

Faith Loops

Faith Loops are PowerPoint presentations with images and information that will help us grow in the understanding of our Catholic faith. They will be projected on the screens during the twenty minutes prior to each weekend mass. To learn more about your faith while waiting for Mass to begin, come a few minutes early.

The slides will loop, or repeat, themselves. Thus, the name: Faith Loops.



Test Your Knowledge:

The New Testament

Which of the following is not one of the synoptic gospels? Which is different?



a. Matthew

b. Mark

c. Luke

d. John

Test Your Knowledge:

The New Testament

Which of the following is not one of the synoptic gospels? Which is different?

d. The Gospel of John

The word *synoptic* derives from a Greek word meaning 'seeing the whole together' or 'taking a common view'. The gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke are called the synoptic gospels, as they share many of the same stories about Jesus, often in a similar order, and with similar or sometimes identical words. In contrast, John's gospel, the last to be written, is more poetic and contains considerable content not found in the synoptic gospels.

What is Catholic Social Teaching?



Faced with injustice and inequality in our world — unemployment, poverty, war, racism, etc. What is our responsibility? The basic needs of many are not being met.

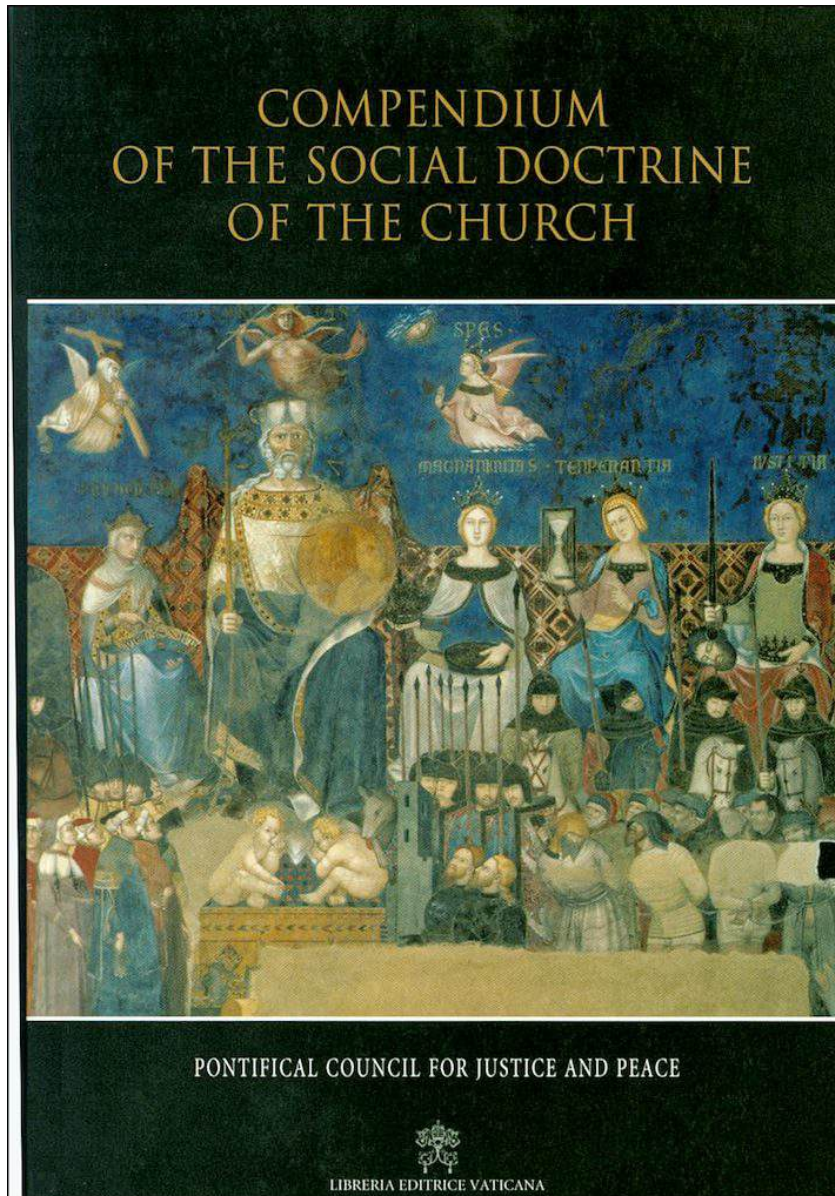
The Catholic Church has identified seven principles we need to

embrace so we can build a just and peaceful society and grow in holiness amidst these challenges.

