

## Catholic Response to the LDS Missionaries



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## Catholic Response to the LDS Missionaries



- Introduction
- Missionary Methods
- The Discussions
- The Catholic Response
- Summary
- Question and Answer

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## Introduction



- Fifth-generation Mormon born and raised in Utah
- Convert to the Catholic faith in 1994
- Mormons versus Mormonism
- Three Classifications of Christian Churches:
  - The Catholic Church
  - Reformed (Protestant) Churches
  - Restored (LDS) Church

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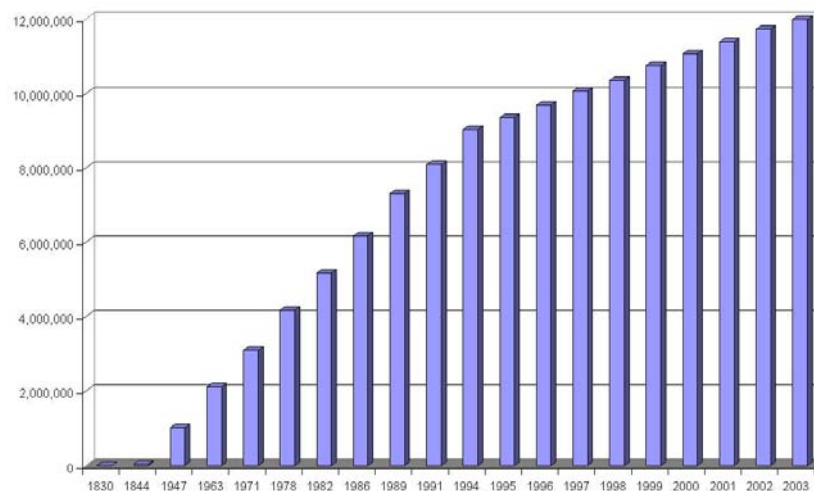
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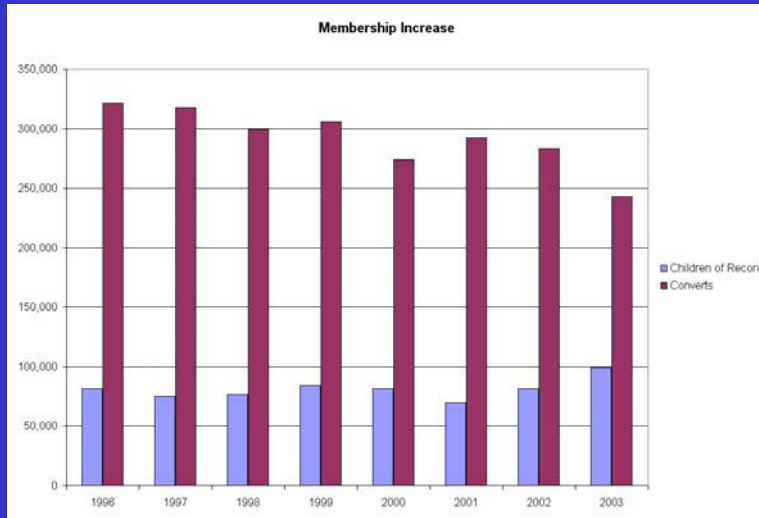
## LDS Membership Statistics



LDS Statistical Report (Membership)



## Increase in New Members

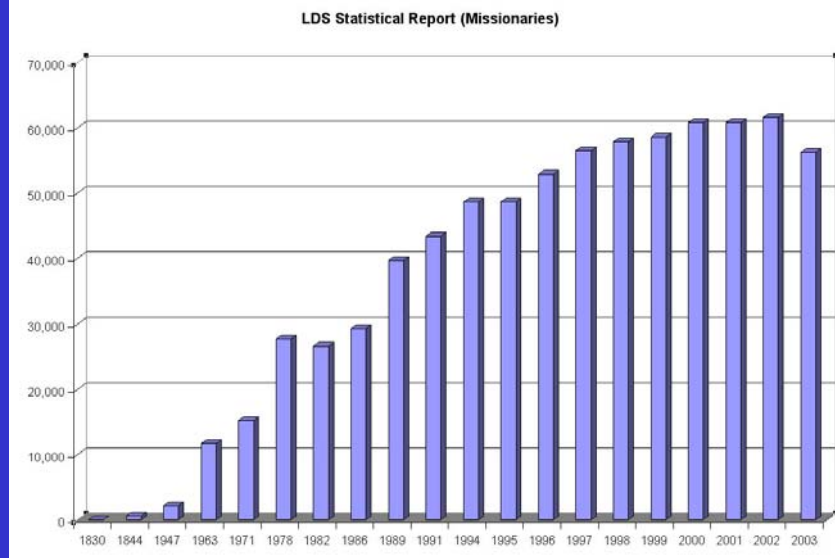


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## LDS Missionaries in the Field



