

THE READY ANSWER TO MANY COMMON QUESTIONS

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When Nero blamed the Christians for the great fire in Rome he was readily believed. There is always room for prejudice against people who are not understood. If Catholics, when asked about angels or about freewill have no ready answer their stumbling attempts are sure to be misunderstood; if, when asked to justify the Church's attitude towards divorce or freemasonry, they can exhibit no more than a blind obedience, non-Catholics will be unimpressed, to say the least. When a sincere enquirer is looking for an immediate and concise proof for the existence of God or of the soul a Catholic may do incalculable harm by not being ready to supply that proof.

The questions that could be asked about the Catholic Faith are innumerable, but the following, with appropriate replies, may serve as a foundation for many variations.

1. People who talk about "God" have only a hazy idea of what they refer to.

The Oxford Dictionary defines "god" as "a superhuman being worshipped as having power over nature and human fortunes". The idea is not hazy at all. It can be further proved that there is but one true God of infinite power and knowledge.

2. The existence of God cannot be proved. You either believe in God or you don't.

The Earth is just the right distance from the Sun for human habitation; in the human body identical cells are differently arranged to perform a great variety of functions as nerves, muscles, eyes, brain, and so many more; of all known substances water is the only one which, over any range of temperature, will expand as it cools and this happens with water as it approaches freezing point, with the result that marine life is preserved, whereas otherwise it would be destroyed when large masses, of water froze to a solid mass. Science abounds in examples of law and order, of purpose and design. The intelligence indicates an intelligent creator, and that intelligent being we call "God".

Admittedly, a man is free to believe that all the purposeful design in nature has come about through an infinite series of events each dependent on highly improbable chance. Such a belief would be scarcely rational. Einstein, probably the most comprehensive scientific mind of our time, was too engrossed in science to give much thought to religion and yet, as reported in Life the week after he died, he declared that his scientific studies had led him to a belief in a Creator of the Universe.

3. If God did exist He wouldn't allow all the evil and war and suffering in the world.

The marvels of nature are enough to prove that God does exist. That evils and sufferings also exist can only make us wonder why He permits them. Moral evils exist because men have freewill and choose to go against God's will. God made man as the only creature capable of loving and serving Him voluntarily: freedom to obey God's will implies freedom to disobey.

Suffering can be understood only in relation to the fall of the human race from God's favour by the disobedience of the first two human beings. A family might lose a benefice because of disloyalty to the sovereign; the consequent poverty and suffering of the descendents should serve as a constant disciplinary reminder.

4. Doctors have explored man very thoroughly and have never found any trace of a soul.

The student of anatomy examines material evidence, but the soul, the source of thought and freewill and personality, is not a material reality. The human soul, that which distinguishes the living from the dead, is so distinctly an immaterial reality that material evidence of the anatomist can give no certitude of the exact moment at which the soul leaves the body.

5. Even if the soul does exist now, that doesn't prove that it will exist forever.

Death and destruction mean disintegration. But the soul has no material parts to disintegrate and therefore cannot die.

6. Ghosts are always a bit of a joke. Catholics go too far when they refer to a "Holy Ghost".

A joke always implies an incongruity, so jokes have been made about the incongruity of seeing immaterial things with material eyes. But spirits and the knowledge of spirits existed before the jokes were made. God is a spirit, an immaterial being in which there are three persons, one of whom we call the Holy Spirit. The emphasis in the name is not on Ghost, which simply means Spirit in accordance with the Divine Nature, but on Holy. We believe that the Holy Spirit because He is Holy in Himself, makes the human race holy and pleasing to God the Father, just as God the Father created the human race, and God the Son redeemed the human race.

7. Man has no freewill. He acts according to the way he has been brought up and the circumstances in which he finds himself.

The thousands of men in prisons today are there because society holds them responsible for their illegal actions. Other men are rewarded with scientific or literary prizes because they are believed by society to be responsible for their works. Society has always accepted the basic assumption of personal responsibility, otherwise known as “freewill”.

Certainly, heredity and environment condition a man’s decisions, but the decisions are still his own and can be made in opposition to the urgings of his own background and circumstances.