What is Catholic Social Teaching?

The fact that the Catholic Church has identified these seven principles – and has written a comprehensive compendium of the Social Teaching of the Catholic Church – is said to be one of the Church’s best-kept secrets.

Let’s not keep it a secret any longer.



Catholic Social Teaching Principle #6:

Solidarity



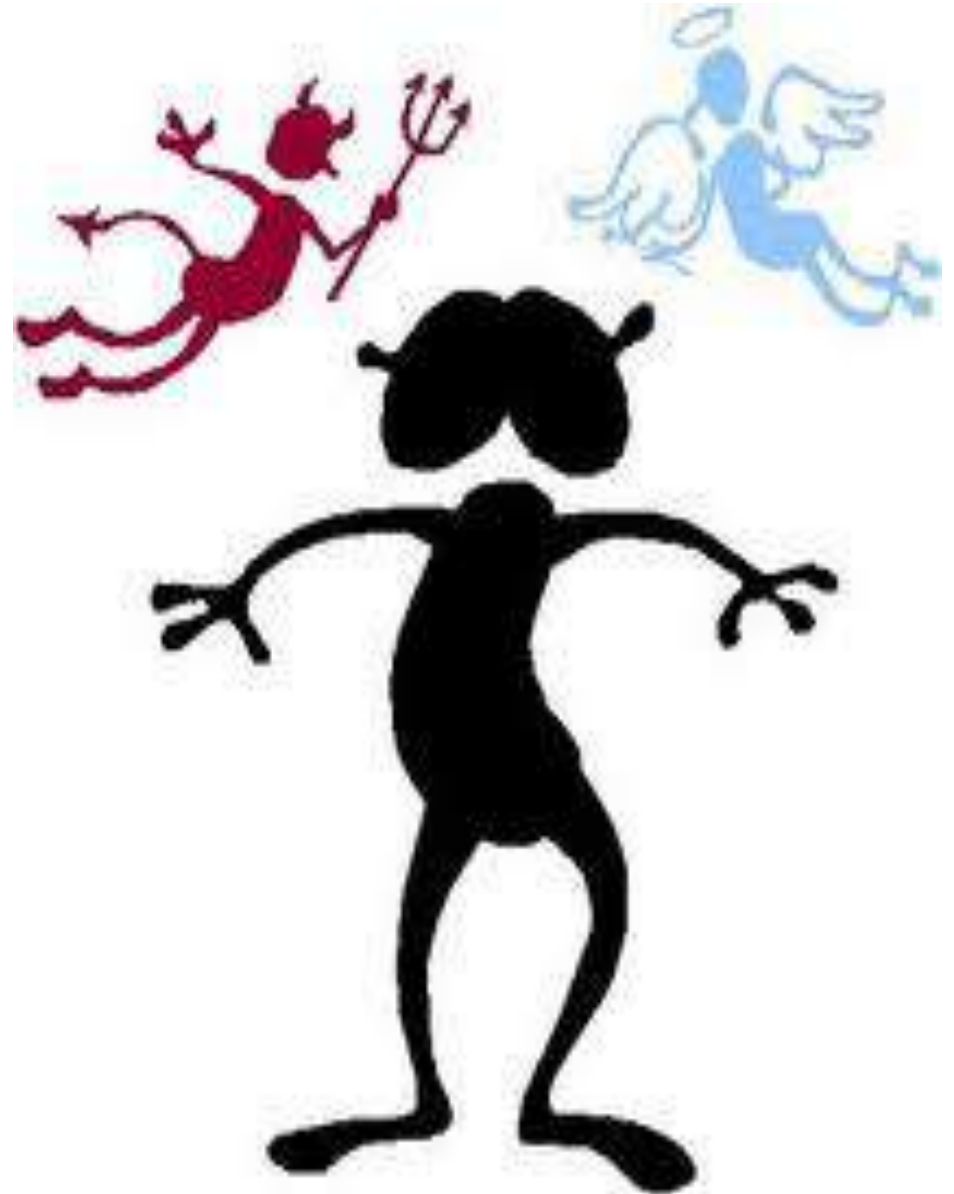
God made everyone, so we are all brothers and sisters in God's family wherever we live.

