ADAM M. KUEHNER

ROMAN CATHOLICISM

Do You Agree?

45 QUESTIONS

EVERY SERIOUS-MINDED

ROMAN CATHOLIC

SHOULD ASK THEMSELVES ABOUT THEIR

PERSONAL FAITH

ADAM M. KUEHNER
QUESTION #1
Do I agree with the Roman Catholic Church that “both Scripture and Tradition must be accepted and honored with equal sentiments of devotion and reverence”?

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #82.** As a result the Church, to whom the transmission and interpretation of Revelation is entrusted, “does not derive her certainty about all revealed truths from the holy Scriptures alone. Both Scripture and Tradition must be accepted and honored with equal sentiments of devotion and reverence.”

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #97.** “Sacred Tradition and Sacred Scripture make up a single sacred deposit of the Word of God” (DV 10), in which, as in a mirror, the pilgrim Church contemplates God, the source of all her riches.

QUESTION #2
Do I agree with the Roman Catholic Church that it alone has the right to interpret the Scriptures, to determine which books belong in the Bible, and to include the “Apocrypha” as part of Holy Scripture?

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #100.** The task of interpreting the Word of God authentically has been
entrusted solely to the Magisterium of the Church, that is, to the Pope, and to the bishops in communion with him.

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #120.** It was by the apostolic Tradition that the Church discerned which writings are to be included in the list of the sacred books (Cf. DV 8 #3). This complete list is called the canon of Scripture. It includes 46 books for the Old Testament (45 if we count Jeremiah and Lamentations as one) and 27 for the New (Cf. DS 179; 1334-1336; 1501-1504). The Old Testament: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, 1 and 2 Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah, Tobit, Judith, Esther, 1 and 2 Maccabees, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, the Song of Songs, the Wisdom of Solomon, Sirach (Ecclesiasticus), Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Baruch, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zachariah and Malachi. The New Testament: the Gospels according to Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, the Acts of the Apostles, the Letters of St. Paul to the Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, the Letter to the Hebrews, the
QUESTION #3

Do I agree with the Roman Catholic Church that true saving faith means believing everything officially taught by its leaders?

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #171.** *The Church, “the pillar and bulwark of the truth,” faithfully guards “the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.”* She guards the memory of Christ’s words; it is she who from generation to generation hands on the apostles’ confession of faith. As a mother who teaches her children to speak and so to understand and communicate, the Church our Mother teaches us the language of faith in order to introduce us to the understanding and the life of faith.

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #175.** “We guard with care the faith that we have received from the Church, for without ceasing, under the action of God’s Spirit, this deposit of great price, as if in an excellent vessel, is constantly being renewed and causes the very vessel that contains it to be renewed.”

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #182.** *We believe all “that which is contained in the word of God, written or
handed down, and which the Church proposes for belief as divinely revealed” (Paul VI, CPG § 20).

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #183.** Faith is necessary for salvation. The Lord himself affirms: “He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned” (Mk 16:16)

**QUESTION #4**
Do I agree with the Roman Catholic Church’s claim to be the only true Church and “the universal help toward salvation”?

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #816.** “The sole Church of Christ [is that] which our Savior, after his Resurrection, entrusted to Peter’s pastoral care, commissioning him and the other apostles to extend and rule it. . . . This Church, constituted and organized as a society in the present world, subsists in the Catholic Church, which is governed by the successor of Peter and by the bishops in communion with him.” (LG 8 § 2) The Second Vatican Council’s Decree on Ecumenism explains: “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.” (UR 3 § 5)

**QUESTION #5**

Do I agree with the Roman Catholic Church that those born into Protestant churches are to be regarded as true Christians on account of their baptism, by which they were justified and united to Christ?

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #818.** “However, one cannot charge with the sin of the separation those who at present are born into these communities [that resulted from such separation] and in them are brought up in the faith of Christ, and the Catholic Church accepts them with respect and affection as brothers . . . . All who have been justified by faith in Baptism are incorporated into Christ; they therefore have a right to be called Christians, and with good reason are accepted as brothers in the Lord by the children of the Catholic Church.” (UR 3 § 1)
QUESTION #6
Do I agree with the Roman Catholic Church that the ministry of Protestant Churches derives its power from the grace and truth of the Roman Catholic Church, and that Protestants should reunite with Rome in a spirit of “Catholic unity”?

- Catechism of the Catholic Church #819. Furthermore, many elements of sanctification and of truth” (LG 8 § 2) are found outside the visible confines of the Catholic Church: “the written Word of God; the life of grace; faith, hope, and charity, with the other interior gifts of the Holy Spirit, as well as visible elements” (UR 3 § 2; cf. LG 15). Christ’s Spirit uses these Churches and ecclesial communities as means of salvation, whose power derives from the fullness of grace and truth that Christ has entrusted to the Catholic Church. All these blessings come from Christ and lead to him (Cf. UR 3) and are in themselves calls to “Catholic unity.”

QUESTION #7
Do I agree with the Roman Catholic Church’s claim to be the sole foundation and authority over every particular church throughout the entire world?
Catechism of the Catholic Church #834. Particular Churches are fully catholic through their communion with one of them, the Church of Rome “which presides in charity” (St. Ignatius Of Antioch, Ad Rom. 1, 1: Apostolic Fathers, II/2,192; cf. LG 13). “For with this church, by reason of its pre-eminence, the whole Church, that is the faithful everywhere, must necessarily be in accord”. Indeed, “from the incarnate Word’s descent to us, all Christian churches everywhere have held and hold the great Church that is here [at Rome] to be their only basis and foundation since, according to the Savior's promise, the gates of hell have never prevailed against her” (St. Maximus the Confessor, Opuscula theo.: PG 91:137-140).

