

# OUR HOLY FAITH



# OUR HOLY FAITH

BOOK THREE

## PRINCE OF PEACE

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Gastonia, North Carolina

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## Publisher's Note

The original editions of the *Our Holy Faith* series textbooks were published between 1959 and 1964. They were compiled by many different authors over the course of several years. Consequently, the texts varied in their organization from year to year, with similar sections appearing with different names throughout the series and often in varying sequences.

For greater ease of use and consistency, we have reorganized each book so that the Catechism lessons, tests, and other exercises are placed at the end of each relevant chapter or lesson. We have also included answer keys for your convenience in the back of each book.

While the teachings in the original editions remain relevant due to the enduring truths of our Faith, it was necessary to update other aspects in order to more accurately reflect the Church today. These new editions have been revised to incorporate some of the changes to the practices of the Catholic Church.

To the extent possible, we have adapted the text to reflect both the ordinary and extraordinary forms of the Mass and liturgical calendars. In addition to these updates, we have inserted, where relevant to the text, traditional prayers and quotes from the Bible, the Catechism, and the saints.

This new Our Holy Faith series is faithful to the work of the original authors. It honors the fundamental and unchanging truths of the Catholic Church and is heavily influenced by tradition. We believe it is the catechesis you can trust with your children's faith.

# Dear Boys and Girls

This is your religion book for this year. If you study well, you will learn many important things about your holy religion. You will learn much about God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. You will learn about God's love for you—how He wants you to love Him with all your heart. How He wants you to keep His commandments well, so that some day He can take you into heaven, there to be happy with Him forever and ever.

Study your lesson each day, and learn all that you can about our dear Lord. Receive Him often, if you have made your First Communion, and pray to Him every morning and evening.

Do you know any short prayers that you can whisper to our Lord and to our Blessed Mother during the day? At the end of each chapter you will find one of these. They are very beautiful and they are also very powerful prayers.

How good it is to be a Catholic! It is the Catholic Church which teaches all these wonderful things about our holy religion. Pray for others so that they too may belong to the Catholic Church. Help them find God's one true Church. Then you will not only know your religion, but you will be living it. That is what God wants you to do.









UNIT

1

I Believe In God



## CHAPTER 1

# We Belong to God



### LESSON 1

## God Made Us to Share in His Happiness

Today we see the sun, the moon, and the stars. We see the trees and the beautiful flowers. We see boys and girls. We see men and women. We see many other things. God made them all. God made everything. *God made us.*

Before the world was made there was only God. *God is the Supreme Being who made all things.*

God had nothing to start with. He made everything from nothing. How could God do this? God could make all things from nothing, because He is the Supreme Being. He is above all creatures. No one is as great as He.

Why did God make us? God made us because He is good. God made us to show forth His goodness. He wanted to show His goodness to us and to all men.

God has always been very happy in heaven. He did not need us to make Him happy, but God wanted to share His happiness. *So God made us to show forth His goodness and to share with us His everlasting happiness in heaven.* Do you share the many good things you have?

Some day, if we live as God wants us to live, we will share God's happiness in heaven. This happiness will last forever. *To gain the happiness of heaven we must know, love, and serve God in this world.*





To love and serve God means to do as He wants us to do.  
What does God want us to do? God wants us to be good, as He is.  
God wants us to obey His laws.

Before we can love and serve God, we must first know Him.  
How can we know God if we have never seen Him? God made it  
easy for us to know Him.

If we look at the world about us, everything we see will tell us  
that there is a God. It also tells us something about God. The sun,  
moon, and stars tell us how powerful He is. The trees and flowers  
tell us how beautiful He is. The plants which give us food tell how

good God is to us. Night and day tell us how He loves us. Our own body tells us that God is wonderful and wise.

