



# THE HUMANISTIC CATHOLIC CATECHISM

*Traditional Form, Humanistic Substance*

Catholicism without God

Catholic in external form, humanistic in meaning

Primatial See: Ketchikan, Alaska

Founder and Presiding Bishop: Bishop Robert Horwath

Foundation Catechism Edition

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Part II, Catechism in Questions and Answers: 120 questions for teaching, formation, membership, clergy preparation, and website instruction.

Part III, Summary Formulas and Teaching Notes: concise formulas for public use, pastoral instruction, registrar language, and page-by-page website consistency.

*Central formula: Humanistic Catholicism is essentially Catholicism without God: Catholic in external form, humanistic in meaning.*

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## Decree of Publication

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This catechism is issued as a formation text for the Humanistic Catholic Church, an independent church body with its Primatial See in Ketchikan, Alaska.

It is written to state the Church's theology, ceremonial identity, sacramental interpretation, moral vision, pastoral language, and official teaching style.

The catechism is not a Roman Catholic document and does not claim affiliation with the Roman Catholic Church, the Vatican, any Roman Catholic diocese, or any other ecclesiastical body.

*The rule of interpretation is always: Catholic in external form, humanistic in meaning.*

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## Preface: Why a Catechism?

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A catechism gives a church a stable teaching voice. It allows members, visitors, clergy, students, and website readers to understand what the Church means by its words and rites.

The Humanistic Catholic Church uses familiar Catholic vocabulary, but it does not use that vocabulary to teach supernatural claims. It uses Catholic language as ceremonial, cultural, ethical, and communal language.

This catechism therefore explains what the Church keeps, what it removes, and what it means when it uses the old names of Mass, sacrament, blessing, priest, bishop, parish, diocese, and holy order.

The goal is not confusion. The goal is clarity: Catholicism without God, expressed through beauty, memory, dignity, and human solidarity.

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# 1. The Core Identity

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The Humanistic Catholic Church is essentially Catholicism without God. This phrase must be understood with precision.

The Church keeps the visible structure of Catholic ceremonial life: Mass, sacraments, clergy, vestments, incense, holy water, candles, bells, feasts, fasts, parishes, dioceses, blessings, ordination, anointing, and pastoral rites.

The Church does not interpret these forms as supernatural interventions. It interprets them as human actions of memory, meaning, belonging, ethical responsibility, compassion, and care for creation.

*The Church is Catholic in external form and humanistic in substance.*

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## 2. The Core Rule

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### **Traditional Form, Humanistic Substance**

The core rule governs all doctrine, liturgy, teaching, websites, certificates, pastoral forms, and public statements.

Traditional form means that the Church retains the ceremonial grammar of Catholic life: the altar, the book, the water, the oil, the bread, the cup, the vestment, the procession, the calendar, the register, and the office of clergy.

Humanistic substance means that the Church interprets these forms through the human person, the earth, memory, reason, compassion, community, and moral responsibility.

When older language seems to suggest supernatural meaning, it must be rewritten into humanistic meaning.

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## 3. Language Discipline

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The Church's official language must avoid references to a supernatural deity, supernatural beings, supernatural intervention, supernatural command, supernatural forgiveness, and supernatural rescue.

The Church may retain familiar Catholic ceremonial terms, but each term must be explained in humanistic and non-supernatural language.

- Say "ritual reflection" rather than deity-directed prayer.
- Say "ceremonial dedication" rather than supernatural blessing.
- Say "moral repair" rather than supernatural absolution.
- Say "human dignity and shared life" rather than supernatural status.
- Say "memory, solidarity, and table fellowship" when explaining the Eucharist.

This discipline protects the identity of the Church and prevents the website, catechism, and rites from drifting into theistic language.

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## 4. The Human Person

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Every person possesses inherent dignity. Dignity is not earned by belief, social status, education, wealth, purity, clergy rank, nationality, gender, orientation, or previous religious history.

The Church receives people as embodied, relational, moral, vulnerable, and capable of growth. Human beings are wounded by shame, exclusion, violence, isolation, and neglect; they are strengthened by belonging, ritual, truth, care, memory, and service.

The rites of the Church exist to guard dignity. No rite should humiliate a person, coerce belief, or create a false hierarchy of human worth.

*The first pastoral principle is dignity before judgment.*

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## 5. Creation and the Earth

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Creation means the earth, the natural world, embodied life, material reality, and the shared environment that sustains the human family.

Water, oil, bread, wine or grape juice, ash, fire, incense, flowers, cloth, candles, and human touch are central because human beings are embodied. Ritual speaks through material signs.

The Church honors creation through ecological care, gratitude for food and water, responsible use of material things, and reverence for the fragile conditions that make life possible.

In this catechism, creation is not a supernatural claim. It is the name of the shared living world.

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## 6. Jesus in Memory

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The Humanistic Catholic Church honors Jesus as a historical figure of compassion, courage, table fellowship, moral seriousness, and solidarity with people pushed to the margins.

The Church does not require supernatural claims about Jesus as a condition of participation. It receives the memory of Jesus as part of the Catholic ceremonial inheritance and as a model of human compassion.

The Eucharistic table especially remembers Jesus as a figure who ate with friends, outsiders, seekers, wounded people, and the socially rejected.

*Jesus is honored in memory, ethical imitation, table fellowship, and acts of compassion.*

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## 7. The Church

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The Church is the ceremonial community gathered around human dignity, ritual beauty, shared memory, ethical responsibility, and sacramental practice.

The Church exists to accompany people through the thresholds of life: birth, naming, belonging, maturity, wrongdoing, reconciliation, illness, commitment, leadership, grief, and death.

The Church may gather in homes, chapels, parishes, missions, dioceses, online communities, and pastoral settings.

The visible center of unity is the Presiding Bishop, who guards the Church's doctrine, discipline, ceremonial books, clergy, parishes, and institutional continuity.

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## 8. Authority and Governance

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Authority in the Humanistic Catholic Church is pastoral, ceremonial, institutional, and ethical. It exists to preserve identity, protect people, keep records, form clergy, and maintain the rites.

The Presiding Bishop serves as the visible head of the Church and the chief interpreter of Humanistic Catholicism.

The Church may use a corporation-sole structure to maintain continuity of office, property, records, and ecclesiastical identity.

Authority is not supernatural domination. It is responsibility for order, clarity, care, discipline, and continuity.

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## 9. The Seven Sacraments

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The Humanistic Catholic Church keeps the seven sacraments as the central ceremonial rites of life and community.

- Baptism
- Confirmation
- Eucharist
- Reconciliation
- Anointing of the Sick
- Matrimony
- Holy Orders

A sacrament is an outward ceremonial act using material signs, ritual words, and communal presence to mark human dignity, belonging, memory, responsibility, healing, covenant, or office.

Sacraments are not supernatural mechanisms. They are embodied ceremonies that form persons and communities.

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## 10. Baptism

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Baptism is the rite of welcome, naming, belonging, renewal, and entry into the ceremonial life of the Church.

Its primary sign is water. Water expresses birth, cleansing, life, fragility, renewal, creation, and shared humanity.

The font, candle, white garment, certificate, and register all give public form to the person's welcome into the community.

Baptism does not create a supernatural status. It gives a visible sign of dignity, belonging, care, and communal recognition.

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## 11. Confirmation

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Confirmation is the mature affirmation of belonging, conscience, courage, ethical responsibility, and commitment to community.

Its signs are the laying on of hands, public affirmation, and, where used, ceremonial anointing.

Confirmation marks the moment when a person publicly claims responsibility for a life of compassion, truthfulness, service, and solidarity.

It is not a supernatural empowerment. It is a solemn communal recognition of maturity, courage, and ethical commitment.

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## 12. Eucharist and Mass

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The Eucharist is the central table rite of the Humanistic Catholic Church. The Mass preserves Catholic ceremonial form while interpreting that form humanistically.

The Mass includes gathering, readings, homily, offertory, Eucharistic prayer in humanistic language, elevation, communion, and dismissal.

The altar is the table of the community. The bread is shared life. The cup is joy, suffering, and fellowship. The book is memory and wisdom. The homily is moral reflection. Communion is belonging.

*The Eucharist is memory, solidarity, table fellowship, and communion with one another.*

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## 13. Reconciliation and Penance

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Reconciliation is the rite of truth-telling, accountability, amends, moral repair, and restoration to community.

Wrongdoing is understood as harm done to self, neighbor, community, creation, conscience, or the vulnerable.

The priest listens, guides reflection, protects appropriate confidentiality, and helps the penitent choose concrete repair.

Penance is not punishment for its own sake. It is an act of restitution, apology, service, discipline, or renewed ethical practice.

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## 14. Anointing of the Sick

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Anointing of the Sick is the rite of comfort, dignity, presence, tenderness, and communal care for those who are ill, aging, afraid, grieving, injured, or near death.

Its sign is oil. Oil expresses gentleness, strengthening, care, and the touch of the community.

The rite does not promise supernatural cure. It offers a human circle of attention, support, courage, and companionship.

The sick person is not reduced to a condition. The rite protects dignity and says: you are not alone.

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## 15. Matrimony

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Matrimony is the public covenant of two persons who promise love, fidelity, equality, mutual care, household life, and shared responsibility.

Its signs include consent, vows, rings, joined hands, public witness, and ceremonial blessing understood as dedication.

The Church's marriage discipline is inclusive according to civil law and pastoral order.

Matrimony is not ownership or hierarchy. It is mutual dignity, companionship, honesty, forgiveness, and care.

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## 16. Holy Orders

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Holy Orders sets apart deacons, priests, and bishops for service, ritual leadership, pastoral care, teaching, governance, and preservation of the Church's ceremonial life.

Ordination is a solemn act of recognition, appointment, authorization, and responsibility.

A deacon serves charity, assistance, proclamation, and care for the vulnerable. A priest presides, teaches, blesses, counsels, and cares for the community. A bishop oversees doctrine, discipline, ordination, unity, and mission.

The ordained are servants of the rites, not owners of them.

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## 17. Blessings

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A blessing in Humanistic Catholicism is a ceremonial dedication. It does not call down supernatural power.

To bless is to set apart a person, place, object, ministry, meal, journey, home, or moment for dignity, gratitude, care, courage, memory, and ethical purpose.

Homes may be dedicated to safety and hospitality. Meals may be received with gratitude. Journeys may be marked with prudence and courage. Ministries may be set apart for service.

*A blessing says: this matters; this person is not alone; this life deserves attention.*

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## 18. Ritual Reflection

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Humanistic Catholicism may retain the posture, rhythm, silence, and ceremonial shape of prayer, but it does not direct speech to a supernatural being.

Ritual reflection includes silence, lament, gratitude, remembrance, aspiration, moral attention, public commitment, and communal speech.

Official texts should say: let us remember, let us reflect, let us commit ourselves, let us hold one another in compassion, or let us renew our care for the human family.

This language keeps the ceremony serious while preserving the non-theistic identity of the Church.

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## 19. Moral Life and Repair

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The moral life of the Church is built on truthfulness, compassion, accountability, justice, hospitality, reconciliation, and service.

Wrongdoing is harm. Repentance is honest recognition of harm. Penance is concrete repair. Reconciliation is the restoration of truth, dignity, and relationship where repair is possible.

The Church rejects cheap forgiveness that ignores victims, and it rejects endless shame that prevents repair.

The goal is moral seriousness joined to compassion.

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## 20. The Liturgical Year

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The Church keeps the liturgical year because human beings need rhythm, repetition, seasonal memory, and ceremonial time.

Advent may be interpreted as longing and preparation. Christmas as birth, tenderness, and hospitality. Lent as simplicity, fasting, honesty, and repair. Holy Week as courage, betrayal, suffering, grief, and solidarity. Easter as renewal and resilience. Ordinary Time as steady ethical formation.

Feasts mark gratitude and memory. Fasts mark restraint, discipline, and solidarity.

The calendar trains the community to remember and to live with intention.

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## 21. Saints and Exemplars

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Saints are remembered as historical witnesses, moral exemplars, cultural ancestors, and symbols of courage, compassion, wisdom, sacrifice, justice, and service.

They are not invoked as supernatural intercessors. They are studied, honored, and imitated.

The sanctoral cycle teaches that human life can become memorable through courage, generosity, service, art, scholarship, care for the poor, and fidelity to conscience.

A feast of a saint is a school of memory.

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## 22. Membership and Belonging

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Membership may be expressed through attendance, online participation, reception of rites, formal enrollment, parish registration, ministry appointment, or support of the Church's mission.

The Church may recognize members, communicant members, baptized members, confirmed members, lay ministers, clergy, parish members, online members, supporters, and inactive members.

A person may belong without holding supernatural beliefs. What matters is sincere participation, respect for the Church's identity, and willingness to live within its ceremonial and ethical life.

*Belonging is not gatekeeping. Belonging is dignity made visible.*

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## 23. Parishes, Dioceses, and Missions

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The Church may establish parishes, missions, chapels, dioceses, online ministries, and special works under the authority of the Presiding Bishop.

A parish is a local community of worship, rites, pastoral care, and records. A mission is a developing work. A diocese is a regional structure of oversight, formation, and coordination.

Online ministry may extend pastoral care and teaching to those unable to attend in person.

All structures exist to serve the rites, the members, and the human family.

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## 24. Registers and Certificates

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The Church keeps records because ceremonies shape identity, memory, accountability, and continuity.

Registers may include baptism, confirmation, Eucharistic participation, reconciliation records where pastorally appropriate, anointing, matrimony, holy orders, clergy appointment, lay ministry, membership, parishes, missions, dioceses, and certificates.

Certificates should be beautiful, formal, and accurate. They are public signs of a rite, status, appointment, or belonging.

Recordkeeping must be careful, ethical, and respectful of confidentiality.

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## 25. Public Mission

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The mission of the Humanistic Catholic Church is to preserve Catholic ceremonial life while offering a humanistic path of dignity, compassion, memory, community, and ethical responsibility.

The Church exists especially for people who love Catholic form but cannot accept supernatural deity-language.

Its work includes worship in humanistic form, sacramental rites, pastoral care, teaching, clergy formation, membership, registrar services, online ministry, and ceremonies of blessing and life passage.

*The Church is a home for ritual, beauty, and humanistic meaning.*

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## Catechism Questions 1-8

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**Q1. What is the Humanistic Catholic Church?**

An independent church body that preserves Catholic external form while interpreting it through humanistic meaning.

**Q2. What is Humanistic Catholicism?**

It is essentially Catholicism without God: Catholic in external form, humanistic in meaning.

**Q3. Why is it called Catholic?**

Because it keeps the Catholic pattern of Mass, sacraments, clergy, parishes, dioceses, vestments, feasts, fasts, blessings, and ceremonial life.

**Q4. Why is it called Humanistic?**

Because it interprets those forms through human dignity, creation, reason, compassion, community, memory, and ethical responsibility.

**Q5. Is the Church Roman Catholic?**

No. It is independent and is not affiliated with the Roman Catholic Church, the Vatican, or any Roman Catholic diocese.

**Q6. Is the Church anti-Catholic?**

No. It preserves Catholic external beauty and structure while giving it a humanistic interpretation.

**Q7. Is this a parody or satire?**

No. It is a serious ceremonial church.

**Q8. What is the motto?**

Traditional Form, Humanistic Substance.

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## Catechism Questions 9-16

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**Q9. What does the Church preserve?**

Mass, sacraments, blessings, clergy, vestments, holy water, incense, bells, candles, altars, feasts, fasts, parishes, dioceses, and the liturgical year.

