

Deepening your awareness of a loving Heavenly Father through faith will make your life a richer and happier one. Your ability to make positive changes in the world (**All**), enjoy your relationships (**Us**), and explore your own life (**I**) can all be positively impacted within the rich context of your faith.

## I • Us • All

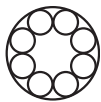
We are each like a drop of water in a pond. Our actions cause concentric ripples of actions. A helping hand or a smile from one person can ripple through their **relationships** to the **relationships** of others, and so on; until the **world** has changed. The actions of the individual may seem insignificant, but can alter the **world**.



**I:** Every positive action begins with **Self (I)**, when we discover our ability to effect change and take the initiative to act.



**Us:** Our impact grows through our **Relationships (Us)**, where we find encouragement as well as challenge.



**All:** The action we take multiplies as it affects the **World (All)** around us, where we realize our greatest power and make a lasting difference.

Look for the **I**, **Us**, and **All** symbols in your planner and supplements. They mark sections and ideas to help make positive ripples in your **self, relationships, and world**.

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# SACRAMENTS

## What are the Sacraments?

Christians believe that Jesus established certain rites, or sacraments, that purify souls, forgive sins and offer God's grace. These sacraments show what is important and essential to Christianity. The word, sacrament, is derived from the Latin word, sacramentum, which means a sign of the sacred.

## How do we know about the Sacraments?

They are recorded in the New Testament, as established by Jesus Christ.

## Who celebrates the Sacraments?

Most Christians celebrate some sacraments. Followers of the Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic and some other Western Christian churches celebrate seven sacraments. Most other Western Christians celebrate two sacraments, Baptism and the Eucharist, also known as Communion.

## What are the seven sacraments of the Roman Catholic Church?

They are Baptism, Eucharist, Reconciliation, Confirmation, Marriage, Holy Orders and Anointing of the Sick.

## What is Baptism?

Many of us were baptized as babies. We don't remember wearing our white gown or whether we cried when the priest washed our heads in water. But, the celebration marks an important event in our faith, whether we are baptized as infants or adults.

The ceremony celebrates God's love for us from the moment we were conceived and the love of family and community have and share with us. The water cleanses us from life, death, cleansing and growth. Baptism frees us from Original Sin and unites us with the Church.

## What is the Eucharist?

This sacrament is the central act of worship for most Christians. As Catholics, we unite with God during Baptism, receive the Holy Spirit at Confirmation and, during the Eucharist, we receive spiritual nourishment and become closer to God again and again. During the Last Supper, Jesus asked his disciples to break bread and drink wine in remembrance of him. "Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him," Jesus said in John 6:56.

As Catholics, we also believe the bread and wine become consecrated during Communion, meaning the bread and wine are ritually transformed into flesh and blood.

## What is the Sacrament of Reconciliation?

As Christians, we have the power to overcome sin. The Sacrament of Reconciliation, or Penance, allows us to reunite with Jesus Christ, who offers us forgiveness from sin, the grace to avoid sin and the charity to forgive others. In seeking God's forgiveness, the sacrament calls us to examine the severity and number of our sins, confess them and then seek mercy.

There are three elements of this process: conversion, confession and celebration.

## What is the Sacrament of Confirmation?

The Sacrament of Confirmation allows us to grow and mature in our faith and commitment to God and His Church. When we undergo Confirmation, we receive the Holy Spirit, the gift of wisdom, understanding, right judgment, courage, knowledge, reverence and wonder and awe in God's presence. Those are the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit.

## What is the Sacrament of Holy Orders?

The Sacrament of Holy Orders is also known as the Sacrament of Ordination. During Ordination, a priest vows to fulfill this Sacrament by pledging to uphold the faith. He promises to lead other Catholics, to bring them the sacraments, especially the Eucharist, to teach the words of Jesus Christ and to help believers understand and grow in their faith.

## What is the Sacrament of Marriage?

The Sacrament of Marriage or Holy Matrimony is a public event that celebrates a daily commitment between a man and a woman. In Marriage, each person gives himself or herself totally to the other. They share their life, love and faith in God to the other. The commitment with each other and celebrate it with fellow believers. The Sacrament is modeled after God's love for His people.

## What is the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick?

When a person is ill or dying, a priest administers the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick. The Sacrament offers the person spiritual and sometimes physical strength during their time of need. It is often the last Sacrament we receive before death and our last opportunity to feel God's grace through the power of the Holy Spirit as instituted by Jesus Christ.

