

CATHOLIC FAITH TEACHING MANUAL

LEVEL 5 : CONFIRMATION



BY FATHER RAYMOND TAOUK

Catholic Faith Teaching Manual

Level 5 : Confirmation



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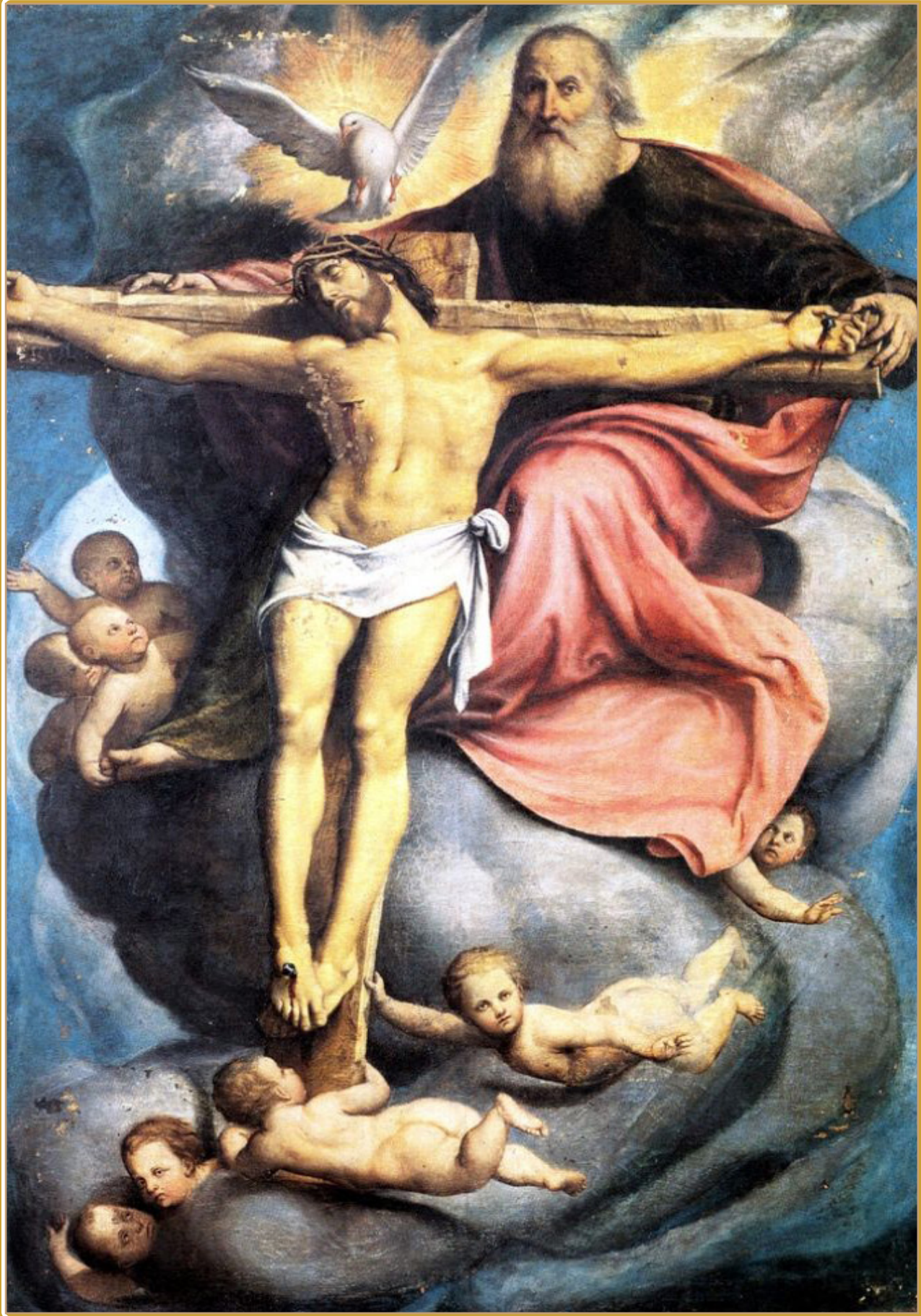
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Lesson 1



