

**A Biblical Study of
The Catechism
of the Catholic Church:
Bible Answers to the Most
Frequently Asked Questions
about Catholic Beliefs and Practices**

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ARE IMAGES AND
STATUES OF
JESUS, SAINTS, ANGELS,
OR MARY HELPFUL OR
HARMFUL?

DO RELICS AND ROSARIES
HAVE SPIRITUAL POWER?

Merriam-Webster's Definitions to
Consider: How similar are these terms?

Icon - "an object of uncritical devotion; a religious image usually painted on a small wooden panel"

Idol - "an object of extreme devotion; a greatly loved or admired person; a picture or object that is worshipped as a

“in the Old Testament, God ordained or permitted the making of images that pointed symbolically toward salvation by the incarnate Word; so it was with the bronze serpent, the ark of the covenant, and the cherubim” (CCC 2129)

“the Christian veneration of images is not contrary to the first commandment which proscribes idols. ... ‘whoever venerates an image venerates the person portrayed in it.’ The honor paid to the sacred image is a ‘respectful veneration,’ not the adoration due to God alone” (CCC 2132)

“The veneration of sacred images is based on the mystery of the Incarnation of the Word of God. It is not contrary to the first commandment.”

(CCC 2141)

“Previously God, who has neither a body nor a face, absolutely could not be represented by an image. But now that he has made himself visible in the flesh and has lived with men, I can make an image of what I have seen of God ... and contemplate the glory of the Lord, his face unveiled” (CCC 1159)

“Following the divinely inspired teachings of our holy Fathers and the tradition of the Catholic Church (for we know that this tradition comes from the Holy Spirit who dwells in her)...holy images of our Lord and God and Savior, Jesus Christ, our inviolate Lady, the holy Mother of God, and the venerated angels, all the saints and the just, whether painted or made of mosaic or another suitable material, are to be exhibited in the holy churches of God, on sacred vessels and vestments, walls and panels, in houses and on streets” (CCC 1161)

Merriam-Webster's Definitions to Consider:

Amulet - a small object worn to protect the person wearing it against bad things (such as illness, bad luck, etc.)

Charm - something worn about the person to ward off evil or ensure good fortune

Fetish - an object of irrational reverence or obsessive devotion

“Medieval piety in
the West developed
the prayer of the
rosary” (CCC 2678)

“The liturgical feasts dedicated to the Mother of God and Marian prayer, such as the rosary, an ‘epitome of the whole Gospel,’ express this devotion to the Virgin Mary.” (CCC 971)

“sacramentals...prepare us to receive grace and dispose us to cooperate with it” (CCC 1670)

2 Kings 18:4–6 And he broke in pieces the bronze serpent that Moses had made, for until those days the people of Israel had made offerings to it (it was called Nehushtan). [5] He trusted in the LORD, the God of Israel, so that there was none like him among all the kings of Judah after him, nor among those who were before him. [6] For he held fast to the LORD. He did not depart from following him, but kept the commandments that the LORD commanded Moses.” (ESV)

Why did King
Hezekiah destroy the
bronze serpent in 2
Kings 18:4? How does
verses 5 & 6 describe
King Hezekiah?

Exodus 20:4–5 “You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. [5] You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me” (ESV)

Why does the Catholic Church combine the 2nd & 1st commandment into just the “first” commandment & then split out the 10th commandment into two?
(CCC 2051)

Deuteronomy 4:16–19

“beware lest you act corruptly by making a carved image for yourselves, in the form of any figure, the likeness of male or female”

Isaiah 2:8 "Their land
is filled with idols;
they bow down to the
work of their hands, to
what their own fingers
have made." (ESV)

Why is the ark of the
covenant now in
Heaven and not on
earth?

(Revelation 11:19)

If objects from the Old Testament such as the bronze serpent, the ark of the covenant, and the cherubim were so important for our faith, why do we not have them today?

What does Acts 19:19 teach us about dangers that can be found in objects? When should we get rid of or destroy objects? Why is trust the critical issue?

Why did the early church father Eusebius warn against amulets being dangerous?

When can an object like a rosary, relic, statue, or image become more like an amulet in our hearts?

In John 5:1–11 at the Pool of Bethesda Jesus does not choose to heal everyone. Why not?

Why doesn't Jesus, Peter, or Paul require an offering in return for the healing that came? Is it wrong for the Church to collect offerings in conjunction with healings?

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