**Q10. What does the Church remove?**

Supernatural deity-language, supernatural intervention language, and claims of supernatural power.

**Q11. What does the Church emphasize instead?**

Human dignity, creation, memory, reason, compassion, community, moral repair, ritual beauty, and solidarity.

**Q12. What is the purpose of the Church?**

To preserve ceremonial Catholic life in a humanistic form and accompany people with dignity, ritual, beauty, compassion, and ethical seriousness.

**Q13. What does the Church teach about human dignity?**

Every person possesses inherent dignity and deserves respect, care, and belonging.

**Q14. Is dignity earned?**

No. It is not earned by belief, status, purity, wealth, education, or church rank.

**Q15. How does the Church receive people excluded elsewhere?**

With dignity, care, and invitation into community, healing, and participation.

**Q16. What is the human family?**

The shared community of persons bound by vulnerability, responsibility, memory, and mutual care.

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## Catechism Questions 17-24

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**Q17. What does creation mean?**

The earth, nature, embodied life, and the material world that sustains human existence.

**Q18. Why use material signs?**

Because human beings are embodied and material signs help express memory, dignity, grief, joy, commitment, and belonging.

**Q19. Does the Church teach care for the earth?**

Yes. Care for creation is part of ethical responsibility.

**Q20. How is Jesus understood?**

As a historical figure of compassion, courage, table fellowship, justice, and solidarity with the marginalized.

**Q21. Must members hold supernatural claims about Jesus?**

No. Participation does not require supernatural claims.

**Q22. Why remember Jesus?**

Because Catholic ceremonial life is shaped by his memory, especially table fellowship, suffering, compassion, and courage.

**Q23. What is the Eucharistic memory of Jesus?**

A memory of table fellowship with friends, outsiders, wounded people, and seekers.

**Q24. What is the Church?**

A ceremonial community gathered around dignity, ritual, ethical life, memory, and sacramental practice.

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## Catechism Questions 25-32

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**Q25. Who is the visible center of unity?**

The Presiding Bishop.

**Q26. Who is the Founder and Presiding Bishop?**

Bishop Robert Horwath.

**Q27. Where is the Primate See?**

Ketchikan, Alaska.

**Q28. What is corporation-sole governance?**

A structure in which the office of the Presiding Bishop serves as the continuing legal and ecclesiastical center of the Church.

**Q29. Why use papal-style ecclesiology?**

To preserve unity, clarity, continuity, and a visible center of governance in external form.

**Q30. What is a sacrament?**

An outward ceremonial act using material signs, ritual words, and communal presence to mark dignity, belonging, memory, healing, covenant, or office.

**Q31. How many sacraments are kept?**

Seven.

**Q32. What are the seven sacraments?**

Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Reconciliation, Anointing of the Sick, Matrimony, and Holy Orders.

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## Catechism Questions 33-40

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**Q33. Are sacraments supernatural mechanisms?**

No. They are embodied rituals of meaning, belonging, memory, and ethical transformation.

**Q34. Why keep the seven sacraments?**

Because they mark the great thresholds of human life and preserve the Catholic ceremonial pattern.

**Q35. What is Baptism?**

The rite of welcome, naming, belonging, renewal, and entry into the ceremonial life of the Church.

**Q36. What is the sign of Baptism?**

Water.

**Q37. What does the water mean?**

Life, birth, cleansing, renewal, creation, and shared humanity.

**Q38. Who may receive Baptism?**

Any person sincerely presented for welcome into the Church's ceremonial life.

**Q39. What does Baptism give?**

A public sign of belonging, dignity, welcome, and communal care.

**Q40. What is Confirmation?**

The mature affirmation of belonging, conscience, courage, ethical responsibility, and commitment to community.

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## Catechism Questions 41-47

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**Q41. What are the signs of Confirmation?**

Laying on of hands, public affirmation, and, where used, ceremonial anointing.

