



YO FATHER

Q My grandmother talks about the Baltimore Catechism, and I've heard of YouCat and the regular catechism. Why do we have so many catechisms? And why do we need them? Isn't the Bible enough?

A Why do we have so many Catechisms? Great question! Let's make things even more interesting by pointing out the fact that the Baltimore Catechism actually has four different versions: one was a

basic version, the second one was for confirmation students, the third was to be used by students after confirmation, and finally the fourth version was aimed toward teachers and catechists.

At the same time as this little fact adds even more variables to the mix (along with the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* published in 1992 and the *YouCat*) I think that it can also help for us to see why we have multiple versions of the catechism.

I'll begin by emphatically stating that Church doctrine — what we believe — does not change from catechism to catechism! Rather, each catechism simply presents the same doctrine from a different viewpoint.

The Baltimore catechisms differed in much the same way that a first-grade religion textbook would look different from an eighth-grade one!

The same could be said between the *YouCat* and the current catechism that was promulgated by St. John Paul II. The *YouCat* aims to be something that would be enjoyable for youth and teens, whereas the big catechism from 20 or so years ago is more technical and in depth.

As for why we needed a new catechism even though the *Baltimore Catechism* was phenomenal? Well, a whole lot happened in the world between 1885 when the *Baltimore Catechism* was first published, and 1992 when the new one came out (107 years — the same amount of time since the Cubs last won the World Series!) Over 107 years a lot changed in the world.

I again want to stress that this doesn't mean that what we believed changed, but that if the way people understand things and approach the world changes,

then the terminology and viewpoint that are used to present the very same doctrines have to be updated and tweaked so as to make the material relevant and understandable to the people of the given time period.

So that is precisely why there are so many different catechisms out there: to account for the fact that people are at different levels of understanding and have different abilities of comprehending, and that material has to be packaged differently so as to be best received by people with a different mind set or world view in different centuries.

As for why we need a catechism in the first place? Well, while the Bible is the greatest book ever, the truth of the matter is that our faith is based on both Scripture (the Bible) and tradition. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* presents in an organized manner, everything that we believe that is presented to us by

both Scripture and tradition.

In other words, the Church's doctrine is and always will be based on and supported by the Bible, but through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, countless Church councils throughout the centuries have delved deeper into the mysteries of Christ and have discerned deeper truths about what we believe.

In other words, on some things the Bible gives us flowers, but in other areas it gives us the seeds, which sprouted after the Scriptures had already been recorded. The beauty of the faith represented by these flowers would be what we call the *living tradition of the Church*. So we need the catechism and the Bible so that we can appreciate and understand the true beauty of all that it is that we believe!

This month's YO Father question is answered by Father Keith Romke. Send your questions to youngobserver@rockforddiocese.org.

February is Catholic Press Month

By SHARON BOEHLEFELD | Features Editor

Work on *The Central Times*, the student newspaper at Aurora Central Catholic High School, starts early.

Student journalists who opt to take up newspaper work regularly arrive on campus at 7 a.m. to write stories, design pages, meet for planning sessions, or, as they did recently, talk about current events.

When several staff members gathered recently, they spent a little time talking about the consequences of NBC news anchor Brian Williams's war stories.

The news had broken the day before and students were not yet sure exactly what the long term impact would be on journalism, as they considered the question with advisor Len Bogacki.

The staff uses several rooms to produce *The Central Times*, which is printed monthly by an east coast publisher and mailed back to the students.

They use one computer lab to write stories and do online research. They use another to design pages. And they use advisor Len Bogacki's classroom for planning and lecture sessions.

About 15 students are active in the extracurricular activity this year, says Bogacki.

Because if we, the storytellers, don't do this, then the bad people will win.

— Christiane Amanpour, chief international correspondent for CNN



Natalie Droeske (right), editor in chief, and Jared Smith, both seniors at Aurora Central Catholic High School, look over one of the pages of a recent issue of the school paper, *The Central Times*.

Apply now for NINA scholarships

The Northern Illinois Newspaper Association offers three scholarships for graduating seniors in the region who are interested in pursuing media careers. Students need portfolios and recommendations for their applications. **The deadline is March 20.** Info: <http://ninaonline.org/high-school-seniors-can-apply-now-for-scholarship/>.



Gathered for an early morning discussion are Central Times staffers (from left) Kayla Siemann, freshman; Natalie Droeske, senior; Alex Montalbano, freshman; Jared Smith, senior, and Abby Ripper, freshman.



