

Catholic Response to the LDS Missionaries



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Catholic Response to the LDS Missionaries

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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



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 Catholic Response



- Topics for Discussion
 - Fasting
 - Tithing
 - Sacrifice
 - Blessings (Grace)
 - Obedience
 - Service to Others
 - Salvation

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LDS Fasting



- Church members are to fast for two consecutive meals on fast day (usually the first Sunday of each month)
- Fasting produces spiritual strength
- Monthly fasting should be coupled with a desire to bless our fellow beings
- One purpose of the monthly fast is to benefit the poor
- We are to fast using wisdom and discretion coupled with prayer and meditation

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LDS Fasting (Cont.)



- Fast Offerings (monetary amount equal to the meals fasted) are to be given to the bishop, who in turn distributes them to the needy
- Deacons (boys age 12 and 13) go house-to-house to collect the Fast Offerings from members
- We are to be very generous in the giving of fast offerings

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Catholic Fasting



- Expression of interior penance in imitation of the fast of Jesus for forty days in the desert (Matt. 4:2)
- Ascetical practice recommended in Scripture and the writings of the Church Fathers
- Sometimes prescribed by a precept of the Church, especially during the liturgical season of Lent (CCC 538, 1434, 2043)
- Interior penance of the Christian is expressed through fasting, prayer, and almsgiving

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Catholic Fasting (Cont.)



- Fourth Precept of the Church
 - “You shall observe the days of fasting and abstinence established by the Church”
 - Ensures times of asceticism (self-discipline) and penance
 - Prepares us for the liturgical feasts and helps us acquire mastery over our instincts and freedom of heart

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LDS Tithing



- Members of the LDS church are to give as tithing one-tenth of all their increase annually
- The law of tithing was instituted because the people could not abide the greater "Law of Consecration" (D&C 42:30-39)
 - Dedication of all of one's time, talents, and possessions to the Church and its purposes
 - Each member was to receive a sufficient portion ("inheritance") from the common treasury to continue in trade, business, or profession as desired

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Catholic Tithing



- Fifth Precept of the Church
 - "You shall help to provide for the needs of the Church"
 - The faithful are obliged to assist with the material needs of the Church, each according to his abilities
- Jesus warns us about observing the minutiae of the law (of tithing), while neglecting its weightier precepts (Matt. 23:23; Lk. 18:12)
 - Justice
 - Mercy
 - Faith

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LDS Sacrifice



- Members are to live the law of sacrifice; to be willing to make whatever sacrifices the Lord requires for the sake of the gospel
- “A religion that does not require the sacrifice of all things never has power sufficient to produce the faith necessary unto life and salvation” (Joseph Smith)
- Those who refuse to share what they have will not gain exaltation
- “The law of sacrifice is a celestial law; so also is the law of consecration” (Bruce R. McConkie)

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Catholic Sacrifice



- A ritual offering made to God by a priest on behalf of the people, as a sign of adoration, gratitude, supplication, and communion (CCC 2099)
- The perfect sacrifice was Christ’s death on the cross; by this sacrifice, Christ accomplished our redemption as high priest of the new and eternal covenant (CCC 616)
- The sacrifice of Christ on the cross is commemorated and mysteriously made present in the Eucharistic sacrifice of the Church (CCC 1357, 1544)

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LDS Blessings (Grace)



- By faith we are saved by the grace of God, not by works alone without true faith
- “Signs come by faith... for without faith no man pleaseth God” (D&C 63:11)
- Eternal life is a gift of God, and even though the obtaining of eternal life requires good works, it cannot be wholly earned by us
- “For we know that it is by grace that we are saved, after all we can do” (2 Nephi 25:23)

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LDS Blessings (Grace) (Cont.)



- Blessings
 - Babies and children by priesthood authority
 - From father as patriarch to family
 - From the church patriarch to members
- Gift of the Spirit (spiritual gifts and talents)
 - Spiritual gifts are distributed among the members of the church
 - The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy

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Catholic Blessings (Grace)



- Prayer invoking God's power and care upon some person, place, thing, or undertaking
- Prayer of benediction acknowledges God as the source of all blessing
- Some blessings confer a permanent status
 - Consecration of persons to God
 - Setting things apart for liturgical usage
- CCC 1671, 2626

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Catholic Blessings (Grace) (Cont.)



- Grace is the free and undeserved gift that God gives us to respond to our vocation to become His adopted children
- Sanctifying Grace
 - God shares His divine life and friendship with us in a habitual gift, a stable and supernatural disposition that enables the soul to live with God, to act by his love
- Actual Grace
 - God gives us the help to conform our lives to His will

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Catholic Blessings (Grace) (Cont.)