8. If God knows the future, don’t I have to act the way He knows I will?

Speaking of “the future” in this context implies that God is limited by man’s vague concept of “time”, a concept which is becoming more and more embarrassingly elusive for scientists. In the absence of any clear meaning for the implication of predetermination it is much more reasonable to accept the evidence of our own conscious realization that in any given situation we are capable of personal decision.

9. Plenty of good people have no religion.

When we say that a person is “good” we mean that he is good for some purpose. “Good for pleasing God” will often coincide with “good for pleasing men”, but not necessarily. Religion tells us what is good for pleasing God; those who have no religion are quite likely to fall short of pleasing God, if only for the reason that they have no such conscious intention.

10. Why must Catholics abuse their intellects by believing in mysteries?

A mystery is something we cannot fully understand. Men believe in light and electricity and hormones, but do not fully understand them. It is only reasonable to expect that we would not fully understand some of the things which God, having infinite intelligence, has revealed to us. Just as we can believe in the power of electricity without fully understanding it, so we can believe in the infinite power of God without fully understanding it.

11. Catholics contradict themselves. They say that God made the laws of nature; then they turn around and say that He breaks them by allowing miracles to happen.

A miracle is a suspension of a law of nature. Surely God, Who made the laws of nature, should be conceded the power of suspending those laws if for no other reason than to demonstrate, when appealed to, that He has that power.

12. Lourdes is a huge hoax.

The Medical Bureau at Lourdes, a panel of doctors of many nations and many shades of belief, has declared hundreds of cures to be contrary to the known laws of science. Of these cures the Church has recognized as miracles less than sixty in over a hundred years. In other words, the Church is less ready than the medical profession to recognize cures at Lourdes as being miraculous.

13. The Gospels are among the most inspiring legends in all literature.

The Gospels are genuine history, better authenticated than any of the classical histories of Greece and Rome, including those of Herodotus and Livy. To prove that a given work is genuine history it is necessary to show that it was written by the ascribed author, that the author was well acquainted with the events described, that he had no intention of deceiving, and that he himself was not deceived. All of these requirements have been proved exhaustively of the Gospels and no reputable historian now doubts their authenticity.

14. Christ was one of the noblest men that ever lived.

Christ was the noblest man that ever lived. More than that, He was God. He showed that He had power over nature by stilling the storm at a word, changing water into wine, curing the lepers, feeding four thousand people with a handful of food, and raising people to life after they had been dead for days; He showed that He was superhuman by raising Himself from the dead, something no other human being has ever done. He must have been God.

15. Catholics are hard to take: they think that they are right and that everyone else is wrong.

Catholics claim to be right only in the interpretation of Christ's teachings. Christ did appoint a teaching body to teach exactly what He taught. Truth forbids that He intended the contradictions to be taught that are found in the Christian sects of today. Obviously, some must be right and some wrong. Apart from the fact that the Catholic Church is the only Christian body that asserts a claim to infallibility in the teaching of Christ's doctrines, the Catholic Church is the only church having any absolute unity of belief. The probability of the Catholic Church being the genuine interpreter of Christ's teaching is too overwhelming for the reason to reject.

16. Catholics believe what priests tell them to believe; Protestants go straight to the Bible for God's own words.

The words of the Bible, like the State laws, are open to a variety of conflicting interpretations. To find the true interpretation of the words of the Bible the Catholic Church has employed thousands of scholars for nearly two thousand years, pooling the results of their studies in the light of a thorough knowledge of the whole Bible and the writings of the disciples of Christ who lived about His time; some of these scholars devote a lifetime to a special study of the Old Testament, others to the New Testament, others to Hebrew idiom, others to Greek idiom, others to archaeology. On top of that, the Catholic Church is assured of Divine guidance. The advocates of private interpretation of the Bible leave themselves open to grave error.

17. The Church of England is a branch of the Catholic Church.

To speak of the Church of England as a branch of the Catholic Church is an unfortunate metaphor because Henry VIII cut the Church of England off from the Catholic Church; the metaphor can only imply a dead branch.

