

BELIEFS

of

Orthodox Christians

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Preface

BELIEFS OF ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS is the second volume in a series of the *Orthodox Christian Library*, published by the Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America. It was originally written and published in Romania by the late Metropolitan Irineu Mihalcescu of Moldova, one of the most outstanding contemporary Orthodox theologians. As Professor of Dogmatics and Dean of the Theological Faculty of the University of Bucuresti, he wrote many other theological books.

In this volume, he intended to give the average Orthodox laymen in the Catechism form and in a language understood by him, an insight into the vast treasury of Orthodox teachings. There are similar publications in English, but the Episcopate felt that the present volume excelled in so many ways that it should be made available to the English-speaking readers. The translation was done by Father Vasile Hategan of St. Mary's Romanian Orthodox Church in Cleveland, Ohio.

The Episcopate hopes that it will be a guide and inspiration for future Orthodox generations in America, and will acquaint other Christians with the teachings of the Holy Orthodox Church.

Bishop VALERIAN D. TRIFA
Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America.

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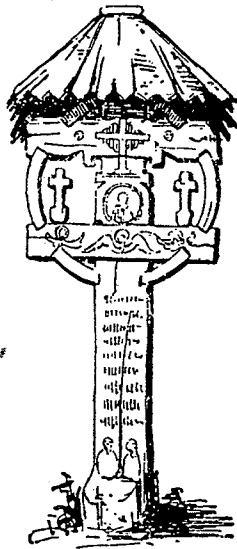
Introduction

1. *What is man and what is his purpose in this world?*

Man is the supreme being of all God's visible creatures, for he alone is endowed with a rational mind, a soul and a free will. His purpose, therefore, is to know, love and honor God, the Creator and Ruler of the Universe. By doing so, man can attain happiness in this life and the life to come. Man is happy in this life when he is content with himself and his state of being. Man is happy in the life to come when he is worthy of everlasting life. Happiness on earth is never complete, because life is too short and there are so many adversities to overcome. Worldly possessions are vain and fleeting. Thus, only in Heaven can we find complete happiness, where it is everlasting.

2. *Who, then, can attain happiness?*

If we are pleasing to God, we can attain happiness in this life and the life to come. To please God, we must believe in Him, put our hope in Him and love Him. Hence, *Faith, Hope and Love* are the three virtues by which we may please God and attain happiness. Towards this end, we must believe in God, put our hope in Him and love Him, not in an imperfect human way, but as we are taught by our Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Orthodox Church.



1. Faith

3. *What is Christian Faith?*

Generally speaking, faith is the acceptance of a fact as truth, when told by someone who is worthy to be believed. Christian faith is a divine gift by means of which we accept as truth all which God has revealed to us and teaches in His Holy Church. Faith is a Divine Gift because it is an operation of God's Grace which enlightens the mind, warms the heart and moves the will, so that we may accept and hold with determination as truths beyond doubt all which God has revealed to us. Grace, however, is also a merit of man, for only he who so wishes will actually believe. Thus, God rewards those who believe and punishes those who do not believe, for he said: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." (Mark 16:16)

A Christian must believe "all which God revealed" for the salvation of the world as is related by the Patriarchs and prophets in the Old Testament and the Holy Apostles in the New Testament.

4. *Where is the Revelation of God to be found?*

Divine Revelation or the Word of God is to be found in the Holy Scripture or Bible and in Holy Tradition, which are known as the *Sources of Faith*.

5. *What is the Holy Scripture?*

The Holy Scripture or Bible is a collection of books written by holy men inspired by the Holy Ghost and which contain the Word of God as taught by the Church.

The Bible is divided into two parts: The Old Testament which contains God's Revelation before Jesus Christ and the New Testament which contains God's Revelation as related by Jesus Christ and His Holy Apostles.

The Old Testament contains 39 books and the New Testament, 27 books.

6. *What is Holy Tradition?*

Holy Tradition are those teachings which Men of God preached, but did not set down in writing. This teaching was handed down by word of mouth from one person to another and from generation to generation. Eventually, these teachings

were written by the Holy Fathers and preserved unaltered in their writings and the various Church Service Books.

In matters of Faith, Holy Tradition, being that it is also a channel of God's Revelation, has the same value as the Bible. Holy Tradition is even older and more widespread than the Bible. From Adam to Moses there were no written books but just Tradition. The Savior Himself did not write any of His teachings. The Holy Apostles in the beginning preached only by word of mouth and only later did some of them write also. Not all men can avail themselves of the written word, whereas anyone can partake of the spoken word. In this respect, Holy Tradition supplement and clarifies Holy Scripture.

7. *Can it be proved that Holy Scripture and Holy Tradition are Inspired by God?*

Yes, proof can be given. In fact there are several ways to prove it:

a. The excellence and high moral teachings contained therein is proof beyond doubt that such teachings could not stem from the human mind, but only from God.

b. The purity of the teachings points definitely to its divine origin.

c. The prophecies and miracles performed by many of the preachers of the Divine Word leads us to conclude that they were working with the power of God.

d. The wonderful achievements of the Chris-

tian faith whenever it was put into practice wholeheartedly, as well as the good works which were inspired by it, are also ample proofs of Divine Inspiration.

e. The miraculous founding of the Christian Church, its spread throughout the world and its integrity, as the preserver of the Faith, assures us that Holy Scripture and Holy Tradition are truly the Word of God.

8. *In what way must a Christian accept Holy Scripture and Holy Tradition?*

The true Christian must firmly believe everything contained in the Holy Scripture and Holy Tradition in the manner taught by the Holy Orthodox Church. This means that it is not permissible for one to interpret the Word of God only according to his own understanding, but *only* as the Church explains and clarifies it, for the Church alone has the gift of infallibility. The Church alone has the necessary wisdom, knowledge and inspiration of the Holy Ghost to fully comprehend and interpret those teachings of the Holy Scripture and Holy Tradition which are difficult to understand. Whosoever disagrees with the Church and goes astray will lose his soul.

9. *Is Faith necessary for Salvation?*

Faith is absolutely necessary for Salvation for the Lord tells us that "he that believeth not shall

be damned" (Mark 16:16), and St. Paul assures us that "without faith it is impossible to please God." (Hebrews 11:6) Only the true Faith in Christ as is preserved and preached by our Holy Orthodox Church can save man. No Faith other than that in Jesus Christ can save because He alone is the Savior of the world. There is no true Faith in Jesus Christ assuring Salvation, except the Faith of the Holy Orthodox Church, which is the only true Church of Christ. The Holy Orthodox Church has preserved intact the teachings of Christ throughout the centuries, as received from Him through the Bible and Holy Tradition.

10. *How must Faith be to assure Salvation?*

In order to be assured Salvation, our Faith must be complete, strong, firm and living. Faith is complete when we observe all the teachings of the Church. Faith is strong when we have no doubt and we are firm in confessing it courageously, even at the sake of losing our life. Faith is living when we put into practice that which we believe.

11. *Where do we find the chief Christian teachings?*

The chief Christian teachings are to be found in the Creed as composed by the first two Ecu-

menical Councils at Nicaea and Constantinople, which is as follows:

1 I believe in one God the Father Almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth, and of all
things visible and invisible.
2 And in one Lord Jesus Christ the Son of 2
God,
The Onlybegotten,
Begotten of the Father before all worlds:
Light of Light, Very God of Very God;
Begotten, not made;
Of One Essence with the Father:
Through Whom all things were made:
3 Who for us men and for our salvation 3
came down from heaven;
And was incarnate of the Holy Spirit
and the Virgin Mary,
And was made man;
4 And was crucified also for us under 4
Pontius Pilate,
And suffered, and was buried;
5 And the third day He rose again accord- 5
ing to the Scriptures;
6 And ascended into heaven, 6
And sitteth at the right hand of the
Father;
7 And He shall come again with glory to 7
judge the quick and the dead;
And His Kingdom shall have no end.
8 And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the 8
Lord, the Giver of Life,
Who proceedeth from the Father;
Who with the Father and the Son to-
gether is worshipped and glorified;
Who spake by the Prophets.

9 I believe in one Holy Catholic and 9
Apostolic Church.
10 I acknowledge one Baptism for the re- 10
mission of sins.
11 I look for the Resurrection of the dead, 11
12 And the Life of the world to come. 12
Amen.

ARTICLE I OF THE CREED

"I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible."

12. What teaching is contained in this article?

This article contains the Christian teaching of God and His Attributes.

13. Who is God and what must we know about Him?

God is perfect Spirit, Creator, Ruler and Master of all that exists, from Whom all good flows.

When we say God is Spirit, we mean He is an Incorporeal Being, endowed with understanding, feeling and a Will in the highest degree. When we say He is perfect Spirit, we confess that God unites in His Being all the very highest Attributes. God is:

a. *Eternal* (Everlasting). God has neither beginning nor end. He was not born, nor will He

ever die. He always existed, and will continue to exist to eternity.

b. Immutable (Unchanging). God always remains the same in Himself and in His Judgment.

c. Omnipresent (All-Present). God sees us wherever we may be. In all places and at all times we witness His glory. Heaven and earth are full of His mercy.

d. Omniscient (All-Knowing). God knows everything in the most perfect way at all times. Nothing can be hidden from Him.

e. All-Wise. God has ordained and governs everything with the greatest wisdom.

f. Almighty. God can do all things and no one nor anything can oppose Him.

g. All-Holy. God wills and loves only that which is good and hates evil.

h. All-Good. God wills for His creatures only the best and grants unto them as many and such benefactions as shall be useful to them.

i. All-Just. God rewards virtue and punishes evil, according to merit.

j. All-Merciful. God helps them who need Him and forgives them who repent of their sin.

k. Patience (Forebearing). God often waits a long time before punishing sinners, so they may have a chance to repent and amend their ways.