QUESTION #8
Do I agree with the Roman Catholic Church that Muslims and Christians worship the same God?

Catechism of the Catholic Church #841. The Church’s relationship with the Muslims. “The plan of salvation also includes those who acknowledge the Creator, in the first place amongst whom are the Muslims; these profess to hold the faith of Abraham, and together with us they adore the one, merciful God, mankind’s judge on the last day” (LG 16; cf. NA 3).
QUESTION #9
Do I agree with the Roman Catholic Church that those who knowingly “refuse either to enter or to remain” within its membership cannot be saved?

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #846.** “Outside the Church there is no salvation” How are we to understand this affirmation, often repeated by the Church Fathers? Reformulated positively, it means that all salvation comes from Christ the Head through the Church which is his Body: “Basing itself on Scripture and Tradition, the Council teaches that the Church, a pilgrim now on earth, is necessary for salvation: the one Christ is the mediator and the way of salvation; he is present to us in his body which is the Church. He himself explicitly asserted the necessity of faith and Baptism, and thereby affirmed at the same time the necessity of the Church which men enter through Baptism as through a door. Hence they could not be saved who, knowing that the Catholic Church was founded as necessary by God through Christ, would refuse either to enter it or to remain in it” (LG 14; cf. Mk 16:16; Jn 3:5).
QUESTION #10
Do I agree with the Roman Catholic Church that individuals with no knowledge of the gospel can “achieve eternal salvation” by performing sincere obedience to God according to “the dictates of their conscience”?

❖ Catechism of the Catholic Church #847. “Those who, through no fault of their own, do not know the Gospel of Christ or his Church, but who nevertheless seek God with a sincere heart, and, moved by grace, try in their actions to do his will as they know it through the dictates of their conscience – those too may achieve eternal salvation” (LG 16; cf. DS 3866-3872).

QUESTION #11
Do I agree with the Roman Catholic Church that its official teachers are infallible (i.e. incapable of error) in all matters of faith and morals?

❖ Catechism of the Catholic Church #889. In order to preserve the Church in the purity of the faith handed on by the apostles, Christ who is the Truth willed to confer on her a share in his own infallibility. By a “supernatural sense of faith” the People of God, under the guidance of the Church’s
living Magisterium, “unfailingy adheres to this faith” (LG 12; cf. DV 10).

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #890.** The mission of the Magisterium is linked to the definitive nature of the covenant established by God with his people in Christ. It is this Magisterium’s task to preserve God’s people from deviations and defections and to guarantee them the objective possibility of professing the true faith without error. Thus, the pastoral duty of the Magisterium is aimed at seeing to it that the People of God abides in the truth that liberates. To fulfill this service, Christ endowed the Church’s shepherds with the charism of infallibility in matters of faith and morals.

**QUESTION #12**

Do I agree with the Roman Catholic Church that the Pope truly has “full supreme, and universal power over the whole Church, a power which he can always exercise unhindered”?

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #882.** The Pope, Bishop of Rome and Peter’s successor, “is the perpetual and visible source and foundation of the unity both of the bishops and of the whole company of the faithful” (LG 23). “For the Roman Pontiff, by reason of his office as Vicar of Christ, and as pastor of the entire Church has full, supreme, and universal power
over the whole Church, a power which he can always exercise unhindered” (LG 22; cf. CD 2,9).

**QUESTION #13**

Do I agree with the Roman Catholic Church that both Popes and Ecumenical Councils are infallible (i.e. incapable of error) when declaring official church teaching?

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #891.** “The Roman Pontiff, head of the college of bishops, enjoys this infallibility in virtue of his office, when, as supreme pastor and teacher of all the faithful – who confirms his brethren in the faith he proclaims by a definitive act a doctrine pertaining to faith or morals…. the infallibility promised to the Church is also present in the body of bishops when, together with Peter’s successor, they exercise the supreme Magisterium,” above all in an Ecumenical Council (LG 25; cf. Vatican Council I: DS 3074). When the Church through its supreme Magisterium proposes a doctrine “for belief as being divinely revealed” (DV 10 #2), and as the teaching of Christ, the definitions “must be adhered to with the obedience of faith” (LG 25 #2). This infallibility extends as far as the deposit of divine Revelation itself (Cf. LG 25).

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #2035.** The supreme degree of participation in the authority of Christ is ensured
by the charism of infallibility. This infallibility extends as far as does the deposit of divine Revelation; it also extends to all those elements of doctrine, including morals, without which the saving truths of the faith cannot be preserved, explained, or observed (Cf. LG 25; CDF, declaration, Mysterium Ecclesiae 3).

**QUESTION #14**

Do I agree with the Roman Catholic Church that all “the constitutions and decrees conveyed by the legitimate authority of the Church” must be obeyed, even when they are found contrary to “personal conscience and reason”?

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #2037.** The law of God entrusted to the Church is taught to the faithful as the way of life and truth. The faithful therefore have the right to be instructed in the divine saving precepts that purify judgment and, with grace, heal wounded human reason (Cf. CIC, can. 213). They have the duty of observing the constitutions and decrees conveyed by the legitimate authority of the Church. Even if they concern disciplinary matters, these determinations call for docility in charity.

