

104	In Sacred Scripture, the Church constantly finds her nourishment and her strength, for she welcomes it not as a human word, "but as what it really is, the word of God". "In the sacred books, the Father who is in heaven comes lovingly to meet his children, and talks with them.
121	The Old Testament is an indispensable part of Sacred Scripture. Its books are divinely inspired and retain a permanent value, for the Old Covenant has never been revoked.
122	Indeed, "the economy of the Old Testament was deliberately SO oriented that it should prepare for and declare in prophecy the coming of Christ, redeemer of all men." "Even though they contain matters imperfect and provisional, The books of the Old Testament bear witness to the whole divine pedagogy of God's saving love: these writings "are a storehouse of sublime teaching on God and of sound wisdom on human life, as well as a wonderful treasury of prayers; in them, too, the mystery of our salvation is present in a hidden way.
125	The Gospels are the heart of all the Scriptures "because they are our principal source for the life and teaching of the Incarnate Word, our Saviour"
127	The fourfold Gospel holds a unique place in the Church, as is evident both in the veneration which the liturgy accords it and in the surpassing attraction it has exercised on the saints at all times: There is no doctrine which could be better, more precious and more splendid than the text of the Gospel. Behold and retain what our Lord and Master, Christ, has taught by his words and accomplished by his deeds. But above all it's the gospels that occupy my mind when I'm at prayer; my poor soul has so many needs, and yet this is the one thing needful. I'm always finding fresh lights there; hidden meanings which had meant nothing to me hitherto.
132	"Therefore, the study of the sacred page should be the very soul of sacred theology. the ministry of the Word, too - pastoral preaching, catechetics and all forms of Christian instruction, among which the liturgical homily should hold pride of place - is healthily nourished and thrives in holiness through the Word of Scripture."
137	Interpretation of the inspired Scripture must be attentive above all to what God wants to reveal through the sacred authors for our salvation. What comes from the Spirit is not fully "understood except by the Spirit's action' (cf. Origen, Hom. in Ex. , : PG ,).
196	Our presentation of the faith will follow the Apostles' Creed, which constitutes, as it were, "the oldest Roman catechism". the presentation will be completed however by constant references to the Nicene Creed, which is often more explicit and more detailed.
197	As on the day of our Baptism, when our whole life was entrusted to the "standard of teaching", let us embrace the Creed of our lifegiving faith. To say the Credo with faith is to enter into communion with God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and also with the whole Church which transmits the faith to us and in whose midst we believe: This Creed is the spiritual seal, our heart's meditation and an ever present guardian; it is, unquestionably, the treasure of our soul.
291	"In the beginning was the Word. . . and the Word was God. . . all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made." The New Testament reveals that God created everything by the eternal Word, his beloved Son. In him "all things were created, in heaven and on earth.. . all things were created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together." The Church's faith likewise confesses the creative action of the Holy Spirit, the "giver of life", "the Creator Spirit" (Veni, Creator Spiritus), the "source of every good"

292	<p>The Old Testament suggests and the New Covenant reveals the creative action of the Son and the Spirit, inseparably one with that of the Father. This creative cooperation is clearly affirmed in the Church's rule of faith: "There exists but one God. . . he is the Father, God, the Creator, the author, the giver of order. He made all things by himself, that is, by his Word and by his Wisdom", "by the Son and the Spirit" who, so to speak, are "his hands". Creation is the common work of the Holy Trinity.</p>
302	<p>Creation has its own goodness and proper perfection, but it did not spring forth complete from the hands of the Creator. the universe was created "in a state of journeying" (in statu viae) toward an ultimate perfection yet to be attained, to which God has destined it. We call "divine providence" the dispositions by which God guides his creation toward this perfection: By his providence God protects and governs all things which he has made, "reaching mightily from one end of the earth to the other, and ordering all things well". For "all are open and laid bare to his eyes", even those things which are yet to come into existence through the free action of creatures.</p>
337	<p>God himself created the visible world in all its richness, diversity and order. Scripture presents the work of the Creator symbolically as a succession of six days of divine "work", concluded by the "rest" of the seventh day. On the subject of creation, the sacred text teaches the truths revealed by God for our salvation, permitting us to "recognize the inner nature, the value and the ordering of the whole of creation to the praise of God."</p>
338	<p>Nothing exists that does not owe its existence to God the Creator. the world began when God's word drew it out of nothingness; all existent beings, all of nature, and all human history are rooted in this primordial event, the very genesis by which the world was constituted and time begun.</p>
