

**1. QUESTION:**

- Please bring us up-to-date on the Cause for Father John A. Hardon, S.J. Thank you.

**2. QUESTION:**

- Please give us an update on the Father Hardon Center and Retreat House to be built here at the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe?

**3. QUESTION:**

- Which Saints do you have a devotion to and why?

**4. QUESTION:**

- In light of the current situation in the Church concerning *Amoris Laetitia* and other statements from Pope Francis, and the conflicting interpretations of many prelates and the silence of most, do you believe that the Church is in a *de facto* schism?
- You recently called for the consecration of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary as Our Lady requested. Why do you think this consecration specifically of Russia by name hasn't been done?

**5. QUESTION:**

- Like everyone else, I am anxious to know what is going on with the Dubia. Is the Holy Father planning to hold a meeting with you and the other Cardinals?
- Has there been, or will there be a formal correction?
- What's going on at the Vatican, are you able to discuss it? Is there, as reported, a FEAR of reprisals?
- What is your status with the Order of Malta? Are you still the Patron?
- *Amoris Laetitia* is a Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, but some call it an encyclical. Could you please clarify, and does it really matter?

**6. QUESTION:**

- In your view, what are some of the bright spots seen in the Church today?
  - Is there a particular series you would recommend for RCIA leaders and catechists?
- ANSWER:** *Program from Association for Catechumenal Ministry*
- If a catechist had to choose between teaching 7th graders or those in RCIA, what do you believe are the most important factors for consideration?

**7. QUESTION:**

- Catechists are needed in my diocese and volunteers are called. I volunteered last year and will do so again this year. However the training programs for catechists are not well structured by the Formation Coordinator. I suggested to the coordinator, and copied the Pastor, to let me hold a study group with the catechists using the Marian Catechist Apostolate program but there was no reply. What should I do next?
- After my consecration, I need to attend daily Mass. If I cannot attend in person due to work reasons, may I attend Mass by watching EWTN and make a spiritual communion?

**8. QUESTION:**

- I'm having trouble fulfilling the daily *Way of the Cross*. Can you tell me why we have this spiritual practice? Does praying the *Chaplet of Divine Mercy* suffice to fulfill this practice?

**9. QUESTION:**

- Is it correct to say that we must be aware of the "signs of the times?" Can you discuss some of the "signs of the times" that you see? Would you say that these "signs" are God's warnings and that His judgment is at hand?

What are your thoughts on the following:

- August 21<sup>st</sup> (Our Lady of Knock) A total solar eclipse will occur across the USA.
- September 23 (Saint Padre Pio) The lineup of the stars representing *Revelation 12*.
- October 13<sup>th</sup> (100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the miracle of the sun at Fatima)

#### 10. QUESTION:

- Our goal is to teach the truth and not to offend the Lord. In teaching the Ten Commandments, I need clarification in how to teach the 8<sup>th</sup> Commandment.

The 5<sup>th</sup> Commandment says, “You shall not kill,” but our Catholic Faith teaches that you can kill in self-defense.

The 8<sup>th</sup> Commandment says, “You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor” and the *Basic Course* explains that you can never lie;

- 1) BUT can you lie in defending the innocent from death?

This question comes up often, especially when discussing World War II. During that war, priests sometimes wore disguises to deceive the Nazis; and those who hid Jewish people from the Nazis would deny knowing their whereabouts. This also happens today, such as when someone helps a mother to protect her unborn child from those who want the baby aborted.

- 2) Would it be considered a lie in word and action, for the priest to have dressed in disguises?
- 3) Some definitions say a lie is in *word* only and other definitions say *word and actions*, which is it?
- 4) We teach that lying always offends God, but can you lie in defense of innocent life, just as you can kill in self-defense?
- 5) Also, consider whether or not it offends God to teach children that Santa Claus, the Easter Bunny or the tooth fairy are “real” (which they are not, of course).

#### Revised Basic Course, pp. 91-92

##### Lying

The Eighth Commandment is the universal mandate to use speech according to the will of God, Who is the Truth. Conversely, then, all sins of the tongue are ultimately sins of untruth. They contradict the proper use of human language, whenever it is used for injustice toward our neighbor or when it is used for infidelity or unfaithfulness toward God. The Eighth Commandment prohibits all forms of lying.