Level 5

Confirmation

Catechism

You will continue in this level to study your catechism questions. They are to be learned by heart as they are the very backbone of your studies. Level 4 finished at question number 136. You will notice over the first six lessons, that we have changed the number order, having repeated some questions from previous lessons and having added some questions from other areas; this is because this level is specifically for the preparation of the Sacrament of Confirmation and the questions included are minimal required knowledge for the receiving of the Sacrament. This actually makes no difference to your studying of the questions, just to the numbers next to the questions themselves.

The Doctrine of the Trinity

14. Is there only one God?

Yes, there is only one God.

15. How many Persons are there in God?

*In God there are three Divine Persons
- the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.*

16. What do we mean by the Blessed Trinity?

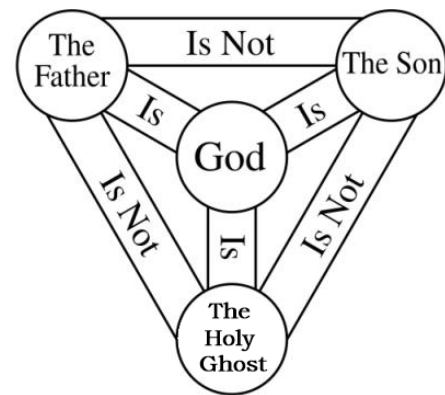
By the Blessed Trinity we mean one and the same God in three Divine Persons.

16a How are the three Divine Persons, though really distinct from one another, one and the same God?

The three Divine Persons, though really distinct from one another, are one and the same God, because all have one and the same Divine Nature.

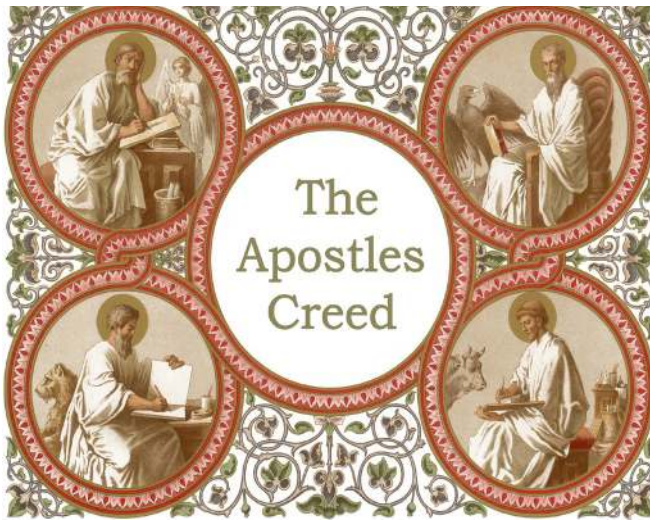
16b Can we fully understand how the three Divine Persons, though really distinct from one another, are one and the same God?

We cannot fully understand how the three Divine Persons, though really distinct from one another, are one and the same God, because this is a supernatural mystery.



The mystery of the Blessed Trinity is one of the most important doctrines of the Church. The fact that God is one, but at the same time, is three Persons, is beyond our nature to comprehend. We believe this because God has revealed it to us. When some young people don't understand something, they say 'it is stupid'. But no, it is not 'it' that is stupid. It is our lack of knowledge and understanding. The mystery of the Blessed Trinity is at the heart of our faith.

Prayer



In this level, as in Level Four, we are going to study the meanings of the words in the prayers we pray. The Apostles' Creed is a prayer that outlines the chief truths of our faith. We start our Rosary with this prayer and it is important that we understand the meaning of these words.