- Sacramental Grace
 - Gifts of the Holy Spirit to help us live out our Christian vocation
- Special Graces
 - Charisms
 - The grace of one's state of life
- CCC 1996, 2000
- Death and Resurrection of Christ opens the way to a new life (justification) that reinstates us in God's grace (CCC 654)

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LDS Obedience



- Faith in Christ is increased by obedience to the word of God
- Redemption from spiritual death through Christ's atonement is conditioned on obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel
- We are to live the law of obedience (which is that the Saints of God shall do all things the Lord commands)
- We are to heed the words of the Lord as they come from His servants, the living and ancient prophets

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LDS Obedience (Cont.)



- The Lord requires active obedience, not just passive acceptance
- If we keep the Lord's commandments, He is bound by His promises to bless us
- Those who keep the Lord's commandments may be blessed with temporal (as well as spiritual) blessings
- Members of the LDS church who refuse to keep His commandments will not be saved (in the celestial kingdom)

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Catholic Obedience



- Submission to the authority of God which requires everyone to obey the divine law
- Obedience to the Church is required in those things which pertain to our salvation
- Obedience is due to legitimate civil authority, which has its origin in God for the sake of the common good and the order of society (CCC 1897)
- The fourth commandment obliges children to obey their parents (CCC 2216)

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Catholic Obedience (Cont.)



- Obedience of faith
 - To listen and freely submit to the word of God (CCC 144)
- Obedience of Christ to the will of the Father
 - Christ died for the disobedience of sin, to bring us the grace of justification, and to satisfy for our sins (CCC 615)
- Vow of obedience
 - A public vow of obedience, accepted by Church authority
 - One element that characterizes the consecrated life (CCC 915)

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LDS Service to Others



- Happiness comes from serving others
- We reap the good that we sow
- We are to perform active service for others, to show charity by action (by giving of personal time and substance)
- We are to give genuinely from the heart when we give
- A person who serves another serves God
- It is more blessed to give than to receive (there is more joy in serving than in being served)

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Catholic Service to Others



- A way to follow Christ (CCC 852)
- The fundamental task of marriage and family is to be at the service of life (CCC 1653)
- “Creatures exist only in dependence on each other, to complete each other, in the service of each other” (CCC 340)
- Laity cooperate with their pastors in the service of the ecclesial community, for the sake of its growth and life (CCC 910)

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Catholic Service to Others (Cont.)



- Liturgy as a service of God
 - Participation of the People of God in “the work of God”
 - Through the liturgy Christ, our redeemer and high priest, continues the work of our redemption in, with, and through His Church
- Service of the common good require citizens to fulfill their roles in the life of the political community (CCC 2239)
- Public authorities have the right and duty to impose on citizens the obligations necessary for national defense (CCC 2310)

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Catholic Service to Others (Cont.)



- The citizen is obliged in conscience not to follow the directives of civil authorities when they are contrary to the demands of the moral order, to the fundamental rights of persons or the teachings of the Gospel (CCC 2242)
 - “Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s” (Mt. 22:21)
 - “We must obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29)

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LDS Plan of Salvation



- Everything is matter (even spirits)
- All matter is eternal, unmade, and indestructible
- The god of this world (Elohim) was once a man in another world
- Elohim and his celestial wives procreated billions of “spirit children”
- The first of these “spirit children” was “Jehovah”
- Lucifer was his younger spirit brother

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LDS Plan of Salvation (Cont.)



- Council of the gods was called to determine the plan
- Christ and Lucifer responded with plans
 - Christ proposed free agency (free will to accept him and his plan)
 - Lucifer offered to save all people by depriving them of free will (no free will – no sin)
- The gods chose Christ's plan
- Enraged, Lucifer rebelled and was joined by 1/3 of the spirit children (battle in heaven)

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LDS Plan of Salvation (Cont.)

