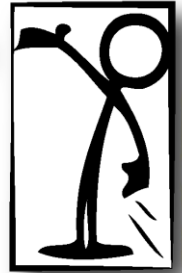




Why did God make us the way we are?



GOSPEL



ANSWERS

And Mary said: "My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord; my spirit rejoices in God my savior. For he has looked upon his handmaid's lowliness; behold, from now on will all ages call me blessed. The Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name.

— Luke 1:46-55

Saints & inspirational stories

Guiseppe Moscati

Guiseppe Moscati was a unique man with a great heart capable of helping and healing others. He spent his life dedicated to medicine and research while being a man of devout and strong faith. His passion for medicine led him to help thousands of people in his life. God made him unique and with an important mission.



Edel Quinn

Edel Quinn and Guiseppe Moscati could not be more different but both helped numerous people with their lives. Edel was sick her whole life but instead of letting that illness hold her back, she traveled to the ends of the earth to preach the gospel.



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



#59 Why did God make man? God made everything for man. Man, however, who is “the only creature on earth that God has willed for its own sake” (GS 24, 3), was created in order to be blessed. This happens when he knows, loves, and serves God and lives in gratitude toward his Creator. Gratitude is love that has been acknowledged. Someone who is grateful turns freely to the giver of the good and enters into a new, deeper relationship with him. God wishes us to acknowledge his love and even now to live our whole life in relation with him. This relationship lasts forever. God loved men. For their sake he created the cosmos; he subjected everything on earth to them; he gave them the ability to speak and understand; he permitted them alone to look up to heaven; he formed them after his likeness; he sent his Son to them; he promised them the kingdom of heaven, and he will give it to those who love him.

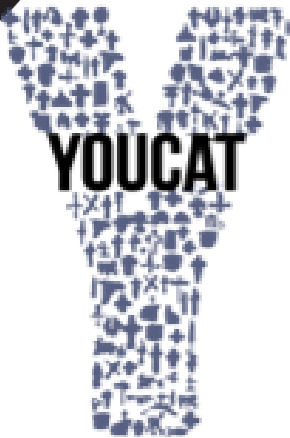
#58 What does it mean to say that man was created “in God’s image”?

Unlike inanimate objects, plants, and animals, man is a person endowed with a spirit. This characteristic unites him with God more than with his visible fellow creatures. Man is not a something but rather a someone. Just as we say about God that he is person, so too we say this about man. Man can think beyond his immediate horizon and measure the whole breadth of being; he can even know himself with critical objectivity and work to improve himself; he can perceive others as persons, understand them in their dignity, and love them. Of all the visible creatures, man alone is “able to know and love his creator” Man is destined to live with him in friendship

#61 In what does the equality of all men consist?

All men are equal inasmuch as they have the same origin in the one creative love of God. All men have their Savior in Jesus Christ. All men are destined to find their happiness and their eternal blessedness in God. Hence all men are brothers and sisters. Christians should practice solidarity not only with other Christians but with everyone and forcefully oppose racist, sexist, and economic divisions in the one human family.

#62 What is the soul? The soul is what makes every individual person a man: his spiritual life-principle and inmost being. The soul causes the material body to be a living human body. Through his soul, man is a creature who can say “I” and stand before God as an irreplaceable individual. Men are bodily and spiritual creatures. A man’s spirit is more than a function of his body and cannot be explained in terms of man’s material composition. Reason tells us that there must be a spiritual principle that is united with the body but not identical to it. We call it the “soul”. Although the soul’s existence cannot be “proved” scientifically, man cannot be understood as a spiritual or intellectual being without accepting this spiritual principle that transcends matter.



#63 From where does man get his soul? The human soul is created directly by God and is not “produced” by the parents. Man’s soul cannot be the product of an evolutionary development out of matter or the result of a generative union of the father and mother. With every man, a unique, spiritual person comes into the world; the Church expresses this mystery by saying that God gives him a soul, which cannot die; even if the person loses his body in death, he will find it again in the resurrection. To say, “I have a soul”, means that God created me not only as a creature but as a person and has called me to a never-ending relationship with him.

#280 What reasons do Christians give for human dignity? Every person, from the first moment of his life in the womb, has an inviolable dignity, because from all eternity God willed, loved, created, and redeemed that person and destined him for eternal happiness. If human dignity were based solely on the successes and accomplishments of individuals, then those who are weak, sick, or helpless would have no dignity. Christians believe that human dignity is, in the first place, the result of God’s respect for us. He looks at every person and loves him as though he were the only creature in the world. Because God has looked upon even the least significant child of Adam, that person possesses an infinite worth, which must not be destroyed by men.

#281 Why do we yearn for happiness? God has placed in our hearts such an infinite desire for happiness that nothing can satisfy it but God himself. All earthly fulfillment gives us only a foretaste of eternal happiness. Above and beyond that, we should be drawn to God.

#293 Why did God give us “passions” or emotions? We have passions so that through strong emotions and distinct feelings we might be attracted to what is right and good and repelled from what is evil and bad. God made man in such a way that he can love and hate, desire or despise something, be attracted by some things and afraid of others, be full of joy, sorrow, or anger. In the depths of his heart man always loves good and hates evil—or what he considers to be such.

#294 Is someone a sinner if he experiences strong passions within himself? No, passions can be very valuable. They are designed to lead to and reinforce good actions; only when they are disordered do the passions contribute to evil. Passions that are ordered to the good become virtues. They then become the motive force of a life of fighting for love and justice. Passions that overpower a person, rob him of his freedom and entice him to evil, we call vice.



#299 What is meant by a “virtue”? A virtue is an interior disposition, a positive habit, a passion that has been placed at the service of the good. “You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect” (Mt 5:48). That means that we must change on our way to God. By our human abilities we can do that only in fits and starts. With his grace God supports the human virtues and gives us, above and beyond that, the so-called supernatural virtues, which help us to come closer to God and live more securely in his light.

#300 Why do we have to work to form our character? We must work at forming our character so that we can freely, joyfully, and easily accomplish what is good. A firm faith in God, in the first place, helps us to do this, but also the practice of the virtues, which means developing within ourselves, with God’s help, firm dispositions, not giving ourselves over to disorderly passions, and directing our faculties of intellect and will more and more consistently toward the good. The most important virtues are: prudence, justice, fortitude, temperance. These are also called the “cardinal virtues” (from Latin cardo = hinge, or from cardinalis = principal).

NATURAL MORAL LAW

“In all cultures there are examples of ethical convergence, some isolated, some interrelated, as an expression of the one human nature, willed by the Creator; the tradition of ethical wisdom knows this as the natural law” Pope Benedict XVI

#334 What connection is there between the “natural moral law” and the Law of the Old Covenant? The Law of the Old Covenant expresses truths that by nature are evident to human reason yet are now proclaimed and authenticated as God’s Law.

#333 Is there a natural law that everyone can know? If people are to do good and avoid evil, certainty about what is good or evil must be inscribed within them. In fact there is such a moral law that is, so to speak, “natural” to men and can be known in principle by every person by reason. The natural moral law is valid for everyone. It tells men what fundamental rights and duties they have and thus forms the real foundation for life together in the family, in society, and in the State. Because our natural knowledge is often troubled by sin and human weakness, a person needs God’s help and his revelation in order to stay on the right path.