

# Confirmation Study Guide (2020)

## 1. Pray the Apostle's Creed from Memory:

I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth.  
And in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried;  
He descended into Hell; on the third day he rose again from the dead;  
He ascended into Heaven and is seated at the right hand of God, the Father almighty;  
from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.  
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of Saints,  
the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

“I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth...”

## 2. What does a person mean when he or she says “I believe”?

“Believe” comes from the Latin word “**credo**” which is actually the combination of two other Latin words: “**cre**” meaning “**heart**”, and “**do**” which means “I give.” So when I profess that I believe in God, I’m actually saying that I give God my heart; much the same way a man or woman says to that special someone: “I believe in you,” i.e., I’m giving you my heart.

## 3. Who is the God in whom Christians believe?

The God in whom Christians believe:

- a) is the **Creator of heaven and earth**, of all things visible and invisible, of all things living or inanimate, of all persons: angelic or human.
- b) \_\_\_
- c) \_\_\_

## 4. What does it mean to create?

To create is to **make something out of nothing**.

## 5. Using the principle of “Cause and Effect”, provide the logic for the existence of a “Creator”.

The argument from Cause and Effect states that for every effect there must be a cause; the greater the effect, the greater the cause must be. Since we can observe that our ever expanding universe, both in its macroscopic dimensions (i.e., observable by telescope), and in its microscopic dimensions (i.e., observable by microscope) is truly awesome, complex and orderly, we must conclude, therefore, that our universe has a proportionate cause that is: [1] capable of designing (i.e., reasoning, imagining, planning), and [2] creating (i.e., making something out of nothing). In short, our universe screams logic and intricate design, which indicates that the cause of the universe is not a “something” but a “someone”, a being who is supremely intelligent and powerful, a being capable of creating, that is, making things out of nothing. We call this being the “Creator” or “God”, who is the cause of all that is, both living and inanimate.

## 6. But if God is the cause of the universe, who caused God?

If there’s another someone who caused God, then that someone would in fact be God, or the ultimate Being. And who caused that someone, and so on? Eventually we have to conclude that there must be a “someone”, who has no cause, but is, in fact, the ultimate cause of all that is, both living and inanimate. This ultimate someone is a being who simply is, and, therefore, has no cause. This being, who simple is, is the uncaused cause of all that is. We call this ultimate someone the supreme being or God.

**7. Using reason, we can argue for our belief in a Supreme Being or Creator, whom we call God, but how do we know “who” God is?**

Through reason, we know that there is a Creator, who is all powerful because of the awesomeness of creation in its dimensions, complexities and design, but this Creator, whom we call God, we cannot know because he is not a part of the materiality of the universe. God is metaphysical, that is, beyond the physical universe. God transcends time and space and cannot be perceived by the senses. Imagine awaking in the middle of the night to a crashing noise in your kitchen. You know that someone dropped something, but who? It’s that way with God. We see his work in creation, but him we cannot see. **For us to know God, God must reveal himself.**

**8. Where do we find the story of God revealing himself to mankind?**

**The Bible is the story of God revealing himself to mankind. The story begins with Abraham, who is known as the father of all believers, and finds its completion with Jesus, the only begotten Son of God.** In between Abraham and Jesus we find God revealing himself in bits and pieces through the prophets and the many historical events in the history of Israel. Recall our analogy of the pieces of a puzzle and the picture on the cover of the puzzle box. The revelations of the Old Testament are like the pieces of a puzzle, whereas Jesus is the picture on the puzzle box. If we want to know where the pieces fit, we have only to look at the picture on the box. Jesus is the fullest revelation of who God.

