

1. What is prayer?

Prayer is a gift from God by which we come to share in God's love. In prayer, we listen to God and also talk to God. At times, prayer is simply resting in the presence of God.

2. What is a sacrament?

A sacrament is a prayer of the church that is composed of an outward sign, instituted by Christ that conveys grace.

3. How many sacraments are there?

There are seven sacraments:

1. Baptism
2. Confirmation
3. Eucharist
4. Reconciliation or Penance
5. Anointing of the Sick
6. Marriage
7. Holy Orders

4. What is the Eucharist?

The Eucharist, also called the Mass, is the special thanksgiving prayer of the Church in which Jesus teaches and nourishes us, through the power of the Holy Spirit.

5. Who is present when we celebrate Mass?

Jesus is present when we celebrate Mass. He is present in the community that gathers, in the Word that is proclaimed, and in a special way, the Bread and Wine that are consecrated and shared.

6 Why do Catholics go to Mass on Sunday?

Catholics have been going to Mass on Sunday since the early days of the Church. We believe that Jesus wants us to gather together on the day that he rose from the dead so that we may experience the reality of his victory over sin and death. When all is said and done, we go because he said: "Do this in memory of me" and we gather to truly receive the Lord in Communion.

7. What does the word "Eucharist" mean?

The word means "to give thanks"

8. What happens to our gifts of bread and wine at Mass?

The Holy Spirit transforms them into the real presence of Jesus so that we may be one with God. Catholics call this mystery "transubstantiation".

9. Is the Mass a sacrifice or a meal?

The Mass is both a sacrifice, in that it is the offering of Jesus to the Father and it is a meal in that we are called to take and eat.

10. What commandment did Jesus give at the Last Supper?

Love one another as I have loved you.

11. What do Catholics do when they pray to saints?

When we pray to saints, we are asking them to pray to God with and for us. We believe that they are now in God's presence, and that they share in God's love. We ask them to remember us as friends who need God's help. We honor them, but not with the honor that belongs to God alone.

12. Why do Catholics pray to statues or crucifixes?

We pray to the persons that the images remind us. They merely help us to be present to that person in our prayers.

13. What is the weekend mass schedule here at St. Joseph's?

Masses are celebrated at 5:30pm on Saturday, and 8:00am, 10:00am, and 12:00nn on Sunday.

14. What is the weekday mass schedule at St. Joseph's?

Mass is celebrated at 8:15am on Monday through Friday.

15. What are the responsibilities of a sponsor?

A sponsor for Baptism or confirmation is expected to share faith with the person they sponsor, and to care about that person's growth in faith. In the care of infants, they help parents in fostering growth in faith for the child.

16. Who made us?

God made us.

17. Who is God?

God is the Supreme Being who made all things?

18. Why did God make us?

God made us to know Him, to love Him, and to serve Him in this world, and to be happy with Him forever in heaven.

19. Is there only one God?

Yes, there is only one God, the Blessed Trinity.

20. What is the Blessed Trinity?

The Holy Trinity is one God in communion of three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

21. Who is God the Father?

God the Father is the first person of the Blessed Trinity, and the Creator of all that is.

22. Who is God the Son?

God the Son is the second person of the Blessed Trinity, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Brother.

23. Who is the Holy Spirit?

The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Blessed Trinity, the Sanctifier, Comforter, Paraclete and Advocate.

24. What are the Sacraments of Initiation?

The Sacraments of Initiation are Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist, These three sacraments make us fully part of the Church.

25. What is Baptism?

Baptism is the sacrament by which we become members of the Church, and as such, are freed from the power of sin. In Baptism, we are called to share in Jesus' ministry and mission.

26. What are the signs of Baptism?

Water is poured and the bishop, priest, or deacon says: "I Baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." In an emergency, anyone may Baptize.

27. What is confirmation?

We receive the Holy Spirit in a special way, as the apostles did at Pentecost. It is a sealing of the gifts of the Holy Spirit that was originally celebrated at the time of Baptism. The bishop, or the priest when given permission by the bishop, confirms by laying his hands on your head, anointing the forehead with oil of chrism and saying: "Be sealed with the gifts of the Holy Spirit".

28. What are the signs of confirmation?

The bishop or priest, when given permission by the bishop, confirms by laying his hands on your head, anointing the forehead with oil of chrism, and saying: "Be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit."

