

TOGETHER

a monthly bulletin insert from the archdiocese



ARCHDIOCESE
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July, 2021 Vol. 1 | No. 7

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A Follower of Jesus in His Holy Catholic Church

This is the second entry in a document by Archbishop Michael Jackels titled, "A Follower of Jesus In His Holy Catholic Church" which was published online in April of 2021.

WHO IS THE LORD JESUS?

What we know from Scripture and Tradition is that Jesus lived 2000 years ago in Judea, present-day Israel. He was born in Bethlehem, grew up in Nazareth, and died but rose again in Jerusalem.

Jesus worked as a carpenter until, at age 30, he began his public ministry. He worked miracles and preached the Gospel, from Greek, meaning Good News. In the case of Jesus, it is the Gospel of the kingdom of God.

HOLY TRINITY

We believe that Jesus is one of the three Divine Persons in the one Godhead: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This mystery of faith is called the Holy Trinity. Jesus is the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, the only begotten Son of God, who became man.

"After Jesus was baptized, he came up from the water and behold, the heavens were opened [for him], and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove [and] coming upon him. And a voice came from the heavens, saying, 'This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.'" (Matthew 3:16-17)

INCARNATION

We believe that the only begotten Son of God received a human nature like ours (except, as God, he never sinned), and was born of the Virgin Mary. This mystery of faith is called the incarnation, from Latin, meaning to be made flesh.

"The Word was God... And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we saw his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth." (John 1:1, 14)

By becoming man, Jesus put flesh on the mystery of the unseen God, and enabled people to see, hear, feel, and touch the glory of Divinity revealed by God to Moses on Mt. Sinai:

"So the Lord passed before [Moses] and proclaimed: The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in love and fidelity." (Exodus 34:6)

The early Christians found an easy way to summarize what they believed about Jesus, God and man. They made an acronym out of the five letters that spell the Greek word for fish: i-ch-th-y-s spells out Iesous-Christos-Theou-Yios-Soter, which translates as "Jesus-Christ-God-Son-Savior." Pretty cool, huh?

THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

This is probably a good spot to say something about the place and privileges of Mary, the Mother of the Lord Jesus.

The immaculate conception: Mary was the mother of the sinless savior. So, as original sin is transmitted through human generation, God prepared Mary for her role by preserving her from original sin. She was saved by Jesus, but in a special way, in anticipation of the event on Calvary Hill.

"Hail [Mary] full of grace! The Lord is with you." (Luke 1:28)

The virginal conception: Jesus was miraculously conceived in the womb of the Virgin Mary by the power of the Holy Spirit. St. Joseph was the husband of Mary, but he was not Jesus' biological father (he was his foster-father).

The angel Gabriel said to Mary: "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God." (Luke 1:35)

The perpetual virginity of Mary: Mary and Joseph did not have other children, either before or after the birth of Jesus. It is believed that Mary and Joseph had taken vows renouncing sexual intimacy, even though they were married. Scholars also say that the mention in the Gospel of the brothers and sisters of the Lord could be Joseph's children from a previous marriage, or cousins.

"[Joseph] took [Mary] his wife into his home. He had no relations with her until she bore a son, and he named him Jesus." (Matthew 1:24-25)

The Mother of Christians: From the Cross, Jesus asked Mary and the apostle John to regard each other as mother and child. Christians have traditionally seen themselves as represented by John, which would make Mary our spiritual mother. This would also be the case on account of Christians being members of the body of Christ, the Church.

"[Jesus] said to his mother, 'Woman, behold, your son.' Then he said to the disciple, 'Behold, your mother.'" (John 19:26-27)

The assumption: At the moment of her death, Mary didn't lie in a grave, while

her body corrupted. Rather, she was taken up body and soul into the glory of Heaven. This event gives credence to our great Christian hope in our own resurrection and eternal life.

“And when this which is corruptible clothes itself with incorruptibility, and this which is mortal clothes itself with immortality, then the word that is written shall come about: Death is swallowed up in victory.” (1 Corinthians 15:54)

When we consider all the above, it’s hard to see how the sappy words of a popular hymn apply to Mary: gentle woman, quiet light, peaceful dove, indeed.

