

Introduction

What is the Catechism of the Catholic Church?

The Catechism is about catechesis. CCC no. 4-5.

1. The Catechism aims at “initiating the hearers into the fullness of Christian life,” not just imparting information.
2. It’s presentation is “organic and systematic.”
 - a. Systematic: organized by some clear system.
 - b. Organic: The Church isn’t a machine or merely an organization, but a living family. It’s living traditions have grown up over time, one thing evolving from another, always in keeping the logic of what came before, always an outgrowth of the original seed that Christ Himself gave to the Apostles.
3. The CCC communicates “the whole of the Church’s life.” CCC no. 7.
4. The common element in the four pillars is “faith.” Read CCC no. 26. Faith is confessed, celebrated, lived and prayed. “Faith is man’s response to God.”

What is the life of faith that the Catechism describes?

CCC no. 1 Blessing to Blessing

The meaning of Blessing CCC no. 1078

The Four Pillars (CCC no. 14-17)

The four modules in the Pillars study are arranged and presented in accord with the four parts of the CCC but also in accord with the ancient pattern reflected in the Scriptures, specially in Acts 2:42.

“And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.”

Module 1 - Creed: The story of Blessing in miniature.: “Apostles Teaching”

Module 2 - Sacraments: The Blessing revealed and communicated: “Breaking of Bread”

Module 3 - Commandments/Life In Christ: Fulfillment in Beatitude: “Fellowship”

Module 4 - Prayer: The Blessing Give and Received: “The Prayers”

Each of these rungs will be articulated further in our studies.

1. Creed as twelve articles, which could be thought of as 12 rungs.
2. There are seven sacraments, relating to the second pillar.
3. There are eight Beatitudes and Ten Commandments in the third pillar.
4. Seven petitions in the fourth pillar on the Lord’s prayer.

Man’s Capacity For God: Invitation To Human Happiness: CCC no. 27

CCC no. 27 the “desire for God is written in the human heart...Only in God will [man] find the truth and happiness he never stops searching for.”

Four Levels of Happiness

1. Instant Gratification
2. Personal Achievement
3. Investing Beyond Self
4. Union with God

Ways of Coming To Know God No. 31-38

1. The world: (CCC 32) "the world's order and beauty, one can come to a knowledge of God as the origin and the end of the universe."
2. The human person: (CCC 33) "With his openness to truth and beauty, his sense of moral goodness, his freedom and the voice of his conscience, with his longings for the infinite and for happiness, man questions himself about God's existence. In all this he discerns signs of his spiritual soul...(CCC33)..."Thus, in different ways, man can come to know that there exists a reality which is the first cause and final end of all things, an reality 'that everyone calls God.'"
3. Reason: (CCC 35) "Man's faculties make him capable of coming to a knowledge of the existence of a personal God. But for man to be able to enter into real intimacy with him, God will both to reveal himself to man and to give him the grace of being able to welcome this revelation in faith." "(CCC 27) "In the historical conditions in which he finds himself, however, man experiences many difficulties in coming to know God by the light of reason alone."
 - a. Obstacles to reason No. 37

God Comes To Meet Man: Divine Revelation: No. 50-73

1. His will was that men should have access to the Father, through Christ, and become sharers in the divine nature. No. 51
2. God wants to adopt us and make us capable of responding to Him, loving Him and knowing Him far beyond our own capacity. No. 52
3. The divine plan is realized simultaneously "by deeds and words which are intrinsically bound up with each other" and shed light on each other. No. 53
4. God reveals Himself gradually, in stages of supernatural revelation that is to culminate in the person and mission of Christ. No. 53
5. A series of Covenants. No. 54-64
 - a. The Fall, Broken relationship but Revelation does not stop. See Gen. 3:15.
 - b. Covenant with Noah, Abraham, Israel, David
 - c. The New Covenant in Christ, where God said everything. No. 65
 - i. Hebrews 1:1-2 "In many and various ways God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets; but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world."
 - ii. There will be no new public revelation after Christ. No. 66
 - iii. While revelation is complete, it is not completely explicit. Over the centuries we come to grasp its significance more fully. No. 66
 - iv. Private Revelation? Not a part of the deposit of faith, but to help us live the faith more fully.

Transmission of Divine Revelation: CCC no. 74-100

God established a plan to reach all peoples. CCC no. 74

The Lord commanded them to hand on the Gospel in two ways:

1. Orally: preaching, their example, the institutions they established. They preached what they received, whether from the lips of the Lord, from His way of life or from the Holy Spirit.
2. Writing: Those who wrote under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

Apostolic Succession

In order to preserve the “deposit of faith” (see No. 84) the apostles left bishops as their successors who gave to the next generation their own position of teaching authority. No. 77

What is the relationship between Tradition and Sacred Scripture? CCC no. 80

Tradition & Scripture are bound together and communicate one with the other. No. 80

Two Modes of Transmission CCC no. 81 & 82.

Both Scripture and Tradition must be accepted and honored with equal devotion and reverence. No. 82

The Magisterium of the Church CCC no. 85-87

“The task of giving an authentic interpretation of the Word of God, whether in its written form or in the form of Tradition, has been entrusted to the living, teaching office of the Church alone.” No. 85

1. The magisterium is the bishops in communion with the pope. CCC no. 85
2. The magisterium is not superior to the Word of God, but it’s servant. CCC no. 86
3. Our response to the Magisterium is one of obedience. Jesus said to the apostles, “He who hears you, hears me.” (Luke 10:16)

Dogmas CCC no. 88-90

The magisterium defines dogmas, that is truths contained in divine revelation or truths that are connected to divine revelation. CCC no. 88

Dogmas are lights along the journey of faith. They illuminate the path. Think of dogma as the grammar in the sentences of the story.