

FUNDAMENTALS OF CATHOLICISM

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SESSION 1: *Introduction to the Catechism / Reason and Revelation*

For this class read: Apostolic Letter, *Laetamur magnopere*; Apostolic Constitution, *Fidei depositum*; *Catechism* nos. 1–49; John C. Cavadini, “The Use of Scripture in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*,” *Letter & Spirit* 2 (2006): 43–54.

NOTE: The assigned numbers in the reading from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (=CCC) refers to the *paragraph* numbers in the text and *not* to page numbers. Thus, “CCC 1” refers to the paragraph that begins: “God, infinitely perfect and blessed in himself. . .”

Questions on Apostolic Letter, *Laetamur magnopere* (found in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*)

1. What was the request made of JPII by the Extraordinary Assembly in 1985?
2. Who presided over the commission that oversaw the drafting of the *Catechism*?
3. The Apostolic Constitution which promulgated the *Catechism* is said to retain its “validity and _____”?
4. JPII describes the coming together of the members over the *Catechism* “a symphony of _____”?
5. JPII describes the *Catechism* as a “sure norm for _____”
6. What will the catechist find in this *Catechism*?

Questions on Apostolic Constitution, *Fidei Depositum* (found in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*)

1. What is the mission entrusted to the Church?
2. What council does John Paul II begin the letter speaking of? How does JPII explain the council’s impact upon him personally?
3. What was the purpose of the Synod held in 1985? What desire was expressed at this Synod?
4. Who was involved in the commission called together to work on the *Catechism*? Who chaired this commission? Who was consulted (i.e., “the whole _____ of the Catholic Church”)? What does this say about the *Catechism*?
5. What does JPII say a catechism should do? (Note: Several elements are involved).
6. The *Catechism* contains material that is both _____ and _____. Explain.
7. What is the structure of the *Catechism*? (Name the four parts). Where does this fourfold division come from?
8. What does JPII declare the *Catechism* to be? Who is it offered to?

Questions on CCC 1–25

1. Know the four parts of the *Catechism* and what pertains to each pillar. (Be prepared to get a question like: “True or False: The first part of the *Catechism* deals with the meaning and importance of prayer.”)
2. The *Catechism* is described as what kind of presentation of the Catholic faith (cf. no. 18)?
3. What is not often quoted word for word but only alluded to by reference? What is said to be a “valuable working tool” for understanding the *Catechism*?
4. Why are some passages in the *Catechism* in small print? What do these passages offer?

5. What sections should be memorized?
6. What does the *Catechism* emphasize?
7. What doesn't the *Catechism* do?
8. How does the prologue end?

Questions on CCC 26–49

1. Where is the desire for God written?
2. How can the bond of man to God be forgotten, overlooked or even explicitly rejected?
3. The call for man to seek God demands what from man?
4. What do we mean by “proofs” for God?
5. How do the world and the human person point to God?
6. God can be known as the first _____ and last _____ of all things? Without this knowledge man would not be able to do what?
7. What difficulties does man have in coming to know God by the light of reason alone?
8. Man stands in need of being enlightened by God's revelation for what reasons?
9. All creatures bear a resemblance to God, especially which kind of creature?
10. Between Creator and creature there is no similitude (similarity) that can be expressed without implying even greater what?
11. Man is by nature what kind of being? What is the only way to live a fully human life?
12. Man is made to live in what with God? What does he find in him? Only when man is completely united to God will he be what? (Hint: it begins with a “c”.)
13. The Church teaches that when man listens to the message of creation and the voice of his conscience man can know what with certainty? The one true God can be known with certainty from his what and by the natural light of what?
14. We really can name God though what is true about our limited language?

Questions on Cavadini, “The Use of Scripture in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*”

1. In what way does the new *Catechism* use Scripture? How is its use different from the *Roman Catechism*? Cavadini says that it would be fair to style this as a *scriptural* _____. The scriptural text is not just a “proof” of the doctrinal statement but rather its what?
2. Why has the *Catechism* been criticized?
3. How is Scripture contextualized in the *Catechism*? What is the “rule of faith”?
4. What is one of the most salient points of development from the *Roman Catechism*? (Hint: it has to do with its treatment of Jesus.)
5. What does the *Catechism* say about the negative portrayal of the “Jews” in the Gospel of John?
6. Has the *Catechism* affirmed the benefits of literary and historical scholarship? What does it avoid reducing “scriptural” to?
7. What is the model for scriptural catechesis? How does the *Catechism* draw from the fathers of the Church?