18. The Church of England has bishops, just as well as the Catholic Church.

If the Church of England wishes to give the title of "bishop" to its administrative leaders it is perfectly free to do so, and Catholics will politely recognize the title for whatever it means. Certainly, the administrator of a diocese is rightly called a "bishop"; but to be a bishop in the Catholic sense a man must have succeeded to the power to ordain priests to say Mass. This succession was lost in the Church of England when, from 1550 to 1662, the ceremony of ordination eliminated all reference to the essential function of the priesthood. The gap in succession of 112 years leaves the Church of England bishop with a title that is meaningful in the administrative sense only.

19. The Greek Orthodox Church is another branch of the Catholic Church.

There is ample evidence in the Gospels that an essential characteristic of the True Church is unity. The differences between the Greek Orthodox Church and the Catholic Church are fundamental, so that the two bodies cannot be considered as two branches of the same church.

20. Catholics would be better off if they took more notice of the Presbyterians' strict Christian views.

Some Presbyterians do lead more Christian lives than some Catholics but the fact remains, that Christ gave the true Church the Authority to interpret His teaching. John Knox can give his interpretation but that is not necessarily the interpretation Christ intended. Just as individual interpretation of traffic laws would lead to chaos, so much more so with the Word of God.

21. So many Catholics live bad lives that it is clear that the teaching of the Catholic Church is not Christ's teaching.

If individual Catholics refuse to obey the teachings of the Catholic Church their bad lives in no way indicate that the teachings of the Catholic Church are opposed to Christ's teaching. Indeed, the moral teaching of the Catholic Church is so strict, in accordance with Christ's teaching, that it is impossible for a person to live up to that teaching without the special help of God's grace. Those who fail to do so are those who neglect to pray for that grace.

22. What Catholics need is the Methodists' love of the Holy Bible.

If the Catholic Church hadn't preserved the Bible by arduous hand-copying through the centuries before printing was

invented the Methodists wouldn't have a Bible. The first Bible printed was a Catholic Bible. Over a million copies of Monsignor Ronald Knox's translation of the Bible into modern English idiom were printed before the New English Bible appeared. The Church positively urges Catholics to read the Bible every day. The millions of Catholics all over the world who attend Mass every day read several extracts from the Bible daily.

23. Catholics aren't allowed to read the real Bible, but only specially edited versions the Church prepares for them.

Seeing that the Catholic Church preserved the Bible through the centuries of barbarian invasions, and still holds the oldest known complete copy (which is freely available to qualified scholars) it is hardly likely that the Catholic Church would countenance omissions or false translations. Indeed, the boot is on the other foot; the Protestant versions do not bear comparison with the copies of the originals kept in the British Museum. Anyone with sufficient knowledge of Greek and Hebrew could easily check the inaccuracies of the Protestant versions. The New English Bible has, happily, corrected many of the former mis-translations and omissions that were made to support non-Catholic doctrines.

24. Catholics theorise too much. The Salvation Army does something practical about Christ's teaching on loving our neighbour.

The Salvation Army is to be admired for its sincerity and practical charity but it is an incomplete form of Christianity with no authority for teaching what it does teach, beyond a hit-or-miss interpretation of Christ's doctrines. As for practical charity, the Catholic Church abounds in such works as hospitals and the St. Vincent de Paul Society.

25. Non-Catholics are broadminded enough to go to Catholic services. Why won't Catholics meet them half way?

Unfortunately, the seeming unfairness is caused by the existence of two different points of view. Non-Catholics generally believe that one Christian Church is as good as another. Catholics, on the other hand, have a rational conviction that the Catholic Church is the only True Church, and that to do anything that might seem to contradict that conviction would do more real harm than good. Strange as it may appear, the Church forbids Catholics to attend non-Catholic services out of a deep regard for the non-Catholics, whom she considers lost sheep from the fold, in the hope that they may seek to discover her motives and the source of her authority, as many have done.

26. Catholics think that only Catholics can get to Heaven.

Catholics believe that anyone who believes all that Christ taught and lives according to that belief will go to Heaven. However, it's much more likely that a man with a perfect map, an accurate compass, and an absolutely reliable guide will reach his destination through hazardous country than a man with an incomplete, unreliable map, a faulty compass and an unreliable guide.