29. What are the gifts of the Holy Spirit?

The gifts of the Holy Spirit are: Wisdom, Understanding, Knowledge, Counsel, Piety, Fortitude, and Fear of the Lord.

30. When did Jesus give his disciples the gift of the Holy Spirit?

Scripture answers this question in several ways. It tells us that He gave the gift of the Spirit when He visited them after His resurrection. It also tells us that the Spirit came upon the disciples at Pentecost. What is being said is that the gift of the Holy Spirit is a Resurrection gift, and that in making us one with God, it offers the assurance that sin is forgiven. It also calls us and empowers us to share in Jesus' saving mission.

31. What is Anointing of the Sick?

Anointing of the Sick is the sacrament during which the Church prays for the sick, asking God to prevent spiritual illness and if it is God's will, to heal physical illness, through the anointing with oil that the priest confers.

32. What is Matrimony?

Matrimony is the sacrament by which two Christians promise to love each other faithfully, for life. In this sacrament, the two people become a sign to all of the love of Christ.

33. What is Holy Orders?

Holy Orders is the sacrament through which men are called to serve as bishops, priests or deacons in ministries of service, teaching and leadership.

34. May women be ordained?

The present teaching of the Catholic Church is that women may not be ordained. However, women are able to serve in many non-ordained ministries in the Church.

35. At what age is a member of the parish expected to contribute to the support of the parish?

Upon beginning preparation for the sacrament of Confirmation, it is expected that the person will support the parish by participating and by contributing according to their means.

36. What is the Church's law about marriage?

Catholic Christians may marry anyone they want to marry, as long as both parties are free to marry. However, they are to meet with their parish priest who will help them to prepare for marriage. Usually they marry in the Catholic Church and have two witnesses. In special circumstances, the bishop may give permission to marry in a non-Catholic Church but the Catholic must ask for this permission, not just do it on his/her own.

37. What is the name of the Christian Scripture?

The Bible is the Christian Scripture.

38. How is the Bible divided?

The Bible is divided into the Old Testament (or the Hebrew Scripture), and the New Testament.

39. Which books of the New Testament are the oldest written record of the Christian Community?

The letters of Saint Paul are the oldest written records on Christianity.

40. Name the four evangelists?

The four evangelists are Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

41. What is the oldest Gospel?

Scholars believe that the Gospel according to Mark is the oldest.

42. Is the Bible a history book?

The Bible is not meant to be a history book, although there is a great deal of history in the Bible. It is, however, a witness to the faith of Jews and Christians in the love of God for us, and of the actions of God in human history. It tells the story of God's love in many different ways, especially by poetry, story, narrative and history.

43. What do Catholics believe about the Bible?

Catholics believe that the Bible is the inspired word of God. The Bible, as interpreted by the Church, serves as the guide for Christian living.

44. What is Advent?

Advent is the preparation time for Christmas, beginning four Sundays before Christmas, and ending with Christmas.

45. Who is Jesus?

Jesus is a person like us in all things but sin. He is the Son of God, the second person of the Blessed Trinity, who became like us so that we could become one with God.

46. What do we call the mystery of the Son of God becoming one with us, taking on our flesh and blood? We call this the Incarnation.

47. When Jesus used the Bible, what did he use?

Our Lord used the Old Testament as his Bible.

48. What do we mean when we say Jesus redeems us?

By redemption, we mean that Jesus has overcome the power of sin, and given to us the help we need to become fully human by loving God and others.

49. Did Jesus die on the cross?

Yes, Jesus did die on the cross, and most of his followers abandoned him. Mary, His mother, John, the beloved Disciple and some women, among them Mary Magdalene remained with Him until the end.

50. What happened after Jesus died?

Scripture tells us that on the third day, Jesus rose from the dead and came to tell his frightened disciples that He forgave them for abandoning Him. He also told them to share the grace of forgiveness with others. He asked them to tell all people about Him so that they too could share in God's love.

51. What does Resurrection mean?

Resurrection means that Jesus rose from the dead and that he is now glorified with God.

52. Has anyone else experienced this gift of Resurrection?

The Catholic Church believes that all faithful people will be raised to the glory at the end of time. We also believe that the Blessed Virgin Mary already shares in this gift, because she is the mother of Jesus and the Model Disciple.

53. What do we call this special grace granted to Mary?

We call it the Assumption of Mary which is celebrated each year on August 15th.

54. What is man/woman?

Men and women are creatures who are made in the image and likeness of God, who share in the creative power of God's love.

