

The 1649 Douay Catechism

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Stabat Mater Press

Originally:
An Abridgment of the Christian Doctrine

By H.H. Tuberville, D.D.

Authored in the year of Our Lord, 1649

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First Edition

Paperback ISBN: 9798311195607

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APPROBATIOCUM:

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Datum Duaci, Martii 11, 1649.

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APPROBATION:

WE feel pleasure in recommending to the faithful of our Diocese this edition of "An Abridgment of the Christian Doctrine, with proofs of Scripture on points controverted," as we have found it essentially conformable to the Dublin edition of 1820, of the correctness of which we entertain no doubt.

+ BENEDICT, Bp Bn.Boston, April 24th, 1833

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What a Christian is: And of the Blessed Trinity.



Q: CHILD, what religion are you of?

A: Sir, by the benefit and grace of God,
I am Christian.

Q. Whom understand you by a Christian?

A. Him that inwardly believes and outwardly professes the law of Christ.

Q. When are we obliged to make an external profession of it?

A. As often as God's honour, our own, or neighbour's good requires it.

Q. How prove you that we are bound outwardly to profess our faith?

A. Out of St. *Matt.* x. 32, where Christ saith, Every one, therefore, that shall confess me before men, I will confess him before my Father

who is in heaven. But he that shall deny me before men, I also will deny him before my Father who is in heaven.

Q. Are we bound also to venture the ruin of our estates, the loss of our friends, and to lay down our very lives for the profession and defence of our faith?

A. Doubtless we are: seeing the reward we expect in heaven, infinitely exceeds all the pleasures and punishments of this life. And because Christ the Son of the living God, has suffered far greater things for us, even to a disgraceful death on the cross? and therefore, it were base ingratitude in us, not to be ready to give our lives for him as often as his honour shall require it. *Luke*, xiv. 26, 33.

Q. In what doth the faith and law of Christ chiefly consist?

A. In two principle mysteries, namely, the unity and trinity of God, and the incarnation and death of our Saviour.

Q. What means the unity and trinity of God?

A. It means, that in God there is but one only divine nature or essence, and that in the same one and divine nature there are three persons, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

Q. How show you that?

A. Out of John, v. 7. There are three that give testimony in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one.

Q. Why are there but three Persons only?

A. Because the Father had no beginning, nor proceeds from any other person; the Son proceeds from the Father, and Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son.

Q. What means the incarnation and death of our Saviour?

A. It means that the second person of the blessed Trinity was made man, and died on the cross to save us.

Q. In what are these two mysteries signified?

A. In the sign of the cross, as it is made by Catholics, for when we put our right hand to our head, saying, In the name we signify Unity; and when we make the sign of the cross saying, Of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, we signify Trinity.

Q. How doth the sign of the cross represent the incarnation and death of our Saviour?

A. By putting us in mind that he was made man and died upon the cross for us.

Faith Explained.



Q. WHAT is faith?

A. It is a gift of God or a supernatural quality, infused by God into the soul, by which we firmly believe all those things which he hath any way revealed to us.

Q. Is faith necessary to salvation?

A. It is; St. Paul assuring that without faith it is impossible to please God. *Heb.* xi. 6. and *St. Mark*, xvi. 16, saying, He that believeth not shall be condemned.

Q. Why must we firmly believe matters of faith?

A. Because God hath revealed them, who can neither deceive, nor be deceived.

A second reason is, because not only all points of faith, but also the rule, or necessary and infallible means whereby to know them, to wit, the church's oral and universal tradition, are absolutely certain, and cannot lead us into error in faith; else we can never sufficiently be assured what is faith, or what is not.

Q. If a man should deny, or obstinately doubt of some one point of faith, would he be thereby lose his whole faith?

A. Yes, he would; because true faith must always be entire, and he that fails in one, is made guilty of all, by discrediting the authority of God revealing it.

Q. Is it not enough to believe all that is written in the Bible?

A. No, it is not: For we must also believe all apostolic tradition.

Q. How prove you that?

A. Out of 2 *Thess.* ii. 15. Therefore brethren (saith St. Paul) stand and hold ye the traditions which ye have learned, whether by word, or by our Epistle.