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #2039.** Personal conscience and reason should not be set in opposition to the moral law or the Magisterium of the Church.
QUESTION #15
Do I agree with the Roman Catholic Church that outwardly scandalous sins like adultery, murder, and theft are “mortal” (i.e. deadly), while certain lesser sins are merely “venial” (i.e. not deadly)?

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #1855.** Mortal sin destroys charity in the heart of man by a grave violation of God’s law; it turns man away from God, who is his ultimate end and his beatitude, by preferring an inferior good to him. Venial sin allows charity to subsist, even though it offends and wounds it.

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #1858.** Grave matter is specified by the Ten Commandments, corresponding to the answer of Jesus to the rich young man: “Do not kill, Do not commit adultery, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Do not defraud, Honor your father and your mother” (Mk 10:19).

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #1862.** One commits venial sin when, in a less serious matter, he does not observe the standard prescribed by the moral law, or when he disobeys the moral law in a grave matter, but without full knowledge or without complete consent.

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #1863.** ...venial sin does not set us in direct opposition to the will and friendship of God; it does not break the covenant with God. With God’s grace it is humanly reparable. “Venial sin does not deprive
the sinner of sanctifying grace, friendship with God, charity, and consequently eternal happiness” (John Paul II, RP 17 # 9).

**QUESTION #16**

Do I agree with the Roman Catholic Church that justification includes not only the pardon of sins, but also the inward renewal of the soul in faith, hope, and charity?

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #1989.** “Justification is not only the remission of sins, but also the sanctification and renewal of the interior man” (Council of Trent (1547): DS 1528).
- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #1991.** Justification is at the same time the acceptance of God’s righteousness through faith in Jesus Christ. Righteousness (or “justice”) here means the rectitude of divine love. With justification, faith, hope, and charity are poured into our hearts, and obedience to the divine will is granted us.
- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #1995.** The Holy Spirit is the master of the interior life. By giving birth to the “inner man” (Cf. Rom 7:22; Eph 3:16), justification entails the sanctification of his whole being.
QUESTION #17
Do I agree with the Roman Catholic Church that Jesus Christ died on the cross so that I might be made “inwardly just” at my baptism and, on that basis, declared righteous before God?

❖ **Catechism of the Catholic Church #1992.** Justification has been merited for us by the Passion of Christ who offered himself on the cross as a living victim, holy and pleasing to God, and whose blood has become the instrument of atonement for the sins of all men. Justification is conferred in Baptism, the sacrament of faith. It conforms us to the righteousness of God, who makes us inwardly just by the power of his mercy. Its purpose is the glory of God and of Christ, and the gift of eternal life (Cf. Council of Trent (1547): DS 1529).

QUESTION #18
Do I agree with the Roman Catholic Church that, according to divine grace, my good works obtain merit in the sight of God?

❖ **Catechism of the Catholic Church #2008.** The merit of man before God in the Christian life arises from the fact that God has freely chosen to associate man with the work of his grace. The fatherly action of God is first on his own initiative,
and then follows man’s free acting through his collaboration, so that the merit of good works is to be attributed in the first place to the grace of God, then to the faithful. Man’s merit, moreover, itself is due to God, for his good actions proceed in Christ, from the predispositions and assistance given by the Holy Spirit.

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #2011.** The charity of Christ is the source in us of all our merits before God. Grace, by uniting us to Christ in active love, ensures the supernatural quality of our acts and consequently their merit before God and before men. The saints have always had a lively awareness that their merits were pure grace.

**QUESTION #19**

Do I agree with the Roman Catholic Church that prayers and good works “can merit for ourselves and for others the graces needed... for the attainment of eternal life”?

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #2010.** Since the initiative belongs to God in the order of grace, 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 then 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. Even
temporal goods like health and friendship can be merited in accordance with God’s wisdom. These graces and goods are the object of Christian prayer. Prayer attends to the grace we need for meritorious actions.

**QUESTION #20**

Do I agree with the Roman Catholic Church that my baptism imparted to me saving faith, new life in Christ, purification, justification, and sanctification?

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #168.** It is the Church that believes first, and so bears, nourishes, and sustains my faith. Everywhere, it is the Church that first confesses the Lord: “Throughout the world the holy Church acclaims you,” as we sing in the hymn “Te Deum”; with her and in her, we are won over and brought to confess: “I believe,” “We believe.” It is through the Church that we receive faith and new life in Christ by Baptism.

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #1227.** The baptized have “put on Christ” (Gal. 3:27). Through the Holy Spirit, Baptism is a bath that purifies, justifies, and sanctifies” (Cf. I Cor. 6:11; 12:13).

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #1263.** By Baptism all sins are forgiven, original sin and all personal sins, as well as all punishment for sin (Cf. Council of Florence (1439): DS
1316). In those who have been reborn nothing remains that would impede their entry into the Kingdom of God, neither Adam’s sin, nor personal sin, nor the consequences of sin, the gravest of which is separation from God.

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #1265.** Baptism not only purifies from all sins, but also makes the neophyte “a new creature,” an adopted son of God, who has become a “partaker of the divine nature” (Cf. 2 Cor 5:17; 2 Pet 1:4; cf. Gal 4:5-7) member of Christ and coheir with him (Cf. 1 Cor 6:15; 12:27; Rom 8:17), and a temple of the Holy Spirit (Cf. 1 Cor 6:19)

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #1266.** The Most Holy Trinity gives the baptized sanctifying grace, the grace of justification: [1] enabling them to believe in God, to hope in him, and to love him through the theological virtues; [2] giving them the power to live and act under the prompting of the Holy Spirit through the gifts of the Holy Spirit; [3] allowing them to grow in goodness through the moral virtues. Thus the whole organism of the Christian's supernatural life has its roots in Baptism.

