



WHAT DO WE BELIEVE ABOUT GOD? HOW IS GOD THE TRINITY?



GOSPEL



ANSWERS

AND I WILL ASK THE FATHER, AND HE WILL GIVE YOU ANOTHER ADVOCATE TO BE WITH YOU ALWAYS, THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH, WHICH THE WORLD CANNOT ACCEPT, BECAUSE IT NEITHER SEES NOR KNOWS IT. BUT YOU KNOW IT, BECAUSE IT REMAINS WITH YOU, AND WILL BE IN YOU. I WILL NOT LEAVE YOU ORPHANS; I WILL COME TO YOU.

- JOHN 14: 15-21

SAINTS & INSPIRATIONAL STORIES

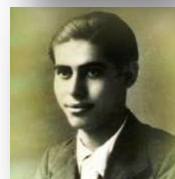
ST FRANCIS CABRINI

St Francis Cabrini found God at an early age and adhered to her firm belief in God – the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit. She dedicated her life preaching and teaching the faith and belief in the one true God all across the US.



BLESSED BARTOLOME BLANCO MARQUEZ

Blessed Bartolome had such a strong belief and faith in God that he ultimately gave his life to stand true to this faith and not fight beside those who opposed and persecuted the Church. He shared that firm belief with his family and friends from prison through his letters.



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



TRINITY (Latin trinitas = the state of being threefold): God is only one, but he exists in three persons. The fact that in English we have two terms, the Triune God and the Trinity for the same reality (one emphasizes God's unity, the other the distinction of persons in him) is an indication of the unfathomable mystery of the Trinity

#30: WHY DO WE BELIEVE IN ONLY ONE GOD? We believe in only one God because, according to the testimony of Sacred Scripture, there is only one God and, according to the laws of logic, there can be only one. If there were two gods, then the one god would be a limit on the other; neither of the two would be infinite, neither one perfect; in these respects neither of the two would be God. Israel's fundamental experience of God is: "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord" (Deut 6:4). Again and again the prophets exhort the people to abandon their false gods and to convert to the one God: "For I am God, and there is no other" (Is 45:22).

#31: WHY DOES GOD GIVE HIMSELF A NAME? God gives himself a name so as to make it possible to address him. God does not wish to remain incognito. He does not want to be revered as a "higher being" that is merely sensed or surmised. God wishes to be known and to be called upon as someone real and active. In the burning bush God reveals to Moses his holy name: Yahweh (Ex 3:14). God makes it possible for his people to address him, but he still remains the hidden God, the present mystery. Out of reverence for God, the name of God was not (and is not) spoken in Israel; the title Adonai (Lord) is substituted. This same word is used by the New Testament when it glorifies Jesus as true God: "Jesus is Lord!" (Rom 10:9).

MONOTHEISM (from Greek monos = only and theos = God, doctrine about the existence of only one God): the teaching that God is a unique, absolute, and personal being, the ultimate ground of everything. Monotheistic religions are Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

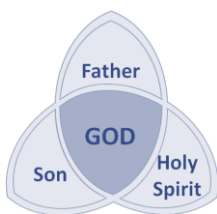
YAHWEH The most important name of God in the Old Testament It can be translated "I am who I am." For Jews as well as for Christians, it designates the one God of the whole world, their creator, preserver, covenant partner, liberator from slavery in Egypt, judge, and savior.

#32: WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO SAY THAT GOD IS TRUTH? "God is light and in him is no darkness" (1 Jn 1:5). His Word is truth (Prov 8:7; 2 Sam 7:28), and his Law is truth (Ps 119:142). Jesus himself vouches for God's truth by declaring before Pilate, "For this I was born, and for this I have come into the world, to bear witness to the truth" (Jn 18:37). The truth of God cannot be "proved" or subjected to empirical tests, since science cannot make him an object of investigation. And yet God subjects himself to a special sort of proof. We know that God is truth on the basis of the absolute credibility of Jesus. He is "the way, and the truth, and the life" (Jn 14:6). Anyone who enters into a relationship with him can find this out by putting it to the test. If God were not "true", then faith and reason could not have a dialogue with each other. An agreement is possible, however, because God is truth, and the truth is divine.



CONQUEST WEEKLY ACTIVITY GUIDE

MARTYR (from Greek martyria = witness, testimony):
A Christian martyr is a person who is ready to suffer violence or even to be killed for Christ, who is the truth, or for a conscientious decision made on the basis of faith.



#33: WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO SAY THAT GOD IS LOVE?

