

# CATHOLIC DOCTRINE

COURSE MANUAL

THE101\_21A



LESSON PLAN - ANSWER KEYS - TESTS - QUARTER REPORT FORMS

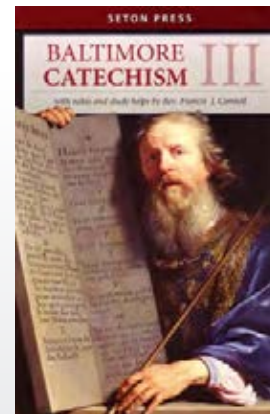
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### COURSE TEXTBOOK

This course uses *Baltimore Catechism No. 3*, Confraternity Edition (with summarizations of doctrine and study helps by Father Francis J. Connell, C.S.S.R., S.T.D.)

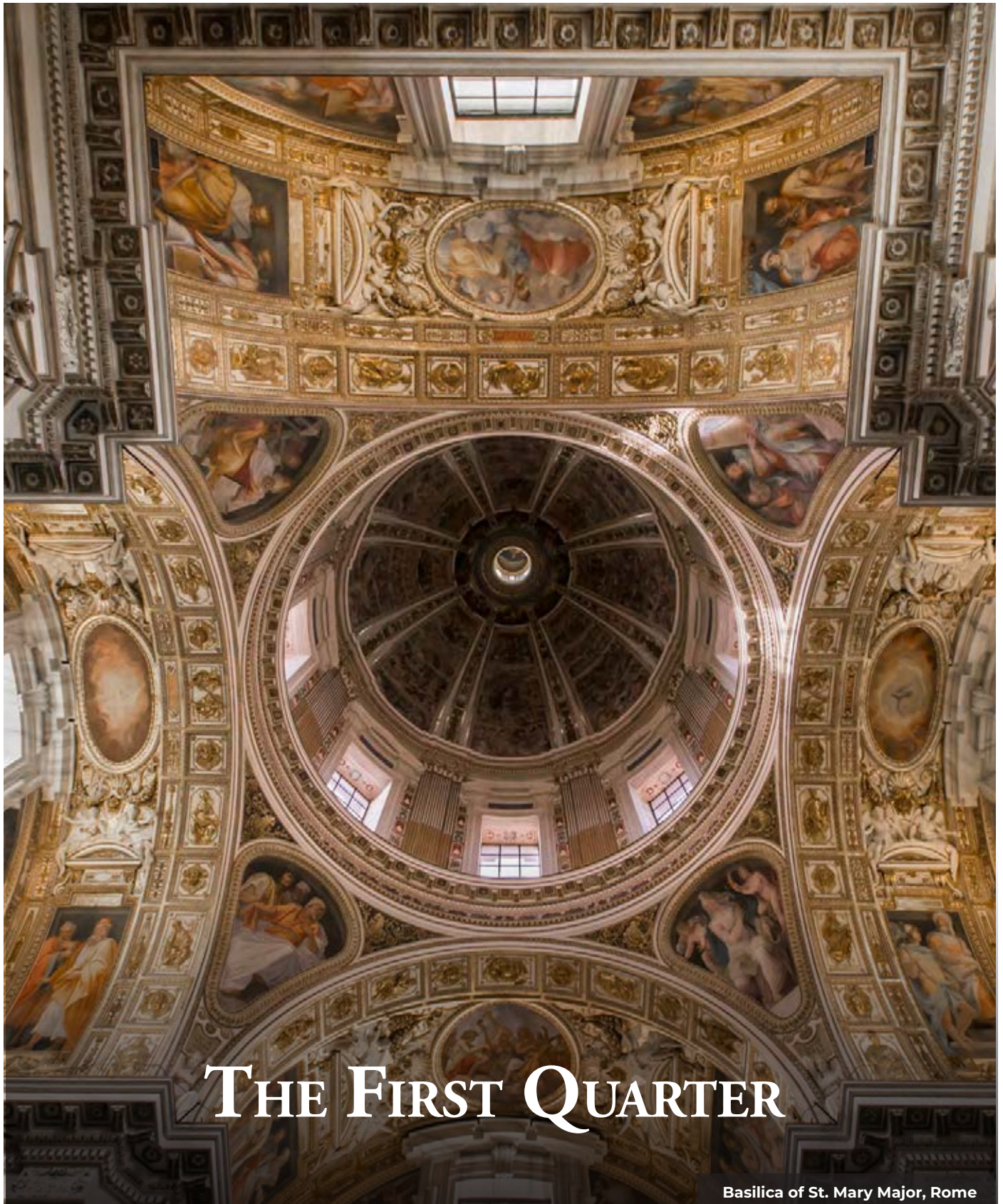






# CATHOLIC DOCTRINE

## INTRODUCTION



# THE FIRST QUARTER

Basilica of St. Mary Major, Rome



## Week One

**Day 1 The Purpose of Man's Existence (Lesson 1)**

Read the “Come Holy Spirit” prayer found on page 13 of this Course Manual. We encourage you to say this prayer frequently.

You can check off work as you complete it!

**Read and study pp. 1–5, in the catechism.**

Give attention to the questions and answers, doctrinal explanations, and Scripture passages for Questions 1–5 in Lesson 1, “The Purpose of Man's Existence.”



**NOTE: For each remaining catechism lesson assignment, although we will not specifically mention the designated questions and answers, doctrinal explanations, and Scripture passages that are included in that catechism lesson, these are all part of the assignment.**

The *Beatific Vision* is the immediate knowledge of God, which the angelic spirits and the souls of the just enjoy in Heaven. It is called “vision” to distinguish it from the knowledge of God that the human mind may attain in the present life. “Beatific” means showing or producing exalted joy or blessedness. Therefore, this vision is called Beatific because, through this “face-to-face” vision of God, the soul finds perfect happiness. See Question 3 (c) and (d), on p. 2 in the catechism.

