

Answers to Life's Difficult Questions

can be found in the saving love of Jesus Christ.

IS THERE A POINT TO LIFE?

Yes! God created us out of his love and goodness, in his image and likeness, to be with him and share in his love forever!

*“Yet, O LORD, you are our father;
we are the clay and you the potter:
we are all the work of your hands.”*

Isaiah 64:7

We were made to know, love and serve God, who is the source of all happiness.

*"You made us for yourself, O Lord,
and our hearts are restless until they rest in you."*

-St. Augustine

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS WORLD?

“Your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God.” Is 59:2

Because God wanted us to love him freely, he created us with free will
~ to be able to choose good, or evil.

In seeking a false good, outside of God's plan of love, Man has brought sorrow and pain upon himself and his world.

Unfortunately, our sin (turning away from God's love) has separated us from God and poisoned our world.

“For the wages of sin is death” Romans 6:23

“...and so death spread to all men because all men sinned.” Romans 5:12

Mankind's attempts to perfect human society, apart from God, have *always* fallen short.

Is there any hope?

Yes! God was not content to leave his children in darkness!

“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God sent the Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him.” John 3:16-17

Jesus could overcome the separation between God & man because he was both God and man.

“Jesus spoke to them, saying, ‘I am the light of the world; he who follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.’” John 8:12

“I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.” John 10:10

Through his life, death and resurrection, Jesus has reconciled us with the Father and purchased for us the rewards of eternal life. He transforms and empowers us to live our new lives in him through the grace of the Holy Spirit.

“We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Romans 5:1

“And hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us.” Romans 5:5

What does God want from me?!

God wants us to live in *happiness* forever. God offers this through his Son, Jesus.

For the unbaptized this means coming to faith and baptism.

For the baptized this means a daily *living out* of one's saving baptismal faith. Spiritual feelings and warming a pew on Sunday are not enough. **We must give our whole lives to Christ¹ and live as his disciples.** Saying ‘Yes’ to Jesus means new and everlasting life.

“Abide in me, and I in you... He who abides in me, and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. If a man does not abide in me, he is cast forth as a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire and burned.” John 15:4-6

“This ‘Yes’ to Jesus Christ... is twofold: a trustful abandonment to God and a loving assent to all that he has revealed to us. *This is possible only by means of the action of the Holy Spirit.*” ~ General Directory for Catechesis, 54

“We need to return to Christ, the Word of God made flesh for the salvation of mankind. Jesus... stands as the goal of every human aspiration. Only in him can man come to know himself fully.” -Pope John Paul II

In baptism we are united with Christ. We must take up our cross daily with him.

“He who says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.” 1John 2: 6

To abide in Christ and do the will of the Father, we need to live by the Spirit. We call this *“living in a state of grace.”*

“Not every one who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.” Matthew 7:21

“He who through faith is righteous shall live.” Romans 1:17

Living in a state of grace:

- ❖ live in the awareness of our Heavenly Father’s love for us;
- ❖ unite our lives to Christ (this includes the cross);
- ❖ live in the grace of the Holy Spirit (and be open to his guidance);
- ❖ pray daily and read (meditate on) the Bible;
- ❖ be an active part of his body (the Church);
- ❖ avoid sin, especially serious sin (turn away from even the desire to sin);²
- ❖ live transformed lives that are dedicated to love and justice;
- ❖ Catholics believe Christ instituted the Sacraments to communicate to us his saving grace.³ Through them we encounter and are nourished by the Life of Christ.

“God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who has not the Son of God has not life.” 1John 5:11-12

Don’t Give Up Hope!

“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not from you; it is the gift of God; it is not from works, so no one may boast.” Ephesians 2:8-9

We can never “merit” God’s grace. But because we have free will, we can either cooperate with it, or not. Turning away from the life of Christ forfeits our “state of grace.” (see Romans 11:2)

*St. Paul wrote: “This charge I commit to you... wage the good warfare, holding faith and a good conscience. **By rejecting conscience, certain persons have made shipwreck of their faith.**” 1Timothy 1:18-19*

“So I ask you not to lose heart...

*be strengthened with might through his Spirit...
that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith;
that you, being rooted and grounded in love,
may have power to comprehend...
what is the breadth and length and height and depth,
and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge,
that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.”*

Ephesians 3:13-19

*“The grace of God has appeared, offering salvation to all men.
It trains us to reject godless ways and worldly desires,
and live temperately, justly, and devoutly in this age
as we await our blessed hope...”*

Titus 2:11-13

“He who endures to the end will be saved.”

Mat 10:22,24; 24:13; Mk 13:13

Let us respond to Jesus, who knows our every need, who loves us, and who knocks at the door of our heart:



***“Behold, I stand at the door and knock.
If anyone hears my voice
and opens the door,
I will enter his house
and dine with him,
and he with me.***

Revelations 3:20

Why not quiet you mind and you heart and take a moment to pray this prayer?

Dear Lord Jesus,

Thank you for loving me.

Please come now and make me whole.

I haven't always lived as I should.

I've offended You and hurt others,

and I am truly sorry for this.

Forgive me Jesus of all my sins.

Heal me.

I place all my trust in You,

my Savior, my Lord and my God.

Fill my heart with Your love.

I give my whole life now to you.

I will no longer run from your love,

and I promise to cooperate with

Your Spirit, by living each day

in obedience to your commandments.

I give you thanks for your gifts of faith, hope & love.

Thank You Father for sending Your Son Jesus,

so that I might return to You,

and live in Your love forever!

Amen

Jesus I Trust in You!

Whether you are Catholic or not:

- ❖ if you need someone to talk to or to pray with you;
- ❖ if you'd like more information about the Catholic Faith;
- ❖ or if you have been away from the Church and want to come back; please call your local Catholic church. We look forward to hearing from you.

Catholics who wish to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation are invited to make an appointment by calling the Pastor or come at our regularly scheduled times.

You are welcome in our faith community!

For Mass and Confession times nationally, go to <http://www.MassTimes.org>

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¹ Cf. Gen. Dir. for Catechesis (GDC) 25,26,53; Redeemer of Mankind, 1,7,13; Catechesi Tradendae, 19,20; Eph 2:8,9; 1Cor 3:11

² Cf. 1Jn 5:17, 1Cor 6:9-10

³ **Baptism** - 1Pet 3:21; Rom 6:3-5; Acts 2:38; **Confirmation** – Acts 8:18; **Eucharist** - Lk 24:35; Jn 6:27,33,35,48,50,51,54,58; **Confession** Jn 20:23; 2 Cor 5:18; Mat 18:18 **Anointing of the Sick** - Jas 5:14 ...