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# COMMON CATHOLIC PRAYERS

## Our Father or Pater Noster

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. *Amen.*

## Fatima Prayer or O My Jesus

O my Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fires of hell, and lead all souls to heaven, especially those most in need of Thy mercy.

## Hail Mary or Ave Maria

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with Thee. Blessed art Thou among women. And Blessed is the fruit of Thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. *Amen.*

## Gloria or Glory Be

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning is now, and ever shall be, world without end. *Amen.*

## Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only born our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. *Amen.*

## Hail, Holy Queen

Hail, holy Queen, Mother of Mercy. Our Lady, Sweetest, and our hope! To Thee we flee for aid, the tender mercy of Eve, to Thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn, then, most gracious advocate, Thine eyes of mercy toward us; and we beseech thee to turn unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus. O tender, O loving, O sweet virgin Mary. Pray for us, O holy mother of God, that we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

## Let Us Pray

O God, Whose only begotten Son, by His life, death, and resurrection has purchased for us the rewards of eternal life, Grant, we beseech Thee, that meditating upon these mysteries in the most Holy Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary, we may imitate what they contain, and obtain what they promise: through the same Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

## The Nicene Creed

We believe in one God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds, God of God, Light

of Light, Very God of Very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father by Whom all things were made; Who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary, and was made man, and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried, and the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of the Father. And He shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead, whose kingdom shall have no end.

And we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets. And we believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins, and look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. *Amen.*

## Act of Love

O my God, I love Thee above all things, with my whole heart and soul, because Thou art all-good and worthy of all love. I love my neighbor as myself for the love of Thee. I forgive all who have injured me, and ask pardon of all whom I have injured. *Amen.*

## Act of Contrition

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended you, and I detest all my sins, because of Your just punishments, but most of all because they offend You, my God, Who are all-good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve, with the help of Your grace, to sin no more and to avoid the near occasion of sin.

## Peace Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace;

where there is hatred, let me sow love;

where there is injury, pardon;

where there is doubt, faith;

where there is despair, all hope;

where there is darkness, light;

and where there is sadness, joy.

Grant that I may not so much seek

to be consoled, as to console;

to be understood, as to understand;

to be loved as to love;

for it is in giving that we receive,

it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,

and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

## Act of Faith

O my God, I firmly believe all the truths that the Holy Catholic Church believes and teaches; I believe these truths, O Lord, because Thou, the infallible Truth, hast revealed them to her; in this faith I am resolved to live and die. *Amen.*

## Act of Hope

O my God, relying on Thy promises, I hope that, through the infinite merits of Jesus Christ, Thou wilt grant me pardon of my sins, and the graces necessary to serve Thee in this life and to obtain eternal happiness in the next. *Amen.*

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# CATHOLICS TO KNOW

## Blessed Teresa of Calcutta (Mother Teresa)

The tireless, selfless advocate for the downtrodden whom the world came to know as Mother Teresa was born Agnes Gonxha Bojaxha on Aug. 27, 1910. She grew up in Skopje, Macedonia, to parents of Albanian descent. At age 12, she said, God called her to spread the love of Christ. At 18, she joined the Sisters of Loreto, an Irish community of nuns with missions in India. After taking her vows, she taught at St. Mary's High School in Calcutta from 1931 to 1948. But the suffering she saw outside the convent walls led her to work in Calcutta's slums. With nothing but faith, she started an open-air school for the children of the poorest of the poor. Soon God provided volunteers and financial support.

On Oct. 7, 1950, The Holy See permitted Mother Teresa to start her own order, "The Missionaries of Charity," which was devoted to loving and helping the poor, the sick, the forgotten. Now members and volunteers with the order help people throughout the world. They care for AIDS patients, minister to the homeless, teach poor children and offer emergency aid in times of natural disaster.

She earned worldwide recognition, yet her work was never finished. And she never swayed from her initial promise—to spread the love of Jesus Christ. She once described herself as "God's pencil – a tiny bit of pencil with which He writes what He likes."

She was beatified in 2003 and is a candidate for canonization.

Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mother\\_Teresa](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mother_Teresa)

## Dorothy Day, Servant of God

This converted Catholic who started the Catholic Worker Movement once said, "If I have achieved anything in my life, it is because I have not been embarrassed to talk about God."