## Missionary Methods



- Missionary Training Center
  - Trained on how to present the 6 discussion topics and not to stray from them
  - Language training if going to a foreign country
- The Mormon Faith is Based on Feelings
  - Subjective “Testimony” or feeling that a teaching or practice is true
  - Distrust anything not Mormon

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## Missionary Methods (Cont.)



- Contacts with “Investigators”:
  - Mormon acquaintance gives the missionaries your name and address
  - Neighborhood “tracting”
  - Response to TV/Radio ad for a free video, Book of Mormon, or Bible (missionary follow-up)
  - Life-changing event (birth, death, wedding, etc.)

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## The Missionary Discussions



1. The Plan of Our Heavenly Father
2. The Gospel of Jesus Christ
3. The Restoration
4. Eternal Progression
5. Living a Christ-like Life
6. Membership in the Kingdom

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## The Missionary Discussions



- 1. The Plan of Our Heavenly Father**
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## The Missionary Discussions



### 1. The Plan of Our Heavenly Father

- God has a plan for our salvation
- We are to become like him
- By faith and by following the perfect example of Jesus we can return to God and live forever
- Through prophets we find out about this divine plan
- Prophets continue to teach even today

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## The Missionary Discussions



### 1. The Plan of Our Heavenly Father (Cont.)

- Joseph Smith is one such prophet; indeed, he is the greatest
- He had a vision as a young boy and was used by God to bring back the true Christian church.
- He did this, in part, by discovering and translating the Book of Mormon, an ancient record of Hebrew people living in America

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## The Missionary Discussions



### 1. The Plan of Our Heavenly Father (Cont.)

- You can know that what the missionaries say is true by listening to their “testimonies” and praying to receive one of your own

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## The Missionary Discussions



### 1. The Plan of Our Heavenly Father

### **2. The Gospel of Jesus Christ**

### 3. The Restoration

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### 6. Membership in the Kingdom

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## The Missionary Discussions



### 2. The Gospel of Jesus Christ

- Jesus Christ overcame physical death by his resurrection
- Therefore, all people will be resurrected
- To be saved from sin, we must use our free agency (free will), accept Christ and follow the Mormon faith
- Faith in Christ means serving him; repentance is total and permanent commitment to the Mormon gospel

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## The Missionary Discussions



### 2. The Gospel of Jesus Christ (Cont.)

- The outward expression of this is Mormon baptism
- With this “ordinance” we receive the companionship of the Holy Ghost
- By obeying God’s commandments as taught by the Mormon church, and by enduring to the end, we can be saved

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## The Missionary Discussions



### 3. The Restoration

- We must find and accept the truth
- By doing this, we learn that Christ founded his Church by revelation
- Revelation is continued today by “apostles” and “prophets”
- It was not always so; the first apostles were rejected and their priestly authority was completely lost

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## The Missionary Discussions



### 3. The Restoration (Cont.)

- For many centuries the institution known as “Christendom” was in reality an apostate church opposed to God and the truth
- Not until 1830, when Joseph Smith organized the Mormon church, was the true church of Christ restored to a lost world
- Priestly authority was re-established
- New scriptures were brought forth and ancient rituals were again performed

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## The Missionary Discussions



### 3. The Restoration (Cont.)

- An outward indication of membership in the one, true church is weekly attendance at its meetings

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## The Missionary Discussions



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## The Missionary Discussions



### 4. Eternal Progression

- Each one of us lived with God the Father and our "Heavenly Mother" (a wife of God the Father) in the eons before we were conceived by our earthly parents
- When we finally took on a physical body, we were given the opportunity to accept the Mormon plan, live obediently and finally progress to godhood ourselves
- Only temple-worthy Mormons can become gods

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# The Missionary Discussions



