

## Why I Am Catholic

The promise of obedience.

No other church, denomination, nor religion has as many people who make promises and vows of obedience. No other sees obedience as being critical and vital to its growth and the growth of all believers. And that is based on the Scriptures and the example of Christ.

"For just as through the disobedience of one person the many were made sinners, so through the obedience of one the many will be made righteous." (Rom 5:19) Further, the Letter to the Hebrews says Christ "learned obedience from what he suffered." (Heb 5:8)

Peter praises those who "have purified yourselves by obedience to the truth for sincere mutual love. . ." (I Pt 1:22) Paul speaks of Titus' joy "as he remembers the obedience of all of you. . ." (II Cor 7:15)

Diocesan priests and permanent deacons take promises of obedience. Religious brothers, priests, monks, and sisters (nuns) take perpetual vows of obedience. Even many lay people take promises of obedience as secular members of religious communities or in being consecrated. All of us are called to obedience to Christ, to Church teaching and to Church authority.

"To obey (from the Latin *ob-audire*, to 'hear or listen to') in faith is to submit freely to the word that has been heard, because its truth is guaranteed by God, who is truth itself. Abraham is the model of such obedience offered us by Sacred Scripture. The Virgin Mary is its most perfect embodiment." (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 144) "The duty of obedience requires all to give due honor to authority and to treat those who are charged to exercise it with respect, and, insofar as it is deserved, with gratitude and good will." (1900)

Today many question whether one can be obedient and also have freedom. "The more one does what is good, the freer one becomes. There is no true freedom except in the service of what is good and just. The choice to disobey and do evil is an abuse of freedom and leads to 'the slavery of sin.'" (1733) The world is falling into spiritual slavery because it disobeys God's commandments and seeks to make its own rules. Obedience is freedom.