The word Creed comes from Latin, Credo, which means I believe. Therefore, the Creed is a summary of what one believes. It is called the The Apostles' Creed because it was composed by the Apostles, and contains a summary of the principal truths they taught.

The Apostles' Creed has come down to us intact, except for a few clauses added by the Church later, in order to counteract various heresies. These additions, however, are not new doctrines, but a clarification of what the Creed already contained.

The Creed is divided into twelve articles and all the articles are absolutely necessary to faith; if even one article is omitted or changed, faith would be destroyed.

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth;

This first article teaches us that God is the creator of all things on earth and in heaven. It also shows us the First Person of the Blessed Trinity, to Whom creation is attributed. This is the beginning of the teaching of the Holy Trinity.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, Our Lord;

This second article of the Creed shows our faith in the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity and His relation to God the Father, that is, the Son.

Question 1 ♦ How many Persons are there in God?

Question 2 ♦ How are the three Divine Persons, though really distinct from one another, one and the same God?

Question 3 ♦ What do we mean by the Blessed Trinity?

Question 4 ♦ What does the word Credo mean?

Question 5 ♦ How many articles of faith does the Apostles' Creed contain?

Question 6 ♦ What does the first article of the Apostles' Creed teach us?



Bible Studies



In this Level we will be looking at stories from the Acts of the Apostles, written by Saint Luke. This was the beginning of the spread of Christianity. The Apostles were confirmed on the first Pentecost Sunday, when the Holy Ghost appeared to them under the form of tongues of fire. From there, they went out and spread the gospel at the risk of their own lives.

The Election of Matthias and the Descent of the Holy Ghost

Descending from Mount Olivet, the apostles retired to the upper chamber, or supper-room of the house in which they usually assembled. There they remained in prayer for ten days, with Mary the mother of Jesus, several other holy women, and a great number of disciples, the number of persons being about one hundred and twenty. During those days of prayer, Peter, rising up, said that it was time for a new apostle to be chosen to replace the traitor Judas.

The choice had come down to two men, Joseph, called Barsabbas, and Matthias. After praying for guidance, the Apostles cast their vote, and they chose Matthias, who was numbered with the eleven apostles, and filled the place left vacant by the lamentable fall of Judas. Ten days after the ascension, the Jews celebrated the Feast of Pentecost.

On that day the apostles were assembled together, persevering in prayer, when suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a mighty rushing of wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. There appeared to them cloven tongues, as it were of fire, and it sat upon every one of them. And they were filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak in divers tongues (different languages).

Now, there were at that time, in Jerusalem, Jews from every nation under heaven, who had come for the celebration of the feast. Having heard of what had taken place, they went in great numbers to the house wherein the apostles were assembled. Each one was astonished to hear them speak in his own tongue (language).

But some of the people mocked them, saying that they were drunk. Then Peter, going forth from the house with the other apostles, lifted up his voice, and spoke, "These are not drunk, as you suppose, but this is that which was spoken of by the prophet Joel: 'In the last days I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy.' "Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles, and wonders, and signs, which God did by Him in the midst of you, as you also know; Him you have crucified and put to death by the hands of wicked men. God hath raised Him up, whereof we all are witnesses. Being exalted, therefore, by the right hand of God, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath poured forth this which you see and hear. Therefore, let all the house of Israel know most assuredly that God hath made Him Lord and Christ, this same Jesus whom you have crucified."

Bible Studies

The words of Peter had a divine power that penetrated all hearts, and many, repenting of their sins, asked Peter and the other apostles what they ought to do. Peter said to them: “Do penance, and be baptized, everyone of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”

They received his words with joy, and on that day about three thousand persons were baptized.

- Question 7 ♦ Why did the Apostles choose another Apostle?
Question 8 ♦ Who was chosen to take the place of Judas?
Question 9 ♦ On what day did the Holy Ghost come to the Apostles?
Question 10 ♦ How many people were baptized on the first Pentecost?







