

CATHOLIC FAITH TEACHING MANUAL

LEVEL 4 : PRE - CONFIRMATION




BY FATHER RAYMOND TAOUK

Catholic Faith Teaching Manual

Level 4 : Pre -Confirmation

Saint Boniface

An icon of Saint Boniface, a bearded man with a halo, wearing a green and white checkered garment with a large white cross. He is holding a book. The icon is set within a gold border. The words "SAINT" and "BONIFACE" are written in the top corners, and "BONIFACE" and "SAINT" are written in the bottom corners.

The Church is like a great ship being pounded by the waves of life's different stresses. Our duty is not to abandon ship, but to keep her on her course.

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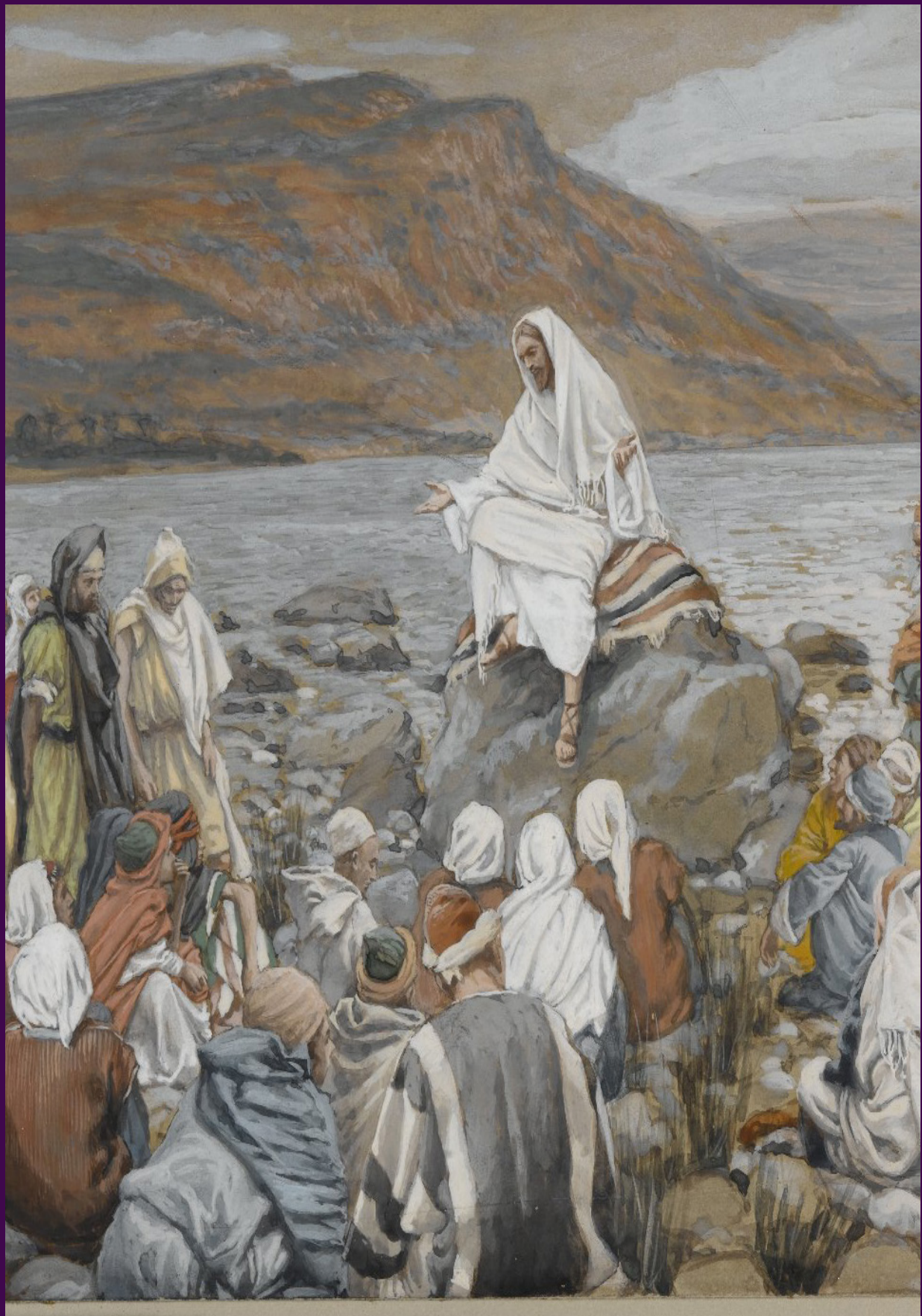
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Lesson 1