27. Why deny Evolution now that Science accepts it?

Even for Science, Evolution is as yet no more than an acceptable but unproved hypothesis. Catholics are quite free to believe in Evolution as a theory of how the various forms of life appeared on the Earth, provided that they also believe that (a) God created the elements of evolution; (b.) all human beings are descended from the same first two human beings; (c) God creates each human soul individually and directly.

28. No-one really believes in fairies and angels.

The Gospels, which are accepted as authentic history, record several appearances of angels. An angel appeared to the Virgin Mary to ask her consent to become the mother of Christ; an angel appeared to Christ in the Garden of Olives to comfort Him in His distress before He was led off for His trial before Pilate. The true scientific attitude requires us to accept reliably recorded data, not to attempt to explain it away to satisfy pre-judgements.

29. Would God have created men out of love and then spitefully inflict unending punishment on them for offending Him?

Men are given a clear choice between eternal happiness for showing their love for God by obeying His will and eternal punishment for flouting God's will. God certainly created men to love Him; if they refuse to do so eternal punishment is their own choice.

30. Protestants don't believe in Purgatory because it's not mentioned in the Bible.

Protestants believe in atoms, but they are not mentioned in the Bible; nor has anyone ever seen an atom. We know of

the existence of atoms from reasoning; we know of the existence of Purgatory from reasoning. Those who die with their minds set in defiance of God's will must go to Hell: "nothing defiled can enter Heaven." The mercy of God will save those with lesser defects from eternal punishment; the justice of God will prevent those with lesser, defects from immediate entrance into Heaven. Reason tells us that there must be some intermediate place or state of purgation. In the Bible we find that "It is a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead that they may be loosed from their sins" (2 Mach. xii, 48). It would be useless to pray for the souls in Hell, and superfluous to pray for the souls in Heaven. Without actually using the word "Purgatory" these words from the Bible clearly indicate the existence of a place or state of purgation.

31. Prayer doesn't appeal to me at all. It's an unnatural kind of business.

Prayer is praising God, thanking Him, asking Him for favours, and telling Him that we are sorry for having offended Him. There's nothing unnatural about telling an architect that you admire his latest building that has gone up; there's nothing unnatural about telling God that you admire the world He has created. No-one would be surprised to hear a member of a family thank the mother for the Christmas dinner she has prepared; no-one should be surprised to know that some people thank God for special gifts they have received.

32 . Why pray to saints when we can pray straight to God for what we need?

In a business organization where the manager is more than ordinarily concerned for the welfare of his employees it is still helpful for special favours to have influence through a friend of the manager. The saints have proved their loyalty to God, but we are still on trial; seeing that the Church tells us that they are willing to handle our petitions for us, we would do ourselves less than justice to by-pass their ready patronage.

33. Catholics worship Christ's mother as if she were a goddess.

There is no such being as a goddess. To honour a man's mother because she is his mother is a sure way of honouring him. Moreover, the Catholic Church, with her authority to interpret the Bible, tells us that Christ's dying words, "Behold thy mother", mean that we are all to regard Mary as our spiritual mother. It would be an unworthy son who did not pay great respect to his mother.

34. Primitive tribes have mumbo-jumbo; Catholics have weird ceremonies that they call sacraments.

The mumbo-jumbo of primitive tribes is non-effective. The sacraments were instituted by Christ as the most effective actions to be performed by man. The actions and the words merely indicate symbolically what is happening to the soul and when it is happening. The real effects on the soul are vouched for by the words of Christ in the Gospels.

35. Baptism can't do much good for a baby that's too young to know what's going on.

The food a baby receives before it's old enough to know what's going on certainly does it plenty of good; so does Baptism, which brings the soul into favour with God and makes it eligible for entrance into Heaven.

36. If Christ was as definite about the Mass as Catholics claim He was, surely Protestants would have enough sense to realize it.

Much bitterness was stirred up during the Reformation so that Protestants threw overboard anything that was distinctly Catholic. The Mass went, and Protestant versions of the Gospels omitted or distorted references to the Eucharist.

