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CATHOLIC BENCHMARK QUIZ

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For each quiz question there is also an explanation for the correct answer as well as a reference to relevant portions of the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC). The CCC is referenced by paragraphs, so CCC 245 means paragraph 245, not page 245. If your family does not have a physical copy of the CCC, you can access a digital copy online at the Vatican's website or at the United States Council of Catholic Bishop's (USCCB) website:

http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/_INDEX.HTM

<https://www.usccb.org/sites/default/files/flipbooks/catechism/>

Catholic Benchmark Quiz Answer Key

Name: _____ Answer Key _____

1. What does Christ mean?

- a. God
- b. Anointed one**
- c. It was Jesus' last name
- d. Jew

CCC 436 "The word "Christ" comes from the Greek translation of the Hebrew "Messiah", which means "anointed." It became the name proper to Jesus only because he accomplished perfectly the divine mission that "Christ" signifies. In effect, in Israel those consecrated to God for a mission that he gave were anointed [with oil] in his name. This was the case for kings, for priests and, in rare instances, for prophets. This had to be the case all the more so for the Messiah whom God would send to inaugurate his kingdom definitively. It was necessary that the Messiah be anointed by the Spirit of the Lord at once as king and priest, and also as prophet. Jesus fulfilled the messianic hope of Israel in his threefold office of priest, prophet, and king."

Since you are a CHRIST-ian, you too have been anointed with oil (at your baptism and at confirmation).

2. True or **False:** God the Father is greater than the Holy Spirit.

CCC 245 "The Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity, is God, one and equal with the Father and the Son, of the same substance and also of the same nature"

3. True or False: Jesus was made by the Father.

CCC 241-242 *The introduction of the Gospel according to John alludes to this fact where Jesus is referred to as "the Word":*

John 1:1-3 *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came to be through him, and without him nothing came to be."*

Recall hearing the following from the Nicene Creed at Mass:

*I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the Only Begotten Son of God,
born of the Father before all ages.
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, **not made**, consubstantial with the Father;
through him all things were made.*

4. True or False: Jesus is God.

CCC 446 *THIS IS IMPORTANT. Knowing that Jesus is God changes the entire meaning of the Bible and the entire meaning of your life.*

5. True or False: At Mass, the bread and wine literally become Jesus' body and blood.

CCC 1357 *"... we offer to the Father what he has himself given us: the gifts of his creation, bread and wine which, by the power of the Holy Spirit and by the words of Christ, have become the body and blood of Christ. Christ is thus really and mysteriously made present."*

I encourage you to watch "[Sophia SketchPad: The Eucharist](#)" on YouTube.

6. Who wrote the Bible?

- a. The Angel Gabriel
- b. Jesus
- c. The Romans
- d. Humans inspired by the Holy Spirit

CCC 106 *"God inspired the human authors of the sacred books. 'To compose the sacred books, God chose certain men who, all the while he employed them in this task, made full use of their own faculties and powers so that, though he acted in them and by them, it was as true authors that they consigned to writing whatever he wanted written, and no more.'"*

7. True or False: In general, abortion is morally acceptable and is not a sin.

CCC 2271 "Since the first century, the Church has affirmed the moral evil of every procured abortion. This teaching has not changed and remains unchangeable. Direct abortion, that is to say, abortion willed either as an end or a means, is gravely contrary to the moral law..."

Most women who have obtained abortions felt pressured into it. Women who have had an abortion should seek healing and forgiveness in the Catholic Church and be shown the utmost love and support as it can be a traumatic experience. "Rachel's Vineyard" is a ministry specifically meant to help women who have had abortions (and men who pressured them into it) find healing.

<http://www.rachelsvineyard.org/>

8. True or False: You have to believe evolution doesn't exist to be a Christian.

Certain portions of Genesis need not be taken literally. Saint Augustine, for example, taught God created some creatures in the form of primitive seeds from which they were to gradually develop.

However it should be noted, per CCC 295, you must believe that evolution was guided by the hand of God and not completely random if you choose to espouse the theory of evolution. If you are fascinated by this complicated topic, I encourage you to go ahead and read Pope Pius XII's encyclical *Humani Generis*, it is less than 8 pages. The theologically tenable orthodox version of the theory of evolution is likely far different than the version you've been taught in public schools and secular television, and there are a great many scientific shortcomings of the theory that lead some well educated Christians to doubt the theory of evolution.

9. How often do YOU usually pray?

- a. More than once a day c. Once a day
b. Once a week d. Less than once a week

CCC 2744 While there is no magic number, it really is best to pray much more than once a day because relationships are strengthened the more often you talk with people. And so your relationship with Jesus likely will not grow if you don't communicate with him regularly.