Level 4

Pre - Confirmation



Catechism



Each lesson we are going to study some catechism questions. This is the most important part of your lesson. These questions you must learn by heart so that you will come to know a great deal about God and His wonderful creation. Level Three studied forty two catechism questions, so we commence this Level with Catechism Question 88. May God bless you in your study of Himself and His holy Church.

In Level Four Catechism, we are going to study the Ten Commandments and the Commandments of the Church. These are very important to us as the Commandments are the first and most obvious way we know that we are doing the will of God.

During Our Lord's life a man asked Him what he must do to be saved and the first answer given was to follow the Commandments. Thus, we will study them this level as our catechism topic.

The First Commandment

88. What is the first commandment of God?

The first commandment of God is:

I am the Lord thy God; thou shalt not have strange gods before Me.

89. What are we commanded by the first commandment?

By the first commandment we are commanded to offer to God alone the supreme worship that is due Him.

90. How do we worship God?

We worship God by acts of faith, hope, and charity, and by adoring Him and praying to Him.

We remember from Level Three that the first three Commandments deal with our relationship with God, whereas the last seven Commandments deal with our relationship with our neighbour.

Each Commandment commands something and forbids something.

The spirit of the First Commandment is that we offer to God alone the supreme worship that is due to Him. Anything going against that is a breaking of this Commandment.

Question 1 ◆ What are we commanded by the first commandment?

Question 2 ◆ How do we worship God?

Prayer

In previous levels, each lesson we have learned a different prayer. By now, we should have a good number of prayers that we know by heart. Many we say every day, and others from time to time.

In this level we are not going to learn any new prayers, but we are going to study the words (meanings) of some of the more common and popular prayers. It is very important to know what we are saying when praying!

The Our Father (The Lord's Prayer)

Our Father, Who art in heaven:

This prayer which Our Lord Himself taught us, is addressed to God the Father. When we say these words, we are demonstrating our faith by saying that God is in heaven; we are showing our faith in God, but also in the existence of heaven.



Hallowed be Thy name:

We have used this word “hallowed” all our lives; but do we know what it means? It means that we are calling the name of God, holy. In the Old Testament, the Jews revered God’s holy name so much, they would never even say it.

- Question 3 ◆ When we pray the Our Father, to Whom do we speak?
- Question 4 ◆ What do we mean by Hallowed be Thy name?
- Question 5 ◆ Who taught us the prayer, The Our Father?



Bible Story



In this Level we will be looking at stories from the New Testament only. In fact, we will be studying only a very brief period in Our Lord's life; from His triumphal entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, to the Descent of the Holy Ghost on Pentecost Sunday. Therefore a great deal of our studies this level will be on the Passion and Death of Our Saviour.

Jesus Rides Into Jerusalem

A short time after Lazarus had come to life again, Jesus took supper with Lazarus, and Mary, and Martha, and the next day He said to His disciples: "It is time we went to Jerusalem." When they had come to Mount Olivet, Jesus told two of His disciples to go to the next village, and that they would there find, tied to a gate, a donkey with its young one, called a colt. No man had ridden yet on this colt. Jesus told them: "When you find this colt, the man you see minding it will ask you what you want, and you are to say you want the colt, for the Lord is in need of it, and then he will let you take it."

And the disciples going, did as Jesus told them. When they brought the colt to Jesus, it had no harness or saddle on it, so they spread their clothes over its back, and made Jesus sit on it. A very great crowd of people now came, and they cut down boughs of trees, carried palm branches in their hands, and strewed their clothes and boughs along the way, for Jesus to ride over.

They shouted and said "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." and so they entered Jerusalem in great joy. The whole city came out to meet Him, and they said: "Who is this?" and the people said: "This is Jesus."

Jesus went to the Temple, and crowds came with Him, and they brought to Him the blind, and deaf, and lame, and dumb, and all sick persons, and Jesus cured them, so that they were all glad and filled with joy, even the little children called out: "Hosanna to the Son of David; blessed be the Son of David."