**9. Who is the God in whom Christians believe?**

The God in whom Christians believe:

- d) is the **Creator of heaven and earth**, of all things visible and invisible, of all things living or inanimate, of all persons angelic or human;
- e) is the **One Supreme Being who reveals himself: first to Abraham**, then to Isaac, Jacob, Moses, the many Judges, Kings, Prophets of Israel, and **finally in his only begotten Son, Jesus Christ**;
- f) \_\_\_\_\_

**10. By what name did Abraham call God?**

**Abraham called God “EI-Shaddai”, which is Hebrew for “Mighty One” or “Almighty” in English.**

**11. By what name did Jesus call God?**

**Jesus calls God “Abba” which means “Father”, the name Jesus teaches his disciples to use when they pray: “Our Father...”**

**12. In between Abraham and Jesus, God reveals his name to Moses. Tell me the story.**

**The Israelites were slaves in Egypt. God appears to Moses in a burning bush in the desert; he commands Moses to return to Egypt and to lead Israel out of their bondage in Egypt to freedom in the Promised Land. When Moses asks God his name, God reveals his name is “YAHWEH” which means “I AM WHO I AM”.**

**13. What does the name YAHWEH reveal about God?**

**His name is a mystery.** He is knowable, but we will never fully know Him. He cannot be restricted to a category. **God simply “is”...without beginning, without end.**

**14. God’s name YAHWEH is sacred. Out of reverence for God’s name, pious Jews do not pronounce it. By what name do the Jews use, therefore, in place of YAHWH?**

**In place of YAHWEH, Jews call God “ADONAI” which in English is LORD.**

“And in Jesus Christ, His only Son our Lord...”

**15. What is Jesus’ name in Hebrew and what does it mean?**

**In Hebrew, Jesus’ name is Yeshuah. It means “Yahweh saves” or “Yahweh’s salvation.”** At the annunciation, the angel Gabriel reveals, first to Mary and then to Joseph, the name “Jesus” as the proper name of the child to be born. This name expresses both his identity as savior of mankind, and his mission to “save his people from their sins” (*Matthew 1:21*). In

the name of Jesus, the disciples perform miracles of healing and casting out demons. Jesus also instructs his disciples that the Father will grant them all they ask for in this name.

**16. What does it mean when we call Jesus “Christ”?**

The word “Christ” is the English translation of the Greek word “**Christos**”, which translates the Hebrew word “**Messiah**”; it means “**Anointed One**” or “**Chosen One**.” Therefore, to call Jesus the “**Christ**” is to claim that He is the anointed or chosen one of God sent to save us from our sins. Those who believe Jesus is the anointed one are known today as Christians.

**17. If we profess Jesus to be the Christ or long awaited Messiah of Israel, God’s “Chosen or Anointed One”, what should be our response to this belief?**

At the time of Jesus, those who believed that he was the Christ followed him. In fact before they were called “Christians” they were called “followers of the way,” (cf. Acts 22:4) because Jesus had proclaimed “I am the way, the truth and the life.” (John 14:6) **Therefore, the appropriate response for those, who believe that Jesus is the Christ, is to follow him.**

**18. How do I follow Jesus?**

I follow Jesus by filling my mind, my memory and my imagination with all that Jesus said and did, and then living my life according to what Jesus said and did. Psychologists say: “We may not always do what we say, but we always do what we believe.” If this adage is true, then the proof of my faith in Jesus as the Christ, God’s “Chosen Instrument for my Salvation” is to conform my thoughts, words and actions to His.

**19. In the Apostles Creed we profess that we believe in “Jesus Christ, His Only Son, our Lord. What do we mean when we proclaim Jesus to be God’s Son?**

By proclaiming Jesus to be God’s Son, we are professing that we believe that Jesus comes from the Father, or as we say in the Nicene Creed on most Sundays of the year, Jesus is “*the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father, through whom all things were made.*”

**20. Is Jesus begotten of God, made, or created?**

In His divine nature, Jesus is eternally begotten of the Father. That is, He comes from the Father. Just as we come from our parents, Jesus comes from the Father. In His divine nature, Jesus comes only from the Father, therefore, He is exactly as the Father is, namely, Jesus is God. He is NEITHER made NOR created. He IS the “Creator”.

**21. What do we mean when we call Jesus “Lord”?**

Lord is the English translation of the Hebrew word “Adonai” which was used as a substitute title for God’s name “YAHWEH”. This is the primary understanding of the word “Lord” by Christians. Secondly, the word “Lord” can be understood as “King” or “Sovereign”, as recorded in an ancient Christian hymn in Philippians 2:10: “...at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

**22. If Jesus is truly Lord, what should our response be?**

The proper response for one who believes that Jesus is “Lord” or “I AM WHO AM” is to worship Him. Christians follow Jesus because He is the Christ (the Chosen Instrument of our Salvation), and we worship Him because he is LORD.

