

The Douay Catechism of 1649



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An
ABRIDGMENT
of the
CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE:
With Proofs of Scripture on
POINTS CONTROVERTED

By Way of Question and Answer. Composed in 1649,
by Rev. Henry Tuberville, D.D.,
of the English College of Douay

“This is the way, walk ye in it.” (Isaiah xxx. 21)

The Author to the Reader

THE principle part of the Catechism is an Abridgment of the Christian Doctrine; defended and cleared by proofs of scripture, in points controverted between Catholics and Sectaries; and explained by the familiar way of question and answer.

To this, in the former impressions, was only adjoined a necessary exposition of the Mass, our Lady's Office, and the festival days of the year, but to this last edition is added, an Explanation of certain ceremonies of the Church, which now renders it more complete for instructing the ignorant, in the whole doctrine and discipline of the Catholic Church. Besides I have corrected some false citations, and other errata, which by the printer's negligence, occurred in the former impressions.

Peruse it, good reader, with such charity as I have penned it, and if by it perusal thou shalt become more knowing in the law of Christ, and in practice more dutiful to God, and thy neighbour, it will abundantly recompense the labour of

Thy well-wishing friend
And servant in CHRIST
H T

Approbatio

CUM Liber inscriptus, An Abridgment of the Christian Doctrine, &c. authore viro docto H. T. mihi probe note, intertia Editione, quam non indiligenter perlegi, nihil contineat contra sanam Doctrinam vel bonos Mores; multa vero partim scitu necessaria, partim valde utilia, dilucide & succincte, in Fide Catholica instituen dis proponat, dignum censeo qui ob publicam utilitatem Typis evulgetur.

Datum Duaci, Martii 11, 1649.
Gulielmus Hydeus, S. T. D., ac professor,
Colligii Anglorum Duacensis Præses &
Librorum Censor.

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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CHAPTER I. WHAT A CHRISTIAN IS: AND OF THE BLESSED TRINITY.



- Q.1. Question: Child, what religion are you of?**
A. Answer: Sir, by the benefit and grace of God, I am Christian.
- Q.2. Whom understand you by a Christian?**
A. Him that inwardly believes and outwardly professes the law of Christ.
- Q.3. 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.4. 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.5. 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. *St. Luke*, xiv. 26, 33.

Q.6. 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.7. 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.8. How show you that?

A. Out of *St. 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.9. 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

CHAPTER VII. CHARITY EXPOUNDED



Q.346. WHAT is Charity?

- A. It is the gift of God, or a supernatural quality infused by God into the soul of man, by which we love God above all things, and our neighbours as ourselves, for God's sake.

Q.347. Why is it called supernatural?

- A. Because it is not in the power of nature to obtain it, but by the special grace and gift of God.

Q.348. Is charity imputed as protestants would have it, or is it a quality truly inherent in the soul?

- A. It is truly inherent in the soul, as wisdom is inherent in a soul that is wise, and love in a soul that loves.

Q.349. How prove you that?

- A. First out of *Rom.* v. 5. "The charity of God which is poured forth in our hearts, by the Holy Ghost, which is given us."

Secondly, out of *Dan.* vi, 22, “Before him (i.e. God) justice have been found in me.”

Thirdly, out of *Ephes.* iii. 17, 18, where St. Paul prays for his brethren, “That Christ may dwell by faith in your hearts: that, being rooted and founded in charity, you may be able to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth, and length, and height, and depth.”

Q.350. What is it to love God above all things?

- A. To be willing to lose all things, rather than the grace or love of God by mortal sin.

Q.351. Who has this love?

- A. They who keep the commandments of God, according to that, “This is the charity of God, that we keep his commandments; and his commandments are not heavy.” *1 John* v. 3.

Q.352. Hath not he charity then, that breaks any of the commandments?

- A. He hath not; for “he that saith, he knoweth God, and doth not keep his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.” *1 John* ii. 4.

Q.353. What is it to love our neighbours as ourselves?