The Jewish priests and learned men, hearing the children, were angry, and they asked Jesus if He heard what the children said. Jesus always loved little children, and must have liked their song best of all, for He said: "Yes, I hear. Out of the mouths of infants and of sucklings thou hast perfected praise."

- Question 6 ◆ Why did the people cut down palms when Jesus entered
- Question 7 ◆ What did the people shout out as Jesus entered Jerusalem?
- Question 8 ◆ What did Jesus ask the Apostles to get for Him?







The Saints



Saint Denis

There were Christians in France very soon after the death and resurrection of Jesus. The country, which was then called Gaul, was part of the Roman Empire, so things that were done at Rome soon left their mark there also; and when one of the Emperors, Valerian, ordered a great persecution of the Christians, those in Gaul suffered as much as those in Rome. Almost all of them were killed, and after the terror was over the Pope decided he must send some missionaries to preach the Gospel and to encourage those Christians that were left.

The man he chose, who was known to be very brave and good and was very learned in the Christian Faith, was named Denis. Denis took with him his two great friends Rusticus, a priest, and Eleutherius, a deacon; and with some others they traveled the roads of Gaul until they came to an island in the middle of a great river – the island in the river Seine which is now part of Paris. Here they settled and built a church where they began to practice their religion and to preach.

They made so many converts that the pagan priests became very angry and asked the Governor Sisinnius to put a stop by force to the new teaching. Sisinnius sent for Denis and his companions, and ordered them to sacrifice to the pagan gods. When they refused to do this they were put in prison and tortured, but they still said that Jesus was truly God and that it was their duty to tell as many people as they could about His resurrection. So they were taken to a high hill overlooking the city and there they were beheaded. That Paris hill is still called Montmartre, which means “the Mount of the Martyrs.”

The bodies of Denis and his companions were thrown into the river Seine so that they might float away and be altogether forgotten; but a Christian lady named Catulla rescued them and gave them a proper burial, marking their graves with a little shrine.

Years later, when Christianity became the religion of the Roman Empire, a great church was built there so that all Frenchmen might remember Denis, the first Bishop of Paris and “the Apostle of France.” Here most of the kings of France were buried. Over the altar the king’s standard always hung when he himself was not in battle. And when there were battles to be fought the war-cry of the soldiers was “Saint Denis for France,” for he became the patron saint of France as Saint George is the patron saint of England. His Feast day is on October 9.

- Question 9 ◆ Which Roman Emperor ordered a great persecution of the Christians at the time of Saint Denis?
- Question 10 ◆ Where was Saint Denis killed?
- Question 11 ◆ What does Montmatre mean?
- Question 12 ◆ Who is the Patron Saint of France?

Devotions

Throughout the history of the Church, Our Blessed Lord and His holy Mother have, from time to time appeared to certain souls to give them messages, either for the individuals concerned or for the whole world. The Church examines these events carefully and then pronounces judgment as to whether the faithful can follow these apparitions or not. In addition to the true apparitions, there have been many false ones, inspired by the devil, so it is very important to listen to what the Church has to say.

When heaven speaks to us through these apparitions, it is always with good reason. Our Lord or Our Lady have something to tell us that is an important help in our salvation. In this Level, we are going to study a number of these apparitions, many of which have taken place in the past two hundred years. Our first topic for discussion is the Story of Lourdes.

The Story of Lourdes

To understand the story of Lourdes, it is necessary to

understand the story of the seer, (the person to whom Our Lady appeared), Saint Bernadette. Bernadette Soubirous was born in 1844 and was the oldest of the four surviving children of the nine born to her mother (five had died as babies). When Saint Bernadette was about twelve, her father lost his job and the family had to move to a house with only one room. It was just big enough for three beds and a fire place to cook the meals and to keep them warm during winter. Their neighbour in the same building were their cousin's livestock (animals). The walls were made of stone and the room was always damp which did not help Saint Bernadette's asthma.