**23. How do I worship Jesus as Lord?**

We worship Jesus as LORD when we begin and end each day with prayer, praise and thanking for all our blessings. But most especially, we worship Jesus as LORD when we gather Sunday after Sunday (the LORD’s Day) to celebrate Eucharist in obedience to his command: “Do this in memory of me.”

“...who was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary...”

**24. What does it mean to say Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary?**

From the scriptures we know that Mary conceived Jesus in her womb through the power of the Holy Spirit, who overshadowed her. **Jesus is conceived without human seed.** The mission of the Holy Spirit is always conjoined to that of Jesus, God's Son. **The Holy Spirit, “the Lord, the giver of Life”, is sent to sanctify the womb of the Virgin Mary and divinely impregnate it, causing the Virgin Mary to conceive the eternal Son of the Father in a humanity drawn from her own.** Mary remains a virgin, before, during and after the conception and birth of Jesus. In short, the eternal Son of God, who has no beginning or end in His divine nature, takes to Himself our human nature.

**25. Is Jesus half God and half human?**

**Jesus is not half God and half human. Jesus is 100% God and 100% human. Jesus, the Father's eternally begotten Son, is one person in two natures, divine and human.**

“...suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried...”

**26. What does it mean to say that Jesus suffered?**

To claim that Jesus suffered is to claim that He fully participated in our humanity. **Jesus was truly human. He had a human body and a human soul, and therefore was subject to human pain and suffering just as we are.** This is important to remember when we reflect on His passion and death. **Jesus possesses two natures, one divine and the other human, not confused, but united in the one person of God's Son.**

**27. Why is Pontius Pilate mentioned in the Apostle's Creed?**

**Referencing Pontius Pilate in the Creed gives the Christian story a concrete historical reference.** By knowing who was the judge who sentenced Jesus, we can fix a time, place and culture to the Gospel story. Unlike fairy tales and fables that begin with “once upon a time, in a far away place...,” **the Christian story takes place in history: Jesus suffered under Pontius Pilate whose life, decisions, etc. are historically documented not only in the New Testament but in secular histories of that period.**

**28. What is the significance of Christ's crucifixion for our salvation?**

**“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 6:23)** **It was for our sins that Jesus suffered crucifixion and death. It was for sinners that Jesus accepted death on the cross. He offered himself to the Father as the atonement or expiation for our sins, freely offering himself for our salvation. We are the ones who deserved crucifixion, but Jesus dies in our place.**

**29. Why do we say that Jesus' crucifixion was a true self offering of himself as opposed to a mere execution at the hands of his enemies?**

**Because on the night before he died, at the Last Supper, Jesus both symbolized this self-offering and made it sacramentally present when he took bread and declared: “This is my body which is given for you” (Luke 22:19), and likewise the chalice of wine, saying: “This is my blood of the covenant, which will be shed on behalf of many for the forgiveness of sins.” (Math. 26:28).** Thus he both instituted the Eucharist as the “memorial” (1 Corinthians 11:25) of his sacrifice and instituted his apostles as priests of the new covenant.

**30. How is it possible that the sacrificial death of the one man, Jesus Christ, atones or expiates for the sins of the many?**

**The sacrificial death of the one man, Jesus Christ, is able to atone or expiate for the sins of the many because the one man Jesus Christ is not only Son of Mary (i.e., human), but Son of God (i.e., divine), and therefore, as Son of God, Christ's death has infinite value.**

**31. What do we call the sin of Adam and Eve?**

We call the first sin of Adam and Eve “Original Sin”. For Adam and Eve, this was a personal sin. This sin had little to do with eating forbidden fruit, but rather was a way to “opt out” of God’s free gift of love. It is a sin of PRIDE, as our first parents are desiring to be “like” God and decide for themselves what is good and evil. It is a sin of SELFISHNESS because that is when Adam and Eve first noticed their own nakedness, which they hadn’t noticed before because they were selfless, which reveals a human vulnerability without God... bringing shame and fear.

