

## **Reasons to Believe in God and in the Holy Catholic Church He Set Up** (by Fr. Michael)

More and more people are coming to me wondering if God exists and if the Catholic religion is just a “fairy tale” to make us feel good. There is a lot of confusion out there! We have a duty to seek the truth.

If someone came to you today and asked you why you believe that God exists and why you believe that Christ set up the Catholic Church, what would you say?

God does exist and He did set up the Catholic religion to worship Him. Here are eight reasons to believe that God exists (in no particular order) and a few final comments about our religion.

**1. Creation.** I know that God exists because of creation. Some Being had to create us and everything around us. **Romans 1:19-20** states: “For what can be known about God is evident to them, because God made it evident to them. Ever since the creation of the world, his invisible attributes of eternal power and divinity have been able to be understood and perceived in what He has made. As a result, they have no excuse.”

Some people try to explain away the universe by the “big bang theory.” It is just a theory. However, if the universe was created through a big bang, Someone had to cause the big bang; we call God the First Cause.

**2. The gift of faith.** I know that God exists because of the gift of faith and the consolation I receive by following His “rules.” In **John 14:15**, Jesus says, “If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.” I notice that when I have a intimate relationship with God and try to keep His commandments, I am full of joy. When I follow the teaching of the Bible, I have peace. As a matter of fact, I feel like what Paul said in **Galatians 5:22-23**: “[T]he fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.”

**3. Eucharistic miracles.** I believe God exists because of Eucharistic miracles. Here are two examples. In September 2013, I went to Santarem, Portugal, and saw a Eucharistic miracle from the year 1266. There is a Host (Jesus) that has not corrupted at all since that year. The staff at the church where the miracle is on display told us the Host was tested around 2003 and the results were that the Host was still bleeding.

During Mass in Boxmeer, Holland, in the year 1400, the wine in the chalice was transformed into Blood and bubbled out of the chalice, splashing onto the corporal. The priest, terrified at the sight, asked God to forgive his

doubts, and the Blood immediately stopped bubbling out of the chalice. That Blood that had fallen onto the corporal coagulated into a lump the size of a walnut. Even today one could go to Holland and see the miracle, which has not changed.

When scientists test many of these Host miracles, they find that the Host is heart tissue. For me, this shows that Jesus is trying to love us with His heart when we receive Him in Holy Communion.

To see more examples of Eucharistic miracles, visit: [http://www.therealpresence.org/eucharst/mir/engl\\_mir.htm](http://www.therealpresence.org/eucharst/mir/engl_mir.htm)

**4. Incorrupt bodies.** I believe that God exists because of incorrupt bodies; we call them incorruptibles. God performs miracles in keeping them from decaying all the way. Some are partially corrupt.

In September 2013 while I was on pilgrimage through Portugal, Spain, and France, I saw the incorrupt bodies of St. Catherine Laboure (d. 1876) and St. Bernadette Soubirous (d. 1879)—both dead for well over 100 years.

If you do a Google search on “incorruptibles,” you will find page after page. One practical Youtube video is: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cygNDLJx\\_aw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cygNDLJx_aw)

**5. Present miracles/healings.** I know that God exists because of the current miracles that I get to see. On May 15, 2013, I was concelebrating at a Healing Mass in Cincinnati, OH, at the Holy Spirit Center. There were about 150 people in attendance. One person in attendance was my former Air Force R.O.T.C. cadet, Jennifer. I asked her and her husband to come. To be succinct, she was healed that night of a vocal cord problem, an eyesight problem, and serious complications from a concussion. She was singing the final praise song that night (after three hours of Mass and Eucharistic Adoration), and her voice came back. She thought that God may have healed her, so she stopped taking her daily medication for the concussion. She has been fine and med-free ever since.

I have seen a number of people get healed from additions to pornography and masturbation. All of them were healed after they were in right relationship with God—attending Mass, frequent Confession, and praying the Angelic Warfare Confraternity Prayer. Also, they did other prayers.

There are many miracles/healings at Lourdes, France. There are almost 7,000 healings that have been documented there, but the Church—being careful—will always be slow to approve them. Please visit: [http://www.miraclehunter.com/marian\\_apparitions/approved\\_apparitions/lourdes/miracles1.html](http://www.miraclehunter.com/marian_apparitions/approved_apparitions/lourdes/miracles1.html)

**6. Exorcisms.** I know that God exists because of the reactions of demons when they are exposed to God and His saints and holy objects. If you speak to an exorcist, he will tell you about what happens during an exorcism. The demons react to many things: the Eucharist; the Word of God (Bible passages); blessed water, crucifixes, incense, bells, rosaries; relics of saints; certain prayers in Latin (considered a sacred language); and other prayers (Rosary, Litany of the Saints, Litany of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, etc.) A few ways to tell if someone is influenced strongly by a demon is that he/she can speak a language he/she never studied and/or the person has superhuman strength. There are people who fake a possession, but there are ways to discover who is faking and who is not. Visit: <http://www.ncregister.com/daily-news/help-for-exorcists-how-a-new-york-psychiatrist-battles-demons>

**7. Saints willing to give their lives for Christ.** I know God exists because of the countless number of people who have defended Jesus Christ and were martyred because of doing so. We just celebrated the Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul on June 29. St. Paul was beheaded and St. Peter was crucified upside-down. As a matter of fact, 11 of 12 of the Apostles were martyred.