14. *How do we know God and His Attributes?*

We cannot see God with our eyes because He is a Spirit, but we can know Him in three ways:

a. By means of careful examination of the visible world. This world could not have been made of itself, nor can it sustain or govern itself. It cannot be the cause of the beauty and order within itself. Therefore, the Universe must have a Creator, a Sustainer and a Ruler, All-Wise and Almighty, Who is God;

b. By the scrutiny of our mind which tells us that there is an unseen Judge Who rewards virtue and punishes evil justly;

c. Through Divine Revelation: "No man hath seen God at any time; the Onlybegotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared him." (John 1:18)

15. *Why is God called "The Father"?*

Our Holy Orthodox Church teaches that there is only one God, but that in this unity we can distinguish Three Persons, which are not to be confused with one another. The three Persons are the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Each of these Persons is perfect God, yet there are not three Gods, but only One. The human mind cannot encompass nor understand this mystery, because God and His Attributes are Infinite. We must, however, be fully assured that it is so, since He who revealed this mystery is Christ Himself, who said: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." (Matthew 28:19) St. John also said: "For there are three that bear

record in Heaven, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one." (I John 5:7) The three Divine Persons are perfectly equal to one another; all are one and the same God because all have one and the same divine essence. Each one, however, has its own personal properties to distinguish it from the others. These properties are: The Father was not born, the Son was begotten of the Father; and the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father. Since the Son was begotten of the Father from all eternity, likewise does the Holy Ghost proceed from the Father in all eternity. The Father is neither older nor greater than the Son or the Holy Ghost. All are equal.

The three Divine Persons are jointly called: "The Most Holy Trinity."

16. *What do the words: "Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth and of all things visible and invisible" mean?*

They mean that God created the world by His Almighty power and watches over it with His Divine Providence.

17. *What must we know about Creation?*

The Universe—Heaven, earth, angels, men and all that is within it—is not eternal, nor did it come about by its own volition, but was created by God at the beginning of time. God created the Uni-

verse from nothing by His command. It was a single act of His All-Powerful Will. God created the world so that He may share His unbounded gifts with His creation and that He may be glorified.

18. *Why is God also called the Maker of "All things visible and invisible"?*

Besides the visible world, God created angels and the human soul. Angels are pure spirits, as is God, but they are not as perfect as He. They serve God by acting as His messengers. They protect us from harm and inspire us to do good. Even though God created all angels good, some of them did not remain faithful to God and have sinned. These bad angels were cast into hell and are known as devils. They try to harm us by tempting us into sin. We can resist their temptations by fasting, praying and doing good deeds. God will always help us to fight the snares of the devil if we ask Him. The good angels who remained faithful to God entered into the eternal happiness of Heaven, where they see, love and adore God.

19. *How did God create the visible world?*

God created the visible world from nothing by stages. Moses relates in Genesis how God created the world in six days. When everything

in the world was ready for a master, God created man also.

20. *How did He create man?*

Man was created altogether differently from the rest of the creatures of the world. God only commanded that they be created, and it was done. The body of man was shaped out of earth by God Himself and was endowed with an immortal soul. Man was made, in the words of the Scripture, in the "image and likeness of God," which means that man's soul was endowed with reason and a free will, which, if used only to do the will of God, can attain holiness to the point where it will be like God. The first man and woman were Adam and Eve, who were placed in the Garden of Eden and endowed with happiness, great knowledge, control of passions by reason, and freedom from suffering and death. These gifts were to be inherited by their heirs, the whole human race.

21. *How did man lose this state of happiness?*

God gave Adam and Eve the commandment not to eat of the fruit of a certain tree. They did not obey the commandment, but were tempted by the devil and ate of the forbidden fruit. On account of their sin, they lost sanctifying Grace, the right to heaven and their special gifts. They then became subject to death, to suffering and to a strong inclination to evil, and were driven

from Paradise. This sin was inherited by all the descendents of Adam and Eve. We are born with this sin and deprived of God's Grace. This sin is called *the original sin*.

22. *Did God abandon man after his fall?*

God created the world because of His great love for us and He constantly watches over us. Being Almighty, He would not let man, for whom He made the world, perish. Therefore, when Adam and Eve were driven from Paradise, He promised a Savior Who would make peace between God and man. This Savior is our Lord Jesus Christ. After the fall, many centuries passed until the coming of Christ. During this time, God wanted man to realize his state of sin and that Salvation can come only from God. God never abandoned man, but prepared him for the coming of Christ.

23. *Did God prepare all men alike for the coming of the Savior?*

No. He gave the Jews clear and precise indications in the Law through the Prophets. He allowed the Gentiles to seek their own way, sending them from time to time, learned men, and putting them in contact with the Jews, who were the keepers of His Revelation.

ARTICLE II

*“And in One Lord Jesus Christ the Son of God,
The only Begotten,
Begotten of the Father before all worlds;
Light of Light, Very God of Very God;*

24. *What is taught in this article?*

First, we learn that Jesus Christ is the promised Savior and second that He is the Son of God and true God.

25. *How are we told that Jesus was the promised Savior?*

The very name of our Lord, *Jesus*, means *Savior* in Hebrew, as Archangel Gabriel told Joseph: “and she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins.” (Matthew 1:21) The word *Christ* in Greek means *Anointed*. The prophets, priests and Kings were anointed by the Jews, and so it is that Jesus Christ is Prophet, Priest and King.

26. *How are we to know that Jesus Christ is truly the promised Savior?*

We know that Christ is the Savior because in Him all the prophecies of the Old Testament were fulfilled.

27. *What was prophesied about the Savior?*

a. The time and place of His birth;

- b. The important events of His life, His passion and His Death;
- c. His Resurrection and Ascension;
- d. The founding and the spread of His Church.

28. *Which are the most important prototypes concerning our Savior?*

a. Abel, the patriarchs Isaac and Joseph, the King and Psalmist David, the Pascal Lamb and the Snake were Prototypes of the Passion of Christ.

b. The priest Melchisedec was the prototype of His ministry.

c. The Prophet Jonah was the prototype of His Resurrection.

d. Noah's Ark was the prototype of His Church; the Red Sea of His Baptism; Manna of the Eucharist; the Temple, with its priests and ritual, of the Christian Church.

29. *Why do we say Christ is called Prophet, Priest and King?*

Our Lord is called:

a. *Prophet*, because He revealed to man the mysteries of God, taught them what to believe, hope and do for Salvation;

b. *Priest*, because He sacrificed Himself on the Cross and sacrifices Himself daily on the Holy Altar for the forgiveness of our sins; and

c. *King*, because He founded and rules unto

eternity, His Spiritual Realm, His Holy Church and Heavenly Kingdom.

30. *Why do we call Jesus Christ, Lord?*

Jesus Christ is called Lord because He is God and this is one of the names given God.

31. *What do the words "Son of God, the Only Begotten" mean?*

Jesus Christ is the only true Son of God, whereas the Christians who call themselves sons of God, are sons only in Grace, through adoption, as is said by the Apostle: "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God." (John 1:12)

32. *When was the Son of God begotten of God the Father?*

Before all ages.

33. *What is meant by the words: "Light of Light"?*

These words help us better to understand the great mystery of the birth of the Son from the Father. Just as two beams of light are united in one, without being distinguished, so it is with the birth of the Son of God from God the Father. Further on, it says "Very God of Very God; Begotten, not made; of one Essence with the Father; through whom all things were made," showing that God the Son is True God, as is the

Father, being of the same Essence with Him. Therefore, they are equal and together created the visible and invisible world. God the Son was never inferior to God the Father.

34. *Who attests to the fact that Christ is the Son of God and True God?*

God the Father, who has said of Jesus Christ at His baptism and ascension; "this is my beloved Son," attests to it.

Jesus Christ Himself also assures us:

a. through His numerous statements that He is the Son of God and is One in Essence with God, having the same Attributes;

b. through His Holy Life, the loftiness of His teaching and the many miracles He performed, and

c. through the glorious Resurrection and Ascension into Heaven.

The Holy Apostles tell us that Christ was truly God and teach us that He is worthy of worship, just as God the Father.

Finally, Holy Tradition, verifies that Christ was truly the Son of God.

ARTICLE III

*“Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven;
And was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary,
And was made man.”*

35. *What do we learn in this article?*

We learn that the Son of God was made man for our salvation.

36. *How was the Christ made man?*

The Son of God was made man through the Blessed Virgin Mary, who conceived Him of the Holy Spirit. When Christ became man, He did not lose the nature of God. He was man and God at the same time. As God He retained His Divine Nature, but as man, He had a body and soul, as we do. He did not differ from ordinary man, except that He was without sin. Therefore, He had a Divine and Human Nature. He was God-Man.

37. *Why do we honor the Theotokos? (The Mother of God)*

We honor the Theotokos because she gave birth in a supernatural way to our Savior and remained a Virgin even after birth. Her Son was not just another man, but was God at the same time. We honor Her more than all the saints and

angels and pray to Her to intercede before God for our Salvation.

ARTICLE IV

*“And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate,
And suffered, and was buried.”*

38. *What does this article teach us?*

This article teaches us that Jesus Christ suffered and died on the Cross for our sins, and was buried.