The Saints



Saint Ambrose

Ambrose was born in the year 340, not very many years after Emperor Constantine had made Christianity the religion of the Roman Empire. At that time the Empire had four great governors, and one of these, the Prefect of Gaul (who was responsible for Britain, France, Spain, Portugal, as well as parts of Germany, and for the islands of Sardinia, Corsica, and Sicily), was Ambrose's father. It was natural that Ambrose too should train to become a governor, and he was sent to Rome to prepare himself for his career. When he was twenty-nine he was made Governor of Northern Italy and went to live in the great palace at Milan, where at that time was the Court of the Emperor of the West. He ruled well, and the people came to love and trust him.

Five years after Ambrose became governor the Bishop of Milan died, and there was such a dispute as to who should become the next Bishop that on the day of the election Ambrose decided that he, as Governor, ought to attend in state in case the two different parties began to fight. He spoke to the people, reminding them how they should behave on such a solemn day. Then in silence after he had finished speaking a child's voice suddenly called out: "Ambrose, Bishop." It seemed like a sign from Heaven. The crowds took up the cry, and the Governor found himself faced by the whole city roaring, "Ambrose must be our bishop."

But Ambrose was not a priest. It was quite impossible for him, said Ambrose, to become their bishop. He was their governor, and their governor he would remain. Then, when they still called for him as bishop, he decided to run away. He left secretly at night by a side-door of the palace, and started to travel to Rome. But in the dark he took the wrong turn, and just as day broke he found that he had gone in a circle and had come back to Milan again by another gate. This time the people surrounded him in his palace, and he was practically made a prisoner. So at last he gave in, was baptized, and seven days later made Bishop of Milan. He was thirty-four, and for the remaining twenty-three years of his life he stayed in Milan as Bishop.

He had found when he was governor that it had been difficult to raise enough money to keep the city in proper repair; but with his power then he had been able to tax the people. Now that he had to keep the churches in repair and to find money for the poor he found things still more difficult. He gave away to the Church all his own money and possessions, and made others follow his example. And when people were starving and no more money could be found he decided to sell the gold and silver vessels of the Church itself. His enemies said that this was an insult to God.

"Which do you think is more valuable," said Ambrose, "church vessels or living souls?" And he went on selling the treasures in the market-place, calling, "Behold, the God of Christ that saves men from death!"



The Saints



Ambrose's enemies were people called Arians, who claimed to be Christians but who did not really believe that Jesus was God. The Empress herself and most of the courtiers and the wealthy people of Milan were Arians, and at last the Empress, who hated Ambrose, determined to take one of the Christian churches to use for Arian worship. Because she was the head of the State she had the right to take any building she wanted, but, all the same, Ambrose knew he must refuse her. He would not allow a Catholic church to be taken for Arian services. "Palaces are matters for the Emperor," he said, "but churches belong to the Bishop."

The Empress would not listen to his arguments, but ordered her soldiers to occupy one of the churches of Milan. Then Ambrose called on the faithful Christians, and day after day, night after night, they filled every church in the city, saying their prayers, singing hymns, and listening to sermons, so that there was not room for a single soldier to get inside a church. The citizens who had insisted that Ambrose should become Bishop now showed how loyal they were to him. And on Good Friday, 386, the Empress admitted she was beaten and withdrew her order.

Ambrose's next step was to build a great new cathedral (which is known today as Saint Ambrose's) in which he determined to make a shrine for two martyrs, the twin brothers Gervase and Protase, who had given their lives for Christ in Milan over two hundred years before in one of the great persecutions. But no one knew where the martyrs had been buried, and the people did not want to wait until their bones were found – if ever they could be sure that the saints themselves would make it possible for him to discover their tomb; and one night the answer was given to him in a dream.

