

The Catechism...

The Sacraments

(Our final session)

A C A T E C H I S M ;

That is to say, An Instruction to be learned of every Person, before he be brought to be confirmed by the Bishop.

Question.

WHAT is your Name ?

Answer, N. or M.

Quest. Who gave you this Name ?

Answ. My Godfathers and Godmothers in my Baptism; wherein I was made a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of Heaven.

Quest. What did your Godfathers and Godmothers then for you ?

Answ. They did promise and vow three things in my Name : First, that I should renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanity of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh ; Secondly, that I should believe all the Articles of the Christian Faith ; And thirdly, that I should keep God's holy Will and Commandments, and walk in the same all the days of my life.

Quest. Dost thou not think that thou art bound to believe, and to do as they have promised for thee ?

Answ. Yes, verily ; and by God's help so I will. And I heartily thank our heavenly Father, that he hath called me to this state of salvation, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. And I pray unto God to give me his grace, that I may continue in the same unto my life's end.

Catechist. Rehearse the Articles of thy Belief.

Answer.

I Believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth ;

And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord ; Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of the Virgin Mary, Suffered under Pontius Pilate, Was crucified, dead, and buried ; He descended into Hell ; The third day he rose again from the

Next Time...

Identity and
commitment

Belief and
Faith

Naming and
Promising

The Creed



The Ten
(Commandments)

The Two
Commandments
& The Lord's
Prayer

The
Sacraments



Prayer

Law and
Behaviour

Grace and
strength



Before the Sacraments - reflections from ‘The Michaels...’

Some key points to note:

- Context, context, context: The Catechism was written by an institution (the church) to serve its particular ideas about theology *and* society. It's dogmatic statements should be treated with caution
- The nature of **heaven** - less a 'place', more of a 'dimension' (which *intersects* with our own)
- Thy will be done - let's pray that God is teaching us something through both Brexit *and the* Pandemic!

Question. HOW many Sacraments hath Christ ordained in his Church?

Answer. Two only, as generally necessary to salvation; that is to say, Baptism, and the Supper of the Lord.

Question. What meanest thou by this word Sacrament?

Answer. I mean an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace given unto us, ordained by Christ himself, as a means whereby we receive the same, and a pledge to assure us thereof.

Question. How many parts are there in a Sacrament?

Answer. Two: the outward visible sign, and the inward spiritual grace.

- TWO ONLY - other traditions include FIVE more - Marriage, Ordination, Confirmation, Penance and 'Extreme Unction'.
- The 39 Articles of Religion make clear that only Baptism and Communion were *ordained* by Christ. The others evolved in the life of the church, and do not have the same status.
- AN OUTWARD AND VISIBLE SIGN OF AN INWARD AND SPIRITUAL GRACE...memorise this!

Question. What is the outward visible sign or form in Baptism?

Answer. Water: wherein the person is baptized, In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

Question. What is the inward and spiritual grace?

Answer. A death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness: for being by nature born in sin, and the children of wrath, we are hereby made the children of grace.

Question. What is required of persons to be baptized?

Answer. Repentance, whereby they forsake sin: and faith, whereby they stedfastly believe the promises of God, made to them in that Sacrament.

- TRINITARIAN baptism - accepted by all the World Council of Churches.
- The doctrine of 'Original Sin' - be cautious! Is all creation 'irrevocably stained' by Adam's sin? (Is sin a 'thing' - or an idea/attitude). Or is all creation 'good' (as God declares in Genesis)?
- Compare with John the Baptist vs Jesus understandings of God (last Sunday's sermon!)

Question. Why then are infants baptized, when by reason of their tender age they cannot perform them?

Answer. Because they promise them both by their sureties: which promise, when they come to age, themselves are bound to perform.

- ANABAPTISTS (and ‘Baptists’) believe that baptism can only be administered to adult believers, who *understand* their state of sin, and *actively seek* God’s grace.
- This places the emphasis on *our* search for God, rather than *God’s* search for us. Most Anglicans believe that it is God’s right to freely dispense grace...not ours. His grace is not *conditional* on our repentance. He gives his grace anyway.
- Infant baptism is practised by those who believe that baptism *grafts* us into membership God’s family - at any age.

Question. Why was the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper ordained?

Answer. For the continual remembrance of the sacrifice of the death of Christ, and of the benefits which we receive thereby.

Question. What is the outward part or sign of the Lord's Supper?

Answer. Bread and Wine, which the Lord hath commanded to be received.

Question. What is the inward part, or thing signified?

Answer. The Body and Blood of Christ, which are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper.

- Note: Lord's Supper - avoids contentious terms like 'Communion' or 'Eucharist' or 'the Mass'
- "Do this in REMEMBRANCE of me". The Anglican Reformers sought to demystify the Sacrament. 'Memorialism' vs 'Real Presence'
- But what does Jesus mean when he says "This is my body/blood"?
- Key terms: transubstantiation vs consubstantiation

Question. What are the benefits whereof we are partakers thereby?

Answer. The strengthening and refreshing of our souls by the Body and Blood of Christ, as our bodies are by the Bread and Wine.

Question. What is required of them who come to the Lord's Supper?

Answer. To examine themselves, whether they repent them truly of their former sins, stedfastly purposing to lead a new life; have a lively faith in God's mercy through Christ, with a thankful remembrance of his death; and be in charity with all men.

- **STRENGTHENING AND REFRESHING:** let's focus on the *purpose*, not the mechanism. (Or on the 'story' rather than the 'history'.)
- **CHARITY WITH ALL (men)** - 'forgive us...as we forgive them'. See also Mt 5.23-24: "So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift."

Th...th...th...that's
all folks!

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