The Beatific Vision is a mystery and a special grace that God grants to those who have successfully persevered in holiness and are in the state of grace when they die. The bodily eye cannot behold God, but in Heaven the blessed have an intuitive vision of God. The greater the holiness a person attains in this life, the greater will be that person's level of knowing God in Heaven, and the greater will be the happiness of his soul. Each soul will obtain the complete happiness possible to it based on its level of holiness, and greater souls will have a greater degree of happiness.



**Narrated Catechism Q&A  
available on  
SetonOnline**



**Our Lady Help of Christians, Guiseppe Rollini**

**Day 2 The Purpose of Man's Existence: Study Helps**

Continue reading, discussing, and studying catechism Lesson 1, Questions 6 and 7 and "Important Truths about the Purpose of Man's Existence," pp. 5–7. ☐



Do the Study Helps ("True or False") on p. 7 in the catechism as the Lesson 1 Quiz. ☐  
**An online auto-graded version is available on SetonOnline.**

(If not using the online quiz, we suggest that the parent-teacher give any true/false quizzes orally to the student, repeating each statement twice, after which the student writes "true" or "false" on a sheet of paper.)

An Answer Key for the Lesson Quizzes is included in this Course Manual. If using the online quiz, results are recorded in SetonOnline so that parents can easily copy the grades to the parent grade section of MySeton or the printed Quarter Report Form.

**Day 3 The Purpose of Man's Existence: Problems and Exercises**

Do the Lesson 1 Supplemental Study Helps ("Problems and Exercises") on p. 384 in the catechism, orally or in writing, as the parent-teacher directs. Omit numbers 8, 9, and 12. Be sure to discuss the answers. (CCC 1–10; 26–197) ☐



National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Washington D.C.



**Day 4** The Purpose of Man's Existence: Supplement

Read and discuss the following supplement to Lesson 1.

**THE PURPOSE OF MAN'S EXISTENCE**

We begin our course with the most fundamental belief of any religion: the existence of God. A person who does not believe in God is an *atheist*. A person who is not sure of the existence of God and does not think God's existence can be either proved or disproved is an *agnostic*. Religions are generally either *polytheistic* (belief in many gods) or *monotheistic* (belief in one God). There are also *pantheistic* religions, which teach that all things together are God. Examples of polytheistic religions include the religions of the ancient Greeks and Romans and the religions of many primitive tribes. There are three major monotheistic religions: Christianity, Judaism, and Islam.

We can clearly show, using our unaided reason, that God does indeed exist. We can approach this question in several ways. First of all, a belief in God has prevailed among all races, in all times and places. A belief held universally by people who have nothing else in common except their humanity could scarcely result from chance.

**St. Thomas' Proof from Motion**

The most famous proof for the existence of God is the argument from motion, as formulated by the great 13th century Doctor of the Church, St. Thomas Aquinas. The argument found in his *Summa Theologica* is as follows:

- (1) We see that in the world things are in motion: for example, things go from hot to cold, go forward and backward, etc.
- (2) Now, St. Thomas tells us that it is impossible for a thing to move itself. The classical definition of motion, as defined by Aristotle, is "the actuality of potential insofar as it is potential." To understand what this definition means, consider the following example. A pot of cold water is on a stove. The pot as it stands is *actually* cold, but it is *potentially* hot, because all that is required for it to become hot is for the stove to be turned on. Now, when we turn on the stove, the pot begins to become *actually* hot. Thus, we begin to see the meaning of the definition: the fire of the stove actualizes the potential of the pot to be hot. This process of the pot becoming more and more hot, or to put it another way, more and more *actually hot* and less and less *actually cold*, is what motion is.



St. Thomas Aquinas





Although we now understand what motion is, perhaps we still do not understand why a thing cannot move itself. However, when we go back to the example, we can begin to see this more clearly. What is it that makes the pot become actually hot? It is the stove. For something to be made actually hot, there needs to be something else acting on it that is already actually hot. St. Thomas says, “Thus that which is actually hot, as fire, makes wood, which is potentially hot, to be actually hot, and thereby moves and changes it.” Now, since the definition of motion requires that a thing be changed from potentially one way to actually that way, for a thing to move itself would mean that it would need to be both potentially one way and actually that way at the same time. Consequently, for our pot to make itself hot, it would need to be *actually* hot. However, for motion to take place, it would need to be *potentially* hot (and, hence, *actually cold*), so that it could *be made* actually hot. In other words, the pot would need to be both potentially and actually hot at the same time. Or, put another way, for the pot to move itself, it would have to be both hot and cold at the same time, which is clearly impossible! Thus, the pot cannot *make itself* become actually hot, or actually *anything*. Everything that is moved must be moved by another.



- (3) Next, St. Thomas tells us: “Therefore, whatever is in motion must be put in motion by another. If that by which it is put in motion be itself put in motion, then this also must needs be put in motion by another, and that by another again. But this cannot go on to infinity.” Here, Thomas is saying that there cannot be an infinite regression of “moved movers”—that is, a mover that is itself moved by another thing before it. Why is this? The reason stems from the fact that if we go back in the chain of movers, we must necessarily come to a mover that is, in and of itself, actual and did not receive its actuality from anything else. Otherwise, the entire chain of motion could never have started to begin with. The common example to illustrate this point is a locomotive. Each car is moving because it is being pulled by the one before it. However, there must be a car at the very front of the train that is not pulled by another. This car is actual and is responsible for the motion of every other car. Now, when we consider all motion in the world, we see that there must be a first mover, just as the train needs a first mover. This First Mover must be put in motion by no other and must therefore be the Cause of all subsequent motions. This Mover, then, must be purely actual. If He were not purely actual, He would have some potency to something we can call *X* (that is, this Mover would be able to be moved in this regard by something that was *actually X*). However, if He could be moved by something else, then He would not be the First Mover.