We can also know God because He spoke to some of His friends here on the earth. God spoke to Adam. He spoke to Abraham. He spoke to Moses. God spoke to many other people long before Jesus was born. In this book, we will learn about some of the people to whom God has spoken. If we look at the things God made, and learn about the wonderful things that God has told us about Himself, we will come to know and love God as our heavenly Father. When we love Him, then we will want to do the things that He wishes us to do. Then, some day, we will be happy forever in our Father's beautiful home in heaven.

Ultimately, there is no better way to know God, and to be united with Him, than to imitate and follow Jesus Christ. Hear

*“The whole earth is a living icon of the face of God.”*

*—St. John of Damascus*

what St. Paul wrote in the letter to the Colossians: “[Jesus] is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For in him were all things created in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones, or dominations, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him and in him. And he is before all, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he may hold the primacy: Because in him, it hath well pleased the Father, that all fullness should dwell; And through him to reconcile all things unto himself, making peace through the blood of his cross, both as to the things that are on earth, and the things that are in heaven.”

**A SHORT PRAYER**

O my soul, love the love that loves you from eternity.

**FOR ME TO REVIEW**

*Catechism Lesson*

1. **Q. Who made the world?**  
A. God made the world.
2. **Q. Who is God?**  
A. God is the Creator of heaven and earth, and of all things.
3. **Q. What is man?**  
A. Man is a creature composed of body and soul, and made to the image and likeness of God.
6. **Q. Why did God make you?**  
A. God made me to know Him, to love Him, and to serve Him in this world, and to be happy with Him forever in the next.
9. **Q. What must we do to save our souls?**  
A. To save our souls we must worship God by faith, hope, and charity; that is, we must believe in Him, hope in Him, and love Him with all our heart.

**FOR ME TO REMEMBER**

1. God is the Supreme Being who made all things.
2. God made us to show forth His goodness.
3. God made us to share His everlasting happiness in heaven.
4. To share God's happiness in heaven, we must know, love, and serve Him in this world.
5. God is our Father.

**FOR ME TO DO**

1. Try to love others.
2. Draw a picture showing different ways in which we can serve God.

## LESSON 2

## God Teaches Us How to Gain Heaven

Many years ago God the Father sent Jesus, His only Son, to become man, and to live on this earth. Jesus came to do His Father's will.

When Jesus was here, He wanted everyone to know and love His Father in heaven. That is why He taught many things about His heavenly Father to the people of the Holy Land. Jesus also taught them the things that they must do to know, love, and serve His heavenly Father.



Do you know what Jesus did so people would not forget the things that He taught? Jesus started the Catholic Church. He wanted His Church to teach the same things that He taught.

Today the Catholic Church teaches us what God wants us to know. It teaches us everything we must know and do to get to heaven. This is why we say that *we learn to know, love, and serve God from Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who is the head of the Catholic Church.*

Jesus taught us many things when He was here on earth. He taught these things first to His Apostles. The Apostles were the twelve men Jesus chose to help Him start the Catholic Church. They were the first priests and bishops of the Church.

The Apostles taught everything that Jesus told them. The chief things Jesus taught were put in a prayer by the Apostles. *We find the chief truths taught by Jesus Christ through the Catholic Church in the Apostles' Creed.* A creed is a short prayer which announces the most essential beliefs of Catholics and all Christians.

When we study the truths of the Apostles' Creed, we learn how great, wise, and good God is. We also learn about His wonderful love for all His children. If we know God well, we will love and serve Him in this life. We will love all His children too, near and far. Then when we die, we will live with Him forever in heaven.

*“To live in  
heaven is  
‘to be with  
Christ.’”*

*—Catechism of the  
Catholic Church, 1025*

**A SHORT PRAYER**

Sacred Heart of Jesus, I believe in Your love for me.

