

# Vatican issues draft of universal catechism

By Jerry Filteau  
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — The Vatican in December sent the world's bishops the first draft of a new universal catechism for the church — the first in more than 400 years.

Meant as a comprehensive statement of basic truths of the Catholic faith, the document is 434 pages long in the English version. It was also issued in French, Spanish, Italian and German.

Structured in three main parts — creed, sacraments, commandments — plus an epilogue on prayer, the document is organized almost exactly the same as the last such universal catechism, the Roman Catechism issued in 1566 following the Council of Trent.

Unlike the Roman Catechism, however, the new document addresses issues unheard of four centuries ago, such as nuclear and chemical warfare, surrogate motherhood, biogenetic research, reckless driving and pollution and toxic waste.

Its synthesis of moral and doctrinal teaching relies heavily on Scripture, ancient church writers and the teachings of the Second Vatican Council.

In a cover letter, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger asked bishops to submit their comments, criticisms and proposed changes to the Vatican by May 31, 1990. Cardinal Ratzinger is prefect of the Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and head of the special Commission for the Preparation of a Catechism for the Universal Church, which Pope John Paul II formed in 1986 to carry out the catechism project.

Copies of the provisional text were sent

to bishops through bishops' conferences around the world under a stamp of secrecy. Texts were sent to U.S. bishops Dec. 18. Although officials at the Vatican and U.S. National Conference of Catholic Bishops declined to release the document, a U.S. source outside Washington made a copy available to Catholic News Service Dec. 26.

The provisional title of the new work is "Catechism for the Universal Church." In an explanatory note accompanying the text, the commission told the bishops that the final version, like the draft, is to be addressed primarily to world's bishops, the chief "teachers of the faith."

The note said that through the bishops the catechism will also be addressed to editors of diocesan and national catechisms, and to catechists and the people of God.

The note stressed that the draft text is not definitive and "does not yet have all the homogeneity which one would desire."

It said the draft still suffers some "limitations," such as differences in style in various parts of the text and occasional repetitions of the same material in different places. But it added that even the limitations could have a value in the consultation process, because they afford bishops an opportunity to comment on which style they prefer or on where they thought some subjects would be most appropriately treated.

One stylistic element almost certain to provoke some criticisms from the United States and Canada is the repeated use, in the English version, of masculine terms in references that are clearly meant to refer to all persons, male and female. The U.S. and

Canadian bishops have made concerted efforts in recent years to avoid use of exclusive language wherever possible in their public documents.

The project for a new universal catechism began with a proposal by Cardinal Bernard F. Law of Boston at the 1985 world Synod of Bishops. Taking up Cardinal Law's suggestion, the synod urged the pope to develop "a catechism or compendium of all Catholic teaching on faith and morals which may serve as a point of reference for the catechisms or compendiums composed in various regions."

The synod said the presentation of teaching in the catechism should be "biblical and liturgical, setting out sound doctrine and adapted to contemporary Christian life."

Two Americans — Cardinal Law and U.S.-born Cardinal William W. Baum, prefect of the Vatican Congregation for Catholic Education — are on the catechism's preparatory commission. Another American, Archbishop William J. Levada of Portland, Ore., is on the commission's writing committee.

The draft catechism is not restricted to a simple repetition of Catholic teaching. It also presents reasons behind the teaching, explanations of its nuances and implications, and at times, indications of the church's proper attitude and pastoral approach toward those who find it difficult to live in accord with a particular teaching.

While the draft reiterates church teaching against homosexual activity and against divorce and remarriage, for example, it also stresses the pastoral concern of the church and the need for special pastoral

care for those who find difficulty living in accord with those teachings.

In the section on the commandments especially, the draft often refers to specific contemporary moral issues. In treating the commandment against killing, for example, the draft reiterates the traditional teaching that society has a right to impose the death penalty for extremely grave crimes, but it adds: "Although the right to exact this penalty exists, the church would always urge the exercise of clemency, which is more in accord with the instincts of Scripture and particularly of the Gospel. Alongside the need to protect society and to discourage wrongdoing, there is also the duty to be merciful as the heavenly Father is merciful."

