



The Christian Path

Following baptism, the Catholic Christian must endeavour to be a true disciple of Jesus. The believer must seek forgiveness of subsequent sins, and try to follow the example and teaching of Jesus. To help Christians, Jesus has provided seven sacraments which give Grace from God to the believer. These are, Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Reconciliation/Confession, Anointing of the Sick, Holy Orders, and Matrimony.

Catholics believe that God works actively in the world. Christians may grow in grace through prayer, good works, and spiritual disciplines such as fasting and pilgrimage. Prayer takes the form of praise, thanksgiving and supplication. Christians can and should pray for others, even for enemies and persecutors (Matthew 5:44). They may address their requests for the intercession of others not only to people still in earthly life, but also to those in heaven, in particular the Virgin Mary and the other Saints. As Mother of Jesus, the Virgin Mary is also considered to be the spiritual mother of all Christians. Unless a Christian dies in unrepented mortal sin, which is normally remitted in Penance, that person has God's promise of inheriting eternal life. Before entering heaven, some undergo a purification, known as Purgatory. Catholic teachings include a stress on forgiveness, doing good to others, and on the sanctity of life. This is manifested in practical terms by opposing activities which Catholics see as destroying divinely created life, including euthanasia, eugenics, contraception, abortion, and capital punishment. The Catholic Church maintains that, through the graces Jesus won for humanity by sacrificing himself on the cross, salvation is possible even for those outside the visible boundaries of the Church, whether non-Catholic Christians or non-Christians, if in life they respond positively to the grace and truth that God reveals to them.

*"Roman Catholic Church."

Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia.