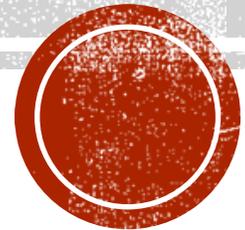


THE OBEDIENCE OF FAITH

BY

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INTRODUCTION

- God has revealed himself through Creation: nature
- God has revealed himself through the Scriptures
- God has revealed himself through his only son Jesus Christ
- Our response to God's revelation of himself is through faith. That is why our catechism states that:
- *By his revelation, the invisible God, from the fullness of his love, addresses men as his friends, and moves among them, in order to invite and receive them into his own company." The adequate response to this invitation is faith. CCC, no 142*



WHAT IS FAITH?

- The word faith comes from the Greek word, PISTIS and its verb PISTUEO.
- From its original meaning, FAITH means- *belief, firm persuasion, assurance, firm conviction, faithfulness.*
- Faith is confidence in what we hope for and the assurance that the lord is working, even though we cannot see it.
- Faith knows that no matter what the situation, in our lives or someone else's that the lord is working in it.



WHAT IS FAITH?

- By definition, Faith is a supernatural gift of God which enables us to believe without doubting whatever God has revealed.
- **To that effect, Faith is a gift from God.** In faith, we surrender our whole being to God who has revealed himself to us. This involves the assent of the intellect and the will to the revelation that God has made in words and deeds.
- **Faith is our response to God's revelation of Himself:** God makes himself known to us through revelation in order to give us something and to draw a response from us.



WHAT IS FAITH?

- From the Scriptures, we know that *"Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen"* (Hebrews 11: 1)
- Faith is the assurance that the things revealed and promised in the Word are true, even though unseen, and gives the believer a conviction that what he expects in faith, will come to pass.
- Faith is the connecting power into the spiritual realm, which links us with God and makes Him become a tangible reality to our sense perceptions.
- Faith is the basic ingredient we need to begin a relationship with God.



WHY IS FAITH IMPORTANT TO US AS CHRISTIANS

- *The Scriptures has the answer to that question:*
- *“Without faith it is impossible to know God. Anyone who wants to come to him must believe that God exists and that he rewards those who sincerely seek him. . . .” (Hebrews 11:6)*
- *“We are saved by grace through faith in Christ Jesus and not by our own efforts or works” (Ephesians 2:8-9).*
- **Everything in salvation is based on faith. We have to believe in that which we cannot see. Faith is a spiritual force that overcomes great opposition and can carry a person through great trials and triumphs over circumstances in the natural realm.**



WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FAITH AND REASON

- Faith is the belief in the truth of something that does not require any evidence and may not be provable by any empirical or rational means.
- Reason is the faculty of the mind through which we can logically come to rational conclusions.
- **Faith and reason are both sources of authority upon which beliefs can rest.**
- **Faith and Reason work together to help us discover the truth. What we believe in faith and what we discover by reason are not only compatible but also mutually beneficial.** God is the source of both faith and reason, and there is no contradiction in God. Both faith and reason lead us to the one Truth of whom God is.



EXAMPLES OF FAITH

- There are individuals in the Scriptures that we look up to as our models of faith.
- **ABRAHAM:** He is called our father in faith. He trusted in God's promise to make him a great nation.
- There are other men and women, saints and those who we personally know whose faith have also inspired us.



MOSES

- In faith Moses responded to God's call to lead his people out of slavery in Egypt to the promised land.



THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

- She is the perfect model of faith. From her YES to God at the Annunciation to her silent assent at the Cross, Mary's faith remained firm.
- No wonder we hear Mary's faith acclaimed in the Gospel of Luke 1:45: *"Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled."*



THE DIMENSIONS OF FAITH

- It is important to note that our Christian faith has two important dimensions.
- The first dimension is our **PERSONAL FAITH**. Personal faith is our own individual adherence, that is borne out of our own personal devotion and piety. It is a free assent to the whole truth that God has revealed.
- The second dimension is our **COMMUNAL FAITH AND RELATIONSHIP**: Communal faith is not a private affair. It is the assembly of believers at Mass, professing their faith together and joining their hearts to experience themselves as the Body of Christ.
- It is important to note that our personal faith brings us into a relationship with God's people and the faith of the entire people strengthens us in our relationship with God.



THE ARTICLE OF FAITH EVERY CATHOLIC MUST BELIEVE

- What we believe as our faith is summarized in the Apostle creed and the Nicene creed.
- Our profession of faith begins with *God*, for God is the First and the Last, the beginning and the end of everything.
- The Credo begins with God the *Father*, for the Father is the first divine person of the Most Holy Trinity; our Creed begins with the creation of heaven and earth, for creation is the beginning and the foundation of all God's works."