37. The Eucharist is a repulsive idea, to say the least of it.

The Jews, too, thought that the idea of the Eucharist was a repulsive idea when Christ first promised to give them His flesh to eat and His blood to drink. There may have been some excuse for the Jews, because Christ hadn't made clear the attractive way in which He would fulfil His promise. Those who still doubt His word will be free to turn their backs on Him as the Jews did and, like the Jews, they will not be recalled.

38. Confession is a slick trick the Catholic Church has invented to make sin easy for Catholics.

Confession was instituted by Christ when He said, "Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven." Confession doesn't make sinning easier; it makes it harder because a Catholic knows that it is quite useless to confess a sin unless he has determined not to commit that sin again.

39. Why go to Confession? Why not simply tell God that you are sorry, and leave it at that?

Sincere sorrow for sin is quite necessary to restore friendship with God. However God, not man, has indicated that

Confession is also necessary to strengthen the soul: i.e. sincere sorrow implies for the Catholic need to go to Confession.

40. Priests are parasites in society.

Admittedly, it is not the function of a priest to contribute directly to the material welfare of society. A priest's function is to attend to the spiritual and moral welfare of society. To perform that most important function he undergoes a long and arduous professional training. His professional work is very much like that of a lawyer in that he interprets the law of God for people, whereas the lawyer interprets the law of the State. Nevertheless, a priest's primary function is to offer sacrifice, the principal duty of society towards the Creator. A man can scarcely be called a parasite in society when he is performing, on behalf of society, society's most important duty.

41. Luther objected to such Catholic abuses as selling indulgences to rich people who wanted to commit sin.

An indulgence is not a permission to commit sin, and was never so regarded by the Church. The Church has always taught that after we have had a sin forgiven we must do good works to make up for it. Otherwise we would have to suffer a time in purgatory after we die. Christ said of the Church: "Whatsoever you shall loose upon Earth shall be loosed also in Heaven". So the Church takes Christ at His word and releases its members from some suffering to be expected in Purgatory; as an assurance of goodwill the Church asks that certain good works be done to gain the indulgences. Almsgiving used to be one of the good works for which indulgences might be gained; as this was open to abuse, indulgences are not now given for alms. Luther recognized the possibility of such abuse but, instead of attacking the abuse as such, attacked the principle of indulgences. The Church had no alternative but to condemn Luther for denying the obvious meaning of Christ's words. As has been said, when Luther saw the bath-water was dirty he threw out the baby as well.

42. Who wants to go to Heaven with a lot of pious cranks and sit on a cloud, dressed in a night-shirt, playing a harp, for all eternity?

Humour depends largely on symbols and incongruity. The cartoonists have found Heaven to be a happy hunting ground. Sacred artists have used the cloud as a symbol of far-away, the long white robe as a symbol of innocence, and the harp as a symbol of aesthetic pleasure; none of which ideas are in themselves funny; but, surround a drunk with these symbols and you have incongruity, and humour of a sort. In fact, we have no idea of what Heaven is really like. St. Paul's words, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive the joys God has in store for those that love him" are sufficient guarantee that no-one who gets to Heaven will be disappointed.

43. The Catholic Church has the impertinence to say that someone is in Heaven, to call him "Saint Anthony", and then to give him the job of looking after lost property.

The Church is divinely guided in judging whether a person has merited Heaven by living according to Christ's teachings. If from widespread reports made to the Church's extensive spiritual intelligence service it is found that numerous requests made to a particular saint to intercede with God for a particular class of favours are usually answered it is fairly presumed that God Himself expects that such requests be presented to Him through that particular saint. Saint Joseph protects the interests of the working man, St. Gerard Majella protects mothers-to-be, St. Christopher protects travellers.

44. No matter what you do to water you can't make it holy.

The Olympic flame is materially no different from other similar flames, but it is honoured because it has been lit at a special place by special people. Holy water is water that has been blessed by a special person, a priest, at a special place, a church. As the Olympic flame serves as a reminder of the spirit of the Games, so Holy water serves as a reminder of the supernatural life which we received in Baptism.

45. You must admit that Catholics look ridiculous when they bob down in the church.

The word "genuflection" means "a bending of the knee". In feudal times a knight genuflected before his king as a mark of loyalty. The genuflection before the tabernacle in a Catholic church is a mark of loyalty to the King of kings within the tabernacle.

46. Civilized people should be beyond wearing the charms that Catholics call "medals".

Many a man went to the war carrying a picture of his mother or of his wife in his wallet. She would know it was there as a sign of his love for her. Many a man, too, carried a medal with a representation of his Heavenly Mother for the same reason. However, his Earthly mother could not protect him; his Heavenly Mother could.

47. God has said "Thou shalt not carve images", and yet there are so many statues in Catholic churches.

A careful reading of the Book of Exodus will show what God really forbade was the making of images to be adored. In the same Book of Exodus we also read that God ordered images of the angels to be made. Statues of famous men do honour to those men; statues of Christ and his saints honour them and remind us of them.

48. Catholics are kept poor paying for expensive churches.

Catholics know from the Bible that God wishes the churches to be as worthy as possible of their sacred function. What Catholics give for that purpose they give voluntarily. Catholics who are poor owe their poverty to the social system in which they live, to their own meagre talents, or to some other reason beyond the direct control of the Catholic Church.

49. Why are Catholic countries usually poor and illiterate?

Comparisons of national wealth or literacy cannot be fairly made independently of statistics. Moreover, the distribution of national wealth may be as important as the aggregate of national wealth. Even though Italy, Ireland and Spain, by coincidence being not only Catholic countries but also lacking in natural resources of coal and iron, are not recognized as wealthy nations, they are free of the economic tensions that plague England and the United States. The most remarkably successful economic organization of our time, the European Economic Community, is predominantly Catholic. Ireland, one of the best-fed nations in the world, according to United Nations statistics, is economically self-sufficient.

Literacy is largely dependent upon economic factors and the allegations of illiteracy in Catholic countries are as untrue as the allegations of poverty.

50. Catholic Action is the Church's way of interfering in politics.

Catholic Action must be distinguished from the political action of Catholics. This is no mere quibble. Catholic Action is a systematic organization, under the direction of the Bishops, with the object of encouraging Catholic moral attitudes in everyday life. Catholic Action is a world-wide spiritual activity. The political action of Catholics is part of their own right and responsibility; such action, of its nature, is local. Every Catholic knows that a Bishop has full spiritual jurisdiction but no political jurisdiction.

51. The Inquisition is a clear example of the danger of allowing the Catholic Church any part in politics.

The period of history in which the Inquisition functioned was a period of violent religious antipathies, a period in which Luther aroused the Peasants' War, Henry VIII beheaded Sir Thomas More, and the Pilgrim Fathers fled to America. Just as the State gaolers would torture loyal Catholics while Anglican divines questioned them to try to prove their treasonous support of Phillip of Spain, so theologians in Spain were employed by the State to question suspected enemies of the State.

52. Catholics are forbidden to read books which would tell them the real truth about the Catholic Church.

Catholics are forbidden to read books which tell lies about the Catholic Church; they are also forbidden to read books which are morally harmful. Relatively few men are competent by reason of their scholarship in theology or history to detect all forms of error; therefore the Church relies on a body of experts to publish what is called the Index of Forbidden Books and to explain why certain books have been placed on the Index. There are only about a hundred books specifically included on the Index; even these may be read, with permission, by Catholics of sufficient scholarship if they can give good reason for doing so.

53. The Jesuits are the secret agents of the Catholic Church. Even the Pope had to suppress them to save his face.

The Jesuits are members of a religious order and are renowned for their scholarship and outspoken attitude against anything harmful to the Catholic Church. In the eighteenth century too much wealth had weakened the moral fibre of many Catholic rulers. When the Jesuits persisted in using the prestige of their scholarship to protest against the moral abuses of the rulers, the ruler slandered the Jesuits to the Pope. The Pope ignored the slanders. Then the rulers threatened retaliation against the Church in their countries. As the threats mounted, Pope Clement XIV issued a decree of

suppression in 1773. There was no face-saving involved and when, a few years later, the European political situation was changed by the French Revolution, Pope Pius VII restored the Jesuits in 1814.