Therefore, the First Mover cannot be moved by anything else.

Thus, it is necessary that a First Mover exist. Consequently, this implies that the First Mover is completely and purely *actual*, which means that there is *no being or thing* to which He is in potency. He must possess *fullness* of all *being, actually and to its fullest extent*. This Being everyone understands to be God.

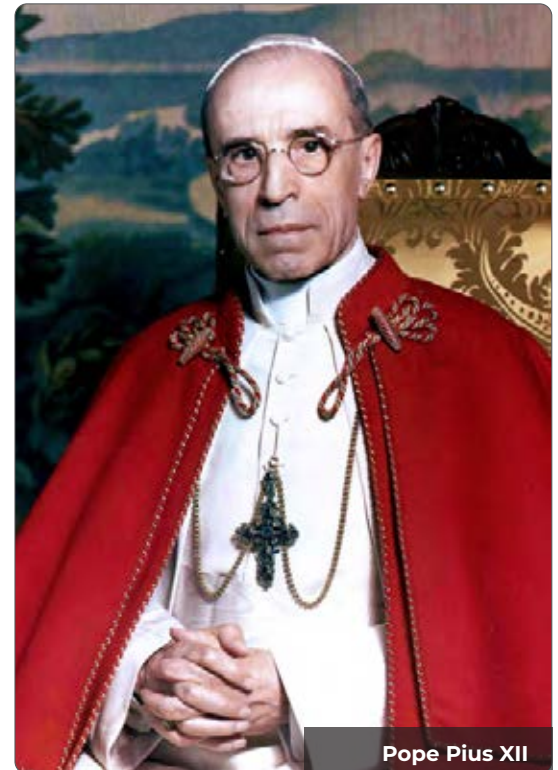


## St. Thomas' Proof from Design

Another argument for the existence of God is the argument from design. The existence of order and design in the universe is evidence for the existence of an Intelligent Mind. Think of the many examples from nature showing order and design far beyond the power of man. The universe could not be the result of blind chance; the order and design in the universe presupposes (really, demands) an Intelligent Designer.

Someone might argue that the order and design in the universe came from an evolutionary process. However, if there is an evolutionary process, then it too could have come only from an Intelligent Designer, an Infinite Mind, Who not only began the process but also is the immediate Cause of every step in it. Thus, even if evolution were true, it would in no way disprove the existence of God.

In his encyclical *Humani Generis*, Pope Pius XII stated that evolution may be studied as a hypothesis, as long as it is clearly understood that if evolution occurs on any scale, small or large, God is the source of the evolutionary process. **There can be no truth to any belief that teaches that things came into existence from nothing, spontaneously or by accident.** God, if He chose, could have fashioned the universe through an evolutionary process, or He could have fashioned it without such a process. However, whether or not evolution took place, God still must be acknowledged as the Creator of the universe. Furthermore, the Church teaches that one may *not* believe that the soul of man evolved in any way: God creates each individual human soul directly, out of nothing.



Pope Pius XII

There is no conflict between true science and the Catholic religion. God is the Author of all truth, and He is the Creator of all that science studies. A true scientist should come to know, and therefore love, God more as he studies the wonders and complexity of the material universe. Think of a number of different sciences, and think about how the subject matter of each could help the scientist know and appreciate God's majesty.

One of the earliest philosophers once asked, "Why is there anything rather than nothing?" In response, St. Thomas Aquinas explained that no created thing has within itself the power of existing. If it did, it would always have existed, and therefore it would be God. Another Being had to give this thing its existence. God Himself created everything that exists, and He keeps it all in existence every moment. Creation was not merely a single act that is now over and done with; creation is a continuing act. We are wholly dependent on God, Who, being self-existent, has no need of us. He created us, not out of need, but out of love. Since He loves us, He wants us to be happy, and He has revealed to us how to be happy. We will study this revelation in future lessons.





Do the Lesson 1 Supplement Questions.



1. Define *atheist* and *agnostic*.
2. Besides Christianity, what are the two other major monotheistic religions?
3. What question did one of the earliest philosophers ask about existence?
4. How did St. Thomas Aquinas answer this question?
5. How does the existence of order and design in the universe demonstrate the existence of God?
6. Why is it false to say that religion and science are opposed to each other?
7. Why is it false to say that evolution disproves the existence of God?
8. Why is it false to say that once God has created things, He has nothing more to do with them?

## Day 5 God and His Perfections (Lesson 2)



Read, discuss, and study catechism Lesson 2, "God and His Perfections," Questions 8–17, pp. 8–12.



Narrated Catechism Q&A  
available on  
**SetonOnline**



The Transfiguration of Our Lord



## Week Six

**Day 1** The Incarnation: Study Helps

Continue catechism Lesson 7, Questions 85–89 and “Important Truths about the Incarnation,” pp. 56–61.

☐

Do the Study Helps (“Column Selection”) on p. 61 as the Lesson 7 Quiz.  
**An online auto-graded version is available on SetonOnline.**

☐**Day 2** The Incarnation: Problems and Exercises

Do the Lesson 7 “Problems and Exercises” on p. 390, orally or in writing.  
Discuss the answers. (CCC 422–570)

☐**SUGGESTED ACTIVITY:**

If you do not already know “The Angelus” and the “Memorare” prayers, memorize them now. These prayers may be found on pp. ix and xii in the “Prayers” section of the *Baltimore Catechism*.



The Annunciation, Leonardo da Vinci



**Day 3 The Incarnation: Supplement**

Read and discuss the following supplement to Lesson 7.

**THE DIVINITY OF JESUS CHRIST**

The catechism gives a good summary of the doctrine of the Incarnation. This discussion material will present an apologetic approach to the doctrine of the divinity of Jesus Christ, so that you will realize that this doctrine is eminently reasonable to believe.