Next day he ordered the workmen to dig in a certain place in front of the railing of a churchyard outside the city gates. The hole was dug, but there was no sign of any bodies buried there. But when it seemed that he had made a mistake an extraordinary thing happened. Blind and lame and sick people who had gone to the place, hoping to find the relics there, were suddenly cured. So the digging began again, and at last the two bodies were found and taken in state to be reburied in the new cathedral. One of the immense multitude who watched was an African name Augustine, who was later baptized by Ambrose and became one of the greatest of Christian saints.

At the doors of the new cathedral some time later occurred an event which was one of the great landmarks of the early Christian church. In a town far from Milan the Governor had put in prison a charioteer who was a favorite of the people at the games in the Circus. The people thought the sentence was unjust, and they became so angry that they murdered the Governor. When the news of it was brought to the Emperor, who was in Milan, he swore that he would take terrible vengeance on the town. Ambrose came to the Emperor, and, while not making light of the crime, asked him to be merciful. Ambrose thought that the Emperor had listened to him, but actually the Emperor sent secret orders to the soldiers of the town that there was to be a great massacre, and seven thousand men, women, and children were murdered.

The Saints

When the news came to Milan, Ambrose called the Emperor a murderer and refused to allow him to receive the sacraments until he had done penance in public. The Emperor said he was sorry, and came to the Cathedral in state, accompanied by his courtiers and his guards. But at the door Ambrose barred the way.

“How can you lift up in prayer the hands that are still dripping with blood?” said Ambrose. “Depart, I say.”

“David sinned,” said the Emperor; “yet David was forgiven.”

“Yes,” said Ambrose, “you have imitated David in his sin. Now imitate him in his repentance.” And not until the Emperor put off all his royal clothes and put on sackcloth and in the sight of all Milan confessed his sin, promised amendment, and lay on his face before the High Altar was he allowed once more to receive Holy Communion.