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #1277.** Baptism is birth into the new life in Christ. In accordance with the Lord's will, it is necessary for salvation, as is the Church herself, which we enter by Baptism.

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #1987.** The grace of the Holy Spirit has the power to justify us, that is, to cleanse us from our sins and to communicate to us “the righteousness of
God through faith in Jesus Christ” and through Baptism (Rom 3:22; cf. 6:3-4).

**QUESTION #21**

Do I agree with the Roman Catholic Church that “baptism is necessary for salvation” and that it “assures entry into eternal beatitude (i.e. heaven)”?

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #1257.** ... Baptism is necessary for salvation for those to whom the Gospel has been proclaimed and who have had the possibility of asking for this sacrament (Cf. Mk. 16:16). The Church does not know of any means other than Baptism that assures entry into eternal beatitude; this is why she takes care not to neglect the mission she has received from the Lord to see that all who can be baptized are “reborn of water and the Spirit.” God has bound salvation to the sacrament of Baptism, but he himself is not bound by his sacraments.

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #1277.** Baptism is birth into the new life in Christ. In accordance with the Lord's will, it is necessary for salvation, as is the Church herself, which we enter by Baptism.
QUESTION #22
Do I agree with the Roman Catholic Church that the Eucharist (or Mass) gives me “the food of eternal life”?

❖ **Catechism of the Catholic Church #1212.** *The sacraments of Christian initiation – Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist – lay the foundations of every Christian life. “The sharing in the divine nature given to men through the grace of Christ bears a certain likeness to the origin, development, and nourishing of natural life. The faithful are born anew by Baptism, strengthened by the sacrament of Confirmation, and receive in the Eucharist the food of eternal life. By means of these sacraments of Christian initiation, they thus receive in increasing measure the treasures of the divine life and advance toward the perfection of charity”* (Paul VI, apostolic constitution, Divinae consortium naturae: AAS 63 (1971) 657; cf. RCIA Introduction 1-2).

QUESTION #23
Do I agree with the Roman Catholic Church that in the Eucharist (or Mass) Christ is offered as a sacrificial victim?

❖ **Catechism of the Catholic Church #1367.** *The sacrifice of Christ and the sacrifice of the Eucharist are one single
sacrifice: “The victim is one and the same: the same now offers through the ministry of priests, who then offered himself on the cross; only the manner of offering is different.” “In this divine sacrifice which is celebrated in the Mass, the same Christ who offered himself once in a bloody manner on the altar of the cross is contained and is offered in an unbloody manner” (Council of Trent (1562): DS 1743; cf. Heb 9:14, 27).

**QUESTION #24**
Do I agree with the Roman Catholic Church that in the Eucharist (or Mass) the elements of bread and wine are converted into Christ’s physical body and blood?

❖ **Catechism of the Catholic Church #1375.** *It is by the conversion of the bread and wine into Christ's body and blood that Christ becomes present in this sacrament. The Church Fathers strongly affirmed the faith of the Church in the efficacy of the Word of Christ and of the action of the Holy Spirit to bring about this conversion.*
QUESTION #25
Do I agree with the Roman Catholic Church that once the bread and wine are transformed into the Lord’s physical body and blood, I ought to worship them according to the “cult of adoration”?

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #1378.** Worship of the Eucharist. In the liturgy of the Mass we express our faith in the real presence of Christ under the species of bread and wine by, among other ways, genuflecting or bowing deeply as a sign of adoration of the Lord. “The Catholic Church has always offered and still offers to the sacrament of the Eucharist the cult of adoration, not only during Mass, but also outside of it, reserving the consecrated hosts with the utmost care, exposing them to the solemn veneration of the faithful, and carrying them in procession” (Paul VI, MF 56).

QUESTION #26
Do I agree with the Roman Catholic Church that the “sacrament of Penance is necessary for salvation for those who have fallen after Baptism” that they might be “reconciled with God”?

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #980.** It is through the sacrament of Penance that the baptized can be reconciled
with God and with the Church: “Penance has rightly been called by the holy Fathers ‘a laborious kind of baptism.’ 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” (Council of Trent (1551): DS 1672; Cf. St. Gregory of Nazianzus, Oratio 39,17: PG 36,356).

**QUESTION #27**

Do I agree with the Roman Catholic Church that, through the sacrament of Penance, it has the authority to forgive me of grave sins committed after my baptism?

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #986.** By Christ’s will, the Church possesses the power to forgive the sins of the baptized and exercises it through bishops and priests normally in the sacrament of Penance.

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #1486.** The forgiveness of sins committed after Baptism is conferred by a particular sacrament called the sacrament of conversion, confession, penance, or reconciliation.

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #1446.** Christ instituted the sacrament of Penance for all sinful members of his Church: above all for those who, since Baptism, have fallen into grave sin, and have thus lost their baptismal grace and
wounded ecclesial communion. It is to them that the sacrament of Penance offers a new possibility to convert and to recover the grace of justification. The Fathers of the Church present this sacrament as “the second plank [of salvation] after the shipwreck which is the loss of grace.”

**QUESTION #28**

Do I agree with the Roman Catholic Church that by performing acts of Penance imposed by a priest, I can “expiate” and “make satisfaction for” my personal sins?