55. If we are created with such a great dignity, what happened?

We are created to be free so that we can love. In our freedom, we sometimes make choices that are contrary to God's loving plan for creation.

56. When we make choices that oppose God's loving will for us and others, what is this called?

To choose against God's loving will is to sin.

57. How did sin begin?

From the beginning of creation, men and women have made choices that oppose God's loving will. The Scripture tells us in the story of Adam and Eve that sin began with our choice and that our choice was freely made.

58. What does a Catholic call this sinful condition into which we are born?

We call this original sin.

59. Was anyone ever born free from original sin?

The Blessed Virgin Mary, Jesus' mother, was born free from original sin as a special sharing in the redeeming love of God in Jesus. This is called her Immaculate Conception.

60. What is actual sin?

Actual sin is any willful thought, desire, word, action or omission that is contrary to God's will.

61. What kinds of actual sin are there?

There are two kinds of actual sin: mortal sin and venial sin.

62. What is mortal sin?

Mortal sin is a serious, freely chosen offense against the law of love that God reveals in Jesus.

63. What is the effect of mortal sin?

Mortal sin destroys the person's relationship with God. In effect, mortal sin is a conscious, free choice to live life without God.

64. What are some common serious sins that people commit today?

Some common sins are drug abuse, alcohol abuse, stealing, lying, shop lifting, cheating, abortion and careless driving. Anything that does not represent the sacred dignity of a person, yourself, or another is a serious sin.

65. What is venial sin?

Venial sin is a less serious offense against God's law of love.

66. When we sin, does God abandon us?

God does not abandon us when we sin. God sent Jesus the Savior into our world to free us from the power of sin and call us to live with God and others.

67. Name the Ten Commandments.

The Ten Commandments are:

- 1 I am the Lord your God, you shall not have strange gods before me.
- 2 You shall not take the name of the Lord, your God in vain.
- 3 Remember to keep holy the Lord's day.
- 4 Honor your father and your mother.
- 5 You shall not kill.
- 6 You shall not commit adultery.
- 7 You shall not steal.
- 8 You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
- 9 You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.
- 10 You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.

68. What is meant by the "seal of the confessional"?

The "seal of the confessional" means that the priest may not reveal information that he hears in confession. Whatever the penitent says in confession is privileged information, and may not be used against him/her.

69. Candidates for Confirmation are expected to be able to pray the following prayers by heart:

THE APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again.
He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again 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.

SIGN OF THE CROSS

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name;
Thy kingdom come;
Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
And forgive us our trespasses
As we forgive those who trespass against us,
And lead us not into temptation
But deliver us from evil. Amen.

THE HAIL MARY

Hail Mary! Full of grace,
The Lord is with thee;
Blessed art thou among women,

And blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God,
Pray for us sinners,
Now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

THE GLORY BE

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit;
As it was in the beginning, is now and will be forever. Amen.

THE ACT OF CONTRITION

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended thee. I detest all my sins because of thy just punishments, but most of all because they offend thee, my God, who art all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve, with the help of thy grace, to confess my sins, to do penance, and to amend my life. Amen.

70. What is the Church?

The Church is the community of disciples of Jesus, founded by Jesus, and by the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, sent to continue His saving mission.

71. What does it mean to share in Jesus' mission?

To share in Jesus' mission means to:

1. Proclaim the Gospel to all people.
2. To form community where faith, hope and love are shared.
3. To serve all who are in need, in the name of Jesus.

72. Who are the leaders of the Church founded by Jesus?

Jesus gave a special ministry of leadership to His twelve apostles. They were to govern by serving. Bishops are successors of the apostles.

73. What do Catholics believe about St. Peter?

Catholics believe that St. Peter was entrusted with a ministry to govern the church and ensure the unity of the Church. St. Peter was the first Pope.

He has passed on his leadership to the Popes throughout the ages, including the current Pope.

74. Who do Catholics believe exercises this Petrine Ministry now?

The Bishop of Rome, whom we call the Pope, is the successor of St. Peter in the Petrine Ministry.

75. What is the present Pope's name?

The present Pope is named Benedict XVI.

76. What are the chief marks of the Church?

There are four chief marks of the Church. The Church is: one, holy, Catholic (found throughout the world), and apostolic.