39. *What must we believe of the Passions of Christ?*

We must believe that:

a. Jesus suffered willingly for us, so that we may be saved from damnation.

b. He suffered only as man. Only His Human Nature was in pain, for the Divine Nature could not suffer nor die.

c. Nevertheless the Divine Nature was one with the Human Nature during Christ's Passions.

d. Through His Passions, Jesus Christ brought Salvation to all mankind. If anyone is not saved, it is solely his fault, for he does not do that which is necessary for Salvation.

40. *How are we saved by the Passions and Death of our Lord?*

We are all guilty of the Original Sin and

doomed to suffering and death. Through the Passions and Death of our Lord Jesus Christ we are washed of this sin and saved from eternal suffering and death, if we become His followers, by having a living faith, accepting baptism and living up to His teachings and His example.

41. *What must we know of the Holy Cross?*

Since Our Savior suffered and died on the Cross and by it came our Salvation, we must honor the Holy Cross as a great treasure. The Holy Cross is the symbol which distinguishes a Christian from a non-Christian and has the power to cast away evil spirits. Therefore, it is profitable to make the sign of the Cross as often as possible.

ARTICLE V

“And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures.”

42. *What do we learn in this article?*

We learn that Jesus Christ had defeated death and arose the third day from the grave, as was said in the Scriptures.

43. *How do we know that Christ truly rose from the dead?*

We know that Christ truly rose from the dead from the Disciples and Apostles who saw Him

after the Resurrection, spoke to Him and walked with Him. They preached this greatest of Miracles to the whole world, and neither persecution nor a martyr's death could stop them.

44. *What value has the Resurrection for us?*

The Resurrection of our Lord is of the greatest value to us because

a. It fortifies us in our faith that He is Truly God, Master of Life and Death and Savior of the world.

b. It assures us that we will also be resurrected on Judgment Day.

c. It urges us to try to resurrect ourselves in this life from sin and live a new and holy life.

ARTICLE VI

*“And ascended into heaven,
And sitteth at the right hand of the Father.”*

45. *What teaching is taught in this article?*

We learn from this article that Christ ascended bodily to Heaven forty days after His Resurrection.

46. *Why did he ascend into Heaven?*

Our Lord Jesus ascended to Heaven

a. to rule again in glory in the Heavenly Kingdom, as He did before His Incarnation;

b. to send down upon His Apostles the Holy Spirit;

c. to be our Intercessor before God the Father;

d. to open the gates of Heaven for us and prepare the way.

ARTICLE VII

“And He shall come again with glory to judge the quick and the dead;

And His Kingdom shall have no end.”

48. *What does this article teach?*

It teaches us that Jesus Christ will come again at the end of the world, with glory and power, to judge all men.

49. *What is this judgment on the last day called?*

This judgment is called the Last Judgment, for there will be no other one after it. It is also called the General Judgment, for at that time all men will be judged.

50. *To what will men have to answer at the Last Judgment?*

At the Last Judgment, men will have to account for all their deeds, words and thoughts.

51. *How will the Last Judgment be carried on?*

At the Last Judgment, Jesus Christ will come on a cloud in the sky, surrounded by hosts of angels and seated on His Judgment Throne. All the peoples of the world will be gathered before Him and He will separate them into two groups: at His right will be the good men and at His left the evil ones. Then all deeds, words and thoughts will be bared and Christ will pronounce sentence of everlasting reward or eternal punishment on everyone.

52. *What do we mean by “Heaven”?*

Heaven is a place and state of everlasting and complete bliss, in which the souls will rejoice in the sight of God and will abide forever near Him.

53. *What do we mean by “hell”?*

Hell is a place and a state of everlasting punishment for the souls, who are separated from God and abide with the devil.

54. *Is there any other judgment besides the Last Judgment?*

Besides the Last Judgment, there is a Particular Judgment, where the soul is judged immediately following death, when it leaves the body. The eternal bliss of the righteous and the eternal pun-

ishment of the evil is not definite or complete at this Judgment, but only at the Last Judgment.

55. *Why is there a Last Judgment if a man is judged right after death?*

The Last Judgment is held

a. so that the Wisdom and Justice of God be known by all men;

b. so that Jesus Christ will be glorified by the whole world; and

c. so that the bliss or punishment of the judged be complete, for at that time, the soul will be reunited with the body which it had on earth and together they will be happy or suffer.

ARTICLE VIII

*“And I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord, the Giver of Life,
Who proceedeth from the Father;
Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified;
Who spake by the Prophets.”*

56. *What teaching is continued in this article?*

The teaching contained in this article concerns the Holy Ghost, the third person of the Holy Trinity, and especially:

a. that He is Truly God;

b. that He is the Lord, Giver of Life; and

c. that He spake by the Prophets.

57. *How do we know that the Holy Ghost is Truly God?*

We know from the Holy Scripture and Holy Tradition, which teaches that

a. the Holy Ghost is of the same Essence with the Father, from whom He proceedeth;

b. the Holy Ghost is equal to the Father and the Son, for He too has Divine Attributes and works and is to be worshipped.

58. *Why is the Third Person of the Holy Trinity called the “Holy Ghost, the Lord, Giver of Life”?*

All three Persons of the Godhead are Perfect Spirit and it is meant we call them Lord. The third Person is called Holy Ghost, the Lord, Giver of Life, for He pours the Grace of God the Father upon us, won by God the Son, He cleanses us of our sins, He sanctified us and makes us partakers of eternal life.

59. *How does the Holy Ghost operate?*

The Holy Ghost operates through the Church, which He teaches and rules invisibly and through each soul separately.

60. *In what sense must the words “Who spake by the Prophets” be interpreted?*

Through the Holy Sacraments and His Seven Gifts: Wisdom, understanding, counsel, spiritual strength, knowledge, godliness and holy fear, the

Holy Ghost enlightens, sanctifies, fortifies and consoles man. Therefore, the Holy Ghost is also known as the Comforter and the bodies of the righteous as "Temples of the Holy Ghost."

The words "Who spake by the Prophets" mean that the Holy Ghost has inspired the writers of the Holy Scripture, revealing to them the Divine Truth and steers them away from error.

ARTICLE IX

"I believe in one Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church."

61. *What is the Church?*

The Church is the congregation of all baptized persons who believe and confess the teachings of Jesus Christ. The Savior founded the Church as an institution through which we may have our sins forgiven and receive eternal Salvation since the preaching of the word and the ministering of the Sacraments and Services were given only to Her, to show us the true way to Salvation. Therefore, outside of the Church there is no Salvation, for as St. Cyprian said: "You cannot have God as Father if you do not have the Church as Mother." Truly, the Church is our spiritual mother.

62. *Are all believers equal?*

The Church being a congregation of persons,

not all of its faithful are equal. Since the Church must preserve internal order and conduct its affairs, there are those who lead and those who are led. The Spiritual leaders are the bishops, priests and deacons, who teach the faithful lay people. The clergy are also called spiritual pastors and the laymen the flock. This arrangement was laid down by Jesus Christ Himself, who is the Unseen Head of the Church and Whose clergy rules in His Name. There are ranks even among the clergy. The highest ranks are the bishops, the successors of the Holy Apostles, then come the priests, the successors of the 70 Disciples of the Lord and finally the deacons, the successors of the seven deacons appointed in Jerusalem by the Holy Apostles.

63. *How is the Church ruled?*

Since there are many bishops in the Church, they assemble when the need arises, and take measures when the welfare of the Church demands it. The decisions reached are then enforced by each bishop in his jurisdiction. These meetings or assemblies are called *Synods* or *Councils*. They have the highest authority, for they can even judge a bishop. In the first eight centuries, there were seven Ecumenical Councils held, at which the bishops of the whole Christian Church were present. Their decisions are binding to this day. No more general Councils could be held after these Councils, but each National Church has had its own local Synods, which decided upon its in-

ternal matters and which could never be in conflict with Holy Scripture or Holy Tradition.

64. *Why is the Church called "One Holy, Catholic and Apostolic"?*

The Church is One because there is only one Head, our Lord Jesus Christ, her founder. The various Local Churches are not separate Churches but members of the same Body of the Christian Church.

The Church is Holy, because Her founder and Head has sanctified Her with His Passions and has given Her the power to forgive sins. Her holiness is not affected by the fact that there are sinners within Her fold, for they either repent and become true sons, or persist in sin and separate themselves from the Church.

The Church is Catholic, because She is not limited to any place or at any time, nor to any race or nation, and relies upon the councils for Her conduct.

65. *Which is the true Christian Church?*

Of all the various churches, only the Holy Orthodox Church is the true Church of Christ on earth, for She alone has preserved intact the faith and worship established by our Lord Jesus Christ, preached by the Holy Apostles and the Holy Fathers. The other churches have introduced innovations or have made changes. Therefore, one can be surer of his salvation within the Holy

Orthodox Church than elsewhere. We should feel proud for belonging to the Orthodox Church and should never allow ourselves to be attracted to other faiths by delusions. Rather we should try to bring others to the true Faith.

66. *What does the Church ask of us?*

The Church asks of each one of us (if we want to be true members of it and be happy in this life and the one to come) to obey her commandments.

67. *Which are the nine commandments of the Church?*

The nine commandments of the Church are as follows:

1. Pray to God and attend Divine Liturgy regularly on Sundays and Feast Days.
2. Keep the Fasts prescribed by the Church.
3. Pay proper reverence to the clergy.
4. Make our confession and take communion as often as possible.
5. Do not read heretical literature.
6. Pray to God for our Spiritual and temporal rulers and every estate of man.
7. Observe such fasts, prayers, services or regulations as your Bishop may appoint.
8. Guard, preserve, support and contribute to the welfare, honor and property of the Church.
9. Refrain from celebrating marriage at forbidden times or with forbidden persons.