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #1434.** The interior penance of the Christian can be expressed in many and various ways. Scripture and the Fathers insist above all on three forms, fasting, prayer, and almsgiving (Cf. Tob. 12:8; Mt. 6:1-18), which express conversion in relation to oneself, to God, and to others. Alongside the radical purification brought about by Baptism or martyrdom they cite as means of obtaining forgiveness of sins: effort at reconciliation with one’s neighbor, tears of repentance, concern for the salvation of one's neighbor, the intercession of the saints, and the practice of charity “which covers a multitude of sins” (1 Pet 4:8; Cf. Jas. 5:20).

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #1437.** Reading Sacred Scripture, praying the Liturgy of the Hours and the Our
Father – every sincere act of worship or devotion revives the spirit of conversion and repentance within us and contributes to the forgiveness of our sins.

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #1459.** ... Absolution takes away sin, but it does not remedy all the disorders sin has caused (Cf. Council of Trent (1551): DS 1712). Raised up from sin, the sinner must still recover his full spiritual health by doing something more to make amends for the sin: he must “make satisfaction for” or “expiate” his sins. This satisfaction is also called “penance.”

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #1460.** The penance the confessor imposes must take into account the penitent's personal situation and must seek his spiritual good. It must correspond as far as possible with the gravity and nature of the sins committed. It can consist of prayer, an offering, works of mercy, service of neighbor, voluntary self-denial, sacrifices, and above all the patient acceptance of the cross we must bear. Such penances help configure us to Christ, who alone expiated our sins once for all. They allow us to become co-heirs with the risen Christ, “provided we suffer with him” (Rom 8:17; Rom 3:25; 1 Jn 2:1-2; cf. Council of Trent (1551): DS 1690).
Do I agree with the Roman Catholic Church that, although I am saved by Christ, I must, at my death, undergo a cleansing fire in Purgatory to punish my lesser sins, to obtain pardon, and to be made holy enough for heaven?

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #1030.** 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.

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #1031.** The Church gives the name Purgatory to this final purification of the elect, which is entirely different from the punishment of the damned (Cf. Council of Florence (1439): DS 1304; Council of Trent (1563): DS 1820; (1547): 1580; see also Benedict XII, Benedictus Deus (1336): DS 1000). The Church formulated her doctrine of faith on Purgatory especially at the Councils of Florence and Trent. the tradition of the Church, by reference to certain texts of Scripture, speaks of a cleansing fire (Cf. 1 Cor. 3:15; 1 Pet 1:7): “As for certain lesser faults, we must believe that, before the Final Judgment, there is a purifying fire. He who is truth says that whoever utters blasphemy against the Holy Spirit will be pardoned neither in this age nor in the age to come. From this sentence we
understand that certain offenses can be forgiven in this age, but certain others in the age to come” (St. Gregory the Great, Dial. 4, 39: PL 77, 396; cf. Mt 12:31).

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #1473.** The forgiveness of sin and restoration of communion with God entail the remission of the eternal punishment of sin, but temporal punishment of sin remains.

### QUESTION #30

Do I agree with the Roman Catholic Church’s policy of issuing “indulgences”, by which I obtain the “satisfactions of Christ and the saints” on “certain prescribed conditions” (often money), thereby granting me “a remission before God of the temporal punishment due to sins”?

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #1471.** “An indulgence is a remission before God of the temporal punishment due to sins whose guilt has already been forgiven, which the faithful Christian who is duly disposed gains under certain prescribed conditions through the action of the Church which, as the minister of redemption, dispenses and applies with authority the treasury of the satisfactions of Christ and the saints” (Paul VI, apostolic constitution, Indulgentiarum doctrina, Norm 1). “An indulgence is partial or plenary according as it removes either part or all of the temporal punishment due to
The faithful can gain indulgences for themselves or apply them to the dead (CIC, can. 994).

**Catechism of the Catholic Church #1475.** In the communion of saints, “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” (Indulgentiarum doctrina, 5). 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 punishments for sin.

**QUESTION #31**

Do I agree with the Roman Catholic Church that the combined merit of Christ, Mary, and all the saints is stored in the “Church’s treasury”, to be used for indulgences?

**Catechism of the Catholic Church #1476.** We also call these spiritual goods of the communion of saints the Church’s treasury, which is “not the sum total of the material goods which have accumulated during the course of the centuries. On the contrary the ‘treasury of the Church’ is the infinite
value, which can never be exhausted, which Christ’s merits have before God. They were offered so that the whole of mankind could be set free from sin and attain communion with the Father. In Christ, the Redeemer himself, the satisfactions and merits of his Redemption exist and find their efficacy” (Indulgentiarum doctrina, 5).

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #1477.** “This treasury includes as well the prayers and good works of the Blessed Virgin Mary. They are truly immense, unfathomable, and even pristine in their value before God. In the treasury, too, are the prayers and good works of all the saints, all those who have followed in the footsteps of Christ the Lord and by his grace have made their lives holy and carried out the mission the Father entrusted to them. In this way they attained their own salvation and at the same time cooperated in saving their brothers in the unity of the Mystical Body” (Indulgentiarum doctrina, 5).

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #1478.** An indulgence is obtained through the Church who, by virtue of the power of binding and loosing granted her by Christ Jesus, intervenes in favor of individual Christians and opens for them the treasury of the merits of Christ and the saints to obtain from the Father of mercies the remission of the temporal punishments due for their sins. Thus the Church does not want simply to come to the aid of these Christians, but also to spur them to works of devotion, penance, and charity (Cf. Indulgentiarum doctrina, 5).
QUESTION # 32
Do I agree with the Roman Catholic Church that I may obtain indulgences for my deceased loved ones in order to help shorten their stay in Purgatory?

