

EVANGELIZATION: SHORT COURSE IN APOLOGETICS – PREPARING THE FRIENDLY DEFENDER TO EXPLAIN, DEFEND AND ADVANCE THE CATHOLIC FAITH

-Organized by Tim Rohr for Archdiocesan Evangelization Committee

This is the “short” course in Beginning Apologetics. It is **designed to:**

1. Equip the Catholic to immediately be able to give a reason for those Catholic beliefs that are most frequently challenged.
2. To enable a Catholic to respond not only in a way that is clear, reasonable, and charitable, but also in a spirit of true evangelism where the challenger is invited to “come home” to the fullness of the faith as found only in the Catholic Church.
3. Be duplicate-able: anyone who completes this course will be able to easily facilitate a similar study and achieve the same results

Though Beginning Apologetics Vol. 1 & 2 and the accompanying Study Guide are the primary texts for this course, we will, due to the constraints of time and urgent nature of our mission, proceed with the following recommendations:

1. The topics and their order of presentation have been selected and organized based on the most common order of “attack” from challengers to our faith. (e.g. statue worship and worship of Mary are usually first challenged – especially on Guam)
2. Due to the fact that most of our separated brethren will not accept any references to our Catechism or the writings of the Church Fathers, we will limit our references to Scripture alone (as they do).
3. All course participants will, on their own, examine the references to the Catechism and the Church Fathers as well as material in the text not covered in class.

Materials for Course

- Bible (NIV or KJV) – we use the protestant bible for apologetic purposes
- Topic Tabs
- Beginning Apologetics 1 & 2, Study Guide (Fr. Frank Chacon & Jim Burnham)
- Catechism of the Catholic Church 2nd Edition
- The Faith of the Early Fathers Vol. 1, 2, & 3 ed. by William A. Jurgens or: The Teachings of the Early Fathers ed. by John Willis, S.J.

Basic Premise:

Usually when an anti-Catholic asks a question they are not looking for an answer. They are aiming to create doubt.

Strategy:

Our strategy will be:

1. Take control of the conversation with our own questions
2. Create doubt on their part
3. Be ready with the Catholic explanation and an invitation to learn more.

Goal:

1. To make a friend
2. To make a Catholic

Some things to keep in mind:

He who asks the questions controls the conversation

A man convinced against his will is of the same opinion still

Win converts not arguments

Some questions to ask:

- Why do you ask?
- Do you really want to know what our Church teaches on that?
- Where'd you get that from?
- Where'd you learn that?
- Where'd you hear that?
- What makes you think that?
- Why do you think that?
- What do you mean by that?
- What does your church teach on that?
- Why is that important to you?
- Well, what do you think of (chapter and verse)?
- What do you mean by "worship"? (or whatever word they use) Here are some:
 - Sacrifice
 - Worship
 - Pray to
 - Intercessor
 - Vain repetition
 - Graven images
 - Saved
 - Born again
 - Tradition
 - "Father"

What to say when an evangelist comes to your door and you are not prepared:

Hi. Thanks for dropping by. I would really like to talk to you, but now's not a good time, could you come back (day & time).

Session 1

PREFACE TOPIC: The Bible Alone & The Canon of Scripture (pgs. 13 & 10-11) We begin with this topic, not because it is one our separated brethren will bring up, but because it is the one most immediately useful and effective for a Catholic, especially if one is not yet prepared to explain the finer points of our Faith from Scripture.

- I. Mary (pgs. 18-24)
- II. Saints (pgs. 27-29)
- III. Statues (pg. 34, no. 2)

Bible Alone & Sacred Tradition

1. Why do you Catholic's believe things that are not in the Bible?
2. Why do you Catholic's follow man made traditions instead of the Bible alone?

Mary:

1. Why do you Catholics worship/pray to Mary?
2. Why do you call her the Mother of God?
3. Why do you Catholics believe that Mary never sinned when she herself calls God her "savior"?
4. Why do you Catholics believe that Mary is still a virgin when the bible clearly says that Jesus had brothers and sisters?
5. Why do you pray the rosary? Don't you know that vain repetition is forbidden in the Bible?

Saints (pgs. 27-29)

1. Why do you Catholics worship/pray to Saints?
2. Why do you Catholics wear medals/scapular? Isn't that superstitious?
3. Why do you Catholics think that the bones of dead saints can heal you?

Statue Worship (pg. 34, no.2)

1. The Bible forbids "graven images", so why do Catholic use/worship statues?
2. You Catholics changed the Bible to take out the command against the making of "graven images".

Session 2

- IV. Confession (pg. 24)
- V. Salvation/Born Again/Works (pg. 36-7, nos. 7- 9; pg. 37, no. 8)
- VI. Baptism (pg. 35, no. 5; pg. 36, no 6)
- VII. Papal Authority & Apostolic Succession (pgs. 14-16)

Confession (pg.24)

1. Why do you Catholic's confess your sins to a priest? Don't you know only Jesus can forgive sins?
2. Why do Catholics believe you have to do penance for your sins? Don't you believe in the sufficient work of Christ?

Salvation (pg. 36-7, nos. 7- 9; pg. 37, no. 8)

1. Are you saved/born again?

2. Have you accepted Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior?
3. Are you a Christian?
4. Catholics aren't Christians.
5. Why do you Catholics believe you can earn your way to heaven?

Baptism (pg. 35, no. 5; pg. 36, no 6)

1. Why do you Catholics baptize babies? A baby can't give his heart to Jesus.
2. Why do you Catholics believe that pouring water on someone's head will save them when the Bible clearly says it is faith that saves you, not water?