Day was born in Brooklyn, New York, on Nov. 8, 1897. She grew up in Chicago, first in a tenement flat on the South Side and later on the more prosperous North Side. Walking the poor neighborhoods and reading Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle* first stirred her social conscious. She attended the University of Illinois at Urbana but left after two years. She moved to New York and became a reporter at a socialist daily newspaper. She also started attending masses at a local Catholic church.

The First World War and the Women's Suffrage Movement encouraged her to write about and work against what she saw as an unjust social order. She became a Catholic in 1927 after the baptism of her newborn daughter.

With the poverty, homelessness and unemployment of the Great Depression as a backdrop, Day founded the newspaper, *The Catholic Worker*, in the 1930s. Eventually the paper, which espoused Catholic social teachings and encouraged a peaceful transformation of society, spawned an entire movement.

She continued to work for world peace and the poor until her death on Nov. 29, 1980. In 2000 Day was declared a Servant of God and is a candidate for canonization.

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## St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton established the first new community for religious women in the United States when she founded the Sisters of Charity of St. Joseph's in 1809. She also started the first free Catholic School for girls at the same time. The Sisters staffed the free schools.

Elizabeth Ann Bayley was born into New York's high society on Aug. 28, 1774. Her father was a prominent doctor and the family were Episcopalians. She married a wealthy businessman, William Magee Seton, when she was 19. But about 10 years into the marriage, Seton's business failed and he died from tuberculosis, leaving Elizabeth impoverished with five children to feed.

But Elizabeth took charge of her life. She converted to Catholicism on March 14, 1805, and supported her family by opening a free school in Boston. Though a secular institution, Seton ran the school much like a religious community. Eventually, she founded a Catholic girls' school in Baltimore, Maryland, which started the first Catholic girls' school in the United States.

She died Jan. 4, 1821. When Pope Paul VI canonized her on Sept. 14, 1975, she became the first native-born North American to be so honored. Her legacy includes several religious communities with thousands of members who serve hundreds of schools, social service centers and hospitals throughout the world.

Source: [www.catholic-forum.com](http://www.catholic-forum.com)

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# CATHOLICS IN THE KNOW

## Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati, Man of the Beatitudes

Pope John Paul II has called Pier Giorgio Frassati a role model for youth. This young Italian, who was born in 1901, had a profound effect upon Catholics in his short life, so much so that the Pope beatified Frassati on May 20, 1990. The Holy Father called Frassati, "The Man of the Eight Beatitudes." He is a candidate for canonization.

Frassati grew up in a rich and politically influential family in Turin, Italy. Early on, he showed a willing heart and special love for God and serving the poor. Though he was an average student, he excelled in athletics. With his outgoing personality, he made many friends in high school and at the university. His ultimate goal was to become a leader.

Frassati became active in several Catholic organizations which ministered to the poor, promoted Eucharistic adoration, Marian devotion and defended chastity. His strong faith and political view led him to challenge society when it conflicted with Christian values and ideals. Though he was from a privileged upbringing, he paid no attention to class, often giving money to the needy and visiting the sick. During one of these visits, Frassati contracted polio and died a few days later, on July 4, 1925. He was only 24 years old.

Source: <http://www.frassati.org/fuq.cfm>

## The Six Catholic Supreme Court Justices

There are currently six Catholic Justices on the United States Supreme Court. The Justice who replaced the court in 2006, Chief Justice John Roberts Jr. is the nine member court for the first time in the history of the court. Only 12 Catholics have served on the Supreme Court since it first convened in 1789.

Chief Justice John Roberts Jr. was appointed by President George W. Bush in 2005. Roberts received more Senate votes supporting his nomination than any other nominee for Chief Justice in American history. Roberts graduated magna cum laude from Harvard Law School and worked at a steel mill during the summer to help pay for his tuition. He is married and has two children.

In 1986 President Ronald Reagan appointed Associate Justice Scalia, and Scalia's nomination passed unanimously. Scalia adheres to an originalist view of the Constitution and is well-known for his searing dissents of Court majority opinions. He often talks of his Catholic

faith in speeches to Knights of Columbus chapters. "Be fools for Christ," he told one group. "Have the courage to suffer the contempt of the sophisticated world." He is married and has nine children.

