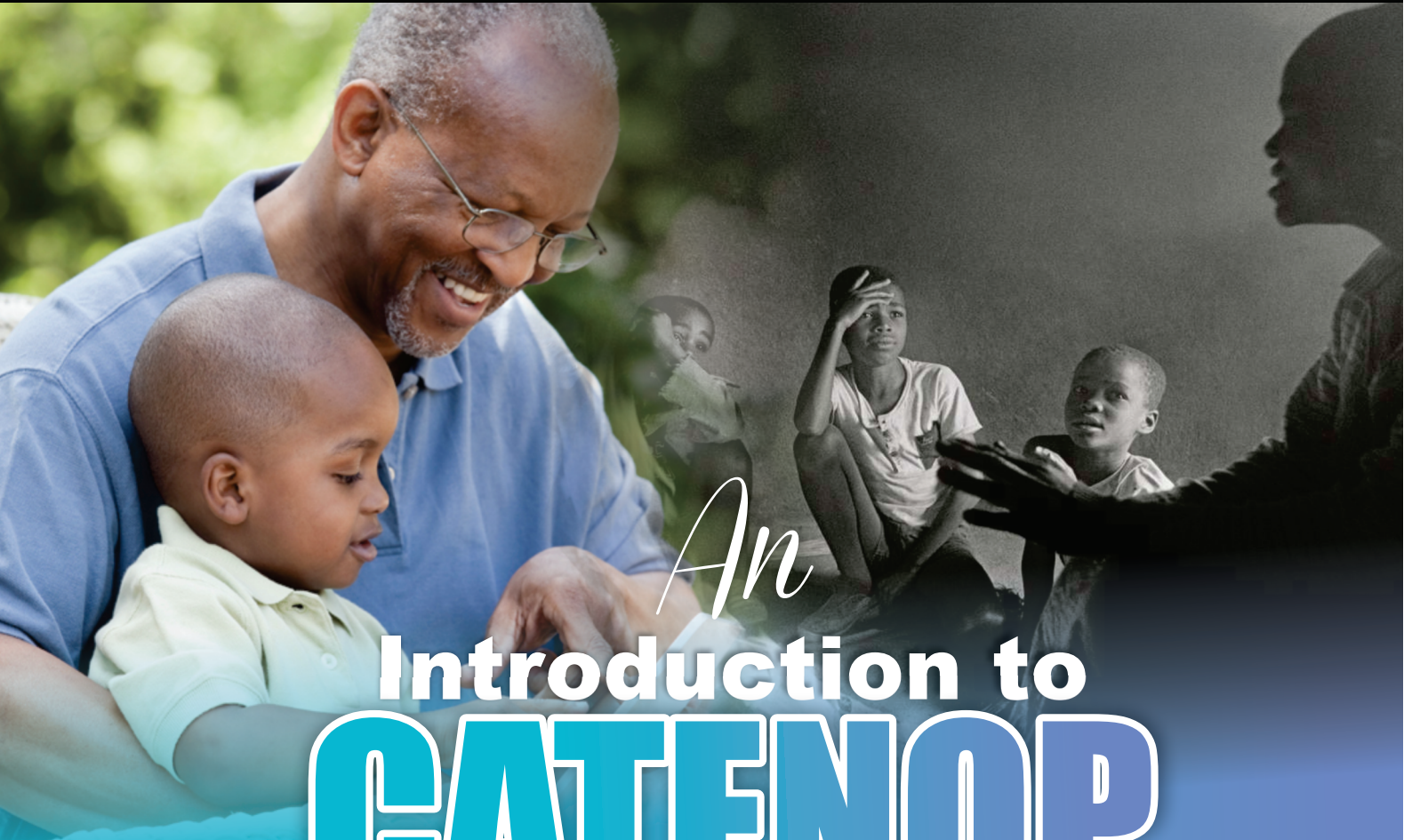




Jan. 2023 - Dec. 2024



*An*  
**Introduction to**  
**CATENOP**

**WORDS FROM THE ELDERS**

*THE CATHOLIC DISCOVERY*

**A PUBLICATION OF BLU FOUNDATION**

# About CATENOP

The Catholic Enlightenment New Outreach Program (CATENOP) is an initiative to support the New Evangelism agenda of the Catholic Church, to assist with the education of the catholic community, and the general public; by providing a host of exemplary and iconic Catholic literature teachings (supported by some selected closely related general Christian and secular literature); to the under-informed members of the public.

CATENOP aims to bridge the gap, in the exposure and understanding of teachings; which exists due to cultural and language barriers, literacy barriers, and insufficient channels/ media for distribution.

CATENOP considers social and technological environment of the current period of information age (starting in the 3rd decade of the 21st century), and works to develop a prominent brand and a set of platforms, upon which the agenda can grow consistently and survive future challenges.

## CATENOP GOALS

- To provide novel literature publications that draw content and ideas from various exceptional positive compositions with some generated as far back as 100 years ago and consolidate them into convenient distribution mediums.
- Create a platform through which these efforts can serve as a foundation for the subsequent building of additional volumes, as well as more languages in Nigeria and Africa. This may be viewed in a series of 5-year phases.
- For effective penetration, we shall adapt the material to match the current media structures and audience characteristics.
- Address some of the main challenges/issues facing the typical Ibo/Nigerian, through the use of relevant teachings; (First Phase of CATENOP prioritizes the domains of Money, Marriage, and Miracles)
- Instigate and foster extensive related dialogue within Catholic sub-groups like Catholic Youth Organizations.
- Provide a forum/medium through which other Catholic authors can develop literature and promote the doctrine.
- Develop the CATENOP project to attain and sustain recognition by the larger catholic community in the USA, thereby enabling relationships and possible collaboration with other organizations like EWTN.