- We are one human family, regardless of race, ethnic background, religion, etc.
- We pursue and promote justice and peace for ALL.
- We stand in support of all people in need.
- We love our neighbor.

Word of the Week: **Conscience**

The word **conscience** derives from an Old French word that can be broken into two parts 'con' and 'science', which literally means 'with knowledge'.

It refers to knowledge within oneself ... a moral sense of right and wrong.



Word of the Week: **Conscience**

The Second Vatican Council teaches:

“Deep within our consciences we discover a law which we have not laid upon ourselves but which we must obey. Its voice, ever calling us to love and to do what is good and to avoid evil, sounds in our hearts at the right moment. For we have in our hearts a law inscribed by God. Our conscience is our most secret core and sanctuary. There we are alone with God whose voice echoes in our depths”
(*Gaudium et Spes*, 16).

Word of the Week: **Conscience**

Ultimately, we must follow and obey our own conscience. However, in order to make moral decisions, one must have an *informed* conscience. We gain wisdom and guidance from **Sacred Scripture** and **Church doctrine**.

We also have the **good example of others** who choose to do what is good, right, and holy. Of course, the **Holy Spirit** is always there to help us.

The **Catechism of the Catholic Church** also speaks of the importance of 'self-criticism', as we tend to justify a poor decision or judge things in our favor.

The Way of the Cross

The path that Jesus followed from the court of Pontius Pilate to the place he was crucified outside the city of Jerusalem is known as the Via Dolorosa or 'the sorrowful way'. Certain sites – or stations – in the streets mark the path. For centuries, many people have traveled to Jerusalem to retrace and recall Jesus' steps to Calvary, especially during Lent.



The Way of the Cross



In the Middle Ages, the first Way of the Cross was developed for those who could not make the pilgrimage to the Holy Land. By the 18th century, these stations were found in most Catholic churches and contained fourteen stations, which are rooted in Sacred Scripture or Tradition.

We are encouraged to pray the Stations of the Cross during Lent, especially on Fridays. They are:

- I. Jesus is condemned to death.
- II. Jesus carries his cross.
- III. Jesus falls the first time.
- IV. Jesus meets His mother.
- V. Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus carry the cross.
- VI. Veronica wipes the face of Jesus.
- VII. Jesus falls the third time.