President Ronald Reagan appointed Associate Justice Kennedy to the court in 1988. Kennedy is known for his pragmatic approach and fair-minded congeniality and has become a voice of moderation on the court. He is married with three children. Before joining the Supreme Court, he served on the Ninth Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals.

Associate Justice Thomas was appointed in 1991 by President George H. W. Bush. Thomas was born in rural Georgia and raised by his grandfather, who encouraged him to become a priest. Thomas attended seminary but left to attend law school where he encountered severe racism at the school he was attending. On the court he is known for his independent streak and prescribes to an originalist interpretation of the Constitution. He is married to Virginia Lamp and they are raising Thomas' great-nephew. He also has a child from a previous marriage.

After a close vote in the Senate, Associate Justice Samuel Alito was confirmed in 2006. Alito graduated from Princeton University and Yale Law School, where he was editor of the Yale Law Journal. During his confirmation hearings, Alito told how his father was discriminated against because of his nationality and religion and it taught him to treat everyone who came before him in the courts with respect. Alito is married and has two children.

Sonia Sotomayor is the first Latina to sit on the United States Supreme Court. She was a judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit when President Barack Obama picked her to replace retired Justice David Souter on the U.S. Supreme Court in 2009. Sotomayor graduated from Princeton University and Yale Law School, graduating in 1979 to start out as a assistant district attorney. Throughout her career she has shown the ruggedness, personal sacrifice, and intellectual concentration that will make her an exciting new voice on the Supreme Court.

Sources: Talbot, Margaret, "Supreme Confidence," *The New Yorker* March 28, 2005 pg. 43. Fletcher, Michael and Kevin Merida, *Jurist Embraces Image as a Hard-Line Holdout* *The Washington Post*, Oct. 11, 2004 pg A01. [www.supremecourt.gov](http://www.supremecourt.gov) and [www.oyez.org](http://www.oyez.org)

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# CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

## Reference Chart

Issue	CCC Reference
Abortion	2270-2275, 2319-2323
Alcohol Abuse	2290
Animal Experimentation	2415, 2417-2418
Armed forces	2310
Astrology	2116
Capitalism	2125
Chastity	2332, 2337-2339
Civil Disobedience	2242
Common good	1924-1927, 2237
Conscientious objection	2311
Contraception	1653-1654, 2366-2367, 2398-2399
Damage of property	2409
Death Penalty	2265-2267
Divorce	1650-1651, 2382-2386
Drugs	2291
Envy	1866, 2539-2541, 2552
Euthanasia	2270-2271, 2314
Family	2204-2233
Famine	2310
Forgery	2409
Fraud	2409
Freedom of religion	2108-2109
Gambling	2413
Genocide	2313
Gluttony	1866
Heaven	1023-1029, 1053

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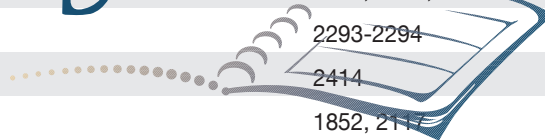
# CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

## Reference Chart

Issue	CCC Reference
Hell	1033-1037, 1056-1058
Horoscopes	2116
Idolatry	1852, 2112-2114
Justice	1807, 2411
Lying	2482-2487
Murder	2262-2266
Organ Transplants	2296
Poverty	2439-2449
Purgatory	1030-1032, 1054
Sexuality	355, 369-373, 383, 1605, 2322-2337, 2363, 2351-2357, 2360, 2370, 2380, 2388-2390, 2393, 2395, 2522
Science	2293-2294
Slavery	2414
Sorcery	1852, 2117
Speeding	2290
Suffering	1508, 1521
Suicide	2202-2203
Superstition	2110-2111, 2138
Tax evasion	2450
Technology	2293-2294
Terrorism	2297
Theft	2408, 2453-2454
Tobacco	2290
Torture	2297-2298
Violence	1735, 2306
War	2307-2317

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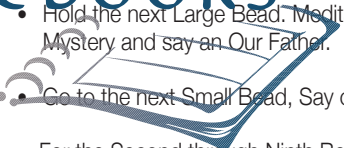
# HOW TO SAY THE ROSARY