On February 11, 1858, the fourteen year old Bernadette and two friends went to gather firewood. They stopped near the Gave River to remove their shoes and wade across the small stream near a natural grotto at a place called Massabielle. The other two children raced ahead, but Bernadette, being afraid the icy water would bring on an asthma attack, hesitated. Suddenly, she heard the sound of a rushing wind and saw a bright light near the grotto. In this light appeared a lady, so beautiful that to see her again one would be willing to die. Saint Bernadette started praying the Rosary. The lady smiled and joined in at the Glory Be prayers. The lady asked Saint Bernadette to return fifteen times, which she promised to do.

During the apparitions, the lady gave Saint Bernadette a number of messages. The main purpose of most of her requests was to ask people to do penance for their sins. The lady gave Saint Bernadette some messages for herself which she never revealed. She also asked for a chapel to be built at the grotto, and for processions.



- Question 13 ◆ In what year did Our Lady appear to Saint Bernadette?
- Question 14 ◆ What two things in particular did Our Lady ask for?
- Question 15 ◆ What was the main purpose of Our Lady's requests?

Fasting

Fasting

From the earliest times the Church has taught its children to fast. It has followed the example of our Divine Saviour Who spent forty days in the desert fasting, before beginning His public life. Jesus often spoke of the necessity of fasting. There are two main types of fasting in the Church; the fast before Holy Communion and the days of fast. Let us look at each of these separately.

Fasting before Holy Communion:

The Church prescribes that anyone who wishes to receive Our Lord in Holy Communion, fast for one hour before receiving the Sacred Host. This means that for a period of one hour, no food or liquid (except water) may be taken. It was not so many years ago that the fast was three hours before Holy Communion. In fact, your grandparents will probably remember when the fast was from midnight!

Under pain of sin we must keep the one hour fast, but when possible, we should try to fast for a longer period, perhaps three hours.

Days of Fast:

A fast day is one on which only one full meal is allowed but two other small meals may be taken (these two meals combined, must be less than the quantity of the larger meal).

No food can be eaten between meals, but one may drink water, lemonade, tea/coffee and other non-nourishing drinks.

Everyone aged between 21 years and 59 years are bound under mortal sin to fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. (In earlier days, it was obligatory to fast during all of Lent).

The Church encourages, however, that we fast during Lent, on certain Vigils and on Ember days. Fasting is also highly recommended when we are asking God for something. Prayer and fasting go together very well.



Question 16 ♦ Who are bound to fast?

Question 17 ♦ On which days are we bound to fast?

Question 18 ♦ How long is the fast before Holy Communion?



The Catholic Faith Teaching Manual (Level 4, Pre-Confirmation) provides a Traditional Catholic learning resource for children aged 11-12 (Grade 5) or older who will be making their Confirmation in the next year.

It introduces the fundamentals of the Catholic faith which incorporates both the tradition and the beauty. It is part of a series of books that has 5 levels designed for Primary school children from Grade 2 to Grade 6. The manual is ideal for schools and homeschooling. The manual can be taught over a year or in months depending on your preference.

The Catholic Faith Teaching Manual Level 4, contains 15 lessons, which include Catechism questions, Bible studies, lives of the Saints, Devotions and General Catholic Practices.

This Level is a completion of what has been taught in the other levels, focusing on Jesus and his final days on earth. At completion the student will understand the sacrifice made by Our Lord in establishing the One true Faith here on earth for our Salvation.

At completion of Level 4, the student will have a thorough understanding of prayer, lives of the Saints that were influential in establishing the early church. They will learn Catholic devotions such as "The Nine First Friday's", "The First Saturday's", Fatima - The Last Vision, The four Last Things, Feast days, The ecclesiastical year, Catholic etiquette, the history behind the Miraculous Medal and much more.

The focus in this level is to provide an understanding of Catholic practices and devotions. The student learns to draw from the Catholic Church through its gifts, to help them build their inner strength to prepare for the spiritual battle that lies ahead. It is a preparation for the sacrament of Confirmation.

CATHOLIC FAITH TEACHING MANUAL SERIES

Level 1 : Holy Communion (age 9-10, Grade 2/3)

Level 2 : Post Communion (age 10, Grade 3/4)

Level 3 : Intermediary Level (age 11, Grade 4)

Level 4 : Pre confirmation Level (age 11-12, Grade 5)

Level 5 : Confirmation Level (age 12-13, Grade 6)



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