Senior Josh San Diego looks over the latest edition of the paper as students insert center pages (in pink) into the paper. Advisor Len Bogacki looks on.

Marmion senior honored for leadership

Blake Turcich of Geneva, a senior at Marmion Academy in Aurora, was one of 10 local students honored with the 2014 Ted Brattin Civic Youth Award.

Ted Brattin was an Aurora businessman who was involved in founding the Aurora Council of the Navy League and the Aurora-Naperville Rotary Club. This annual award is presented to Fox Valley youth ages 13-19 who, like Brattin, have shown outstanding leadership and selfless service to the community.

Turchich has volunteered since grade school making a difference in the lives of those with special needs. At Camp Soar, he works one-on-one with a severely handicapped camper for a full week every summer. He gets up early on Saturday mornings to go work with special needs children and adults. And he started "Polishing Pals," his own volunteer program where he and other volunteers that he trained go to area nursing homes to polish the residents' shoes. Some visits include more than 100 shoes.

"He is a very humble and dedicated student who has a love for his fellow mankind," says Dan Thorpe, Marmion Academy's director of college guidance.



Blake Turcich

Lent tips from Pope Francis

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| 1 Get rid of the lazy addiction to evil | 5 Take part in the sacraments | 9 Help the Poor |
| 2 Do something that hurts | 6 Pray some more | 10 Evangelize |
| 3 Don't remain indifferent | 7 Fast | |
| 4 Pray: Make our hearts like yours! | 8 Give alms | |

— Sister Ann Brummel, OP, principal, Rosary High School, Aurora



Every Catholic conference I have ever been to provides a new insight to my faith. I have attended many Catholic teen conferences, such as Steubenville and the Dominican Preacher Conference in Sienna Heights, Michigan.

This year, I had the privilege to go to the Catholic Youth Summit, in Rockford, with Holy Angels Parish.

The speakers at this conference were absolutely incredible, providing an upbeat and happy atmosphere. There were numerous high schools and parishes represented, which allowed for a great diverse community!

I certainly enjoyed the different speeches that

were given, which included letting God help you in your decisions and that God is always with you even throughout your difficult times. Most of the speeches were very eye-opening and definitely applied to different aspects of my life.

While at the conference, I met many new teenagers who helped further my faith. Just meeting new people helped me to understand that no matter where we are from, we all have the same foundation of the Catholic faith and are part of the Body of God.

One of my favorite parts of the conference was having a question and answer session with Bishop Malloy. It was delightful to hear his insights on the different questions everyone asked!

Finally, spending my Sunday at the Catholic Youth Summit in Rockford definitely "rocked." It was a great opportunity to further my knowledge of the Catholic faith with my peers in an atmosphere that was directed towards teenagers!

— Morgan Martinez, 17, attends Rosary High School in Aurora and is a member of St. Katharine Drexel Parish in Sugar Grove

Share your faith stories

If you are a high school or college student who is interested in sharing your faith journey, tell us in about 250 words. Write about how you live your faith every day. Talk about what being Catholic means to

you. Send your essay to youngobserver@rockforddiocese.org. Put "My Catholic Life" in the subject line. Be sure to include your age, phone number (not for publication), school, parish and town. Be sure to include a photo.

VOCATION CORNER

Jesus, I trust in You

The most important building block of vocational discernment is simply trusting in God. This is an essential and absolutely crucial element of following God's will because if we don't trust in Him, then it will be nearly impossible to want to follow where He leads.

If however, we reach out in trust and believe deep down that wherever He leads us is where we will be most joyful in life (which is 100 percent true!) then it becomes so much easier to desire to follow His will in whatever it may be.

This of course is easier said than done.

One time I was really having a hard time trusting and I was getting very anxious and stressed out. I talked to a priest about it and he told me that one of the most powerful things

that I could do would be to go into the chapel, pick up a rosary, and simply pray the phrase "Jesus I trust in You" on each of the beads.

As I began to pray this way more and more frequently, it didn't fix everything, but it did allow me to slowly let go of my fears and my desire to control everything. It allowed me to step out into uncertain waters because that was where Jesus was calling.

So, there's no reason why this prayer can't work for you too.

Jesus, I trust in You.

— Father Keith Romke is diocesan Director of Vocations. Write to him at kromke@rockforddiocese.org.