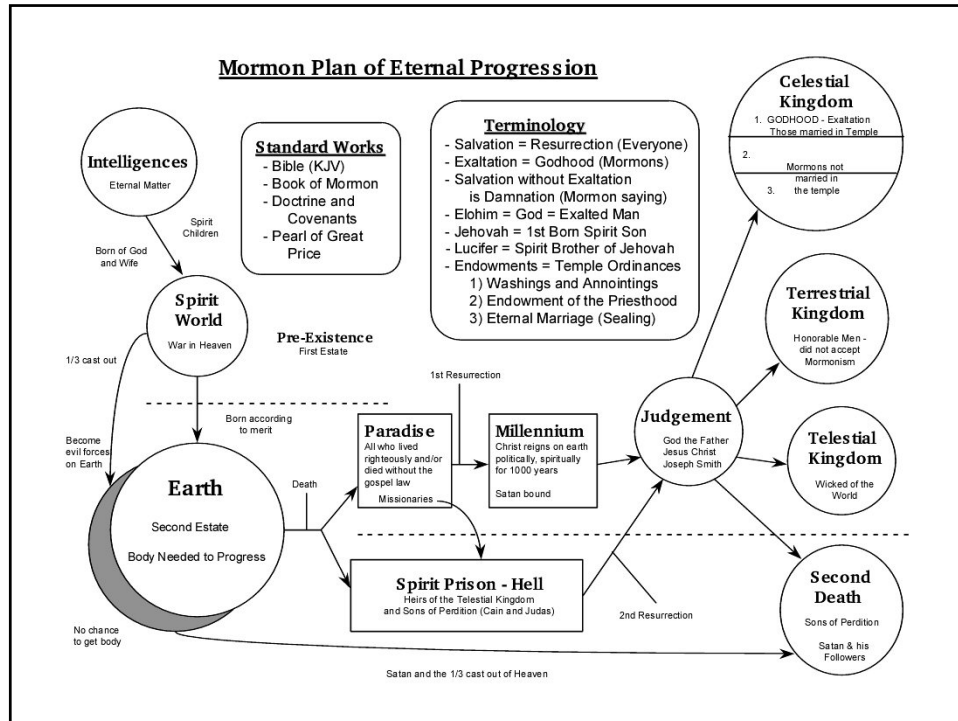


- Many fought valiantly for Christ – rewarded by being born into happy, prosperous families
- Less noble parentage for those who were least valiant or even neutral
- During earthly life, each person has the chance to accept or reject Mormon “gospel”
- At death, each human spirit enters the “spirit world”
- Most humans will eventually enjoy some type of heavenly bliss

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Catholic Plan of Salvation



- Where did we come from?
 - “The world was made for the glory of God.... The ultimate purpose of creation is that God who is the Creator of all things may at last become ‘all in all.’ ” God wanted to make His creatures share in His being, wisdom and goodness. (CCC 293-295)
 - God created heaven and earth from nothing, by His word only; that is, by a single act of His all-powerful will. (Baltimore Catechism, Question 33)

Catholic Plan of Salvation (Cont.)



- Why are we here?
 - “God enables men to be intelligent and free causes in order to complete the work of creation, to perfect its harmony for their own good and that of their neighbors.” We enter into the divine plan by our actions, prayers and sufferings. (CCC 307)
 - We were made “to know, love, and serve God in this life, and be happy with him in the next.” (Baltimore Catechism, Questions 3, 4, and 6)

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Catholic Plan of Salvation (Cont.)



- Where are we going?
 - “Those who die in God’s grace and friendship and are perfectly purified live for ever with Christ.... Heaven is the ultimate end and fulfillment of the deepest human longings, the state of supreme, definitive happiness.... In the glory of heaven the blessed continue joyfully to fulfill God’s will in relation to other men and to all creation. Already they reign with Christ; with him ‘they shall reign for ever and ever’ “. (CCC 1023, 1024, 1029)

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Catholic Plan of Salvation (Cont.)



- The Four Last Things
 - **Death** (end of our earthly life)
 - **Judgment** (by Christ)
 - Particular Judgment (each individual at the moment of death)
 - General Judgment (all men on the last day)
 - **Heaven** (Beatific Vision)
 - Directly if in a state of perfect holiness (without sin or reparation due to sin)
 - Purgatory for those who die without perfect holiness (with venial sins or reparation due to sin)
 - **Hell**
 - Eternal state to which the wicked are condemned (without God)

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Summary



- Fasting is an expression of interior penance in imitation of the fast of Jesus for forty days in the desert (Matt. 4:2)
- The faithful are obliged to assist with the material needs of the Church, each according to his abilities
- The sacrifice of Christ on the cross is commemorated and mysteriously made present in the Eucharistic sacrifice of the Church
- Grace is the free and undeserved gift that God gives us to respond to our vocation to become His adopted children

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Summary (Cont.)



- Obedience is submission to the authority of God which requires everyone to obey the divine law
- Obedience to the Church is required in those things which pertain to our salvation
- Service to others is a way to follow Christ (CCC 852)
- The fundamental task of marriage and family is to be at the service of life (CCC 1653)
- The four last things

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Summary (Cont.)



- 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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