**FOR ME TO REVIEW**

*Catechism Lesson*

10. **Q. How shall we know the things which we are to believe?**
  - A. We shall know the things which we are to believe from the Catholic Church, through which God speaks to us.
11. **Q. Where shall we find the chief truths which the Church teaches?**
  - A. We shall find the chief truths which the Church teaches in the Apostles' Creed.
12. **Q. Say the Apostles' Creed.**
  - A. I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified; died, and was buried. He descended into hell; the third day He arose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

*Questions*

1. Who is God?
2. Why is God called the Supreme Being?
3. Why did God make us?



4. Did God make us because He needed us?
5. Will the happiness of heaven be anything like the happiness of this world?
6. Why should we always do what the Catholic Church tells us to do?
7. How can we know what we should do to know, love, and serve God?
8. Why should we want to know the Apostles' Creed perfectly?
9. Imagine that a friend, John, says that his father is on this earth just to be a good doctor. Can you prove that he is wrong?
10. Mary, a friend, can't make up her mind if there is a God or not. Can you help her?
11. How can you make God known to others?

**FOR ME TO REMEMBER**

1. God speaks to us today through the Catholic Church.
2. The Catholic Church teaches us to know, love, and serve God.
3. The Catholic Church teaches us God's truths.
4. The chief truths that the Catholic Church teaches are found in the Apostles' Creed.

**FOR ME TO DO**

1. Show your love for your classmates.
2. Find the "Apostles' Creed" in this book. Read it over to see if you are saying the words correctly. Then write it.

## LESSON 3

## Jesus Helps Us Know, Love, and Serve God

Jack was trying to climb a wall. He could not do it. Do you know what he did? He asked his friend to help him. With his friend's help, Jack was able to climb the wall.

*“Courage,  
courage,  
trust in God  
who helps  
you in all  
things.”*

—St. Mary MacKillop

We are like Jack. We need help too.

We need help to know God's truths. We need help to love and serve God. We need help to get to heaven. Who can give us the help that we need? Only Jesus, our best Friend. He will help us. He will give us help to know, love, and serve God. This help is called grace.

What is grace? Grace is a gift from God. It makes our souls holy. It helps us to do what God wants. We can enter deeper into a life of grace through prayer and the faithful reception of the sacraments.

There are two sacraments which give us much grace to know, love, and serve God. We know them already. They are the sacraments we receive when we go to confession and Holy Communion. They are called Penance and Reconciliation and Holy Eucharist. They are very important. Let us review what we know just to be sure.



### A SHORT PRAYER

Christ Jesus, my helper and my Redeemer.



**FOR ME TO REMEMBER**

1. Jesus helps us by giving us grace.
2. God gives us grace when we pray.
3. We get grace in our souls when we receive the sacraments.
4. The sacraments of Penance and Reconciliation and Holy Eucharist give us much grace.

**FOR ME TO DO**

1. Write or say a prayer to Jesus. Ask Him for the grace to know, love, and serve His Father in heaven.

## LESSON 4

## **Penance and Reconciliation—A Cure for Sick Souls**

On the first Easter Sunday night, the Apostles were gathered in a big room. All at once Jesus stood before them. Do you know what He said? He said, “Peace be with you.” Then Jesus breathed on His Apostles and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them.” With these words Jesus gave the Apostles power to forgive sin. This is how Jesus gave us the sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation.

What is the sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation? It is the sacrament which takes away our sins. It is the sacrament we receive when we go to confession.

Why did Jesus give us the sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation? Many, many times while Jesus was on earth, sinners

came to Him. Some were sorry for their sins. They asked Jesus to forgive them. Jesus forgave them their sins.

Jesus knew that after He went back to heaven, people would still sin. They would need His help to be good again. That is why He gave us the sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation.

If we commit a very bad sin (mortal sin), we know that we have rejected God's saving grace. A good confession will take away sin and reconcile us back with God. Jesus comes with His grace to live in our souls, and through confession we receive him fully back into our lives. If we confess our sins to a priest, our souls will be holy and pleasing to God again.

Venial sin is a different kind of sin than mortal sin. It does not stop saving grace from reaching our souls, but it does make us less pleasing to God. It shows we do not love God as He deserves to be loved, for God calls all of us to perfection.

