



Sacred Catechism

The dogmas of the Christian Faith are contained fully in the Holy Scriptures and in the Tradition of the Church. They are summarized in "The Creed", the Symbol of Faith, which was composed by the First Oecumenical Synod at Nicaea (325 A.D.) and was completed, from the 8th article to the end, by the Second Oecumenical Synod of Constantinople (381 A.D.), and was validated by all subsequent ones.

PART ONE

DOGMAS, OR CONCERNING THE CREED

The Articles of the Creed

Question. **How many articles does the Orthodox Creed have?**

Answer. **The Creed has twelve articles, as follows:**

I. I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible;

II. And in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Only-begotten, begotten of the Father before all ages; Light of Light, true God of true God; begotten, not made; being of one essence with the Father; by Whom all things were made;

III. Who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from the Heavens, and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and became man;

IV. And was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, suffered and was buried;

V. And arose again on the third day according to the Scriptures;

VI. And ascended into the Heavens, and sitteth at the right hand of the Father;

VII. And shall come again, with glory, to judge both the living and the dead; Whose Kingdom shall have no end;

VIII. And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of life; Who proceedeth from the Father; Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified; Who spake by the Prophets;

IX. In One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church.

X. I confess one baptism for the remission of sins.

XI. I look for the resurrection of the dead.

XII. And the life of the age to come. Amen.

*FIRST ARTICLE OF THE CREED
THE HOLY TRINITY*

Ques. What is the First Thing which we are taught by the very beginning of the Creed?

Ans. That there is One God.

Ques. By what is it proved that God exists?

Ans. It is proved first by our own very self, which neither we ourselves could create, nor can anyone else like us create.

Ques. By what else is it proved?

Ans. It is proved by the whole world, the heaven, the earth, and all things that are, which neither were created of themselves, nor is man able to create them.

Ques. What do you conclude from this?

Ans. I conclude that there exists a Being higher than man and the world, Who created the world and man, and this higher Being is God.

Ques. How many persons is God?

Ans. God is Three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; and these Three Persons are the Holy Trinity. The Three together are one and the same God.

Ques. What else have you to say concerning the Three Persons of the Holy Trinity?

Ans. The First Person of the Holy Trinity, the Father, is uncreated and unbegotten; the Second Person, the Son, is uncreated and begotten of the Father; the Third Person, the Holy Spirit, is uncreated and proceeds from the Father.

Ques. What are the chief attributes of God?

Ans. God is one, immaterial, timeless, eternal, omnipresent, omnipotent, all-good, just, all-wise, and generally He is the beginning and the end of all perfection and virtue.

Ques. What else does the first article of the Creed teach us?

Ans. That God created the heaven and the earth, and all things visible and invisible.

Ques. What are the visible things?

Ans. Visible things are all we see, such as the earth, the sun, the stars, man, and generally all natural bodies.

Ques. What are the invisible things?

Ans. Invisible things are all we do not see, such as the souls and the angels.

Ques. What are the angels?

Ans. The angels are immaterial spirits who serve God.

Ques. Are there wicked angels?

Ans. There are demons or devils, whom God created good, but since they willed to set themselves against God, God cast them into the outer fire and punishment.

Ques. What is the activity of the demons?

Ans. They endeavor to draw man to evil and sin; not, however, by force, but with falsehood and deceit.

Ques. To what world does man belong, to the visible and material, or to the invisible and immaterial?

Ans. Man has a visible and material body, and by it he belongs to the visible and material world; but he also has an immaterial and immortal soul, and by it he belongs to the immaterial and invisible world.

Ques. What then is man's rank in creation?

Ans. Man is the highest and most perfect of all visible creatures.

Ques. Of what did God make man?

Ans. God made man of earth, and breathed into him an immaterial and immortal soul.

Ques. Into whose likeness did God make man?

Ans. God made man in His own image and likeness.

Ques. What does this mean?

Ans. It means that God bestowed on man all the qualities which God Himself has, but in a far lower measure and degree.

Ques. Why did God make the world and man?

Ans. God made the world and man in His all-goodness, that they might have a part in His good things.

Ques. Where did God set man, and what did He order him to do?

Ans. He set him in Paradise, and gave him power over all beasts and plants. He ordered him only not to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, because he would die and be miserable.

Ques. Did man keep God's command?

Ans. No, the devil in the form of a serpent deceived Eve, Adam's wife, who ate and gave to Adam, and he ate.

Ques. How were Adam and Eve punished for their disobedience?

Ans. They were driven out of Paradise, and from immortal and happy beings they became mortal and miserable.

Ques. In what consisted the former happiness of Adam and Eve?

Ans. In that they were near to God and always willed and did good, never evil.

Ques. In what consisted the later unhappiness of Adam and Eve?

Ans. In that they were removed far from God, Whom they began also to forget, and in that instead of doing good they were inclined more to do evil.

Ques. What do we call the disobedience of Adam and Eve?

Ans. We call it sin.

Ques. Is sin confined to Adam and Eve alone?

Ans. No, it was transmitted to all men, who are descended from them.

Ques. What were the results of sin?

Ans. The results of Adam and Eve's sin were that man forgot God altogether and was estranged from Him, and that he inclined not to good things which God wills, but to evil things which the devil wills.

Ques. Could not God hinder man from sin by force?

Ans. He could as Almighty, but He would not, because as all-good He had created man with the faculty of free choice and self-control.

Ques. Did not God foresee that man would sin?

Ans. He foresaw it, as He foresees and foreknows all things, both good and bad. Nevertheless, God is not the cause of evil, but the devil, and that man errs who can withstand the devil and avoid evil, and does not do so.

Ques. What means does the devil employ to entice men to sin?

Ans. The fleshy pleasures and enjoyments of man, his evil desires and appetites, and his passions.

