

*Saint Joseph*

**NEW  
AMERICAN  
CATECHISM**

According to the new  
National Catechetical Directory  
“Sharing the Light of Faith”  
and Holy Scripture

**No. 2**

**Middle Grade Edition**

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## FOREWORD

**T**HE new *National Catechetical Directory* states: “Textbooks must present the authentic and complete message of Christ and His Church, adapted to the capacity of the learners, with balanced emphasis proportionate to the importance of particular truths.” (264)

I have tried to follow this important principle of the American Bishops in preparing the four editions of THE NEW AMERICAN CATECHISM. To reach various age levels the Catechism has: The First Communion Catechism (Grades 1-2), the Primary Edition (Grades 3-5), the Middle Grade Edition (Grades 6-8), and the Expanded Edition (High School and Adults).

The text used for the answers was taken from “Basic Teachings for Catholic Religious Education” (National Conference of Catholic Bishops, January 11, 1973), which is now found in a revised form in “Chapter V: Principal Elements of the Christian Message for Catechesis” and “Chapter VI: Catechesis for a Worshiping Community” of *Sharing the Light of Faith*—National Catechetical Directory for Catholics of the United States. References to the revised text are indicated.

In order to make the teaching of these truths more effective, I recommend the use of sketches and stories, which can be found in my two publications listed on the opposite page.

Father Lawrence G. Lovasik, S.V.D.

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We offer ourselves  
to God through  
Jesus



CHAPTER

2

True Worship of God

11. What must we believe about God?

We must believe that God is all-good, holy, just, and merciful, wise and perfect.

God is all-good. He is Love itself. He has given us all the good things we have because he loves us. He created the world to show forth his glory and to share his happiness with the beings he created. He shares his life with them. He loves all men and wills that all men be saved.

God is all-just. He promised to reward those who do good and to punish those who do evil.

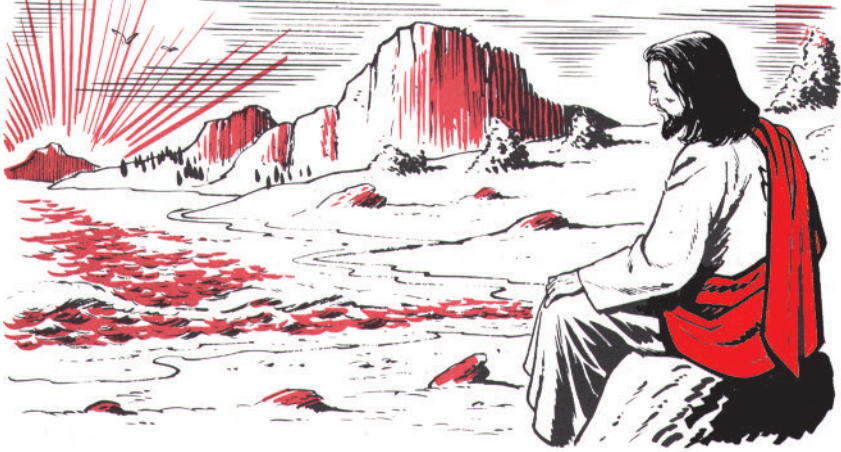
God is all-merciful, ready to forgive any sinner who is truly sorry and who wishes to lead a good life.

God is all-wise. He knows all things, past, present, and future, even our secret thoughts, words, and actions. Nothing can be hidden from him.

God is all-perfect. He is all-holy because he is God. He is infinite because there is no limit to his life. He is eternal because he had no beginning and will have no end. He is all-powerful because he can do all things. He is everywhere.

God is the one limitless, almighty, all-knowing spirit. He does not need anything or anyone outside of himself. All things depend on him. Yet God cares for all things which he has created. He calls all men to become his adopted children.

## Jesus spoke about the things God made



### CHAPTER

# 4

## Knowledge of God and the Witness of Christian Love

### 26. Can man come to know God through created things?

(1) Sacred Scripture says that man can come to know God through the things God has made. (2) The Church teaches that from thinking about created things man can come to know God as the beginning and end of all that is.