ARTICLE X

"I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins."

68. *What does this article teach us?*

This article teaches us concerning the Sacrament (or Mystery) of Baptism.



Sacraments

69. *What is a Sacrament?*

A Sacrament is an outward sign instituted by Jesus Christ, whereby the Holy Ghost is imparted to man through Grace.

70. *What is Grace?*

Grace is the mercy and love of God shown to the believer for his Salvation by the indwelling of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost is given by virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ, without whom there would be no Salvation. "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; nor more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me and I in him, the

same bringeth forth such fruit: for without me ye can do nothing." (John 15:4-5)

71. *What are the distinguishing marks of a Sacrament?*

A Sacrament must have:

1. An outward sign,
2. An inward impartation of the Holy Ghost and
3. Be instituted by Christ.

72. *What are the Sacraments of our Church?*

The seven *Sacraments of the Church* are

1. Baptism
2. Chrismation
3. Penance
4. Eucharist (Communion)
5. Matrimony
6. Holy Orders
7. Unction

73. *Who may administer the Sacraments?*

The Sacraments can be administered only by a bishop or a priest. The bishop can administer all seven sacraments. The priest can administer only six, excluding Holy Orders. Baptism alone can be administered by a deacon, or even a layman in case of extreme necessity. The effectiveness of the Sacraments is not dependent on the worthiness or unworthiness of the person who administers them, but rather on the power of our Lord

Jesus Christ Who instituted them. The persons who administer them only act on His behalf.

A. BAPTISM

74. *What is Baptism?*

Baptism is the Sacrament through which a person is washed of his sins by triple immersion into water and the saying of the words: "The Servant of God (N. N.) is baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen." A newly baptized person is cleansed of the original sin and of actual sins committed before baptism.

75. *When was the Sacrament of Baptism instituted by our Savior?*

Our Savior hallowed Baptism when He Himself was baptized in the river Jordan by St. John the Baptist. The Sacrament was instituted after the Resurrection, when our Lord said unto His Holy Apostles: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." (Matthew 28:19)

76. *What is asked of him who is to be baptized?*

The person to be baptized must show penance and have faith in God. When an infant is baptized, his sponsor confesses on his behalf and promises the Church that he will see that the bap-

tized child will be reared in the true faith of the Church. The sponsor must be of the Orthodox faith and must keep his promise to see that his spiritual child has a Christian upbringing.

77. *What do the various ceremonies at Baptism mean?*

In renouncing the devil, we promise to renounce his works and pomps. The blowing of the priest three times over the person signifies his rebirth by the Grace of the Holy Ghost. The making of the cross symbolizes that the person becomes a brother of Christ and will witness Him and bear His cross. The triple immersion symbolizes the death and the Resurrection on the third day of our Savior. The white vestment in which the person is clothed symbolizes the purity of the life he must lead and the lighted candle symbolizes the good deeds he must perform to be the light to lighten the darkness of sin.

78. *What else must we know about Holy Baptism?*

Of Holy Baptism we need to know that it is never repeated, except if it were not administered properly the first time in the name of the Holy Trinity. Even when it was administered only by a layman, the priest does not immerse the child anymore, but only reads the prayers of immersion. If there is a child about whom there is doubt

that he was baptized, the following formula is used: "The servant God is baptized, if he was not already baptized."

B. HOLY CHRISMATION

79. *What is Holy Chrismation?*

Holy Chrismation is the Sacrament in which the priest anoints the important parts of the body with chrism, saying: "The seal of the gift of the Holy Ghost."

80. *Why is one anointed with Chrism?*

Holy Chrism is administered to give the fulness of the Holy Ghost to the anointed and to strengthen his spiritual life. For this reason, this Sacrament is usually administered immediately after baptism and to those who have fallen from the true Faith and have returned to it. In the first century, this Sacrament was administered only by the laying-on of the hands on the newly baptized persons by the Bishop.

81. *What must we know of Holy Chrismation?*

Holy Chrism used in this Sacrament is consecrated by a bishop with much ceremony on Thursday of Holy Week and distributed to the priests. Chrism is made of pure olive oil and various aromatics. The olive oil symbolizes the spiritual

power obtained by anointment, to fight off the enemies of Salvation and the aromatics symbolize the sweet smell of the good deeds the newly baptized person must always perform.

C. PENANCE

82. *What is Penance?*

Penance is the Holy Sacrament through which a penitent Christian receives absolution of the sins he confesses to his Father Confessor.

83. *When was this Sacrament instituted?*

It was instituted when Christ said unto His Holy Apostles "Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained." (John 20:22-23)

84. *What is asked of the penitent?*

If the Sacrament of Penance is to be fruitful and helpful at all, it is absolutely necessary that the penitent person really feel sorry for the sins he has committed and to show strong determination that he will sin no more. He will confess fully and fulfill any penance given him.

85. *What is a Penance?*

A penance is spiritual medicine given by the confessor to ward off temptation and keep the

penitent person on the right path. Fasting, praying and good deeds are the best penance to perform. A Christian should not only try to perform the penance given him, but to do even more. He should try to root out from his soul the inclination to sin. Otherwise Confession is of little value.

D. HOLY EUCHARIST (*Communion*)

86. *What is Holy Eucharist?*

Holy Eucharist is the Sacrament in which, under the appearances of bread and wine, the Body and the Blood of our Lord are offered up as a sacrifice and partaken by the faithful.

87. *When was the Sacrament of Holy Eucharist instituted?*

Our Lord instituted the Sacrament of Holy Eucharist at the Last Supper, which took place on Thursday evening before His Passion. At that time, He took bread, blessed it, broke it and gave it to His Apostles, saying: "Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you for remission of sins." Then He took a cup of wine, blessed it and giving it to them said: "Drink ye all of it; this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you and for many for remission of sins." He gave His Apostles the Commission: "Do this in remembrance of me."

88. *When and how does the bread and wine become the Body and Blood of our Lord?*

The bread and wine, which are offered, become the Body and Blood of Christ during the Liturgy when the Choir is singing: "We praise Thee" During this time the priest secretly recites the Epeclasis (invocation of the Holy Spirit). By this prayer the bread and wine in a miraculous and mysterious manner become the Body and Blood of Christ. After that time, even though the elements still taste like bread and wine, they are actually the real Body and Blood of Christ.

89. *What are the benefits of Holy Eucharist?*

The person who received Holy Communion is united with Christ and the Grace of God with himself is increased. His soul is strengthened to fight evil; he is washed of sins and becomes an heir of eternal life. These benefits are derived only by those persons who draw near with fear, love, faith, after having received Absolution. Anyone who approaches the Chalice unworthily commits a grave sin and damages his soul. The more often a person receives Communion, the better it is. The first Christians received Communion on all Sundays and Holidays. We should try to do the same, and, if not possible, at least during the four great Fasts of the year.

90. *What else do we have to know about Holy Eucharist?*

Holy Eucharist is not only a Sacrament, but also a Sacrifice offered for the forgiveness of sins of the living and the dead. Jesus Christ, whose Body and Blood is present in the bread and wine of Holy Eucharist, is sacrificed. This Unbloody Sacrifice is one with Christ's Sacrifice on the Cross, except that on Calvary He suffered physical death and physically shed His blood, whereas in Holy Eucharist there is a mystical re-enactment of His death and of the shedding of blood. Since Sacrament and Sacrifice is offered during the celebration of the Holy Liturgy, therefore, we should attend with reverence, attention and devotion, and try to receive Holy Communion regularly.

E. HOLY MATRIMONY

91. *What is Holy Matrimony?*

Holy Matrimony is the Sacrament which unites a Christian man and woman in marriage, receiving thereby the blessing of God and His Grace in helping them fulfill the Christian obligations of this State. Anyone marrying outside the Church does not receive this blessing and such marriage is not recognized by the Church.

92. *When did our Lord institute this Sacrament?*

Marriage is a state instituted from the beginning of mankind. God created Adam and gave him Eve as a helpmate, therefore establishing

marriage. The bond between man and woman is indissoluble, except in very grave cases, for Christ said: "Whatsoever God has joined together, let no man put asunder." Our Lord sanctified marriage at Cana of Galilee, where He performed His first Miracle. Marriage symbolizes the mystical union of Christ and His Church.

93. *What are the chief duties of husband and wife in the married state?*

The chief duties of a husband and wife are to live together in love and faith, having as an example the love of Christ for His Church. They must provide in every way for the welfare of the children they may bear. The husband, being stronger, must be kind and considerate of his wife providing for her, and the wife respect her husband.

94. *Do all persons have to marry?*

Marriage was established for the procreation of the human race, so it is the privilege of every person to marry. If anyone wishes to be as holy as possible and finds that marriage would be a hindrance towards this goal, he may remain unmarried, but must live in the greatest purity, otherwise his sin will be greater. St. Paul said: "I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, it is good for them if they abide even as I. But if they cannot contain, let them marry; for it is better to marry than to burn." (I Corinthians 7:8-9)

F. HOLY ORDERS

95. *What is Holy Orders?*

Holy Orders is the Sacrament by which certain called men receive, through the prayers and laying-on of the hands of the Bishop, the right and power to preach the word of God, to administer the Holy Sacraments, to officiate at Church Services and to lead the faithful on the path of Salvation. This right and power is received only from a Bishop, who alone can ordain priests, bless Chrism and the antimension. The priest can perform all other Offices except these, while the deacon is a helper of the bishop and the priest and cannot administer any Sacrament.

