



HOW IS GOD A PART OF OUR LIVES?



GOSPEL



ANSWERS

JESUS SAW TWO BOATS THERE ALONGSIDE THE LAKE; THE FISHERMEN HAD DISEMBARKED AND WERE WASHING THEIR NETS. GETTING INTO ONE OF THE BOATS, THE ONE BELONGING TO SIMON, HE ASKED HIM TO PUT OUT A SHORT DISTANCE FROM THE SHORE. THEN HE SAT DOWN AND TAUGHT THE CROWDS FROM THE BOAT.

- LUKE 5: 1-10

SAINTS & INSPIRATIONAL STORIES

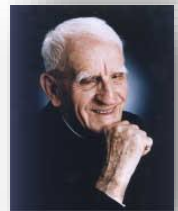
ALPHONSE GALLEGOS

Fr Alphonse made God a part of the lives of the people he was sent to lead in the faith. He sought them out and showed them that God was interested in them, where they were at. To do this, he had to have had a very real faith in God and prayer life that helped him to find God in his own life.



MATTHIAS BARRETT

Br Mathias had a life that was by no means ordinary and perhaps at times he did not fully understand why God permitted certain things in his life. But he never doubted God's presence and hand in his life. This led him to begin a brotherhood that would help many people.



TALK
ABOUT IT!

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



#7: WHY DID GOD HAVE TO SHOW HIMSELF IN ORDER FOR US TO BE ABLE TO KNOW WHAT HE IS LIKE? Man can know by reason that God exists, but not what God is really like. Yet because God would very much like to be known, he has revealed himself. God did not have to reveal himself to us. But he did it—out of love. Just as in human love one can know something about the beloved person only if he opens his heart to us, so too we know something about God's inmost thoughts only because the eternal and mysterious God has opened himself to us out of love. From creation on, through the patriarchs and the prophets down to the definitive revelation in his Son Jesus Christ, God has spoken again and again to mankind. In him he has poured out his heart to us and made his inmost being visible for us.

#8: HOW DOES GOD REVEAL HIMSELF IN THE OLD TESTAMENT? God shows himself in the Old Testament as God, who created the world out of love and remains faithful to men even when they have fallen away from him into sin. God makes it possible to experience him in history: With Noah he establishes a covenant to save all living things. He calls Abraham so as to make him "the father of a multitude of nations" (Gen 17:5b) and to bless "all the families of the earth" in him (Gen 12:3b). The people Israel, sprung from Abraham, becomes his special possession. To Moses he introduces himself by name. His mysterious name usually transcribed Yahweh, means "I AM WHO I AM" (Ex 3:14). He frees Israel from slavery in Egypt, establishes a covenant with them on Sinai, and through Moses gives them the Law. Again and again, God sends prophets to his people to call them to conversion and to the renewal of the covenant. The prophets proclaim that God will establish a new and everlasting covenant, which will bring about a radical renewal and definitive redemption. This covenant will be open to all human beings.

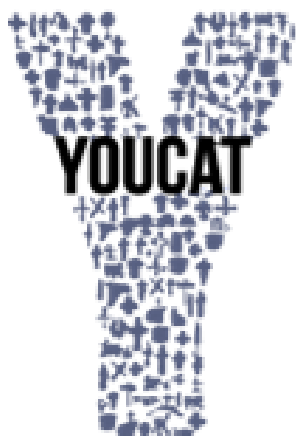
#10: WITH JESUS CHRIST, HAS EVERYTHING BEEN SAID, OR DOES REVELATION CONTINUE EVEN AFTER HIM? In Jesus Christ, God himself came to earth. He is God's last Word. By listening to him, all men of all times can know who God is and what is necessary for their salvation. With the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Revelation of God is perfect and complete. To make it comprehensible to us, the Holy Spirit leads us ever deeper into the truth. God's light breaks so forcefully into the lives of many individuals that they "see the heavens opened" (Acts 7:56). That is how the great places of pilgrimage such as Guadalupe in Mexico or Lourdes in France came about. The "private revelations" of visionaries cannot improve on the Gospel of Jesus Christ. No one is obliged to believe in them. But they can help us understand the Gospel better. Their authenticity is tested by the Church.

#196 WHO CAN BE BAPTIZED, AND WHAT IS REQUIRED OF A CANDIDATE? Any person who is not yet baptized can be baptized. The only prerequisite for Baptism is faith, which must be professed publicly at the Baptism. A person who turns to Christianity is not just changing a world view. He travels a path of learning (the Catechumenate), in which he becomes a new man through personal conversion, but especially through the gift of Baptism. He is now a living member of the Body of Christ.



