

## Confess Jesus Is Lord

People say to us "why does the Catholic Church have so many requirements in order to be saved like regular participation in the Church?" They say all you have to do is testify that Jesus is the Lord. That is it. They are referring to the line from Saint Paul in Romans (10:9), "for, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." It seems so simple just testify that Jesus is Lord and you

are saved. The simple answer is that all of us testify the Jesus is the Lord. Each time we say the Nicean-Constantinople Creed in the Liturgy we state: "And I believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ..."

The next verse brings clarity on the subject of confessing. "For one believes with the heart and so is justified, and one confesses with the mouth and so is saved." Confession in the last verse is not enough to be saved you also have to believe in your heart. Salvation comes with two



connected conditions. Salvation begins in belief in the heart, salvation comes out of faith. Faith is a gift from God. The person has to accept this not in the mind but

in the heart. In the greatest commandment, our Lord says that one must love with their whole heart. The heart is the center of the person; it involves the whole person. When a person has faith, it is a working together of the individual uniting with God's will ("Thy will be done") freely by their own choice. They chose no longer to be separated from God but to be with God which means to be living in the state of grace as a moral righteous person. This is the justification of which Paul speaks. So when a person has faith and

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they have chosen to be moral and be in communion with God, it is then when they confess they are saved. Verse 13 concludes this thought with for "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." This salvation is offered to everyone.

But there is more to follow in verse 14: "But how can they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how can they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone to preach?" This confession of Jesus as Lord comes in response to preaching. It is in hearing the Good News that one's heart is opened to freely accept the gift of faith. It is for this reason that the Church encourages regular participation in the Divine Liturgy because the good news is not just in the sermon but the whole liturgy is filled with the proclamation of the faith of the Church. Two examples are: First, "O Only-Begotten Son and Word of God, Who, being immortal, deigned for our salvation to become incarnate of the Holy Mother of God and ever-Virgin Mary, and became man without change. You were also crucified, O Christ, our God, and by death have trampled death, being one of the Holy Trinity, and glorified with the Father and the Holy Spirit, save us." This prayer describes who the incarnate Jesus is, what He accomplished and His desire to save us. Second: "O Lord, I

believe and profess that You are truly Christ, the Son of the living God, Who came into the World to save sinners, of whom I am the first. Accept me as a partaker of your mystical supper, O Son of God, for I will not reveal Your mysteries to our enemies, nor will I give you a kiss as did Judas, but like the thief will I confess to You...." So in the participation in the church is where we are spiritually fed.

St. Paul continues, "And how can people preach unless they are sent?" How does one know that they are getting the correct preaching? It must be consistent with Holy Scripture and within the two thousand plus-year tradition. It is for this reason that in our Church, each priest belongs to a line going back to the apostles. This is called apostolic succession. Each bishop belongs in a line that goes back hundreds of years and is documented. When he is ordained, a gospel book is placed over his head as a reminder of the source of the teachings that he and those he ordains preach. The bishop sends forth those he ordains.

So when a person hears the preaching of Jesus through a person who was sent, his heart is moved and he freely through the grace of God is transformed so that he confesses that Jesus is the Lord and is saved.

*Fr Jonathan Morse*

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