Ques. Was it possible for man to be saved and freed by his own effort from the state of sin in which he found himself?

Ans. It was not possible.

Ques. Was he destined then to remain for ever in this state?

Ans. No, because God, as the all-good friend of man, had from the beginning made provision for saving man from sin, when the fitting time should come.

Ques. What is God's Providence?

Ans. We call God's Providence the thought and foresight which God has for the preservation and good of the whole world.

Ques. What is the Providence of God concerning man?

Ans. That man should be saved from sin without violence done to man's free will.

Ques. How was this possible?

Ans. This was impossible to man, but not to God, Who to this end sent upon earth His only begotten Son to save man from sin.

Ques. How did the Son of God accomplish this salvation?

Ans. By becoming man and dying on the Cross.

Ques. Why did He become man?

Ans. To teach man as man, and thus to do no violence to man's free will.

Ques. What result had the teaching and death of the Son of God?

Ans. The saving of man from sin, which was taken away from man, and pardoned by God.

Ques. Why did not this salvation come sooner?

Ans. Because it was necessary that man should be prepared gradually to accept the teaching of the Son of God.

Ques. What was the Law that prepared man for this?

Ans. The Law which God gave by Moses to the Israelites, and which is contained in the Old Testament.

SECOND ARTICLE OF THE CREED

CHRIST

Ques. What is the Second Article in the Creed?

Ans. **“And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all the ages, Light of Light, true God of true God, begotten, not made, of one essence with the Father, by Whom all things were made.”**

Ques. What does this second article of the Creed teach us?

Ans. **It teaches us the attributes of the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, Who is the very Son of God, Who became man and suffered death to save men from sin.**

Ques. What are these attributes of the Second Person?

Ans. That He is the only begotten Son of God, that He was not made by the Father like the creatures, but that He was begotten of Him, Light of Light, and true God of true God, that He is of one essence with the Father, in other words is God, and that through Him the world was made.

THIRD ARTICLE OF THE CREED

OUR SALVATION

Ques. What is the Third Article of the Creed?

Ans. **“Who for us men and for our salvation came down from the Heavens, and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and became man.”**

Ques. What does this article of the Creed teach us?

Ans. **It teaches us that the Son of God descended from the Heavens, and took a human body from the Virgin Mary by the Holy Spirit, and became man.**

Ques. What else does it teach us?

Ans. That Mary remained a Virgin after the birth of her Child, even as she was before that birth.

Ques. What other name was given to Jesus?

Ans. Christ (Χριστός), which means “the Anointed One,” because He was anointed, not however by man, as were the kings, priests and prophets of the Israelites, but by the Holy Spirit.

Ques. When the Son of God became man, did He cease to be God?

Ans. No, the Son of God, when He became man remained also God, as He was before; and thus one and the same Person was God-Man, that is at once God and Man.

Ques. As Jesus Christ has two natures, has He also two wills?

Ans. Yes, one as God and one as Man. The human will is however subjected to the Divine.

Ques. The life and doings of Jesus Christ, were they divine and human?

Ans. Some were divine and others human, He lived as other men, but worked miracles as God.

Ques. Give some instances.

Ans. For instance, when He wept for Lazarus, He wept as man; but when He raised Lazarus from the grave He raised Him as God.

Ques. Give another instance.

Ans. When He slept in Peter's ship, He slept as man; but when He walked on the sea, He walked as God.

Ques. Another.

Ans. When He was persecuted by His enemies and was condemned to death and died and was buried, He suffered as man; but when after three days He rose from the dead He rose as God.

FOURTH ARTICLE OF THE CREED

THE CRUCIFIXION

Ques. **What is the Fourth Article of the Creed?**

Ans. **"He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered, and was buried."**

Ques. **What does this article teach us?**

Ans. **That Jesus Christ was persecuted by the chief priests and scribes of the days of the Governor of Judaea, Pontius Pilate, and that He was condemned and crucified, and died and was buried.**

FIFTH ARTICLE OF THE CREED

THE RESURRECTION

Ques. **What is the Fifth Article of the Creed?**

Ans. **"And He ascended into the Heavens and sitteth on the right hand of the Father."**

Ques. **What does this article teach us?**

Ans. **That Jesus Christ was taken up into Heaven forty days after His resurrection.**

Ques. What did Jesus Christ do on earth during forty days?

Ans. He appeared to His disciples, whom He commanded to go out into the world and to teach His Gospel.

Ques. What else did He command them?

Ans. To baptize all who believed in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. He gave them also authority to forgive sins.

Ques. How was Jesus Christ taken up into Heaven, as God, or as man with His human body?

Ans. With His human body, because as God He existed always, in Heaven and everywhere.

SEVENTH ARTICLE OF THE CREED

THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

Ques. What is the Seventh Article of the Creed?

Ans. "And shall come again with glory to judge the living and the dead."

Ques. What does this article teach us?

Ans. It teaches us that our Savior Jesus Christ shall appear once again to judge all the world, both the living and the dead.

Ques. When and how will this Second Coming of Christ be?

Ans. When the consummation comes, that is, the end of the world, then the souls of the dead will be united to their bodies, and together with all that are alive, will be caught up suddenly, and will appear before Christ, that he may judge them.

Ques. Will this Second Coming of Christ be like the First?

Ans. No, because at His First Coming He appeared to men as a lowly man, while at His Second He will come with all His Glory and Might and Majesty, as God.

Ques. After what manner will be the Judgment of men and their Retribution?

Ans. On the right hand of the throne where Christ shall sit will be set the just and the virtuous, and on the left hand sinners and wicked men. And after telling the first all the good things they did He shall send them to everlasting joy and life and blessedness; but the others, after telling them all the bad things they did, He shall send into the outer fire, where they will be punished.

EIGHTH ARTICLE OF THE CREED

THE HOLY SPIRIT

Ques. What is the Eighth Article of the Creed?