10. How often do YOU go to Mass?

- a. More than once a week c. Once a month
b. Once a week d. Less than once a month

CCC 2181 "The Sunday Eucharist is the foundation and confirmation of all Christian practice. For this reason the faithful are obliged to participate in the Eucharist on days of obligation, unless excused for a serious reason (for example, illness, the care of infants) or dispensed by their own pastor. Those who deliberately fail in this obligation commit a grave sin."

11. True or False: If you commit a mortal sin, you have to go to confession before receiving communion at Mass.

CCC 1415 "Anyone who desires to receive Christ in Eucharistic communion must be in the state of grace. Anyone aware of having sinned mortally must not receive communion without having received absolution in the sacrament of penance."

"Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of profaning the body and blood of the Lord. Let a man examine himself, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup" (1 Cor. 11:27–28)

This is unfortunately a tenant of the Catholic faith that many are ignorant of. If you have been ignorant of this then you are much less culpable, but do confess this and don't be afraid to stay in your pew during communion if you have a doubt.

12. Who goes to hell?

- a. All people who aren't Christians.
- b. Hell doesn't exist.
- b. People that explicitly or implicitly choose to go there.
- d. Only murderers.

While the Catholic Church has the authority to know some individuals who are in heaven by name (the Saints), the Catholic Church doesn't declare who is in hell so to an extent it is a bit of an unknown. People go to hell by their own choice. It is a great mystery why anyone would ever choose to go to hell, yet presumably many people do (Mt. 7:13-14). It is good to think of this not as a one time choice at the end of your life or a one time choice during your life. Rather think of it as an ongoing journey of decisions to grow closer or further away from God that is ultimately interpreted/judged by the most merciful person in the universe (Jesus).

CCC 1056 "Following the example of Christ, the Church warns the faithful of the "sad and lamentable reality of eternal death", also called "hell.""

CCC 1057 "Hell's principal punishment consists of eternal separation from God in whom alone man can have the life and happiness for which he was created and for which he longs."

CCC 1058 "The Church prays that no one should be lost: "Lord, let me never be parted from you." If it is true that no one can save himself, it is also true that God "desires all men to be saved" (1 Tim 2:4), and that for him "all things are possible" (Mt 19:26)"

Matthew 7:13-14 "Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the road broad that leads to destruction, and those who enter through it are many. How narrow the gate and constricted the road that leads to life. And those who find it are few."

13. True or False After death you will forever be transformed into a spirit (an angel).

We believe in the resurrection of the body (as stated in the Apostles creed). One takeaway is that the human body is beautiful, you are beautiful, and you and your body deserve respect and honor because it is made in the image and likeness of God (which is way more special than angels) and will endure for all eternity.

CCC 997 *"In death, the separation of the soul from the body, the human body decays and the soul goes to meet God, while awaiting its reunion with its glorified body. God, in his almighty power, will definitively grant incorruptible life to our bodies by reuniting them with our souls, through the power of Jesus' Resurrection."*

14. Who can a valid sacramental marriage in the Catholic Church be between?

- a. A man and a woman.
- b. A man and a man.
- c. A woman and a woman.
- d. All of the above.

Those especially interested in the topic or in disbelief of it or who find the Church's teachings outdated/outrageous etc should take the time to watch [The Third Way: Homosexuality and the Catholic Church - YouTube](#) .

Those that experience same sex attraction are encouraged to live a chaste life (similarly married heterosexuals and single heterosexuals are called to live chaste lives). Sex within marriage is great, but sex is not the most important thing in life and a person is not defined by their sexual inclinations.

CCC 2357 *"Homosexuality refers to relations between men or between women who experience an exclusive or predominant sexual attraction toward persons of the same sex. It has taken a great variety of forms through the centuries and in different cultures. Its psychological genesis remains largely unexplained. Basing itself on Sacred Scripture, which presents homosexual acts as acts of grave depravity, tradition has always declared that "homosexual acts are intrinsically disordered." They are contrary to the natural law. They close the sexual act to the gift of life. They do not proceed from a genuine affective and sexual complementarity. Under no circumstances can they be approved."*

CCC 2358 *"The number of men and women who have deep-seated homosexual tendencies is not negligible. This inclination, which is objectively disordered, constitutes for most of them a trial. They must be accepted with respect, compassion, and sensitivity. Every sign of unjust discrimination in their regard should be avoided. These persons are called to fulfill God's will in their lives and, if they are Christians, to unite to the sacrifice of the Lord's Cross the difficulties they may encounter from their condition."*