- Hold the Crucifix, make a Sign of the Cross and say the Apostles' Creed.
- Hold the First Bead, say an Our Father.
- Say one Hail Mary for the Second and Third Beads.
- Hold the Fourth Bead and say one Hail Mary, one Glory Be, and one O My Jesus.
- Hold the Fifth Bead. Meditate on the First Mystery, saying an Our Father.
- Go to the Center of the Rosary and hold the First Small Bead. Say one Hail Mary.
- Say one Hail Mary for the Second through Ninth Bead.
- For the Tenth Bead, say one Hail Mary, one Glory Be, and one O My Jesus.
- Hold the next Large Bead. Meditate on the Second Mystery while saying an Our Father.
- Go to the next Small Bead. Say one Hail Mary.
- Say one Hail Mary for the Second through Ninth Beads.
- Hold the Tenth Bead and say one Hail Mary, one Glory Be, and one O My Jesus.
- Hold the next Large Bead. Meditate on the Third Mystery and say an Our Father.

- Proceed to the next Small Bead. Say one Hail Mary.
- For the Second through Ninth Beads, say one Hail Mary.
- For the Tenth Bead, say one Hail Mary, one Glory Be, and one O My Jesus.
- Hold the next Large Bead. Meditate on the Fourth Mystery and say an Our Father.
- Go to the next Small Bead and say one Hail Mary.
- For the Second through Ninth Beads, say one Hail Mary each.
- For the Tenth Bead, say one Hail Mary, one Glory Be, and one O My Jesus.
- Hold the next Large Bead. Meditate on the Fifth Mystery and say an Our Father.
- Go to the next Small Bead, Say one Hail Mary.
- For the Second through Ninth Beads, say one Hail Mary each.
- For the Tenth Bead, say one Hail Mary, one Glory Be, and one O My Jesus.
- Hold the Centerpiece and conclude by reciting Hail Holy Queen and Let Us Pray.
- Repeat these instructions, inserting one of the four mysteries, depending on the day.

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# THE MYSTERIES OF THE ROSARY

## THE FIVE JOYFUL MYSTERIES

*(said on Mondays, Saturdays, and during Christmas season Sundays)*

1. The Annunciation – Luke 1:26-38
2. The Visitation – Luke 1:39-56
3. The Nativity – Luke 2:1-21
4. The Presentation – Luke 2:22-38
5. The Finding in the Temple – Luke 2:41-52

## THE FIVE GLORIOUS MYSTERIES

*(said on Wednesdays and most Sundays, except during Lent and the Christmas season.)*

1. The Resurrection – John 20:1-29
2. The Ascension – Luke 24:36-53
3. The Descent of the Holy Spirit – Acts 2:1-41
4. The Assumption
5. The Crowning of the Blessed Virgin

## THE FIVE SORROWFUL MYSTERIES

*(said on Tuesdays, Fridays, and during Lent Sundays)*

1. The Agony in the Garden – Matthew 26:36-56
2. The Scourging at the Pillar – Matthew 27:26
3. The Crowning of Thorns – Matthew 27:27-31
4. The Carrying of the Cross – Matthew 27:32
5. The Crucifixion – Matthew 27:33-56

## THE FIVE MYSTERIES OF LIGHT

*(said on Thursdays)*

1. His Baptism in the Jordan – Matthew 3:13-16
2. His self-manifestation at the wedding of Cana – John 2:1-11
3. His proclamation of the Kingdom of God, with his call to conversion – Mark 1:14-15
4. His transfiguration – Matthew 17:1-8
5. His institution of the Eucharist as the sacramental expression of the Paschal mystery – Matthew 26

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# TOP 10 ORGANIZED RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

Religion	Members	% World Population
Christianity	1.9 billion	33 percent
Islam	1.1 billion	20 percent
Hinduism	900 million	13 percent
Buddhism	324 million	6 percent
Sikhism	19 million	0.4 percent
Judaism	14 million	0.2 percent
Baha'ism	6.1 million	0.1 percent
Confucianism	5.3 million	0.1 percent
Janisism	4.9 million	0.1 percent
Shintoism	2.8 million	0.01 percent

*(The statistics represent rough approximations because outside Christianity, few religions keep track of specific numbers. In addition, the list includes only organized religions and excludes more loosely defined groups such as Chinese or African traditional religions. Source: 2005 Time Almanac)*