421	<p>Christians believe that "the world has been established and kept in being by the Creator's love; has fallen into slavery to sin but has been set free by Christ, crucified and risen to break the power of the evil one. . ."</p>
465	<p>The first heresies denied not so much Christ's divinity as his true humanity (Gnostic Docetism). From apostolic times the Christian faith has insisted on the true incarnation of God's Son "come in the flesh". But already in the third century, the Church in a council at Antioch had to affirm against Paul of Samosata that Jesus Christ is Son of God by nature and not by adoption. the first ecumenical council of Nicaea in confessed in its Creed that the Son of God is "begotten, not made, of the same substance (homoousios) as the Father", and condemned Arius, who had affirmed that the Son of God "came to be from things that were not" and that he was "from another substance" than that of the Father.</p>
751	<p>The word "Church" (Latin ecclesia, from the Greek ek-ka-lein, to "call out of") means a convocation or an assembly. It designates the assemblies of the people, usually for a religious purpose. Ekklesia is used frequently in the Greek Old Testament for the assembly of the Chosen People before God, above all for their assembly on Mount Sinai where Israel received the Law and was established by God as his holy people. By calling itself "Church," the first community of Christian believers recognized itself as heir to that assembly. In the Church, God is "calling together" his people from all the ends of the earth. the equivalent Greek term Kyriake, from which the English word Church and the German Kirche are derived, means "what belongs to the Lord."</p>

752	<p>In Christian usage, the word "church" designates the liturgical assembly, but also the local community or the whole universal community of believers. These three meanings are inseparable. "The Church" is the People that God gathers in the whole world. She exists in local communities and is made real as a liturgical, above all a Eucharistic, assembly. She draws her life from the word and the Body of Christ and so herself becomes Christ's Body.</p>
790	<p>Believers who respond to God's word and become members of Christ's Body, become intimately united with him: "In that body the life of Christ is communicated to those who believe, and who, through the sacraments, are united in a hidden and real way to Christ in his Passion and glorification." This is especially true of Baptism, which unites us to Christ's death and Resurrection, and the Eucharist, by which "really sharing in the body of the Lord, . . . we are taken up into communion with him and with one another."</p>
857	<p>The Church is apostolic because she is founded on the apostles, in three ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - she was and remains built on "the foundation of the Apostles," The witnesses chosen and sent on mission by Christ himself; - with the help of the Spirit dwelling in her, the Church keeps and hands on the teaching, The "good deposit," the salutary words she has heard from the apostles; - she continues to be taught, sanctified, and guided by the apostles until Christ's return, through their successors in pastoral office: the college of bishops, "assisted by priests, in union with the successor of Peter, the Church's supreme pastor": You are the eternal Shepherd who never leaves his flock untended. Through the apostles you watch over us and protect us always. You made them shepherds of the flock to share in the work of your Son....
875	<p>"How are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without a preacher? And how can men preach unless they are sent?" No one - no individual and no community - can proclaim the Gospel to himself: "Faith comes from what is heard." No one can give himself the mandate and the mission to proclaim the Gospel. The one sent by the Lord does not speak and act on his own authority, but by virtue of Christ's authority; not as a member of the community, but speaking to it in the name of Christ. No one can bestow grace on himself; it must be given and offered. This fact presupposes ministers of grace, authorized and empowered by Christ. From him, bishops and priests receive the mission and faculty ("the sacred power") to act in persona Christi Capitis; deacons receive the strength to serve the people of God in the diaconia of liturgy, word and charity, in communion with the bishop and his presbyterate. The ministry in which Christ's emissaries do and give by God's grace what they cannot do and give by their own powers, is called a "sacrament" by the Church's tradition. Indeed, the ministry of the Church is conferred by a special sacrament.</p>
957	<p>Communion with the saints. "It is not merely by the title of example that we cherish the memory of those in heaven; we seek, rather, that by this devotion to the exercise of fraternal charity the union of the whole Church in the Spirit may be strengthened. Exactly as Christian communion among our fellow pilgrims brings us closer to Christ, so our communion with the saints joins us to Christ, from whom as from its fountain and head issues all grace, and the life of the People of God itself": We worship Christ as God's Son; we love the martyrs as the Lord's disciples and imitators, and rightly so because of their matchless devotion towards their king and master. May we also be their companions and fellow disciples!</p>

960	The Church is a "communion of saints": this expression refers first to the "holy things" (sancta), above all the Eucharist, by which "the unity of believers, who form one body in Christ, is both represented and brought about" (LG).
