

## **ROMAN CATHOLICISM'S GOSPEL:**

### **Understanding the Basics of the Faith.**

Gary Westgerdes, Box 83, Montezuma, OH 45866

Another Look

1 – 3 – 88

I receive your newsletter and find it interesting. Articles that I am interested in seeing in your newsletter include: What does a person need to believe in order to be a Catholic (Roman)? And what can a Catholic do to give himself the greatest amount of assurance of attaining heaven?

Thank you for your interest in me. If you do not address these questions in your next newsletter could you please send an answer to me soon. These are two questions that have me puzzled.

Thankyou

*Gary Westgerdes*

## **NATIONAL CATHOLIC EVANGELIZATION ASSOCIATION**

3031 FOURTH STREET, N.E. WASHINGTON, D.C. 20017 – (202) 832-5022 – UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE PAULIST FATHERS

22 January 1988

Gary Westgerdes Box 83 Montezuma, OH 45866

Dear Mr. Westgerdes,

Thank you for your letter of January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1988.

What does a person need to believe in order to be a Catholic? Great question! Unfortunately, a simple answer in a one page letter is impossible considering all the scholarship and debates surrounding this issue.

I would like to suggest that you contact a priest in your area. Make an appointment and let him know what you want to discuss. Also, you might want to consider reading the following two books:

BASICS OF THE FAITH: A CATHOLIC CATECHISM. By Dr. Alan Schreck. Ann Arbor: Servant Publications, 1987.

UNDERSTANDING CATHOLICISM. By. Dr. Monika Hellwig. Mahwah NJ: Paulist Press.  
Hope this will help. God bless you.

Sincerely,

*Mr. Thomas D. Carter*

Programs Coordinator

Inviting the 75,000,000 unchurched Americans and the 15,000,000 inactive Catholics to be enriched by Jesus Christ within the Catholic family of believers.

This is Gary's Response Given in Answer, to His Own Letter, from His Personal Studies of Roman Catholic Catechisms and other books such as those mentioned above. Compiled in 2011 - Using the Catechism of 1994.

## **The Gospel According to Roman Catholicism. Salvation, Forgiveness of Sin and Eternal Life from:**

### **The Catechism of the Catholic Church © 1994.**

(All the following info is direct quotes intended to express the true gospel of the Roman Catholic Church from the truth of Her own teachings.)

- 1. By His Death and Resurrection, Jesus Christ has "Opened" Heaven to us (CCC - 1026).**
  
- 2. [The Church] Has Received The Keys of The Kingdom of Heaven so that in Her, Sins May Be Forgiven through Christ's blood and the Holy Spirit's action. In this Church, The Soul Dead through sin Comes Back to Life in order to live with Christ, whose grace has saved us (CCC - 981). 3. "For it is through Christ's CATHOLIC CHURCH ALONE which is the universal help toward salvation, that The Fullness of The Means of Salvation can be obtained. It was To The APOSTOLIC COLLEGE ALONE of which Peter Is The Head, That we believe that Our Lord Entrusted All The Blessings of The New Covenant, in order to establish On Earth The One Body of Christ Into Which All those Should Be Fully Incorporated Who Belong in any way To The People Of God" (CCC - 816). 4. "Outside The Church There Is No Salvation." Basing Itself On Scripture And Tradition the Council teaches that THE CHURCH ... IS NECESSARY FOR SALVATION ... (CCC - 846).**
  
- 5. "The Riches of Christ Are Communicated to all the members Through the Sacraments" (CCC - 947). 6. The Saving Work ... is revealed and active in the Church's sacraments ... The Seven Sacraments are the signs and instruments by which the Holy Spirit Spreads the Grace of Christ (CCC - 774). 7. The Church affirms that for believers The Sacraments of the New Covenant Are Necessary for Salvation (CCC - 1129). 8. The Sacraments are efficacious Signs of Grace, instituted by Christ and entrusted to the Church, By Which Divine Life Is Dispensed to Us (CCC - 1131).**
  
- 9. The Communion of Saints & the Church Treasury. The Christian Who Seeks to purify himself of his sin and to become holy with The Help of God's Grace Is Not Alone. "The life of each of God's children is Joined in Christ and Through Christ in a wonderful way to the life of All the Other Christian Brethren in the Supernatural Unity of the Mystical Body of Christ, as in A Single Mystical Person" (CCC - 1474). 10. "A perennial link of charity exists Between The Faithful who have already reached their heavenly home, those who are expiating their sins in purgatory and those who are still pilgrims on earth.**

Between them there is, too, An Abundant Exchange of All Good Things.” In this wonderful exchange, The Holiness of One Profits others, well beyond the harm that the sin of one could cause others. Thus Recourse to the Communion of Saints Lets the Contrite Sinner Be More Promptly and efficaciously Purified of the punishment for sin (CCC – 1475). **11.** We Also Call These Spiritual Goods of the Communion of Saints the Church’s Treasury, which is “not the sum total ... the ‘treasury of the Church’ is The Infinite Value, Which Can Never Be Exhausted, Which Christ’s Merits Have Before God ... In Christ, the Redeemer Himself, the satisfactions and merits of His Redemption exist and find their efficacy” (CCC – 1476). **12.** Merit. No One Can Merit the Initial Grace of forgiveness and justification, at the beginning of conversion. Moved by the Holy Spirit and by Charity, We Can Merit for Ourselves and for Others the Graces Needed for our sanctification, for the increase of grace and charity, and for The Attainment of Eternal Life (CCC – 2010).