CATENOP is supported by various catholic societies including the Friends of St. Anthony.

## MAIN CONTENT AND THEMES

CATENOP initially addresses the main issues concerning

(i) Money : vocational challenges in a difficult economy; Starting from spiritual solutions such as Novenas, pilgrimages... to prudent best practices... to self-improvement principles; and capitalizing on encouraging testimonies about miraculous breakthroughs experienced by the catholic faithful over the years.

(ii) Marriage: The problems facing marriage today; the lack of sufficient education and understanding of marriage; lack of value and virtue of marriage ; adulteration of the marriage values by modern social trends. It similarly addresses the lost wisdom, and provides spiritual solutions as well as testimonies of catholic faithful.

(iii) Miracles: this encourages the faithful to explore the mystical side of the catholic church, pushing against the common skeptical stance of the “Pentecostal miracle churches” , as well as the skepticism of the Atheist community; drawing attention to iconic stories and testimonies. It also delves into the “miracles within science” , which are scarcely recognized even by educated lay people.

**Words**  
**Elders** **From the** **|||**  
*THE CATHOLIC DISCOVERY*

*A Journey of faith & miracles*

**A PUBLICATION OF BLU FOUNDATION**

# INTRODUCTION

The Words from the Elders Series is a compilation of inspired teachings, collated from catholic elders and from iconic catholic authors, over the last few decades; that aim to educate and enlighten future generations about their cultural and religious heritage, and addresses the situation and the needs of the faith in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The first volumes of this **Words From The Elders** series, focus on the Igbo society, and the Igbo catholic community in particular; expounding on the history and weaves together a narrative for a long series of lectures, discussions and publications. Subsequent volumes will extend to other Nigerian languages. These publications are adapted for easy following as Audio Books and radio broadcasts, in Igbo language.

This series is divided into three (3) parts namely:

- A message to our grandchildren
- A journey of faith & miracles
- A collection of Christian classics

As we know, years are passing by taking the older generation who are repositories of experience and knowledge away with it. It is therefore fitting that some of the situations of time past be documented in such a way that the coming generations will gain some perspective on how things were in the past.

The Catholic Church has a rich culture that have evolved from one generation to the next. While the church's teachings remain the same, changes in world view seem to blur some of the lines. The younger generation needs to be reoriented and enlightened in such a way as not to be swayed by the present tidal waves of the world.

In classic literature of religious men and women both lay and clergy, we see universal truths and practicable solutions to life's challenges. This book aims to point the young ones to in the direction of truth.

This publication presents an abridged version of the **Words from The Elders** book including excerpts on the teachings of some notable authors such as Archbishop Fulton Sheen, Scott & Kimberly Hahn, G.K. Chesterton, Pope Benedict XVI, and others. It chronicles the life of the Igbos before the Nigerian Civil War and the advent of Christianity and Catholicism in Igboland. This serves as a precursor to the forthcoming Words from the Elders book series.

*Happy reading!!!*

# A MESSAGE TO OUR GRANDCHILDREN

My dear children, grandchildren and great grandchildren, peace be with you. I am writing to leave you with some words of wisdom. It is my hope that these words will guide you in your journey here on Earth and help you reach your destination in heaven. Remember, before you can get to where you wish to go, you must know and understand where you are coming from. So let us begin with a brief history of the Igbo people.

## On the History of the Igbo People and Christianity



120 years ago, at the turn of the century before Nigeria was amalgamated into one country, southern Nigeria was still a protectorate under the British. The religious landscape of Igboland was very different from what it is now. The Igbo people have always been deeply spiritual, but that spirituality manifested itself in ancestral worship, paganism, and polytheism. Practices were simplistic and theology was rudimentary.

Christianity came to Igboland in stages. The introduction of Christianity came in the form of Presbyterians and other protestant groups and then a few decades later the Catholics. When the protestant groups arrived, they brought with them many changes to Igbo life. Literacy was encouraged in order to read the bible, monogamy was encouraged, idol worship was discouraged etc. The coming of the Catholics brought even greater changes and challenges. Catholicism was something very different because Catholicism demands a lot more than other Christian denominations. For example, the Mass is more elaborate than a Sunday service, priests play a significant role in the Church, and the catechism is extensive. Understanding of the truth is deeper but converts had to work hard to gain that understanding.

Early Catholics in Igboland faced many challenges. They had to explain themselves especially since they were contrasted to the Presbyterians and some other denominations that Igbos were much more familiar with at that point in time. Because Catholicism was so different and demanded more of people, conversion was not as rapid as it could have been. Catholics were respected but not fully embraced. The civil war in the 60s changed these dynamics, as the civil war raged Biafra was blockaded and brought to near starvation. The heroic efforts of the Catholic missionaries helped alleviate some of the misery experienced by the civilians. That effort not only saved lives but won the Catholics missionaries the eternal gratitude of the Igbo and led to many conversions.

4

## On Marriage



Prior to the advent of Christianity, amongst Igbo people, the purpose of marriage was firstly procreation and the need to carry on the family name. Secondly came economic practicality. The woman was viewed as a helper such that if you had farmland, she would help carry the produce at harvest time and assist with other farm work. She was also responsible for domestic chores and enhanced the family through her labor. Thirdly, marriage served as a union between disparate families. It was more of a social obligation for meeting material needs and to foster relationships between families as a socio-cultural tool rather than something with eternal implications. There was not a strong notion of marriage being something created by God to bring people together, as such, divorces and polygamy were common.

Upon the advent of Christianity on their doorsteps, a deeper understanding of marriage came about.