96. *When did Jesus Christ institute the Sacrament of Holy Orders?*

The first Bishops were the Holy Apostles. Our Savior gave them the power to preach the Divine Word and to administer the Sacraments, when He said: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." (Matthew 28:19) He had given them the power to absolve men of their sins: "Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them, and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained." (John 20:23) Finally, He had given them the power to be the spiritual leaders of their flock: "He that heareth you heareth me, and he that depiseth you depiseth me."

(Luke 10:16) These powers have been transmitted to their successors, right up to our present day.

97. *Are there any other Orders besides the Priesthood?*

There are two kinds of Orders. One is given by ordination and the prayers of a Bishop; the other is given to all lay persons. Of this kind of lay Orders, we are told by St. Peter: "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." (I Peter 2:9) This means that each person is a priest in a larger sense; that each one has the duty to propagate the teachings and miracles of our Lord Jesus Christ and to be a shining example of it.

G. HOLY UNCTION

98. *What is Holy Unction?*

Holy Unction is the Sacrament through which a Christian receives absolution of sins and hope of regaining bodily health by annointment with oil and the prayers of the priest.

99. *How do we know that this Sacrament is instituted by our Savior?*

In the Holy Gospel we read that the Holy Apos-

ties anointed the sick and they were healed. (Mark 6:13) St. James in his Epistle said: "Is any one sick among you? Let him call for the priests of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord." (James 5:14) This anointing was done at the command of our Lord, for otherwise it would not have had the power of absolution and of healing.

100. *How is this Sacrament to be received?*

The Christian who is to receive this Sacrament should have his confession heard and be full of faith and hope, in the mercy of God.

ARTICLE XI

"I look for the Resurrection of the dead."

101. *What does this article teach us?*

This article teaches us that all the dead will rise and that a good Christian should anticipate the day of Resurrection.

102. *How can a man rise if he is dead?*

Death is only the separation of the soul from the body. The soul returns to God, its Creator, to answer for its deeds. The body returns to the earth from which it was made. At the Resurrection, the soul will unite with the body it had on

earth, through the Almighty power of God, who will recompose the body. But at the Resurrection the body will be immortal, as St. Paul says: "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." (I Corinthians 15:44)

103. *Why does man have to die?*

Man has to die because he was born with the original sin of Adam.

104. *Why doesn't God reveal the hour of our death?*

He has not revealed our hour of death because:

a. He wants us to honor Him as the Supreme Master of the living and dead;

b. He wants us to be prepared at every moment for our hour of death;

c. He wants to reduce the fear of death, therefore we must be ready for death at all times, being at ease with ourself, with our neighbor and God.

105. *What is the state of the soul after death?*

When the soul leaves the body, it receives an immediate judgment, and is rewarded or punished according to its deeds. But this state of bliss or punishment is only partial and temporal, until the Last or General Judgment, when all souls will receive their complete and eternal reward or punishment. In this intermediary state, the soul cannot do anything to better or harm itself. Only the living through prayers, acts of charity and

offering the Bloodless Sacrifice, can lighten the burden of the departed souls. It is our duty to have Requiems and special prayers for the dead and be assured that our heirs will do likewise for us when we die.

106. *Why must the body rise?*

Is it necessary for the body to rise, so that it may be a partaker of eternal bliss or punishment together with the soul, just as the two were united on earth where they performed good or evil deeds.

107. *When will the bodies rise?*

The Resurrection of the bodies will be at the end of the world. We do not know when this end will come, for our Lord tells us that not even the angels in Heaven know when.

108. *Will all the dead arise?*

Certainly all the dead will rise to be judged for their deeds on earth. Those who are living at the time of the general Resurrection will be transformed at once just as the dead, according to St. Paul: "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in a twinkling of an eye." (I Corinthians 15:51)

ARTICLE XII

“And the Life of the World to Come. Amen.”

109. *What does this article teach us?*

This article teaches us that we must await the everlasting life, which is the truly happy life coming after the Resurrection of the dead and the Last Judgment.

110. *How will the Everlasting life be?*

For those who have loved God and obeyed His Commandments on earth, the everlasting life will be one of great and eternal happiness, which the mind cannot comprehend, as St. Paul says: “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.” (I Corinthians 2:9)

Those who loved God will be united in love with Him and partake of His bliss and glory, together with the angels and saints.

But not all the righteous will be equally happy. Each one will be happy according to his merits “there is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; but one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the Resurrection of the dead. (I Corinthians 15:41-42)

111. *What will be the fate of sinners in the life to come?*

The sinners will not perish after the Resurrection and the Last Judgment. They also will live unto eternity; not in happiness but in suffering and hard labor according to their evil deeds, together with the devils. Therefore their life is not called the eternal life, but eternal death.

112. *What does the word “Amen” at the end of the Creed mean?*

The word “Amen” is a Hebrew term meaning “so be it” and it was placed at the end of the Creed, to show that we must firmly believe all we have confessed in the Creed.





2. Hope

113. *What is hope?*

Hope is a divine gift, by which we believe that God will do all that He had promised to do for our Salvation and our happiness in this life and the one to come. Christian hope has as its basis Jesus Christ Himself, who promised us eternal life (Timothy 1:11), and has assured us "whatsoever we ask in His name, it shall be granted." (John 14:13) Hope is built upon faith, which it perfects.

114. *How is Christian hope best expressed?*

Christian hope is best expressed in Prayer and the Beatitudes.

115. *What is Prayer?*

Prayer is the lifting up of the soul to God, to praise Him, to petition Him, to thank Him for His benefactions.

116. *Why must we pray?*

Prayer brings us closer to God; it makes us more pious and determined to shun evil and do good deeds. It consoles and fortifies us in time of suffering or distress. Through prayer we receive and keep within us the Grace of God necessary for Salvation.

117. *How must we pray?*

We must pray

a. With *attention* and *piety*; that is, lifting our mind to God and concentrating upon the words of the prayer;

b. With *humbleness*; that is, to acknowledge our unworthiness before God and not to think that God is obliged to grant all we ask of Him, leaving it entirely up to God when and how He shall answer our prayer;

c. With *living trust in His Goodness* and not doubting that our prayers will be heard and satisfied, if they are righteous and profitable to the soul; and

d. With *perseverance*; that is, to pray at all times, even if our previous prayers were not heard.

118. *When must we pray?*

Our Saviour teaches us to pray at all times, (Luke 18:1) for prayer is for the soul, what breathing is for the body. Whatever we may be doing, does not stop us from lifting our minds to God at the same time in prayer. We must pray at least every morning and evening, when sitting down or getting up at a meal, when beginning or ending work and at all times of trouble, distress or happiness. We must pray with more warmth and at greater length on Sundays and holy days, for these days were specifically set aside for the good of the soul.

119. *Where must we pray?*

We can pray wherever we may be. When we are at home, we should pray in the privacy of our chambers, as the Lord taught us (Matthew 6:6) and when we travel or are at work, pray there. On Sundays and holy days especially, we should pray in church, for our prayers joined with the prayers of others fortify the soul and are pleasing to God.

120. *Which is a model prayer?*

The best model prayer is the "Our Father" or the "Lord's Prayer," so called because it was given to us by Christ Himself.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

The Lord's Prayer is as follows:

✠ *Our Father, Who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil:*

For Thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory, ✠ of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

EXPLANATION OF THE LORD'S PRAYER

121. *How is the Lord's Prayer divided?*

The Lord's Prayer is divided into three parts: The preface, the seven petitions, and the Doxology.

122. *What is the preface?*

The preface is: "Our Father Who art in Heaven."

123. *Why do we say "Our Father"?*

We call God "Our Father" because He has made, maintains and governs the world. We Christians have especially been granted the right to be called the sons of God, because we believe in Jesus Christ, His Son. We say "Our Father" and

not "my Father," even when we pray by ourselves, because as we recite this prayer each one does not only pray for himself but for all people.

124. *Why do we say "Who art in Heaven"?*

We say of God that He is in Heaven or we call Him Heavenly God, first so as not to mistake Him with our parents on earth and secondly, so we may think only of Spiritual matters and not worldly ones.

FIRST PETITION

125. *What is the first petition and what do we ask of God?*

The first petition is "Hallowed be Thy name."

In this petition we implore God to grant His Grace to us and to all men, so that we may perform only good deeds which will glorify the Lord's Holy Name.

SECOND PETITION

126. *What is the second petition and what do we ask of God?*

The second petition is "Thy Kingdom come." In this petition we pray for three things:

a. that the Church or visible Kingdom of God may spread and bring into its fold all mankind;

b. that the invisible Kingdom of Divine Grace may take possession of our hearts; that is, that God may give us the strength to live according to His Commandments;

c. that we may become sons of the future Kingdom of God; that is, partakers of everlasting happiness.

THIRD PETITION

127. *What is the third petition and what do we ask of God?*

The third petition is: "Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven". In this petition we pray God to give us His Grace that we may fulfill His Will on earth, as the angels fulfill His Will in Heaven.

128. *How do we fulfill God's Will?*

We fulfill God's Will if we obey His Commandments, heed the advice and admonitions of the clergy; accept without complaint the trials to which He subjects us, be it as a punishment for our sins, or to strengthen us on the path of righteousness. We should consider the benefactions which we received as His gift and should not lose our virtues when we gain great wealth and satisfaction. The perfect example of fulfillment of God's Will was given us by Christ the Savior, and by the Saints in general.

FOURTH PETITION

129. *What is the fourth petition and what do we ask of God?*

The fourth petition is: "Give us this day our daily bread." In this petition we pray God to provide our daily needs for the upkeep and the increased welfare of our soul and body, the two parts which constitute our being. Thus we pray for the enlightenment and enrichment of the mind, for the good guidance of our hearts and the strengthening of our will as well as for health, bodily nourishment, clothing, housing and all that is necessary in every day life.