CONQUEST WEEKLY ACTIVITY GUIDE

#194 WHAT IS BAPTISM? Baptism is the way out of the kingdom of death into life, the gateway to the Church, and the beginning of a lasting communion with God. Baptism is the foundational and the prerequisite for all other sacraments. It unites us with Jesus Christ, incorporates us into his redemptive death on the Cross, thereby freeing us from the power of Original Sin and all personal sins, and causes us to rise with him to a life without end. Since Baptism is a covenant with God, the individual must say Yes to it. In the baptism of children, the parents confess the Faith on behalf of the children.



#195 HOW IS BAPTISM ADMINISTERED?

The classical form of administering Baptism is the threefold immersion of the candidate in the water. Usually, however, water is poured three times over the head of the candidate, while the minister of the sacrament speaks the words, "N., I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." Water symbolizes cleansing and new life, which was already expressed in the baptism of repentance performed by John the Baptist. The Baptism that is administered with water "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" is more than a sign of conversion and repentance; it is new life in Christ. That is why the ceremony also includes the signs of anointing, the white garment, and the baptismal candle.

#197 WHY DOES THE CHURCH ADHERE TO THE PRACTICE OF INFANT BAPTISM?

From antiquity the Church has practiced infant Baptism. There is one reason for this: before we decide on God, God has decided on us. Baptism is therefore a grace, an undeserved gift of God, who accepts us unconditionally. Believing parents who want what is best for their child want Baptism also, in which the child is freed from the influence of original sin and the power of death. Infant Baptism presupposes that Christian parents will raise the baptized child in the faith. It is an injustice to deprive the child of Baptism out of a mistaken liberality. One cannot deprive a child of love so that he can later decide on love for himself; so too it would be an injustice if believing parents were to deprive their child of God's grace in Baptism. Just as every person is born with the ability to speak yet must learn a language, so too every person is born with the capacity to believe but must become acquainted with the faith. At any rate, Baptism can never be imposed on anyone. If someone has received Baptism as a little child, he must "ratify" it later in life—this means he must say Yes to it, so that it becomes fruitful.



CONQUEST WEEKLY ACTIVITY GUIDE



#198 WHO CAN ADMINISTER BAPTISM? Normally a bishop, a priest, or a deacon administers the sacrament of Baptism. In an emergency, any Christian, indeed anyone, can baptize by pouring water over the head of the recipient and pronouncing the baptismal formula, "I baptize you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." Baptism is so important that even a non-Christian can administer it. In doing so, however, he must have the intention of doing what the Church does when she baptizes.

#200 WHAT HAPPENS IN BAPTISM?

In Baptism we become members of the Body of Christ, sisters and brothers of our Redeemer, and children of God. We are freed from sin, snatched from death, and destined from then on for a life in the joy of the redeemed. Being baptized means that my personal life story is submerged in the stream of God's love. "Our life", says Pope Benedict XVI, "now belongs to Christ, and no longer to ourselves. . . . At his side and, indeed, drawn up in his love, we are freed from fear. He enfolds us and carries us wherever we may go—he who is Life itself" (April 7, 2007).

199 IS BAPTISM IN FACT THE ONLY WAY TO SALVATION?

For all those who have received the Gospel and have heard that Christ is "the way, and the truth, and the life" (Jn 14:6), Baptism is the only way to God and salvation. At the same time, however, it is true that Christ died for all mankind. Therefore all men who have had no opportunity to learn about Christ and the faith but seek God sincerely and live according to their conscience also find salvation (the so-called Baptism of desire). God has made salvation dependent on the sacraments. Therefore the Church must tirelessly offer them to mankind. To give up her missionary work would be a betrayal of God's commission. God himself, however, is not dependent on his sacraments. In places where the Church does not exist or has had no success—whether by her own fault or for other reasons—God himself paves another way to salvation for the people.

#361 WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR A CHRISTIAN TO BE BAPTIZED WITH A PARTICULAR NAME?

"In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit", the person is baptized with a name. The name and the face are ultimately what make a person unique, even in God's sight. "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine" (Is 43:1). Christians treat the name of a person reverently, because the name is profoundly connected with that person's identity and dignity. From time immemorial Christians have selected names for their children from the list of the saints; they do so in the belief that the patron saint is an example for them and will intercede with God for them in a special way.