- Catechism of the Catholic Church #1479. Since the faithful departed now being purified are also members of the same communion of saints, one way we can help them is to obtain indulgences for them, so that the temporal punishments due for their sins may be remitted.

QUESTION #33
Do I agree with the Roman Catholic Church that the solemn feasts (or Holy Days) which it has established “open up to the faithful the riches of her Lord’s power and merits” and “communicate to us the fruits of the Paschal mystery”?

- Catechism of the Catholic Church #1163. “Holy Mother Church believes that she should celebrate the saving work of her divine Spouse in a sacred commemoration on certain days throughout the course of the year. Once each week, on the day which she has called the Lord’s Day, she keeps the memory of the Lord’s resurrection. She also celebrates it once
every year, together with his blessed Passion, at Easter, that most solemn of all feasts. In the course of the year, moreover, she unfolds the whole mystery of Christ .... Thus recalling the mysteries of the redemption, she opens up to the faithful the riches of her Lord's powers and merits, so that these are in some way made present in every age; the faithful lay hold of them and are filled with saving grace” (SC 102).

Catechism of the Catholic Church #1171. In the liturgical year the various aspects of the one Paschal mystery unfold. This is also the case with the cycle of feasts surrounding the mystery of the incarnation (Annunciation, Christmas, Epiphany). They commemorate the beginning of our salvation and communicate to us the first fruits of the Paschal mystery.

QUESTION #34
Do I agree with the Roman Catholic Church that by observing its solemn holy days, I am admiring, exalting, and honoring Mary as being “inseparably linked with the saving work of her Son”?

Catechism of the Catholic Church #1172. “In celebrating this annual cycle of the mysteries of Christ, Holy Church honors the Blessed Mary, Mother of God, with a special love. She is inseparably linked with the saving work of her Son. In her the Church admires and exalts the most excellent fruit of
redemption and joyfully contemplates, as in a faultless image, that which she herself desires and hopes wholly to be” (SC 103).

**QUESTION #35**

Do I agree with the Roman Catholic Church that by observing its solemn holy days, I am begging God for favors through the merits of past saints and martyrs?

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #1173.** When the Church keeps the memorials of martyrs and other saints during the annual cycle, she proclaims the Paschal mystery in those “who have suffered and have been glorified with Christ. She proposes them to the faithful as examples who draw all men to the Father through Christ, and through their merits she begs for God's favors” (SC 104; cf. SC 108, 111).

**QUESTION #36**

Do I agree with the Roman Catholic Church that every one of its official precepts is binding upon my conscience?

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #2041.** The precepts of the Church are set in the context of a moral life bound to and nourished by liturgical life. The obligatory character of these positive laws decreed by the pastoral authorities 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:

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #2042.** The first precept ("You shall attend Mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation.") requires the faithful to participate in the Eucharistic celebration when the Christian community gathers together on the day commemorating the Resurrection of the Lord (Cf. CIC, cann. 1246-1248; CCEO, can. 881 #1, #2, #4). 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 (Cf. CIC, can. 989; CCEO, can. 719). The third precept ("You shall humbly receive your Creator in Holy Communion at least during the Easter season.") guarantees as a minimum the reception of the Lord's Body and Blood in connection with the Paschal feasts, the origin and center of the Christian liturgy (Cf. CIC, can. 920; CCEO, cann. 708; 881 #3).

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #2043.** The fourth precept ("You shall keep holy the holy days of obligation.") completes the Sunday observance by participation in the principal liturgical feasts which honor the mysteries of the Lord, the Virgin Mary, and the saints (Cf. CIC, can. 1246; CCEO, cann. 881 #1, #4; 880 #3). 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 (Cf. CIC, cann. 1249-1251; CCEO, can. 882). The faithful also have the duty of providing for the material needs of the Church, each according to his abilities (CIC, can. 222).

QUESTION #37
Do I agree with the Roman Catholic Church that in order “to conquer sin and increase in holiness”, Christians must “turn their eyes to Mary”?

❖ Catechism of the Catholic Church #829. “But while in the most Blessed Virgin the Church has already reached that perfection whereby she exists without spot or wrinkle, the faithful still strive to conquer sin and increase in holiness. And so they turn their eyes to Mary” (LG 65; cf. Eph 5:26-27): in her, the Church is already the “all-holy.”

QUESTION #38
Do I agree with the Roman Catholic Church that Mary was inseparably joined to Christ in His work of salvation, thereby “enduring with her only begotten Son the intensity of his suffering”? 
Mary’s role in the Church is inseparable from her union with Christ and flows directly from it. “This union of the mother with the Son in the work of salvation is made manifest from the time of Christ’s virginal conception up to his death” (LG 57); it is made manifest above all at the hour of his Passion: “Thus the Blessed Virgin advanced in her pilgrimage of faith, and faithfully persevered in her union with her Son unto the cross. There she stood, in keeping with the divine plan, enduring with her only begotten Son the intensity of his suffering, joining herself with his sacrifice in her mother’s heart, and lovingly consenting to the immolation of this victim, born of her: to be given, by the same Christ Jesus dying on the cross, as a mother to his disciple, with these words: ‘Woman, behold your son.’”