**The Historicity of the Gospels**

Our main source for the life of Jesus Christ is the Gospels. We must first, therefore, determine the reliability of these sources. Scholars apply certain criteria to any ancient manuscript in order to determine its historical reliability. We will now apply this criteria to the Gospels.

The first question we must answer is, “Do the Gospels present direct eyewitness testimony?” Who were the authors of the Gospels? From earliest times, the Gospels have been attributed to two of the Apostles who knew Jesus better than any other men of the time (St. Matthew and St. John); an intimate friend of St. Peter, the leader of the Apostles (St. Mark); and a close companion of St. Paul who interviewed eyewitnesses (St. Luke). “This evidence about the Evangelists, where not explicitly set forth in their own narratives, is derived from Papias, bishop of Hierapolis in Asia Minor, writing about 125 A.D.—an old man at that time, who could clearly remember the latter part of the Apostolic Age.”<sup>1</sup>

The second question to determine historical reliability is: “Were they written within living memory of the events that they describe, and therefore were they subject to verification or contradiction by others who remembered or witnessed those events?” To answer this question, we must first determine roughly when the Gospels were written. The closer in time a book is to the actual events, the more reliable it is likely to be. The dating of the Gospel of John can be deduced from the Rylands papyrus fragment of St. John’s Gospel. As Dr. Warren Carroll explains:

Then came the enormously important discovery of the Rylands papyrus fragment of St. John’s gospel in a remote area of Upper Egypt, in 1935. The fragment, word for word in accord with our standard text, was dated by paleographic analysis (an analysis of the manner in which the letters were formed) to the first decades of the second century, probably about 130, very possibly earlier. This fits perfectly with the traditional dates of 95–100 A.D. for St. John’s death and the commitment of his Gospel to writing, especially since the place where the Rylands papyrus fragment was found, at the very edge of the ancient civilized world far down into Africa, nearly two thousand miles from Ephesus where St. John died, indicates a very wide dissemination of his Gospel by 130 and consequently a considerably earlier date of the original writing.<sup>2</sup>

As for the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, Dr. Carroll explains their dating as follows:

As for the date of the first three gospels, virtually all critics would now put them before 90, and the majority before 60, well within living memory of the events of Christ’s life, death, and resurrection.

<sup>1</sup> Warren Carroll, *A History of Christendom: The Founding of Christendom*. (Christendom Press: Front Royal, VA), 290.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 293.



Even critics proceeding from assumptions about the composition and character of Scripture very different from those maintained here are now beginning to discover strong arguments from their own premises for pushing the dates of the composition of the Gospels of Matthew and Mark back to the 40's and 50's A.D. (the period when tradition always held they were written) and to accept the clear evidence from the point at which the Book of Acts ends and the manner of its conclusion, that it was written in 62 or 63 A.D., with Luke's Gospel a little earlier.<sup>3</sup>

Thus, all four Gospels were clearly written well within the lifetime of the men who had known Jesus Christ.

Now we must ask, "Do they contain obviously fabulous, legendary, or mythical material?" It is important to note that fables, legends, and myths tell us magic, not miracles. Whereas in the Gospels, God works miracles for some purpose such as converting sinners or saving souls, the main purpose of magic is to astonish, and it is usually trivial in nature. The Gospels have no magic, fables, legends, or myths whatsoever. As Dr. Carroll states:

Such magical events constitute the fabulous element in literature, a marked characteristic of the apocryphal gospels and purported accounts of the works of the Apostles which the Church refused to include in the canon of the New Testament. It is immediately obvious in comparing these apocrypha, or other contemporary mythological literature even when involving Christian themes, with the canonical gospels, that the canonical gospels are fundamentally different in form, style, emphasis, and purpose. They have none of the fabulous and magical material at all.<sup>4</sup>

The fourth question we must address is: "Are they corroborated at significant points by external, independent testimony from persons not directly involved with the writers or their particular beliefs and goals?" The facts in the Gospels are indeed corroborated by other sources. For example, the Annals of Tacitus, a Roman historian who wrote early in the second century, refers to a group of people living in 64 A.D. called "Crestiani" and says that "the author of this denomination, Christ, in the reign of

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 293–294.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 295.



Christ with the Four Evangelists, Fra Bartolomeo



Tiberius, had been condemned to death by Pontius Pilate.” In his book, *The Antiquities of the Jews*, Flavius Josephus, a first-century Jewish historian who was born seven or eight years after the death of Christ, wrote about Jesus, His miracles, His death, and His Resurrection.<sup>5</sup>

Finally, we must ask, “Would the authors have wished to deceive? Did they have anything to gain personally from distorting the truth?” The authors of the Gospels clearly gained nothing in this life from their advancement of the Christian religion, since all except for John were martyred (and John was exiled).

Clearly, the Gospels meet all of these standards, and for these reasons, it makes sense to accept the Gospels as historically reliable documents.

### Scriptural Evidence of Jesus Christ’s Divinity

Now that we have seen that the Gospels are reliable sources, we will examine the evidence that the Old and New Testaments give of Jesus Christ’s divinity. In the Bible, Jesus not only verbally claimed to be God; He also proved it.