THE APOSTLE CREED

- I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit
and born of the virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to hell.
The third day he rose again from the dead.
He ascended to heaven
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty.
From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.



THE APOSTLE CREED

- I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic* church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.



THE NICENE CREED

- The Nicene Creed
- I believe in one God,
the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible.



THE NICENE CREED

- I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the Only Begotten Son of God,
born of the Father before all ages.
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us men and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary,
and became man.



THE NICENE CREED

- For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.



THE NICENE CREED

- I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.
- I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.



THE GOAL OF FAITH

- We may ask the question: What is the goal of faith in God?
- Faith is necessary for salvation. Believing in Jesus and in the One who sent him for our salvation is necessary for our salvation. The Lord Himself teaches us that *“He who believes and is baptized will be saved, but he who does not believe will be condemned.”* CCC, no 183.
- Therefore, the ultimate goal of a life of faith is eternal union with God in Heaven. Through the gift and experience of our faith, we are able not only to look ahead to what awaits us, but also to experience here some of God’s divine life, ‘a taste in advance’ of our sharing life with him forever. CCC no. 163



FAITH IS SOMETHING THAT IS DEVELOPED OVER TIME

- Our is not static, it develops with time. Faith can be likened to the growth of a child. The more we practice our faith, the more we grow on it.
- Faith is a relationship with God. We grow in relationship when we listen, communicate and trust.
- Therefore our faith communion develops in stages. We can say that it is a journey or a pilgrimage. On this journey, there will be periods of temptation, worry, shadows and darkness.
- In fact, many saints experienced such tests. The good news is that Jesus has given us the Holy Spirit to enlighten and guide us on the way.
- Thirst for knowledge helps us to grow in the journey of our faith.



THE CHALLENGES OF FAITH

- Like many other things in life, our Faith is challenged by many obstacles.
- When our prayer is not answered
- When we have disappoints
- When we become sick
- When we lose someone we love
- When we lose our jobs
- When we experience disappointments.

These are moments when our faith is challenged, but it can also be a turning point for our faith.



OTHER CHALLENGES OF FAITH

- There are other challenges from the pressure we find in the society and the interactions with people we meet.
 - 1) Atheism
 - 2) Agnosticism
 - 3) Materialism
 - 4) Secularism



ATHEISM

- **Atheism is the world view that denies the existence of God. People with religious faith believe in God. Sometimes, they present a compelling argument to defend their position.**
- **Atheism could cause a person of faith to question their beliefs in God and the after life if they meet someone who lives a very happy life without the presence of God in their lives they could begin to doubt the importance of Religion as a source of meaning in their lives.**



AGNOSTICISM

- Agnosticism is the world view that states that there is not enough evidence to believe in God. This again is something that could cause a Christian to question their religious beliefs. A person's religious belief is based on faith . It is also based on historical evidence for the life of Jesus. It is also based on the gospels written by the evangelists which are documents of religious faith.
- The fact that an agnostic believes that there is not enough evidence for the existence of God could lead a Christian and person of faith begin to doubt this evidence. It could also cause them to ask questions about the teachings of the church, encyclicals of the pope and documents like the catechism and the second Vatican councils.



MATERIALISM

- Materialists are people who believe we find meaning in life through material objects. They put material objects that we can see, feel and touch first in their lives.
- The material worldview could cause a person of religious faith to begin to question God because he can't be seen in the same way as material objects can.



SECULARISM

- Secularism is the world view that religion should have no place in the state of a country. Religion should have no influence on the laws of a country.
- Our society has become more secular in recent years. Abortion legislation has been introduced which is against our faith.
- This is often a challenge to people of religious faith. I am happy that are still people who want to ensure that the faith is passed on to their children no matter the challenges.



HOW DO WE OVERCOME THE CHALLENGE OF OUR FAITH IN SOCIETY TODAY

- You must continually strive to deepen your faith through constant studies of sacred writings and the scriptures.
- You must be on your knees everyday in prayer. Developing a habit of prayer is important.
- Knowing our faith and sharing it with others is the responsibility of every Catholic.
- Do not live your faith because of a person. Sometimes, we experience that the people fail us in our faith. Our focus must be on God and not on Human Beings who are fallible.



CONCLUSION

- We need to affirm again and again that our faith in Jesus Christ. We must discover who Jesus Christ is to us personally. The key to our history is to be found in Jesus, who is the Lord of history.
- You need to develop your faith and make it work.



QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- 1) How would you rate your faith in God?
- 2) Is there anything that has happened in your life that has challenged your faith?
- 3) In what ways do you find it difficult to be open about your faith?
- 4) Have you been able to apply your faith your family issues?
- 5) What step do you think you can take to make your faith more effective and stronger?