**32. How does Original Sin affect us?**

The primary consequence of the Original sin was the loss of an intimate relationship with God—Adam and Eve are expelled from Paradise. This consequence of Original sin is passed on to us and to all the descendants of Adam and Eve. The grace of Baptism restores us once again to a relationship of intimacy with God, a relationship which we must nurture during our earthly pilgrimage by daily conversation with God, a relationship which reaches its fullness in heaven when we shall see God face to face.

**33. How does the Christian theologically define “death”?**

Theologically, death is the extinction of life in the body, through the departure of the soul, which is the principle of life. The soul’s departure takes place when the body is no longer adapted to life. **In short, death is when the soul leaves the body.**

**34. What happened to Jesus’ body after His death on the cross?**

His body was taken down from the cross and placed in a nearby tomb.

**35. After His death, what happened to Jesus’ soul?**

His soul descended into hell. There He opened the gates of heaven for all those who received His grace and had died before Him.

**36. What is Hell?**

Hell is the place where God is not.

**37. Why does Jesus descend into Hell?**

In his soul, Jesus descends into hell, the realm of the dead, as Savior, proclaiming to the souls imprisoned there that he has died for their sins, so that they too might be reconciled to God. (Cf. 1 Pet 3:18-19) Thus Jesus becomes the bridge between Heaven and the “realm of the dead.”

**38. Who was in hell that needed rescuing? Or saving?**

Jesus rescues our first parents, Adam and Eve, the patriarchs of Israel and all the righteous souls waiting for his coming; he opens the gates of Heaven to them. Suffice it to say, it was a happy day!!!

“...on the third day, he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven...”

**39. What does it mean when we say that Jesus rose from the dead?**

Resurrection is the reunion of the soul with the body. When we say Jesus rose again from the dead, we mean that His human soul was reunited with His earthly body, and that His pierced and wounded body rose from the tomb to life, a new life that is immortal and incorruptible. Jesus’ resurrection is not merely resuscitation as would be performed by paramedics on a heart attack patient, but a new life, one without end.

**40. What do we mean when we say that Jesus rose immortal and incorruptible?**

By immortal, we mean that Jesus would never again experience death, which is to say, that his human soul and human body are now eternally united, and never again subject to separation by death.

By incorruptible, we mean that Jesus’ human body is no longer subject to sickness, corruption, disability or debilitating limits of the ageing process.

**41. What do we mean when we say Jesus ascended into heaven?**

Jesus ascends body and soul into Heaven (Mary is Assumed). "Ascended" means "under one's own power" which refers to a King taking his throne. "Assumed" means "drawn up by someone else."

"...seated at the right hand of God...from there he will come again to judge the living and the dead."

**42. What does Jesus do at the right hand of the Father?**

He intercedes on our behalf and reigns as King of Heaven and Earth.

**43. At the end of time, Christ will come again to judge the living and the dead. For what will we be held accountable?**

Jesus taught that on Judgment Day the conduct of each one and the secrets of hearts will be brought to light, (Cf Mk 12:38-40; Lk 12:1-3; Jn 3:20-21; Rom 2:16; 1 Cor 4:5) and that on that day the culpable unbelief of those who treated the offer of God's grace as nothing, will be condemned. (Cf. Mt 11:20-24; 12:41-42) Jesus also taught that our attitude toward our neighbor will disclose our acceptance or our refusal of God's grace and mercy. In Matthew 25:31-46 Jesus speaks again about judgment on the Last Day, and that when he comes in glory, he will judge people according to how they treated others. He will say: "Truly I say to you, as you did to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me." Those who did good to the least, go to heaven; those who neglected the least go off to eternal damnation.

**44. Are we judged at the moment of death or at the end of time?**

Both. The first judgment is at the moment of death, when the soul leaves the body. This is called the **Particular Judgment** and irrevocably settles the soul's salvation or damnation, even though it may have to undergo a time of purgation. (cf. 2 Tim. 4:6; Heb. 9:27; Act 1:25; Rev. 20:4-6) The second judgment is called the **Universal Judgment** and will take place after the resurrection of our bodies when Christ comes at the end of time. The body will share in the reward or punishment of the soul. At this judgment, the righteousness of God will be manifested before all. (cf. Rom. 14:10; 2 Thes. 1-2; Rev. 20:12-14)

"I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of Saints..."