130. *Why then do we ask only for "bread" and not also for other things which we need?*

The Savior uses only the word "bread" because He wishes to teach us to pray only for that which is an indispensable necessity in every day life. There are many kinds of foods with which man can nourish himself, but bread is the simplest and cheapest food, without which we cannot survive. There are also many kinds of clothing, dwellings and other things necessary in life, but we must not, however, crave expensive luxury. We should be content with the simpler things of life and not desire more than is absolutely necessary. This does not mean that wealth is an evil nor that God forbids the acquiring of wealth, but rather, that we should not give prime importance to worldly

riches, as the Lord tells us: We should think first of God and of the needs of the soul, and only afterwards of the body.

131. *Should we then ask for what is necessary for body and soul for one day at a time?*

The words "this day" in this petition have two meanings:

a. we must pray to God and ask him every single day for our "bread";

b. we ask God all those things which are necessary for sustenance of our life as long as we may live.

FIFTH PETITION

132. *What is the fifth petition and what do we ask of God?*

The fifth petition is: "and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us."

We pray that God may forgive our offenses and we bind ourselves to forgive those who have offended us. The Savior tells us that if we do not forgive the offenses of other men, neither will God forgive our own. He also says that God does not accept the sacrifice of him who is angry with his brother. Therefore, when we say "as we forgive those who trespass against us" not only do we take it upon ourselves to forgive those who offend us, but our very forgiveness must precede the for-

giveness we ask of God. Should we not do so, we pray in vain.

SIXTH PETITION

133. *What is the sixth petition and what do we ask of God?*

The sixth petition is: "and lead us not into temptation." In this petition, we pray God that we be spared temptations which lead us to perdition, and to grant us His Grace, so that we may emerge victorious from temptation, when He so permits.

134. *Wherefrom do temptations come, why do they come and how may we do away with them?*

Temptations are of two kinds. As a trial for the strengthening of our faith, temptations come from God. Such was the case with Job's temptations, with the Savior's in the desert, etc. . . . As a deception and a snare laid out for man to lose his soul, temptations come from our own lowly cravings and desires, from other men and from the devil.

These second kind of temptations are evil and so it is from them that we implore God to save us. Whatever the source of temptations may be, they come only with God's permission and God tolerates them:

- a. to try our faith in Him and,
- b. that our merit be even greater should we overcome them.

Therefore, temptation in itself is no sin, but merely an occasion for sin for the weak and an opportunity for spiritual elevation and victory for the strong in faith.

We rid ourselves of temptation by vigilance and prayer as the Savior tells us himself: "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation." (Matthew 26:41)

SEVENTH PETITION

135. *What is the seventh petition and what do we ask of God?*

The seventh petition is: "but deliver us from Evil."

In this petition we pray God to deliver us from all which is evil and harmful for our soul and body, as for instance where the body is concerned: from disease, famine, war, etc.; and in the case of the soul: from sin, the devil and the torments of hell.

136. *What is the Doxology?*

The Doxology is: "For thine is the Kingdom and the Power, and the Glory, of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, both now and ever unto ages of ages. Amen." In these words we express our confidence that God will grant us all that we have asked in the Lord's Prayer because He is the World's Ruler and our Father who can do all that He wills.

THE BEATITUDES

137. *How many Beatitudes are there?*

There are nine Beatitudes promised by our Lord Jesus Christ in His Sermon on the Mount.

THE FIRST BEATITUDE

138. *What is the first Beatitude and what is its meaning?*

The first Beatitude is: "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven."

The words "Poor in spirit" refer to those men who never believe they have gained sufficient useful learning, virtues, good deeds and spiritual treasures; who never boast with what they have, never surrender to laziness, but relentlessly strive for the good and implore God insistently to grant them His help to do His Will. The Savior promises them rest and happiness in the life to come, as the words "Kingdom of Heaven" indicate.

THE SECOND BEATITUDE

139. *What is the second Beatitude and what is its meaning?*

The second Beatitude is: "Blessed are those who mourn; for they shall be comforted." The meaning of this Beatitude is that those who repent of their sins, will be comforted or forgiven. No one should despair because of his sins and be-

come indifferent or lazy, but rather should be sincerely sorry and God will help him.

THE THIRD BEATITUDE

140. *What is the third Beatitude and what is its meaning?*

The third Beatitude is: "Blessed are the meek for they will inherit the earth." Meekness is an indispensable quality of the soul necessary for a better life amongst men. Should there be no meek men who endure without murmur rough words and the injustice of the wicked and violent, who answer with a kind word to insults and with a smile to threats, who know how to quiet the outbursts of ire and to create at all times a warm and friendly atmosphere, then quarrels and scandals would never cease and life on earth would become unbearable. For this reason, the Savior blesses the meek, promising them happiness not only on this earth but also in the next life having thus won it for themselves. Truly the meek man reigns on earth, for as unimportant as his social position might be, he is loved and honored by all, he is content within his heart and if he lacks anything, finds it easily.

THE FOURTH BEATITUDE

141. *What is the fourth Beatitude and what is its meaning?*

The fourth Beatitude is: "Blessed are they that

hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled."

This Beatitude refers not only to those who endure all kinds of injustice and therefore seek justice as a hungry man seeks bread or a thirsty man seeks water; but it refers even more so to those who are saddened by the injustice among men everywhere. These righteous men wish with all their hearts to see an end to injustice as quickly as possible. The former and the latter will have their desires fulfilled for God, the Impartial Judge, will do justice to those who have been deprived of it and punish severely those who committed injustice.

THE FIFTH BEATITUDE

142. *What is the fifth Beatitude and what is its meaning?*

The fifth Beatitude is: "Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy." Those men are merciful who offer with all their heart any help they can to the needy and suffering. Mercy stems from love and is of the same value to the giver as to the receiver. The merciful will find the Mercy of God in this life and at the Last Judgment. There are two kinds of works of mercy. Some concern the soul; others concern the body. Among the most important spiritual works of mercy are:

1. To instruct the ignorant.
2. To counsel the doubtful.

3. To exhort and convert sinners.
4. To comfort the sorrowing and afflicted.
5. To forgive offenses.
6. To suffer wrongs patiently.
7. To pray for others, living and dead.

THE SIXTH BEATITUDE

143. *What is the sixth Beatitude and what is its meaning?*

The sixth Beatitude is: "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they will see God." Pure in heart are persons who cleanse their heart of evil thoughts or desires. They are promised the enjoyment of being in God's presence, which is the greatest happiness one can attain in the life to come.

THE SEVENTH BEATITUDE

144. *What is the seventh Beatitude and what is its meaning?*

The seventh Beatitude is: "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the Sons of God." Peace is the first prerequisite for any body of men, small or great, to prosper. He who contributes to the maintenance of peace and concord and to its establishment wherever there is discord, does mankind unspeakably much good and acquires the right to call him "Son of God," a name reminiscent of the true Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ Who came into the world to bring peace to men.

THE EIGHTH BEATITUDE

145. *What is the eighth Beatitude and what is its meaning?*

The eighth Beatitude is: "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven."

This Beatitude blesses those who are persecuted because of their righteousness; in other words because they have confessed the truth. They are promised, as are the poor in spirit, "The Kingdom of Heaven."

THE NINTH BEATITUDE

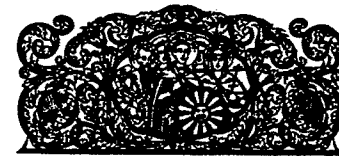
146. *What is the ninth Beatitude and what is its meaning?*

The ninth Beatitude is: "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and will persecute you and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad; for great is your reward in heaven." This Beatitude blesses those who suffer all kinds of persecutions because of/or for the name of Christ, because they are true Christians. A great reward is promised them in Heaven.

147. *What must we know in general of the rewards promised in the Beatitudes?*

We must know that these good deeds are so closely related one with the another, that he who truly performs one, performs them all, likewise

he who neglects them all. The reward for good deeds is not only eternal happiness, but also earthly happiness. A good Christian can be happy in this life as in the next; whereas the sinners will be unhappy in the next life, and most of the time in this one, also.





3. Love

148. *What is love?*

Love is a Divine Gift by which we are moved to love God as the Supreme Good, thereby fulfilling all the commandments for our salvation and happiness and that of our neighbor. Love is particularly demonstrated by good deeds and completes faith and hope, assuring us salvation.

149. *Who must we love?*

We must love God, our neighbors and ourselves for so has our Lord Jesus Christ commanded.

150. *Why must we love God more than anything else?*

We must love God more than anything else be-

cause He has made us, cares for us, and grants us all kinds of good things; being particularly concerned with our salvation and happiness.

151. *How does man show his love to God?*

Man shows his love to God if he obeys His commandments.

152. *Which are the most important Divine Commandments?*

God made His will known in the Ten Commandments which he gave to Moses on Mount Sinai and which Jesus Christ expressed briefly in the words: "The first and greatest Commandment is: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind. The second is like unto it: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." (Matthew 22:37-39)

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

153. *How are the Ten Commandments divided?*

The Ten Commandments are divided into two parts: the first four, which show our duties to God and the last six, which show our duties to our neighbors. They were divided this way when they were written on two stone slabs and given to Moses.

FIRST COMMANDMENT

154. *Which is the First Commandment?*

The first Commandment is:

"I am the Lord thy God; thou shalt have no other gods before Me."

155. *What does God require of us in the First Commandment?*

In this Commandment, God reveals to us that He alone is true God to whom are due honor and glory. He commands us to worship Him alone, to believe in Him, to love Him and to put our hope in Him; thereby forbidding sins against faith, love and hope in Him.