1067	"The wonderful works of God among the people of the Old Testament were but a prelude to the work of Christ the Lord in redeeming mankind and giving perfect glory to God. He accomplished this work principally by the Paschal mystery of his blessed Passion, Resurrection from the dead, and glorious Ascension, whereby 'dying he destroyed our death, rising he restored our life.' For it was from the side of Christ as he slept the sleep of death upon the cross that there came forth 'the wondrous sacrament of the whole Church.'" For this reason, the Church celebrates in the liturgy above all the Paschal mystery by which Christ accomplished the work of our salvation.
1073	The liturgy is also a participation in Christ's own prayer addressed to the Father in the Holy Spirit. In the liturgy, all Christian prayer finds its source and goal. Through the liturgy the inner man is rooted and grounded in "the great love with which [the Father] loved us" in his beloved Son. It is the same "marvelous work of God" that is lived and internalized by all prayer, "at all times in the Spirit."
1082	In the Church's liturgy the divine blessing is fully revealed and communicated. the Father is acknowledged and adored as the source and the end of all the blessings of creation and salvation. In his Word who became incarnate, died, and rose for us, he fills us with his blessings. Through his Word, he pours into our hearts the Gift that contains all gifts, the Holy Spirit.
1083	The dual dimension of the Christian liturgy as a response of faith and love to the spiritual blessings the Father bestows on us is thus evident. On the one hand, the Church, united with her Lord and "in the Holy Spirit," blesses the Father "for his inexpressible gift in her adoration, praise, and thanksgiving. On the other hand, until the consummation of God's plan, the Church never ceases to present to the Father the offering of his own gifts and to beg him to send the Holy Spirit upon that offering, upon herself, upon the faithful, and upon the whole world, so that through communion in the death and resurrection of Christ the Priest, and by the power of the Spirit, these divine blessings will bring forth the fruits of life "to the praise of his glorious grace."
1088	"To accomplish so great a work" - the dispensation or communication of his work of salvation - "Christ is always present in his Church, especially in her liturgical celebrations. He is present in the Sacrifice of the Mass not only in the person of his minister, 'the same now offering, through the ministry of priests, who formerly offered himself on the cross,' but especially in the Eucharistic species. By his power he is present in the sacraments so that when anybody baptizes, it is really Christ himself who baptizes. He is present in his word since it is he himself who speaks when the holy Scriptures are read in the Church. Lastly, he is present when the Church prays and sings, for he has promised 'where two or three are gathered together in my name there am I in the midst of them.'"
1090	"In the earthly liturgy we share in a foretaste of that heavenly liturgy which is celebrated in the Holy City of Jerusalem toward which we journey as pilgrims, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God, Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle. With all the warriors of the heavenly army we sing a hymn of glory to the Lord; venerating the memory of the saints, we hope for some part and fellowship with them; we eagerly await the Savior, our Lord Jesus Christ, until he, our life, shall appear and we too will appear with him in glory."

1094	It is on this harmony of the two Testaments that the Paschal catechesis of the Lord is built, and then, that of the Apostles and the Fathers of the Church. This catechesis unveils what lay hidden under the letter of the Old Testament: the mystery of Christ. It is called "typological" because it reveals the newness of Christ on the basis of the "figures" (types) which announce him in the deeds, words, and symbols of the first covenant. By this re-reading in the Spirit of Truth, starting from Christ, the figures are unveiled. Thus the flood and Noah's ark prefigured salvation by Baptism, as did the cloud and the crossing of the Red Sea. Water from the rock was the figure of the spiritual gifts of Christ, and manna in the desert prefigured the Eucharist, "the true bread from heaven."