**45. What are Christians referring to when they use the word "spirit"?**

"Spirit" is how we translate the Hebrew word "ruah", which means "breath, air, or wind". The spirit is the very breath and life force of every living thing.

**46. Who is the Holy Spirit?**

The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity. He is God and is one in nature with the Father and the Son from whom He proceeds.

**47. Is the Holy Spirit a part of God?**

No. God has no parts. God simply IS. The Holy Spirit, the Father and the Son are ONE. Each person of the Trinity is God in fullness.

**48. Is the Holy Spirit separate from the Father and the Son?**

No. The Holy Spirit is a distinct Person, but never separate from the Father and Son. God has no parts and therefore cannot be divided. God simply is: "I AM WHO AM".

**49. What is the role of the Holy Spirit in relation to the Son of God?**

The Holy Spirit is conjoined with the Son in His mission of accomplishing the work of salvation. The Holy Spirit's role is to reveal God to us by making Christ known to us... for to know Jesus Christ is to know God. And when the Father sends His Word, He always sends His Breath (a.k.a, the Holy Spirit). In their joint mission, the Son and the Holy Spirit are distinct, but inseparable. To be sure it is Christ who is seen, the visible image of the invisible God, it is the Spirit who reveals Him.

**50. What is the Blessed Trinity?**

When we speak of the Trinity, we are talking about “mystery.” It is beyond our human capacity to fully comprehend. The essential meaning of the Trinity is the unity of one and the same God in three divine Persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Throughout salvation history God progressively reveals Himself, first as the transcendent Creator “outside” us; then as the incarnate Savior “beside” us; and then as the indwelling Spirit “inside” us. The reason for this progression, first Father (Old Testament), then Son (Gospels), then Spirit (Acts of the Apostles and the Church), is found in God’s very being, which is love (*1 John 4:18*), and in the purpose and motive for God’s self-revelation to man, which is love. For love’s aim is always greater intimacy, deeper union with the beloved. So the stages of God’s self-revelation are stages of increasing intimacy with man from “outside”, to “beside”, to “inside.”

**51. Who is the God that Christians worship?**

The God in whom Christians believe:

- g) is the **Creator of heaven and earth**, of all things visible and invisible, of all things living or inanimate, of all persons angelic or human;
- h) He is the **One Supreme Being who reveals himself: first to Abraham**, then to Isaac, Jacob, Moses, the many Judges, Kings, Prophets of Israel, **and finally in his only begotten Son, Jesus Christ**;
- i) He is **the One God who reveals himself as a Trinity of Persons—Father, Son and Holy Spirit**. Ergo, Catholic worship begins and ends by acclaiming the names of the THREE who are ONE.

**52. What are the words that the bishop says as he anoints your head with Chrism (special oil) during confirmation?**

Using your Confirmation name, the bishops says: “    N.     , *Be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit.*”

**53. What is the “Gift of the Holy Spirit” that we receive in Confirmation?**

According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church (#733), **Love is God’s first gift to us: “God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.” (Rom 5:5)**

**54. What are the seven GIFTS of the Holy Spirit?**

The seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, which all candidates will get to receive at Confirmation are:

- 1. **Wisdom**
- 2. **Understanding**
- 3. **Counsel** (also called Right Judgement)
- 4. **Fortitude** (or Courage)
- 5. **Knowledge**
- 6. **Piety** (or reverence)
- 7. **Fear of the Lord** (also called wonder or awe at God’s magnificence)

**55. When do we celebrate the birth of the Church?**

We celebrate the birth of the Church on **Pentecost Sunday, when the Holy Spirit descended upon the Apostles and Mary in the upper room**. Because of this Gift of the Holy Spirit, the Apostles were no longer afraid, but emboldened to proclaim Jesus as both Christ and Lord, thereby initiating the mission of the Church (to preach the Gospel and baptize all nations).

**56. What is the “Church”?**

The word “Church” comes from the Greek word “ecclesia” which means “assembly”. Thus, **the Catholic Church is the “assembly of believers” who, having heard the Good News of Jesus Christ, and opened their hearts to the stirrings of the Holy Spirit, have put their faith in Him and now proclaim Him as both Christ and Lord.**

Christians frequently refer to their worship space as a “church” as it is the place where the assembly of believers gathers to worship. As such, the “building” itself becomes a symbol of the “assembly of believers” itself. The two have become almost synonymous.