- Marriage being a sacrament
- Marriage being sacred
- Marriage being a covenant
- Marriage being deeper than they had known

The Church made it clear that marriage is not only about two individuals; God must be invited into it. Christianity in general and Catholicism in particular emphasized the sacramentality of marriage and the fulfillment of God's purpose. These ideas posed many challenges to Igbo people because there had to be a transition from what the previous understanding of marriage was, to the new understanding. Added to that, there is the challenge of one generation transitioning from being polygamous to monogamy.

Now in 21st century Igboland, we have the modern challenges to marriage. The roles of men and women in the house are less clear, the prevalence of divorce, and other issues are threatening to erode our hard-won appreciation of marriage. As a result, we experience negative consequences cause by societal and economic pressure, the influence of the West, and a general lack of interest in marriage. There is mass amnesia leading to forgetting of core catholic (Christian) values and teachings which were supposed to strengthen marriage. This predicament calls for a return to the wisdom of our fathers. We need to go back and understand what our forefathers and mothers saw in Christianity and specifically in Catholicism. We need to revisit what was so appealing in the realm of marriage and capture that back again.

If marriage is viewed sacramentally and as a covenant it gives a long-lasting effect including long term happiness.



## On Money



The Igbo people, like most African peoples, were generally very poor. They were primarily very rural and had only a few urban areas; as a whole, there was not much wealth among the people. That status changed largely due to the British influence and commerce, modernization in general, and being unified with the wider world trade. Technology and foreign influence led to economic growth and exploitation of resources like palm oil. Followed later by petroleum from the ground, coal, steel, and other resources. The innately industrious nature of Igbo people was given a direction and led to an economic boom. Prior to Christianity, accumulation of wealth was attributed to the action of individuals, families, or small groups. This did not change after the introduction of Christianity. What changed was a deeper understanding of the purpose of money and the subsequent wealth it gave the Igbos.

When Christianity and more specifically Catholicism touched Igboland, the Church did not encourage nor discourage wealth; rather it helped frame the way the people looked at wealth. The church changed the perception of wealth, and the Igbos moved from viewing wealth as being the result of merely their own work, to demonstrating a certain amount of gratitude towards God for blessing us with that wealth. The church also tried to encourage and teach Igbos about what to do with wealth, and how to differentiate between good and bad uses of wealth. Good uses meaning to the greater glory of God and outright charity. Bad uses being waste, excessive amassing of wealth, and abuse of the power that comes from wealth.

## On Apologetics



One last lesson for you my grandchildren, as young Catholics, know your faith! Understand it and be able to explain or defend what you believe.

Unfortunately, ever since Martin Luther's and the schism of 1521, Catholics and our Protestant brethren have been at loggerheads. We differ on many articles of faith and some manner of worship. As a result, Catholics all over the world are often criticized by our fellow Christians. Criticized for our adherence to the old traditions of the church.

Igbo Catholics within Nigeria have inherited the same struggles that Catholics outside Nigeria have faced for 5 centuries. Fortunately, the wider Catholic church has provided an answer for years: the truth (apologetics). We therefore must embrace the same understanding and explanations that the Catholics outside Nigeria have provided. Let us learn from our fellow Catholics and combine those lessons with our Igbo traditional wisdom. While you may be confused as to where to begin your search for truth, some direction has been provided in the section Collection of Christian Classics.

### Conclusion

My children, my Grandchildren learn from the past. Learn from my messages about marriage, money, and explaining your faith. Grandchildren take note! Bring God back into your marriages. Learn to master money and not to let money master you.

# A JOURNEY OF FAITH AND MIRACLES

Let's begin with a question.

Why are there so many miracle churches out there? And What is it about miracles that is so attractive to us human beings?

The truth is people need a reminder of God. That reminder comes in many forms, quiet prayer, scripture reading, wellbeing in life etc...One of the most powerful and evocative reminders of God's presence is in the form of a supernatural action which is difficult to explain and beyond normal experiences: a miracle. People in their faith journey need miracles as a reminder of God's divinity. This is one of the many reasons why Jesus himself performed miracles while on earth. To remind us of his divinity. One thing that the Catholic Church has and teaches about are many different miracles which have been revealed throughout its existence. The miracles recognized by the church are too many to explore here so we will narrow our focus.



Let us now continue by exploring a particular miracle, that of the transformation of bread and wine into the body and blood of Jesus Christ. We will use as an example, the “Bergoglio Eucharistic Miracle”. This miracle happened in the mid-1990s, in the diocese of then Cardinal Bergoglio, now Pope Francis. After Mass on Aug. 15, 1996, at a parish in Buenos Aires, Argentina, a woman approached the priest saying that she found a consecrated Host in the church. The priest – following proper procedures in such a case – placed the Host into a glass of water so it would dissolve and put the Host into the tabernacle. Days later, to the priest's amazement, the Host appeared bloody and had a flesh-like appearance. Several years later, there was still no sign of decay.



What followed after was a rigorous investigation by the church. Part of that investigation involved taking a sample and sending it to an eminent Forensic pathologist who did not know the source and tested the sample rigorously and found the following:

Dr. Zugibe said, “The heart muscle is in an inflammatory condition and contains a large number of white blood cells. This indicates that the heart was alive at the time the sample was taken. It is my contention that the heart was alive, since white blood cells die outside a living organism.”

It's important to note that after blood is drawn from a person, the white blood cells disintegrate after 15 minutes. Therefore, it's scientifically unexplainable that in 2005, white blood cells were found in a blood sample from 1996.

This is a miracle! This is science confirming that miracle. This is science complementing our faith.

## Science and Religion



If you asked most people, be they religious or not, “do science and religion disagree?”. They will answer, with “you cannot believe in God and science”, or they will say that there is a conflict. This is a problem. People think that they have to choose between their faith and their knowledge/Science. This conflict is not only tragic, but also totally unnecessary. The conflict arises because of three problems:

- The first problem comes from ignorance of purpose. Science and Religion answer two different questions. Science tells us what we are. Religion tells us why we are that way.
- The second problem comes from ignorance of history. The history of the church is the history of the growth of science. Science as we know it would never have come about without the church's blessing and support.
- The third problem comes from ignorance of current science. An honest examination of current scientific knowledge leads to a recognition that we have a creator (7 examples are listed below).



