. That said, it also needs to be stressed that while His grace makes doing the good possible, it does not make it easy. The key in teaching well about the saints, is to take a balanced approach.

Earlier on, I mentioned that we should not overdo it on teaching about the mystical phenomena in the lives of the saints. However, we should not be afraid to teach about miracles and mystical experiences of saints where those happenings are well-grounded in fact and are not merely "urban myth." For instance, in Sacred Scripture itself we have examples of miraculous healings taking place through the hands of the apostles. We want our students to know and believe that God can and does work miracles and He often, perhaps even usually, does this through the instrumentality of human persons. He does this with the primary end in mind of converting, healing, and saving souls.

Finally, our saints are greatly varied in terms of their physical and spiritual attributes and characteristics. They had different and various charisms. Some are ancient, some are modern. Some are men, some are women. Some were rich, some were poor. Some were active in the world, some were hermits. Some are priests and/ or religious, some are laymen and women, and on and on. They have come in all ages, shapes, sizes, temperaments, etc. However, they all had certain things in common. They all practiced virtue to an heroic degree, they were unswerving in their fidelity to the Catholic Church and all of her teachings, they all had a great love of Holy Mass and Jesus in the Holy Eucharist, they loved the Mother of God, they loved God with all their heart, mind, soul, and strength, and they loved their neighbor as themselves.

WHAT A WITNESS!

**Blessed Jose Luis Sanchez del Rio,
Child-martyr**

Born: 28 March 1913
Parents: Macario Sanchez and Maria del Rio
Died: 10 February 1928, at the age of 14 years, 10 months, 13 days
Beatified: 20 November 2005, Solemnity of Christ the King

During the persecution of the Catholic Church by the Mexican government, Jose Luis was arrested on 10 February 1928, because of his association with a Catholic Action group known as "Los Cristeros". He was ordered to denounce his Catholic faith. Instead, he shouted, "Long live Christ the King and the Virgin of Guadalupe!" The soles of his feet were sliced with knives. He was told that his life would be spared if he shouted, "Death to Jesus Christ". He refused. Despite his bleeding feet, he was forced to march to a cemetery

where a grave had been prepared for him. All along the way, he shouted, “Long live Christ the King and the Virgin of Guadalupe!” He was made to stand by the grave while he was shot in the head. All of this has been testified to by eyewitnesses, at least one of whom is still living. Tell your students about this boy. Tell them to ask Blessed Jose Luis to pray for them for courage, strength, a fervent love of Christ Jesus and the Holy Mother.

St. Joseph, Patron Saint of Families

St. Joseph is considered by many theologians to be the second greatest human person who has ever lived, after the Blessed Virgin Mary. (Jesus is, of course, a Divine Person, Who has both the Divine Nature and a human nature). What we know of St. Joseph from the Bible is found almost exclusively in Matthew 1 and in Luke 1 and 2. He was a carpenter by trade and is referred to in Scripture as “a righteous man” – Mt. 1:19. He is an exemplar of justice, obedience, purity, faithfulness, and charity. Joseph is the patron saint of husbands, fathers, virgins, family life, and happy death. In the 19th century, Blessed Pope Pius IX named him Patron of the Universal Church. His name was included in the Roman Canon by Blessed Pope John XXIII. The litany of St. Joseph is one of only five litanies that are approved by the Holy See for use in public worship.
St. Joseph, Pray for Us!

For the Litany of St. Joseph, click below:

<http://www.ewtn.com/Devotionals/Litanies/joseph.htm>

For Pope John Paul II’s Apostolic Exhortation On the Person and Mission of St. Joseph (*Redemptoris Custos*), click below:

http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_jp-ii_exh_15081989_redemptoris-custos_en.html

MARRIAGE & FAMILY

NOTABLE QUOTABLES ON MARRIAGE & FAMILY LIFE

- Then God said: “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and the cattle, and over all the wild animals and all the creatures that crawl on the ground.”

God created man in his image, In the divine image he created him; male and female he created them.

God blessed them, saying: “Be fertile and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it. Have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and all the living things that move on the earth.”

- Genesis 1: 26 –28

- The Lord God said: “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a suitable partner for him.” So the Lord God formed out of the ground various wild animals and various birds of the air, and he brought them to the man to see what he would call them; whatever the man called each of them would be its name. The man gave names to all the

cattle, all the birds of the air, and all the wild animals; but none proved to be the suitable partner for the man.

So the Lord God cast a deep sleep on the man, and while he was asleep, he took out one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. The Lord God then built up into a woman the rib that he had taken from the man. When he brought her to the man, the man said:

*“This one, at last, is bone of my bones
and flesh of my flesh;
This one shall be called ‘woman,’
For out of ‘her man’ this one has been
Taken.”*

That is why a man leaves his father and mother and clings to his wife, and the two of them become one body.