77. Must someone belong to the Church to be saved?

The Catholic Church believes that it is very important that all people come to be a part of the Church. However, we also believe that God's redeeming love is found outside of the visible Church. In the Declaration on Religious Freedom and in the Second Vatican Council, the Church taught that all people of sincere conscience can come to eternal happiness because of God's saving love in Jesus.

78. What is the Catholic term for all those who belong to the Church?

The "communion of saints" is the name of community of the faithful on earth, the blessed in heaven and the people who have died but are still being purified before sharing in God's being in heaven.

79. List the last five Popes, beginning with the present Pope.

Pope Benedict XVI,
Pope John Paul II,
Pope John Paul I,
Pope Paul VI,
Pope John XXIII

80. Name the Archbishop of Washington.

Donald W. Wuerl is the Archbishop of Washington.

81. Are Catholics called to keep any laws besides the Ten Commandments?

Catholics are also to keep the Six Precepts of the Church.

82. What are the Six Precepts of the Church?

The Six Precepts of the Church are:

- 1 To participate in Mass on all Sundays and holy days of obligation.
- 2 To fast and to abstain on the Fridays of Lent and at other times should the Church call a fast.
- 3 To confess your sins at least once a year if you are guilty of serious sin.
- 4 To receive Holy Communion during the Easter Season.
- 5 To contribute to the material support of the Church.
- 6 To observe the laws of the Church concerning marriage.

83. Why do we have the Precepts?

The precepts remind us of the minimum that is expected of someone who is a member of the Church. They call us to remember that we are called to be holy.

84. What is a fast day?

A fast day is a day on which only one full meal is to be taken. Food may be taken at the other meal time. Those over 21 and under 60 are to keep the fast. However, if one is ill or has a medical condition, she/he is not expected to keep this rule. For example, someone with diabetes ought not to fast.

85. What is a day of abstinence?

A day of abstinence is a day on which we are not to eat meat. It is expected that on such days, we will take more simple meals, or make some other sacrifice also.

86. Must a Catholic give a certain amount to support the Church.

A Catholic is to give as they are able to, to support the Church. Christians ought to recognize that supporting the Church is part of being faithful. We ought to give a certain amount, like one

hour's wage per week, or a certain percentage of our week salary. The Bible asks for faithful people to give 10%. The important thing to remember is that regular giving is an act of thanksgiving for all that God has given us.

87. Name the Holy Days of Obligation in the United States.

January 1, the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God.

August 15, The Assumption of Mary

November 1, All Saints Day

December 8, The Feast of the Immaculate Conception

December 25, Christmas Day

88. What is the parish schedule for the Sacrament of Reconciliation?

The sacrament is celebrated each Saturday from 4:00pm to 5:00pm. It is also celebrated whenever someone requests an appointment to receive the sacrament.

89. When is the Sacrament of Reconciliation celebrated communally?

At St Joseph, we have a Parish Penance Service during Advent and during Lent.

90. What is Lent?

Lent is the preparation for Easter, beginning 40 days before Easter with Ash Wednesday, and ending with the Easter Triduum on Holy Thursday.

91. What was Jesus' mission on earth?

Jesus spent His last three years on earth proclaiming the presence of the Reign of God. He told people that the power of God's love was available to them. He called them to turn away from sin and accept God's love. He taught them that God was a forgiving Father. He gathered a community of disciples to share in His mission.

92. Why did the authorities crucify Jesus?

Jesus was crucified because the religious and secular leaders of his day were afraid that his message of the coming of the Reign of God's love would mean the end of their power.

93. Did Jesus mean to overthrow the Roman and Jewish leaders?

No. Jesus never preached violent revolution. He called people to live in a way that would allow God's love to transform creation.

94. What are the two great commandments?

Jesus teaches in Scripture that the two great commandments
First - You shall love the Lord your God with your whole heart, with your whole soul, and with your whole mind, and with your whole strength
Second - You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

95. What are the theological virtues?

We call faith, hope, and charity the theological virtues.

96. What is Faith?

Faith is the virtue given by the Holy Spirit by which we entrust ourselves completely to God, believing and accepting God's gift of love in Jesus. In faith, we commit ourselves to living as if God's Reign had come already.

97. What is hope?

Hope is the virtue by which we look forward to the fulfillment of the Reign of God's love that came in Jesus.

98. What is charity or love?

Charity is the virtue by which we love God above all else, because of God's goodness to us. Charity also means that we love our neighbors as ourselves since Jesus revealed that to truly love God, we must love our neighbor as ourselves.