These conflicts and problems are caused by materialists (and atheists) who do not understand the science of true religion. Science is an approach not a goal, it is deductive, inductive, and considers all evidence. Materialists choose who they will listen to, they will believe that a person can go to the moon or that Jupiter is made of gasses but will dismiss a miraculous curing of cancer without investigating. Materialists have their religion; it is what they call “science”. True Scientists understand that science leads one to ask questions and assess objectively the results of those questions. When one assesses objectively, it is easy to see the hand of the divine manifest itself in nature. Most people who are not scientists through lack of experience are ill-equipped to understand the technical details enough to reach this conclusion. Scientists who are Christians must instruct the brethren and help them understand.

Materialist and atheists create several dangerous myths

**Myth No 1: Scientists are not religious.**

False, in a 2009 poll over half of the scientist questions believed in a higher power. Furthermore, many prominent scientists in history were deeply religious: Sir Isaac Newton, Gregor Mendel, Georges Lemaitre, Mary Anning, Blaise Pascal, amongst others.

**Myth no 2: You cannot be scientist and religious.**

Why the either or? Believing there is God doesn't mean you do not understand biology. What we Christian scientists know is that behind the proposed evolution process is the clear and distinct hand of God. This can be proven.

Any serious examination of history will show the numerous men and women of God who were also scientists. Any serious examination of scientific literature will point to many phenomena that demonstrate that we come from a creator and there is an invisible hand guiding the world. Here are seven arguments highlighting that hand of God:

**1. Science has discovered ample evidence that the universe had a beginning.**

In 1929 astronomer Edwin Hubble affirmed he saw galaxies expanding outward, which meant they had been much closer together in the past. This matches what is written in the bible, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the Earth".

**2. Science has found the earth to be fine-tuned for life.**

Scientists have found some 30 constants or laws of physics that govern the universe. All are unrelated to each other and yet are finely tuned to incredible proportions to make life possible. The evidence points to "Someone" spending a lot of time tuning all of these laws so they would work in unison.

**3. Scientists cannot explain the origin of life and its genetic code without the concept of an initial Originator.**

In the last 60 years, biologists have found that life began with an enormous amount of precise information already embedded in the cell. The human genome alone is a molecule with approximately 3 billion genetic letters, all precisely ordered to give instructions to the cell.

**4. Science has proven that biological life runs by millions of exquisitely programmed "robotic machines."**

Many biochemists have a hard time believing and explaining that blind evolution can construct such machinery – and get all the parts to function together from the start.

**5. Science has found the earliest evidence of life to be of great variety, fully formed and without transitions.**

Natural selection (evolution) can tell you something about the survival of the species, but nothing about the arrival of the species. It certainly cannot trace the origin of the approximately 10 million species on earth.

**6. Science has shown the earth to be a unique planet with so many "just right" conditions to sustain life.**

As author Eric Metaxas explains: "Today there are more than 200 known parameters necessary for a planet to support life – every single one of which must be perfectly met, or the whole thing falls apart.

**7. Science reveals the universe is precisely mathematically designed while allowing for free will.**

A big problem for evolutionists and atheists is this: Evolution can't do math, since it is based on random variations and mutations, and math requires an intelligent agent who can first prepare a mathematical blueprint of laws before creating things so they will be orderly. This is why the present cosmos can be traced back to mathematical rules.

**Conclusion**

We wish to promote more of the silent miracles. Many miracles within the church are underreported and people do not study these enough. We wish to demonstrate how our faith can be strengthened by knowledge. Lastly, we wish to emphasize that miracles do not happen outside a life of faith. Bring your miracle into your life through your faith and the practice of holiness.

# A COLLECTION OF CHRISTIAN CLASSICS

The mission of the Catholic Enlightenment New Outreach Project (CATENOP) is to aid the church in Igboland (and Nigeria as a whole) by participating in the New Evangelization movement. To perform this vital function, we aim to closely examine over 120 iconic Christian works. Translating them, interpreting them, adapting them and contextualizing them, in order to reach a young audience from a different cultural background (than that of the original material). It is the hope and vision of CATENOP to ensure that the wisdom from our elders is not lost. Wisdom and knowledge can get lost in antiquity, if not preserved and passed down to the next generation and to generations to come.

Below is a sample of some of the authors we have chosen to bring to the next generation of Igbos. Each of these authors have over the years impacted thousands of people through their works. Venerable Bishop Fulton Sheen was so powerful an evangelist and teacher of the Catholic faith that he was featured by TIME magazine and won an award for best TV show (in protestant dominated United States). Pope John Paul who lived within many of our lifetimes was known as a wonderful Pope and great evangelist, however, many of his writings are being forgotten. His writings on theology of the body contain valuable lessons for any couple that wishes to get married, yet they are not well known, talk less of being implemented.

Using audio, visual, and written formats, CATENOP is on a quest to bring these great works of literature to the average person in a way that would be easy to understand and implement. CATENOP bridges the gap between the church elders and the next generation in the spirit of the New Evangelization Movement.



## A few Prominent Saints whose work we will write about:

### St. Augustine of Hippo



St. Augustine of Hippo (13 November 354 – 28 August 430) was a theologian and philosopher of Berber origin and the bishop of Hippo Regius in Numidia, Roman North Africa. His writings influenced the development of Western philosophy and Western Christianity, and he is viewed as one of the most important Church Fathers of the Latin Church in the Patristic Period. His many important works include *The City of God*, *On Christian Doctrine*, and *Confessions*.