Papal Authority & Apostolic Succession (pgs. 14-16)

1. Where do you find the word "pope" in the Bible?
2. How can you believe that a man is infallible?
3. (In reference to Mt. 16:13-19) The rock Jesus was referring to was not Peter himself, but Peter's confession of faith.
4. Jesus gave power to all who believe in Him, what makes you think he gave a special authority to just Peter?
5. Even if Jesus gave Peter a special authority what makes you think He meant that authority to be passed on?

Session 3

- VIII. Priesthood (pg. 34, no. 1, pg. 38, no. 12)
- IX. Eucharist (pgs. 7-9)
- X. Mass-Sacrifice (pg. 35, no. 4)
- XI. Purgatory (pgs. 30-33)

Priesthood

1. Why do you Catholics have priests? The Bible says that all Christians are priests.
2. Why do you Catholics call your priests "father" when the Bible says to call no man "father".
3. Why does your church require priests not to marry? Don't you know that that's against the teachings of the Bible?

Eucharist/Mass

1. The Bible says that Jesus died once for our sins. Why do you Catholics sacrifice Him again and again?
2. How can you believe that a piece of bread is really Jesus? Isn't that idolatry?
3. Jesus really didn't mean that we were to eat his flesh and drink his blood. He was just speaking symbolically. How can you Catholics believe that?
4. How can you Catholic's believe that the bread and wine you receive at communion is really the body and blood of Jesus Christ?

Purgatory

1. Why do you Catholics believe in Purgatory? Where do you find that in the Bible?
2. Why do you Catholics believe that Purgatory is some sort of second chance to get saved? You're either saved or you aren't.
3. Why do you Catholic's pray for the dead?

Session 4

XII. Divinity of Jesus/Trinity – Dealing with JW's

XIII. Apologetic approach and method

Divinity of Jesus & the Trinity

- Challenges to the divinity of Jesus & the Trinity are more specific to Jehovah Witnesses & Iglesia Ni Cristo, and don't come in the way of a direct question. We'll be discussing how those challenges come about and how to handle them in the Jehovah Witness section.

Recommended Reading:

- All the booklets in the Beginning Apologetics Series by Father Frank Chacon & Jim Burnham
- A Biblical Defense of Catholicism by Dave Armstrong
- 12 Painless Ways to Evangelize by Karl Keating
- Answering Jehovah Witnesses by Jason Evert
- Born Fundamentalist, Born Again Catholic – David B. Currie
- Catholic and Christian – An Explanation of Commonly Misunderstood Catholic Beliefs by Alan Schreck
- Catholicism and Fundamentalism by Karl Keating
- College Apologetics – Proof of The Truth of The Catholic Faith by Fr. Anthony F. Alexander
- Crossing the Tiber by **Steve Ray**
- Evangelical Is Not Enough – Worship Of God In Liturgy And Sacrament by Thomas Howard (this is the book that Steve Ray spoke of that caused him to make the decision to convert)
- Friendly Defenders – Catholic Flash Cards by Matthew J. Pinto
- How Not To Share Your Faith – The Seven Deadly Sins of Catholic Apologetics and Evangelization by Mark Brumley
- Inner Strength for Active Apostles – How to Win Souls Without Losing Your Own by Dom Jean-Baptiste Chautard
- Inside Mormonism by Isaiah Bennett
- Meeting Mary by Kenneth J. Howell
- Refuting the Attack on Mary by Father Mateo
- Rome Sweet Home by Scott Hahn
- Search and Rescue – How To Bring Your Friends and Family Into, or Back Into the Catholic Church – by Patrick Madrid
- The Catholic Verses – 95 Bible Passages That Confound Protestants by Dave Armstrong
- The Everyday Apostle – Commonsense Ways to Draw Others to Christ by Fr. Edward F. Garesche
- The Papacy – Evangelization Guide by **Steve Ray**
- The Salvation Controversy by James Akin

- The Scriptural Roots of Catholic Teaching by Chantal Epie
- Upon This Rock – by **Steve Ray**
- Welcome Home – Stories of Fallen-Away Catholics Who Came Back by Fr. John Corapi and others
- What Catholics Really Believe by Karl Keating
- When Mormon's Call by Isaiah Bennett
- Where We Got The Bible – Our Debt to the Catholic Church (together with his conversion story) From The Kirk To The Catholic Church by Archbishop Henry G. Graham
- Which Bible Should You Read? – A Short Comparison and Commentary on Modern Bible Translations by Thomas A. Nelson
- Why I Became a Catholic – A Timeless Conversion Story by Sir Joseph Pope

Recommended Listening

- 20 Ways to Counter Anti-Catholicism by James Akin
- 7 Deadly Sins of Apologetics by Mark Brumley
- Overcoming Common Objections by Scott Hahn

Recommended Tools (to have on you)

- Catholic Answers Tracts
- Pillar of Fire, Pillar of Truth (booklet)
- Bible with Topic Tabs

Recommended Websites: (Be careful on the Internet. When in doubt, check with the Catholic Evidence Guild – at www.ceguam.org)

www.catholic.com (Catholic Answers)

www.catholicapologetics.org

www.catholicconvert.com (Steve Ray)

www.ceguam.org (Catholic Evidence Guild of Guam)

www.ewtn.com (EWTN)

www.scripturecatholic.com

Websites NOT recommended!!

<http://www.catholicintl.com/> - this is the website of Robert Sungenis. Though his website looks very orthodox he been, and remains, extremely critical and disrespectful of Pope John Paul II. We don't need this.

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