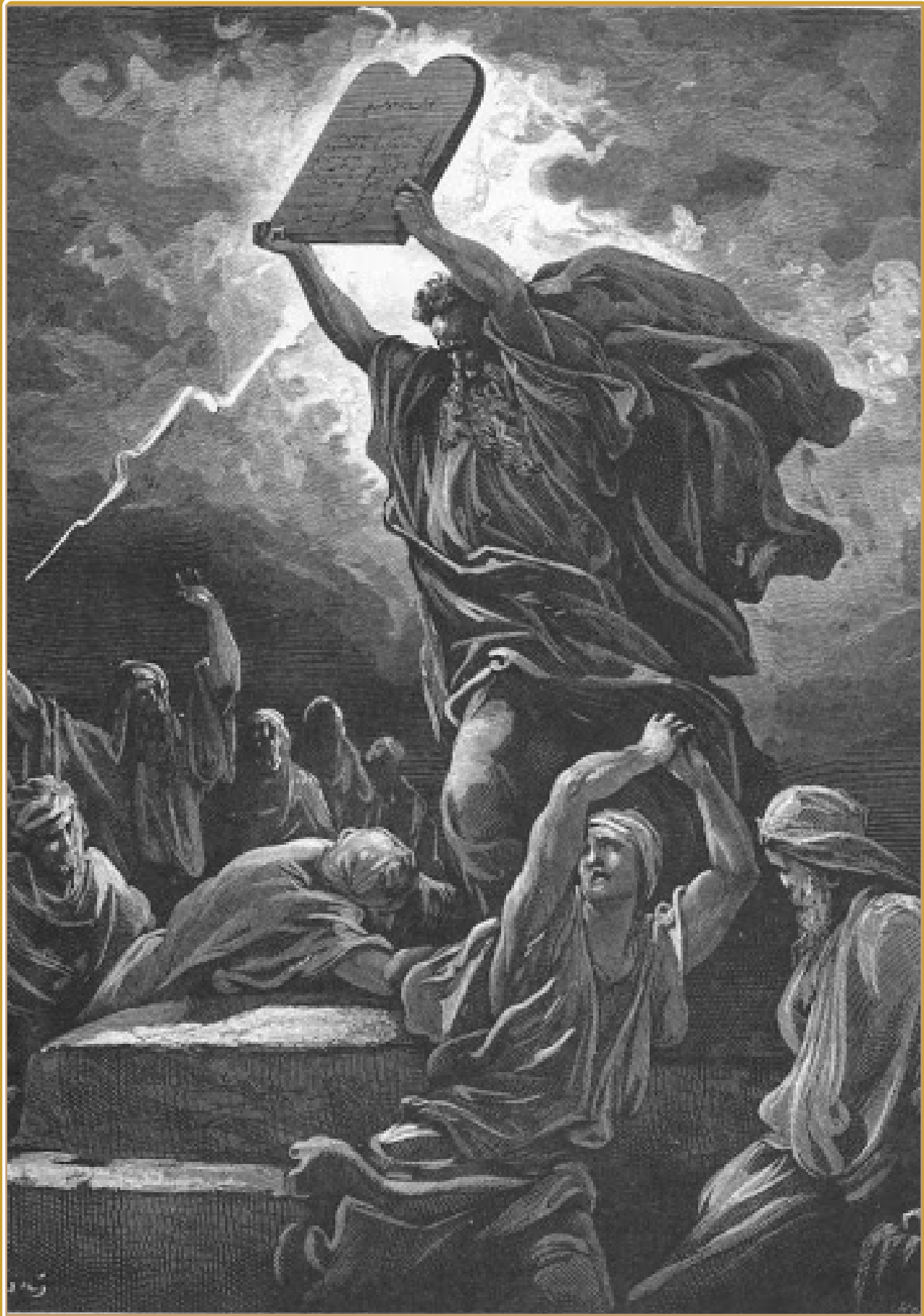


That he was indeed sorry we know, because he enacted a new law that between the pronouncement of a sentence of death and its execution a whole month must pass, so that there would be time to prevent any injustice. And the Emperor so loved and respected Ambrose for showing that the law of God is greater than the law of even the most powerful man that he said, “Ambrose is the only man I think worthy of the name Bishop.”

Question 11 ♦ Saint Ambrose became bishop of where?

Question 12 ♦ Which great Saint was baptized by Saint Ambrose?

Question 13 ♦ How old was Saint Ambrose when he was consecrated a bishop?



Confirmation

In previous levels, there is a section titled 'Devotions'. In this Level, we are replacing the 'Devotions' section, with a section called, Confirmation. Each lesson does not necessarily teach directly about the Sacrament itself, but it contains the knowledge necessary to prepare for the reception of the Sacraments. Therefore, some of the work presented in this section will be a revision of work from other levels.

The Ten Commandments

A knowledge of the Ten Commandments is essential for all Catholics, especially those who are confirmed and are therefore adult Catholics, soldiers of Christ. These Ten Commandments need to be learned by heart if not already known. The first three commandments are directly related to God and the last seven commandments are directly related to one's neighbor.

1. I am the Lord, thy God; thou shalt not have strange gods before Me.
2. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.
3. Remember thou keep holy the Lord's Day.
4. Honor thy father and thy mother.
5. Thou shalt not kill.
6. Thou shalt not commit adultery.
7. Thou shalt not steal.
8. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.
9. Thou shalt not covert thy neighbor's wife.
10. Thou shalt not covert thy neighbor's goods.



Question 14 ♦ How many commandments of God are there?

Question 15 ♦ Which commandments are directly related to God?

Question 16 ♦ Write out and number the seven commandments directly related to our neighbor.