His numerous written works, the most important of which are *Confessions* (c. 400) and *The City of God* (c. 413–426), shaped the practice of biblical exegesis and helped lay the foundation for much of medieval and modern Christian thought. In Roman Catholicism he is formally recognized as a doctor of the church. Augustine was one of the first Christian ancient Latin authors with a very clear vision of theological anthropology. He saw the human being as a perfect unity of soul and body. Augustine's favorite figure to describe body-soul unity is marriage: *caro tua, coniunx tua* – your body is your wife.

#### Quotes

“Pray as though everything depended on God. Work as though everything depended on you.”

“Do you wish to rise? Begin by descending. You plan a tower that will pierce the clouds? Lay first the foundation of humility.”

“Pray as though everything depended on God. Work as though everything depended on you”- Saint Augustine

“If you believe what you like in the gospels, and reject what you don't like, it is not the gospel you believe, but yourself”- Saint Augustine



Thérèse of Lisieux OCD, born Marie Françoise-Thérèse Martin (2 January 1873 – 30 September 1897), also known as Saint Therese of the Child Jesus and the Holy Face, was a French Catholic Discalced Carmelite nun who is widely venerated in modern times. She is popularly known in English as the Little Flower of Jesus, or simply the Little Flower, and in French as *la petite Thérèse* (little Thérèse). Thérèse has been a highly influential model of sanctity for Catholics and for others because of the simplicity and practicality of her approach to the spiritual life. She is one of the most popular saints in the history of the church. Pope Pius X called her "the greatest saint of modern times". The story of Thérèse's spiritual development was related in a collection of her epistolary essays, written by order

of the prioresses and published in 1898 under the title *Histoire d'une âme* ("Story of a Soul"). Her popularity is largely a result of this work, which conveys her loving pursuit of holiness in ordinary life.

### Quotes

"Without love, deeds, even the most brilliant, count as nothing."

"The world's thy ship and not thy home."

"Miss no single opportunity of making some small sacrifice, here by a smiling look, there by a kindly word; always doing the smallest right and doing it all for love."

—St. Therese of Lisieux

"Holiness consists simply in doing God's will, and being just what God wants us to be."

—St. Thérèse de Lisieux

"I know now that true charity consists in bearing all our neighbors' defects--not being surprised at their weakness, but edified at their smallest virtues."

—St. Therese of Lisieux, *Story of a Soul* (*l'Histoire d'une Ame*): The Autobiography of St. Therese of Lisieux



Giovanni di Pietro di Bernardone, OFM, better known as Francis of Assisi, was an Italian Catholic friar, mystic, the founder of the Franciscans, and one of the most venerated figures in Christianity. He was inspired to lead a life of poverty and itinerant preaching. Pope Gregory IX canonized him on 16 July. Saint Francis of Assisi grew up wealthy in the small town of Assisi, Italy.

Despite the anger it brought his father, Saint Francis took a vow of poverty after receiving multiple visions from God, where in one of which God told him to “repair my church, which is falling in ruins.” Saint Francis soon established the Franciscan Order where he and his followers sought to live out the gospel in a literal way. He is known for his love of nature and animals, his strong commitment to both physical and spiritual poverty, and for receiving the stigmata (marks resembling the wounds on the crucified body of Jesus Christ).

### Quotes

“Start by doing what is necessary, then what is possible, and suddenly you are doing the impossible.”

“For it is in giving that we receive.”

“Preach the Gospel at all times. Use words if necessary.”

“The only thing ever achieved in life without effort is failure.”

“The deeds you do may be the only sermon some persons will hear today.”

“Remember that when you leave this earth, you can take with you nothing that have received—only what you have given.”



Pope John Paul II, born Karol Józef Wojtyła (18 May 1920 – 2 April 2005) was head of the Catholic Church and sovereign of the Vatican City State from 1978 until his death in 2005. He was later canonized as Pope Saint John Paul II. As pope, John Paul II wrote 14 papal encyclicals and taught about sexuality in what is referred to as the "Theology of the Body".

Some key elements of his strategy to "reposition the Catholic Church" were encyclicals such as *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, *Reconciliatio et paenitentia* and *Redemptoris Mater*. In his "At the beginning of the new millennium (*Novo Millennio Ineunte*)", he emphasized the importance of "starting afresh from Christ": "No, we shall not be saved by a formula but by a Person."

His principal documents include 14 Encyclicals, 15 Apostolic Exhortations, 11 Apostolic Constitutions and 45 Apostolic Letters. He also wrote five books: *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*; *Gift and Mystery: On the Fiftieth Anniversary of My Priestly Ordination*; *Roman Triptych*, meditations in poetry; *Rise, Let Us Be on Our Way* and *Memory and Identity*. Pope John Paul II introduced the New Evangelization of the Catholic Church.

According to Saint Pope John Paul II, so many young couples struggle with not knowing how God wants us to use our bodies in this life. In their ignorance they alternate between asking, Are we servants of the flesh? Or Are we supposed to ignore our body entirely? Too many couples struggle because they do not understand the role of sex in marriage. Saint Pope John Paul recognized this and made it part of his early mission as pope to guide young people. From 1979 till 1984 he gave a series of over 120 lectures in which he explored and taught on the nature and value of marriage, celibacy and virginity. Through these lectures he gives young people a way of understanding their bodies and understanding more about God's beautiful plan for us here on Earth.

## Quotes

"Man and woman were made for one another.