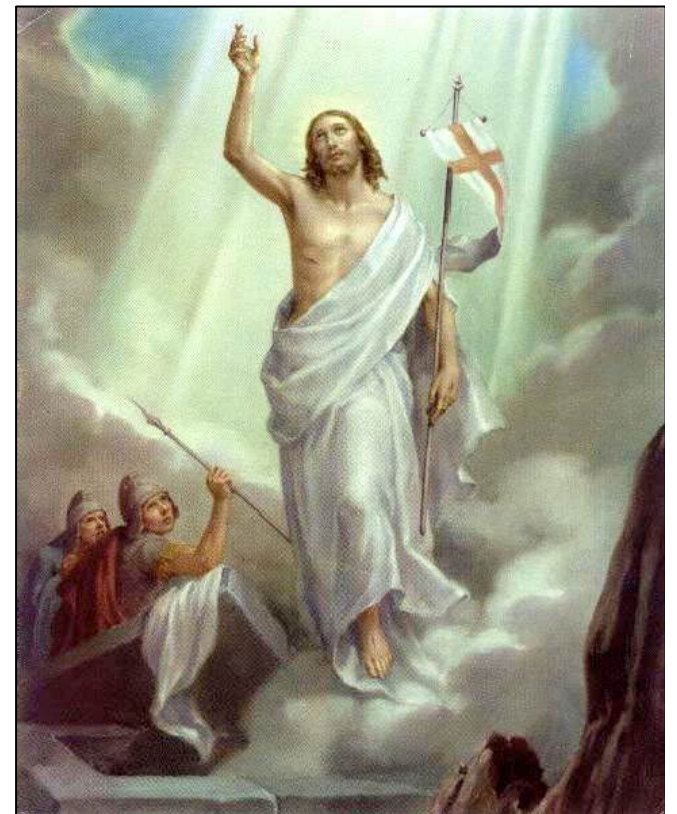
The Way of the Cross



The Way of the Cross

- VIII. Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem.
- IX. Jesus falls the third time.
- X. Jesus is stripped of his garments.
- XI. Jesus is nailed to the cross.
- XII. Jesus dies on the cross.
- XIII. Jesus is taken down from the cross.
- XIV. Jesus is placed in the tomb.

Newer Stations of the Cross often conclude with a 15th station: the Resurrection.



**I HAVE HAD
PRAYERS ANSWERED,
MOST STRANGELY SOMETIMES,
BUT I THINK OUR HEAVENLY
FATHER'S LOVING KINDNESS
HAS BEEN EVEN MORE EVIDENT
IN WHAT HE HAS REFUSED ME.**

Lewis Carroll,
author of Alice in Wonderland

The Byzantine Cross

The Byzantine or Orthodox cross is found in Ukrainian Catholic Churches. It has three horizontal bars. The top one is short and represents the plate on which was inscribed 'INRI', short for 'Iesus Nazarenus, Rex Iudaeorum', which translates as 'Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.'

The bottom bar is also short, but slanted. It is the 'footrest' to which Jesus' feet were nailed. It slants upward toward Dismas, the name given to the 'penitent thief' who was crucified on Jesus' right side. This slanted line also points toward heaven.



A Different Approach to Fasting

Lenten fasts have a tendency to be oriented toward things like giving up junk food or television. There are many other creative ways we can welcome Jesus' healing touch this Lent:

- Fast from **anger** and **hatred**. Give your family an extra dose of love each day.
- Fast from **judging others**. Before making any judgments, recall how Jesus overlooks our faults.
- Fast from **resentment** or **bitterness**. Work on forgiving those who may have hurt you.

A Different Approach to Fasting

- Fast from **discouragement**. Hold onto Jesus' promise that he has a perfect plan for your life (Jeremiah 29:11).
- Fast from **complaining**. When you find yourself about to complain, close your eyes and recall some of the little moments of joy Jesus has given you.
- Fast from **spending too much money**. Try to reduce your spending by ten percent and give these savings to those in need.

You Were Wondering ...

What is the difference between mortal and venial sin?