Ans. "And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of life, Who proceedeth from the Father; Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified; Who spake by the Prophets.

Ques. What does this article of the Creed teach us?

Ans. It teaches us the attributes of the Third Person of the Holy Trinity, that is the Holy Spirit, mentioned also at the beginning of the Creed.

Ques. Why is it said that the Holy Spirit is the Giver of Life, and that He spoke by the Prophets?

Ans. Because the Holy Spirit gives Divine grace and life to man, and because He spoke by the mouth of the Prophets all that they said and wrote.

Ques. What are the effects of the Divine grace and life which the Holy Spirit gives to man?

Ans. The enlightenment of the mind and the sanctification of the heart of man.

Ques. What spiritual gifts does man acquire with the enlightenment of his mind?

Ans. He draws near to God and is thus strengthened to overcome the devil and to flee from sin, and to desire and do what is good.

Ques. Can all men acquire the grace of the Holy Spirit?

Ans. All have the power, but not all have the will to do so.

Ques. Why?

Ans. Because the Holy Spirit gives the Divine grace to those who are worthy; and in order that a man may become worthy he must have the fear of God and great faith and devotion towards Him, to which very few attain.

Ques. Were only the Prophets found worthy of the grace of the Holy Spirit?

Ans. No. Many other holy and saintly men of the Old Dispensation.

Ques. What others?

Ans. First and chiefest of all, the Disciples and Apostles of Jesus Christ, on whose heads the Holy Spirit descended in the shape of flames of fire on the fiftieth day [Pentecost] after the Resurrection of Christ.

Ques. What others in a lesser degree?

Ans. The holy Fathers of the Church who assembled in the Oecumenical Synods.

THE SEVEN OECUMENICAL SYNODS

Ques. What is an Oecumenical Synod?

Ans. An Oecumenical Synod is a meeting of the holy Fathers and Teachers of the Church from all parts of the world to discuss and decide questions of the Christian faith.

Ques. How many such Oecumenical Synods have there been?

Ans. Seven. The first of these compiled the Creed.

HOLY TRADITION

Ques. All things that holy men, enlightened and guided by the Holy Spirit, said, are they written, or did some remain unwritten?

Ans. Some remained unwritten, which have been preserved in the Church by Tradition from the time of the Apostles until today.

Ques. Give some examples.

Ans. That we should turn to the East in prayer; that we should make the sign of the cross; that priests should wear a peculiar dress; that we should light sacred lamps in the Church; and many others.

NINTH ARTICLE OF THE CREED

THE CHURCH

Ques. **What is the Ninth Article of the Creed?**

Ans. **"In one Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church."**

Ques. **What does this article of the Creed teach us?**

Ans. **It teaches us the attributes of the Church of Christ.**

Ques. What are these attributes?

Ans. That the Church of Christ is one, and not many; that it is holy, because it was sanctified by Christ; that it is Apostolic, because it is governed and administered according to the teaching and Tradition of the Apostles; that it is Catholic (Universal), because it is world-wide and makes no distinction of places and races.

Ques. What is it that we call the Church?

Ans. By the Church we mean the whole body of Christians, that is, the whole body of men, women, and children who believe in Jesus Christ, have been baptized in the name of the Holy Trinity, and believe what Holy Scripture, Tradition, and the Seven Oecumenical Councils teach.

Ques. Who is the Head, and who are the Members of the Church?

Ans. The Head of the Church is Christ, and all Orthodox Christians are its Members.

Ques. Who governs and administers the Church?

Ans. The Bishops and their representatives, Presbyters or Priests who receive the gift of Orders from the Bishops, who derived it in succession from the Apostles.

Ques. What is the work of the Bishops and Priests?

Ans. First, to preach the Word of God; secondly, to administer the Divine Mysteries; and thirdly, to govern the Church.

Ques. When was the Church of Christ first established?

Ans. It was established first of all in the time of Christ and His Apostles at Jerusalem, and thence gradually through the preaching of the Apostles and their successors it has been spread abroad in all the world.

Ques. Did the Church suffer persecutions and wars?

Ans. The Church suffered many fearful and murderous persecutions, in which Christians who would not deny Christ were killed, after they had suffered many savage and terrible torments.

Ques. Who are these brave Christians who preferred to be tortured and put to death rather than deny Christ?

Ans. They are the holy Martyrs of Christ.

Ques. What other kind of persecutions has the Church suffered?

Ans. It has suffered from within the persecutions by heretics, which were even worse than the persecutions by idolaters from without.

Ques. What did these heretics seek to do with their heresies?

Ans. They sought to cast out from the Church the doctrines which it had received from Christ and from the Apostles, and to bring in their own false and blasphemous doctrines.

Ques. Was it only of old time that there were such heresies and heretics, or do they exist even now?

Ans. They exist, unhappily, even now, in very great numbers.

Ques. What are the greatest of these heresies?

Ans. The first is the heresy of the Latins, Westerns, or Papists, who have been separated from the true Church of Christ, and are subject to the Pope of Rome.

Ques. What other?

Ans. Next are the Protestants, who have been separated from the Pope, and are no longer subject to him. They are divided into Lutherans, Calvinists, and numberless other heresies.

Ques. Which is the true Church of Christ?

Ans. The only true Church is the Eastern Orthodox Church.

Ques. Why is this Church commonly called "Eastern"?

Ans. Because most of the Christians of this Church live in the East.

Ques. Why is it called Orthodox?

Ans. Because it judges *rightly* (*orthos*), that is, it professes and teaches the true dogmas of the Christian Faith, as it received them from Christ, and from the Apostles, and as the Seven Oecumenical Synods explained them.

Ques. Who are the spiritual chiefs of the Orthodox Church?

Ans. The Patriarch of Constantinople, and the Patriarchs of Jerusalem, Antioch and Alexandria.