-Genesis 2: 18-25

- Children too are a gift from the Lord, the fruit of the womb, a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the children born in one’s youth. Blessed are they whose quivers are full. They will never be shamed contending with foes at the gate.

-Psalm 127: 3-5

- Whoever denigrates marriage also diminishes the glory of virginity. Whoever praises it makes virginity more admirable and resplendent. What appears good only in comparison with evil would not be truly good. The most excellent good is something even better than what is admitted to be good.

-St. John Chrysostom, De virg. 10, 1: PG 48, 540

- How can I ever express the happiness of a marriage joined by the Church, strengthened by an offering, sealed by a blessing, announced by angels, and ratified by the Father? . . . How wonderful the bond between two believers, now one in hope, one in desire, one in discipline, one in the same service! They are both children of one Father and servants of the same Master, undivided in spirit and flesh, truly two in one flesh. Where the flesh is one, one also is the spirit.

-Tertullian, Ad uxorem. 2, 8, 6-7: PL 1, 1412-1413

- Children are the supreme gift of marriage and contribute greatly to the good of the parents themselves. God himself said: “It is not good that man should be alone,” and “from the beginning [he] made them male and female”, wishing to associate them in a special way in his own creative work, God blessed man and woman with the words: “Be fruitful and multiply.” Hence, true married love and the whole structure of family life which results from it, without diminishment of the other ends of marriage, are directed to disposing the spouses to cooperate valiantly with the love of the Creator and Savior, who through them will increase and enrich his family from day to day.

-Vatican II Constitution Gaudium et spes (The Church in the Modern World 48)

- The family may be regarded as the cradle of civil society, and it is in great measure within the circle of family life that the destiny of states is fostered.

-Pope Leo XIII: Sapientiae Christianae

- The family is more sacred than the state, and men are begotten not for the earth and for time, but for heaven and eternity.

-Pope Pius XI: *Castii connubi*

- Conjugal love involves a totality, in which all the elements of the person enter – appeal of the body and instinct, power of feeling and affectivity, aspiration of the spirit and of will. It aims at a deeply personal unity, a unity that, beyond union in one flesh, leads to forming one heart and soul; it demands indissolubility and faithfulness in definitive mutual giving; and it is open to fertility. In a word it is a question of the normal characteristics of all natural conjugal love, but with a new significance which not only purifies and strengthens them, but raises them to the extent of making them the expression of specifically Christian values.”

-Pope John Paul II – *Familiaris Consortio* 13

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The Catechism on Christian Marriage, Openness to Fertility, and the Protection of the Unborn

The Goods and Requirements of Conjugal Love

1643 "Conjugal love involves a totality, in which all the elements of the person enter - appeal of the body and instinct, power of feeling and affectivity, aspiration of the spirit and of will. It aims at a deeply personal unity, a unity that, beyond union in one flesh, leads to forming one heart and soul; it demands indissolubility and faithfulness in definitive mutual

giving; and it is open to fertility. In a word it is a question of the normal characteristics of all natural conjugal love, but with a new significance which not only purifies and strengthens them, but raises them to the extent of making them the expression of specifically Christian values."¹⁵⁰

The unity and indissolubility of marriage

1644 The love of the spouses requires, of its very nature, the unity and indissolubility of the spouses' community of persons, which embraces their entire life: "so they are no longer two, but one flesh."¹⁵¹ They "are called to grow continually in their communion through day-to-day fidelity to their marriage promise of total mutual self-giving."¹⁵² This human communion is confirmed, purified, and completed by communion in Jesus Christ, given through the sacrament of Matrimony. It is deepened by lives of the common faith and by the Eucharist received together.

1645 "The unity of marriage, distinctly recognized by our Lord, is made clear in the equal personal dignity which must be accorded to man and wife in mutual and unreserved affection."¹⁵³ Polygamy is contrary to conjugal love which is undivided and exclusive.¹⁵⁴

The fidelity of conjugal love

1646 By its very nature conjugal love requires the inviolable fidelity of the spouses. This is the consequence of the gift of themselves which they make to each other. Love seeks to be definitive; it cannot be an arrangement "until further notice." the "intimate union of marriage, as a mutual giving of two persons, and the good of the children, demand total fidelity from the spouses and require an unbreakable union between them."¹⁵⁵

1647 The deepest reason is found in the fidelity of God to his covenant, in that of Christ to his Church. Through the sacrament of Matrimony the spouses are enabled to represent this fidelity and witness to it. Through the sacrament, the indissolubility of marriage receives a new and deeper meaning.

