

Faith Tidbits..
*a little food for thought
and some knowledge
about your
Catholic faith*

May 2009

This monthly series will answer questions you always wondered about or questions you never even thought to ask... all about our Catholic Faith. If you have a question you want answered, call Diane Hardick at 633-3672.

A little more from Canon Law

1. Is there a penalty for a Catholic if they join another religion?

The offense of abandoning the Christian faith is called *apostasy*. *Apostasy* is the “total repudiation of the Christian faith” (canon 751). *Repudiation* may be defined as a “rejection or intentional denial.” In order to be an apostate, an individual must be a baptized Christian who totally denies their Christian faith and its teachings. Apostasy would result in an instant excommunication from the Catholic faith. Joining another Christian religion does not necessarily constitute apostasy. Most people continue to be Christian, but join another Christ denomination. This is a sinful action, but not apostasy. There is no penalty of excommunication when a Catholic chooses to join another Christian church. Although, In order for the person to return to their Catholic faith, they must make a formal return to the Church through confession and a profession of faith before receiving Holy Communion.

2. Must a child made a sacramental confession before receiving their first Holy Communion?

Canon 914 requires a sacramental confession before First Holy Communion, but it is often ignored in our day. Many pastors and catechists, as well as parents, argue that a young child is incapable of committing a mortal sin. What is encouraged is that every child be given the opportunity to participate in a sacramental confession prior to receiving First Holy Communion. This helps develop in children the good habit of regular and sincere confession and reverence for the Eucharist.

3. Why is the Sacrament of the sick given to people who are not dying?

Too often Catholics confuse the old *Last Rites* with the Sacrament of the Sick, which is offered to any member of the Church who is in danger by reason of serious illness and/or surgery or old age. The canon does not say *in danger of death* because the purpose of the sacrament is to strengthen those are “dangerously ill” and not only those who are deathly ill. The Church does, though, encourage those on their deathbed to receive the sacrament as well.

4. Are my children considered illegitimate if I obtain an Annulment in the Church?

Canon 1137 clearly states that children born within a marriage that was entered into “in good faith” are not to be considered illegitimate. *In good faith* means that at the time of the wedding one or both people truly believed that they were establishing a marriage.

Want to know more about our Church Laws and how they affect us as the Laity in the Church?

**Join us for a Three Week Series entitled “Canon Law for the Laity”
presented by Lynnette Tait, JCL
November 4, 11 and 18.**

Look for more information to come in the fall.