

THE CATECHISM PROJECT

The duty of each and every Catholic is to conform themselves to timeless truth. That truth is the truth revealed in Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour, and entrusted to the holy Catholic Church to be made known through Scripture and Tradition. Only through the revelation of Christ do we find what is good and true. It is not to be found in the world; it is found in the deposit of faith.

We have just celebrated the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross and the wisdom of that Cross on which our salvation was won. As St. Paul taught: “For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God” (1 *Cor.* 1:18). That power of God to save is made known to us through the teachings of Our Lord which he entrusted to the Apostles and to the Church He founded. They are unchanging truths because God does not change.

Today, as throughout history, the truth of Christ has been clouded and even discarded, and in its place we find, instead, opinions not founded in faith or reason but in popularity, and where believing what is contrary to what is popular is called hate. As St. James wrote in his epistle: “Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God” (4:4).

As we face times of great difficulty and of confusion amidst ever-changing claims, we must remember, as Our Lord said, “My teaching is not mine but his who sent me” (*Jn.* 7:16). The Church has been entrusted with the deposit of faith handed on since the time of the Apostles by way of sacred Scripture and sacred Tradition. The fathers of the Second Vatican Council wrote that the Church is “Divinely sent to the nations of the world to be unto them ‘a universal sacrament of salvation,’... driven by the inner necessity of her own catholicity,

and obeying the mandate of her Founder... ever to proclaim the Gospel to all men" (*Ad gentes*, n. 1).

It is inspired by the mission of Our Lord and given to the Church as made known in Scripture and Tradition, that I launch today, again, the pastoral work of the parish, which I call "The Catechism Project". I encourage all of you to begin to read the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and to know and to make known the unchanging truth of Our Lord as taught by the Church through the ages.

It was Pope St. John Paul II who, in 1992, decreed that a catechism of the Catholic Church should be prepared and promulgated throughout the Church. Of this he said: "Guarding the deposit of the faith is the mission which the Lord entrusted to His Church, and which she fulfils in every age" (*Fidei depositum*).

Because of this, I offer to all parishioners who will dedicate themselves to participating in the work and the life of the parish, and who will commit to reading a paragraph of the Catechism of the Catholic Church every day and praying for our holy mother, the Church, and our parish dedicated to the Holy Cross, a copy of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. I have personally bought and donated copies of the *Catechism* and I offer them to those who will join the parish in "The Catechism Project". With this year's launch, I have added to this YouCat, the catechism for adolescents and young people which summarises the most important elements of the faith in a question-and-answer format so making the truths of the faith accessible to a younger generation.

To be a part of this pastoral work of the parish and to commit yourself to the reading of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, or for a copy of *YouCat* for your sons and daughters, speak with me after the Mass. Let us join together and participate in the mission of the Church to which we are all called by virtue of our Baptism and, by the intercession of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church and the Seat of Wisdom, work towards knowing and making known the deposit of faith entrusted for all time to the holy Catholic Church so that

“the light of true faith [may] free humanity from the ignorance and slavery of sin in order to lead it to the only freedom worthy of the name (cf. *Jn.* 8:32): that of life in Jesus Christ under the guidance of the Holy Spirit” (John Paul II, *Fidei depositum*).

In a world which abhors truth and seeks to destroy Christianity, at a time when the teachings of the Church are questioned and formation in the faith is sorely lacking, the Catechism of the Catholic Church and education in the faith is needed more than ever. For those of you who joined us in the parish retreat day, you will know of the terrible battles that confront the Church today and the need we have for men and women to live lives of nobility in defence of the faith of Our Lord. No man or woman of faith can sit by and allow the desecration and the destruction of the faith. To do so leads us to our own eternal condemnation. As St. Paul wrote to St. Timothy, we must, each of us: “avoid the profane chatter and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge” (I *Tim.* 6:20) and “guard the good treasure entrusted to [us], with the help of the Holy Spirit living in us” (II *Tim.* 1:14).

With this, the Holy Cross Parish “Catechism Project”, let us make known the beauty of the unchanging truths of God entrusted to His Church for the salvation of all men and women.

It is my hope that all parishioners will join the parish in this work of the Holy Spirit to know and to make known the faith so that we may be drawn ever deeper into the wisdom of God and to understand how, in our time and in our place, He seeks to raise us to the fulfillment of our humanity and to make known He who is the light of truth to all the world.