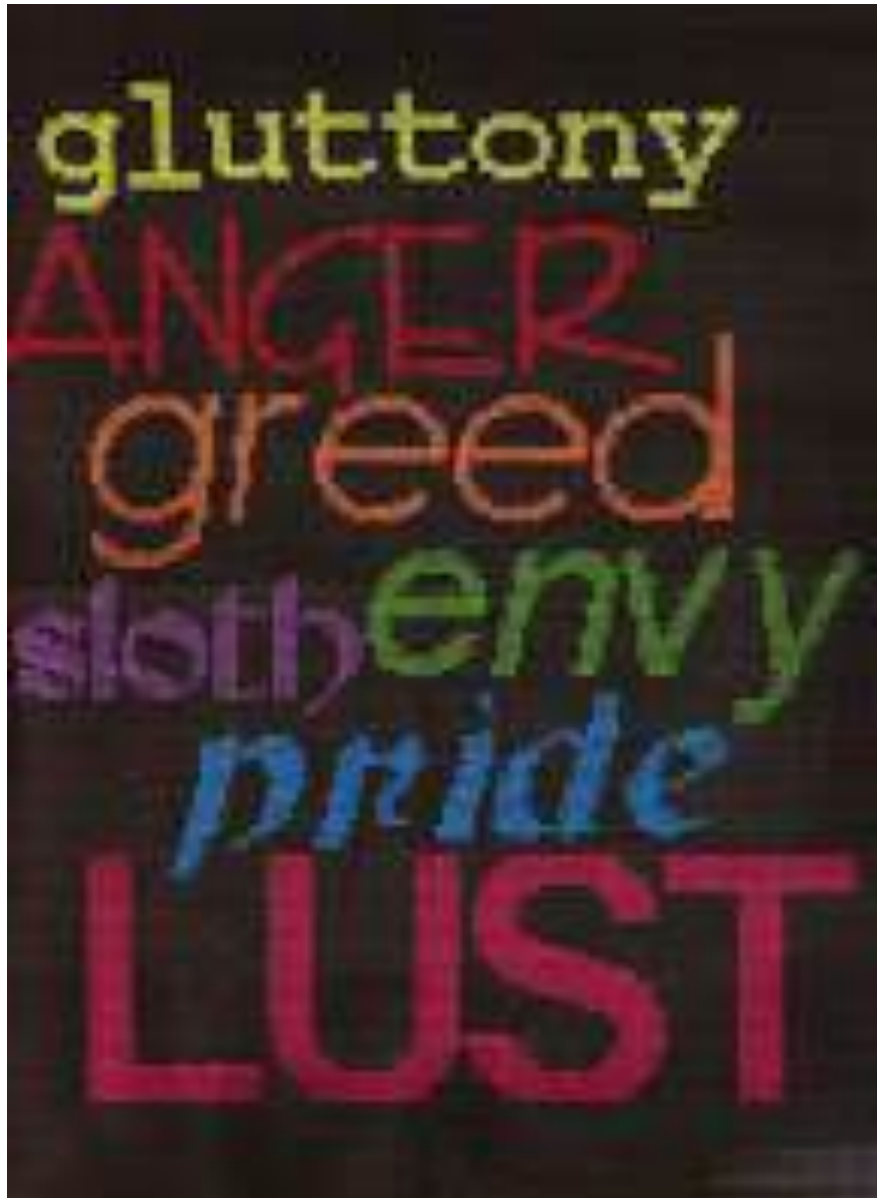
There are two different kinds of sin: mortal and venial. The word *mortal* means 'death'.

To be considered a mortal sin, the offense:

- must be serious in nature,
- committed with full knowledge that it is a moral wrong, and
- performed with one's full consent.

Therefore, if the act was committed involuntarily, by mistake, or out of ignorance, it does not meet the conditions of a mortal sin.

Mortal and Venial Sins



A mortal sin destroys the virtue of charity that helps us to love God and neighbor. Therefore, it harms our relationship with God.

The Catholic Church identifies seven 'deadly sins', listed on the left.

Mortal and Venial Sins

What is considered a serious or grave sin?