156. *How must we glorify God?*

We can and must honor God in two ways: *inwardly*, by dedicating all our thoughts, feelings and desires to Him and *visibly*, by believing in Him and never forsaking Him, whatever adversity we may have to suffer. We also glorify Him by taking part in the Holy Services ordained by Him and His Holy Church.

157. *Which persons sin against the belief in God?*

First of all, all atheists—those who do not believe there is a God—sin against the belief in God. The heathens and idol-worshippers—those who adore false gods—sin against the belief in God. The heretics who believe otherwise than the

Church teaches, sin greatly. Those who make use of charms or spells, believe in dreams or fortune-telling or go to spiritists, also sin against belief in God.

158. *Which persons sin against hope in God?*

Anyone who lives in the false hope that God is good and will forgive his sins as often as he may go astray, without showing true repentance, sins against hope in God. Secondly, anyone who loses his hope that God will ever forgive him, and thereby does not persist in doing good deeds, also sins against hope in God.

159. *Which persons sin against love toward God?*

Those persons who hate God and who love themselves or the world more than God sin against love toward God. He who takes the name of God in vain or blasphemes shows by deed that he hates God. The proud man who values himself out of all proportions does not take God in account. The miser loves his money, the greedy person loves food and drink more than God.

160. *Is it becoming that we should pray to angels and saints?*

Yes, we must pray to angels and saints. The prayer we say to them is different than the one we offer to God. We worship them only as beings who are close to God in order that through their prayers they might intercede for us; not that they

help us of their own power. We hold neither the angels nor the saints to be as God and we do not worship them but only venerate them; that is, we show them respect as we also show men who are alive and who are of great service to the Church or the country or who win distinction by means of their knowledge, wisdom or their virtue in general.

THE SECOND COMMANDMENT

161. *What is the Second Commandment?*

The second Commandment is:

"Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, nor the likeness of anything that is heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them."

162. *What does this Commandment teach us?*

This Commandment teaches us not to worship idols which are fashioned by the human hand and considered gods. Worship of idols (idolatry) was widespread at the time when God gave the Hebrew people the Ten Commandments through Moses. For this reason, the sons of that nation are particularly asked to avoid idolatry. Notwithstanding, forms of idolatry are also very widespread among us: the greed of food and drink for "the god of the greedy is his belly" says the Apostle Paul (Philemon 3, 19); the love of money

which the Apostle again calls "the adoration of idols" (Col. 3, 5); false pride or the over-rating of one's self; as well as belief in fate (which can be forecast magically) in incantations; sorceries, in talking with the dead.

163. *Is the veneration of icons forbidden in this Commandment?*

The veneration of icons is not forbidden in this Commandment because we do not venerate the wood or the paints of which they are made, nor the images which they portray, but rather the Saints which they represent. Icons are a stimulus to lift our hearts more easily unto the Saints chosen and pleasing to God, that we may be spurred to follow their example. For the illiterates, the Holy Icons are like a book in which they can read. Beside this, icons are the most adequate decorations for holy places and for Christian homes.

THE THIRD COMMANDMENT

164. *What is the Third Commandment?*

The third Commandment is:

"Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord God in vain."

165. *What does this Commandment teach us?*

This Commandment teaches us not to dishonor

the name of God. The name of God is taken in vain—

- a. when It is spoken of lightly or in fun, in anger or in trivialities;
- b. when used as a curse;
- c. when used in perjury, and
- d. when a formal promise is broken.

166. *Are oaths forbidden?*

No, an oath is not forbidden. It is a holy act invoking God as a witness for the verity of our words, thus recognizing that He is Truth and our highest Master. An oath, for this reason, is permitted, on condition that the person who takes it, speak only the truth and that the matter for which he takes the oath be important, not a trifle. In Holy Scripture we often find that God Himself had sworn. The Savior did not avoid answering the question of the High Priest under oath. The Holy Apostles have sworn when the need arose. Perjury and oaths lightly taken are to be avoided. In everyday life, words of assurance, as the Savior tells us, should be "yes" and "no." An oath should be used only when strictly necessary.

THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT

167. *What is the Fourth Commandment?*

The fourth Commandment is:
"Remember the Sabbath Day, to keep it Holy.

Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God."

168. *What does this Commandment teach us?*

In this commandment we are taught to keep the Lord's day a holy day. As the Lord's Day, the Jews have kept and still keep Saturday. Christians keep Sunday, because on that day the Lord Christ arose from the dead and saved mankind from the slavery of sin. In keeping Sunday instead of Saturday, we do not disobey this Commandment, since its object is to hallow for God one of the week's seven days, whichever it may be. The other Church holy days must be equally considered as days of the Lord, as are Sundays.

169. *How must we observe Holy Days?*

On holy days we must not tire ourselves with physical labor, but we should rest our body and take care of our soul. Consequently, we should go to Church and listen to the Holy Liturgy; we should read books useful to the soul, particularly the Holy Scripture, the Lives of the Saints, Sermons, and short stories with a moral teaching. We should do all kinds of good deeds, as for instance, helping the poor, visiting the sick, teaching the faith to the children, and other such things.

THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT

170. *What is the Fifth Commandment?*

The fifth Commandment is:

"Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee."

171. *What is this Commandment's meaning?*

This Commandment signifies the duty imposed on children to honor and love their parents as the dearest, the most beneficent and the most considerate beings, *after God*.

172. *How do children show respect and love to their parents?*

Children show respect and love to their parents—

- a. if they obey them,
- b. if they speak well about them and address them respectfully,
- c. if they don't anger them in any way, and
- d. if they help them in times of need.

173. *Whom else must we respect and love, as parents?*

We must honor equally with our parents all those who in some way have at heart our welfare and happiness. Thus, teachers and priests, as spiritual fathers, the chief of the State and of the Church, the law-makers, judges and all civil serv-

ants guard the property, honor and life of all citizens, must enjoy our respect and love. We must also love, as our mother, our country or fatherland and submit to its laws. Younger people have the obligation to respect their elders and servants, their masters.

174. *Do parents have duties towards their children?*

Parents have duties to fulfill toward their children. Thus, they must see to their good upbringing. They must protect them from evil; they must prepare them in some profession or occupation with which they might earn a living, or to which they can fall back on in a time of need; they must provide for them until they grow up, etc. Similarly, civil and ecclesiastical authorities are under obligation to tend to all which concerns the bodily and spiritual welfare of the State and Church. The employers should be good and just with their employees; pay them the wages at which they were engaged; teach them virtue and protect them from evil.

THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT

175. *What is the Sixth Commandment?*

The sixth Commandment is:

"Thou shalt not kill."

176. *What is forbidden in this Commandment?*

This Commandment forbids murder and suicide.

177. *Is there only one kind of murder?*

No, there are two kinds of murders; bodily and spiritual. Bodily murder is the taking of a human life, the infliction of an injury or wound which results ultimately in death, and a severe treatment which shortens life. Also counted as murder are: thoughtless exposure to danger, immoderate eating, drinking and revelry which spoil our health.

Spiritual murder is defined as the bad example and faults which intentionally lead one into sin and deliberate lies against one.

THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT

178. *What is the Seventh Commandment?*

The seventh Commandment is:
"Thou shalt not commit adultery."

179. *What does this Commandment forbid?*

This Commandment forbids all unbecoming words or deeds of which we should be ashamed before God or decent people.

180. *How can we avoid immorality?*

We may abstain from this sin by avoiding un-pure thoughts and desires as well as lowly words, jokes, songs and games, obscene pictures, gather-

ings of depraved people, immoral books, drunkenness, sloth, etc.

181. *Is fornication a great sin?*

Adultery is a very great sin because it deprives man of his innocence, poisons soul and body, ruins his health, causes him to commit other sins and plunges him deeper still in misery and shame.

History shows that nations who permitted immorality have had a sad ending before their time. The same is true of man: he who falls in the arms of fornication commits moral suicide.

THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT

182. *What is the Eighth Commandment?*

The eighth Commandment is:
"Thou shalt not steal."

183. *What does this Commandment forbid?*

This Commandment forbids theft defined as the unjust acquisition of somebody else's property. Several kinds of theft exist:

a. when another person's belongings are taken secretly.

b. The taking of another's belongings by force is called robbery.

c. The estrangement of somebody's belongings in a malicious way as, for instance, by falsifying documents, or through the use of counterfeit money or false measures is known as fraud.

d. High interest rates are called usuries.

e. When money is taken by civil servants from citizens to allow the law to be broken, this is called bribery.

f. Lastly, when payments to workers are stopped, when borrowed belongings are not returned, when duties pertaining to one's office are not fulfilled, all such misdemeanors are forms of theft.

184. *What lesson may we draw from this commandment?*

We learn that man is under obligation to acquire wealth only by honest and just means, to respect the belongings of others and to give to each what is his own.

THE NINTH COMMANDMENT

185. *What is the Ninth Commandment?*

The ninth Commandment is:

"Thou shalt not bear false witness against your neighbor."

186. *What does this Commandment forbid?*

This Commandment forbids false witnessing, lying, slandering, unjust suspicion, listening to evil words and anything which could harm the property or the honor of your neighbor. Thus, truth should be spoken at any price and under any circumstance.

187. *Do circumstances occur when lies are forgiven?*

Lies are never forgiven under any circumstances because they are unworthy of men and because God punishes liars. Furthermore, he who starts telling lies which at first are not harmful, will become accustomed in time, to tell lies which can cause untold harm.