- A. To wish him as much good as we wish ourselves, and to do him no wrong.

Q.354. Who is our neighbour?

- A. All men, women, and children, even those who injure us, or differ from us in religion, but especially Catholics.

Q.355. Why so?

- A. Because they are the images of God, and redeemed with the blood of Christ.

Q.356. Why especially Catholics?

- A. Because they are all members of the mystical body of Christ, which is the church.

Q.357. Whence ariseth the obligations of loving our neighbour?

- A. Because God hath commanded it: and “if one shall say I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar.” *I John* iv. 20.

Q.358. Are we not also bound to love our enemies?

- A. We are, according to that, “It was said of old, Thou shalt not kill: but I say unto you, Love your enemies.” *St. Matt.* v. 43, 44.

Q.359. What kind of love are we bound to show to our enemies?

- A. We are bound to use a civil behaviour towards them, to pray for them in general, and to be disposed to do any charitable office for them when their necessity require it.

Q.360. What is the highest act of charity?

- A. To give our life for God’s honour, and the salvation of our neighbour.

Q.361. Why is charity the greatest and most excellent of virtues?

- A. Because it is the life of all the rest. “Faith without charity is dead.” *St. James* ii. 26.

Q.362. What state of life do we conceive to be of greatest perfection.

- A. That which of its own nature and proper institution obligeth to the highest and greatest charity, for charity is perfection, and such is the state not only of bishops, but also, as many probably think, of pastors who have the charge of souls.

Q.363. How prove you that?

- A. Out of *1 John* xv. 13; “Greater charity than this no man hath, that a man yield his life for his friends,” which is the proper obligation of every parish priest, according to that, “The good pastor giveth his life for his sheep.” *St. John* x. 12.

Q.364. How prove you the necessity of charity?

- A. Out of *St. John* iv. 16. “He that remains in charity, remains in God, and God in him,” and chapter iii. ver 14, “He that loves not, remains in death.”

Q.365. What are the effects of charity?

- A. It destroys sin. “Charity covers a multitude of sins,” *St. James* v. 20, and gives spiritual life to the soul. “In this we know that we are translated from death to life, because we love the brethren.” *1 John* iii. 14.

CHAPTER VIII. OF THE COMMANDMENTS IN GENERAL



Q.366. WHAT is the principal aim or end of the commandments?

A. To teach us the will and pleasure of the eternal God, or the love of God, and our neighbour. "He that loveth his neighbour hath fulfilled the law." *Rom. xiii. 8.*

Q.367. Why are the commandments (excepting the determination of the sabbath day) called the commandments of the law of nature?

A. Because God wrote them in the heart of men at the creation, being the very dictates of natural reason.

Q.368. When did he renew them in the written law?

A. When he gave them to Moses on mount Sinai, in thunder and lightening, written in two tables of stone *Exod. xx.*

which it received by touching and bearing the oblation of the most precious body of Christ; the word *Rood* in the old Saxon tongue, signifying Cross.



CHAPTER XXVI. SOME CEREMONIES OF THE CHURCH EXPOUNDED



Q.1118. WHAT is holy water?

- A. A water sanctified by the word of God and prayer. *1 Tim.* iv. 5, in order to certain spiritual effects.

Q.1119. What are those effects?

- A. The chief are, 1. To make us mindful of our baptism, by which we entered into Christ's mystical body, and therefore we are taught to sprinkle ourselves with it as often as we enter the material Temple (which is a type thereof to celebrate his praise.) 2. To fortify against the illusions of evil spirits, against whom it hath great force as witnessed Theodoret, *Eccl. Hist.* l. 5, c. 31. And hence arose the proverb, He loves it, (speaking of things we hate) as the Devil loves holy water.

Q.1120. How ancient is the use of Holy water?