TENTH ARTICLE OF THE CREED

HOLY BAPTISM

Ques. What is the Tenth Article of the Creed?

Ans. "I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins."

Ques. What does this tenth article teach us?

Ans. That the Christian faith is not sufficient if one does not receive Baptism, which is one of the Seven Divine Mysteries, touching which the Second part of this Catechism will treat.

ELEVENTH ARTICLE OF THE CREED

THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

Ques. What is the Eleventh Article of the Creed?

Ans. "I expect the resurrection of the dead."

Ques. What does this article teach us?

Ans. That the dead shall live again at the Second Coming of Christ, as we have learned.

TWELFTH ARTICLE OF THE CREED

THE FUTURE LIFE

Ques. What is the Twelfth Article of the Creed?

Ans. That after the Second Coming of Christ there shall follow a life eternal, unending, bringing joy and happiness to the just and virtuous, but suffering to sinners.

PART TWO

DIVINE WORSHIP, OR CONCERNING THE DIVINE MYSTERIES

Ques. What have we been taught so far in Part One of the Catechism?

Ans. We have been taught the Dogmas of the Christian Faith, that is, what a Christian must believe in order to find his salvation.

Ques. What is the Christian's salvation?

Ans. To be saved from sin, that he may enjoy hereafter eternal life and bliss.

Ques. What are we to be taught in Part Two of the Catechism?

Ans. We shall be taught how a Christian must worship God.

WORSHIP

Ques. What do you mean by Divine Worship?

Ans. The manifesting by outward signs our faith in God.

Ques. By Divine Worship do we only make an outward show of our faith, or do we also acquire Divine Grace?

Ans. Yes, indeed, we also acquire Divine Grace through the Holy Spirit.

Ques. What are the most important forms of worship by which we acquire Divine Grace?

Ans. The Divine Mysteries.

Ques. How many are the Divine Mysteries, and which are they?

Ans. Seven: 1) Holy Baptism, 2) Holy Chrism, 3) Divine Communion or the Eucharist, 4) Confession, 5) Holy Orders, 6) Holy Matrimony, and 7) Holy Unction.

Ques. By whom and where are the Holy Mysteries celebrated?

Ans. By the priests, in the temple of God, the church.

Ques. What do you mean by a sacred rite?

Ans. All the sacred acts, such as the prayers and supplications of the priest and of the faithful, by which the administration of the Holy Mysteries is accompanied, come under the term "sacred rite."

Ques. How is prayer offered in the church, aloud or in thought?

Ans. Aloud, by the priests sometimes, by the chanters always; the rest of the faithful follow the prayers of the priests and the thanksgivings of the chanters with silent prayer.

THE DIVINE LITURGY

Ques. What is the chief rite of the Church?

Ans. The Divine Liturgy, in which is celebrated the Mystery of the Divine Eucharist.

Ques. Speaking generally, what is a Service?

Ans. A Service is the whole body of prayers and thanksgivings which the priests and the chanters read and chant before God in the church.

Ques. The chief services of the Church, which Christians ought especially to attend, how many are they?

Ans. Three: **Vespers**, toward the evening, **Orthros (Matins)**, about the dawn, and the **Divine Liturgy**, after Orthros.

Ques. When is the Divine Liturgy celebrated?

Ans. Every day, with the exception of certain fixed days, but indispensably every Sunday, the day which is kept as a feast in memory and honor of Christ's resurrection, and on every feast of Christ, of the Theotokos, and of the other Saints.

THE DIVINE MYSTERIES

1) HOLY BAPTISM

Ques. **What is the first Mystery, and how is it celebrated?**

Ans. **The first Mystery is Baptism, which was ordained by Christ Himself. In this Mystery the Christian is immersed in water three times, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.**

Ques. What is the Divine Grace which the Christian acquires with Holy Baptism?

Ans. With Holy Baptism, which he receives only once in his life, the Christian is cleansed from ancestral sin and from all sins into which he has fallen before he was baptized, and he becomes at the same time a member of the Church of Christ.

Ques. What is required before a person be baptized?

Ans. It is required that he should renounce the devil and his works, that is, sin, and confess that he has full faith in Jesus Christ.

Ques. How does the person about to be baptized make this confession of faith?

Ans. He recites the Creed, in which is contained the Christian Faith.

Ques. How, then, are infants baptized, when by reason of their age they cannot have faith in Christ?

Ans. They are baptized because the *sponsor* recites, as the representative of the infants, the Creed, and accepts before God and men the promise and obligation to teach and catechize, if necessary, the children who are baptized, when they come to an age to understand.

2) HOLY CHRISM

Ques. **What is the second Holy Mystery?**

Ans. **Holy Chrism, with which are anointed the chief members of the body of the person who has been baptized.**

Ques. What is the meaning and aim of Holy Chrism?

Ans. With the Holy Chrism the person baptized receives the gifts of the Holy Spirit, by which he advances in every good work.

3) THE DIVINE EUCHARIST

Ques. What is the third Holy Mystery?

Ans. **The third Holy Mystery is the Divine Eucharist, which is also called Holy Communion. Our Lord Jesus Christ instituted this Mystery when He ate for the last time before the Passover with His disciples at the Mystical Supper.**

Ques. What did Christ do, and what did He say at the Mystical Supper?

Ans. He took bread, and when He had broken it, He divided it among His disciples and said: "Take, eat, this is My Body." Then He took the cup with wine and gave it to His disciples, saying: "Drink of this all of you, this is My Blood. Do this always in remembrance of Me."

Ques. By whom, when, and where is the Mystery of the Eucharist celebrated?

Ans. By the priest in the Divine Liturgy on the Holy Table which is in the midst of the Holy Bema of the church.

Ques. How is this Holy Mystery celebrated, and how do Christians communicate in it?

