

AND BECAME MAN. FOR OUR SAKE HE WAS CRUCIFIED UNDER PONTIUS PILATE, HE SUFFERED DEATH AND

WHY did GOD make YOU?

"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."

BALTIMORE CATECHISM, LESSON ONE, QUESTION 150.

is plenty of evidence that the harsh, impersonal, cold brutality of the pagan world is taking hold of modern society.

The rise of Christianity changed the world with agape love. When Christianity is truly lived it is warm, inviting, caring, deeply personal, and phenomenally attractive, and it sets self-interest aside. The world needs a new and massive wave of agape love. Are you willing to be part of that? We are at another decision point.

Agape loves was profound and revolutionary two thousand years ago and remains so today. How many of your peers are walking the halls lonely and depressed? How many don't feel loved? Where is their hope? What gets them through the day?

Agape love is not just a concept. It's a revolutionary invitation for you to reach out to others and share with them the love of God.

BE BOLD Be Catholic.

discussion questions

1. WHEN YOU THINK OF CHURCH, WHAT COMES TO MIND?

Handwritten lines for answer 1.

2. IF YOU COULD ASK A GROUP OF EARLY CHRISTIANS ONE QUESTION, WHAT WOULD YOU ASK?

Handwritten lines for answer 2.

3. WHY IS IT DIFFICULT TO PRACTICE AGAPE LOVE?

Handwritten lines for answer 3.



CATHOLICS HAVE BEEN MAKING INCREDIBLE CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE WORLD FOR 2,000 YEARS. WHAT WILL YOUR CONTRIBUTION BE?

Matthew 16: 16-19

KNOW IT: Peter was the first pope, and the papacy is the rock that Jesus chose to build his Church upon.

THINK ABOUT IT: We can trace our spiritual heritage back through 265 popes. That is a beautiful thing.

LIVE IT: Being pope is difficult. Pray for the pope today.

Sacraments and her teachings, and embraces the life Christ calls them to. We are all called to catholic unity as God's children, but not everyone responds to this call. The call is small c catholic; the response is big C Catholic.

The fourth and final mark of the Church is "apostolic." What does it mean that the Church is "apostolic"?

On the day of your Confirmation the bishop will extend his hands over you, pray that you receive the Holy Spirit, and anoint you with the sacred oil (chrism) and the Sign of the Cross.

Why? What gives him the right? Who gives him the authority to do that?

This is one of the great questions of Christian history. If you can develop a clear understanding of this, a lot of other things will fall into place. Let's turn to the Scriptures for some insight.

Jesus was walking down the road one day, talking with his disciples, answering questions, and asking questions. Toward the end of these discussions he asks the disciples who they think he is. Peter replies, "You are the Christ, the son of the living God." (Matthew 16:16) What seemed like a very spontaneous conversation then turned into something very formal when Jesus said, "You are Peter and on this rock I will build my Church." Jesus goes on to say, "I will give you the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." (Matthew 16:18-19)

Jesus gave Peter the authority to lead the Church, and through Peter he gave the other apostles authority. As Catholics we can trace a direct line from your bishop back two thousand years to Peter. Pope Francis is the 265th successor of Peter.

This is what we mean when we say the Church is "apostolic." The apostles were the foundation that Jesus chose to build his Church upon. They were the witnesses whom Jesus chose to send out on a mission to the whole world. The Church celebrates and defends the teachings passed on by the apostles, continues to be guided by the apostles, and carries on the mission entrusted first to the apostles.

Your bishop is a successor to the apostles. That's profound and beautiful.

So at Mass next Sunday you will probably hear some people mindlessly mumbling the Creed. Don't be one of them. Say it loud and proud: "I believe in one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church."

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. IF JESUS WANTED THE CHURCH TO BE ONE, WHY DO YOU THINK THERE ARE SO MANY DIFFERENT CHURCHES TODAY?

2. HOW MANY POPES HAVE THERE BEEN DURING YOUR LIFETIME? WHO WERE THEY? WHAT DO YOU REMEMBER ABOUT THEM?

3. WHAT DO YOU THINK WAS JESUS' MAIN MESSAGE?



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QUESTIONS

1. WHAT MAKES YOU PROUDEST TO BE CATHOLIC?

2. IN WHAT WAYS HAS THE CHURCH DISAPPOINTED YOU?

3. WE ALL MAKE MISTAKES, AND WE ALL SIN AGAINST GOD. DO YOUR OWN FAILINGS HELP YOU TO UNDERSTAND WHY THERE HAVE BEEN SCANDALS AT DIFFERENT TIMES IN THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH?

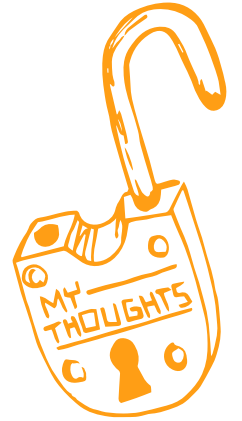


Discussion Questions

1. WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE BEST REASON TO BE CATHOLIC?

2. WHAT DID YOU LEARN IN THIS SESSION THAT REALLY MADE YOU STOP AND THINK?

3. HOW DID THE TOP TEN REASONS TO BE CATHOLIC CHANGE THE WAY YOU VIEW CATHOLICISM?



9.5 DECISION point



If you could invite Mary to give a lecture at your school, what would you ask her to speak about?

There are a lot of people who turn their backs on Catholicism simply because it is old. Catholicism is old; I admit it. But let me ask you a question: If you found an ancient treasure map, would you throw it away just because it was old? No. I don't think you would. You would go looking for the treasure. The age of a map doesn't determine its value of the map. It doesn't matter how old the map is. What matters is whether or not the map leads to treasure.

Catholicism is a treasure map. It may be old, but it still leads to treasure. I hope you have the courage and the wisdom to seek out the treasure that is Catholicism. And once you find it, I hope you spend the rest of your life marveling at its beauty and applying it to your life.

Do that and you will live an uncommon life filled with purpose and happiness.

YOU DON'T THROW AWAY A Treasure MAP JUST BECAUSE IT'S OLD.



JOURNAL QUESTIONS

1. HOW DO YOU THINK YOUR LIFE MIGHT BE BETTER IF YOU FOLLOWED THE MAP THE CHURCH INVITES US TO FOLLOW?

2. IN WHAT WAYS IS GOD CALLING YOU TO BE COUNTERCULTURAL LIKE THE FIRST CHRISTIANS WERE?

3. HOW PURPOSEFULLY ARE YOU LIVING YOUR LIFE? GIVE YOURSELF A SCORE BETWEEN ONE AND TEN.