99. Who is/are your patron saint(s)?

This question is answered differently by each person.

100. What is the Rosary?

The Rosary is a prayer Catholics have prayed for hundreds of years. It consists of various prayers and meditations on the mysteries of Christ's life, and on the life of His mother, Mary.

101. What are the Five Joyful Mysteries?

The Annunciation - The Angel announces to Mary that she will be the mother of Jesus, and, Mary accepts God's will.

The Visitation - Mary visits her relative, Elizabeth, who is pregnant with John the Baptist. John jumps in Elizabeth's womb for joy in the presence of Jesus in Mary's womb.

The Nativity - The birth of Jesus.

The Presentation - Mary and Joseph take the infant, Jesus to the Temple in Jerusalem, and present him to the Lord as the law commanded for a firstborn.

The Finding of the child Jesus in the Temple - Mary and Joseph find the child, Jesus, in the Temple after searching for him. He asks them if they did not know he had to be about His Father's business.

102. What are the Five Sorrowful Mysteries?

The Agony in the Garden - Jesus goes to the Mount of Olives after the Last Supper to pray. He asks the Father to allow Him to live, but He prays that His Father's will be done. He is in great anguish, knowing what awaits Him if he does not run away from Jerusalem.

The Scourging - Jesus is taken by the soldiers and beaten and mocked. He is treated cruelly because He is being faithful to God.

The Crowning with Thorns - Jesus is crowned with thorns by the soldiers who cannot understand that the kingdom he brings is the reign of compassion willed by God for all creation.

Jesus carries the Cross - Jesus carries His cross to Calvary, faithful to His God and Father until the end.

The Crucifixion - Jesus is nailed to the cross and dies.

103. What are the Five Glorious Mysteries?

The Resurrection - Jesus rises from the dead. He is the Lord of the living and the dead. He appears to His disciples and gives them the gift of divine peace and forgiveness.

The Ascension - After being taken with the disciples for forty days, Jesus is taken from their sight after telling them that they are to go to all nations and bring them the good news of God's love in Him. He promises not to leave them alone, but see Him, He will be with them until the end of time.

The Descent of the Holy Spirit - As Jesus promised, the Holy Spirit fills the hearts of the disciples at Pentecost, confirming them in faith and beginning the great building of the Church that will continue to share in Jesus' mission until the end of time.

The Assumption - The Blessed Virgin Mary, at the end of her earthly life, is taken up to heaven. She shares in a special way in the resurrection of the body that we too will share in at the end of time.

The Coronation - The Blessed Virgin is crowned the Queen of Heaven, in recognition to her special place in Jesus' love, and as recognition of her love for all people.

104. What are the Five Luminous Mysteries?

The Baptism of Jesus – Jesus stepped into the Jordan River and was baptized by John, The heavens opened up and God the Father said “This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.”

The Wedding Feast of Cana – At the wedding, Jesus changed water to wine because His Mother, Mary, asked him to help. Mary was one of the first people to believe in Jesus. Jesus performed his first miracle in Cana, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

The Proclamation of the Kingdom of God – Jesus came to Galilee preaching the Good News of God. and that the kingdom of God was near. He told the people to ask for forgiveness and pardoned the sins of all who believed in Him.

The Transfiguration – The Apostles were on Mount Tabor with Jesus. They saw the glory of God shining from Jesus, and then God the Father said “This is my chosen Son, listen to Him.

The Institution of the Eucharist – At the Last Supper, Jesus offered His body and blood, under the signs of bread and wine. Then He washed the Apostles' feet. He showed each of us how much He loves us by sharing the Sacrament of the Eucharist.

105. What are the Stations of the Cross?

This is devotion in the Catholic Church by which we remember Jesus' final moments on earth, and in meditating on His willingness to carry the cross, come to know his love more deeply. The actual stations are:

1. Jesus is condemned to death.
2. Jesus accepts His cross.
3. Jesus falls under the weight of the cross.
4. Jesus meets His mother.
5. Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus carry the cross.
6. Veronica wipes the face of Jesus.
7. Jesus falls the second time.
8. Jesus speaks to the women of Jerusalem.
9. Jesus fall the third time.
10. Jesus is stripped of his clothes.
11. Jesus is nailed to the cross.
12. Jesus dies on the cross.
13. Jesus is taken down from the cross.
14. Jesus is buried in the tomb.
15. Jesus rises on the third day. (A recent addition)