Q. What other proof have you?

A. The apostle's Creed, which all are bound to believe, although it be not in Scripture.

Q. Is faith only, as excluding good works, sufficient to salvation?

A. No: it is not: *St. James*, ii. 24, saying, Do you see how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only? And St. Paul, saying, *1 Cor.* xiii. 2. If I should have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and not have charity, I am nothing. And if I should distribute all my goods to feed the poor, and if I should deliver by body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

Q. What faith will suffice to justify?

A. Faith working by charity in Jesus Christ.

Q. What vice is opposite to faith?

A. Heresy.

Q. What is Heresy?

A. Is it an obstinate error in things that are of faith.

Q. Is it a grievous sin?

A. A very grievous one, because it wholly divides a man from God, and leads to atheism, Christ saying, if he will not hear the church let him be to thee as an heathen and a publican, *Matt.* xviii. 17.

The Creed Expounded



Q. WHAT is the creed?

A. It is the sum of belief.

Q. Who made it?

A. The twelve apostles.

Q. At what time did they make it?

A. Before they divided themselves into the several countries of the world to preach the gospel.

Q. For what end did they make it?

A. That so they might be able to teach one and the same doctrine in all places.

Q. What doth the creed contain?

A. All those chief things which we are bound to believe, concerning God and his church.

The First Article

Q. What is the first article of the creed?

A. I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

Q. What signifies I believe?

A. It signifies as much as I most firmly and undoubtedly hold.

Q. What means, I believe in God?

A. It means that not only that I firmly believe there is a God, but also that I am piously affected to him, as to say chiefest good and last end, with confidence in him, or otherwise that I move unto him by faith, hope, and charity.

Q. What signifies the word Father?

A. It signifies the first person of the most blessed Trinity, who by nature is the Father of his own only begotten Son, the second Person of the blessed Trinity; by adoption is the Father of all good Christians; and by creations is the Father of all creatures.

Q. What means the word Almighty?

A. It means that God is able to do all things as he pleaseth; that he sees all things, knows all things, and governs all things.

Q. Why is he called Almighty in this place?

A. That we might doubt of nothing which follows.

Q. What signify the words, Creator of heaven and earth?

A. They signify that God made heaven and earth, and all creatures in them, of nothing, by his sole word, *Gen.* i.

Q. What moved God to make them?

A. His own mere goodness, that so he might communicate himself to angels, and to men, for whom he made all other creatures.

Q. When did God create the angels?

A. On the first day when he created heaven and earth, *Gen.* i. where Moses implies the creation of angels in the word heaven, and makes no other mention of it. The Nicene creed, interpreting the Apostles' Creed, says, that the words Creator of heaven and earth, mean all things visible and invisible.

Q. For what end did God create them?

A. To be partakers of his glory, and our guardians.

Q. How prove you by Scripture, that they be our guardians?

A. Out of *St. Matt.* xviii. 10, where Christ saith 'See that you despise not one of these little ones: For I day unto you, their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father who is in heaven.'

Q. Do the angels know our necessities, and hear our prayers?

A. Doubtless they do, since God has deputed them to be our guardians; which is also proved out of *Zach.* i 12. where an angel prays for two whole cities; the words are "Then the angel of the Lord answered and said, O Lord of hosts, how long wilt thou not have mercy on the cities of Juda and Jerusalem, against which thou hast been angry these seventy years?"

Q. What Scripture have you for praying to angels?

A. *Gen.* xlviii. 16, where Jacob on his death bed prayed to an angel for Ephraim and Manasses, saying, 'The angel of the Lord that delivered me from all evils, bless these children.'

This place is cited for prayer to the angels in the notes of the Rhemish Testament upon it, and is confirmed to signify a created angel by St. Basil, lib. 3. cont. Dunon. sub initio: And St. Chrysosthom. 7. in laudem Sancti Pauli.

Q. How did Lucifer and his fellow angels fall from their dignity in heaven?

A. By a rebellious sin of pride.

Q. With what shall their ruins be repaired?

A. Holy men.

Q. When and to what likeness did God create man?

A. On the sixth day, and to his own likeness: *Gen.* i. 27.

Q. In what doth the similitude consist?

A. In this, that man is in his soul an incorporeal, intellectual and immortal spirit, as God is. And in this, that as in God there is but one most divine nature or essence, and yet three distinct Persons; so in man there is but one indivisible soul, and yet in that soul three distinct powers, will, memory, and understanding.

Q. How do you prove the soul to be immortal?

A. Out of *Matt.* x. 28, where Christ saith, 'Fear not them that kill the body, and cannot kill the soul.'

Q. What other proof have you?

A. Out of *Eccles.* xii. 7. At our death the dust returns to the earth from whence it was, and the spirit to God that gave it.

