

# Christianity and catholic church assignment

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Catholicism Subculture of Catholicism Lauren Leaflets University of Southern Indiana Catholicism is a very broad term used to refer to Christians and churches belonging to the Roman Catholic Church. To be Catholic requires a person to have certain unique, beliefs, values, and traditions that are separate from other people practicing Christianity. The Catholic Church maintains that It has been able to carry on the true tradition of the apostolic church as well and has evolved into a distinctive branch of Christianity throughout the years.

The Catholic Church is also a part of an entire subculture of Catholicism that has any other rituals and practices that are very different from and not practiced in other Protestant churches. The belief system and values presented In this church are also extremely different than other regular Christian churches as well. The services also called Mass, Is much more organized and formal than other Protestant churches with priests wearing more elaborate clothing than Christian ministers.

The research presented throughout this paper will be focusing on the subculture and belief system that is present within the Catholic Church along with the different values that are also there. It will also be focusing on how the audience interacts with the priest as well. Specifically, this research will cover how the belief system In the Catholic Church Is different than others found In many other Protestant churches as well as give more information over specific traditions such as Communion and Confirmation.

This research will also focus on what the different beliefs within Catholicism actually are as well and why they are that way such as the use of birth

control for example. The results of this research should give readers better insight to Catholicism as well as religion as a whole. Much of this research has also taken place at SST. Marry Catholic Church In Evansville, Indiana.

Literature Review The term Catholicism refers to every aspect of the Catholic faith which includes its rituals, theologies, and also as a religious people as a whole.

The following articles that will make up a large portion of this review will mostly consist of research that pertains to the different beliefs and rituals of Catholicism and also studies how the church responds to sexual behavior as well. Other research will mainly be focusing on topics such as the intellectual freedom that exists within this faith and how people that are a part of Catholicism are able to think freely within the church.

This review over these articles will hopefully give better insight to the Catholic faith as well as religion as a whole as will the observations and interview that will be conducted to go along with this research. Cooper (2006) describes how Marshall Macaulay's Catholic beliefs have had conflicting assumptions because his Sunday beliefs are different from his Monday to Saturday beliefs. This research also presents Macaulay's attitude towards the media and his relationship with the church as well.

This article relates to the other search presented in this review because some of the other articles also have conflicting beliefs and assumptions as well relating to the Catholic Church. This research presented in this article also gives better insight into how the belief system works within Catholicism which is one of the main points of this research as a whole. Another article

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also presents information on intellectual freedom that goes on within the church.

According to Jewel (1996), it states that although the church does retain its power to define right and wrong, and good and evil, the primary emphasis of the Catholic position on intellectual freedom has been the development of well-formed individual consciences. The research also states that the Roman Catholic Church is not committed to intellectual freedom because Catholic doctrine regards human reasoning as easily corruptible, making it a suspect by which truth can be discerned.

This article will go along with some of the other research presented because it seems that in certain churches people are not able to think freely and that people are not allowed to have very much intellectual freedom (Ellen, 1996). Another article presents a study in which two sisters create and interpret meaning through their Catholic and New Age subcultures that they are a part of. The purpose of the study and the article is to examine religious and spiritual subcultures (Morgan, 2002), which is also the prime object of this research as a whole (Morgan, 2002). The article, "Shed Upon the Rude? Reflections on Scots and Religion," discusses the history of the Catholic faith, mainly in Scotland, such as its dealings with Copernicus, Galileo, and Columbus as well as contraception and stem cell research. The creation of religion and language in Scotland, has been through many changes in the last five hundred years. These might be seen differently as episodes of rebirth, modernization, and popular enfranchisement. This portion of history

is very important because a section of this study being conducted will also be about the history of the Catholic Church as well (Falconer, 2005).

This article also goes along with the general research that is being conducted because history is a very important part of Catholicism and as other research points out, many of the rituals and radiations performed within the Catholic Church stem back to different times in history. Research has also been conducted over the issue of birth control within the Catholic Church. The article in which this is presented also deals with the issues of having separate Catholic schools.

Both of these issues present what could be called secondary lags in the church and in addition, their learning has been impaired because of their isolation from the rest of society in general. This also goes along with the topic of intellectual freedom and also there is other information presented in this research over the subject of birth control as well (Spencer, 1967). Soup (2007) have examined many communication research trends throughout many different religions. The article presented offers a book review of Materializing aspects of religion such as clothing and rituals are types of communication.

All aspects of religion and any religious practices are all ways of communicating. It also states that there is a chapter over Catholic religious practices which are very important in this research. All of the information in this article proves to be relevant as it is discussing rituals and traditions of all religions not just Catholicism (Soup, 2007). Gogh (2006) describes how the

significance of religious sites such as churches other places of worship are an important part to the study of religion.