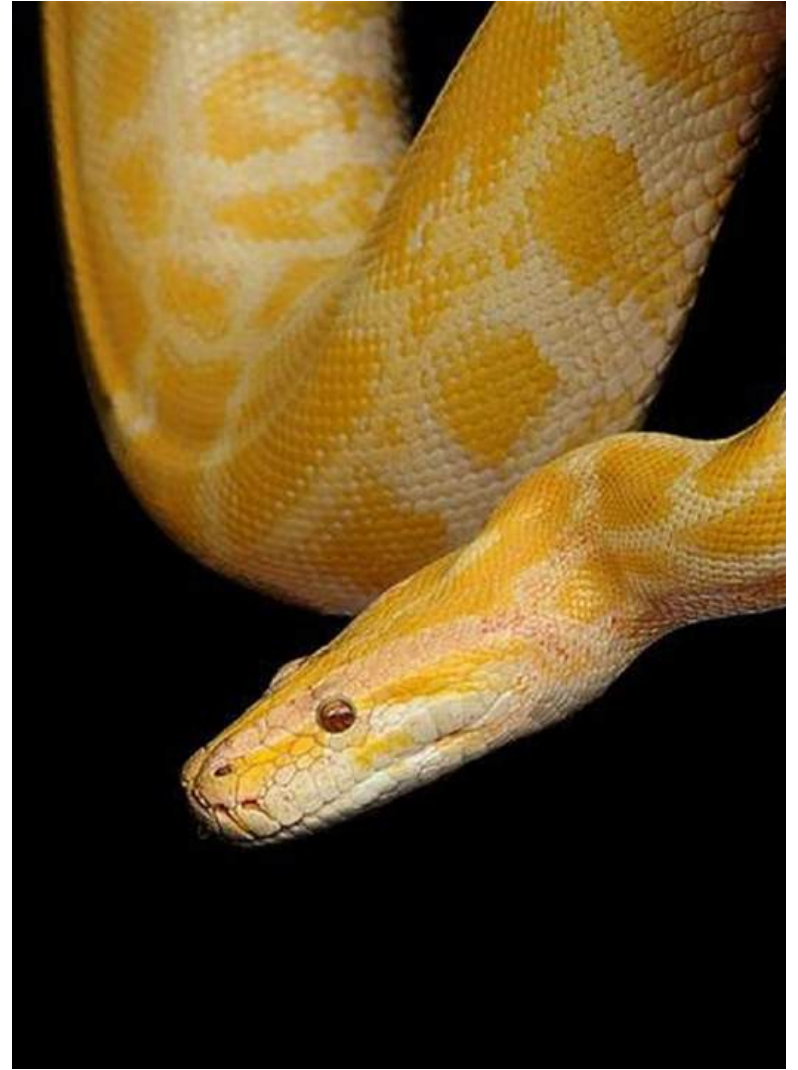
In the gospel account of the rich young man who inquired of Jesus what he must do to inherit eternal life, Jesus responded, “You know the commandments: ‘You shall not murder; You shall not commit adultery; You shall not steal; You shall not bear false witness; You shall not defraud; Honor your father and mother’” (Mark 10:17–19). Clearly, Jesus was implying that the Ten Commandments identify serious sins.



Mortal and Venial Sins

Venial sins are less serious and may have been committed unintentionally or without fully understanding the gravity of the wrongdoing. There may be circumstances that lessen the severity of the sin.

While venial sins may damage our relationship with God, they do not destroy it. However, when repeated, venial sins can become bad habits or **vices** (the opposite of virtues).



Test Your Knowledge

Those preparing for baptism and entry into the Catholic Church at the Easter Vigil are called:

- a. confirmands
- b. catechumens
- c. neophytes
- d. candidates



Test Your Knowledge

Those preparing for baptism and entry into the Catholic Church at the Easter Vigil are called:

b. catechumens

Adults wishing to join the Catholic Church take part in a program called the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA). A catechumen is one who has not yet been baptized but is preparing to be initiated into the sacred mysteries. He or she is a student in the faith.

Those who are already baptized, perhaps in another faith, but are not yet confirmed or in full communion with the Catholic Church are known as **candidates**.

Prayer Before Mass

Dear God, help me to be open to all that you want to give me at Mass today.

My heart is open. I come in hope.

I come empty and unsure and troubled.

I come in need to be loved by you,
united with this faith community,
strengthened by your word,
and nourished by the Bread of Life.

Cleanse me. Refresh me.

Strengthen me for the journey ahead.

Lead me to heaven.

Thank you, God, for this time together.

Thank you, God, for everything. Amen.



Questions???

Do you have a question about the Catholic faith or about the celebration of the Mass? If so, write it on a piece of paper and drop it into the marked shoebox on the table at the back of the church. We will try to answer it in a Faith Loop at a later date.

Thank you.