It also condemns, in addition to classically recognized sins of murder, suicide, abortion, mutilation, hostage-taking and torture, new "risks to life in an industrial society" — among them the threat to others posed by drunken or reckless drivers and "the absence of guarantees and of protection for high-risk industrial concerns (nuclear power stations, those producing toxic matter or pollutants), which are a growing threat to people and their natural environment."

In its treatment of modern warfare, the draft reaffirms the traditionally held "right of lawful self-defense," but it condemns outright "the manufacture and use of chemical weapons." It says it is "morally wrong" for nations to have "defense strategies that rely on weapons of indiscriminate destruction." It urges negotiated elimination of nuclear weapons from

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## Dining Around the Diocese

**Big Apple Cafe**  
682 Park Avenue  
271-1039

A European cafe atmosphere greets you at the Big Apple Cafe, a comfortable fun place to dine. Located in the chic Park Avenue area, the Big Apple offers foods that are prepared fresh daily. Enjoy outdoor dining this spring and summer. Open menu all day. On Sundays, stop by after mass for a sumptuous brunch, from omelettes to french toast. Hours: 11a.m. to 11p.m. weekdays, Friday and Saturday from 11 a.m. to midnight, Sunday 11a.m. to 10p.m.

**Cannon's**  
1551 Mt. Hope Ave.  
(1 minute north of W. Henrietta Rd. exit off Rte. 390)  
(716)461-1026

A Rochester favorite for 23 years, featuring a diverse menu including seafood, steaks, chops, veal, and Italian dishes. For the late night diner we serve until 1 a.m. Mon.-Sat., and midnight Sun. Lunches are served daily from 11 a.m. til 3:30.

**Charlie Brown's Family Restaurant**  
495 Goodman St. North  
One block from Main St. E.  
(716)326-3606 Take out

One of Rochester's cleanest and newest restaurants, where you will find delicious food prepared and served in a comfortable atmosphere at reasonable prices. Breakfast specials daily starting at 95¢. Open 7 days 6a.m. to 3p.m. — Fri till 9p.m. Senior citizen discount available on lunches and Fri night (except specials). Owned and operated by Charles D. Scanio.

**Cheap Charlie's**  
8 Elm St. (Victor-Holcomb Rd.)  
Holcomb, NY  
1-657-6131

Looking for great food in a relaxed, homey atmosphere? Then try Cheap Charlie's in Holcomb. They offer daily lunch and dinner specials, as well as an all day Friday fish fry. Or sample the prime rib dinner Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays. The cocktail lounge features daily specials from 4 to 8. Hours: Monday-Thursday, 11-9; Fri., Sat., 11-10 Sundays, 12-8.

**Crystal Barn**  
Corner Clover & Jefferson  
at the Barn Bazaar in Pittsford  
(716)381-4844

A pleasant blend of crystal chandeliers and Victorian motif set in an authentic country barn, creates a memorable atmosphere...for lunch, cocktails or an enjoyable dining experience. Your host George and Katherine Gerkos and Chef Russell Brindisi pride themselves in presenting you with the most carefully selected and prepared dinners as well as unique special creations for each evening. We most sincerely hope that you'll find our quality uncompromising and our service unsurpassed. Reservations are appreciated.

**Fornataro's**  
2155 Long Pond Rd.  
(corner Long Pond & Spencerport Rds.)  
(716) 426-1240

Along the streets of Rome or in the Italian countryside, the word "trattoria" conjures up images of a family-like dining room just off a kitchen, fragrant with the rich aroma of simmering meat sauces, tomatoes and fresh peppers. Such could be a description of Fornataro's. Featuring Continental, Italian, American cuisine such as Salimbocca, Veal French, Fettucine Alfredo as well as traditional favorites like Steak Diane, Beef Wellington and others. Breads and pastas are homemade. Wines and liquors are used liberally in the cuisine as are artichoke hearts and fruits. Lunch served Monday through Friday, dinner seven nights a week. Banquet and private party rooms are available.