Alone man does not completely realize this essence [of being a person]. He realizes it only by existing 'with someone' – and even more deeply and completely – by existing 'for someone'...The communion of persons means existing in a mutual 'for,' in a relationship of mutual gift." – TOB January 9, 1980

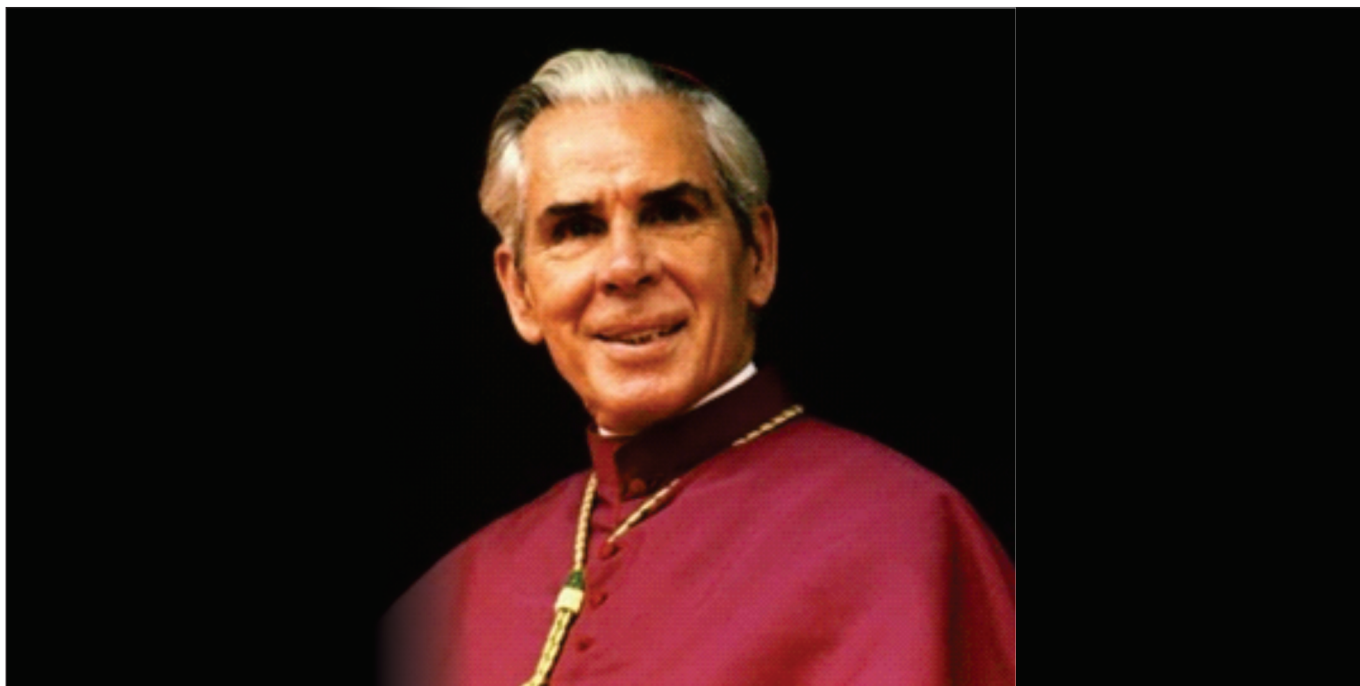
"Our bodies allow us to become a gift to others in love.

The human body includes right from the beginning...the capacity of expressing love, that love in which the person becomes a gift – and by means of this gift – fulfills the meaning of his being and existence." – TOB January 16, 1980

## A Sample of prominent writers whose works will be featured:

CATENOP 2023 | 20

### Archbishop Fulton Sheen



Fulton John Sheen (born Peter John Sheen, May 8, 1895 – December 9, 1979) was an American bishop of the Catholic Church known for his preaching and especially his work on television and radio. Ordained a priest of the Diocese of Peoria in 1919, Sheen quickly became a renowned theologian, earning the Cardinal Mercier Prize for International Philosophy in 1923. He went on to teach theology and philosophy at the Catholic University of America as well as acting as a parish priest before being appointed auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of New York in 1951. He held this position until 1966 when he was made the Bishop of Rochester.

For 20 years as "Father Sheen", later monsignor, he hosted the night-time radio program *The Catholic Hour* on NBC (1930–1950) before moving to television and presenting *Life Is Worth Living* (1952–1957). Sheen's final presenting role was on the syndicated *The Fulton Sheen Program* (1961–1968) with a format very similar to that of the earlier *Life is Worth Living* show. For this work, Sheen twice won an Emmy Award for Most Outstanding Television Personality, and was featured on the cover of *Time* magazine.

According to Archbishop Sheen, marriage is a vocation which we are called by God to answer. The biggest reason for this decline in marriage is that we have forgotten God. Without God's grace, marriage loses a lot of purpose and direction.

#### Quotes

"Love of self without love of God is selfishness; love of neighbor without love of God embraces only those who are pleasing to us, not those who are hateful."