Church History



The First Years of Christianity

From 32AD to 70AD

Our Lord, Jesus Christ, founded a visible Society, or Church to carry on His work through the ages. He handed on His own authority to His twelve Apostles, with Peter appointed as head, about the year 32 AD. Jesus said, "All power is given to Me in Heaven and on Earth. Go ye therefore and teach all nations.... I am with you all days even to the end of the world". So the Church was sent to teach all Nations with the same Divine authority as Jesus Himself. Jesus gave the same mission to His Church as that given to Him. "As the Father sent Me, I also send you." The twelve Apostles were a group of Jews, unlearned, mostly fishermen. The task given to them was quite beyond them unless they were given strength and guidance from God. So it was that Jesus promised to stay with them until the end of time. He also promised to send the Holy Ghost, who would teach them all things.

On Pentecost Sunday, the Holy Ghost came down upon the Apostles and Our Lady in the form of tongues of fire. The Holy Ghost came to strengthen and enlighten the Apostles and to guard and guide the Church through all ages. Pentecost Sunday was the birthday of the Church, because on that day, the Apostles set out to begin their mission of converting the whole world. Saint Peter, by the power of his preaching converted three thousand people with his first sermon.

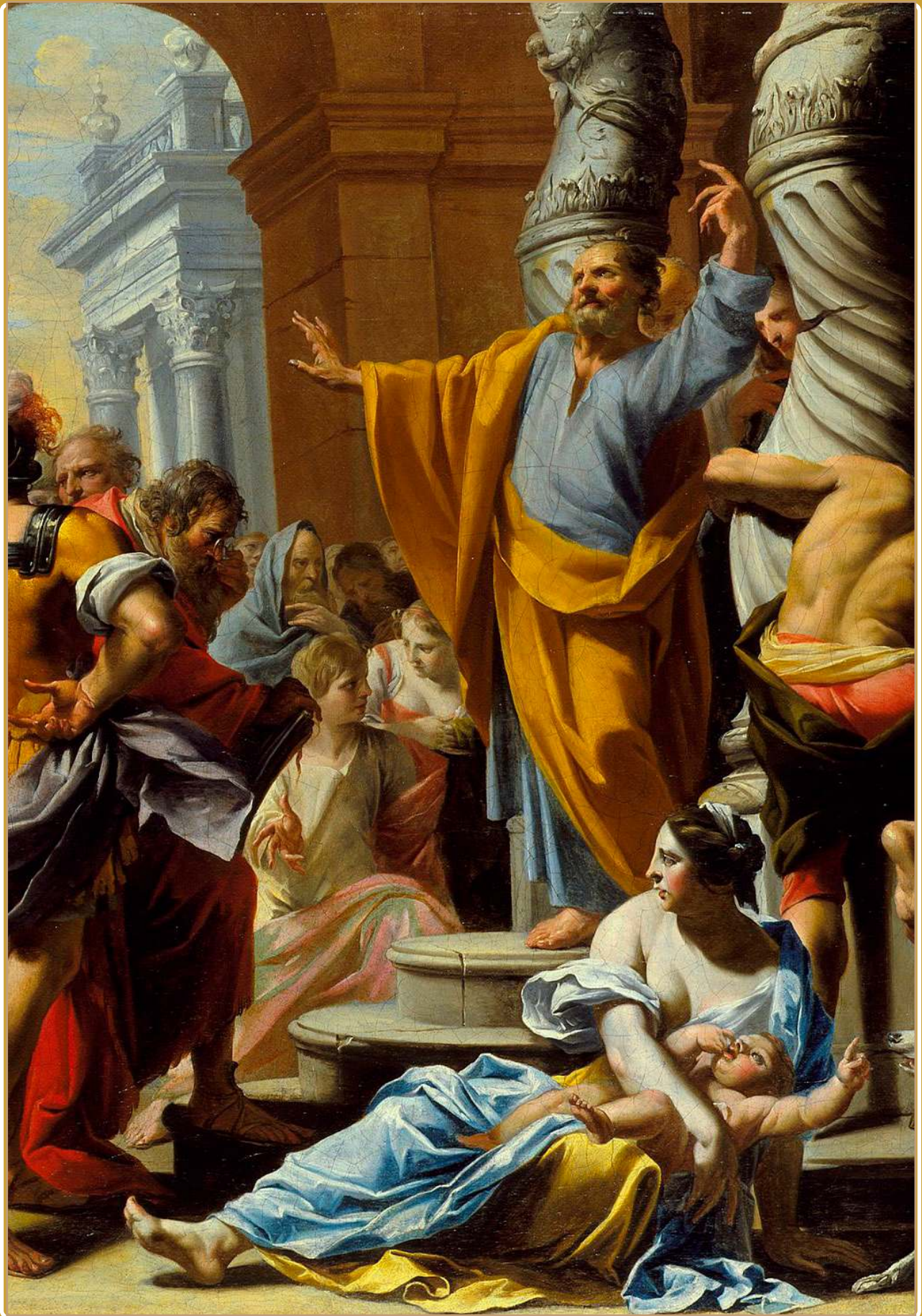
When Saint Peter and Saint John cured a man crippled from birth and taught that it was done by the power of Jesus, five thousand more people were converted and baptized. The Chief Priests, who had caused the death of Jesus, were very angry to hear the Apostles preaching about Jesus. Saint Peter and Saint John were thrown into jail, scourged and forbidden to preach about Jesus.