The religious site such as the location, placement, and investment is the first instance both rigorously insisted upon within a single religion. SST. Marry Catholic Church which was where most of the research was played a very important part in the information that was gathered and the observations that were conducted which is why this article s relevant in many ways to the rest of the research that was done. Overall, these articles present a lot of information over the Catholic Church, but it seems as though there really is not a lot of information over the subculture that does make up a part of Catholicism.

Throughout the rest of the research that is conducted, along with these articles, it is hoped that more information will be presented over the different subculture and rituals that are a part of Catholicism. Methods The methods that were used throughout this research were participant observations as well as an interview. Observations were conducted at SST. Marry Catholic Church in Evansville, Indiana. They were mostly conducted on the weekends during the afternoon/evening masses that were held at the church because it was the most convenient time to be able to observe everything that was going on.

There was also a lot more going on and a lot more to observe on the weekends rather than the masses that were held throughout the week.

There were more people at these masses also known as Eucharist Celebrations instead of those that occurred during the week. The masses

usually lasted to around an hour or so each time and by going around two times a week, it took about four weeks to complete the observations. Field notes were taken at each Mass over all of the rituals and traditions that were observed as well the way that people interacted when they entered into the church.

By taking these notes and being able to look through them later, it was much easier to be able to remember what was observed and the patterns that were present as well. An interview was also conducted with a person that is also Catholic in order to find out more information about Catholicism. This interview lasted around twenty minutes or so and the interviewee was asked questions about Catholicism such as the issue of birth control, what the significance of Communion and Confirmation is, and also just about what the importance of the rituals are that are completed as well.

This interview was recorded and then transcribed word for word while keeping the interviewee anonymous in order to obtain more information about Catholicism as a whole. Completing this interview was very beneficial in receiving more information about Catholicism and the church first hand from someone who actually is Catholic instead of just trying to find information over the topic. There were many different rituals and interactions that occurred throughout the time that observations were conducted at SST. Marry Catholic Church. It was usually very quiet inside the the middle of the aisles before sitting down in the pews.

Sometimes there were also people kneeling in the pews and praying by themselves before the mass actually began as well. Also, there were bowls of

Holy water when first walking in. At the first mass that observations were conducted at, it was very confusing as to what was going on because it was so different from other Protestant churches. The church itself had a very high ceiling on the inside with many pillars holding it up as well. The inside was very spacious and open. There were also sculptures everywhere along the walls of the church and up at the front of Mary, Jesus as well as all of the different saints.

Along the walls there were sculptures of Jesus at various stages of being crucified on the cross as well. There was also some writing that appeared as though it might have been in Hebrew on the podiums that were up at the front of the church. In the interview that was conducted it was stated that this writing was probably in Latin and was probably a biblical verse of some kind. Up at the front there was also a piano along with several chairs placed in different places as well for the priest as well as people that sing up at the front.

During each actual Mass that observations were conducted at, there was always a little boy or girl that were usually about ten years old or so that would sit up at the front with the priest the entire time the Mass went on. Interview results stated that they were there mainly to assist the priest with different tasks such as opening up the Bible to certain pages, etc. These children are called altar servers. Also at each mass, there were always people reseed up nicely in suits greeting everyone at the doors as they walked in as well. It seemed as though they may have been trying to create a welcoming atmosphere by doing this.



These people were both men and women and there were usually around four or five of them. Throughout every mass there was also a lot of singing of different songs that went on. The same songs were sung at every Mass and people for the most part seemed to know what they were and which parts that they needed to sing as well. The same exact song was sung at the beginning of every Mass. Usually the priest or sometimes it would be another person singing up at the front of the church would sing a certain part of the song by themselves and then the audience would join in at other certain parts.

During each Mass at a certain time, everyone would always join hands across all of the pews and say the Lord's Prayer together. Afterwards they would shake everyone's hand around them and state, " peace be with you. " This seemed to create a sort of feeling of fellowship throughout all of the members of the church. From these observations and from the interview that was completed as well, it can be said that there are many ceremonial rituals that are very important within the Catholic faith. During the Communion portion of the Mass, people went up to the front to take it instead of having it passed around.

Everything is very structured and runs on a schedule compared to other Christian churches. After a while though, the masses were almost boring and repetitive because the same events took place at every one. Most people were dressed in casual clothing; there were some older people there each time that were more dressed up. The priest usually wore a green robe with a white shirt underneath it with a green, orange, and brown checked scarf or

Stool around his neck. A different radiation that was practiced one day was the baptism of a baby during Mass.

When wrapped in a white blanket. The priest then poured a pitcher of what was probably Holy water over his head and then spread what appeared to be oil across his forehead as well. A candle was then lit and given to the father of the baby; the priest then held the baby for a few minutes while a prayer was said. The pew that the family was sitting in up at up at the front with the baby also had white cloths tied around the ends of it. Another different ritual that also happened occurred on the first day that observations were conducted.

