

1) Who founded the Catholic Church?

The Catholic Church was founded by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ over 2000 years ago. Jesus appointed Peter as the first leader of the Church, “And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.” (Mt. 16:18). Successive leaders of the Church starting from Peter to Francis have been given the designation, ‘Pope’ (Spiritual Father).

2) How do I become a member of the Roman Catholic Church?

One can become a member of the Catholic Church from infancy to adulthood.

Infants are baptized - Baptism being the first Sacrament of Initiation - into the Catholic Church. Here the parents speak on behalf of the child requesting that the child be baptized into the faith. Ongoing formation will take place as the child gets older through consistent Mass attendance and eventual enrollment in Sunday School. This will naturally progress to the reception of the other two Sacraments of Initiation, namely, Holy Communion and Confirmation. After receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation one is considered as having come into “full communion with the faith”, more specifically, a full member of the Catholic Church.

[Click here to read more on Infant Baptism at Stella Maris Catholic Church](#)

[Click here to find out about Sunday School at Stella Maris Catholic Church](#)

Regarding adults, the Catholic Church has a process of formation called the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA). RCIA is geared towards guiding adults into the Church whether they had previously been baptized into another church or have not been baptized. Where one has already been validly baptized, baptism will not be

required. All RCIA candidates will then be prepared for the Sacraments of Holy Communion and Confirmation.

During the formation process you will learn the history, beliefs and values of the Roman Catholic Church. You will also learn the proper order of celebration of the Mass. You will be required to attend Mass; however, you may not receive Communion until you have fully entered the Church. In spite of this, your involvement in the Church allows you participate in prayers and become involved with the community by joining a ministry which can help to solidify your commitment.

[Click here to find out about RCIA at Stella Maris Catholic Church](#)

3) Who do Catholics worship: God or Mary?

Catholics worship God! We believe in the Holy Trinity, God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. However, given the very significant role Mary played in God's plan of salvation we hold her in very high regard. Mary's yes to God, "*Let it be done to me according to Your word*" (Lk. 1:38), to be the mother of Jesus, set in motion the earthly aspect of God's salvation plan which led to Jesus' eventual death on the cross for our sins.

Resulting from our belief in the Triune God is the revelation that as Jesus is God, Mary is therefore the Mother of God and deserves her place of reverence in our lives. Mary's reverential designation as our Blessed Mother also has a scriptural foundation. In the gospel of Luke, Mary's cousin Elizabeth received a revelation about the Incarnation, God-made-flesh. This occurred when Mary visited Elizabeth subsequent to her visitation by the Angel Gabriel. On seeing Mary, Elizabeth exclaimed, "Most blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And how does this happen to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?" (Lk 1:42-43).

4) Do Catholics worship the Saints?

No, Catholics do not worship Saints because they are not God. They are not even considered gods but are gifts from God. All Saints are saved by the blood of Jesus and not by their works. We therefore celebrate their lives as examples to imitate.

5) Why should I go to the sinful Priest to confess my sins?

When Jesus became human, He took our humanity into His divinity. When He rose from the dead, Jesus comforted the weak and fearful disciples. He then breathes on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven....”. (*Jn. 20:22-23*)

The Lord Jesus chose to empower fallible human beings to participate in His work of salvation by giving them power to forgive sins through the Holy Spirit. It is God who forgives sin through the agent of the Priest. Priest and penitent are always in need of mercy. All human beings are empowered to love, forgive and heal through the gift of the Holy Spirit. The Sacrament of Reconciliation/Confession however, is reserved for the Priests who are successors of the first disciples.

6) Why should I join the Catholic Church?

“The difficulty in explaining ‘why I am a Catholic’ is that there are ten thousand reasons all amounting to one reason: that Catholicism is true.” - G.K. Chesterton

The Catholic Church, rich in history and symbolism was founded by Jesus Christ nearly 2,000 years ago. We therefore have the privilege of being part of a faith which was started by our Lord and Saviour. In this regard, we are charged with winning souls for

Christ and building His Kingdom. Jesus gave us His Spirit who leads us into all truth (*Jn. 16:13*). Christ is the head of the Church and we Roman Catholics are the Body, members of His Church

7) Why do Catholics Make the Sign of the Cross?

Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me" (Mt. 16:24).

The sign of the cross (*Signum crucis*), is a ritual blessing made by Catholics on themselves as a form of prayer. This is done by tracing a cross by touching the middle of the forehead, then down the chest, and then touching the left then right shoulder. This action is generally accompanied by spoken or mental recitation of the Trinitarian formula, "In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen." The sign of the cross may also be done by clergy upon others or objects as an act of blessing.

Making the sign of the cross prepares us to receive grace and helps us to cooperate with that grace to do the will of God.

8) Why do Catholics worship on Sunday?

Roman Catholics worship on Sunday because it was on the first day of the week that the disciples who were gathered in a locked room encountered the risen Lord (*Jn. 20: 19 & 26*).

The early Church continued to meet on Sundays, the first day of the week, to encounter the risen Lord in the sharing of the word and the breaking of the bread (*Acts 20:7*).

We worship on Sundays because we believe in Jesus Christ and the power of his resurrection evidenced on the first day of the week.

9) Why do Catholics pray the Rosary?

We pray the Rosary to come to a deeper understanding of true holiness. As Mary said "let it be done to me according to thy word" (Lk. 1:38), we are led to reflect on what this means for each of us. Catholics pray the Rosary as a form of prayer that focuses on various episodes in the life of Jesus as told in Scripture. The Rosary engages the mind and body because when it is prayed, the lips, hands and mind are involved. By reflecting on the life of Jesus, we grow in our love for him and seek to do His will as Mary and the disciples.

The life of Jesus is segmented into twenty mysteries to which is added, the Our Father and a few other prayers. These mysteries are prayed on specific days.

[How to Pray the Rosary](#)

10) Do Catholics believe the Eucharist/Communion is the real Body and Blood of Jesus?

The Eucharist or Holy Communion was instituted by Jesus during His last supper:

Mt. 26:26-28

While they were eating, Jesus took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and giving it to his disciples said, “Take and eat; this is my body.” Then he took a cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which will be shed on behalf of many for the forgiveness of sins.

Lk. 22:19-20

Then he took the bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body, which will be given for you; do this in memory of me.” And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which will be shed for you.

Therefore, the Eucharist or Holy Communion is believed by Catholics to be the real presence of Jesus Christ. This sacrament is both a sacrifice and a meal. We believe that the Holy Spirit is present in the actions of the Priest during the Eucharistic Prayer. The ordinary elements of bread and wine are transformed into the Body and Blood of Jesus. We eat of the Lord so that we may become more like the Lord. This is the work and gift of the Lord.