**57. What are the Four Marks of the Church?**

- 1. **One**

2. Holy
3. Catholic
4. Apostolic

**58. What does it mean that the Church is “One”?**

The Church is One because the members of the Church: (1) share the same Creed or Belief, (2) celebrate the same Sacraments, especially the Eucharist, (3) are governed by the Pope and all Bishops in union with him. The source of this unity is the Holy Spirit, who is the “soul” of the Church.

**59. What do we mean when we say that the Church is “Holy”?**

The Church is “holy” because the Holy Spirit dwells in her as in a temple, thereby enabling her to worship the Father, through, with, and in Jesus Christ the Lord.

The word “holy” means to be different, whereas the opposite of being different is to be the same or ordinary.

*(For example, a chalice is holy because it is set aside for worship; it holds the blood of Christ. It’s quite different than a Styrofoam cup, which is ordinary, even disposable.)*

God is holy for the same reason. God is NOT like us; he’s different. To become like God, therefore, is to be holy. It is the role of the Holy Spirit to help us become more like God and less like everyone else.

*(For example, it’s ordinary for teens to cheat on homework and tests, to abuse alcohol, drugs, tobacco, or to be sexually active. But if you don’t do these things, you will be different; you’ll be less ordinary and more like God—Holy.)*

**60. What does it mean that the Church is “Catholic”?**

The word catholic means universal. The Church is catholic because people of every race, language, culture, etc. are called to the assembly of believers. As the story of the first Pentecost reveals, the Apostles, who had been charged by Christ to build his Church, were enabled by the Holy Spirit to speak new languages so that they might bring all people into the one assembly of believers. Catholics believe that this one assembly of believers subsists in the Catholic Church, which alone can trace its roots back to the Apostles.

**61. What does it mean that the Church is “Apostolic”?**

The word “apostle” means “one who is sent.” The original Twelve Apostles were those men that Jesus personally chose and sent to proclaim the “Good News” of the Kingdom. The Catholic Church is “apostolic” because she alone can trace her roots back to the teaching handed down to us through the Twelve.

**62. Who are the successors to the Apostles?**

The bishops of the Catholic Church are the legitimate successors of the ministry and teaching of the original Twelve Apostles. The role of the Twelve Apostles, as (1) witnesses of the life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus, and as (2) the foundation stones of His Church, is unique and is not transmitted. However, Jesus promised to be with His Church until the end of time (Mt 28:20). The spread of the Gospel until the end of time was the divine mission entrusted to the Church. To ensure the faithful transmission of the apostolic witness, the Apostles instituted successors. These successors, the order of bishops, are the continuing presence of the pastoral ministry of the Apostles in the Church. The bishops of the world who are in union with the pope are known as the “college of bishops.”

**63. What is the mission of the Church?**

The mission of the Church is to continue the mission of Jesus, that is, to proclaim the kingdom or reign of God to all people even to the ends of the earth. Christ gives us this command: “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matthew 28:19). This mandate of Jesus has its origin in the eternal love of God who “...desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth” (1 Timothy 2:4).

#### **64. What is the communion of saints?**

The communion of saints is the spiritual unity among all those who have been immersed into the dying and rising of the Lord Jesus Christ in the saving waters of baptism. This communion in Christ includes:

- (1) the faithful on earth, called the **Church Militant**,
- (2) the souls in purgatory, known as the **Church Suffering**, &
- (3) the saints in heaven, known as the **Church Triumphant**.

This communion of the faithful on earth, in purgatory and in heaven is the one body of Christ. It is the Church or Assembly of Believers.

### “...The Forgiveness of Sins...”

#### **65. What is sin?**

Sin is any thought, word or deed contrary to the eternal law of God (cf. Ten Commandments). Sin is a deliberate choice to do what we know to be wrong. You can not commit sin by accident. For example, if you cause an accident by speeding, you may not have intended to cause the accident, but you did intend to speed. In short, you sinned. Sin can also be the deliberate omission of doing something good. Jesus commanded us to love our neighbor as ourselves. When we fail to do good to our neighbor, we sin. For example, when you see someone in trouble but refuse to get involved, you sin by omission.