Q. In what state did God create man?

A. In the state of original justice, and perfection of all natural gifts.

Q. Do we owe much to God for our creation?

A. Very much, seeing he made us in such perfect state, creating us for himself, and all things else for us.

Q. How did we lose original justice?

A. By Adam's disobedience to God, in eating the forbidden fruit.

Q. In what state are we now born?

A. In the state of original sin, and prone to actual sin, subject to death.

Q. How prove you that?

A. Out of *Rom.* v. 12. 'By one man sin entered into the world, and by sin death; and so unto all men death did pass, in whom all have sinned.'

Q. Had man ever died, if he had never sinned?

A. No, he had not, but had been converted by the tree of life, and been translated alive into the fellowship of the angels.

The Second Article

Q. SAY the second article.

A. And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord.

Q. Of what treats this article?

A. Of the second person of the blessed Trinity, in whom we also believe and put our trust.

Q. What is the second Person?

A. He is true God, and true Man, in one Person.

Q. How prove you that?

A. Out of *St. John's* Gospel, chap. i. 1. 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God, &c. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.'

Q. What other proof have you?

A. Out of *Phil.* ii. 6, 7, where *St. Paul* saith, 'That Christ when he was in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but he hath lessened himself, taking the form of a servant, made unto the likeness of men; and found in habit as a man.'

Q. Why should God be man man?

A. To redeem and save lost man.

Q. Was his incarnation necessary for that end?

A. In the manner it was; because our offences against God were in

some sort infinite; as being against his infinite goodness; and therefore required an infinite satisfaction; which no one could make but God and therefore he was made man.

Q. What other proof have you for the necessity of the Incarnation?

A. Because God is in himself so spiritual, sublime, and abstract a thing, that if he had not in his mercy adapted his own inscrutable greatness to the littleness of our sensible capacity, by being made man, scarce on of a thousand would ever have been able to know anything to the purpose of him; or consequently to love and serve him as they ought, (which is the necessary means of our salvation) since nothing is efficaciously willed which is not first well understood.

Q. What benefit have we by the knowledge of God made man?

A. It much inflames us with the love of God, who could not more have dignified men's nature, or shown more love to the world, then to send down his only Son to redeem it in our flesh.

Q. What signifies the name of Jesus?

A. It signifies a Saviour, St. *Matt.* i. 21.

Q. Is any special honour due to that name?

A. There is, because it is the highest title of God made man.

Q. How prove you that?

A. Out of *Phil.* ii. 8, 9, 10, where we read, 'God hath given unto Christ because he hath humbled himself unto the death of the cross, a name which is above all names, the name of Jesus.'

Q. What other proof have you?

A. Because there is no other name under heaven given to man, in which we must be saved. *Acts* iv. 12.

Q. How prove you that we must bow at this name?

A. Out of Phil. ii. 10. That in the name of Jesus every knee should bow of those that are in heaven, on earth and in hell.

Q. What signifies the name Christ?

A. It signifies anointed.

Q. Why was he called anointed?

A. Because he was a priest, a prophet, and a king to all which unction pertains.

Q. With what was Christ anointed?

A. With all the plenitude of divine grace.

Q. What mean the words, his only Son our Lord?

A. They mean that Jesus Christ is the only Son of God the Father, begotten, as he is God, and of the same Father from all eternity, without a mother; and therefore is coequal and consubstantial to his Father; and consequently infinite, omnipotent Creator, and so Lord of us and all things, as the Father is.

*The Third Article***Q. WHAT is the third article?**

A. Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary.

Q. What means, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost?

A. It means that the second Person of the blessed Trinity took flesh of the Virgin Mary, not by a human generation, but by the work of the Holy Ghost.

Q. How prove you that?

A. Out of St. Luke i. 31, 35. Behold (saith the angel) thou shalt conceive and bear a Son, &c. the Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the virtue of the Highest shall overshadow thee.

Q. What understand you by the words, born of the Virgin Mary?

A. I understand that Christ was born of her at midnight, in a poor stable at Bethlehem, between an ox and an ass.

Q. Why at midnight?

A. To signify that he came to take away the darkness of our sins.

Q. Why in Bethlehem?

A. Because it was the head city of David's family, and Christ was of David's race.

Q. Why in a poor stable?

A. To teach us to love poverty and contempt of this world.

Q. Why between an ox and an ass?

A. To fulfil that of the prophet, Thou shalt be known, O Lord, between two beasts, Habacuc xii. *juxta* Sept.

Q. What doth the birth of Christ avail us?

A. It perfecteth in us faith, hope, and charity.

Q. What signifies, "born of the Virgin Mary?"

A. It signifies that Our Lady was a virgin not only before, but also in, and after childbirth.