First, Jesus Christ clearly claimed to be God. In John 8:58, Our Lord says, “Amen, amen I say to you, before Abraham was made, I am.” The Jews, who knew the Old Testament, understood that “I Am” was the name that God gave to Himself when speaking to Moses on Mt. Sinai, and thus they clearly understood that Jesus was claiming to be God. In fact, they tried to stone Jesus, because they considered such a claim to be blasphemous. In John 10:30, Jesus’ claim to divinity becomes even more explicit when He says, “I and the Father are one.” Jesus is claiming not only divinity but also unity. Here, we find the same basis for the teaching on the mystery of the Holy Trinity. Although each of the three Persons is distinct by virtue of a relation of opposition, “all three Persons are perfectly equal to each other, because all possess the same divine nature with all its infinite perfections” (catechism, p. 23). Jesus reiterates this teaching in John 14:8-11 when Philip asks Him to show the Apostles the Father. Jesus replies, “Philip, he that seeth me seeth the Father also. How sayest thou, Shew us the Father? Do you not believe, that I am in the Father, and the Father in me?” Also, in Luke 10:16, Our Lord says, “He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me.” Again, in Matthew 10:32, Jesus says, “Everyone therefore that shall confess me before men, I will also confess him before my Father who is in heaven.” In Matthew 26:64, while Jesus is being questioned, the high priest demands that Jesus tell them whether he is the Christ, the Son of God, and Jesus replies, “Thou hast said it. Nevertheless I say to you, hereafter you shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of the power of God, and coming in the clouds of heaven.” Thus, we see that Jesus did indeed claim to be God.

If someone seriously claims to be God, there are only three possible explanations: it is true; he is a liar; or he is insane. Nothing in the life of Jesus Christ suggests that He was either lying or insane. In fact, the Gospels are filled with examples of Our Lord’s perfection, for He was free from every sin and imperfection. Look in the Gospels and find some examples of Jesus Christ’s virtues.

Second, Jesus Christ proved that He was God: (a) by fulfilling the prophecies of the Old Testament; (b) by making His own prophecies, which were later fulfilled; and (c) by performing miracles.

(a) Jesus Christ proved that He was God by perfectly fulfilling the prophecies of the Old Testament. Immediately after the Fall of Adam and Eve, God promised to send a Redeemer, saying: “I will put enmities between thee and the woman, and thy seed and her seed: she shall crush thy head, and thou shalt lie in wait for her heel” (Gn 3:15). Throughout the Old Testament, we continue to learn about this Messiah—who He is, His origins, His mission, and what He will undergo. In Genesis 49:10, Jacob imparts a special blessing

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid.



to Judah, indicating that the Messiah will be a direct descendent of his. “The sceptre shall not be taken away from Juda, nor a ruler from his thigh, till he come that is to be sent, and he shall be the expectation of nations.” Jesus was in fact born into the tribe of Judah.

In Isaiah 7:14, we learn of the virginal conception of Jesus: “Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign. Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel.” Isaiah 11:1 also indicates the ancestry of Jesus, saying: “There shall come forth a rod out of the root of Jesse, and a flower shall rise up out of his root.” Jesse was the father of David, and Jesus was born of the house of David.

In Micheas (Micah) 5:1-14, the prophet reveals that the Messiah will be born in Bethlehem, David’s hometown. Also, he mentions the Messiah’s mother but not the father, indicating the virginal conception. Jesus was born in Bethlehem of the Virgin Mary.

In the Old Testament, we learn not only of the Messiah’s origins but also of the sufferings that He would have to endure. Psalm 21:15-19 describes the terrible thirst of Jesus, the piercing of His hands and feet, the taunting of the guards, and the dividing of His garments. “I am poured out like water; and all my bones are scattered. My heart is become like wax melting in the midst of my bowels. My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue hath cleaved to my jaws: and thou hast brought me down into the dust of death. For many dogs have encompassed me: the council of the malignant hath besieged me. They have dug my hands and feet. They have numbered all my bones. And they have looked and stared upon me. They parted my garments amongst them; and upon my vesture they cast lots.”

Next, Psalm 40:11 prophesies the ultimate victory of the Messiah, His Resurrection, saying, “But thou, O Lord, have mercy on me, and raise me up again: and I will requite them.” Not only will the Messiah be victorious over his persecutors, but He will also receive homage from the kings of the Earth. Psalm 71:10 prophesies the coming of the Magi to pay homage to the Christ Child: “The kings of Tharsis and the islands shall offer presents: the kings of the Arabians and of Saba shall bring gifts.”

Isaiah 50:6 also predicts Jesus’ sufferings: “I have given my body to the strikers, and my cheeks to them that plucked them: I have not turned away my face from them that rebuked me, and spit upon me.” Isaiah 53 portrays Him as despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows Who has borne our griefs, stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. “But he was wounded for our iniquities, he was bruised for our sins: the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and by his bruises we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray, every one hath turned aside into his own way: and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was offered because it was his own will, and he opened not his mouth: he shall be led as a sheep to the slaughter, and shall be dumb as a lamb before his shearer, and he shall not open his mouth. He was taken away from distress, and from judgment: who shall declare his generation? because he is cut off out of the land of the living: for the wickedness of my people have I struck him. And he shall give the ungodly for his burial, and the rich for his death: because he hath done no iniquity, neither was there deceit in his mouth.

“And the Lord was pleased to bruise him in infirmity: if he shall lay down his life for sin, he shall see a long-lived seed, and the will of the Lord shall be prosperous in his hand. Because his soul hath laboured, he shall see and be filled: by his knowledge, shall this my just servant justify many, and he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I distribute to him very many, and he shall divide the spoils of the strong, because he hath delivered his soul unto death, and was reputed with the wicked: and he hath borne the sins of many, and hath prayed for the transgressors.”

Finally, Zacharias 11:12-13 foretells the betrayal of Judas, saying: “And I said to them, ‘If it be good in your eyes, bring hither my wages; and if not, keep quiet.’ And they weighed for my wages thirty pieces of





The Burial of Christ, Guercino

silver. And the Lord said to me: 'Cast it to the statuary, a handsome price, that I was prized at by them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and I cast them into the house of the Lord to the statuary.'

(b) Jesus showed that He was God by making His own prophecies, which were later fulfilled. In Matthew 20:18-19, Our Lord predicts His own suffering, death, and Resurrection. "Behold we go up to Jerusalem, and the Son of man shall be betrayed to the chief priests and the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death. And deliver him to the Gentiles to be mocked, and scourged, and crucified, and the third day he shall rise again."