Ans. The priest takes bread, and wine with water, which through the prayers of the priest, and the devotions and supplications of the Church, are changed by the Holy Spirit, and the bread becomes the Body of Christ, and the wine His Blood. Thus the Christian partakes of the very Body and Blood of Christ, even though the Holy Communion has the taste not of flesh and blood, but of bread and wine.

Ques. What is the aim of this Holy Mystery?

Ans. The Christian partaking of the sacred Body and Blood of our Savior Christ is made one with Him, and thus acquires the strongest weapon against the devil and sin, and is sanctified and strengthened to do works good and pleasing to God.

Ques. How often should a Christian partake of the Holy Communion?

Ans. As often as possible, if he is able; but it is hard to always be ready and worthy of the Holy Communion. The Christian should receive Holy Communion at least four times a year, after first fasting during the four fasts: before Christmas, Pascha, the Holy Apostles, and the Dormition of the Theotokos.

Ques. What is the preparation which is required of the Christian before he receives Holy Communion?

Ans. He ought to examine himself, to see what sins he has committed; to be deeply sorry for them; to repent sincerely; and to determine steadfastly and inexorably that he will sin no more.

Ques. Then what should he do?

Ans. Go to his Spiritual Father, to whom he should confess all his sins, without hiding through fear or shame the least of them; assure him that he has repented; and if the sins are venial, the Spiritual Father forgives them and gives the person who confesses them leave to receive Holy Communion. If, however, they are serious, he repels him until he has fulfilled the ecclesiastical penances which he imposes on the confessant.

Ques. Is the Holy Mystery of the Eucharist necessary to salvation?

Ans. The Christian cannot be saved unless he receives Holy Communion. However, he must be prepared, as we have said, because as much benefit as Holy Communion brings to him who receives it worthily, so much injury it brings to him who receives it unworthily.

4) REPENTANCE AND CONFESSION

Ques. What is the fourth Holy Mystery, and what is its meaning?

Ans. **The fourth Holy Mystery is Repentance and Confession. In this Mystery he who confesses his sins and repents of them from the depths of his soul and heart, invokes the mercy of God, and through the priest receives from God the forgiveness of his sins.**

Ques. From whom does the priest have authority to forgive sins?

Ans. The priest receives this authority from the bishop, who has it in succession from the Apostles. Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself gave this authority to the Apostles.

5) HOLY ORDERS

Ques. What is the fifth Holy Mystery, and what is its meaning?

Ans. **The fifth Holy Mystery is Holy Orders. In this Holy Mystery the Bishop, laying his hands on the candidate, imparts to him from the Holy Spirit the gift of Holy Orders.**

Ques. What is the ministry of the priesthood?

Ans. The preaching of the word of God, the governance of the Church, and above all, the celebration of the Holy Mysteries.

Ques. From whom have the bishops received power and authority to confer the gift of Holy Orders?

Ans. By succession from the Apostles.

Ques. Who have the full dignity of Holy Orders and who do not?

Ans. Priests have the full dignity of Holy Orders, and bishops who confer it on priests, who are subordinate to them. But deacons do not have the grace of Holy Orders in full. They help the bishop and the priest in the celebration of the Holy Mysteries, but deacons do not have the power to celebrate a Holy Mystery.

6) HOLY MATRIMONY

Ques. What is the sixth Holy Mystery and what is done in it?

Ans. **The sixth Holy Mystery is Matrimony. In this Holy Mystery, when the persons betrothed confess their mutual love and determination to be joined together in an honorable marriage, the priest blesses the marriage, and invokes the Divine Grace upon them.**

Ques. What are the duties of the husband and wife?

Ans. The husband should love his wife as his very self and the wife should love her husband and be subject to him as her head, and both should preserve their marriage honorable, and the bed undefiled, and bring up their children in the fear and love of God.

7) HOLY UNCTION

Ques. What is the seventh Holy Mystery and what is its effect?

Ans. The seventh Holy Mystery is the Holy Unction ("Prayer-oil") in which the sick person is anointed with oil and the priest invokes the Divine Grace which heals the infirmities of soul and body.

PART THREE

MORALITY – THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Ques. What have we been taught so far in the First and Second Parts of the Catechism?

Ans. In Part One we have been taught what we ought to believe; in Part Two, how we ought to worship God.

Ques. What remains then for us to be taught in Part Three of the Catechism?

Ans. There remains for us to be taught what we must do to obey the will of God.

Ques. Where has God made His will known?

Ans. In the Divine Law, which is contained briefly in the *Decalogue*, or the *Ten Commandments* (Ex. 20:1-17; Deut. 5:6-21) which God gave to Moses on Mount Sinai, and in the *Nine Beatitudes* of the Gospel.

Ques. What does God's Law teach us?

Ans. To do good works and avoid evil works, that is, sin.

Ques. Is it only God's Law which teaches us to do good and avoid evil?

Ans. No, but also the *conscience*, which is inborn in the heart of every man.

Ques. What is the conscience?

Ans. The conscience is the inmost feeling of our heart which makes us grieve when we do evil and rejoice when we do good.

Ques. Does the conscience suffice to show us how to avoid evil and to do good?

Ans. No: because it is imperfect and corrupted by sin.

Ques. Are *good works* necessary to the Christian's salvation?

Ans. Certainly; in order that a Christian be saved it is not enough that he have faith, it is not enough that he be a partaker of the Holy and Immaculate Mysteries, but he must also live agreeably with God's commands.

Ques. Tell me in two words *what God's Law teaches us*.