1103	Anamnesis. the liturgical celebration always refers to God's saving interventions in history. "The economy of Revelation is realized by deeds and words which are intrinsically bound up with each other.... (The) words for their part proclaim the works and bring to light the mystery they contain." In the Liturgy of the Word the Holy Spirit "recalls" to the assembly all that Christ has done for us. In keeping with the nature of liturgical actions and the ritual traditions of the churches, the celebration "makes a remembrance" of the marvelous works of God in an anamnesis which may be more or less developed. the Holy Spirit who thus awakens the memory of the Church then inspires thanksgiving and praise (doxology).
1142	But "the members do not all have the same function." Certain members are called by God, in and through the Church, to a special service of the community. These servants are chosen and consecrated by the sacrament of Holy Orders, by which the Holy Spirit enables them to act in the person of Christ the head, for the service of all the members of the Church. The ordained minister is, as it were, an "icon" of Christ the priest. Since it is in the Eucharist that the sacrament of the Church is made fully visible, it is in his presiding at the Eucharist that the bishop's ministry is most evident, as well as, in communion with him, the ministry of priests and deacons.
1154	The liturgy of the Word is an integral part of sacramental celebrations. To nourish the faith of believers, the signs which accompany the Word of God should be emphasized: the book of the Word (a lectionary or a book of the Gospels), its veneration (procession, incense, candles), the place of its proclamation (lectern or ambo), its audible and intelligible reading, the minister's homily which extends its proclamation, and the responses of the assembly (acclamations, meditation psalms, litanies, and profession of faith).
1156	"The musical tradition of the universal Church is a treasure of inestimable value, greater even than that of any other art. the main reason for this pre-eminence is that, as a combination of sacred music and words, it forms a necessary or integral part of solemn liturgy." The composition and singing of inspired psalms, often accompanied by musical instruments, were already closely linked to the liturgical celebrations of the Old Covenant. the Church continues and develops this tradition: "Address . . . one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with all your heart." "He who sings prays twice."

1157	Song and music fulfill their function as signs in a manner all the more significant when they are "more closely connected . . . with the liturgical action," according to three principal criteria: beauty expressive of prayer, the unanimous participation of the assembly at the designated moments, and the solemn character of the celebration. In this way they participate in the purpose of the liturgical words and actions: the glory of God and the sanctification of the faithful: How I wept, deeply moved by your hymns, songs, and the voices that echoed through your Church! What emotion I experienced in them! Those sounds flowed into my ears distilling the truth in my heart. A feeling of devotion surged within me, and tears streamed down my face - tears that did me good.
1186	Finally, the church has an eschatological significance. To enter into the house of God, we must cross a threshold, which symbolizes passing from the world wounded by sin to the world of the new Life to which all men are called. the visible church is a symbol of the Father's house toward which the People of God is journeying and where the Father "will wipe every tear from their eyes." Also for this reason, the Church is the house of all God's children, open and welcoming.
1189	The liturgical celebration involves signs and symbols relating to creation (candles, water, fire), human life (washing, anointing, breaking bread) and the history of salvation (the rites of the Passover). Integrated into the world of faith and taken up by the power of the Holy Spirit, these cosmic elements, human rituals, and gestures of remembrance of God become bearers of the saving and sanctifying action of Christ.
1273	Incorporated into the Church by Baptism, the faithful have received the sacramental character that consecrates them for Christian religious worship. The baptismal seal enables and commits Christians to serve God by a vital participation in the holy liturgy of the Church and to exercise their baptismal priesthood by the witness of holy lives and practical charity.
1324	The Eucharist is "the source and summit of the Christian life." "The other sacraments, and indeed all ecclesiastical ministries and works of the apostolate, are bound up with the Eucharist and are oriented toward it. For in the blessed Eucharist is contained the whole spiritual good of the Church, namely Christ himself, our Pasch."
1326	Finally, by the Eucharistic celebration we already unite ourselves with the heavenly liturgy and anticipate eternal life, when God will be all in all.
1330	<p>The memorial of the Lord's Passion and Resurrection.</p> <p>The Holy Sacrifice, because it makes present the one sacrifice of Christ the Savior and includes the Church's offering. the terms holy sacrifice of the Mass, "sacrifice of praise," spiritual sacrifice, pure and holy sacrifice are also used, since it completes and surpasses all the sacrifices of the Old Covenant.</p> <p>The Holy and Divine Liturgy, because the Church's whole liturgy finds its center and most intense expression in the celebration of this sacrament; in the same sense we also call its celebration the Sacred Mysteries. We speak of the Most Blessed Sacrament because it is the Sacrament of sacraments. the Eucharistic species reserved in the tabernacle are designated by this same name.</p>

1331	Holy Communion, because by this sacrament we unite ourselves to Christ, who makes us sharers in his Body and Blood to form a single body. We also call it: the holy things (ta hagia; sancta) - the first meaning of the phrase "communion of saints" in the Apostles' Creed - the bread of angels, bread from heaven, medicine of immortality, viaticum....
1332	Holy Mass (Missa), because the liturgy in which the mystery of salvation is accomplished concludes with the sending forth (missio) of the faithful, so that they may fulfill God's will in their daily lives.
1333	At the heart of the Eucharistic celebration are the bread and wine that, by the words of Christ and the invocation of the Holy Spirit, become Christ's Body and Blood. Faithful to the Lord's command the Church continues to do, in his memory and until his glorious return, what he did on the eve of his Passion: "He took bread...." "He took the cup filled with wine...." the signs of bread and wine become, in a way surpassing understanding, the Body and Blood of Christ; they continue also to signify the goodness of creation. Thus in the Offertory we give thanks to the Creator for bread and wine, fruit of the "work of human hands," but above all as "fruit of the earth" and "of the vine" - gifts of the Creator. the Church sees in the gesture of the king-priest Melchizedek, who "brought out bread and wine," a prefiguring of her own offering.
1334	<p>In the Old Covenant bread and wine were offered in sacrifice among the first fruits of the earth as a sign of grateful acknowledgment to the Creator. But they also received a new significance in the context of the Exodus: the unleavened bread that Israel eats every year at Passover commemorates the haste of the departure that liberated them from Egypt; the remembrance of the manna in the desert will always recall to Israel that it lives by the bread of the Word of God; their daily bread is the fruit of the promised land, the pledge of God's faithfulness to his promises.</p> <p>The "cup of blessing" at the end of the Jewish Passover meal adds to the festive joy of wine an eschatological dimension: the messianic expectation of the rebuilding of Jerusalem. When Jesus instituted the Eucharist, he gave a new and definitive meaning to the blessing of the bread and the cup.</p>
1346	<p>The liturgy of the Eucharist unfolds according to a fundamental structure which has been preserved throughout the centuries down to our own day. It displays two great parts that form a fundamental unity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the gathering, the liturgy of the Word, with readings, homily and general intercessions; - the liturgy of the Eucharist, with the presentation of the bread and wine, the consecratory thanksgiving, and communion. The liturgy of the Word and liturgy of the Eucharist together form "one single act of worship"; <p>The Eucharistic table set for us is the table both of the Word of God and of the Body of the Lord.</p>
1347	Is this not the same movement as the Paschal meal of the risen Jesus with his disciples? Walking with them he explained the Scriptures to them; sitting with them at table "he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them."

1348	<p>All gather together. Christians come together in one place for the Eucharistic assembly. At its head is Christ himself, the principal agent of the Eucharist. He is high priest of the New Covenant; it is he himself who presides invisibly over every Eucharistic celebration. It is in representing him that the bishop or priest acting in the person of Christ the head (in persona Christi capitis) presides over the assembly, speaks after the readings, receives the offerings, and says the Eucharistic Prayer. All have their own active parts to play in the celebration, each in his own way: readers, those who bring up the offerings, those who give communion, and the whole people whose "Amen" manifests their participation.</p>
1350	<p>The presentation of the offerings (the Offertory). Then, sometimes in procession, the bread and wine are brought to the altar; they will be offered by the priest in the name of Christ in the Eucharistic sacrifice in which they will become his body and blood. It is the very action of Christ at the Last Supper - "taking the bread and a cup." "The Church alone offers this pure oblation to the Creator, when she offers what comes forth from his creation with thanksgiving." The presentation of the offerings at the altar takes up the gesture of Melchizedek and commits the Creator's gifts into the hands of Christ who, in his sacrifice, brings to perfection all human attempts to offer sacrifices.</p>
1368	<p>The Eucharist is also the sacrifice of the Church. the Church which is the Body of Christ participates in the offering of her Head. With him, she herself is offered whole and entire. She unites herself to his intercession with the Father for all men. In the Eucharist the sacrifice of Christ becomes also the sacrifice of the members of his Body. the lives of the faithful, their praise, sufferings, prayer, and work, are united with those of Christ and with his total offering, and so acquire a new value. Christ's sacrifice present on the altar makes it possible for all generations of Christians to be united with his offering.</p> <p>In the catacombs the Church is often represented as a woman in prayer, arms outstretched in the praying position. Like Christ who stretched out his arms on the cross, through him, with him, and in him, she offers herself and intercedes for all men.</p>