**Q42. What does Confirmation mean?**

The person publicly claims responsibility for compassion, courage, and solidarity.

**Q43. What is the Eucharist?**

The central table rite of the Church.

**Q44. What are the Eucharistic signs?**

Bread and wine or grape juice.

**Q45. What does the bread signify?**

Shared life, nourishment, memory, and belonging.

**Q46. What does the cup signify?**

Joy, suffering, covenant, community, and the shared human story.

**Q47. What is Communion?**

Receiving the table signs as an expression of belonging, solidarity, and shared humanity.

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## Catechism Questions 48-54

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**Q48. Who may receive Communion?**

Those who come in sincerity, respect, and willingness to share in the community's ritual life.

**Q49. What is the altar?**

The ceremonial table of memory, community, and shared life.

**Q50. What is Reconciliation?**

The rite of truth-telling, accountability, moral repair, amends, and restoration to community.

**Q51. What may be confessed?**

Harm, wrongdoing, neglect, dishonesty, cruelty, selfishness, broken trust, or failure of responsibility.

**Q52. What does the priest do in Reconciliation?**

Listens, guides reflection, protects appropriate confidentiality, and helps the penitent seek repair.

**Q53. What replaces supernatural absolution?**

A solemn declaration of accountability, courage, moral repair, and renewed belonging.

**Q54. What is penance?**

An act of repair, restitution, service, apology, discipline, or renewed ethical practice.

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## Catechism Questions 55-61

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**Q55. What is Anointing of the Sick?**

The rite of comfort, dignity, presence, care, and accompaniment for illness, aging, suffering, fear, or serious need.

**Q56. What is the sign of anointing?**

Oil.

**Q57. What does oil mean?**

Tenderness, strengthening, care, dignity, and the touch of the community.

**Q58. Who may receive anointing?**

Any person in sickness, frailty, grief, fear, suffering, or serious need of comfort.

**Q59. What is Matrimony?**

A public covenant of love, fidelity, equality, mutual care, and shared household life.

**Q60. What are its signs?**

Consent, vows, rings, joined hands, public witness, and ceremonial dedication.

**Q61. Is Matrimony inclusive?**

Yes, according to civil law and the Church's pastoral discipline.

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## Catechism Questions 62-68

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**Q62. What does marriage affirm?**

Love, fidelity, equality, shared responsibility, care, forgiveness, household stability, and mutual dignity.

**Q63. What is Holy Orders?**

The rite setting apart deacons, priests, and bishops for service, ritual leadership, pastoral care, teaching, governance, and preservation of ceremonial life.

**Q64. What are the three orders?**

Deacon, priest, and bishop.

**Q65. What is a deacon?**

A minister of service, charity, proclamation, assistance at rites, and care for the vulnerable.

**Q66. What is a priest?**

A minister authorized to preside at Mass, administer sacraments, offer blessings, teach, counsel, and care for the community.

**Q67. What is a bishop?**

A chief minister of oversight, ordination, governance, teaching, unity, and ceremonial continuity.

**Q68. What is the Presiding Bishop?**

The visible head of the Church and guardian of its doctrine, discipline, liturgy, clergy, and institutional continuity.

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## Catechism Questions 69-75

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**Q69. What is a blessing?**

A ceremonial dedication of a person, place, object, meal, journey, ministry, or moment to dignity, care, compassion, memory, and ethical purpose.

**Q70. Does blessing require supernatural language?**

No. It is symbolic, ceremonial, communal, and ethical.

**Q71. What may be blessed?**

Homes, meals, families, objects, journeys, ministries, candles, water, ashes, palms, vestments, animals, tools of service, and life moments.

**Q72. What is holy water?**

Water ceremonially set apart as a sign of life, cleansing, renewal, creation, and belonging.

**Q73. What is incense?**

A sensory sign of reverence, attention, memory, solemnity, and beauty.

**Q74. What are candles?**

Signs of attention, memory, warmth, hope, and the fragile beauty of human life.