After the Lord's Prayer was said by everyone in the audience, everyone began walking towards middle of each of the aisles and putting their hands on the shoulder of the person in front of them. The priest then walked up through the middle of each aisle and put something like Holy water or oil on peoples' foreheads that were in the aisle. The people in the aisles were the only people that had the oil or water spread across their foreheads. There were also some people that would move into the aisles so that the priest would be able to reach them. A prayer was also said and it appeared that this was a healing tall of some kind.

During the interview that was conducted, there was also a lot of information given over how Catholicism is different from regular Christianity. One of the major differences is the way that Catholic people view Mary in the church. Mary is looked at as a very prominent figure within the faith because she was the mother of Jesus. She is not worshipped though which in the interview it

was stated that that is a very common belief. It is commonly believed that Mary is worshipped within the church because of the Hail Mary which is kind of like a prayer towards her, but she is not actually being worshipped.

Although the saints also play an important role in Catholicism, Mary is seen as a more prominent figure within the faith. Another major difference that was revealed in the interview that was conducted is that when communion is taken during Mass, people do actually and truly believe that they are eating Jesus' body and drinking his blood. When the priest blesses the bread and wine, it is believed that it really does turn into the body and blood of Jesus. Another distinction between Catholicism and Christianity is the idea of the Pope because he is seen as a go-between, between people and God, which people sometimes do not agree with.

Throughout the interview it was also stated that Confession was a major part of Catholicism as well. This is a process in which people will confess all of their sins to a priest in order to be forgiven for them. It is not required but is highly recommended and people who are not Catholic sometimes believe that they should not have to talk to a priest to be forgiven for their sins. The relationship with God should already exist and people should not have to go to a priest in order to be forgiven. The use of birth control is also prohibited in the Catholic Church as well.

It is believed that God has a purpose for everything that is done and using birth control defeats that purpose. For example, if God wants someone to have a child when they are twenty four and the person is on birth control, then it is being ruined. It is believed that God has a way of doing things. The

interviewee stated though that she did indeed know a lot of modern day Catholics who do believe in the use of birth control and that the belief might be dwindling. Interview results also revealed that people must go through an educational process before they are allowed to take

Communion at the front of the church during every Mass. People do actually believe to prepare for it. This takes place over a several month long period. The interviewee stated that she began in September and did not make her Communion until March or April. Much of this time she said was spent learning about Jesus and his life as well. Most people do this at around the age of eight or nine and are required to be in second grade in order to make this commitment. Confirmation is what happens after Communion takes place and usually occurs when people are in about their sophomore year of high school.

It basically states that a person is no longer a child and is being accepted into the Catholic Church as an adult. Once they have decided to be confirmed, that is when they have decided that they are going to practice Catholicism. A mass is held with a bishop but the main focus of this is being accepted into the Catholic Church as an adult. This is also a year-long preparation process and people are able to pick out a Confirmation name as well. These names are usually chosen from the names of all of the saints and the interviewee stated that she was required to research the saint and write a paper on them about why they wanted that for a name.

The name that she had chosen for herself was Teresa, after Mother Teresa. Information in this interview also revealed that people have to be dead in

order to be considered to become a saint. People become saints throughout their good deeds and are then canonized, which means to become a saint. The website of SST. Mary Catholic Church provides a lot of information relating to the church as a whole. The homepage of the website shows several pictures of the inside of the church including parts of Mass, statues of different saints, and also church members as well.

The mass schedule is also posted on the homepage making it easy for people who may not be familiar with SST. Mary to see what times Mass is usually held. A welcoming statement is shown on the homepage as well as a link for a director of worship position that is also available. Some of the other information that is available on the church's website is an events calendar, a quarterly newsletter, contact information, and different places that the church donates to such as Habitat for Humanity and other soup kitchens as well. Information is also available about baptisms, confirmations, and also first missions.

There are also links posted for Facebook and Twitter as well as an online directory. Different blogs by different people are also available to be read on this website as well along with a financial report of the church explaining how much money was taken in and spent. There is also an entire section on the website devoted to requirements for weddings. The information that is provided on this website such as the financial report is very topics such as finances. In the section about weddings, being held at the church, there were also a lot of rules that were stated that had to be followed.

This was also true with the observations that were conducted over the Mass itself. From looking at this website and from previous research that has been conducted, it seems that there are a lot of rules within the Catholic Church that have to be followed. The fact that people are also able to follow SST. Mary Catholic Church on Facebook and Twitter as well is a good way of promoting the church as well as allowing more people that may be a part of the church to be able to communicate with each other in more ways than they used to be able to.