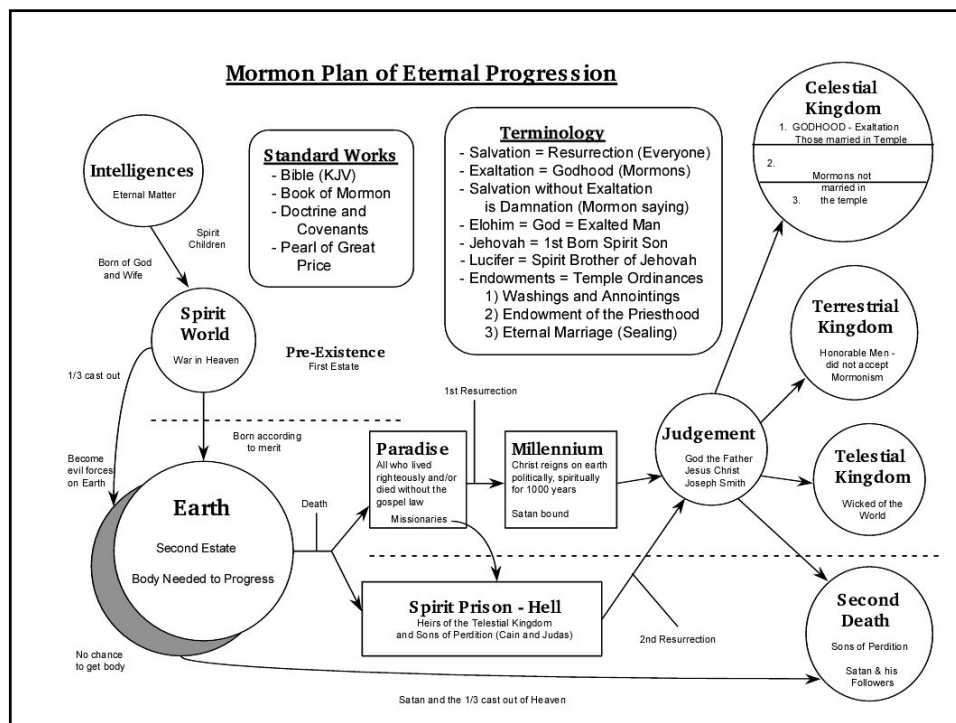
## 4. Eternal Progression (Cont.)

- Non-Mormons and those who fall short of the ideal do not return to God the Father
- Genealogy and proxy-work for the dead are necessary if they, too, are to be saved
- Families can thus be “for ever”
- Chastity and obedience to such rules as the “Word of Wisdom” are also necessary for eventual godhood

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## The Missionary Discussions



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## The Missionary Discussions



### 5. Living a Christ-like Life

- God requires sacrifice, which in turn brings us blessings
- We show our love for him by following his commands and by service to others
- Fasting and tithing are two ways we show our faith in God's loving care

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## The Missionary Discussions



1. The Plan of Our Heavenly Father
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### **6. Membership in the Kingdom**

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## The Missionary Discussions



### 6. Membership in the Kingdom

- Jesus Christ is the Creator, Redeemer, and Judge
- Through obedience to his Mormon church, we can attain “exaltation”, or the highest level of salvation
- We become gods of our own worlds
- The Mormon church’s mission, therefore, is to help “perfect the saints, proclaim the gospel, and redeem the dead”

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## The Missionary Discussions



### 6. Membership in the Kingdom (Cont.)

- We must heed the inspired guidance of Mormon leaders, follow the scriptures, perform the ordinances and serve
- Spreading the Mormon message is crucial to our own advancement, so we must cultivate a missionary spirit

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## The Missionary Discussions



### 6. Membership in the Kingdom (Cont.)

- By researching our family trees and performing proxy temple work for our dead ancestors, we enable them to become Mormons (and gods) too

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## The Catholic Response



- Faith and Reason are not diametrically opposed
- Three legs to stand on:
  - Bible (historical accuracy, God-inspired)
  - Tradition (Early Church Fathers, consistency)
  - Teaching Authority (Apostolic Succession)

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## Summary



- Know, love, and practice your own faith
- Use good Catholic Christian charity when speaking to the Mormon missionaries
- Be prepared to respond with your own “testimony” of the fullness of truth contained only in the Catholic Church
- No “Total Apostasy” means no need for Restoration

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Question and Answer



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