Lying includes the use of speech or other means of communication (either verbal or non-verbal) to deceive or to say what is contrary to the mind. Deliberately speaking contrary to what is on one’s mind is an offense against the truth; using the mind in this way is contrary to the purpose intended by God, and cannot result in true peace of mind. Lying is normally a venial offense against God. It may, however, become grave under certain circumstances, such as when a person lies under oath or denies his Catholic Faith.

##### Prudence in Speech

Telling the truth involves not only saying what is on one’s mind, but also communicating what should be said. Because it is sometimes important **not** to tell everything we know, the prohibition against lying finds its balance in the laws of fraternal love. Sometimes, charity requires the use of prudence in conveying the truth. In any given situation, we must assess whether or not it is appropriate to reveal all, part, or none of the truth to a person asking to be informed about it. Here, charity and respect for the truth must be weighed before a response is given to each request for information. Sufficient reasons for remaining silent or using discreet language are: the safeguarding of someone’s reputation, the well-being of others, the avoidance of scandal, a respect for the privacy of those involved, and the safeguarding of the common good. In the final analysis, no one is obliged to reveal the truth to persons who have *no right to know* the information in question. The obvious example, by divine disposition, is the content of a sacramental confession.

##### Mental Reservations

Given the appropriate circumstances, we may use what is known as a “broad mental reservation” to withhold what we know from another. Mental reservations restrict the meaning of the words we use; they may be either *broad* or *strict*. The intention of a *broad* mental reservation is not to deceive; rather, it is to limit information. In using broad mental reservations, the words employed may be evasive or have double meanings; however, the information must not be untrue. The person receiving the reply may then interpret for himself what he hears. Broad mental reservations must be used with great prudence due to the risk of creating mistrust between people if they cannot be sure that what they are told is the truth.

While we do not have to tell others all that we know, we may not communicate the opposite of what we are thinking. In using *strict* mental reservations to withhold or to protect information, the specific or evasive words used are untrue. In effect, a strict mental reservation is a lie, because what is spoken is directly contrary to what is on the mind; the listener is given information which prevents the perception of what is true. Because the strict mental reservation is a lie, it is never permissible.

#### 11. QUESTION:

- The laity in my parish are confused on the rubrics they are to follow during Holy Mass in at least three ways that I can see. Some of them follow along with the priest (*Orans* position), some of them use their own rubrics (holding hands during the *Our Father* or reach out toward the priest during responses), and some believe the Novus Ordo is irreverent and so they keep to the rubrics of the Extraordinary Form of the Mass (kneel during the exchange of peace or during the *Agnus Dei* and kneel for the final blessing). Depending on the church, we see more than this, but you can imagine that by what I have told you that this is confusing to people coming into or returning to the Church and can be distracting during the Mass. There is a prevailing belief that we can all do our own thing during Mass.
  - 1) We should teach people about the rubrics of the Mass but even Catechists are confused, so how do we fix this problem?
  - 2) How important is it for the laity to follow the rubrics? And if someone deems the rubrics of the Extraordinary Form of the Mass more reverent, is it okay to follow those rubrics for the Novus Ordo, for instance, kneeling during the exchange of peace, or if no exchange of peace, kneeling during the *Agnus Dei* and during the final blessing instead of standing?
  - 3) Also, not all priests ask us to offer each other the *Sign of Peace* during the Mass, but if they do, should we do so and in what manner?

It is my hope that an answer about the rubrics will help us all to pray with more unity and less confusion.

- Oftentimes when the Tabernacle is placed off to the side of the altar or elsewhere in a church, people walk up and touch the Tabernacle and pray. Even in Adoration Chapels where the Blessed Sacrament is exposed people will sometimes approach and either touch the base on which the Blessed Sacrament is placed or touch the enclosure in which the Blessed Sacrament is encased.
  - 1) What can you tell us about this practice?
  - 2) If it should be discouraged, how can we charitably explain this to others?

#### 12. QUESTION:

- Article links from Life Site News have been included in Marian Catechist emails. I would like to know if you are aware of that. The implication is we should be concerned about the direction the current Holy Father is leading the Church.

Another article headline I read stated, Cardinal Zen said, "The Pope Would Betray Christ by Allowing Communist China to Select Bishops." This article link was not sent out by the Marian Catechists, but again, it can be found on Life Site News.