**QUESTION #39**

Do I agree with the Roman Catholic Church that Mary was “preserved free from all stain of original sin” and later “was taken up bodily into heavenly glory, and exalted by the Lord as Queen over all things”, such that her prayers “will deliver our souls from death”?

**Catechism of the Catholic Church #966.** “Finally the Immaculate Virgin, preserved free from all stain of original sin...”
sin, when the course of her earthly life was finished, was taken up body and soul into heavenly glory, and exalted by the Lord as Queen over all things, so that she might be the more fully conformed to her Son, the Lord of lords and conqueror of sin and death” (LG 59; cf. Pius XII, Munificentissimus Deus (1950): DS 3903; cf. Rev 19:16). The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin is a singular participation in her Son’s Resurrection and an anticipation of the resurrection of other Christians: “In giving birth you kept your virginity; in your Dormition you did not leave the world, O Mother of God, but were joined to the source of Life. You conceived the living God and, by your prayers, will deliver our souls from death” (Byzantine Liturgy, Troparion, Feast of the Dormition, August 15th).

**QUESTION #40**

Do I agree with the Roman Catholic Church that Mary is “a mother to us” in that she “cooperated by her obedience, faith, hope, and burning charity in the Savior’s work of restoring supernatural life to souls”?

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #968.** Her role in relation to the Church and to all humanity goes still further. “In a wholly singular way she cooperated by her obedience, faith, hope, and burning charity in the Savior’s work of
restoring supernatural life to souls. For this reason she is a mother to us in the order of grace” (LG 61).

QUESTION #41
Do I agree with the Roman Catholic Church that due to Mary’s “saving office” to “bring us the gifts of eternal salvation” by her “manifold intercessions”, she may be “invoked in the Church under the titles of Advocate, Helper, Benefactress, and Mediatrix”?

- Catechism of the Catholic Church #969. “This motherhood of Mary in the order of grace continues uninterruptedly from the consent which she loyally gave at the Annunciation and which she sustained without waverig beneath the cross, until the eternal fulfilment of all the elect. Taken up to heaven she did not lay aside this saving office but by her manifold intercession continues to bring us the gifts of eternal salvation…. Therefore the Blessed Virgin is invoked in the Church under the titles of Advocate, Helper, Benefactress, and Mediatrix” (LG 62).
QUESTION #42
Do I agree with the Roman Catholic Church that “devotion to the Blessed Virgin is intrinsic to Christian worship” and that “Marian prayer, such as the rosary, is an epitome of the whole gospel”?

- Catechism of the Catholic Church #971. “All generations will call me blessed”: “The Church’s devotion to the Blessed Virgin is intrinsic to Christian worship” (Lk 1:48; Paul VI, MC 56). The Church rightly honors “the Blessed Virgin with special devotion. From the most ancient times the Blessed Virgin has been honored with the title of ‘Mother of God,’ to whose protection the faithful fly in all their dangers and needs.... This very special devotion ... differs essentially from the adoration which is given to the incarnate Word and equally to the Father and the Holy Spirit, and greatly fosters this adoration” (LG 66). The liturgical feasts dedicated to the Mother of God and Marian prayer, such as the rosary, an “epitome of the whole Gospel,” express this devotion to the Virgin Mary (Cf. Paul VI, MC 42; SC 103).
QUESTION #43
Do I agree with the Roman Catholic Church that Christians should offer “prayer to the holy Mother of God” and “surrender the hour of our death wholly to her care”?

- Catechism of the Catholic Church #2675. Beginning with Mary's unique cooperation with the working of the Holy Spirit, the Churches developed their prayer to the holy Mother of God, centering it on the person of Christ manifested in his mysteries. In countless hymns and antiphons expressing this prayer, two movements usually alternate with one another: the first “magnifies” the Lord for the “great things” he did for his lowly servant and through her for all human beings (Cf. Lk. 1:46-55). The second entrusts the supplications and praises of the children of God to the Mother of Jesus, because she now knows the humanity which, in her, the Son of God espoused.

- Catechism of the Catholic Church #2679. Mary is the perfect Orans (prayer), a figure of the Church. When we pray to her, we are adhering with her to the plan of the Father, who sends his Son to save all men. Like the beloved disciple we welcome Jesus’ mother into our homes (Cf. Jn. 19:27), for 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 (Cf. LG 68-69).
Catechism of the Catholic Church #2677. Because she gives us Jesus, her son, Mary is Mother of God and our mother; we can entrust all our cares and petitions to her: she prays for us as she prayed for herself: “Let it be to me according to your word.” By entrusting ourselves to her in prayer, we abandon ourselves to the will of God together with her... “Pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death:” By asking Mary to pray for us, we acknowledge ourselves to be poor sinners and we address ourselves to the “Mother of Mercy,” the All-Holy One. We give ourselves over to her now, in the Today of our lives. And our trust broadens further, already at the present moment, to surrender “the hour of our death” wholly to her care.

QUESTION #44

Do I agree with the Roman Catholic Church that Christians should offer up requests to the deceased “saints” in heaven, asking them “to intercede for us”?

Catechism of the Catholic Church #828. By canonizing some of the faithful, i.e., by solemnly proclaiming that they practiced heroic virtue and lived in fidelity to God's grace, the Church recognizes the power of the Spirit of holiness within her and sustains the hope of believers by proposing the saints to them as models and intercessors (Cf. LG 40; 48-51). “The
saints have always been the source and origin of renewal in the most difficult moments in the Church’s history” (John Paul II, CL 16.3). Indeed, “holiness is the hidden source and infallible measure of her apostolic activity and missionary zeal” (CL 17, 3).

