

The Baltimore Catechism

23D. How is the Bible divided?

The Bible is divided into the Old Testament, written before the coming of Jesus Christ, and the New Testament, written after His ascension into Heaven.

23E. Are all the passages of the Bible to be understood according to our modern manner of expression?

No; some of the passages of the Bible are not to be understood according to our modern manner of expression, since they contain certain figures of speech, parables, and literary forms used by the people of ancient times but not employed in the present.

23F. How can we know the true meaning of the Bible?

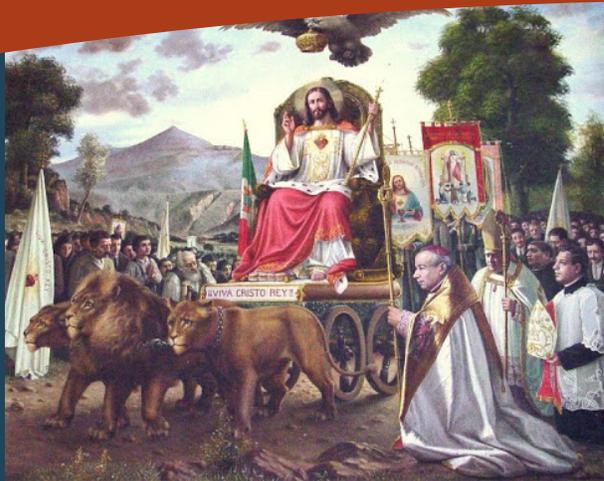
We can know the true meaning of the Bible from the teaching authority of the Catholic Church, which has received from Jesus Christ the right and the duty to teach and to explain all that God has revealed.

23G. Are Catholics encouraged by the Church to read the Bible?

Yes; Catholics are encouraged by the Church to read the Bible, especially the gospels, which tell about the earthly life of Jesus Christ, the Son of God made man.

23H. What is the chief message of the New Testament?

The chief message of the New Testament is the joyful announcement of our salvation through Jesus Christ.



Special Issue: Next Month's Election and What Is at Stake

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A Properly Formed Conscience for

“Voting is one of the most moral actions you can make, and therefore you must consider Our Lord will judge this action.” – *The 2020 Catholic Voters Guide*

A proper vote comes from a properly formed conscience. “Each of us is responsible to properly form our consciences” (CCC 1798). When we are in a state of grace, there is a lot more predictability in our lives. “The more a correct conscience prevails, the more do persons and groups turn aside from blind choice and try to be guided by objective standards of moral conduct (CCC 1776).”

A properly formed conscience is nurtured by living in a state of grace. We live in a state of grace when we avail ourselves of the sacraments, specifically Holy Communion and the sacrament of confession. It’s impossible to live in a state of grace without the sacraments. Living in a state of grace is not something we can do on our own. If we are not living in a state of grace, we cannot make good decisions. We are overreacting, getting caught by surprise, and either in a peak or in a valley; there is no steady state. We constantly worry, and we are overly emotional. We live day-to-day. This is no way to live.

Maybe we feel that everything is fine. We say to

ourselves, “I’m a nice person. I don’t murder or steal or usually lie.” While this may be true, this is how worldly people think. The world is dominated by mediocrity. Mediocrity is believing that we are “nice people” and that we got it going all on our own, while we overreact, constantly worry, and are either in a peak or valley. Which is it today, a peak or a valley? What will it be tomorrow?

One reason that forming our consciences is imperative is that we have a solemn duty to fulfill on Nov. 3, 2020. A vote is not a valentine for the candidate you *like* the most. A vote is not as much a judgment of a candidate’s moral conduct but more of a judgment of the policies that the candidate and his party support when assessed against objective moral standards.

“All are bound to seek the truth, to embrace it and to hold on to it as they come to know it. ... These obligations bind the human” (*Dignitatis Humanae*, 1965). Fr. Gabriele Amorth (1925–2016) was the chief exorcist of the diocese of Rome. He said, “Everybody is vulnerable to the work of Satan. ... [T]he Devil loves to take over those who hold political office.”

We must understand a candidate and his party’s policies and contemplate them against a set of moral standards and the natural law.

You Cannot Vote for a Democrat as a Catholic

Both the Republican Party and the Democratic Party publish a party *platform*. The party platforms are approved at each party's convention during an election year. The party platforms lay out the vision for the country for the next four years, regardless of the election results.

