

School of Prayer



Catechism of the Catholic Church

History of the Catechism

“Catechism” comes from the Greek word that means “echo.” This refers to the oral handing on of the truths of the faith.

“Catechesis is an education in the faith of children, young people, and adults which includes especially the teaching of Christian doctrine imparted, generally speaking, in an organic and systematic way, with a view to initiating the hearers into the fullness of Christian life.” (St. JPII, *Catechesi Tradendae* p. 18)

Short question and answer format before the invention of the printing press in 1437.

Roman Catechism of 1566

- ❖ Bishops' desire to present the fundamental truths of the faith after the Council of Trent (1545-1563)
- ❖ Roman Catechism was the source of local catechisms worldwide until 1978

US Baltimore Catechism

- ❖ In 1844, the USA bishops' at the Council of Baltimore decided to publish a national catechism.
- ❖ Contained 421 questions and answers. Used until 1962, the dawn of the Second Vatican Council.

Catechism of the Catholic Church 1992

- ❖ In 1985, a Synod of Bishops convened in Rome on the 30th anniversary of Vatican II. Call for a new catechism.
- ❖ It would serve as a reference book for national catechisms.
- ❖ It was published in 1992, modified in 1997.
(*Modification reflected St. John Paul's desire to be clear regarding the death penalty.*) Revised edition in English in 2000.

Structure of the Catechism

- ❖ The Profession of Faith (*Creed*)
- ❖ The celebration of the Christian Mysteries (*Sacraments*)
- ❖ Life in Christ (*Morality*)
- ❖ Christian Prayer

Our Capacity for God

- ❖ Our desire for God. The desire for God is written in the human heart, because man is created by God and for God. CCC 29.
- ❖ “Our hearts is restless until it rests in you.” St Augustine

Knowing God

- ❖ Through **creation**. “The heavens proclaim the glory of God!” Ps 19. “ever since the creation of the world, his invisible attributes of eternal power and divinity have been able to be understood and perceived in what he has made.”
- ❖ The order, harmony, and beauty of the cosmos points to a creator.
- ❖ Through the **human person**. God has planted in every human heart the hunger and longing for the infinite—for nothing less than Himself.

Late have I loved you, Beauty so ancient and so new, late have I loved you!

Lo, you were within,
but I outside, seeking there for you,
and upon the shapely things you have made
I rushed headlong – I, misshapen.

You were with me, but I was not with you.

They held me back far from you,
those things which would have no being,
were they not in you.

You called, shouted, broke through my deafness;
you flared, blazed, banished my blindness;
you lavished your fragrance, I gasped; and now I pant for you;
I tasted you, and now I hunger and thirst;
you touched me, and I burned for your peace.

While we can come to know something about God through our natural power of reason, there is a deeper knowledge of God that comes to us through **Divine Revelation.** *US Catechism*