



AN INVITATION TO LOVE...

What, then, is the Christian answer?

It is that God IS love. His love creates and sustains the whole universe. God brings into being every human life, and each of our lives is precious in

his eyes. The world in which we live is more than an accident of matter. The whole of creation is a romance, a love story. It has purpose. It sings of the Living God, It bears his signature.

"We are not some casual, meaningless, product of evolution. Each of us is the product of a thought of God. Each of us is willed. Each of us is loved. Each of us is necessary". Pope Benedict

AN INVITATION TO QUESTION...

Many people find it hard to believe in a loving God. They reject that he exists altogether. Or their experience of suffering and tragedy make them doubt his love.

Some spend their whole lives chasing what always turn out to be temporary and illusory goals... wealth, power, fame or beauty. Others have turned away in anger and disgust at the clerical abuse scandals. And still others claim that science has all the answers.

However, there are some questions which remain unanswered.

What is the meaning of life? Who banged out the Big Bang? What caused the universe to come into existence in the first place, out of absolute nothingness?

When we die (as each of us must), is that really all there is, just ashes and dust, a complete and total extinction? Or is there more to life?



"The glory of God is seen in each living human being. Not only the beautiful or the powerful, but also, and equally, the weakest and most vulnerable, the old, the sick, the unborn, and the poor, are masterpieces of God's creation, made in his own image, destined to live forever in eternity, and deserving of the utmost reverence and respect". Pope Francis

AN INVITATION TO A PURPOSE-DRIVEN LIFE...

For Christians, life has a Great Purpose. This purpose is the love and service of God through the love and service of our fellow men and women. It is for this we were born.

This mission, shared by us all, challenges us to distinguish right from wrong, to lift up the downtrodden, to oppose injustice, dispel hatreds and forgive injury done to us. **A truly Christian life is a life lived for others.**



The beating heart of our faith is the belief that God has spoken to us in human history by sending us his son, Jesus Christ, born of the Virgin Mary. He has not left us alone and abandoned in a cold and heartless universe. He has revealed himself and come to our aid.

His death on the cross brings forgiveness for our sins and failings. His resurrection and ascension into heaven give us the hope of an astonishing and everlasting new life. And we can share in that life here and now by believing in Him and belonging to his Church.



AN INVITATION TO BELIEVE AND BELONG...

Faith is a gift. The Holy Spirit is there, by our side, to help us believe. But, at the same time, faith is a step WE can choose to take... it is a personal decision.

God calls us to trust Him and reach out to Him. He wants us to engage with Him and commit ourselves to a personal relationship with him.

Faith is like a plant that needs to be nourished, or it will dry up and perish. Prayer is to faith what water is to plants. It revives our parched spirits.

The sacraments, and especially the Mass, are the irrigation channels through which the refreshing water of God's goodness - his grace - is poured into us. Cut off the water supply and the plant withers.

So, it's not enough for us to say 'I believe'. We need to belong as well, and practice what we say we believe.

Sincerely believing AND actively belonging are two sides of the same Christian coin. A faith that is not practiced is a faith that has fallen asleep.



AN INVITATION TO A MIRACLE...

Many people today have stopped going to Mass. What is so important about the Mass, and why should we make the effort to go?

In the Mass, Jesus extends to us an invitation to grow in our relationship with him. We receive him in Holy Communion as the guest of our souls. At the consecration of the Mass, the gifts of bread and wine on the altar are transformed into the real body and real blood of Jesus. These were his words at the Last Supper:

'This IS my body. This IS my blood. Do this in memory of me'.

This is the miracle moment during each Holy Mass. **Here, we stand at the foot of the Cross and at the gateway of Heaven.** All that we are and everything we can become, is the free gift of a good God who loves us personally, passionately and eternally.

And in the Amazing Grace that is the Mass, He gives us the gift of Himself.

AN INVITATION TO PRAYER...

Carving out even a short time in the middle of our busy day for prayer is like opening a door. It allows God to work in our lives and reveal himself more and more. Jesus is not just a historical figure from 2000 years ago. He is alive. And on the journey of our lives, he is with us, by our side, every step of the way.

Praying is not difficult. The one to whom you pray, and who wants to speak to you, knows you better, and is closer to you than you are to yourself. Already, he dwells within your heart and is waiting for you to call on him.

The prayer that a person prays to the best of their ability has great power. It makes a bitter heart sweet, a sad heart glad, a poor heart rich, a timid heart strong, a blind heart see and a cold heart warm.

Prayer draws the great God into the little heart. It brings together in love the Creator and the created, God and the human heart.

Christ said: 'Search and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened to you'. The greatest prayer of all, the door the Lord himself opens for us when we knock, is the Mass.



Furthermore, in giving Himself to us in the Eucharist, the Lord asks us to give of ourselves - our time, our kindness, our generosity, our respect - to others in our daily lives. He invites us to become who we receive. This is the mission He has set before each one of us:

'Love one another, as I have loved you'.



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THE **BIG** INVITE



AN INVITATION TO FOLLOW...

Always striving for something and never quite reaching it; always thirsting for something but never quite satisfied by it, our human hearts are truly restless, until they rest in Jesus.

How can we come to that inner peace we all yearn for? We can take the first steps by making prayer a part of our day, every day; by re-reading the Gospel story with fresh eyes; and vitally, **BY COMING TO MASS EACH SUNDAY.**

Christ is the Hope that never disappoints, the Joy that can never be surpassed, the Love that will never, ever, let us down.

No one who comes to the Lord is turned away. His mercy, like his love, has no end. No matter how far away from Him we have strayed, or for how long we have been gone, our Father God welcomes each of us, his prodigal sons and daughters, back home with open arms, a joyful heart and a warm embrace.

For we were lost... and now, we have been found.

This very day, and every day of our lives, Jesus turns towards us. He lays His hand gently on our shoulder, and looking with infinite compassion into the very depths of our heart, He invites us:
'Come, follow me'.

This leaflet is written, produced and distributed by lay people for lay people. Its message is endorsed by the priests of your parish.
Please keep this leaflet or pass it on to a family member or friend.