1648 It can seem difficult, even impossible, to bind oneself for life to another human being. This makes it all the more important to proclaim the Good News that God loves us with a definitive and irrevocable love, that married couples share in this love, that it supports and sustains them, and that by their own faithfulness they can be witnesses to God's faithful love. Spouses who with God's grace give this witness, often in very difficult conditions, deserve the gratitude and support of the ecclesial community.¹⁵⁶

1649 Yet there are some situations in which living together becomes practically impossible for a variety of reasons. In such cases the Church permits the physical separation of the couple and their living apart. the spouses do not cease to be husband and wife before God and so are not free to contract a new union. In this difficult situation, the best solution would be, if possible, reconciliation. the Christian community is called to help these persons live out their situation in a Christian manner and in fidelity to their marriage bond which remains indissoluble.¹⁵⁷

1650 Today there are numerous Catholics in many countries who have recourse to civil divorce and contract new civil unions. In fidelity to the words of Jesus Christ - "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another, commits adultery against her; and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery"¹⁵⁸ The Church maintains that a new union cannot be recognized as valid, if the first marriage was. If the divorced are remarried civilly, they find themselves in a situation that objectively contravenes God's law. Consequently, they cannot receive Eucharistic communion as long as this situation persists. For the same reason, they cannot exercise certain ecclesial responsibilities. Reconciliation through the sacrament of Penance can be granted only to those who have repented for having violated the sign of the covenant and of fidelity to Christ, and who are committed to living in complete continence.

1651 Toward Christians who live in this situation, and who often keep the faith and desire to bring up their children in a Christian manner, priests and the whole community must manifest an attentive solicitude, so that they do not consider themselves separated from the Church, in whose life they can and must participate as baptized persons:

They should be encouraged to listen to the Word of God, to attend the Sacrifice of the Mass, to persevere in prayer, to contribute to works of charity and to community efforts for justice, to bring up their children in the Christian faith, to cultivate the spirit and practice of penance and thus implore, day by day, God's grace.¹⁵⁹

The openness to fertility

1652 "By its very nature the institution of marriage and married love is ordered to the procreation and education of the offspring and it is in them that it finds its crowning glory."¹⁶⁰

Children are the supreme gift of marriage and contribute greatly to the good of the parents themselves. God himself said: "It is not good that man should be alone," and "from the beginning (he) made them male and female"; wishing to associate them in a special way in his own creative work, God blessed man and woman with the words: "Be fruitful and multiply." Hence, true married love and the whole structure of family life which results from it, without diminishment of the other ends of marriage, are directed to disposing the spouses to cooperate valiantly with the love of the Creator and Savior, who through them will increase and enrich his family from day to day.¹⁶¹

1653 The fruitfulness of conjugal love extends to the fruits of the moral, spiritual, and supernatural life that parents hand on to their children by education. Parents are the principal and first educators of their children.¹⁶² In this sense the fundamental task of marriage and family is to be at the service of life.¹⁶³

1654 Spouses to whom God has not granted children can nevertheless have a conjugal life full of meaning, in both human and Christian terms. Their marriage can radiate a fruitfulness of charity, of hospitality, and of sacrifice.

[150](#) FC 13.

[151](#) — Mt 19:6; cf. — Gen 2:24.

[152](#) FC 19.

[153](#) GS 49 # 2.

[154](#) Cf. FC 19.

[155](#) GS 48 # 1.

[156](#) Cf. FC 20.

[157](#) Cf. FC 83; — CIC, cann. 1151-1155.

[158](#) — Mk 10:11-12.

[159](#) FC 84.

[160](#) GS 48 # 1; 50.

[161](#) GS 50 # 1; cf. — Gen 2:18; — Mt 19:4; — Gen 1:28.

[162](#) Cf. GE 3.

[163](#) Cf. FC 28.

For more information on the Sacrament of Matrimony, including: *Marriage in God's Plan*, the *Celebration of Marriage*, *Matrimonial Consent*, the *Goods and Requirements of Conjugal Love*, and the *Domestic Church*, click here:

http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/_P50.HTM

For information on the 6th commandment, including: *Male and Female He Created Them*, the *Vocation to Chastity*, the *Love of Husband and Wife*, and *Offenses Against the Dignity of Marriage*, click here: http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/_P83.HTM

For information on the 5th commandment, including: *Respect for Human Life*, *Respect for the Dignity of Persons*, and *Safeguarding Peace*, click here:

http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/_P83.HTM

To see Pope John Paul II's Apostolic Exhortation, *Familiaris Consortio*, click here:

http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_jp-ii_exh_19811122_familiaris-consortio_en.html

To see Pope Paul VI's Encyclical *Humanae Vitae* (*On Human Life*), click here:
http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/paul_vi/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-vi_enc_25071968_humanae-vitae_en.html