Later, in Matthew 26:34, we read: "Jesus said to him [Peter]: Amen I say to thee, that in this night before the cock crow, thou wilt deny me thrice." Also, in Luke 21:24, Jesus relates the destruction of Jerusalem, saying: "And they shall fall by the edge of the sword; and shall be led away captives into all nations; and Jerusalem shall be trodden down by the Gentiles; till the times of the nations be fulfilled." The Temple was destroyed by the Romans in 70 A.D.

In John 13:21-26, we read: "When Jesus had said these things, he was troubled in spirit; and he testified, and said: Amen, amen I say to you, one of you shall betray me. The disciples therefore looked one upon another, doubting of whom he spoke. Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved. Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him, and said to him: Who is it of whom he speaketh? He therefore, leaning on the breast of Jesus, saith to him: Lord, who is it? Jesus answered: He it is to whom I shall reach bread dipped. And when he had dipped the bread, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon."





(c) Our Lord proved that He was God by performing miracles. A *miracle* is an occurrence that is beyond or outside the course of nature, is perceptible to the senses, and whose existence is explainable only through the direct intervention of God.

Some people claim that miracles are impossible, because God would not “intervene” in nature. However, as we already know, God did not simply create the world and then go off and leave it alone. It is being held in existence at every moment by God’s Divine Power. There is nothing unreasonable or impossible about God manifesting this power in different ways at different times—sometimes through what we call the laws of nature and other times by what we call miracles.

Other people have tried to argue against the miracles of Christ by saying that the healing miracles were psychosomatic cures, and by trying to find natural explanations for the other miracles (loaves and fishes—mass hypnotism, for example). However, some of His miracles include the curing of multitudes of people with diseases and handicaps (for example, see Mk 1:32-34 and many other passages), the changing of water to wine at Cana (Jn 2), and the raising of Lazarus from the dead (Jn 11). Go through the Gospels and see how many other miracles of Jesus Christ you can find that cannot be “explained away” by natural phenomena.

The greatest miracle and the conclusive proof of Jesus Christ’s divinity is His Resurrection, which we will study in Lesson 8.

### SUGGESTED ACTIVITY:

A student who does not have sufficient knowledge about the life of Jesus Christ should, in addition to studying catechism Question 89, read and discuss one or more of the Gospels to obtain a familiarity with Our Lord’s life and teachings.



The Miracle of the Loaves of Fishes, James Tissot





Do the Lesson 7 Supplement Questions.



1. What are the main sources for learning about the life of Jesus Christ?
2. According to this supplement, which two Gospels were probably the earliest ones written?
3. Who were Matthew and John?
4. Who were Mark and Luke?
5. What fact makes it unreasonable to claim that the Gospel writers wrote with the intention to deceive.
6. What two non-Christian historians confirm that Jesus Christ existed?
7. What are the three possibilities regarding Jesus Christ's claim that He is God?
8. In what three ways did Jesus Christ prove that He was God?
9. Briefly describe two prophecies that Jesus made in His own life.
10. What is a miracle?

#### Day 4 The Redemption (Lesson 8)



Read, discuss, and study catechism Lesson 8, "The Redemption," Questions 90–101, pp. 62–67.



Narrated Catechism Q&A  
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#### NOTE:

In Question 90 on p. 62 of the catechism, notice the difference between "Redemption" and the concept of "Satisfaction" given in explanation (a).