Ans. First, *to love God*, and secondly *to love our neighbor as ourselves*.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

1. I am the Lord thy God. Thou shalt have no other gods but Me.
2. Thou shalt not make a graven image, nor the likeness of anything that is in the heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down to them, nor worship them.
3. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.
4. Remember that thou keep the Sabbath day. Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath unto the Lord thy God.
5. Honor thy father and thy mother, that thou mayest prosper and live long upon the earth.
6. Do not kill.
7. Do not commit adultery.
8. Do not steal.
9. Do not bear false witness against thy neighbor.
10. Do not covet thy neighbor's wife. Do not covet thy neighbor's house, nor his field, nor his servant, nor his maid, nor his ox, nor his beast of burden, nor anything that is thy neighbor's.

THE FIRST COMMANDMENT

Ques. What is the First Commandment of the Decalogue?

Ans. "I am the Lord thy God. Thou shalt have no other gods but Me."

Ques. What does this Commandment teach us?

Ans. It teaches us that we must have no other god besides the one and only true God, that very God Who of old brought the Israelites out of Egypt, and freed them from the enslaving yoke of the Egyptians.

Ques. What duty flows from this Commandment?

Ans. Our duty to acknowledge the existence of this true God and His attributes as we were taught them in the Creed.

Ques. What will one feel who studies well these attributes of God?

Ans. Fear and love towards God. Fear, because God is almighty and the Judge of right, Who punishes every sin. Love, because God is kind and all good, Who not only created man and gave him so many bodily and spiritual blessings, but cares always for him as a Father.

Ques. What else will he feel?

Ans. He will feel that God is the only Being to Whom he must devote himself wholly, with the body and the soul, and to Him he must dedicate all his trust, his faith, and his hope.

Ques. What then must we do when we feel all this?

Ans. We must turn to God, as children to our Father, open our hearts to Him, and tell Him what we feel.

Ques. What will the fear and love which we have for our Heavenly Father make us say to Him?

Ans. First, we shall glorify Him and thank Him for all the good He has done us.

Ques. And next?

Ans. We shall beseech Him to keep us as His children.

Ques. And thirdly?

Ans. To help us with His Divine Grace to obey His Holy Will.

Ques. Fourthly?

Ans. To show Himself forgiving and merciful to our faults, promising that we too will display the same forgiveness and mercy to those who err and trespass against us.

Ques. Fifthly?

Ans. To deliver us from the snares of the devil and from sin.

Ques. And lastly?

Ans. To confess His everlasting kingdom, power and glory.

Ques. Is there any prayer which recites all these things which you have just said?

Ans. There is and it is called *The Lord's Prayer*.

Ques. Why is it called The Lord's Payer?

Ans. Because our Lord Jesus Christ taught us to offer to our Heavenly Father this very prayer. The prayer is as follows:

"Our Father, Which art in the Heavens, 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 debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one."

Ques. Must we say only this one prayer to God?

Ans. Not this prayer only, but we must pray to God always. And when we have glorified Him and thanked Him we must ask Him for what we need.

Ques. What ought we to ask in prayer from God.

Ans. Not evil things, for this would be an insult and blasphemy to God, but things good and agreeable to his Law.

Ques. When and where ought we to pray?

Ans. Always and everywhere. But it is our special duty to pray in the morning when we rise from our beds, when we sit down to table to eat and when we rise from it, and before we lie down to sleep.

Ques. Ought we to pray only at home and in private?

Ans. No, we ought to go often to church, in order to praise God there together with our other Christian brethren.

Ques. When is it our special duty to go to church?

Ans. Always when there is a service, but particularly on Sunday to the Divine Liturgy.

Ques. Who sin against God's First Commandment?

Ans. 1. Atheists, who deny God. 2. Idolaters, who believe in many and false gods. 3. Heretics. 4. All who deny Divine Providence. 5. Magicians and suchlike people who hope or promise to do miracles through the power of the devil. 6. Superstitious persons who expect God's grace and help from material things and diverse chance signs.

Ques. Who else sin against the First Commandment?

Ans. All who set their hopes on anyone but God. Such as these are all who deify men or material objects.

Ques. Who are these?

Ans. All who devote themselves body and soul to one man or to many men, because they have authority, power, wealth or some other advantage.

Ques. Are there any others?

Ans. All who devote themselves body and soul to themselves and set all their faith and hope in their own authority and power, or on their natural gifts, or on their wealth.

Ques. Do we sin against this Commandment when we invoke the Theotokos or the other Saints?

Ans. We do not sin, because we do not view these holy persons as God, we only invoke them to intercede for us with Him.

THE SECOND COMMANDMENT

Ques. **What is the Second Commandment?**

Ans. **"Thou shalt not make a graven image, nor the likeness of anything that is in the heaven above, or in the earth below, or in the waters under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down to them, nor worship them."**

Ques. **What does the Second Commandment forbid?**

Ans. It forbids idolatry.

Ques. What is idolatry?

Ans. It is to deify and worship idols, or statues or other likenesses of false gods.

Ques. Who sin against this Commandment?

Ans. Those who worship idols and those who offer worship to themselves. Such are the sensual, the covetous, the proud, and generally all who worship their fleshly desires and pleasures, or passions.

Ques. Does veneration of holy icons transgress this Commandment?

Ans. No, because we do not offer *worship* to the icons of Christ, the Theotokos, and the other Saints, but *honor* and *reverence*, and this, too, is offered to the *person* of Christ Himself, the Theotokos, and the other Saints of God.

THE THIRD COMMANDMENT

Ques. **What is the third Commandment?**

Ans. **"Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain."**

Ques. **What does this Commandment teach us?**

Ans. **That we should use the name of God with all reverence and awe.**

Ques. Who sin against this Commandment?

Ans. Blasphemers; and these are not only persons who utter insults to God or to things divine, but also all who for any reason whatever murmur or complain against God, as well as those who curse or blaspheme men.

Ques. What others?

Ans. Those who take an oath about trifling, unimportant matters, those who swear falsely, and those who fail in and leave undone what they have promised under oath.

Ques. What others?

