

APOLOGETICS

"Apologetics" simply means *giving a reasoned explanation for your faith*. A Catholic apologist charitably explains and defends Catholic doctrine using Scripture, history, and common sense.

A beginning apologist must remember the following points:

1. **Charity.** Your goal is to explain and evangelize, not to win arguments.
2. **Unity.** Acknowledge the sincerity and zeal of other Christians.
3. **Study.** Be prepared to study at least 1 hour per week, including the Bible.
4. **Equal time.** Do not allow the non-Catholic to take up all the time. Ask him/her a few challenging questions of your own.
5. **Interpretation.** Read a Bible verse *in context* and show how it supports the Catholic position.
6. **Historical perspective.** Know the beliefs of the early Church Fathers.
7. **Knowledge.** Explain Catholic beliefs clearly. If you don't know the answer to a question, honestly admit it and tell them you will get back to them later on the subject after you have done some study. If you do, just give them what you know. If you can make just one good point, or correct just one misunderstanding, you have already accomplished a lot. Besides, the very fact that a non-Catholic met a Catholic who is polite, knowledgeable about the Bible, and concerned about saving souls will itself leave a good impression of the Catholic Church.

Recommended Resources

Catholic Answers (www.catholic.com)

- A lay-run apostolate focused on Catholic apologetics. Very informative website.
- Publishes *This Rock* magazine
- Holds the radio show *Catholic Answers Live* (FM 88.5; 5pm M-F, 8am M-Sat)

Catholicism and Fundamentalism (Karl Keating) - Ignatius Press

Catholic For a Reason (Scott Hann et al) - Emmaus Road

Where We Got the Bible (Henry Graham) - TAN Books

The Faith of the Early Fathers, Vol. 1 (William Jurgens) - Liturgical

Fundamentals of Catholic Doctrine (Ludwig Ott) - TAN Books

Radio Replies (Frs. Rumble and Carty) - TAN Books

READING

I Liked Catholics, I Just Didn't Want to Be One (*This Rock*, April 2001)