

## Catechism Gives Blueprint To Catholics

The word catechism as a variety of meanings however the most accepted one comes from Greek and means to Echo. In this application it is a way to echo or repeat the tenants of the Catholic Church. Prior to the invention of the printing press in the 1400s , the beliefs and tradition of the church were handed down verbally. They asked people to repeat them over and over until they were learned, like an echo. Even in the time of Jesus the teacher taught scriptures by asking again and again for them to be repeated, until they were learned. This was a common way of teaching even before the time of Jesus. But this again invoked the Echo theme.

After the invention of the printing press, it changed the way things could be taught. The beliefs were written down and there was many question and answer books to help with the catechesis process. In the 15th century the influential catechisms of St/ Peter and St. Rober Bellarmine became the mainstay of the catechesis process.

But it wasn't until the 90s that Vatican II framer, Pope John Paul II recognized something that many overlooked. The young post Vatican II Catholic was severely under catechized and with that in Oct of 1992, he published an apostolic constitution the Deposit of Faith which announced the need for a Catechism of the Catholic Church. The date of his release coincided with the 30th anniversary of the Vatican II. The Catechism of the The Catholic Church goal was to fill in all the missing information that most Catholics no longer know by rote memory. It gave a way for every Catholic family to have a desktop reference for any question their children may ask or any friend of another faith. Many of these persons of other faith still attempt to challenge us and now with the Catechism, any Catholic is armed in answer those questions.

As many look back since Vatican II there is an paradigm shift in the church that moved from self to community. Then Cardinal Karol Wojtyla, who later became known as Pope John Paul II, in the writing of the Vatican II documents said that to help yourself you had to help others and outlined a framework that spoke of the acts of helping others would help one's self. The other shifts in the church though are what allowed the Pope to say we need a Catechism written that would allow Catholics a reference of their faith. He saw the Catechism as a reference of Catholic Doctrine, which was something that was lacking.

In tandem, the US bishops also set to work writing a comprehensive version for the United States Catholics. The format is dramatically different although the message is the same. In June of 2000 they under took the task of creating a Catechism that is uniquely American. This book was to address the local situation and culture but preserved the unity and fidelity of the faith in its teaching found in Pope John Paul II's catechism and gave a more readable book format of the desktop reference out of the Vatican.

## About the Author

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