#### **66. Are some sins more serious than others?**

In judging the gravity of sin, Catholic theology distinguishes between mortal and venial sins (cf. 1 John 5:16-17):

1. **Venial Sin:** is a minor violation of Moral Law, similar to the concept of a misdemeanor.
2. **Mortal Sin:** is a major violation of Moral Law, similar to the concept of a felony. Mortal sins cause death to the soul if not repented.

#### **67. What are the three conditions necessary to commit mortal sin?**

1. **SERIOUS matter.** The evil we do must be seriously wrong, which can be judged by examining the consequences of the action or omission.
2. **We must KNOW** that what we are doing is seriously wrong.
3. **We FREELY choose** to do that which is evil.

Emotion and passion can diminish the voluntary and free character of a sin, as can external pressures or pathological disorders. Sin committed through malice, by deliberate choice of evil, is the most serious.

#### **68. What is venial sin?**

Venial sin is to commit a lesser evil, or to omit a lesser good. Or when one commits a grave violation of the moral law, but without full knowledge or without complete consent.

#### **69. Can a Catholic receive Holy Communion with serious or mortal sin on his/her soul?**

**No.** It doesn't make sense to enter into "communion" with God, if we have turned our back on Him by sin. This would be an insult to God and cause us to commit the additional sin of sacrilege. **One must first repent and be reconciled to God through the Sacrament of Reconciliation before approaching the altar to receive the Body and Blood of Christ.**

#### **70. What happens if a person dies having committed a mortal sin and never having asked for forgiveness?**

Mortal sin deprives us of sanctifying grace. If the sinner does not repent of the mortal sin and seek God's mercy by an act of perfect contrition and the absolution of the priest in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, this lack of repentance causes the sinner's exclusion from Christ's kingdom and the eternal death of hell. **Our freedom to choose to do right or to do wrong has eternal consequences. In short: They go to Hell.**

## **71. How are we forgiven of our sins?**

- a. **First, through Baptism.** It is the first and chief sacrament for the forgiveness of sins by washing away ALL sin, including Original Sin.
- b. **Second, through Confession.** After his resurrection, Jesus appears to the Apostles and breathes on them saying: "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained" (John 20:22-23). Bishops, who are the successors to the Apostles, and their co-workers the priests, fulfill this command and mandate of Jesus to be His ambassadors of mercy by absolving sins in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

## "...Resurrection of the Body and Life Everlasting"

## **72. What do we mean by the resurrection of the body?**

- a. Resurrection is the reunification of body and soul. Just as death occurs when the soul leaves the body, **resurrection occurs when the soul returns to the body. Resurrection, however, is more than the reviving of the body, but the raising of the body to a new and more glorious life with God.**
- b. Christians believe, and therefore hope, that just as Christ is truly risen from the dead and lives forever, **so after death the righteous will live forever with the risen Christ and he will raise them up, body and soul reunited, on the last day.**

## **73. What will our resurrected bodies be like?**

- a. **Our resurrected bodies will be like Christ's glorious body** (Cf. Philippians 3:20-21);
- b. **Our resurrected bodies will be both immortal and incorruptible** (Cf. I Corinthians 15:35-55);
- c. **Our resurrected bodies will be full of life** (Cf. John 10:10).

## **74. What does incorruptible mean?**

By incorruptible we mean that the body will never again be subject to sickness or the ravages of age. It also means that we will be free of all birth defects and disabilities of the body, mind or spirit.

## **75. What does immortal mean?**

By immortal, we mean that we shall never again experience death, the departure of the soul from the body.

## **76. What is life everlasting?**

- a. **Eternal life is life which begins immediately after death.** It will have no end and be preceded for each person by a particular judgment at the hands of Christ who is the Judge of the living and the dead. This particular judgment will be confirmed in the final judgment when Christ returns at the end of time.
- b. **For the saints in heaven, eternal life is life in God.** It is seeing God face to face. To use an earthly illustration, it's like gazing into the face of someone you love... you never get tired of staring or gazing. Similarly, eternal life with God is one "aha" moment after another because God is an infinite being, we will never know Him completely, and (for the saints) heaven is endless discovery of God's grandeur and love for us.
- c. **For those in hell, eternity is endless separation and alienation from God.** Think of the crying child separated from its mother who cannot be consoled. Such is hell.