- A. Ever since the apostles' time; Pope Alexander I. who was but the fourth Pope from St. Peter, makes mention of it in one of his epistles. *Exod.* xxxvii. 8., *2 Par.* iv. 6.; *4 Kings* ii. 21.; *Ps.* I. 9.; *Heb.* ix. 19.; x. 22; *De Cons. Dist.* iii. c. 20; B. Greg. *Pastor, Pars ii.* c. 5.

Q.1121. Why is incense offered in the church?

- A. To raise in the mind of the people an awe of the mysterious in the action to which it is applied, and to beget a pious esteem of it, as also to signify, that our prayers ought to ascend like a sweet perfume in the sight of God. 'Tis mentioned by St. Dionysius, *Eccles Hierarch.* c. 3.

Q.1122. Why is the cross carried before us in procession?

- A. To show that our pilgrimage in this life is nothing but a following of Christ crucified.

Q.1123. Why are our foreheads signed with holy ashes on Ash Wednesday?

- A. To remind us of what we are made, and to admonish us to do penance for our sins, as the Ninevites did in fasting, sackcloth, and ashes, especially in the holy time of Lent.

Q.1124. Who ordained the solemn fast of Lent?

- A. The twelve Apostles, according to *Heirom Epist. ad Marcel*, in memory and imitation of our Saviour's fasting forty days.

Q.1125. Why are the crosses and holy images covered in time of Lent?

- A. To signify that our sins (for which we then do penance) interpose between God and us, and to express an ecclesiastical kind of mourning in reference to our Saviour's passion.

Q.1126. Why is a veil drawn between the altar-piece and the people in Lent time?

- A. To intimate, that, as our sins are as a veil which binder us from seeing the beatific vision, or face of God; and as the veil of the Temple was rent at the

death of Christ, so is the veil of our sins by virtue of his cross and passion, if we apply it by worthy fruits of penance.

Q.1127. What means the fifteen lights set on the triangular figure on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday in holy-week?

- A. The three upper lights signify Jesus, Mary, and Joseph; the twelve lower, the twelve Apostles. The triangular figure signifies, that all light of grace and glory is from the blessed Trinity; and fourteen of those lights are extinguished one by one after every Psalm, to show how all their light of spiritual comfort was extinguished for a time in those most Holy Saints, by the passion and burial of Christ. The fifteenth light is put under the altar to signify his being in the sepulchre, as also the darkness that overspread the whole earth at his death.

Q.1128. What signifies the noise made after a long silence, at the end of the office of Tenebræ?

- A. The silence signifies the horror of our Saviour's death; the noise, the cleaving of the rocks and rending the veil of the Temple which then happened.

Q.1129. Why is the paschal candle hallowed and set up at Easter?

- A. To signify the new light of the spiritual joy and comfort, which Christ brought us at his resurrection; and it is lighted from the beginning of the Gospel till after the communion, between Easter and Ascension, to signify the apparitions which Christ made to his disciples during that space.

Q.1130. Why is the font hallowed?

- A. Because the Apostles so ordered it, according to St. Dionysius, who lived in their time. *1 Eccl. Hier.* c. 2.

Q.1131. Why is that ceremony performed at the feast of Easter and Whitsuntide?

- A. To show that, as in baptism we are buried with Christ, so by virtue of his resurrection, and the coming of the Holy Ghost, we ought to rise again, and walk with him in newness of life.

Q.1132. Why is the material church or temple hallowed?

- A. Because it bears a figure of the spiritual, viz. the mystical body of Christ, which is holy and unspotted, *Ephes.* v. 27. as also to move us to some special reverence and devotion in that place, and all things should be holy in some measure, which appertain to the service of our most Holy God.

Q.1133. Why is the altar consecrated?

- A. Because if the altar in the old law was so holy that it sanctified the gift, *St. Matt.* xxiii. 19. much more ought the altar of the new law to be holy, which is the place of the body and blood of Christ, according to Optatus, in his sixth book against Parmenian the Donatist. "We have an altar (saith St. Paul) whereof they (the Jews) have no power to eat, who serve the Tabernacle." *Heb.* xiii. 10.

THE END