**Q75. Why keep feasts and fasts?**

Because human beings need rhythm, memory, celebration, restraint, and seasonal formation.

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## Catechism Questions 76-82

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**Q76. What is fasting?**

A practice of simplicity, discipline, solidarity, and renewed attention to others.

**Q77. What is a feast?**

A ceremonial celebration of memory, gratitude, community, and human meaning.

**Q78. What are saints?**

Historical exemplars of courage, compassion, sacrifice, wisdom, justice, and service.

**Q79. Are saints invoked supernaturally?**

No. They are remembered, honored, studied, and imitated.

**Q80. What is the Church's moral vision?**

Truthfulness, compassion, accountability, justice, hospitality, reconciliation, and service.

**Q81. What is wrongdoing?**

Harm done to self, neighbor, community, creation, conscience, or the vulnerable.

**Q82. What is repentance?**

Honest recognition of harm and a real turn toward repair.

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## Catechism Questions 83-89

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**Q83. What is forgiveness?**

The difficult human work of release, restoration, and healing where possible, without denying justice or accountability.

**Q84. What is reconciliation?**

The restoration of truth, trust, dignity, and relationship where repair is possible.

**Q85. Does the Church worship a supernatural being?**

No. It gathers for ritual, reflection, memory, ethical formation, and community.

**Q86. What replaces deity-directed prayer?**

Reflection, silence, lament, gratitude, remembrance, aspiration, and communal commitment.

**Q87. How should official prayers be written?**

As communal reflections directed toward dignity, creation, memory, compassion, and ethical responsibility.

**Q88. What should not appear in official Church prayers?**

References to supernatural beings, supernatural intervention, heavenly reward, angels, demons, or supernatural power.

**Q89. Who may attend?**

All who participate respectfully.

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## Catechism Questions 90-96

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**Q90. Who may become a member?**

Any person who sincerely identifies with the Church's ceremonial life and humanistic meaning.

**Q91. Must members hold supernatural beliefs?**

No.

**Q92. Can people from other religious backgrounds attend?**

Yes.

**Q93. Can agnostics, atheists, humanists, cultural Catholics, and seekers participate?**

Yes.

**Q94. Can people participate online?**

Yes, where appropriate to the rite and pastoral context.

**Q95. Does the Church have clergy?**

Yes. Lay ministers, deacons, priests, bishops, and the Presiding Bishop.

**Q96. Does the Church have parishes and dioceses?**

Yes. It may establish parishes, missions, chapels, dioceses, online communities, and ministries.

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## Catechism Questions 97-103

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**Q97. Does the Church keep records?**

Yes. It keeps registers of sacraments, clergy, membership, certificates, parishes, dioceses, and official acts.

**Q98. Why are records important?**

They preserve memory, identity, accountability, continuity, and pastoral care.

**Q99. What is the final summary?**

Catholicism without God: traditional Catholic external form interpreted through dignity, creation, compassion, reason, memory, community, ritual beauty, and ethical responsibility.

**Q100. What is a parish?**

A local community of rites, teaching, pastoral care, membership, and records.

**Q101. What is a mission?**

A developing work of the Church that may become a parish or remain a specialized ministry.

**Q102. What is a diocese?**

A regional structure for oversight, formation, coordination, clergy, records, and ceremonial life.

**Q103. What is online ministry?**

A digital extension of teaching, pastoral care, worship, and community for people who cannot gather physically or who participate at a distance.

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## Catechism Questions 104-110

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**Q104. What is clergy formation?**

The preparation of ministers in the Church's theology, rites, ethics, records, pastoral care, and ceremonial discipline.

**Q105. What is a catechumen?**

A person preparing for deeper participation, baptism, reception, confirmation, or membership.

**Q106. What is a communicant member?**

A person who participates in the Eucharistic life of the Church.

**Q107. What is a certificate?**

A formal record of a rite, appointment, status, or membership.

**Q108. What is the registrar?**

The office or function that maintains official records, certificates, registers, and verification.

