Man to Man Discussion

The Church’s Contributions to Society
January 6, 2012

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Who am I?

- Son/Brother..grew up in Chicago
- Husband to Jackie for 13 years
- Father of 3 boys (11,9 & 5)
- Parishioner since 2007
- Employee at a software company
So much to say...
Discussion Points

☐ Current State
☐ Contributions
☐ Wrap up
Current State

- Dysfunctional governments
- Economic stress
- Church is embattled
  - Scandals
  - Decrease in vocations
  - Shrinking congregations
    - Still world’s largest faith community
    - 1.2 billion
- Rise of secularism/relativism
But, it’s not all bad...
"In every time and place for two thousand years, the Catholic Church has fed, clothed, and housed more people in need than any other institution in history."

Pause to celebrate contributions

Not just the past but *Today* in our community and around the world!

- Current State
- Contributions
  - Education
  - Art and Literature
  - Science and Medicine
  - Social Fabric
  - More...
- Wrap up
Education

- 3,500,000 teachers in 250,000 Catholic schools worldwide teach 42,000,000 pupils*

- In 2010-11, U. S. Catholic elementary and secondary school enrollment was over 2M students
  - 150K+ teachers (96% laity)
  - 6,980 schools, of which 1,822 had wait lists

- Approximately 250 Catholic colleges and universities in the US today

- Church supported and helped develop the concept of universities during the Middle Ages
Did you know?

That the idea of universities did not exist in Ancient Greece or Rome. The Church so embraced the concept of free flowing knowledge and inquiry that by the Reformation, the Church had chartered more universities than any secular government.
Art and Literature

- Countless works of art around the world that were commissioned to remember on the life of Jesus
- Even artists that rejected Christianity produced work shaped by Christian themes
- The Vatican Art Museums
- How many musical scores regarding Christ’s birth alone?
- Preservation of ancient literature by monks
Did you know?

It took Michelangelo 6 years to complete the ‘Last Judgment’ in the Sistine Chapel and that he started it 30 years after completing the ceiling in the Chapel.
Science and Medicine

- Forget Galileo story...mainstream historians recognize many Catholic contributors to science

- Jesuits: leaders in astronomy (35 moon craters), seismology (‘Jesuit science’) and more (led to development of pendulum clocks, pantographs, barometers, telescopes and microscopes)

- Monks preserved scientific knowledge in European monasteries during the Dark Ages

- 585 Catholic hospitals serving 84,000,000 patients in the US in 2002*
Did you know?

Catholic cathedrals in Bologna, Florence, Paris, and Rome were constructed to function as solar observatories. No more precise instruments for observing the sun’s apparent motion could be found anywhere in the world.
Social Fabric of the West

- Social Justice
  - Human Dignity and Justice
  - Capital Punishment
  - Right to Life
- Marriage and Family
- Capitalism and Monasteries
Did you know?

Some scholars believe that the teaching of Christ, in Matthew 22:21, to ‘repay to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God’, is the origin of the separation of Church and state.
Other Areas of Contribution

- Charity:
  - Feeding the hungry
  - Housing the homeless
  - Caring for orphans

- Ministering to those involved in conflicts around the world

- USCCB settles 25-33% of all refugees in the US

- Countless charitable organizations here and abroad
Did you know?

The Catholic Church is the largest landowner in the world.
Another Quote...

“The story of Jesus Christ is the most powerful story in history and has directly or indirectly influenced every noble aspect of our modern civilization... (but) it is easy to become distracted and distance ourselves from this story.”

Wrap-up

- Be proud of our accomplishments

- Never stop doing His work... do not rest on our laurels

- Faith through works is a key pillar to being a well rounded Christian

- Powerful when practiced in conjunction with prayer, attending mass and receiving the Sacraments
Questions for Group Discussion

1. Which of the Church’s contributions to society have impacted you most?

2. Where could the Church (hierarchy & laity) do more in the world?

3. Has separation of Church and state gone too far in the United States?