Each time we receive the sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation, Jesus does something more than take away our sins. He gives us grace to be good. He helps us love Him as we should.

Jesus wants us to go to confession often. If we do, it will help us to live good, holy lives and get to heaven when we die.



*It is called the sacrament of conversion because it makes sacramentally present Jesus' call to conversion, the first step in returning to the Father from whom one has strayed by sin.*

*—Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1423*



### **PRAYER**

O God, be merciful to me, a sinner.



### **FOR ME TO REMEMBER**

1. Jesus gave us the sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation on the first Easter Sunday night.
2. Penance and Reconciliation is the sacrament that takes away sin.
3. The sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation makes our souls holy and pleasing to God.
4. The sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation helps us to be good.
5. We should receive the sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation often.

**FOR ME TO DO**

1. All work together to write a prayer to thank Jesus for giving us the sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation.
2. Try to receive the sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation often.
3. Pray: My Jesus, have mercy!

## LESSON 5

## How to Receive the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation Worthily

Each time I receive the sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation, there are five things that I must do.

1. ***I must think of my sins.*** I must try as hard as I can to think of my sins since my last confession. The Holy Spirit will help me think of my sins. He will help me make a good confession if I ask Him for His help.

When I think of my sins, I will find out my mortal sins first, if I have any. Then I should find out my venial sins. I do this by going over the Ten Commandments and the laws of the Church.

I must not only think of my sins, but I must, insofar as I am capable, also know how many times I have committed each sin.

2. ***I must be sorry for my sins.*** My sins have offended God. I must make a good act of contrition to tell God that I am sorry. To have “contrition” means to be sorry for, and regret, the sins we have committed. If I am not sorry, my sins will not be forgiven. Being sorry for my sins, being contrite, is the most important part of my confession.

3. ***I must make up my mind not to sin again.*** I must genuinely intend not to sin again in the future. In relation to this, I must intend to stay away from those persons, places, or things that lead me into sin.
4. ***I must tell my sins to the priest.*** When I tell my sins I should remember that the priest is taking our Lord's place here on earth. I am really telling my sins to Jesus.
5. ***I must do or say my penance.*** The priest gives me a penance for my sins. This penance makes up for some of the punishment for my sins. I must do or say the penance the priest gives me after I leave the confessional.

Our souls are like a bright sun after we have been to confession. They are free from sin. They are holy and pleasing to God. God dwells in them.

### **What to Do and Say in the Confessional**

1. Kneel down and say, "Bless me, Father, for I have sinned. My last confession was (days, weeks, or months) ago."
2. Tell your sins. Tell the mortal sins first, if you have any. Then tell your venial sins. Tell the sin and the number of times you committed it.
3. When you are finished telling your sins, say, "This is all I can remember, I am sorry for these and all of my sins."
4. Father will then talk to you or ask you some questions.
5. After Father gives you your penance, say the Act of Contrition. Then leave the confessional and say your prayers. Though you may use your own words to express an Act of Contrition, the following is a formal prayer that is especially good for those learning how to say an Act of Contrition:

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee, and I detest all my sins, because of Thy just punishments, but most of all because they offend Thee, my God, who art all-good and

deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve, with the help of Thy grace, to sin no more and to avoid the near occasions of sin.



### **A SHORT PRAYER**

Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, have mercy on us.



### **FOR ME TO REVIEW**

*Questions*

1. Jordan examines his conscience every night before he goes to bed. How will this help him when he goes to confession?
2. George says that as long as he tells the priest his sins in confession, nothing else is necessary. What do you think?
3. Mark committed a mortal sin. He said that if he told God that he was sorry, he didn't have to go to confession. Is this true?



### **FOR ME TO REMEMBER**

1. To receive the sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation worthily I must do five things:  
I must think of my sins.  
I must be sorry for my sins.  
I must make up my mind not to sin again.  
I must tell my sins to the priest.  
I must say or do my penance.
2. The most important part of going to confession is being *sorry* for my sins.