More appropriate are the words from the Song of Songs (6:10), traditionally applied to Mary: “Who is this that comes forth like the dawn, beautiful as the white moon, pure as the blazing sun, fearsome as celestial visions?” That’s what we’re talking about!

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON THE U.S. BISHOPS’ VOTE TO DRAFT A DOCUMENT ON THE MEANING OF THE EUCHARIST IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

The following is an excerpt from a June 21, 2021 document by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). It is intended to clarify misconceptions about a recent USCCB discussion regarding a teaching document on the Eucharist, which many of the faithful understood to be an attempt by the bishops to deny Communion to certain politicians.

Since the conclusion of the Spring Plenary Assembly of the U.S. bishops [taking place June 16-18], there has been much attention on the vote taken to draft a document on the Eucharist. The question of whether or not to deny any individual or groups Holy Communion was not on the ballot. The vote by the bishops last week tasked the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Committee on Doctrine to begin the drafting of a teaching document on the Eucharist.

The Eucharist is the source and summit of Christian life. The importance of nurturing

an ever deeper understanding of the beauty and mystery of the Eucharist in our lives is not a new topic for the bishops. The document being drafted is not meant to be disciplinary in nature, nor is it targeted at any one individual or class of persons. It will include a section on the Church’s teaching on the responsibility of every Catholic, including bishops, to live in accordance with the truth, goodness and beauty of the Eucharist we celebrate.

Below are a few commonly asked questions on the meeting and on this topic at issue.

Did the bishops vote to ban politicians from receiving Holy Communion?

No, this was not up for vote or debate. The bishops made no decision about barring anyone from receiving Holy Communion. Each Catholic - regardless of whether they hold public office or not - is called to continual conversion, and the U.S. bishops have repeatedly emphasized the obligation of all Catholics to support human life and

dignity and other fundamental principles of Catholic moral and social teaching.

Are the bishops going to issue a national policy on withholding Communion from politicians?

No. There will be no national policy on withholding Communion from politicians. The intent is to present a clear understanding of the Church’s teachings to bring heightened awareness among the faithful of how the Eucharist can transform our lives and bring us closer to our creator and the life he wants for us.

Did the Vatican tell the bishops not to move forward on drafting the document?

No. The Holy See did encourage the bishops to engage in dialogue and broad consultation. Last week’s meeting was the first part of that process. It is important to note that collaboration and consultation among the bishops will be key in the drafting of this document.



Litany to St. Joseph to be prayed on the 19th of each month, March - November

Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

God our Father in heaven,
have mercy on us.

God the Son, Redeemer of the world,
have mercy on us.

God the Holy Spirit, have mercy on us.
Holy Trinity, one God, have mercy on us.

Holy Mary, pray for us.

St. Joseph, pray for us.
Noble son of the House of David, pray for us.
Light of the Patriarchs, pray for us.
Husband of the Mother of God,
pray for us.

Guardian of the Virgin, pray for us.
Foster father of the Son of God, pray for us.
Faithful guardian of Christ, pray for us.
Head of the Holy Family, pray for us.
Joseph, chaste and just, pray for us.
Joseph, prudent and brave, pray for us.
Joseph, obedient and loyal, pray for us.
Pattern of patience, pray for us.

Lover of poverty, pray for us.
Model of workers, pray for us.
Example to parents, pray for us.
Guardian of virgins, pray for us.
Pillar of family life, pray for us.
Comfort of the troubled, pray for us.
Hope of the sick, pray for us.
Patron of the dying, pray for us.
Terror of evil spirits, pray for us.
Protector of the Church, pray for us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.

God made him master of his household, and put him in charge of all that he owned.

Let us pray. O God, who in your inexpressible providence were pleased to choose Saint Joseph as spouse of the most holy Mother of your Son, grant, we pray, that we, who revere him as our protector on earth, may be worthy of his heavenly intercession.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.