Reports are coming in saying that over 900,000 Christians were martyred for their faith in 2016.

St. Bernadette Soubirous [1844-1879] died of serious physical complications at age 35. The Blessed Virgin Mary appeared to her 18 times at Lourdes (Feast Day, Feb. 11), and she was never afraid to defend her story. St. Bernadette was taken in by the local police and questioned many times. She never worried or flinched. One time, the police commissioner Jacomet insisted, “No, you’re not speaking the truth. If you don’t tell me who it was who forced you to tell this story, I’ll prosecute you as a liar.” Bernadette replied, “Do as you wish, sir.” He said, “Get ready to go to prison.” She calmly replied, “So much the better! I shall cost my father less, and in prison you’ll come and teach me my Catechism.” She was always ready to die for God and Mary. She was in excruciating pain at her death, and even ridiculed by her mother superior.

**8. The tilma of St. Juan Diego.** Recall that the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared several times to Juan Diego at Tepeyac in Mexico in December 1531. Eventually the image of the Blessed Virgin appeared on his tilma (cape). Here are just a few miraculous facts.

(a) The image has lasted and shows no signs of deterioration. Juan Diego’s tilma is made of a rough cactus fiber which normally disintegrates in 15 to 30 years. Yet, the image of Guadalupe has remained intact for almost 500 years without fading or cracking.

Moreover, it was subjected to candle smoke for many years, which should have accelerated the process of deterioration. In 1778, a worker accidentally spilled strong nitric acid onto a large portion of the image. To everyone’s astonishment, only slight stains appeared which can still be seen in the upper right side. Additionally, in 1921 a bomb concealed in some flowers was placed directly under the image. When the bomb detonated, the marble altar rail and windows 150 feet away were shattered, a brass crucifix was twisted out of shape, but the image was left unharmed.

(b) The image is always 98.6°F, the temperature of the human body. No matter what the surrounding temperature, season, or weather, the image remains at an even 98.6°F.

(c) Using enlarged photos, several images can be seen reflected in the eyes of the Virgin. They appear to be the images of Juan Diego, Bishop Juan de Zummaraga, Juan Gonzales, the interpreter and others.

(d) Within a few years of the image appearing on the tilma, over six million Aztecs converted.

To get more miraculous facts, visit: <https://www.catholiceducation.org/en/culture/catholic-contributions/the-amazing-truth-of-our-lady-of-guadalupe.html>

To end, let’s just say that these are just a few things that point to the existence of God. There are countless other examples we could use. Also, we could have added many real stories about the Mass and the sacraments. If people were intellectually honest, they would study the early Church Fathers and see what they wrote. As one example, St. Justin the Martyr wrote about what Mass looked like in 155 A.D. It looks almost exactly like what you see today. So many Church Fathers and Mothers talked about the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist. Please visit:

<http://www.therealpresence.org/eucharst/tes/a7.html>

When people are struggling to believe in God or His Catholic Church, all of us need to be able to give reasons for our faith. Let’s end with **1 Peter 3:14-16**: *But even if you should suffer because of righteousness, blessed are you. Do not be afraid or terrified with fear of them, but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts. Always be ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope, but do it with gentleness and reverence, keeping your conscience clear, so that, when you are maligned, those who defame your good conduct in Christ may themselves be put to shame.*

**Good Website to Study Your Faith:**

<https://www.scripturecatholic.com/>

## The Office is Closed on Labor Day

### First Saturday Mass at OLS, September 7.

Confession, 8:45; Mass, 9:30 a.m., Rosary, meditation.

### Saturday Vigil Mass Schedule at St. Bernard

The last Saturday vigil Mass at St. Bernard is on Aug 31. Then a 5:30 p.m. Saturday vigil Mass will run from Nov 23 to Mar 28. An additional 4 p.m. Mass will begin on Dec 21

**Pint with a Priest** We profess belief in the Communion of the Saints. How does this impact our lives? There should be some new things to think about this Tuesday. Join us and bring a friend. The Peak Restaurant and Brewery, Winter Park, at 6 pm.

### **Religious Education (RE) Ready. Parents, Please Call**

Please contact Fr. Michael 970-887-0032, ext. 4, or Fr. Peter, 970-364-0170, to register your children for classes. We want to sit down with you and discuss how we can assist you, as you are the primary teacher and example of the Catholic faith to your children.