- 1) I would like to know if you are aware that the Apostolate is promoting this website?
- 2) To your knowledge is the content of these articles true and should we be concerned Catholics? Thank you for guidance in this matter.

#### 13. QUESTION:

- For years we have heard snippets comparing the Fatima Consecration request to the failure by the King of France to carry out a request confided through Saint Margaret Mary. For instance, a recent article by John Henry Westen states, "*Our Lord warned Sr. Lucia in a vision in 1931, expressing dismay that the Pope would not carry out the consecration of Russia as requested. 'Like the King of France, they will repent of it, and they will do it, but it will be late. Russia will already have spread its errors in the world.'*" "He added, '*Make it known to My ministers, seeing that they follow the example of the King of France in delaying the execution of My demand, they will also have to follow him into misfortune.*'"

- 1) When Our Lord says "My ministers," is He most likely referring solely to the Pope(s) or to all Bishops, who were to make a Collegial Consecration?
- 2) Would the misfortune include more of the clergy and the people of God as in the French revolution affecting more than the monarchy, or does it seem to be something reserved for certain successors of the Apostles and perhaps of Saint Peter?

**14. QUESTION:**

- Apart from prayer and sacrifice, is there any more we can do to help defeat current heresies (such as the “homoheresy”—that homosexual acts are not intrinsically evil or disordered, therefore not objectively mortal sin)?
- Is it unreasonable to expect priests to hear Confessions on the very day of Divine Mercy Sunday? Should we believe that the great promised blessing of Our Lord on that day is the same for one who goes to Confession within 1-2 weeks and receives Holy Communion that day in the state of grace as for one who is able to go to Confession also on that very day?

**15. QUESTION:**

- I am an 8th grade Confirmation catechist of a bilingual parish. For the last three years a few students were suddenly pulled out by their parents at examination time, either before priestly examination or before re-examination if they failed the first attempt. I learned that a neighboring parish, our previous mission parish, (or unknown parishes at a distance from us) let them be confirmed in their Easter Vigil Mass.

My understanding is that Easter Vigil’s confirming is reserved for RCIA candidates or those who were baptized previously but are reconciling with the Church AND attended catechesis or RCIA in preparation AT THE PARISH THEY INTEND TO RECEIVE THE SACRAMENTS.

**16. QUESTION:**

- Did the USCCB remove the obligation of Friday *penance* for residents in the United States?

This document from the USCCB, *Pastoral Statement on Penance and Abstinence*, given on November 18, 1966, is being interpreted as removing the obligation of Friday penance because the Bishops nowhere state an alternative obligation. They use the word “urge.”

We urge all to prepare for that weekly Easter that comes with each Sunday by freely making of every Friday a day of self-denial and mortification in prayerful remembrance of the Passion of Jesus Christ (n. 23).

- Does the USCCB have the power to remove the obligation of Friday penance?

**17. QUESTION:**

- I have two nephews who were baptized and confirmed Catholics. I did not attend the first nephew’s wedding to a non-baptized woman outside the Church, due to my conscience. The next nephew will be “married” outside the Church to a Baptist, non-practicing, woman. But this nephew has told me he is now an atheist. If he believes any of the Bible it’s only the four Gospels, but he won’t really open it up or listen to it.

- 1) My question, since he no longer considers himself Catholic or even Christian for that matter, is he still bound by his vows of Baptism and Confirmation? Is his wedding valid, as an atheist? Ought I to stay home, or should I go?

(Please note the *Advanced Course*, Lesson 24, question #98, briefly reflects on Canon 1117, someone who has not left the Church by a “formal act.”)

**Lesson 24 - question 98.**

**98. Every person baptized in the Catholic Church is bound by the canonical form of marriage. *False.***

**Father Hardon’s Explanation:** According to the Church’s law, a person is bound by the canonical form of marriage who “was baptized in the Catholic Church or was received into it and has not left it by a formal act” (Canon 1117). There is no official explanation of what it means to leave the Catholic Church “by a formal act.” This may therefore mean:

- becoming a member of a non-Catholic Christian religious body;
- becoming affiliated with a non-Christian religion;
- making a formal profession of atheism.

In order to prove such adherence, it is enough that a person give positive evidence of having definitely left the Catholic Church.