## **77. What is the meaning of the word "amen" in which we conclude our profession of faith?**

The Hebrew word "Amen", which concludes the last book of Sacred Scripture, as well as some of the prayers of the New Testament, and the liturgical prayers of the Church, **expresses our confident and total "yes" or "agreement" to what we professes in the Creed**, entrusting ourselves completely to Him who is the definitive "Amen" (Revelation 3:14), Christ the Lord.

## What does Confirmation have to do with me?

**78. What does Confirmation mean to me? Why do I want to be Confirmed?**

**79. Which saint did I choose and what inspired me about his or her life?**

**80. How have I grown in my relationship with God this year?**

**81. Why is Confirmation NOT graduation from the Church?**

Confirmation is the completion of Baptism. It is my final **rite of initiation** into the Church. After Confirmation, I will finally be an adult member of the Church—equipped for sainthood. The Holy Spirit will be sealed inside of me so that I can BEGIN my life as an adult Catholic and, by grace, become a saint in heaven.

### GLOSSARY OF IMPORTANT TERMS AND TRANSLATIONS

<b>Annunciation</b>	“Announcement” of Jesus’ birth to Mary by the Archangel Gabriel
<b>Ascended</b>	To rise to Heaven/power by your own ability (Jesus)
<b>Assumed</b>	To rise to Heaven/power by being drawn up on God’s power (Mary)
<b>Create</b>	To make something out of nothing
<b>Original Sin</b>	The first sin, passed on from parent to child
<b>Crucifixion</b>	To die on a cross
<b>Death</b>	When the soul leaves the body
<b>Heaven</b>	The place of unity with God
<b>Purgatory</b>	The place of purification prior to entering Heaven
<b>Hell</b>	The place where God is not
<b>Resurrection</b>	To rise from the dead (NOT resuscitation)
<b>Trinity</b>	Three distinct persons in one God, without separation or division
<b>Pentecost</b>	The day the Holy Spirit descended upon the Apostles and Mary

<b>Communion</b>	“Common unity” or “common union”
<b>Church Triumphant</b>	The saints in Heaven (canonized and uncanonized)
<b>Church Suffering</b>	The souls in Purgatory
<b>Church Militant</b>	Faithful Christians still on Earth
<b>Sin</b>	Any thought, word, or deed contrary to the eternal law of God.
<b>Sins of Commission</b>	A deliberate choice to do something we know is wrong.
<b>Sins of Omission</b>	A deliberate choice to NOT do something we know is right.
<b>Venial Sin</b>	A minor violation of moral law (think “spiritual misdemeanor”)
<b>Mortal Sin</b>	A major violation of moral law (think “spiritual felony”)
<b>Particular Judgment</b>	Individual judgment of each person’s life, immediately after death.
<b>Last Judgment</b>	Judgment at end of time on all of history, all secrets revealed.

<b>“El-Shaddai”</b>	(Hebrew) translates as <b>“Mighty One”</b> or <b>“Almighty,”</b> is used by Abraham to refer to God.
<b>“YAHWEH”</b>	(Hebrew, pronounced: Yaw-way) it means: <b>“I AM WHO I AM,”</b>
<b>“Yeshuah”</b>	Hebrew rendering of “Jesus,” it means <b>“YAHWEH saves”</b>
<b>“Christos”</b>	(Greek) used as the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew concept of “Messiah,” is rendered as “Christ” in English and means <b>“Anointed One”</b> or <b>“Chosen One.”</b>
<b>“Kyrios”</b>	(Greek) translates as <b>“Lord”</b>
<b>“Ruah”</b>	(Hebrew) translates as <b>“Spirit”</b>
<b>“Ecclesia”</b>	(Greek) rendered as “Church” in English and means <b>“assembly(of the faithful)”</b>
<b>“Catholic”</b>	(Latin) translates as <b>“Universal”</b>
<b>“Apostolic”</b>	<b>“passed on through the Apostles (Apostle = “Emissary”)</b>
<b>“Sancti”</b>	(Latin) rendered as “saint” in English and means <b>“holy persons.”</b>