54. Shutting women up in convents is a peculiar way of carrying out Christ's teaching.

Nuns are not shut in convents: the general public is shut out. Nuns are women who have freely chosen to withdraw from ordinary walks of life so that they may give their lives wholly to the service of God. Of course, they must either come in and stay in or go out and stay out. They are as entitled to the privacy of their home as much as are other citizens in the community. Justification and strong encouragement for their vows of poverty, chastity and obedience are to be found in the New Testament, no matter what the impertinent objections of irreligious outsiders may be.

55. Catholics try to show their superiority over non-Catholics by having special schools for their children.

Anyone who has read the standard works on the Philosophy of Education or who has done a university course in Education is well aware that Religion is recognized as an essential part of education. Because Catholics are dissatisfied with the place given to Religion in the State schools of Australia they have paid the enormous price of their convictions by maintaining a school system of their own. Catholics recognize the State's difficulty in providing adequate religious training within a uniform school system for children of different faiths; nevertheless, they cannot in conscience submit their children to that inadequacy.

56. Birth Control is the only answer to having too many children in poor countries and poor families.

The economically backward countries of the world are suffering from mismanagement: agricultural, industrial and distributive. There are vast areas of India badly cultivated or not cultivated at all. Millions of poverty-stricken inhabitants huddle around the cities of South America while much of the continent is rich jungle. Tampering with the natural law is the answer only for those who wish to shirk their family responsibilities and seek to justify themselves by persuading others to follow their example.

57. Too many husbands and wives find out too late that they are mismatched. Divorce is the only way out.

Too many people marry for the wrong reasons and realize their mistake too late. To base a marriage on mere physical attraction or on money is to ask for trouble. The principal intention of a Christian marriage is that the husband and the wife should wish to help one another and their children to get to Heaven. Any incompatibility of temperament, habits, interests or religion should be well considered beforehand; mutual generosity and forbearance will ensure loyalty later.

58. The Catholic Church causes much unnecessary ill-feeling by her attitude towards mixed marriages.

The closeness, the permanency and the sacredness of the marriage bond demand that the Church should exert the strongest influence to ensure its endurance. Mixed marriages have so often been a danger not only to the harmony of family life but also to the faith of the Catholic partner and the children that the Church suffers patiently the ill-feeling of the thoughtless for the sake of the spiritual welfare of its members.

59. Why is the Catholic Church so unreasonable as to forbid its members to join a friendly society like the Freemasons?

Many Freemasons are under the erroneous impression that their society is no more than one which has the purpose of safeguarding its members' common interests. As such, the Freemasons are often guilty of injustice by ensuring that their own members gain positions of employment rather than other claimants with better records of ability. However, Freemasonry is essentially a form of Deism, a religion which regards God as having no direct interest in the personal welfare of individual men, a belief which is contrary to the Catholic concept of God. Accordingly, Catholics are warned that to become a Freemason is to cease to be a Catholic.

60. All the bad Catholics, even bad Popes, are argument enough against the Catholic Church.

A study of the moral doctrines of the Catholic Church would show that their fulfilment would ensure the living of a noble life. But man has freewill to reject the Church's moral guidance, even though he may be fully aware of the eternal consequences of such rejection. It would be impossible to show that any bad Catholic, even a bad Pope, had lived in accordance with the Catholic Church's teaching.

Now that you have read this pamphlet you are aware of some of the questions that non-Catholics ask and you know some of the answers. Nevertheless, you should read further, especially Rev. Dr. Rumble's Radio Replies, Archbishop Sheehan's Catholic Apologetics, Frank Sheed's Theology and Sanity, and Philip Hughes's A Popular History of the Catholic Church; it would be well, too, to read the Australian Catholic Truth Society's set of pamphlets on the beliefs of the various non-Catholic denominations. Always show respect for non-Catholic's sincerity in their own religious beliefs and be ready at all times to show them practical kindness when the opportunity offers.

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