**13.** Justification has been merited for us by the Passion of Christ. It is granted us Through Baptism (CCC – 2020). **14.** **Baptism** is birth into the New Life in Christ ... it **Is Necessary for Salvation, As Is the Church** herself, which We Enter by Baptism (CCC – 1277). **15.** Our Lord Tied Forgiveness of Sins to Faith and Baptism ... Baptism is the First and Chief Sacrament of forgiveness of sins because it unites us with Christ ... (CCC – 977). **16.** The Lord Himself affirms that Baptism is necessary for salvation ... the Church does not know of any means other than Baptism that Assures Entry into Eternal Beatitude (CCC – 1257). **17.** It is by Faith in the Gospel and Baptism That One renounces evil and Gains Salvation that is The Forgiveness of All Sins and The Gift of New Life (CCC – 1427). **18.** Baptism indeed is The Seal of Eternal Life (CCC – 1274). **19.** Children also have Need of the New Birth in Baptism to be freed from the power of darkness and brought into the realm of the freedom of the Children of God ... The Grace of Salvation Is Particularly Manifest in Infant Baptism. The Church and the Parents Would deny a child the Priceless Grace of becoming a child of God Were They Not to Confer Baptism Shortly after Birth (CCC – 1250). **20.** Children Who ... Died Without Baptism ... Trust in God’s mercy and Pray for Their Salvation (CCC – 1283). **21.** “Since Christ Died For All, and since All Men Are in fact Called To One And The Same Destiny, which is divine, we must hold that The Holy Spirit Offers To All The Possibility of being partakers, in a way known to God, of the Paschal mystery.” Every Man Who Is Ignorant of The Gospel of Christ And of His Church, But Seeks The Truth And Does The Will of God In Accordance With His Understanding of It, Can Be Saved. It may be supposed that Such Persons Would Have Desired Baptism *explicitly* If They Had Known Its Necessity (CCC – 1260).

**22.** Because We Are Dead or at Least Wounded Through Sin, the First effect of the gift of love is The Forgiveness of Our Sins. The Communion of the Holy Spirit In The Church Restores To The Baptized The Divine Likeness Lost Through Sin (CCC – 734). **23.** If the

Church Has the Power to Forgive Sins, Then **Baptism Cannot Be Her Only Means of Using The Keys of The Kingdom of Heaven** received from Jesus Christ (CCC – 979). **24. It is Through the Sacrament of Penance that The Baptized Can Be Reconciled** with God and with the Church: ... **This Sacrament of Penance Is Necessary for Salvation** for Those who have Fallen after Baptism, just as Baptism Is Necessary for Salvation for Those who have Not Yet Been Reborn (CCC – 980). **25.** Converting to Christ through Penance and Faith, the Sinner Passes from Death to Life and “does not come into judgment” (CCC – 1470). **26.** Individual, integral Confession and Absolution remain the Only Ordinary Way for the faithful to Reconcile Themselves with God and the Church, unless physical or moral impossibility excuses from this kind of confession (CCC – 1484). **27. Only Priests Who Have Received the faculty of Absolving from the authority of The Church Can Forgive Sins** in the name of Christ (CCC – 1495).

**28. To Receive Confirmation One Must Be In A State of Grace. One should receive** the Sacrament of Penance in order to be cleansed For the Gift of The Holy Spirit (CCC – 1310). **29. The Faithful Are Obligated to Receive This Sacrament** at the appropriate time (CCC – 1306). **30.** The effect of The Sacrament of Confirmation is The Full Outpouring of the Holy Spirit as once granted to the apostles On the Day of Pentecost (CCC – 1302). **31.** From this fact, Confirmation brings an Increase and Deepening of Baptismal Grace (CCC – 1303). **32.** Confirmation, like Baptism, imprints a spiritual mark or Indelible Character on the Christian’s soul, for this reason **One Can Receive This Sacrament Only Once** (CCC – 1317).