(1) The God who loves us makes himself known to us in various ways. He teaches us through the things he has made. The Bible tells us that man can come to know him through the things he made.

(2) The Church also teaches that created things around us help us to see that the one who made them is God and that he can do all things. If we really love God, we will try to learn as much as we can about him, even from the things he made.



## CHAPTER

# 11 The Church as Community

### 63. Why is the Church a community?

The Church is a community because it shares together the life of Christ; it is a people assembled by God.

The Church is the worldwide community of those whom God has called to give witness to his Son Jesus and to the new life he has brought to men. As members of this community, we are joined to Christ through baptism; we share his divine life through grace which reaches us especially through the sacraments.

### 64. Are all persons equal in the Church?

All persons in the Church are united and equal as the one People of God.

All members in the Church are united and equal, but they have different responsibilities. Just as God made Moses the leader of his people in the Old Testament, so Christ gave to his apostles and their successors the right to teach and to command in his name. These powers are given for the service and welfare of the whole People of God. Living in the world, the laity are called to work for the sanctification of the world by carrying out their tasks according to the spirit of the gospel.



3. The sacraments are ..... both of .....and .....(77)
4. The sacraments show that God wants..... (78)
5. Sacraments are called actions of Christ because ..... and ..... (79)
6. The purpose of the sacraments is (1) to ..... (2) to .....(3) and to .....(80)
7. The Church urges Catholics to receive the sacraments often and with great eagerness because .....(81)
8. The Church urges Catholics to receive the sacraments with faith because .....(81)
9. The sacraments are sources of grace for.....(82)
10. The sacraments are remedies for .....(82)

**B. BIBLE READING**

John 4:4-42

**The Samaritan Woman**

One morning, Jesus stopped to rest beside an old well at the foot of a mountain. His disciples had gone to the village to buy food.

Just at this moment a Samaritan woman came to the well with her water jar upon her head. Jesus said to her, "Please give me a drink."

She said to him, "How is it that you, who are a Jew, ask a drink of me, a Samaritan woman?"

Jesus answered, "If you knew the gift of God, and who asks you for a drink, you would have asked of him, and he would have given you living water."

The woman said, "Sir, you have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep. From where, then, do you have living water?"

"Whoever drinks of this water," said Jesus, "shall thirst again; but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst."

"Sir," said the woman, "give me some of this water that I may not thirst, or come here to draw water."

Jesus told her the sins that she had committed. Much surprised, she said, "Sir, I see that you are a prophet. I know that when the Messiah comes, he will tell us all things."

**97. What does the Church encourage the sick to do?**

The Church encourages the sick to help the People of God by offering their sufferings with the sufferings and death of Jesus.

Since Jesus gives us his grace and divine life in this sacrament, he helps us to offer our sufferings in union with his own on the cross that we might share in the work of the redemption. In this way we can help the Church not only by making up for sin but also by meriting grace for the Church. If we share in the sufferings of Jesus, we can expect to share also in his glory.

Before the sacrament of the anointing of the sick the priest usually gives the sick person the sacrament of penance. After the anointing he gives the Body and Blood of Christ.

*Teacher reference: Worshiping Community, no. 127*

**A. FILL IN THE BLANKS**

1. Baptism is the sacrament (1) of..... made holy by ....., (2) of unity with Jesus in ....., (3) of cleansing from ..... (4) and of welcome into .....(83)
2. Confirmation is the sacrament by which ..... now receive ....., the gift of ..... (84)
3. The seal of the Spirit prepares us (1) to be .....by a mature ....., (2) and to ..... while living in the world. (85)
4. Penance is the sacrament which brings to the Christian..... for sins committed ..... (86)
5. Penance is a means of ..... after .....(86)
6. Penance brings about ....., which is wounded by ..... and it helps us .....and to .....(87)
7. If one has fallen into serious sin, sacramental confession is ..... to bring about ..... (88)
8. A sinner can also be restored to grace ..... because he has ..... (89)