

KEY CONCEPTS			
BIBLE	The collection of writings which Christians believe to be revealed by God, made up of the Old and New Testaments.	JUDGEMENT	The belief that God will judge whether or not humans are worthy to enter the Kingdom of Heaven.
ADVENT	The season of awaiting Christ's coming; the four Sundays' preparation for the season of Christmas.	LENT	The forty-day season of fasting, prayer and preparation leading up to Easter.
REVELATION	God making himself known to humankind; for instance, through the Bible.	LITURGICAL YEAR	The annual cycle of seasons and feasts based around the mysteries of Christ. It begins with Advent, and ends with the feast of Christ the King.
CONSCIENCE	The knowledge we have of what is right and wrong, and the God-given compulsion within all human beings to do right and to avoid evil.	STATIONS OF THE CROSS	Fourteen or fifteen drawings that let worshippers follow the milestones of Christ's journey on the day of his crucifixion.
EPIPHANY	The feast celebrating the revelation of the Incarnation. Celebrated on the twelfth and final day of Christmas, it is a celebration of the visit of the Magi to the baby Jesus.	PILGRIMAGE	A journey of religious significance to a holy site or shrine. A Catholic may also regard their journey through life itself as a pilgrimage.
PURGATORY	The process of being purified of sin before uniting with God in heaven.	CONFESSIONALS	A place within a Catholic church, where a priest sits to hear confessions. This is where the Sacrament of Reconciliation takes place.

THE MASS

The Mass is one of the seven sacraments and is an important celebration in the Catholic Church. It is a religious duty for Catholics to attend Mass every Sunday, in order to fulfil the third commandment to 'keep the Sabbath day holy'. The Mass is the central act of the Catholic community and follows a set order. This type of worship is called *liturgical* worship. Wherever a believer attends Mass in the world, the structure, readings and prayers will be the same, showing unity across the world. The Catholic Mass is focused around the Holy Communion, where believers receive the Body and Blood of Christ in the form of bread and wine. Catholics worship God through the liturgical year, following the events in the life of Christ together as a community.

SOURCES OF AUTHORITY

'On Sundays and other holy days of obligation the faithful are bound to participate in the Mass.' (CCC 2180)

'Observe the Sabbath and keep it holy. You have six days in which to do your work, but the seventh day is a day of rest dedicated to me.' (Exodus 20:8-10)

The significance of a place of worship

Catholics believe it is very important to gather together to worship God and to share acts of devotion and honour to him. Attending Mass regularly allows Catholics to develop a deeper understanding of their religion, to know the life of Jesus better, and to be helped to know and understand Christian teachings in order to apply them to their lives. Those who receive Holy Communion can be strengthened spiritually to face the week ahead, as they are united with Christ in the bread and wine. The Bible encourages believers to meet together regularly, and it is an important part of their week. At their place of worship, Catholics can be together as a community, sharing in the fellowship and unity of their faith. The word **communion** comes from the Greek word 'koinonia' which means sharing or fellowship. The Our Father prayer that is recited during Mass reminds Catholics that they are all children of God. The Creed reflects their collective faith in the Church. Attending their local parish church allows them to receive the sacraments which strengthen them on their journey of faith. They can also obtain help and support from their priest and Catholic community when they need it. Often, the church will offer a Children's Liturgy group, where younger Catholics can learn about their faith. Sometimes the church will be a meeting place for the local community, or offer support such as food banks or playgroups. However, the church is simply a building. Catholics believe that the people are more important than the building.

Care for others

'Let us be concerned for each other, to stir a response in love and good works. Do not absent yourself from your own assemblies, as some do, but encourage each other; the more so as you see the Day drawing near.' Hebrews 10:24-25

The Catholic faith is one of fellowship and care for others. The first part of this quote clearly instructs believers to look after each other and to show their faith through love and good works. The book of Hebrews is meant to encourage believers not to give up on their faith and to help others to do so too. In order to do this, Catholics are told here to attend their 'assemblies'; to meet with other believers. Failure to do this means that they are neglecting their faith and will be unable to encourage and inspire others. Therefore, this scriptural quote emphasises how important it is for Catholics to meet together to worship.

Meet together

'For where two or three meet in my name, I am there among them.' Matthew 18:20

This verse is an encouragement to believers to meet together. It does not suggest that if a person prays alone that Jesus is not with them. However, if believers meet together in Jesus' name, he will accompany them and unite with them. This is in contrast to the Jewish idea of the 'Minyan', where at least ten Jewish adults are required to fulfil some religious obligations. In this verse from Matthew, there is a clear importance in gathering together to worship.