**33. Christian Initiation is accomplished by Three Sacraments together: Baptism ...** the beginning of New Life; **Confirmation** ... it’s Strengthening; and the **Eucharist** which Nourishes the disciple with Christ’s Body and Blood for his Transformation in Christ (CCC – 1275). **34.** The New Birth of Baptism, the Gift of the Holy Spirit and the Body and Blood of Christ Received as Food Have **Made Us “Holy and Without Blemish”** (CCC – 1426). **35. The Holy Eucharist Completes** Christian Initiation. Those who have been raised to The Dignity of the Royal Priesthood by Baptism and Configured More Deeply to Christ in Confirmation Participate with the whole community in The Lord’s Own Sacrifice by means of The Eucharist (CCC – 1322).

**36. The Sacrifice of Christ and the Sacrifice of the Eucharist are one single Sacrifice:** “The Victim Is One and The Same ... only The Manner of Offering Is Different.” ... **in the Mass ... Christ ... is Offered in an Un-bloody Manner”** (CCC – 1367). **37. EUCHARIST:** No One May Take Part In It Unless He Believes That What We Teach Is True (CCC – 1355). **38.** When the Church celebrates the Eucharist, she commemorates Christ’s Passover, and it is made present: The Sacrifice Christ Offered Once for all on the Cross Remains Ever Present. “As often as the sacrifice of the Cross by which ‘Christ our Pasch

has been sacrificed' is celebrated on the Altar, **the Work of Our Redemption Is carried out"** (CCC – 1364). **39.** In the Eucharist Christ gives us the Very Body Which He Gave up for us On the Cross, The Very Blood Which He "Poured Out for Many for the Forgiveness of Sins" (CCC – 1365). **40.** The Eucharist is thus a sacrifice because it Re-Presents (makes present) The Sacrifice of the Cross ... its memorial ... It Applies Its Fruit: [Christ] ... [He wanted] to leave to His beloved spouse the Church a Visible Sacrifice which he was to accomplish once for all on the cross Would Be Re-Presented ... and Its Salutary Power Be Applied to The Forgiveness of the Sins We Daily Commit (CCC – 1366).

**41. The Participation of Lay People in Christ's Priestly Office.** "For All their works, prayers, and apostolic undertakings, family and married life, daily work, relaxation of mind and body. If they are accomplished in the Spirit - indeed even the Hardships of Life If Patiently Born – all these Become Spiritual Sacrifices Acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. In the celebration of The Eucharist These May most fittingly Be Offered to the Father Along with the Body of the Lord ... offering worship by the holiness of their lives" (CCC – 901). **42. The Eucharist is Also the Sacrifice of The Church.** The Church which is the Body of Christ participates in The Offering of her Head. With Him, she herself is offered whole and entire. She Unites Herself To His Intercession with the Father For All Men. In the Eucharist The Sacrifice of Christ Becomes Also The Sacrifice of The Members of His Body. The lives of the faithful, Their Praise, Sufferings, Prayers, And Work, are United with those of Christ and with His Total Offering, and so acquire a new value, Christ's Sacrifice Present On the Altar Makes It Possible for All Generations of Christians to Be United with His Offering (CCC -1368). **43.** To the Offering of Christ Are United not only the Members Still Here on Earth, but Also those already in the Glory of Heaven (CCC – 1370). **44. St. Augustine** ... This Wholly redeemed city, the Assembly and society of The Saints, Is Offered to God as A Universal Sacrifice ... **In What She Offers She Herself Is Offered** (CCC – 1372). **45.** The Eucharistic Sacrifice is also offered for the faithful Departed who "**Have Died in Christ but Are Not Yet Wholly Purified**" ... By offering to God our supplications for those who have fallen asleep if they have sinned, we ... offer Christ sacrificed for the sins of all, and so render favorable, for them and for us, the God who loves man (CCC – 1371).

**46. All Who Die in God's Grace and friendship, but Still Imperfectly Purified, Are indeed Assured of their Eternal Salvation; but After Death they Undergo Purification, so as To Achieve the Holiness Necessary To Enter the joy of Heaven** (CCC – 1030). **47.** The Church gives the name **PURGATORY** to this **FINAL PURIFICATION** of the elect (CCC – 1031). **48.** From the beginning The Church Has Honored the Memory of The Dead and Offered Prayers in suffrage for them, Above All the Eucharistic Sacrifice, so that, Thus Purified, they may attain the Beatific Vision of God. The Church Also Commends

Almsgiving, Indulgences, and Works of Penance undertaken On Behalf of the Dead: Let Us Help and commemorate them (CCC – 1032).

**49.** An Indulgence ... Through the action of The Church ... Dispenses and Applies with authority The Treasury of the Satisfaction of Christ and The Saints ... To The Living or the Dead (CCC – 1471). **50.** Through Indulgences the Faithful Can Obtain the Remission of temporal Punishment resulting from Sin for Themselves and also for the Souls in Purgatory (CCC – 1498).