THE TENTH COMMANDMENT

188. *What is the Tenth Commandment?*

The tenth Commandment is:

"Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife; thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, nor his land; nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any of his cattle; nor anything that is his neighbor's."

189. *What does the Tenth Commandment forbid?*

In this Commandment the stress is shifted to the state of the soul. The unforgivable desire for another man's belongings is forbidden. Thus, it is not enough to refrain from theft; we must go a step further, and not even desire or have envy on someone who is rich. If we desire something, our thoughts seek a way to possess that certain object, and so we will slip from thought to deed. When the heart is pure, when we do away with all evil desires, then we are not in danger of doing evil deeds. In such behavior lies moral perfection.

190. *Does man also have duties toward himself?*

In the Ten Commandments mention is made only of duties toward God and neighbor whereas there is no mention of obligations toward oneself. The reason for this is that man naturally knows that he has obligations toward himself, obviously.

The Savior Christ, in the Ten Commandments, as the love of God and of neighbor, gives us as a standard of love toward one's neighbor, the duties of man toward himself, thus showing which the duties toward oneself are. Therefore, it is a good thing to tell what these duties are since many do not know them or have mistaken notions concerning them.

191. *How are duties toward oneself divided?*

Such duties can be divided as follows:

Duties toward one's soul and duties toward one's body.

192. *Which are the duties of man toward man's soul?*

Man's soul has several properties or faculties by which the soul rules the body and keeps contact with the outer world. Such faculties are the *mind* by which he understands things; the *senses* and the *conscience* by which the soul becomes aware of what is beautiful and good or unpleas-

ant and bad; also the *will* by which the soul fulfills its thoughts and desires. All these powers of the soul must be fostered so that each of them may constantly do its part and fulfill its purpose. The mind must be enriched with useful knowledge, the senses and conscience must be so trained that whatever they will ascertain are good and beautiful should really be so; the will should be strong and do only good.

Pertaining to the duties toward the soul is also the duty of everyone to maintain his dignity and good name. To acquire and keep such a good name, the best man can do is to do his work conscientiously.

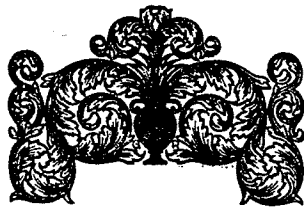
193. *What are man's duties toward his body?*

Man must take care of his body and keep it healthy. Without good health life is a torture. Health is preserved by orderly work, by well-balanced rest, by cleanliness, and moderate eating, drinking, and recreation.

To keep both body and soul healthy, man needs money. Every man is under obligation to earn enough money to meet his own needs, his family's and, if he can afford, also to help the needy. He should not, however, attempt to keep too great a fortune nor to come by it in a dishonest way, but only through honest and just labor. When wealthy, man should neither be miserly nor wasteful but rather, he should use his fortune with moderation and wisdom.

194. *How must we view duties concerning God, neighbor and ourselves?*

Obligations relating to God, to neighbor and to ourselves must be regarded as moral laws established in man's heart by God Himself; a law to which man is always subject. This very law urges us to do only what is good and to shun evil. A secret voice—the voice of our conscience—tells us what is good and what is evil; rewarding us for our good works and reproofing us for our evil deeds. And so, God has planted within us the law of good and evil.



SIN AND VIRTUE

195. *What is Sin and how many kinds are there?*

When man does not fulfill the Commandments established by divine law or when he breaks the will of God, we say that such a man sins. One can sin by deed, by word or by thought. Any unpure thought, any forbidden desire or thought is sinful.

Sin is said to be of two kinds; *original* sin (with which each of us is born, having inherited it from Adam and Eve) and *actual* sin or personal sin which everybody commits. From original sin we are washed by Baptism and from personal sin we are cleansed by the sacrament of Penance.

196. *How many kinds of Actual sins are there?*

Actual sins are in turn of two kinds: mortal sins and venial sins. Mortal sin is committed when, knowingly and willingly, an important precept of

divine law is broken. It is called "mortal" because it robs the soul of Divine Grace which is its very life, and prepares eternal death, that is, the torment of hell.

Venial sin is committed when divine law is broken on a less important article or broken on an important one but without knowledge and intention.

Mortal sins are of three kinds:

Capital sins, sins against the Holy Ghost and sins which cry to Heaven.

197. *What are the capital sins and how many are there?*

They are called capital sins because they give birth to other sins. They are six in number:

a. Pride is that sin by which man overrates himself beyond all proportion, disregarding God and despising his neighbor. From this sin flow, vain ambition, lack of submission to superiors, the bullying of subordinates, envy, quarrel, etc.

b. Covetousness, or love of silver is that sin by which man loves earthly goods beyond all measure and labors to heap riches without keeping in mind those who need his help. Out of this sin flow others: callousness, falsehood, theft, usury, bribery, fraudulence, oppression of the poor, treason, murder, etc.

c. Lust or uncleanness is a sin by which man thinks, craves, speaks and does shameful deeds. Out of this sin are born: lack of piety, a craving

for unforgivable pleasures, enmity, dueling, suicide, etc.

d. Envy or jealousy is that sin by which man regrets the welfare and happiness of another and rejoices in his bad fortune and misfortune. Out of this sin are born: hate, defamation (libel), debullying of subordinates, envy, quarrel, etc.

e. Gluttony, the sin of filling oneself with food and drink. Out of this sin flow: stinginess, waste, injustice, violence, dispute, fighting, shamelessness.

f. Anger (losing of one's temper) for any reason with the accompanying desire for revenge. Out of this sin flow: strife, hatred, revenge, killing, etc.

g. Sloth or laziness whereby one is disgusted of work and the fulfillment of duty. Out of this sin flow: the weakening of the will, softness, poverty, deceit, falsehood, hatred of those at work and the well-to-do, etc.

198. *Which are the sins against the Holy Ghost?*

The sins against the Holy Ghost are as follows:

a. A disproportionate confidence in God's goodness which leads man to sin relentlessly while believing that God will forgive because He is Good.

b. Despair in God's compassion prompting the sinner not to amend himself in the fear that God will not forgive him.

c. Opposition to evident truth which the sinner maintains so that he may continue to sin.

d. The forsaking of the Orthodox faith.

e. Jealousy of one's neighbor for the Grace given him by God.

f. Not teaching those ignorant in matters of faith out of wickedness.

199. *Why are these sins called "against the Holy Ghost"?*

They are so called because man in sinning thus rejects obstinately the Grace of the Holy Ghost and hardens his heart to it. For this reason, those who fall in such sin are usually lost for all time as only a few of them can amend themselves and these only with the greatest difficulty.

200. *Which are the sins that cry to Heaven and why are they so called?*

The sins that cry to Heaven are:

- a. willful murder,
- b. sodomy,
- c. oppression of the poor, of widows and orphans,
- d. keeping back of worker's pay, and
- e. slandering our parents or displeasing them.

Such sins are called "crying to heaven" because they are so grave as to call for divine vengeance on the sinner; even in this life.

201. *Can we be guilty of the sins of others?*

We can become guilty also of the sins of other men or we can share in their sin: if we incite to sin, if we force somebody to sin, if we consent to

sin, if we give occasion to sin, if we praise sin, if we don't reprove sin, if we help somebody to sin and if we undertake the defense of other people's sin.

202. *Is it enough to shun sin?*

It is not enough to shun sin but rather we must take it upon ourselves to become virtuous.

203. *What is virtue?*

Uninterrupted perseverance in the performance of good deeds, pleasing to God is called virtue.

204. *How many kinds of Christian virtues are there?*

Christian virtues are two-fold:

a. The Theological virtues whose object is God are three in number:

1. Faith
2. Hope
3. Charity and

b. Moral virtues whose purpose it is to conduct ourselves in accordance to God's will.

205. *Which are the chief moral virtues?*

The chief moral virtues or cardinal virtues are:

Prudence
Justice
Fortitude
Temperance

Prudence is the thoughtfulness owing to which we behave in this life in such a manner as not to displease God or our neighbor by any deed or word.

Justice is the unwavering will to give to each what is due him.

Fortitude is the quality of the soul by which we carry out our duties faithfully and face resolutely the difficulties and dangers of life.

Temperance is the virtue which provides for the mastery of our own person thereby checking our cravings and passions.

206. *Are there other important virtues beside these?*

Aside from the above-mentioned cardinal virtues, also important are the seven virtues opposed to the seven deadly sins. They are: humility, generosity, purity, meekness, temperance, contentment, diligence.

207. *What are the fruits of virtue?*

Virtue makes man pleasing to God, satisfied with his earthly life and happy in the next life. The virtuous man is truly Christian.

208. *Is there also a shorter way to the achievement of Christian perfection?*

Yes, the way of the Evangelical Counsels.

209. *What are the Evangelical Counsels?*

The Evangelical Counsels are certain encouragements given us by the Savior Christ to be followed should we wish to attain more speedily to Christian perfection. These counsels are three in number:

a. Voluntary poverty which means the willful renouncing of any kind of material fortune.

b. Uninterrupted purity or the total renunciation of bodily pleasures.

c. The unconditional submission to a spiritual superior.

210. *Who must respect the Evangelical Counsels?*

The Evangelical Counsels must be kept by monks and nuns because monasticism was precisely founded for the practice of them. Also they must be observed by those having taken a special vow for this purpose. Other Christians are free of their observance.

211. *Can we not also attain Christian perfection in this world?*

Certainly; not only in a monastery or in solitude and not only by the fulfilling of the Evangelical Counsels can somebody become a model Christian, but also living in the world, if he lives according to the will of God, as shown in the teaching of our Holy Church.

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