1374	<p>The mode of Christ's presence under the Eucharistic species is unique. It raises the Eucharist above all the sacraments as "the perfection of the spiritual life and the end to which all the sacraments tend." In the most blessed sacrament of the Eucharist "the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity, of our Lord Jesus Christ and, therefore, the whole Christ is truly, really, and substantially contained." "This presence is called 'real' - by which is not intended to exclude the other types of presence as if they could not be 'real' too, but because it is presence in the fullest sense: that is to say, it is a substantial presence by which Christ, God and man, makes himself wholly and entirely present."</p>

<p>1375</p>	<p>It is by the conversion of the bread and wine into Christ's body and blood that Christ becomes present in this sacrament. the Church Fathers strongly affirmed the faith of the Church in the efficacy of the Word of Christ and of the action of the Holy Spirit to bring about this conversion. Thus St. John Chrysostom declares:</p> <p>It is not man that causes the things offered to become the Body and Blood of Christ, but he who was crucified for us, Christ himself. the priest, in the role of Christ, pronounces these words, but their power and grace are God's. This is my body, he says. This word transforms the things offered.</p> <p>and St. Ambrose says about this conversion:</p> <p>Be convinced that this is not what nature has formed, but what the blessing has consecrated. the power of the blessing prevails over that of nature, because by the blessing nature itself is changed.... Could not Christ's word, which can make from nothing what did not exist, change existing things into what they were not before? It is no less a feat to give things their original nature than to change their nature.</p>
<p>1376</p>	<p>The Council of Trent summarizes the Catholic faith by declaring: "Because Christ our Redeemer said that it was truly his body that he was offering under the species of bread, it has always been the conviction of the Church of God, and this holy Council now declares again, that by the consecration of the bread and wine there takes place a change of the whole substance of the bread into the substance of the body of Christ our Lord and of the whole substance of the wine into the substance of his blood. This change the holy Catholic Church has fittingly and properly called transubstantiation."</p>
<p>1381</p>	<p>"That in this sacrament are the true Body of Christ and his true Blood is something that 'cannot be apprehended by the senses,' says St. Thomas, 'but only by faith, which relies on divine authority.' For this reason, in a commentary on Luke : ('This is my body which is given for you.'). St. Cyril says: 'Do not doubt whether this is true, but rather receive the words of the Savior in faith, for since he is the truth, he cannot lie.'"</p> <p>Godhead here in hiding, whom I do adore Masked by these bare shadows, shape and nothing more, See, Lord, at thy service low lies here a heart Lost, all lost in wonder at the God thou art. Seeing, touching, tasting are in thee deceived; How says trusty hearing? that shall be believed; What God's Son has told me, take for truth I do; Truth himself speaks truly or there's nothing true.</p>

<p>1391</p>	<p>Holy Communion augments our union with Christ. the principal fruit of receiving the Eucharist in Holy Communion is an intimate union with Christ Jesus. Indeed, the Lord said: "He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him." Life in Christ has its foundation in the Eucharistic banquet: "As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so he who eats me will live because of me."</p> <p>On the feasts of the Lord, when the faithful receive the Body of the Son, they proclaim to one another the Good News that the first fruits of life have been given, as when the angel said to Mary Magdalene, "Christ is risen!" Now too are life and resurrection conferred on whoever receives Christ.</p>
<p>1392</p>	<p>What material food produces in our bodily life, Holy Communion wonderfully achieves in our spiritual life. Communion with the flesh of the risen Christ, a flesh "given life and giving life through the Holy Spirit," preserves, increases, and renews the life of grace received at Baptism. This growth in Christian life needs the nourishment of Eucharistic Communion, the bread for our pilgrimage until the moment of death, when it will be given to us as viaticum.</p>
<p>1393</p>	<p>Holy Communion separates us from sin. the body of Christ we receive in Holy Communion is "given up for us," and the blood we drink "shed for the many for the forgiveness of sins." For this reason the Eucharist cannot unite us to Christ without at the same time cleansing us from past sins and preserving us from future sins:</p> <p>For as often as we eat this bread and drink the cup, we proclaim the death of the Lord. If we proclaim the Lord's death, we proclaim the forgiveness of sins. If, as often as his blood is poured out, it is poured for the forgiveness of sins, I should always receive it, so that it may always forgive my sins. Because I always sin, I should always have a remedy.</p>
