

FROM OUR DIRECTOR OF FAITH FORMATION
September 24, 2023

CATHOLICISM 101 WEEK 3: WHAT IS SIN?

This week we get to cover this cheery topic. With that acknowledged, it's a vitally important topic to cover. If there's no such thing as sin (or it's not a big deal) Christian revelation doesn't make a lot of sense.

If there's no such thing as sin, then God's commandments are more like advice. There's a better and a worse way to live, but there's no real wrong way.

If there's no such thing as sin, then there's no hell. Everyone gets to Heaven one way or the other if nothing is really and gravely wrong.

And if there's no hell, then Christ's coming to earth was a nice bonus but not entirely necessary. It was nice that God became man and we were glad to see Him, but things were going along just fine before He came and would continue going well enough after.

Then this whole business of dying on the Cross. What was that about? It is so violent, why would that be necessary? And why do images and references to it show up so often in Catholic churches?

But of course things weren't alright and haven't been for a long time. Humans really are capable of evil. We remember that when someone else wrongs us, but somehow forget it when we're the ones committing the wrong.

God gave us laws (not just suggestions) forbidding evil.

These laws had teeth; there were consequences for transgressing them and still are. That is because God is good and cares whether we commit or suffer evil. Christ came to call us to repentance away from sin, so that we could go to Heaven. Through His death, we were given a second chance but if we refuse to repent, then our souls are still lost.

You see that at the center of the drama of human life is sin, and turning from it. Therefore it is vitally important that we know what counts as sin, so we can stay on the straight and narrow path to Heaven. What is original sin versus actual sin? Mortal versus venial sin? What counts as a sin at all? Join us this week during Catholicism 101 to learn more!



—Joe Moreshead

[Watch the recorded class here.](#)