# WORLD RELIGIONS

## Judaism

*The oldest of the monotheistic faiths*

**Tenets:** One God, Yahweh, promised the descendants of Abraham to walk with them throughout their history.

**Higher being:** One God, Yahweh

**Holy doctrine:** Torah, the written texts, and Talmud, an oral tradition

**Place of worship:** synagogue

**Founding figure:** Abraham, the Hebrew patriarch

**Important people:** Isaac, Jacob (also called Israel), David, Moses

**Important places:** Jerusalem, Israel

**Groups within:** Orthodox, Conservative, Reform

## Christianity

*Followers believe Jesus, the Son of God, was sacrificed to save humanity from sin.*

**Tenets:** Jesus as the Messiah offers everyone entry into the Kingdom of Heaven through change of heart, belief in Him, and repentance of sins

**God:** one God in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost

**Holy doctrine:** Bible made up of Old Testament from Jewish tradition and New Testament teachings of Jesus and His disciples

**Place of worship:** church, cathedral

**Founding figure:** Jesus Christ

**Important people:** Mary, Jesus' mother; 12 Disciples, Paul

**Important places:** Bethlehem, Jerusalem, Rome

**Groups within:** Eastern Orthodox, Eastern Rite Churches, Roman Catholic, Protestant

## Islam

*Muhammad is the last in a succession of prophets including Abraham and Jesus, who show the ways of the only God, Allah.*

**Tenets:** Muslims follow Five Pillars, or primary duties: profess faith, prayer five times a day, giving to the poor, fasting during days of Ramadan, pilgrimage to Mecca.

**Higher being:** one God, Allah

**Holy doctrine:** Koran, written Word of God, and hadith, the deeds of the prophet

**Place of worship:** mosque

**Founding figure:** Muhammad

**Important people:** Khadija, Muhammad's wife; Gabriel, an Angel of God

**Important places:** Mecca, Medina

**Groups within:** Sunnis, Shi'ites

## Hinduism

*It is the religion of 80 percent of India's population and dates to prehistoric times. Hinduism allows complete intellectual freedom, allowing reverence of many gods, one god, or no god.*

**Tenets:** All living beings are caught in a cosmic cycle of birth, death, and rebirth, in which a person's past moral behavior dictates his position in the next life. Ultimately one aspires to liberation from the cycle and entry into an indescribable state of moksha.

**Higher beings:** All deities are manifestations of the one Brahman, source of the universe.

**Holy doctrines:** Vedic, Upanishads, Epics, Bhagavad-Gita

**Place of worship:** temple

**Founding figures:** none recorded

**Important people:** Lord Rama, Lord Krishna

**Important places:** Ganges, sacred river of India

**Groups within:** Cults of Vishnu, Shiva, and Shakti

## Buddhism

*Siddhartha, or "he who has reached the goal," Gautama, son of a warrior prince, founded the religion in northern India in fourth or fifth century B.C.*

**Tenets:** Anyone can reach spiritual enlightenment, or nirvana, and transcend suffering and reincarnation through spiritual understanding and detachment from material possessions.

**Higher being:** sometimes Buddha, agnostic

**Holy doctrine:** The Tripitaka for the Theravada tradition

**Place of worship:** monasteries, temples, shrines

**Founding figure:** Siddhartha Gautama, or "he who has reached the goal"

**Important people:** Emperor Ashoka

**Groups within:** Theravada, Mahayana, Tantric, Zen

## Sikhism

*Sikhism emerged under the leadership of the guru Nanak in the 15th century and is a major religion in India.*

**Tenets:** Followers reach communion with God and transcend reincarnation through devotional repetition of the divine name, singing of hymns, adhering to a strict ethical code and guidance from a spiritual leader.

**Higher being:** one divine God

**Holy doctrines:** The Adi Granth, or First Book, Guru Granth Sahib, and Dasam Granth

**Place of worship:** gurdwaras, also known as temples

**Founding figure:** Nanak, the first of 10 gurus

**Important people:** Arjun, fifth guru, and Gobind Singh, tenth guru

**Important places:** Golden Temple of Amritsar

**Groups within:** Khalsa, or community of pure ones

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# ORGANIZED RELIGION IN AMERICA

- Nearly 77 percent of U.S. adults identified their religious affiliation as Christian.
- Another 3.7 percent identify with another religion besides Christianity.
- About 14 percent do not list a specific religion or categorize themselves as “no religion, atheist, Agnostic, Humanist or secular.”
- A little more than 5 percent declined to answer questions regarding religion.