Ans. Those who use the name of God mechanically or hypocritically in their prayers, and those who ask of God things which are unseemly or even wicked, as well as those who use God's name lyingly and deceitfully.

THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT

Ques. **What is the Fourth Commandment?**

Ans. **"Remember that you keep holy the Sabbath day. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath unto the Lord your God."**

Ques. **What does this Commandment teach us?**

Ans. **It teaches us that a man ought to work all the week, but on the seventh day to stop all work and consecrate it to God.**

Ques. Which is the Seventh Day?

Ans. For the Jews it was Saturday, because on that day [i.e. the seventh day] God rested from the creation of the world; but for Christians it is Sunday [i.e. the first day], because on that day took place the Resurrection of Christ.

Ques. What are the duties which this commandment teaches us?

Ans. It teaches us that we are bound not only not to work on Sunday, and on the other feasts which the Church has honored as days of rest, but also to devote the whole day to God.

Ques. What then should we do on those days?

Ans. We should go to church, to hear and to meditate on the Word of God, and, when we can, we should do works dear and pleasing to God.

Ques. What are these works that are dear and pleasing to God?

Ans. They are alms for the poor, gifts to churches, hospitals, schools, and many other such things.

Ques. Who sin against this Commandment?

Ans. All who without inevitable necessity work on Sunday, or fail to go to church, and all who read books which are not books of piety and spiritually useful, but soul-destroying and deadly.

Ques. What others?

Ans. All who can do alms or contribute to works of common usefulness, and do not do so; all who frequent dances or unseemly spectacles, and all who give themselves up to drunkenness and dissoluteness.

THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT

Ques. What is the Fifth Commandment?

Ans. **"Honor your father and your mother that you may prosper and live long upon the earth."**

Ques. What duties does the Fifth Commandment teach us?

Ans. **That we should reverence, honor, obey, and love our parents, that we should help them when they are poor, and cherish them in old age, passing over their senile weaknesses. All these things we should do with pleasure and good will, not crossly or grudgingly.**

Ques. To whom do we owe the same honor, obedience and help?

Ans. To our country and our king, to the teachers and pastors of the Church, to our professors and masters, to the ruler and chief men of the state, to elders, to our benefactors, and to our patrons and our guardians.

Ques. Is it only children who have duties to their parents, or have parents also duties to their children?

Ans. Parents, too, should help and defend their children in every way, nourish them while they are of tender age, and bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

Ques. What are the duties of the king, of those in authority, and spiritual pastors?

Ans. The king and those in authority must take thought for the safety and just treatment of his citizens, as do the spiritual pastors for the admonition and salvation of the souls of their flocks.

THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT

Ques. What is the Sixth Commandment?

Ans. **"You shall not kill."**

Ques. What does this Commandment teach us?

Ans. **That we ought not to take away the life of our neighbor, and that as love towards our neighbor is our first duty, so the taking away of our neighbor's life is the first of sins and crimes.**

Ques. Who sin against this Commandment?

Ans. Not only those who take their neighbor's life with arms or poison, or in any other way, but also who, having the power, do not use it to prevent murder.

Ques. What others?

Ans. All those who are able to save the poor, hungry and naked from death and do not do it.

Ques. What others?

Ans. All who cherish in themselves, or excite in others, the causes of murder, to wit, envy, passion and hatred.

Ques. Who are those?

Ans. All who sow scandals and divisions among men, and excite their passions and hate by various means.

Ques. Who else sin against the Sixth Commandment?

Ans. Suicides, persons who kill themselves, all who take bribes, or for any reason condemn the innocent and acquit the guilty, as well as those who in a court of justice deny or conceal the truth.

THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT

Ques. What is the Seventh Commandment?

Ans. **"Do not commit adultery."**

Ques. What does this Commandment teach us?

Ans. **That we should not impair our neighbor's honor by causing in anyway whatever an interruption of the mutual wedded confidence and love of a man and his wife.**

Ques. Who sin against this commandment?

Ans. All who allow themselves any fleshly intercourse whatever besides that of a lawful marriage.

Ques. What others?

Ans. All who admit, either in themselves or others, words, deeds and sights which serve as a cause or occasion of any shameful act.

Ques. What are these?

Ans. Filthy talk, reading, filthy or wanton books, going to filthy or wanton shows, the wanton adornments and dresses of fashion, unseemly movements of the body, drunkenness, gluttony, and evil company.

THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT

Ques. What is the Eighth Commandment?

Ans. **"Do not steal."**

Ques. What does this Commandment teach us?

Ans. **That we must not take from our neighbor's property either much or little, nor for any purpose whatever, either good or evil.**

Ques. Who sin against this commandment?

Ans. Not only robbers and thieves, but all who by any kind of fraud, lying or injustice seize or alienate the property of another.

Ques. Who else?

Ans. Usurers, coiners/counterfeiters, men who use false weights or measures, all who adulterate or over-value their wares, especially grains in time of scarcity. All who steal what does not belong to them on occasion of fire or other disturbance, and all who withhold or keep down the wages of their laborers or servants.

Ques. What others?

Ans. Judges who for bribes or other reasons condemn the poor and unprotected, and justify the rich and powerful, and generally rulers and public servants who misuse their authority and position for private ends.

THE NINTH COMMANDMENT

Ques. What is the Ninth Commandment?

Ans. **“Do not bear false witness against your neighbor.”**

Ques. What does this Commandment teach us?

Ans. **Never to tell a lie to our neighbor’s harm. But even though we may not have this intention, a lie is always unpardonable; we must everywhere and always tell the truth.**

Ques. Who sin against this Commandment?

Ans. All who are summoned to a Court as witnesses and do not tell the truth but a lie, and thus are the cause that the guilty man is acquitted and the innocent is put to death or injured in his property, honor or reputation.

Ques. Who else?

