

CATHOLIC FAQS

Many of us have questions about the Catholic faith. We hope that the Catholic FAQs will address some of those common questions.

1. ***What do Catholics believe about God?***

We believe that God is the creator of all things and each person is made in the image and likeness of Him.

2. ***How does God reveal Himself to us?***

God reveals himself to us primarily in Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh. He reveals himself to us in the Holy Scripture and also in Creation.

3. ***Where do we find God's revelation for us?***

We find God's revelation for us through Scripture and Catholic tradition.

4. ***How can we respond to God?***

We can respond to God's love for us by having faith and trust in Him along with living our lives the way He would want us to.

5. ***Who was the Blessed Virgin Mary?***

The Blessed Virgin Mary was the mother of Jesus, God the Son.

6. ***What is the Mystery of Incarnation of Jesus Christ?***

Incarnation means "made flesh." We believe that "in the beginning was the Word. And the Word was with God and the Word was God...and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us." -John 1:1,14

7. ***What is meant by the Pascal Mystery?***

The Pascal Mystery is the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

8. ***Did Jesus free us from our sins?***

Forgiveness of sin is made available to us through the saving passion, death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

9. ***What is the Catholic Church?***

The Catholic Church is the community of those who profess their belief in Jesus Christ as the Son of God, affirm that belief through Baptism, celebrate it through the Eucharist, accept the teachings of the Catholic faith, and carry out sacramental life and mission of the Church.

10. ***What are Catholics called to do as members of the Church?***

We are called to give witness to our faith in Jesus Christ through word and actions.

11. ***How are we initiated into the Catholic Church?***

We are initiated into the Catholic Church through the Sacraments of Baptism, Eucharist and Confirmation.

12. ***What is a Sacrament?***

A Sacrament is an efficacious sign of grace, instituted by Christ, entrusted to the Church, by which the divine life is presented to us. Christ makes Himself known to us through the Seven Sacraments which are Baptism, First Penance, First Eucharist, Confirmation, Matrimony, Holy Orders and Anointing of the Sick. Christ is made present to us through these and invites us to them. We feel that Jesus touches us through the sacraments, and they are the signs of His presence when we celebrate each of them.

13. ***What is the Sacrament of Baptism?***

Baptism is the first Sacrament of Initiation. It is the first Sacrament whereby the infant or adult is welcomed into the Catholic faith and is freed from the stain of Original Sin. Through Baptism, we become children of God and are claimed by Christ.

14. ***What is the Sacrament of Eucharist?***

The Eucharist is the second Sacrament of Initiation and is often received around the age of seven or as an adult if one goes through the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA). As Catholics, we believe that the Eucharist is truly the body, blood, soul, and divinity of Christ. We believe that the Eucharist is the true presence of Christ. During the Mass, the priest speaks the same words over the bread and wine that Jesus did at the Last Supper. Catholics believe that at this moment, the bread and wine become what Jesus said they are: his body and blood.

15. ***What is the Sacrament of Confirmation?***

The Sacrament of Confirmation is the third Sacrament of Initiation. In this Sacrament, we receive the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and are called to deepen our life with Christ as well as our mission to go and teach all nations. Through this Sacrament, we become empowered and are called to understand our faith and be able to teach others about it.

16. ***What is the Sacrament of Matrimony?***

The Sacrament of Matrimony is one of the two Sacraments of service. The Sacrament of Marriage is a covenant in which a man and a woman establish between themselves. Marriage is between a man and a woman and is rooted in Scripture in the Book of Genesis.

17. ***What is the Sacrament of Holy Orders?***

The Sacrament of Holy Orders is another Sacrament of service. Holy Orders is the sacrament through which the mission entrusted by Christ to His apostles continues to be exercised in the Church. This includes three offices, namely, Bishop, Priest, Deacon.

18. **What is the Sacrament of Reconciliation?**

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is one of the Sacraments of healing in which we encounter Jesus through the priest. The priest acts in the person of Christ and absolves the penitent of his or her sins. The priest is bound by the seal of confession which cannot be broken in ANY circumstances.

19. ***What is the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick?***

Anointing of the Sick is one of the Sacraments of healing. This Sacrament is rooted in Scripture specifically in the Book of James when it references, “let those who are sick among you, call for the priests of the church, and they will come, lay hands on you, and pray over you, and your sins will be forgiven”. This sacrament is open to any Baptized person who desires or is in need of healing. The Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick can be received whenever there is a danger of illness or death and can be received more than once.

20. ***What is the sign of the cross?***

The sign of the cross recalls our belief in a Trinitarian God who is Father, Son, and Spirit. Each time we make the sign of the cross, we recall the cross of Christ who died for our sins. Many times, this is used to begin and end prayers.

21. ***Why do we pray?***

We pray to better our relationship with God. Prayers can be both spoken and unspoken. The Psalms offer a great means to pray. There are 150 Psalms and they encompass prayers from laments to praise. Some Psalms express the feelings of desolation, separation from God, and abandonment. Some Psalms are prayers of thanksgiving for all that God has done in our lives.

22. ***What is the Rosary?***

The Rosary is a means of praying to the Blessed Mother as an intercessor to Jesus. This is started with the Apostles Creed and goes through four sets of mysteries, Glorious, Joyful, Sorrowful, and Luminous, prayed on different days of the week. The rosary is divided into five decades. Each decade begins with the “Our Father”, ten “Hail Mary’s”, and ends with the Glory be, and the Fatima Prayer.

23. ***What are the Stations of the Cross?***

The Stations of the Cross are a form of prayer often prayed during Lent. These recall the passion and death of Jesus Christ.

24. ***What are the Holy Oils used in the Catholic Church?***

The Holy Oils used in the Catholic Church are oils blessed by the bishop at the Chrism Mass (typically during Holy Week, the week before Easter Sunday). These three oils are called the Oil of the Infirm or Oil of the Sick, the Oil of the Catechumens or Oil of Salvation, and lastly, the Oil of Chrism. The Oil of Catechumens and Chrism are used at Baptism while the Oil of Chrism is used at Confirmation and the Ordination of a priest through the Sacrament of Holy Orders.

25. ***What is the Liturgical Calendar?***

The Liturgical Calendar encompasses all of the seasons of the Church year. These include Advent, Christmas, Lent, the Sacred Triduum, Easter, and Ordinary Time. Each Liturgical season lasts for a specific amount of time and has a different basis or meaning behind it. Advent is the beginning of the Liturgical Calendar and consists of the four Sundays that lead to Christmas. Christmas is a season that begins on Christmas Eve, December 24, and continues through the Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God and the Feast of the Epiphany. Christmastide concludes with the Baptism of the Lord which is held in January. During Lent, we recall the forty days Jesus endured in the desert. This is a time of purification and fasting that begins on Ash Wednesday and continues until the Lord's Last Supper Mass held on Holy Thursday. The Sacred Triduum is the most important days in the Liturgical year. It begins on the Thursday before Easter Sunday, known as Holy Thursday that commemorates the Last Supper; Good Friday, that commemorates the crucifixion and death of Jesus; and Holy Saturday that commemorates the burial of Jesus. On Easter Sunday we celebrate the Resurrection of Christ. The Eastertide ends with the Feast of Pentecost when Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to the apostles to spread the Gospels to all nations. Ordinary time is interwoven throughout the year when the Church is not celebrating any of the other Liturgical seasons.