It also shows that the church itself is possible slightly more contemporary to people. This is because these social networking sites enable members as well as potential members to be able to find out information about the church in a more efficient way rather than by actually researching it. Much of the information given on this website is very informative about the Catholic faith as a whole. For example, the information about weddings, baptisms, and communions all provide a lot of information as well as more insight about Catholicism such as the many rules that people have to follow.

For example, in the website, it is stated that members of this church must donate 6% of your income to SST. Mary Parish and 4% through any other charities of their choice. People are also expected to be actively involved in at least one area of ministry. It also seems that from what is shown on this website that this church is run like any other organization. Much of the information that is shown on the websites of organizations is also shown on this website such as finances, newsletters, and there is a mission statement shown as well.

There are also hours of operation as well as ways to contact priests and other people that are in charge of different areas of the church. The fact that there are also blogs available also might make this church more appealing to those that are younger. This could possibly allow the church to draw in a more diverse and younger group of people which would be very beneficial to the church as a whole because it would be a good way to advertise. A variety of ministries are also available through the church as well ranging from youth ministry, ministry for couples and young adults, music ministry, etc.

This also seems like a good way to bring in more people because they have so many options such as these if they decide to become active members. This website as a whole gives better insight to the Catholic Church. Before going through the website and looking at it better I didn't really know that there were so many rules that had to be followed concerning marriage and baptism. For example, a couple being married within this church is required to take pre-marital classes and also has to meet with a priest to discuss the policies and practices relating to marriage in the church.

I also never really realized before I looked at the website, that churches are run like most other organizations. They seem to have many of the same components that make up most businesses from looking at their website such as information about the church, contact lists, and also a mission statement. Overall, this website gives a lot of helpful information about the Holy Catholic Church that I was not really aware of before by just completing observations. It has given me better knowledge about the way that churches are run which I did not really know about before.

Conducting these observations as well as looking through this website has made me more aware about the Catholic faith as well as religion in general. There are many different aspects of Catholicism that make it very different from regular Christianity in several ways. The idea of rules and structure are very reverent throughout the Catholic faith along with the fact that everything seems to run on a very specific schedule as well. There are also several rituals that are practiced that set the Catholic faith apart from other Protestant churches.

These include baptism, Communion, and Confirmation. From the observations and interviews that were conducted, it showed that ceremonial acts such as these are very important parts within Catholicism. And interview that was conducted there were also several limitations that were presented as well. One of these was the amount of time that was available to conduct all of the research. Since the amount of time allowed doing the research was only one semester, not as much information was obtained as there could have been if more time was available.

If there had been more time, the research would have probably been able to go more in depth especially with all of the rituals and ceremonies that are a part of Catholicism. Additionally with all of the ceremonial aspects that are a part of the Catholic faith there are many more topics within Catholicism that could be potential ideas for future research. The subject of weddings within the Catholic Church could be another entire research topic. There are many different rituals and ceremonies within Catholic weddings alone which is why this is an entire different subculture within Catholicism.



The preparation and classes that people are required to take in order to be married within the church would also play a part in this subculture as well. Another subculture within the Catholic faith is the ceremony of Communion along with Confirmation which kind of goes with it. Both of these are rituals that take place within the church on certain occasions and are not just like Mass which occurs every week. Along with what is said about the weddings, the preparation that people are required to go through such as having to write a paper over a saint is something that could be observed as a part of this subculture within the Catholic faith.

The same can be said for Communion and because most of the people going through this ceremony are children, this could also be something that could be observed as a subculture as well. Throughout this semester, I have conducted several hours of observations as well as an interview about Catholicism as a whole. Specifically, this research has taken place at SST. Marry Catholic Church in Evansville, Indiana. There are many aspects of his faith that I was not aware of before I began this research as well as preconceived notions about this faith and religion in general as well. Before conducting this research at SST.

Marry I had several biases about Catholicism. Before, I had been lead to believe that Catholicism was kind of like a cult almost with all of the rules I believed that people had to follow. While there are many rules and a lot of structure within the church and during Mass, when I began conducting my observations I began to realize that Catholicism was in a way like other Protestant churches although the Catholic faith is very much more ritual based than Protestant churches. As I conducted more observations, I realized <https://assignbuster.com/christianity-and-catholic-church-assignment/>

that there are many people that follow this faith and that it was not very much like a cult as I had previously believed.

I felt this way about the Catholic faith before conducting my research just because of what I had heard from other people but I was able to see more into the faith and what it meant the more that I observed. Another preconceived notion I also had before conducting research was the lack of birth control. I thought that everyone who was Catholic today still practiced the idea of not using any birth control. After conducting an interview though, I found out that many modern day Catholics do in fact believe in using birth control although it research over Catholicism throughout this entire semester.