**Q109. What is safeguarding?**

The Church's duty to protect people from abuse, coercion, exploitation, neglect, and misuse of authority.

**Q110. What is pastoral care?**

Respectful accompaniment through illness, grief, confusion, conflict, moral repair, family need, and life transitions.

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## Catechism Questions 111-117

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**Q111. What is ceremonial beauty?**

The use of ordered ritual, music, image, gesture, vestment, space, material signs, and silence to help people experience meaning.

**Q112. What is the role of reason?**

Reason helps the Church interpret tradition responsibly, protect people, teach clearly, and avoid superstition or manipulation.

**Q113. What is compassion?**

The disciplined practice of attending to suffering with tenderness, courage, and practical care.

**Q114. What is solidarity?**

Standing with the human family, especially the vulnerable, isolated, grieving, poor, rejected, or forgotten.

**Q115. What is memory?**

The Church's practice of receiving stories, rites, saints, seasons, and registers as part of a shared human inheritance.

**Q116. What is ethical responsibility?**

The duty to live truthfully, repair harm, protect the vulnerable, serve others, and act with integrity.

**Q117. What is the Church's promise to seekers?**

A serious ceremonial home with Catholic form and humanistic meaning.

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## 46. Teaching Formulas

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### Short Formula

*Humanistic Catholicism is essentially Catholicism without God: Catholic in external form,  
humanistic in meaning.*

### Expanded Formula

The Church preserves the familiar Catholic pattern of Mass, sacraments, blessings, vestments, feasts, fasts, clergy, parishes, dioceses, holy water, incense, candles, bells, and ceremonial life, while interpreting these forms through human dignity, creation, reason, compassion, community, memory, and ethical responsibility.

### Public Clarification

The Church is independent and not affiliated with the Roman Catholic Church, the Vatican, or any Roman Catholic diocese.

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## 47. Official Website Rules

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Every webpage must be audited for language consistency. The website should never drift into supernatural claims or deity-directed speech.

- Keep the terms Mass, sacrament, Eucharist, priest, deacon, bishop, parish, diocese, missal, ordinal, blessing, holy water, and holy orders as external Catholic terms.
- Explain every term through dignity, creation, community, memory, compassion, reason, and ethical responsibility.
- Avoid language of supernatural power, supernatural beings, supernatural intervention, supernatural punishment, or supernatural rescue.
- Use the required identity statement on major pages.

The website should be beautiful, solemn, dignified, and clear.

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## 48. Formation and Clergy Use

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This catechism may be used for membership formation, catechumen instruction, clergy training, registrar staff, website copy, social media explanation, and parish teaching.

Clergy should know the distinction between external form and internal meaning. A minister may use Catholic ceremonial grammar, but must interpret the rites in a humanistic way.

Formation should include doctrine, ritual practice, pastoral boundaries, safeguarding, recordkeeping, public language, and ceremonial leadership.

The aim is a disciplined clergy able to preserve beauty without creating confusion.

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## 49. Summary of the Whole Catechism

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The Humanistic Catholic Church exists for those who love Catholic form but require humanistic meaning.

It preserves the altar, book, chalice, water, oil, vestments, bells, incense, feasts, fasts, clergy, sacraments, blessings, parishes, dioceses, and ceremonial life.

It removes supernatural deity-language and interprets the whole ceremonial inheritance through the dignity of the human person, the beauty of creation, the memory of the human family, and the ethical work of compassion.

*Traditional Form, Humanistic Substance. Catholicism without God. Catholic in external form, humanistic in meaning.*

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## 50. Closing Charge

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Let the Church be beautiful without deception, Catholic in form without false affiliation, humanistic without contempt, and disciplined without cruelty.

Let every altar become a table of dignity. Let every rite become a school of compassion. Let every minister remember that office exists for service. Let every member know: they belong at the table.

Let the catechism guide the Church's teaching, website, rites, certificates, registers, public language, and pastoral care.

*The Humanistic Catholic Church is Catholicism without God: traditional in form, humanistic in meaning.*