CCC 2359 *"Homosexual persons are called to chastity. By the virtues of self-mastery that teach them inner freedom, at times by the support of disinterested friendship, by prayer and sacramental grace, they can and should gradually and resolutely approach Christian perfection."*

CCC 1601 *"The matrimonial covenant, by which a man and a woman establish between themselves a partnership of the whole of life, is by its nature ordered toward the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of offspring; this covenant between baptized persons has been raised by Christ the Lord to the dignity of a sacrament."*

15. How often do YOU go to Confession?

a. Once a month or more
b. Once a year

c. Once every few months
d. Less than once a year

Code of Canon Law: Can. 989 *"After having reached the age of discretion, each member of the faithful is obliged to confess faithfully his or her grave sins at least once a year."*

https://www.vatican.va/archive/cod-iuris-canonici/cic_index_en.html

16. Do you do anything special on Fridays in Ordinary Time for penance (if yes, what)?

Yes or No

Code of Canon Law: Can. 1249 *"The divine law binds all the Christian faithful to do penance each in his or her own way. In order for all to be united among themselves by some common observance of penance, however, penitential days are prescribed on which the Christian faithful devote themselves in a special way to prayer, perform works of piety and charity, and deny themselves by fulfilling their own obligations more faithfully and especially by observing fast and abstinence, according to the norm of the following canons."*

Can. 1250 *"The penitential days and times in the universal Church are every Friday of the whole year and the season of Lent."*

Can. 1251 *"Abstinence from meat, or from some other food as determined by the Episcopal Conference, is to be observed on all Fridays, unless a solemnity should fall on a Friday. Abstinence and fasting are to be observed on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday."*

Can. 1252 *"The law of abstinence binds those who have completed their fourteenth year. The law of fasting binds those who have attained their majority, until the beginning of their sixtieth year. Pastors of souls and parents are to ensure that even those who by reason of their age are not bound by the law of fasting and abstinence, are taught the true meaning of penance."*

17. True or False Everyone in heaven experiences the same perfect reward and an equal amount of glory (i.e., either you're in heaven or you're not and that's all there is to it).

Council of Florence: Session 6 *"the souls of those who have incurred no stain of sin whatsoever after baptism, as well as souls who after incurring the stain of sin have been cleansed...are straightaway received into heaven and clearly behold the triune God as He is, yet one person more perfectly than another according to the difference of their merits. But the souls of those who depart this life in actual mortal sin, or in original sin alone, go down straightaway to hell to be punished, but with unequal pains."*

Matt. 16:27 *"(Jesus) will render to every one according to his works"*

1 Corinthians 3:8 *"And every man shall receive his own reward, according to his own labor"*

Don't worry, everyone in heaven will love each other so much that the unequal glory will not result in envy.

18. Short Answer: In as much detail as you can, explain what the difference is between Catholicism and other branches of Christianity?

There are many possible answers to this, but here is a brief overview. **CCC 1398-1401**

Christians share the belief of the Trinity.

In general, all Christians share the majority of the Bible. Since the Bible was written in non-English languages (e.g., Greek, Hebrew, etc) some English translations from other Christian or pseudo-Christian groups take liberties that slant the meaning of certain passages away from what they originally meant (or even remove entire books or passages of the Bible that conflicted with their theology) so it is important that you use an approved Catholic version of the Bible with reliable commentary in the footnotes.

The Catholic Church can trace its roots all the way back to the apostles, was instituted by Jesus himself, and claims Christ gave the Catholic Church the authority to infallibly teach on matters of faith and morals. Both Catholic and Orthodox Christians have the Mass, believe in the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist, share the same valid sacraments (confession, anointing of sick, etc), believe in the ability of Saints to intercede for us in prayer, hold Mary the mother of God in very very high regard, and can trace their roots back to the apostles. Many other Christian groups regrettably do not have all these things.

According to the CIA World Fact Book 2020 estimate, these are the percentage of world population with respect to religion: Christian 31.1%, Muslim 24.9%, Hindu 15.2%, Buddhist 6.6%, folk religions 5.6%, Jewish <1%, other <1%, unaffiliated 15.6%

In terms of numbers (according to Wikipedia), there are about ~1,345 million Catholics in the world, ~280 million Orthodox Christians (with whom Catholics share nearly everything in common,

but the belief in the authority of the Pope and a few other points. Note that majority of these are "Russian Orthodox" at >100 million adherents), ~950 million Protestant or "non-denominational" Christians, and ~35 million people in various groups that do not believe in the Trinity but whom still advertise themselves as Christians. There are thousands of denominations of Protestant and "non-denominational" Christians, the overwhelming majority of which were founded well after the year 1500 AD, and all believe slightly different things.

