



HOW DO WE KNOW WHAT TO BELIEVE?



GOSPEL



ANSWERS

THEY SAID TO HIM, "WHAT SIGN CAN YOU DO, THAT WE MAY BELIEVE IN YOU?" JESUS SAID TO THEM, "I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE; WHOEVER COMES TO ME WILL NEVER HUNGER, BUT I TOLD YOU THAT ALTHOUGH YOU HAVE SEEN ME, YOU DO NOT BELIEVE. FOR THIS IS THE WILL OF MY FATHER, THAT EVERYONE WHO SEES THE SON AND BELIEVES IN HIM MAY HAVE ETERNAL LIFE,

- JOHN 6:22-69

SAINTS & INSPIRATIONAL STORIES

DOROTHY DAY

Dorothy Day was a person who was in search for the true faith and wanted to find answers to her questions. Through the example of other people, she was led down a path where she learned what we believed as Catholics. She then in turn taught that faith to others.



ST BRIGID OF IRELAND

St Brigid of Ireland played an important role in the history of the Catholic Church in Ireland. She took her faith seriously and once she encountered God, she made it her mission in life to help other people know what believe.



TEAM DISCUSSION

After reading over the YOUCAT numbers on the following pages, how do you think the Youth Catechism answers the question of the week? Were there any words or ideas that you did not fully understand that you would like to understand better?

ANSWER IN YOUR OWN WORDS:



YOUCAT NUMBERS FOR THIS WEEK



#11: WHY DO WE HAND ON THE FAITH? We hand on the faith because Jesus commands us: “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations” (Mt 28:19). No genuine Christian leaves the transmission of the faith exclusively to specialists (teachers, pastors, missionaries). We are Christ for others. This means that every genuine Christian would like God to come to other people, too. He says to himself, “The Lord needs me! I have been baptized and confirmed and am responsible for helping the people around me to learn about God and ‘to come to the knowledge of the truth’ (1 Tim 2:4b).” Mother Teresa used a good comparison: “Often you can see power lines running alongside the street. Unless current is flowing through them, there is no light. The power line is you and I! The current is God! We have the power to allow the current to flow through us and thus to generate the light of the world: JESUS—or to refuse to be used and, thus, allow the darkness to spread.”

#12: HOW CAN WE TELL WHAT BELONGS TO THE TRUE FAITH? We find the true faith in Sacred Scripture and in the living Tradition of the Church. The NEW TESTAMENT developed out of the faith of the Church. Scripture and Tradition belong together. Handing on the faith does not occur primarily through documents. In the early Church it was said that Sacred Scripture was “written on the heart of the Church rather than on parchment”. The disciples and the APOSTLES experienced their new life above all through a living fellowship with Jesus. The early Church invited people into this fellowship, which continued in a different way after the Resurrection. The first Christians held fast “to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of the bread and to the prayers” (Acts 2:42). They were united with one another and yet had room for others. This is part of our faith to this day: Christians invite other individuals to come to know a fellowship with God that has been preserved unaltered since the times of the apostles in the Catholic Church.

#13 CAN THE CHURCH ERR IN QUESTIONS OF FAITH? The faithful as a whole cannot err in faith, because Jesus promised his disciples that he would send them the Spirit of truth and keep them in the truth (Jn 14:17). Just as the disciples believed Jesus with their whole heart, a Christian can rely completely on the Church when he asks about the way to life. Since Jesus Christ himself gave his apostles the commission to teach, the Church has a teaching authority (the MAGISTERIUM) and must not remain silent. Although individual members of the Church can err and even make serious mistakes, the Church as a whole can never fall away from God’s truth. The Church carries through the ages a living truth that is greater than herself. We speak about a depositum fidei, a deposit of faith that is to be preserved. If such a truth is publicly disputed or distorted, the Church is called upon to clarify again “what has always and everywhere been believed by all” (St. Vincent of Lerins, d. 450).



CONQUEST WEEKLY ACTIVITY GUIDE

CREED (FROM THE LATIN Credo = I BELIEVE): THE FIRST WORD OF THE APOSTLES' CREED BECAME THE NAME FOR VARIOUS FORMULAS OF THE CHURCH'S PROFESSION OF FAITH, IN WHICH THE ESSENTIAL CONTENTS OF THE FAITH ARE AUTHORITATIVELY SUMMARIZED.



#23 IS THERE A CONTRADICTION BETWEEN FAITH AND SCIENCE?

There is no insoluble contradiction between faith and science, because there cannot be two kinds of truth. There is not one truth of faith that is in competition with another truth of science. There is only one truth, to which both faith and scientific reason refer. God intended reason, with which we can recognize the rational structures of the world, just as he intended faith. That is why the Christian faith demands and promotes the (natural) sciences. Faith exists so that we might know things that are not apparent to reason yet are real above and beyond reason. Faith reminds science that it is supposed to serve creation and not set itself up in place of God. Science must respect human dignity instead of violating it.

#24 WHAT DOES MY FAITH HAVE TO DO WITH THE CHURCH? No one can believe alone and by himself, just as no one can live alone and by himself. We receive the faith from the Church and live it out in fellowship with the people with whom we share our faith. Faith is the most personal thing a person has, yet it is not a private matter. Anyone who wants to believe must be able to say both "I" and "we", because a faith you cannot share and communicate would be irrational. The individual believer gives his free assent to the "we believe" of the Church. From her he received the faith. She was the one who handed it down through the centuries and then to him, preserved it from falsifications, and caused it to shine forth again and again. Believing is therefore participation in a common conviction. The faith of others supports me, just as the fervor of my faith enkindles and strengthens others. The Church emphasizes the "I" and the "we" of faith by using two professions of faith in her liturgies: the Apostles' Creed, the CREED that begins with "I believe" (Credo), and the Great Creed of Nicaea-Constantinople, which in its original form starts with the words "We believe"

#25 WHY DOES THE FAITH REQUIRE DEFINITIONS AND FORMULAS? Faith is not about empty words but about reality. In the CHURCH, condensed formulas of faith developed over the course of time; with their help we can contemplate, express, learn, hand on, celebrate, and live out this reality. Without fixed forms, the content of the faith would dissipate. That is why the Church attaches great importance to definite sentences, the precise wording of which was usually achieved painstakingly, so as to protect the message of Christ from misunderstandings and falsifications. Furthermore, creeds are important when the Church's faith has to be translated into different cultures while being preserved in its essentials, because a common faith is the foundation for the Church's unity.