In their platform, the Democrats state that "every woman should be able to access high-quality reproductive health care services, including safe and legal abortion." In other words, abortion-on-demand is part of the Democrats' health care plan. The Republicans, on the other hand, state that they are "proud to be the party that protects human life." They strongly oppose infanticide and support "state and federal efforts against the cruelest forms of abortion, especially dismemberment abortion procedures, in which unborn babies are literally torn apart limb from limb."

Can abortion be a standalone reason not to vote for a Democrat? **Yes!** There is no compromise on this issue for Catholics. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) has stated that "The threat of abortion remains our preeminent priority because it directly attacks life itself, because it takes place within the sanctuary of the family and because of the number of lives destroyed Human life must be respected and protected absolutely from the moment of conception."

"Since the first century, the Church has affirmed the moral evil of every procured abortion. This teaching

abortion, that is to say, abortion willed either as an end or a means, is gravely contrary to the moral law. ... Since it must be treated from conception as a person, the embryo must be defended in its integrity, cared for, and healed, as far as possible, like any other human being" (CCC 2270–71, 2274). The souls of the **60 million**-plus aborted babies are guarding the gates of Heaven. We all will face them and have to answer to almighty God.

Issues like immigration, welfare, social security, and health care, while containing moral elements because of whom they affect, are political issues, not moral ones. In comparison to the immediate defense of human life, these issues are trivial.

Politicians who support abortion are corrupt and immoral. They are blinded by their sin. They no longer seek the truth because of their pride. Their consciences are incapable of making objective moral decisions. Immoral leaders pass immoral laws. They cannot be trusted. Neither can bishops and priests be trusted who do not preach that abortion is the preeminent priority and that a vote for a candidate who supports abortion puts your soul in absolute mortal danger.

Biden is a fake Catholic. He cannot claim any allegiance to his Catholic faith while supporting abortion. *As a Catholic, you cannot vote for a candidate who supports abortion. You cannot vote for Joe Biden.*

How We Elect a President

Article II and the Amendments XII and XX of the U.S. Constitution describe the manner in which a president and vice president are elected. The Constitution states that each state "shall appoint, in such manner as the legislature thereof may direct, a number of electors equal to the whole number of senators and representatives to which the state may be entitled." Each state decides for itself how these electors are chosen.

As it turns out, each state relies on the popular vote among its citizens to determine how to allocate its number of electors. All states except for Maine and Nebraska use a winner-take-all method.

The Constitution requires that each state *certify* its vote. Each state in its own constitution determines the date by which it shall certify its vote. California takes until 12/11/2020; Delaware takes until 11/5/2020.

On election night, news outlets use simple math and predictive analysis (a candidate's lead minus the number of votes remaining to be counted, along with how counties have voted in the past) to *predict* the winner of the popular vote for a state, which in turn allocates the state's number of electors to the winning candidate. When the candidate's total reaches 270, a winner is declared even though the vote counting is incomplete and the state's certification is after election night.

If a state is delayed in certifying its results because of an issue like mail-in ballots, then expect a legal mess. It could look like Florida in 2000 between Bush and Gore, but all over the country. If the federal government cannot declare a winner by January 20, then the Constitution states the House of Representatives chooses the president and the Senate chooses the vice president. In the House, the vote is taken by state, the representative of each state having one vote. There are also accommodations for the vice president-elect to act as president until the president-elect is qualified.

I'm So Very Sorry:

Please take note that I have changed a very important aspect of this newsletter. I went from blaming you for not keeping your Catholic faith to blaming myself for not properly catechizing you in your youth. So now, my mission is to proclaim to you **WHAT I SHOULD HAVE TAUGHT YOU ABOUT YOUR CATHOLIC FAITH!**

O My Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fire of Hell, and lead all souls to Heaven, especially those in most need of Thy mercy.

My dearest children: **You are in mortal danger!** I failed to properly teach you the precepts of the Catholic Church and the beauty, richness and completeness of the Catholic faith. This is why I've taken on this little project. My goal is to produce this newsletter every month and send it along with little tokens to help you appreciate the gift. It's meant to serve as a moment of reflection and discussion. I love you, and God bless you!

SHOCKFactor™

"Our purpose in life is to know, love and serve God. It's human nature that we will not willingly serve a God whom we do not love, and we will not love a God we do not know ... if I do not wake up with an inclination or the inspiration to serve Almighty God ... then, 'Houston, we have a problem.' ... There are too many people in the world who do not know the first thing about Almighty God."

- Fr. James Altman