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #2683.** The witnesses who have preceded us into the kingdom, especially those whom the Church recognizes as saints, share in the living tradition of prayer by the example of their lives, the transmission of their writings, and their prayer today. They contemplate God, praise him and constantly care for those whom they have left on earth. When they entered into the joy of their Master, they were “put in charge of many things.” Their intercession is their most exalted service to God’s plan. We can and should ask them to intercede for us and for the whole world.

**QUESTION #45**

Do I agree with the Roman Catholic Church that Christ, by becoming incarnate, introduced into Christian worship the “veneration” of images portraying Himself, Mary, angels, and saints?

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #2131.** Basing itself on the mystery of the incarnate Word, the seventh ecumenical council at Nicaea (787) justified against the iconoclasts the
veneration of icons – of Christ, but also of the Mother of God, the angels, and all the saints. By becoming incarnate, the Son of God introduced a new “economy” of images.

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church #2132.** The Christian veneration of images is not contrary to the first commandment which proscribes idols. Indeed, “the honor rendered to an image passes to its prototype,” and “whoever venerates an image venerates the person portrayed in it” (St. Basil, De Spiritu Sancto 18, 45: PG 32, 149C; Council of Nicaea II: DS 601; cf. Council of Trent: DS 1821-1825; Vatican Council II: SC 126; LG 67). The honor paid to sacred images is a “respectful veneration,” not the adoration due to God alone: “Religious worship is not directed to images in themselves, considered as mere things, but under their distinctive aspect as images leading us on to God incarnate. The movement toward the image does not terminate in it as image, but tends toward that whose image it is” (St. Thomas Aquinas, STh II-II, 81, 3 ad 3).
APPENDIX:

RECOMMENDED SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR EACH QUESTION

**QUESTION #1**: Deuteronomy 12:32; Proverbs 30:5-6; Mark 7:1-13; 2 Timothy 3:14-17.

**QUESTION #2**: John 10:27; Acts 17:10-13; 1 Corinthians 2:12-16; 1 John 2:20-27.

**QUESTION #3**: Matthew 7:15-20; 24:11; Acts 17:10-13; Romans 10:17; 2 Corinthians 11:2-4; 13-15; Galatians 1:6-9; 1 John 4:1.

**QUESTION #4**: Acts 20:29-32; Romans 11:19-22.

**QUESTION #5**: Romans 4:1-12; 5:1; Galatians 2:16; Titus 3:3-7.

**QUESTION #6**: Amos 3:3; John 1:14-17; Romans 1:16-17; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18; 2 John 9-11; Revelation 18:4-5.

**QUESTION #7**: Matthew 7:24-27; 1 Corinthians 3:11; Ephesians 2:20-22; 1 Peter 2:4-8
QUESTION #8: John 8:54-55; 14:6-7; 17:3; Acts 4:12; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; 8:5-6; Galatians 1:8-9; 2 Thessalonians 1:6-9; 1 John 2:23; 5:12; 2 John 9; Revelation 21:8.

QUESTION #9: Amos 3:3; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18; 2 John 9-11; Revelation 18:4-5.


QUESTION #11: Same as #3 above.


QUESTION #13: Same as #3 above.

QUESTION #14: Mark 7:1-13; Acts 4:19; Galatians 1:10; Colossians 2:18-23.


QUESTION #16: Romans 4:4-5.


QUESTION #18: Isaiah 64:6; Luke 17:7-10; Galatians 3:10-12.
QUESTION #19: Same as #18.


QUESTION #21: Same as #20 above.


QUESTION #25: Exodus 20:4-5; Isaiah 44:14-20; Matthew 4:10; Romans 14:17; Galatians 4:8-9; 1 John 5:21.


QUESTION #27: Psalm 51:1-4; 130:4; Isaiah 43:25; Daniel 9:9; Mark 2:7-12; Romans 14:4, 10; 1 Corinthians 7:23.


QUESTION #31: Same as #30 above.

QUESTION #32: Same as #30 above.

QUESTION #33: Deuteronomy 12:32; 1 Kings 12:32-33; Matthew 15:8-9; Galatians 4:10-11; Colossians 2:20-23; Revelation 1:10.


QUESTION #35: Psalm 130:3; Luke 17:10; Ephesians 1:3; 1 Timothy 2:5.

QUESTION #36: Deuteronomy 12:32; Proverbs 30:5-6; Matthew 15:9; Mark 7:8-9; 1 Corinthians 7:23; Colossians 2:20-23; 2 Timothy 3:16-17.


QUESTION #38: Same as #34 and #37 above.

QUESTION #39: Same as #34 and #37 above, plus Jeremiah 7:17-19; 44:16-27.
**QUESTION #40**: Same as #34 and #37 above, plus: Galatians 4:26.

**QUESTION #41**: Same as #34 and #37 above.

**QUESTION #42**: Same as #34 and #37 above, plus Matthew 6:9.


**QUESTION #44**: Deuteronomy 18:10-11; Psalm 50:15; 73:25; Matthew 4:10; 6:9; 7:7-11; 1 Timothy 2:5.

**QUESTION #45**: Exodus 20:4-5; Judges 8:27; 2 Kings 18:4; Isaiah 30:22; 42:8; 44:9-20; Jeremiah 10:3-14; Hosea 14:8; John 4:24; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; 2 Corinthians 5:7; Galatians 3:1-2; Colossians 2:18; 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10; 1 Peter 1:7-8; 1 John 5:21.