## Of the adults listing themselves as Christians, the largest groups were:

Catholic	24.5 percent	General Protestant	2.2 percent
Baptist	1.6 percent	Reformed	2.1 percent
Methodist	1.5 percent	Episcopalian	1.7 percent
General Christian	6.8 percent	Mormon	1.3 percent
Lutheran	4.6 percent	Churches of Christ	1.2 percent
Presbyterian	2.7 percent	Nondenominational	1.2 percent

## Among the nearly 4 percent of American adults who listed another religion were:

Jewish	0.4 percent	Buddhist	0.5 percent
Muslim/Islamic	0.5 percent	Hindu	0.4 percent

Statistics are from the year 2001. Source: 2005 Time Almanac

## 10 Largest U.S. Churches, 2003

Denomination	# of members
The Roman Catholic Church	65 million
Southern Baptist Convention	16 million
The United Methodist Church	8.3 million
The Church of God in Christ	5.5 million
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (Mormon)	5.3 million
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America	5.1 million
National Baptist Convention USA Inc	5 million
National Baptist Conv. of America, Inc.	3.5 million
Presbyterian Church (USA)	3.45 million
The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod	2.5 million

Source: Self-reported memberships of religious bodies, 2003, from 2005 Time Almanac.





## SELECTED HOLY SITES FOR RELIGIONS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

Site	Location	Religion
Church of St. Mary of Zion	Axum, Ethiopia	Ethiopian Orthodox
Black Hills	South Dakota, USA	Lakota Indian Tribe
Seat of Archbishop of Canterbury	Canterbury, England	Anglican, Christian
Vision of the Virgin Mary	Fatima, Portugal	Roman Catholic, Christian
Potala Palace, home of Dalai Lama	Lhasa, Tibet	Tibetan Buddhism
Dome of the Rock, Prophet ascended into heaven	Jerusalem, Israel	Islam
Holy Sepulcher, Jesus' burial site	Jerusalem, Israel	Christian
The Temple Mount, site of First, Second Temples	Jerusalem, Israel	Judaism
Western Wall, Second Temple ruins	Jerusalem, Israel	Judaism
Site of Buddha's death	Kusinara, India	Buddhism
Temples on Mt. Tai Shan, center of living energy	China	Taoists, Buddhists
Temple on Adam's Peak	Sri Pada, Sri Lanka	Buddhists, Hindus, Muslims, Christians

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### COOL CATHOLIC WEB SITES

**[www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va)** — The official website of The Holy See which offers information on an array of items from the Catechism to the Vatican Secret Archives. A site index allows easy access to perhaps almost any document about Catholicism.

**[www.stirenes.org/information/community.html](http://www.stirenes.org/information/community.html)** — This link offers a comprehensive list of Catholic universities and colleges in the United States, including their websites.

**[www.usccb.org/fb/vaticanfilms.htm](http://www.usccb.org/fb/vaticanfilms.htm)** — Film fans can check out this flick list. The Vatican marked the 100th anniversary of cinema in 1995 with a list of 45 "great films." Included are such classics as "It's a Wonderful Life," "Fantasia" and "2001: A Space Odyssey."

**<http://www.frassati.org/faq.cfm>** — The Frassati Society of Young Adult Catholics. Named for Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati, the Man of the Beatitudes, society members are men, women, religious sisters, brothers and priests who support one another in prayer, fellowship, study, ownership of the Catholic faith and communion in Christ. The Society sponsors an annual conference and chapters.

**[www.creighton.edu/collaborativeministry/stations.html](http://www.creighton.edu/collaborativeministry/stations.html)** — Offered by Creighton University's Collaborative Ministries Office, this virtual guide walks Catholics through the Stations of the Cross. According to the site, "is a powerful tool to help you understand and enter into the mystery of Jesus' gift of Himself to us."

**[www.usccb.ca](http://www.usccb.ca)** — The site of the Canadian Conference of Bishops offers information on many subjects, including links to the Catholic press, news updates and archives.

**[www.catholic.org](http://www.catholic.org)** — Catholic Online says its site offers more than five million pages of content for Catholics worldwide, including free e-mail accounts, historical information, discussion and information about Catholicism.

**[www.americancatholic.org](http://www.americancatholic.org)** — St. Anthony Messenger Press and Franciscan Communications offer a mixture of information about Catholicism and Christian faith. Features include "Saint of the Day" and "Minute Meditations."