**StP RE** Short all-family meeting after Mass, Sun, Sep 15.

### **Guest Speaker Circuit, September 19 – 21**

We are privileged to have **Fr. Doug Grandon** and his wife **Lynn** come to visit us and give us some enlightening talks. Here is the schedule:

**-Thursday, Sep 19, 8:30 a.m. Mass followed by a Holy Hour.** [Time to go to breakfast; come back for the talk.]

**-Thursday, Sep 19, 11:15 a.m. “Made This Way”**—by Lynn. Our culture has distorted our moral compass. We may recognize cultural errors but don’t know how to explain them to our children. We will review hot-button current moral issues including the use and misuse of human sexuality with tips for discussion, reviewing the topics covered in the book by the same name by apologist Trent Horn and Leila Miller.

**-Thursday, Sep 19, 6:30 p.m. “The Soviet War on Religion”**—by Fr. Grandon. In 1921, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union called for “anti-religious agitation ... among the broad masses of the workers, using the mass media, films, books, lectures, and other devices.” Between 1921 and 1928, Communists murdered the Metropolitan Archbishop of Kiev, 28 bishops and 6,775 priests. That was just the beginning of the terror. Fr. Doug Grandon will describe the Communists by-and-large successful campaign to destroy the Christianity in the USSR – and the Church’s post-communist resurgence. He will illustrate his talk with several original Soviet anti-Christian propaganda posters.

**-Friday, Sep 20, 8:30 a.m. Mass and Holy Hour.**

**-Friday, Sep 20, 11:15 a.m. “What’s Wrong with Socialism?”** Fr. Grandon will illustrate the difference between pure socialism and pure capitalism using four glasses of water. The clear lesson from history is that nations that adopt pure socialism ultimately experience poverty – and descend into undemocratic fascism. Pure capitalism presents its own problems. Catholics concerned about social justice should advocate a mixed economy that fosters economic freedom and responsible assistance for those who cannot help

themselves. This talk is built around instructive videos and slides. *Snacks available at this point before the next talk.*

**-Friday, Sep 20, 12:30 p.m. “Taking Off The Blindfold”** Lynn examines the mindset which has dominated the field of reproductive medicine for the last 50 years since the advent of oral contraceptives. The predicted cultural upheaval and subsequent health problems associated with hormonal birth control. This talk also reviews the overall ethical concerns and the short and long-term medical consequences, and the wise, healthy alternatives of natural fertility awareness methods.

**-Saturday, Sep 21, 9:30 a.m. Mass**

**-Saturday, Sep 21, 10:15 a.m. “Transgender Identity”**

Lynn gives an overview of the current ideology: how it began, biological absolutes, the difference between sex and gender, body dysphoria disorders, treatments and helpful perspectives for dialogue.

### **Calendar of Events**

**-Oct 13 (Sun).** Our Lady of Fatima Celebration at OLS

#### **Mass Collections, August 24 – 25**

St. Anne	\$ 1970
St. Bernard	2297
Our Lady of the Snow	2127
St. Peter	688
St. Ignatius	878
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 7960</b>

#### **Vocations Prayer Calendar**

*Please pray for our seminarians every day.*

**Sat**—Hernaldo Arrieta & Felipe Colombo

**Sun**—Juan Madrid & Davide Milani

**Mon**—Joseph Bui & Patricio Chuquimarca

**Tue**—Daniele Arienzo & Peter Brancale

**Wed**—Joseph Do & Rommy Munoz

**Thu**—Javier Moretten & Jose Medina

**Fri**—Increase in vocations to priesthood/religious life

#### **Mass Intentions and Schedule for StA, StB, and OLS**

**KEY:** StA = St. Anne; StB = St. Bernard;

OLS = Our Lady of the Snow

-Sat, Aug 31, StA, 5 p.m., Bernie McGinn

-Sat, Aug 31, StB, 5:30 p.m., People in region/visitors

-Sun, Sep 1, StB, 7 a.m., Gilbert and Lorraine Maloney

-Sun, Sep 1, OLS, 9:30 a.m., Ed/Kathleen Szalkowski

#### **Weekday Masses**

-Mon, Sep 2, StA, 8:30 a.m., Msgr. Edward Beult

-Tue, Sep 3, OLS, 7:30 a.m., Larry and Janice Gross

-Wed, Sep 4, StB, 8:30 a.m., +Tom Luby

-Thu, Sep 5, OLS, 8:30 a.m., +Fr. James H. Ryan

-Fri, Sep 6, OLS, 8:30 a.m., Eugene and Marta Kranz

#### **Mass Intentions and Schedule for StP and StI**

**KEY:** StP = St. Peter; StI = St. Ignatius (Walden)

-Sun, Sep 1, StP, 10 a.m., People in our region/visitors

-Sun, Sep 1, StI, 1 p.m., Tim and Barb Lytle

-Fri, Sep 6, StP, 5:30 p.m., Gilbert and Lorraine Maloney