**Irondequoit Town Lounge**  
705 Titus Avenue  
(716)342-3465

Serving lunches 11:30-3 p.m. daily except Sunday. Featuring an Early Bird Special every night but Friday. Fish Frys every Friday. Our party room can accommodate up to 60 people for your next gathering. Clip out this ad and receive \$5.00 off two dinners (not valid on dinners under \$8.00), offer good Sunday thru Thursday, during the month of January. Please present ad when ordering.

**Mr. Dominic's at the Lake**  
4699 Lake Avenue  
(716)865-4630

Noted for their fine Italian dinners that include 11 veal dishes and homemade pasta, Mr. Dominic's is now open for lunch. Early Bird dinner specials Sunday-Friday. Also offering 10% senior discount. Delivery is available for your luncheon group of ten or more. Lunch hours from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Tuesday-Friday. Dinner hours Monday-Friday 4:00-9:30 p.m., Saturday 5:00-10:00 p.m., Sunday 3:00-9:00 p.m.

**National Hotel  
Bed and Breakfast Inn**  
Rte. 20A & 39  
Cuylerville, NY 14481  
(716)382-3130

Built in 1837, the 150 year old National Hotel is a landmark in and of itself. Serving dinners only, Tues.-Sat. 4:30-10 p.m. and Sundays, 12-8 p.m. A special Senior Citizen menu is featured nightly and Sunday. From Rochester, take 390 South to exit 8. The National Hotel Bed and Breakfast Inn is located on Rts. 20A & 39 in Cuylerville just 3 miles south of Geneseo or 3 miles east of Letchworth State Park. Reservations are appreciated.

**(Oswald's) Hof Brau Haus**  
406 Lyell Ave.  
(716)458-2084

Authentic German cooking in an old world Gasthaus decor. Specializing in German wines, and featuring more than 50 imported beers. Special arrangements for groups. Serving lunch and dinner. Live Bavarian entertainment on weekends.

**Victor Milling Co. Rest.**  
75 Coville Rd. (off Maple)  
924-4049

Tucked away in the heart of Victor you'll find this unique and relaxing restaurant. This Fall, enjoy the open hearth's warmth as you peruse the eclectic menu, which features many original recipes including a well-known seafood bisque. Starting Sept. 14, try the Thursday prime rib buffet for \$12.95. Hours for dinner are Mon - Sat from 5 p.m. Lunch, Tues - Fri 11:30 - 2. Lunch menu changes daily.



**Sherwood Manor Restaurant**  
60 W. Main Street  
Honeoye Falls, NY  
(15 Minutes south of Monroe and Clover Sts.)

(716)624-3580 Closed Mondays  
Your host, Andy Carafos, invites you to dine in relaxed elegance, sampling from a menu featuring the finest quality prime rib served in upstate New York. Fresh seafood, veal, steaks, chops, and poultry, as well as several daily luncheon, dinner and early bird specials round out the extensive menu. Banquet facilities available for parties to 125.

**Whitney's Cafe**  
617 Whitney Rd.  
(at O'Conner Rd.)  
Fairport, NY 14450  
388-1440/FAX #388-1120

Located just outside Fairport village, you'll find the new Whitney's Cafe, recently expanded from a breakfast and lunch restaurant to a full-service one with a very extensive menu that's sure to please. "One of my weaknesses," says chef/owner Charles Lawson, "is my heavy-handedness with portions; it's just that I want Whitney's to be known for its quality food and great prices." Hours: M-Sat, 6a-9p; Sun., 7a-3p.

### Dining Around the Diocese

The first issue of each month, the *Catholic Courier* will be featuring some prime dining spots in and around the Rochester diocese. If you, or someone you know, would like to have your restaurant included in our Dining Guide, call the *Catholic Courier* at (716)328-4340. Look for our Dining Guide in the upcoming months, and pay a visit to the restaurant of your choice, and enjoy a pleasant evening of "Dining Around the Diocese."