**51.** The Sacrament of the Anointing of The Sick ... Completes Our Conformity to the death and Resurrection of Christ, just as Baptism Began It. It completes the holy anointing that mark the whole Christian life that of Baptism which Sealed the New Life In Us, and that of Confirmation which Strengthened Us, for the combat of this life. This last Anointing mortifies the end of our earthly life like a solid rampart for the Final Struggles Before Entering the Father's House (CCC – 1523). **52.** In Addition ... The Church Offers ... The Eucharist As Viaticum. Communion in The Body and Blood of Christ, Received at This Moment of "Passing Over" to the Father, has a particular significance and importance. It Is the Seed of Eternal Life and The Power of Resurrection, according to the words of The Lord: "He Who Eats My Flesh and Drinks My Blood Has Eternal Life, and I will raise him up at the last day." The sacrament of Christ once dead and now risen, the Eucharist is Here The Sacrament of Passing Over From Death To Life (CCC – 1524). **53.** Thus, just as the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist form a unity called "The Sacraments of Christian Initiation," so too it can be said that Penance, the Anointing of the Sick and the Eucharist as Viaticum constitute at the end of Christian life "The Sacraments That Prepare for Our Heavenly Homeland" or The Sacraments That Complete the Earthly Pilgrimage (CCC – 1525).

**54.** The Precepts of The Church are set in the content of A Moral Life Bound to and Nourished by A Liturgical Life. The Obligatory character ... is meant to guarantee to the faithful the indispensable Minimum in the spirit of prayer and moral effort, in the Growth in Love of God and neighbor (CCC – 2041). The First precept ("You shall Attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation.") requires ... to participate. The Second precept ("You shall confess your Sins At Least Once A Year.") ensures preparation for the Eucharist by the reception of the sacrament of reconciliation, which continues Baptism's work of conversion and forgiveness. The Third precept ("You shall humbly receive your Creator in Holy Communion At Least During Easter Season.") guarantees ... the reception (CCC – 2042). The Fourth precept ("You shall Keep Holy the Holy Days of Obligation.") completes the Sunday observation by participation in the principal liturgical feasts Which Honor the mysteries of the Lord, the Virgin Mary and the Saints. The Fifth precept ("You shall Observe the Prescribed Days of Fasting and Abstinence.")

ensures the times of ascesis and penance which prepare us for the liturgical feasts; They Help Us Acquire Mastery Over Our Instincts and Freedom of Heart. **The Faithful** Also have the Duty of Providing for the Material Needs of the Church, each according to his abilities (CCC – 2043).

**55. Salvation comes from God alone; but because we receive The Life of Faith through THE CHURCH, She Is Our Mother:** “We believe the Church as The Mother of Our New Birth, and not in the Church as if she were the author of our salvation.” Because she is our mother, she is also Our Teacher in the Faith (CCC – 169). **56. THE CHURCH,** “The Pillar and Bulwark of the Truth,” faithfully Guards “The Faith which was Once for All Delivered to the saints” ... the Church our Mother Teaches Us the Language of Faith in order to Introduce Us to the Understanding and The Life of Faith (CCC – 171). **57.** “For Though Languages Differ throughout the world, the Content of the Tradition Is One and The Same. The Churches established in ..... have no other faith or Tradition ...” **THE CHURCHES** Message “Is True and Solid, in which One and The Same Way of Salvation appears Throughout the Whole World” (CCC – 174).

**58. THE CHURCH ... “Does NOT Derive her certainty about all ... Truths From ... Scripture Alone. Both Scriptures and Tradition must be Accepted and Honored with Equal sentiments of devotion and reverence” (CCC – 82). 59.** The Magisterium of the Church. “The task of giving an Authentic Interpretation of the Word of God ... Written ... Or ... Tradition, has been Entrusted to the living, teaching office of **THE CHURCH ALONE**” (CCC – 85). **60.** “Sacred Tradition, Sacred Scriptures and the Magisterium of the Church are so connected and associated that One of them Cannot Stand Without the Others ... they All Contribute effectively To The Salvation of Souls” (CCC – 95).

**61. “MARY ... is Inseparably Linked with the Saving Work of Her Son” (CCC – 1172). 62.** Mary ... She Has Become the Mother of All the Living. We Can Pray With And To Her. The prayer of the Church is sustained by the prayer of Mary and united with it in hope (CCC – 2679). **63.** Because of Mary’s singular co-operation with the action of the Holy Spirit, The Church Loves to Pray in Communion with the Virgin Mary ... And to Entrust Supplications and Praises to Her (CCC – 2682).

**64. Infallibility of ... Magisterium ... extends to all the elements of doctrine (CCC – 2051).**

**65. The Social Duty of Christians is to Respect and Awaken in each Man the Love of the True and the Good. It requires them to Make Known the Worship of**  
**THE ONE TRUE RELIGION THE CATHOLIC ... CHURCH**  
(CCC – 2105).