<p>1394</p>	<p>As bodily nourishment restores lost strength, so the Eucharist strengthens our charity, which tends to be weakened in daily life; and this living charity wipes away venial sins. By giving himself to us Christ revives our love and enables us to break our disordered attachments to creatures and root ourselves in him:</p> <p>Since Christ died for us out of love, when we celebrate the memorial of his death at the moment of sacrifice we ask that love may be granted to us by the coming of the Holy Spirit. We humbly pray that in the strength of this love by which Christ willed to die for us, we, by receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit, may be able to consider the world as crucified for us, and to be ourselves as crucified to the world.... Having received the gift of love, let us die to sin and live for God.</p>
<p>1395</p>	<p>By the same charity that it enkindles in us, the Eucharist preserves us from future mortal sins. the more we share the life of Christ and progress in his friendship, the more difficult it is to break away from him by mortal sin. the Eucharist is not ordered to the forgiveness of mortal sins - that is proper to the sacrament of Reconciliation. the Eucharist is properly the sacrament of those who are in full communion with the Church.</p>

1396	<p>The unity of the Mystical Body: the Eucharist makes the Church. Those who receive the Eucharist are united more closely to Christ. Through it Christ unites them to all the faithful in one body - the Church. Communion renews, strengthens, and deepens this incorporation into the Church, already achieved by Baptism. In Baptism we have been called to form but one body. The Eucharist fulfills this call: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? the bread which we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread:"</p> <p>If you are the body and members of Christ, then it is your sacrament that is placed on the table of the Lord; it is your sacrament that you receive. To that which you are you respond "Amen" ("yes, it is true!") and by responding to it you assent to it. For you hear the words, "the Body of Christ" and respond "Amen." Be then a member of the Body of Christ that your Amen may be true.</p>
1412	<p>The essential signs of the Eucharistic sacrament are wheat bread and grape wine, on which the blessing of the Holy Spirit is invoked and the priest pronounces the words of consecration spoken by Jesus during the Last Supper: "This is my body which will be given up for you.... This is the cup of my blood...."</p>
1416	<p>Communion with the Body and Blood of Christ increases the communicant's union with the Lord, forgives his venial sins, and preserves him from grave sins. Since receiving this sacrament strengthens the bonds of charity between the communicant and Christ, it also reinforces the unity of the Church as the Mystical Body of Christ.</p>
1419	<p>Having passed from this world to the Father, Christ gives us in the Eucharist the pledge of glory with him. Participation in the Holy Sacrifice identifies us with his Heart, sustains our strength along the pilgrimage of this life, makes us long for eternal life, and unites us even now to the Church in heaven, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and all the saints</p>
1432	<p>The human heart is heavy and hardened. God must give man a new heart. Conversion is first of all a work of the grace of God who makes our hearts return to him: "Restore us to thyself, O LORD, that we may be restored!" God gives us the strength to begin anew. It is in discovering the greatness of God's love that our heart is shaken by the horror and weight of sin and begins to fear offending God by sin and being separated from him. the human heart is converted by looking upon him whom our sins have pierced:</p> <p>Let us fix our eyes on Christ's blood and understand how precious it is to his Father, for, poured out for our salvation it has brought to the whole world the grace of repentance.</p>

<p>1548</p>	<p>In the ecclesial service of the ordained minister, it is Christ himself who is present to his Church as Head of his Body, Shepherd of his flock, high priest of the redemptive sacrifice, Teacher of Truth. This is what the Church means by saying that the priest, by virtue of the sacrament of Holy Orders, acts in persona Christi Capitis:</p> <p>It is the same priest, Christ Jesus, whose sacred person his minister truly represents. Now the minister, by reason of the sacerdotal consecration which he has received, is truly made like to the high priest and possesses the authority to act in the power and place of the person of Christ himself (virtute ac persona ipsius Christi).</p> <p>Christ is the source of all priesthood: the priest of the old law was a figure of Christ, and the priest of the new law acts in the person of Christ.</p>