#### Day 5 The Redemption: Study Helps

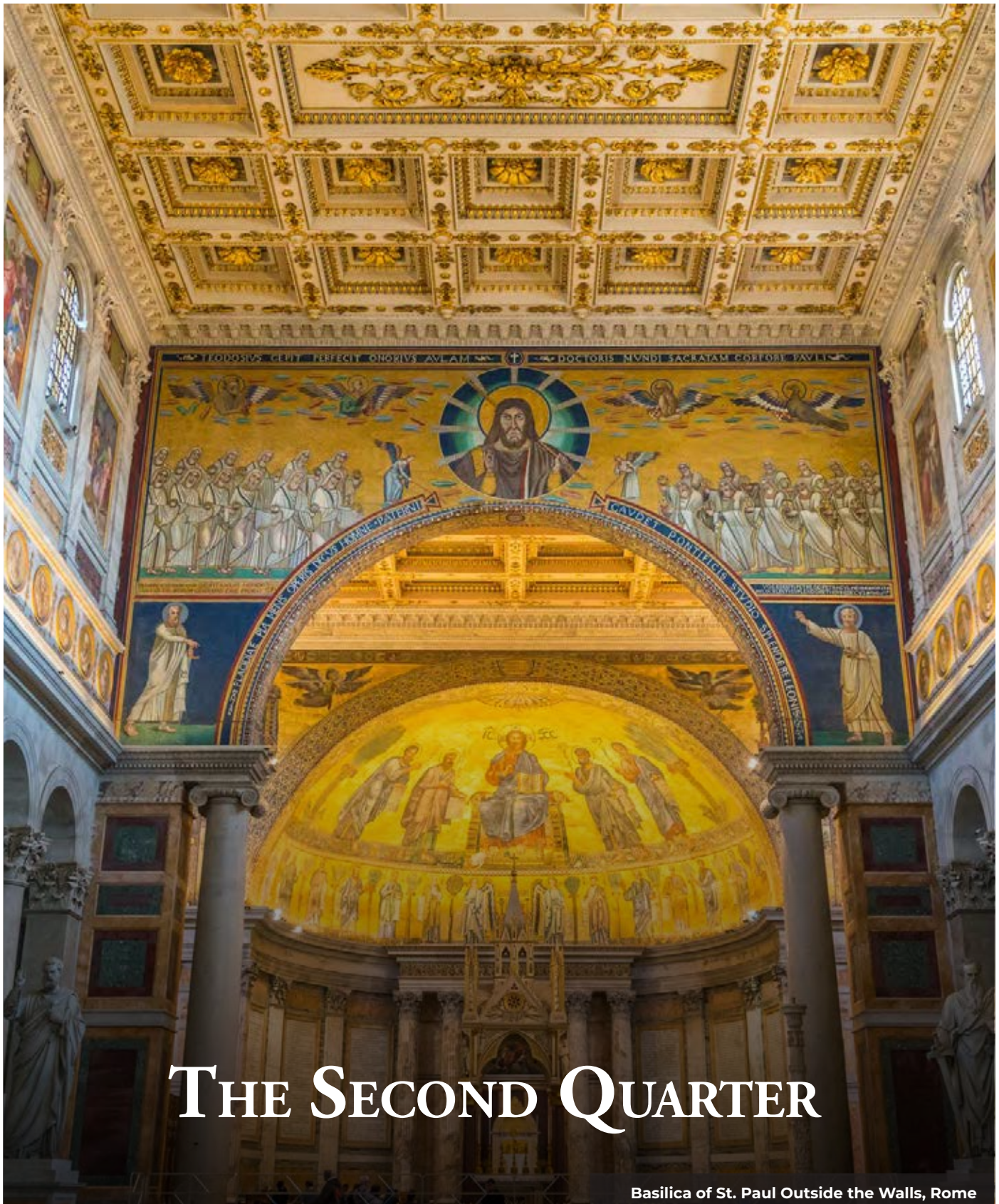


Continue Lesson 8, Questions 102–104 and "Important Truths about the Redemption," pp. 67–70.



Do the Study Helps ("True or False") on p. 70 as the Lesson 8 Quiz.  
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# THE SECOND QUARTER

Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls, Rome



## Week Ten

**Day 1** The Catholic Church (Lesson 11)

Read, discuss, and study catechism Lesson 11 on “The Catholic Church,” Questions 136–146, pp. 92–98.



Narrated Catechism Q&A  
available on  
**SetonOnline**

**NOTE:**

In the *Baltimore Catechism*, Lesson 11, Questions 145–146, we are taught that **Our Lord gave the power to teach, to sanctify, and to rule the faithful to the Apostles, and that these powers have been passed down to their successors, the bishops.** Furthermore, the priests assist the bishops in the care of souls (Question 149). The power to sanctify is the power to make one holier. This power is given to all priests through the Sacrament of Holy Orders, as Question 145 (b) states: “the power to sanctify is the power of orders.” The power to rule and to teach comes from the jurisdiction of the bishop or priest. The pope has universal jurisdiction. He can teach and rule the faithful anywhere and everywhere in the world. Bishops have jurisdiction in the diocese assigned to them. In that diocese, the bishop is responsible for ruling and teaching in every parish. Priests have jurisdiction in the parish assigned to them. If a priest goes outside of his parish, he needs permission to do certain things. Inside his own parish, he automatically has this permission through his jurisdiction.

**Day 2** The Catholic Church: Study Helps

Continue Lesson 11, Questions 147–151 and “Important Truths about the Catholic Church,” pp. 98–102.

**NOTE:**

Question 150, p. 101, mentions “tonsure.” In 1972, Pope Paul VI decreed in his apostolic letter *Mysteria Quaedam*: “First tonsure is no longer conferred; entrance into the clerical state is joined to the diaconate.” Also, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* defines the “laity” as “all the faithful except those in Holy Orders and those who belong to a religious state approved by the Church.” (CCC 897)

Note that seminarians who belong to religious orders attached to the Traditional Latin Mass still receive clerical tonsure.



Do the Study Helps (“Word Selection”) on p. 103 as the Lesson 11 Quiz.  
Omit number 10. **An online auto-graded version is available on SetonOnline.**



**Day 3** The Catholic Church: Problems and Exercises

Do the Lesson 11 “Problems and Exercises” on pp. 395–396, orally or in writing. Discuss the answers. (CCC 748–810)

**Day 4** The Catholic Church: Supplement

Read and discuss the following supplement to Lesson 11.



## THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

We have seen in preceding lessons, especially Lesson 8, what Our Lord Jesus Christ has done for us. Knowing of His great love for us, we want to follow Him and to do His Will. However, there are many Christian religions that claim to speak for Jesus Christ. How are we to know which, if any, we should heed?

We begin by realizing that not all Christian religions can be right, because their beliefs contradict one another in many significant ways. Contradictory beliefs cannot all be true. There can be only one truth, and the person sincerely interested in following Jesus Christ must try to find that one truth.

As Catholics, we believe that Jesus Christ founded the Catholic Church and appointed the pope to be its visible head on Earth. We need to know the reasons for our belief and why those who reject the Catholic Church are mistaken.





At the same time that Jesus was revealing Who He really was, He was preparing His Apostles to teach this revelation to the rest of the world. Although Jesus often preached to crowds of people, much of His teaching was to the Apostles alone. Obviously, they had a special role to play in the spread of the Kingdom. Jesus Christ founded the Catholic Church as the visible Kingdom of God on Earth, and He gave the Apostles the power to teach, to sanctify, and to rule the members of this Church in His Name.

There are four main facts from the Gospels which show that Jesus Christ deliberately founded a visibly organized Church.

First, Jesus gave the Apostles a special commission (Matthew 28:16-20) and special powers which He gave to no one else. He gave the Apostles the power to baptize, to forgive sins, to change bread and wine into His Body and Blood, and to “bind and loose” (Mt 18:18). It is clear that He meant the Apostles to be His representatives on Earth. Their special mission was to “teach ye all nations” (Mt 28:19), and it was to the Apostles alone that He promised, “I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world” (Mt 28: 20). The Apostles were not appointed by themselves or by the people; they were appointed by the Lord Jesus Christ.