Each day, the number baptized increased. There were many miracles. The Chief Priests were enraged. They started a general persecution of the Church. Saint Stephen was the first put to death by stoning. A man named Saul was there and approved. Saul was one of the great enemies of the Church. Later, on the way to Damascus, Saul was struck down by a light from Heaven and rose up to become the great Saint Paul.

At first the Apostles taught in and around Jerusalem and then they went out to all Judea, Syria, Arabia and Persia. Everywhere there were miracles, more converts, Churches established, bishops and priests ordained. Saint Bartholomew went to Persia, Saint Thomas went to India, Saint Matthew to Ethiopia, Saint Jude to Arabia, Saint Andrew to Greece. All died martyrs for the Faith.

Saint Peter first went to Antioch, the chief Roman city of the East. It was there that the followers of Christ were first called Christians. In 42 AD Saint Peter went to Rome, the capital of the Roman World. After twenty five years in Rome Saint Peter died on a cross (upside down), a martyr for the Faith, in 67 AD.

- Question 17 ♦ What was Saint Paul's name before he was converted?
Question 18 ♦ What day is considered to be the birthday of the Church?
Question 19 ♦ Who was the first martyr (person who died for the faith)?



The Catholic Faith Teaching Manual (Level 5, Confirmation) provides a Traditional Catholic learning resource for children aged 12-13 (grade 6) or older who are making their Confirmation.

It introduces the fundamentals of the Catholic faith which incorporates both the tradition and the beauty. It is part of a series of books that has 5 levels designed for Primary school children from Grade 2 to Grade 6. The manual is ideal for schools and homeschooling. The manual can be taught over a year or in months depending on your preference.

The Catholic Faith Teaching Manual Level 5 contains 15 lessons, which include Catechism questions, Bible studies, lives of the Saints, explanation of prayers, church history and spiritual preparation for Confirmation.

This Level is a completion of what has been taught in the other levels, focusing on the rich history of the church and the importance of self discipline. At completion the student will understand the renewed promise of Confirmation, and how the church survived the dangers from outside and within Holy Mother Church.

They will learn the heresies that were quashed by the Popes and the special councils convened to correct these heresies. The focus on this level is the renewed strength that comes from the Holy Ghost through confirmation, and like our predecessors who fought to protect the Church we must carry that obligation as we become soldiers of Christ and guardians of the One, Holy Catholic and Apostolic church.

CATHOLIC FAITH TEACHING MANUAL SERIES

Level 1 : Holy Communion (age 9-10, Grade 2/3)

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Level 3 : Intermediary Level (age 11, Grade 4)

Level 4 : Pre confirmation Level (age 11-12, Grade 5)

Level 5 : Confirmation Level (age 12-13, Grade 6)



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