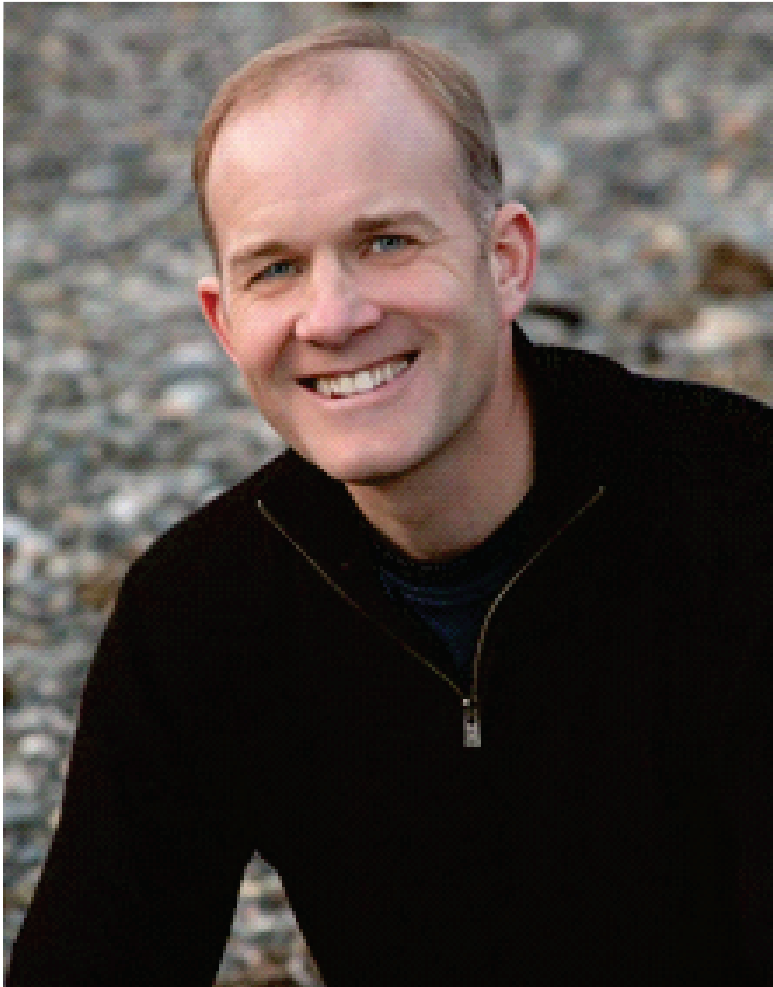
—Fulton J. Sheen, *Three to Get Married*

"The more clearly a man understands anything, the more readily he can summarize it in a few words."

—Fulton J. Sheen, *Three to Get Married*

"You must remember to love people and use things, rather than to love things and use people."

—Fulton J. Sheen



Gary L. Thomas is an American evangelical minister and writer of Christian literature. He is a bestselling author and international speaker whose ministry brings people closer to Christ and closer to others. He unites the study of Scripture, church history, and the Christian classics to foster spiritual growth and deeper relationships within the Christian community. Gary is the author of numerous books that together have sold over two million copies, have been translated into more than a dozen languages, and won numerous awards. His writings have established him as a thought-leader in the areas of marriage, parenting, and spiritual formation. His titles include bestselling book *Sacred Marriage* which has over 1 million copies sold.

According to Gary, marriage is much more than a union between you and your spouse. It is a spiritual discipline ideally suited to help you know God

more fully and intimately. *Sacred Marriage* shifts the focus from marital enrichment to spiritual enrichment in ways that can help you love your mate more.

### Quotes

“Couples don't fall out of love so much as they fall out of repentance.” ...

“What if God designed marriage to make us holy more than to make us happy?” ...

“A Christian is never dependent on the response of others to grow spiritually.



Scott Walker Hahn (born October 28, 1957) is an American Catholic theologian and Christian apologist. A former Presbyterian who converted to Catholicism, Hahn's popular works include *Rome Sweet Home* and *The Lamb's Supper: The Mass as Heaven on Earth*. His lectures have been featured in multiple audio distributions through Lighthouse Catholic Media. Hahn is known for his research on Early Christianity during the Apostolic Age and various theoretical works concerning the early Church Fathers.

Hahn currently teaches at the Franciscan University of Steubenville, a Catholic university in Steubenville, Ohio. He has also lectured at the Pontifical College Josephinum in Columbus, Ohio. Hahn is married to Kimberly Hahn, who co-runs their Catholic apostolate, the St. Paul Center for Biblical Theology.

The first in a series of Bible studies based on Proverbs 31, *Chosen and Cherished* gives readers the tools to build their marriage on the firm foundation of faith. Kimberly Hahn applies Scripture,

Church teaching and pastoral wisdom to such practical matters as conflict resolution, communication skills, setting financial goals, healing the wounds of unfaithfulness and cultivating a spirit of generosity toward your spouse.

### Quotes

“What does it mean to fear the Lord? It means to have awe and reverence for him. The woman who fears the Lord obeys from a heart of love for the God of the universe, who is also her heavenly Father! Her childlike fear of her heavenly Father leads her to faithful and faith-filled obedience.”  
— Kimberly Hahn, *Chosen and Cherished: Biblical Wisdom for Your Marriage*

“If we do not fill our mind with prayer, it will fill itself with anxieties, worries, temptations, resentments, and unwelcome memories.” ...Scott Hahn



Robert J. Spitzer SJ (born May 16, 1952) is a Jesuit priest, philosopher, educator, author, speaker, and retired President of Gonzaga University in Spokane, Washington. Spitzer is founder and currently active as president of the Magis Center of Reason and Faith, a non-profit organization dedicated to developing educational materials on the complementarity of science, philosophy, and faith. He is also president of the Spitzer Center of Ethical Leadership, dedicated to helping Catholic and for-profit organizations develop leadership, constructive cultures, and virtue ethics.

In addition to his numerous publications, Fr. Spitzer has a weekly nationwide television program on EWTN called "Father Spitzer's Universe." He also produced eleven television series for EWTN since 1998

Fortunately, men like fr. Spitzer draw upon their knowledge of both fields (science and religion), and demonstrate to us how awesome our God is and how much more we can understand God's awesomeness when we understand science.

### Quotes

"There is, however, a trade-off in pursuing the higher levels. We will have to give up the immediate gratification, intensity, and surface apparentness of the lower levels of happiness."

"The heart's reasons are essential, but without the mind's reasons, they might seem to be ungrounded idealism that can undermine conviction and openness to God and grace."





Gilbert Keith Chesterton KC\*SG (29 May 1874 – 14 June 1936) was an English writer, philosopher, Christian apologist, a literary and art critic. He has been referred to as the "prince of paradox". Of his writing style, Time observed: "Whenever possible, Chesterton made his points with popular sayings, proverbs, allegories – first carefully turning them inside out."