<p>1549</p>	<p>Through the ordained ministry, especially that of bishops and priests, the presence of Christ as head of the Church is made visible in the midst of the community of believers. In the beautiful expression of St. Ignatius of Antioch, the bishop is typos tou Patros: he is like the living image of God the Father.</p>
<p>1550</p>	<p>This presence of Christ in the minister is not to be understood as if the latter were preserved from all human weaknesses, the spirit of domination, error, even sin. the power of the Holy Spirit does not guarantee all acts of ministers in the same way. While this guarantee extends to the sacraments, so that even the minister's sin cannot impede the fruit of grace, in many other acts the minister leaves human traces that are not always signs of fidelity to the Gospel and consequently can harm the apostolic fruitfulness of the Church.</p>
<p>1566</p>	<p>"It is in the Eucharistic cult or in the Eucharistic assembly of the faithful (synaxis) that they exercise in a supreme degree their sacred office; there, acting in the person of Christ and proclaiming his mystery, they unite the votive offerings of the faithful to the sacrifice of Christ their head, and in the sacrifice of the Mass they make present again and apply, until the coming of the Lord, the unique sacrifice of the New Testament, that namely of Christ offering himself once for all a spotless victim to the Father." From this unique sacrifice their whole priestly ministry draws its strength.</p>
<p>1724</p>	<p>The Decalogue, the Sermon on the Mount, and the apostolic catechesis describe for us the paths that lead to the Kingdom of heaven. Sustained by the grace of the Holy Spirit, we tread them, step by step, by everyday acts. By the working of the Word of Christ, we slowly bear fruit in the Church to the glory of God.</p>
<p>1730</p>	<p>God created man a rational being, conferring on him the dignity of a person who can initiate and control his own actions. "God willed that man should be 'left in the hand of his own counsel,' so that he might of his own accord seek his Creator and freely attain his full and blessed perfection by cleaving to him."</p> <p>Man is rational and therefore like God; he is created with free will and is master over his acts.</p>
<p>1731</p>	<p>Freedom is the power, rooted in reason and will, to act or not to act, to do this or that, and so to perform deliberate actions on one's own responsibility. By free will one shapes one's own life. Human freedom is a force for growth and maturity in truth and goodness; it attains its perfection when directed toward God, our beatitude.</p>

1732	As long as freedom has not bound itself definitively to its ultimate good which is God, there is the possibility of choosing between good and evil, and thus of growing in perfection or of failing and sinning. This freedom characterizes properly human acts. It is the basis of praise or blame, merit or reproach.
2099	It is right to offer sacrifice to God as a sign of adoration and gratitude, supplication and communion: "Every action done so as to cling to God in communion of holiness, and thus achieve blessedness, is a true sacrifice."
2100	Outward sacrifice, to be genuine, must be the expression of spiritual sacrifice: "The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit..." The prophets of the Old Covenant often denounced sacrifices that were not from the heart or not coupled with love of neighbor. Jesus recalls the words of the prophet Hosea: "I desire mercy, and not sacrifice." The only perfect sacrifice is the one that Christ offered on the cross as a total offering to the Father's love and for our salvation. By uniting ourselves with his sacrifice we can make our lives a sacrifice to God.
2157	The Christian begins his day, his prayers, and his activities with the Sign of the Cross: "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen." the baptized person dedicates the day to the glory of God and calls on the Savior's grace which lets him act in the Spirit as a child of the Father. the sign of the cross strengthens us in temptations and difficulties.
2159	The name one receives is a name for eternity. In the kingdom, the mysterious and unique character of each person marked with God's name will shine forth in splendor. "To him who conquers . . . I will give a white stone, with a new name written on the stone which no one knows except him who receives it." "Then I looked, and Lo, on Mount Zion stood the Lamb, and with him a hundred and forty-four thousand who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads."
2634	Intercession is a prayer of petition which leads us to pray as Jesus did. He is the one intercessor with the Father on behalf of all men, especially sinners. He is "able for all time to save those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them." The Holy Spirit "himself intercedes for us . . . and intercedes for the saints according to the will of God."