If God is love, then there is nothing created that is not carried and surrounded by his infinite benevolence. God not only declares that he is love, he also proves it: "Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (Jn 15:13). [218, 221] No other religion says what Christianity says: "God is love" (1 Jn 4:8, 16). Faith holds fast to this promise, although the experience of suffering and evil in the world may make people wonder whether God is really loving. Already in the Old Testament God communicates to his people through the words of the prophet Isaiah: "Because you are precious in my eyes, and honored, and I love you, I give men in return for you, peoples in exchange for your life. Fear not, for I am with you" (Is 43:4-5a) and has him say, "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should have no compassion on the son of her womb? Even these may forget, yet I will not forget you. Behold, I have graven you on the palms of my hands" (Is 49:15-16a). This talk about divine love does not consist of empty words; Jesus proves this on the Cross, where he gives up his life for his friends

#34 WHAT SHOULD YOU DO ONCE YOU HAVE COME TO KNOW GOD? Once you have come to know God, you must put him in the first place in your life. And with that a new life begins. You should be able to recognize Christians by the fact that they love even their enemies. After all, to know God means to know that he who created and willed me, who looks at me every moment with love, who blesses and upholds my life, who has the world and the people I love in his hand, who waits longingly for me, who wishes to fulfill and perfect me and to make me dwell forever with him—is there. To nod with your head at this is not enough. Christians must adopt Jesus' way of life.

#35 DO WE BELIEVE IN ONE GOD OR IN THREE GODS? We believe in one God in three persons Trinity. "God is not solitude but perfect communion." (Pope Benedict XVI, May 22, 2005). Christians do not worship three different Gods, but one single Being that is threefold and yet remains one. We know that God is triune from Jesus Christ: He, the Son, speaks about his Father in heaven ("I and the Father are one", Jn 10:30). He prays to him and sends us the Holy Spirit, who is the love of the Father and the Son. That is why we are baptized "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Mt 28:19).

#454: HOW STRONGLY OBLIGATORY IS THE TRUTH OF THE FAITH? Every Christian must give testimony to the truth and thereby follow after Christ, who before Pilate said, "For this I was born, and for this I have come into the world, to bear witness to the truth" (Jn 18:37). This can even mean that a Christian lays down his life out of fidelity to the truth and love for God and mankind. This ultimate form of commitment to the truth is called martyrdom.



CONQUEST WEEKLY ACTIVITY GUIDE

#39 IS JESUS GOD? DOES HE BELONG TO THE TRINITY?

Jesus of Nazareth is the Son, the second divine person mentioned when we pray, "In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Mt 28:19). Jesus was either an imposter who made himself Lord of the Sabbath and allowed himself to be addressed with the divine title "Lord"—or else he was really God. The scandal came when he forgave sins. In the eyes of his contemporaries, that was a crime deserving death. Through signs and miracles, but especially through the Resurrection, his disciples recognized who Jesus is and worshipped him as Lord. That is the faith of the Church.

#36: CAN WE DEDUCE LOGICALLY THAT GOD IS TRIUNE ?

No. The fact that there are three persons Trinity in one God is a mystery. We know only through Jesus Christ that God is Trinitarian. Men cannot deduce the fact that God is a Trinity by means of their own reason. They acknowledge, however, that this mystery is reasonable when they accept God's Revelation in Jesus Christ. If God were alone and solitary, he could not love from all eternity. In the light of Jesus we find already in the Old Testament (for example, Gen 1:2; 18:2; 2 Sam 23:2), indeed, even in all of creation, traces of God's Trinitarian Being.

#37 WHY IS GOD "FATHER"?

We revere God as Father first of all because he is the Creator and cares lovingly for his creatures. Jesus, the Son of God, has taught us, furthermore, to regard his Father as our Father and to address him as "our Father". Several pre-Christian religions had the divine title "Father". Even before Jesus, the Israelites addressed God as their Father (Deut 32:6; Mal 2:10), realizing that he is also like a mother (Is 66:13). In human experience, father and mother stand for origin and authority, for what is protective and supportive. Jesus Christ shows us what God the Father is really like: "He who has seen me has seen the Father" (Jn 14:9). In the parable of the prodigal son, Jesus addresses the most profound human longings for a merciful father.

#38: WHO IS THE "HOLY SPIRIT"? The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Holy Trinity and has the same divine majesty as the Father and the Son. When we discover the reality of God in us, we are dealing with the working of the Holy Spirit. God sent "the Spirit of his Son into our hearts" (Gal 4:6), so that he might fill us completely. In the Holy Spirit a Christian finds profound joy, inner peace, and freedom. "For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the spirit of sonship in whom we cry, 'Abba! Father!' " (Rom 8:15b). In the Holy Spirit, whom we receive in Baptism and Confirmation we are permitted to call God "Father".

#165: WHY DO WE SAY "AMEN" TO THE PROFESSION OF OUR FAITH? We say Amen—"Yes"—to the profession of our faith because God appoints us witnesses to the faith. Anyone who says Amen assents freely and gladly to God's work in creation and redemption. The Hebrew word amen comes from a family of words that mean both "faith" and "steadfastness, reliability, fidelity". "He who says amen writes his signature" (St. Augustine). We can pronounce this unconditional Yes only because Jesus in his death and Resurrection has proved to be faithful and trustworthy for us. He himself is the human Yes to all God's promises, just as he is also God's definitive Yes to us.