

To Know To Believe To Live - Official Handout

02.13.21 Version

Developed by Msgr. Michael Clay

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What Every Christian Should Know, Believe, and Live: Take the Tour and the Self-Survey

I. Lifelong Journey of Living the Christian Faith:

- A. To know: Centers on knowledge of the Christian faith (i.e., the facts of our faith: dogma, doctrine, traditions, spirituality, etc.)
- B. To believe: Centers on our assent and acceptance of what we teach at the level of faith (i.e., I personally believe this Christian truth to be true for me)
- C. To live: Centers on understanding how we apply what we know and believe into our life (e.g., living morally, serving others, praying regularly, living Gospel values, worshiping the Lord)

II. *Kerygma*: The Core of Christian Faith

- A. The *kerygma* (kernel, essence, foundation) of the Christian faith is essential to the life of the baptized because 1) it defines our core beliefs and 2) is the lifelong reference point for assessing how we are growing in faith.
- B. It is Christianity 101 and yet many Catholics are either not consciously aware of these faith essentials and/or have not fully integrated them into their daily lives as Christians.
- C. Overarching essential relational questions everyone must answer to live as an adult:
 - 1. Who's going to love me?
 - 2. Does my life have meaning?

Christianity would say that these questions can be answered on both a human and divine level and must be answered if a person is to be truly 'whole.'

III. *Kerygma*: The 10 Essentials of the Christian Faith:

- 1. God is love and loves you more than you will ever know on this side of eternity.

KNOW: Do you know 1) that God is love and 2) that God loves you more than you can ever imagine on this side of eternity?

BELIEVE: Do you personally believe 1) that God is perfect love and 2) that God loves you more than you can ever imagine on this side of eternity?

LIVE: To what extent do you live your life in such a way that people can see that you know and believe that God is love and loves you more than you can ever imagine on this side of eternity? If you are living this, to what extent do you help others become aware of these two truths?

- 2. Everything created has a divine imprint. God created the world to be reflective of God's perfect love.

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Humans are the crowning achievement of God's creation because we are made in the image and likeness of God (*imago Dei*) to be God's collaborators.

KNOW: Are you aware that you bear a likeness to God and that you are a collaborator, partner, colleague of God to bring about the healing and restoration of our world?

BELIEVE: Do you believe you are made in God's image and likeness? Do you accept that you have been invited by God to be God's collaborator in bringing our world to a better place?

LIVE: To what extent do you live as God's image to others, especially to those who may find it difficult to believe they too are made in God's image and likeness?

3. For any number of reasons (e.g., ignorance, ego, weakness, seduction from without, etc.), we find ourselves falling into sin which a) negatively impacts us as God's beloved children and b) wounds our relationships.

KNOW: Are you aware that sin is a part of your life? Are you able to name the sin in your life to yourself and to at least one other person?

BELIEVE: Do you believe that sin is destructive to your relationships, both human and divine, and worth remediating?

LIVE: How do you address sin in your personal life to reduce its frequency? How do you address sin in society to reduce its frequency?

4. God is with us (Emmanuel) as the means to restore us and God's kingdom on earth.

Love of God for us is made visible, incarnate (made flesh)

Restoration of humanity and the world is of paramount importance to God because both are worth it!

Unprecedented that divinity would walk among us as a human being in all things but sin

Which photo looks more like your home on Christmas Day?

Religiously focused photo

Consumer focused photo

5. Jesus announces and manifests the Kingdom of God, something most people cannot imagine and so is not being realized by Jesus' disciples.

A sampler:

-Everyone, without exception, is seen as someone made in the image/likeness of God

-Inclusion is of God's nature and therefore something worth imitating

-Love is always more powerful than hatred, or at least ultimately because God will have the last word over evil

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- Forgiveness and mercy are always more important than judgment and condemnation
- Nothing we do will ever stop God from loving us
- Integrity is a reflection of God
- Good is always better than evil
- The poor, etc. always have a special place in God's heart and therefore in ours as well

KNOW: Are you aware that Jesus taught that forgiveness/mercy are always more important than judgment/ condemnation? Do you know that there is nothing you can ever do that will ever stop God from loving you?

BELIEVE: Do you believe these truths are true both for you and for others?

LIVE: How could you be practicing these truths more fully in your daily living and sharing them with others?

6. Jesus embraces the cross to take away anything that could keep us from being with God forever. The passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus is called the Paschal Mystery.

KNOW: Do you know that Jesus would have died for you if you were the only person on earth?

BELIEVE: Do you believe that Jesus' death is for your eternal benefit?

LIVE: How do you live in gratitude to Jesus for what He did for you on Calvary (e.g., worshiping the Lord on Sunday, sharing in the graces of his Paschal Mystery by receiving Holy Communion regularly, sharing that Good News so others may believe it also).

7. God manifests power over the greatest evil and our greatest fear, death, by raising Jesus from the dead through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus' bodily resurrection is meant to take the panic out of our own dying. In the lives of many martyrs, it took away the fear of dying and also the fear of death itself.

KNOW: Are you aware that Jesus' bodily resurrection from the dead changes everything about human death for the Christian (e.g., death is not the end)?

BELIEVE: Do you believe that Jesus' bodily resurrection from the dead changes your life forever?

LIVE: To what extent would you say you live life each day differently because of Jesus' bodily resurrection from the dead in comparison to those who do not believe this (e.g., less fearful of death, serious illness, difficulties of life)?

8. God incrementally gives us the Holy Spirit, the other hand of God in addition to Jesus Christ, to accompany and guide us throughout our lives.

KNOW: Are you aware that the Holy Spirit dwells within you from the moment of conception until you die? Do you know you were empowered with gifts by the Holy Spirit at your Confirmation that you are meant to use every day?

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BELIEVE: Do you believe the Holy Spirit is with you 24/7 to guide/accompany you?

LIVE: How do you use the charisms/gifts God has given you through the Holy Spirit so you may live your life to its potential?

9. Those who believe the previous eight points are called to be baptized, a water bath that 1) forgives sin and 2) initiates one into a) the life of a faith community and b) its ministry.

You become a priest, a prophet, and a servant-leader like Jesus.

KNOW: Do you know that you are a priest, a prophet, and a leader because of your baptism?

BELIEVE: Do you believe your baptism makes you a son/daughter of God and a brother/sister of Jesus Christ?

LIVE: How does your life reflect your offices of baptismal priesthood, prophecy, and leadership?

10. The baptized are called to a life of discipleship (to follow Jesus) and mission (to go out to proclaim the Good News by word and deed).

KNOW: Are you consciously aware that you are called to live your daily life following Jesus' teachings?

BELIEVE: Do you believe Jesus is worth imitating as his disciple? Do you believe you are called to be a witness of Jesus to others?

LIVE: How do you live each day trying to follow Jesus and witnessing to Him by your words and actions?

IV. Final Questions:

1. Which of these 10 essentials of the Christian faith caught your attention the most in terms of a) knowing, b) believing, and/or c) living?
2. Were any of these 10 essentials of the Christian faith new to you? If so, which one(s) and in what way(s)? Which of these 10 essentials of the Christian faith caught your attention the most in terms of a) knowing, b) believing, and/or c) living?
3. Of these 10 points, which one(s) would you like to know about more in terms of knowing, believing, and/or living?
4. Would you be interested in learning more about them in 10 90-minute video-presentation sessions?

If yes, would you be interested in joining a small group of parishioners for discussion during the presentation of these 10 90-minute video sessions offered over several months this year?