19. Short Answer: In as much detail as you can, explain Purgatory and Indulgences.

CCC 1030-1031 "All who die in God's grace and friendship, but still imperfectly purified, are indeed assured of their eternal salvation; but after death they undergo purification, so as to achieve the holiness necessary to enter the joy of heaven. The Church gives the name Purgatory to this final purification of the elect, which is entirely different from the punishment of the damned... the tradition of the Church, by reference to certain texts of Scripture, speaks of a cleansing fire: As for certain lesser faults, we must believe that, before the Final Judgment, there is a purifying fire. He who is truth says that "whoever utters blasphemy against the Holy Spirit will be pardoned neither in this age nor in the age to come". From this sentence we understand that certain offenses can be forgiven in this age, but certain others in the age to come."

According to St. Thomas Aquinas *Summa Theologiae* > Supplement (Appendix I) > Question 2>Article 1 "In Purgatory there will be a twofold pain; one will be the pain of loss, namely the delay of the divine vision, and the pain of sense, namely punishment by corporeal fire. With regard to both, the least pain of Purgatory surpasses the greatest pain of this life. For the more a thing is desired the more painful is its absence. And since after this life the holy souls desire the Sovereign Good with the most intense longing—both because their longing is not held back by the weight of the body, and because, had there been no obstacle, they would already have gained the goal of enjoying the Sovereign Good—it follows that they grieve exceedingly for their delay. Again, since pain is not hurt, but the sense of hurt, the more sensitive a thing is, the greater the pain caused by that which hurts it: wherefore hurts inflicted on the more sensible parts cause the greatest pain. And, because all bodily sensation is from the soul, it follows of necessity that the soul feels the greatest pain when a hurt is inflicted on the soul itself. That the soul suffers pain from the bodily fire is at present taken for granted... Therefore it follows that the pain of Purgatory, both of loss and of sense, surpasses all the pains of this life."

Or, in less scholastic and more relatable terms, have you ever seen a toddler that is completely happy/content and then they see another child with something they don't get to have (e.g., a new toy or ice cream) and suddenly the content toddler is struck with intense physical/emotional pain and you'd have thought someone just hit them or something based on the amount of shrieking and body throwing they are doing? Their pain is real and as any parent or other observer of humanity could tell you, for whatever reason it is one of the most intense feelings toddlers seem to have. Similarly, when we are in purgatory and see an infinite good of heaven just out of our reach it will nearly infinitely pain us [plus there could be a literal fire that you are in, so there's that too]. Which leads us into... indulgences! And why you should be trying to obtain indulgences for yourself and

the suffering souls in purgatory every day because indulgences are so powerful and so easy to obtain, but so few people bother to! See the USCCB's ["Manual of Indulgences"](#).

CCC 1471-1473: *"The doctrine and practice of indulgences in the Church are closely linked to the effects of the Sacrament of Penance. An indulgence is a remission before God of the temporal punishment due to sins whose guilt has already been forgiven, which the faithful Christian who is duly disposed gains under certain prescribed conditions through the action of the Church which, as the minister of redemption, dispenses and applies with authority the treasury of the satisfactions of Christ and the saints. An indulgence is partial or plenary according as it removes either part or all of the temporal punishment due to sin. Indulgences may be applied to the living or the dead.*

To understand this doctrine and practice of the Church, it is necessary to understand that sin has a double consequence. Grave sin deprives us of communion with God and therefore makes us incapable of eternal life, the privation of which is called the "eternal punishment" of sin. On the other hand every sin, even venial, entails an unhealthy attachment to creatures, which must be purified either here on earth, or after death in the state called Purgatory. This purification frees one from what is called the "temporal punishment" of sin. These two punishments must not be conceived of as a kind of vengeance inflicted by God from without, but as following from the very nature of sin. A conversion which proceeds from a fervent charity can attain the complete purification of the sinner in such a way that no punishment would remain. The forgiveness of sin and restoration of communion with God entail the remission of the eternal punishment of sin, but temporal punishment of sin remains. While patiently bearing sufferings and trials of all kinds and, when the day comes, serenely facing death, the Christian must strive to accept this temporal punishment of sin as a grace. He should strive by works of mercy and charity, as well as by prayer and the various practices of penance, to put off completely the "old man" and to put on the "new man."

See Apostolic Constitution of Pope Paul VI *"Indulgentiarum Doctrina"* and CCC 1474-1479 for more.