

FAITH



What is Faith?

- **Daniel Webster: “Confidence or trust in a person, thing, or concept” (often without physical evidence)**
- **CCC:**
 - **The invisible God, from the fullness of his love, addresses men as friends, and moves among them, in order to invite and receive them into his company.**
 - **The adequate response to God’s invitation is faith.**
 - **By faith, man completely submits his intellect and his will to God. With his whole being man gives his assent to God the revealer.”**

Characteristics of Faith

- Faith is grace – A supernatural virtue infused by God and before it can be exercised man must have the gift of grace from God to move and assist him
- Faith is a human act – “Believing is an act of the intellect assenting to the divine truth by command of the will moved by God through grace.” Aquinas
- Faith is understanding – It is intrinsic to faith that a believer desires to know better the One in whom he has put his faith and to understand better what He has revealed. There can never be any discrepancy between faith and reason!
- Faith is freedom – Man’s response to God by faith must be free and never forced. The act of faith is of its very nature a free act.
- Faith is necessary – Believing in Jesus Christ and in the One who sent him for our salvation is necessary for obtaining that salvation. Council of Trent
- Faith is perseverance – To live, grow, and preserve in faith until the end we must nourish it with the word of God; we must beg the Lord to increase our faith Mk 9:24
- Faith is the beginning of eternal life – Faith makes us taste in advance the light of the heavenly vision, the goal of our journey here below 1 Jn 3:2

Abraham – “father of all who believe”

- Letter to the Hebrews, is the great eulogy of the faith of Israel’s ancestors (Heb 11:8-40)
- “By faith, Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place which he was to receive as an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was to go.”
- By faith, he lived as a stranger and pilgrim in the promised land.
- By faith, Sarah was given to conceive the son of the promise.
- By faith, Abraham offered his only son in sacrifice.
- “Faith is the realization of what is hoped for, and evidence of things not seen.” (Heb 11:1)

12 Points of the Apostles Creed

- 1. I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.**
- 2. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.**
- 3. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary.**
- 4. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell.**
- 5. On the third day he rose again.**
- 6. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**
- 7. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.**
- 8. I believe in the Holy Spirit,**
- 9. the holy catholic church, the communion of saints,**
- 10. the forgiveness of sins,**
- 11. the resurrection of the body,**
- 12. and the life everlasting.**

(~100 - 180AD, Rome, addressed Gnostic & Marcion heresies)

The Saints are Examples of Faith

Jesus speaking to St Faustina: “My mercy is greater than your sins and those of the entire world. Who can measure the extent of My goodness? For you – I descended from heaven to earth; for you – I allowed Myself to be nailed to the cross; for you – I let My Sacred Heart be pierced with a lance, thus opening wide the source of mercy for you. Come, then, with trust to draw graces from this fountain. I never reject a contrite heart. Your misery has disappeared in the depths of My mercy. Do not argue with Me about your wretchedness. You will give Me pleasure if you hand over to Me your troubles and griefs. I shall heap upon you the treasures of My grace.”

- Diary of St Faustina, paragraph 1485

The Dilemma of Faith Alone

“So also, faith of itself, if it does not have works, is dead. Indeed, someone may say, ‘You have faith, and I have works.’ Demonstrate your faith to me without works, and I will demonstrate my faith to you from my works... Do you want proof, you ignoramus, that faith without works is useless.” - James 2:17-20

Paul Provides an Answer

“If I have all faith so as to move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.” 1 Cor 13:2

Follow God's Path of Love as Proof of your Faith

“The entire point of religion is to make us humble before God and to open us to the path of love. Everything else is more or less a footnote. Liturgy, prayer, the precepts of the Church, the commandments, sacraments, sacramentals—all of it—are finally meant to conform us to the way of love. When they instead turn us away from that path, they have been undermined.”

- Bishop Robert Barron, Gospel Meditation on
Jn16:23-28, 6/1/19