Ans. All who falsely charge any one before a court as well as judges who condemn the innocent and acquit the guilty.

Ques. Who else?

Ans. Hypocrites, evil speakers, slanderers, tattlers, and all who traduce the honor and reputation of another in any indirect or crooked way.

Ques. Who else?

Ans. All who envy their neighbor, because all the sins of which we have just spoken of are generally bred of envy which moves a man to displeasure over the material or spiritual good things which his neighbor enjoys.

THE TENTH COMMANDMENT

Ques. What is the Tenth Commandment?

Ans. **“Do not covet your neighbor’s wife. Do not covet your neighbor’s house, nor his field, nor his servant, nor his maid, nor his ox, nor his beast of burden, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor’s.”**

Ques. What does this Commandment teach us?

Ans. **That we must not covet any of our neighbor’s goods because the desire to seize a thing which is not ours makes a man become a murderer, an adulterer, a thief and a liar.**

THE GENERAL PURPOSE OF THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

The purpose of these Ten Commandments is, as was said before, that a man should acquire love towards God and love towards his neighbor. The end of love towards God is to make a man pious and obedient to God’s Law. And the end of love towards one’s neighbor is that a man should not hurt his neighbor, either in his life, his honor or his property. For whoso loves his neighbor as himself does not wish to do to his neighbor that which he would not have his neighbor do to him.

CHRIST'S TEACHING

These Ten Commandments are not sufficient for the Christian who wishes to be perfect. They are not sufficient because the teaching of Jesus Christ is still higher than the teaching of the Old Testament and requires that the Christian shall love his neighbor better than his own self, and shall prefer even to suffer, rather than do wrong to him.

The teaching of Christ is concisely contained in the Nine Beatitudes.

P A R T F O U R

MORALITY

THE NINE BEATITUDES (Matt. 5:3-12)

I. "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven."

II. "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted."

III. "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth."

IV. "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled."

V. "Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy."

VI. "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God."

VII. "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called sons of God."

VIII. "Blessed are they that are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven."

IX. "Blessed are you when men shall revile you and persecute you and say all manner of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in Heaven."

THE FIRST BEATITUDE

"Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven."

Ques. What is the meaning of the First Beatitude?

Ans. Since pride is the first of sins, which cast down the devil, and which is for man also the cause of the greatest evils, for this reason our Savior says that blessed and happy are the poor in spirit, that is the humble-minded, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.

Ques. What is the Kingdom of Heaven?

Ans. The eternal life and blessedness, which the devil lost, and which all the proud will lose, and the humble-minded will gain.

THE SECOND BEATITUDE

“Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.”

Ques. **What is the meaning of the Second Beatitude?**

Ans. Jesus Christ calls blessed all who mourn and are sorry for their sins, for they shall be comforted. For God turns away only from the unrepentant, not from those who repent sincerely.

THE THIRD BEATITUDE

“Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.”

Ques. **What is the meaning of the Third Beatitude?**

Ans. Since the world commonly believed that the earth is governed by fierce passions, by war and blood shedding, the Savior calls blessed those who have no fierce passions, but are gentle and temperate, and say that they shall inherit the earth. And in very deed those who are called Christ’s Apostles, without the sword, and only by the Gospel, inherited the world.

THE FOURTH BEATITUDE

“Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.”

Ques. **What is the meaning of the Fourth Beatitude?**

Ans. Since the world usually thinks that those who are wronged are unhappy, Jesus Christ on the contrary tells us that not they who do wrong are happy, but they who are wronged, for they shall enjoy in Heaven a hundredfold what they lost on earth through injustice and wrong.

THE FIFTH BEATITUDE

“Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.”

Ques. **What is the meaning of the Fifth Beatitude?**

Ans. Jesus Christ teaches us that we ought not only not to steal that which is not ours, but to give also of our own to those who are in want, that is, we should give alms.

Ques. Of how many kinds are the works of charity?

Ans. Two: bodily and spiritual.

Ques. What are the bodily works of charity?

Ans. To feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to visit the ill and prisoners, to receive willingly and to entertain strangers, to bury the dead poor, and generally never to do evil to a neighbor, but always good.

Ques. What are the spiritual works of charity?

Ans. By counsel to set the sinner free from his sin, and to bring him back into the way of salvation: to teach the ignorant the Law of God, to give saving counsel to one's neighbor when he is in danger or difficulty to pray to God for him, and to comfort those who are in trouble and sorrow.

THE SIXTH BEATITUDE

"Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God."

Ques. **What is the meaning of the Sixth Beatitude?**

Ans. Since in the heart are born evil desires, and from evil desires are born evil acts, Jesus Christ calls blessed those who have cleansed their hearts from evil desires, for they shall see God.

THE SEVENTH BEATITUDE

"Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called sons of God."

Ques. **What is the meaning of the Seventh Beatitude?**

Ans. Slander, evil speaking, strife, offences, envy, hatred and war are works of Satan, whilst peace is the work of God. Wherefore our Savior blesses the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

THE EIGHTH BEATITUDE

"Blessed are they that are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven."

Ques. **What is the meaning of the Eighth Beatitude?**

Ans. Jesus Christ blesses not the unjust, who persecute, but those who are unjustly treated and persecuted, for they shall be justified in the Kingdom of Heaven.

THE NINTH BEATITUDE

"Blessed are you, when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my Sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad: for great is your reward in Heaven."

Ques. **What is the meaning of the Ninth Beatitude?**

Ans. The disciples and followers of Christ not only shall be wronged and persecuted, but shall be reviled and be evilly spoken of and shall endure all kinds of insults and mockery, and lying charges for the sake of Jesus Christ. But this is the greatest happiness and blessedness of any Christian who is thought worthy to suffer these things for Christ's sake. Joy and great gladness is his, because he has reached the highest step of Christian perfection, and great shall be his reward in the Kingdom of Heaven.