Chesterton created the fictional priest-detective Father Brown, and wrote on apologetics. Even some of those who disagree with him have recognized the wide appeal of such works as *Orthodoxy* and *The Everlasting Man*. Chesterton routinely referred to himself as an orthodox Christian, and came to identify this position more and more with Catholicism, eventually converting to Roman Catholicism from high church Anglicanism.

Chesterton was at ease with literary and social criticism, history, politics, economics, philosophy, and theology.

His style is unmistakable, always marked by humility, consistency, paradox, wit, and wonder. His writing remains as timely and as timeless today as when it first appeared. His book *The Everlasting Man*, led a young atheist named C.S. Lewis to become a Christian.

### Quotes

"Fallacies do not cease to be fallacies because they become fashions."

"According to most philosophers, God in making the world enslaved it. According to Christianity, in making it, He set it free. God had written, not so much a poem, but rather a play; a play he had planned as perfect, but which had necessarily been left to human actors and stage-managers, who had since made a great mess of it."



John Martignoni is founder and president of the Bible Christian Society, an apostolate dedicated to explaining and defending the Scriptural foundations of the Catholic faith. He presents talks around the country and hosts EWTN's Open Line program.

In the last 20 years John has given talks at hundreds of parishes and conferences in the United States and Canada. He has distributed over one million audio copies of his talks and e-newsletter in the past few years. "Apologetics for the Masses," is sent every couple of weeks to about 40,000 subscribers in all 50 states and more than 70 countries.

His book titled the **Blue-Collar Apologetic** presents steps Catholics can use when confronted with controversial doctrinal questions.

### Quotes

"Faith alone is a biblical doctrine and it refers to a living faith. Dead faith is faith that is not accompanied by the fruit of the Spirit, which is the works of God in us."



Clive Staples Lewis was a popular British writer who authored over 30 books during his lifetime. A former atheist, C.S. Lewis became a Christian after many debates and conversations with his Oxford colleague and friend, J.R.R. Tolkien.

C.S. Lewis' religious conversion greatly influenced his writing, as one can see in some of his best-known works like *Mere Christianity*, *The Screwtape Letters*, *The Four Loves*, and more.

## Quotes

"I believe in Christianity as I believe that the sun has risen: not only because I see it, but because by it I see everything else."



Gabrielle was a French Catholic laywoman, nurse, playwright, actress and mystic, best known for her mystical work *Lui et Moi*, published in a very abridged English translation as *He and I*. The book recounts her dialogues with Jesus, which came to her as an "inner voice" and which she recorded in a series of journals from 1936 to shortly before her death in 1950.

This Bestselling book has been read by thousands of people around the world and has made a profound impact in both Catholic and non-Catholic readers.

## Quotes

"Talk to Me. For Me there is no sweeter prayer."  
—Gabrielle Bossis, *He and I*



Catch episodes of the CATENOP messages from February 2023 on:

- Vision Africa Radio 104.1FM, Umuahia
- Pacesetter FM 103.5 Umuahia
- Flo 94.9 FM Umuahia

You can also watch messages and follow the conversation on our website and social media handles

 [catenop](#)

 [@catenop133](#)


 [catenop1](#)


## EVENTS

- Community Outreaches
- Essay Competitions
- School film show/quizzes, etc.

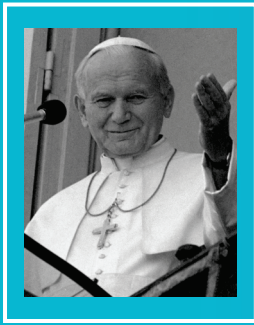
For inquiries you can reach out to us on

 [info@catenop.org](mailto:info@catenop.org)

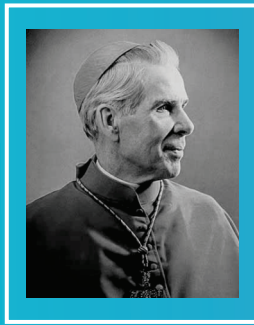
 [catenop133@gmail.com](mailto:catenop133@gmail.com)

 +234 901 1214 153, +234 817 9275 823

BLU Foundation is a not-for-profit organization with interests in health, education, social wellbeing, and the promotion of good values within and outside catholic communities, using multimedia educational instruments.



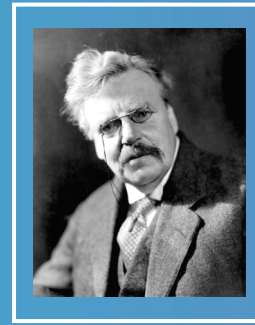
Pope John Paul II



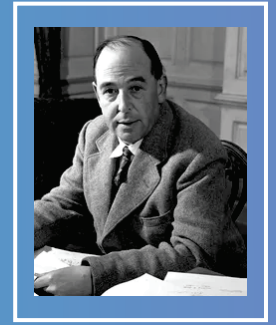
Archbishop Fulton Sheen



St. Teresa of Lisieux



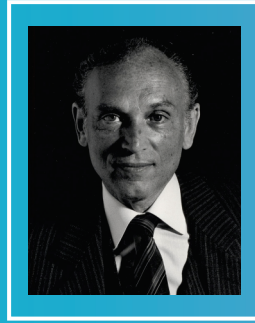
G.K. Chesterton



C.S. Lewis



Gary Thomas



George Schwartz



Scott Hahn



Steve Holbricks



**Ambassador B.M. Ukpung (rtd)**  
**CATENOP Patron and Contributor,**  
**Christian Education Enthusiast**

+234 901 1214 153, +234 817 9275 823

info@catenop.org catenop133@gmail.com catenop @catenop133 catenop1