Second, when speaking of His followers, Jesus used images that imply an organization and unity: Sheepfold, Kingdom, City. The Apostles were to be the leaders of this organization, and they acted as such. This is clear from the Scriptures (especially Acts of the Apostles and St. Paul’s epistles). If this had not been the Will of Jesus Christ, it is inconceivable that the Apostles would have set up a society that had definite leaders with the power to make decisions binding on all the faithful (for example, the Council of Jerusalem described in Acts 15). This organized society consisted of clearly formed communities of the faithful, meeting regularly to receive instruction and celebrate the Eucharist. The leaders expelled those who taught false doctrines (there are several references to this in St. Paul’s epistles). The Apostles had a hierarchy comprising deacons, presbyters (priests), and bishops (as discussed in both Acts and the epistles). All of this complex structure was unmistakably present within just a few years of Jesus Christ’s Ascension to Heaven. It is therefore obvious that Our Lord Jesus Christ commissioned the Apostles to act as leaders of the organized Church that He founded.

Third, Jesus appointed Peter as the head of the Apostles and the chief teacher and ruler of His Church. Without a leader, a society soon breaks up into smaller groups, as different individuals go their own way. The leader whom Jesus appointed was Simon Peter. According to Bishop Sheen in his book *Life of Christ*, Peter’s name appears 195 times in the Scriptures. No other Apostle’s name appears more than 29 times; all of the rest of the Apostles’ names together appear a total of 130 times.

Three times, Jesus declared Peter’s primacy. The first was in response to the famous Petrine confession in Matthew 16:18-19: “And I say to thee: That thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give to thee the keys to the kingdom of heaven. And whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose





on earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven.” Thus, Jesus explicitly declared that He would organize a Church and that Peter would be its head. Jesus also promised that He would preserve this Church against the forces of Hell. Keys symbolized authority to the Hebrews; binding and loosing were Jewish terms for the power to take disciplinary action and to make and interpret laws.

The second Scriptural reference was during the Last Supper (Luke 22:31-32). Jesus foretold the desertion of His disciples, especially Peter’s denial of Him. However, Jesus also specifically declared to Peter that He had prayed that Peter’s faith would not fail, and He told Peter to strengthen the other disciples.

Finally, after the Resurrection, Peter atoned for his threefold denial of Jesus by making a threefold avowal of love of Jesus (John 21:15-17). Using the image of lambs and sheep, Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd, gave Peter authority over the Church.

In addition, throughout the Acts of the Apostles, Peter clearly took the lead—for example, in selecting a successor to Judas, in preaching on Pentecost Sunday, and in decreeing that Gentiles may be members of the Church.

Some people claim that Peter may have been the leader of the Apostles, but that this leadership did not pass on to those who succeeded him as pope. However, it would have made no sense for Jesus to have appointed a visible leader of the Church for the first thirty or so years of its existence and then allow it to go without a visible leader. Furthermore, history shows us that from Peter’s death onward, the Bishop of Rome (the pope) was recognized as having authority over the Church. We can trace an unbroken line of succession from St. Peter to the present pope.

Fourth, it was necessary that there be a visible, recognizable organization in order to fulfill three specific requirements given by Our Lord to the members of His Church:

1. *Believe in the truth.* “Now this is eternal life: That they may know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent” (Jn 17:3) and “For this was I born, and for this came I into the world; that I should give testimony to the truth. Every one that is of the truth, heareth my voice” (Jn 18:37).
2. *Do the Will of the Father.* “Jesus answered, and said to him: If any one love me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him, and will make our abode with him. He that loveth me not, keepeth not my words” (Jn 14:23-24).
3. *Receive and grow in the supernatural gift of sharing in God’s divine life.* “Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God” (Jn 3:5) and “Except you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you” (Jn 6:54).

Only in an organized church can the truth and the Will of the Father be preserved and taught without contradiction, because individuals leading equally good lives can teach and believe contradictory things. Therefore, God has given the Church the assistance and guidance of the Holy Spirit. Only in an organized Church that can be traced back to Jesus Christ can we be sure to avoid contradictions. Only in an organized Church can we be sure that we are receiving valid sacraments. An individual can claim that he possesses the power to transmit the life of God, but unless some higher authority has given him that power, we cannot be sure that it is true. Jesus wants all people to be members of His Mystical Body, the Church, “that they may have life, and may have it more abundantly” (John 10:10).



**SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:**

1. Go through one of the Gospels and list the references to the mission and powers that Jesus Christ gave His Apostles.
2. Choose one pope and report on his life.
3. How would you answer the following argument? “We do not need a Church, because it just gets in the way of our communication with Jesus Christ.”
4. How would you answer the following argument? “One church is as good as another, so just join the one where you get along best.”

**Do the Lesson 11 Supplement Questions.**

1. There are many different Christian religions. Explain why they cannot all be true.
2. What is the visible Kingdom of God on Earth?
3. What powers did Jesus Christ give to the Apostles?
4. What images used by Jesus imply organization and unity for the Church?
5. Give evidence that the Apostles acted as leaders of an organized society or institution?
6. What three requirements did Jesus give for members in the Church?
7. Why is an organized Church necessary?
8. How many times does Peter’s name appear in the Gospels?
9. Name the three times Jesus declared Peter’s primacy?
10. Give three examples of Peter’s leadership in the Acts of the Apostles.

**Day 5 The Marks or Attributes of the Church (Lesson 12)**

Read, discuss, and study catechism Lesson 12, “The Marks and Attributes of the Church,” Questions 152–159, pp. 104–108.



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# CATHOLIC DOCTRINE

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1350 Progress Drive, Front Royal, VA 22630  
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