


READY-TO-GO GAME SHOWS (THAT TEACH SERIOUS STUFF)

Catholic Teachings and Practices Edition

Michael Theisen

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For Jeannie Raisbeck, who does whatever is asked and so much more:
assistant, friend, and grandmother galore.
Thanks for making the last ten years of ministry such a joy.
May you never retire from what you do best!

In gratitude to my supportive and understanding wife, Mary,
who puts up with all my games,
and to Chris, David, and Rachel,
who remind me daily why it is important to keep playing!

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and the staff of the Department of Evangelization and Catechesis,
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and for encouraging the ongoing growth
of youth ministry throughout the diocese,
which makes all this work worthwhile.

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INTRODUCTION: TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES

Hi; we are your Ready-to-Go hosts, Francis and Clare! We congratulate you on choosing the fun and popular game ideas in this book to help your youth increase their knowledge of Catholic events, practices, and people. And what better way to show you how to use these games than by having you participate in a game yourself? As you answer the following questions, you will gain incredible insights into using this book to achieve maximum learning potential (MLP) with the young people you lead. All you need are 10 minutes of uninterrupted time, a highlighter (optional—and only if you are really into this), and a sense of humor (absolutely essential). So place yourself in a comfortable chair, turn off the phone, and let the game begin!

\$1,000 Question: A stitch in time saves what?

- A. the whales
- B. seventy times seven times
- C. your pants from falling down
- D. you from repeating the same thing over and over and over again

Best response. D

Ever tried to teach someone something that you thought was really cool and they thought was NOT!? So what did you do? If you are like most of us, you said the same thing

again and again, only *louder* so that they and all the neighbors could hear you. Sometimes it's not the subject matter that fails us; rather it is the way we are presenting it.

You already know that first impressions count for a lot. By using formats similar to those of popular games that are familiar to most young people, *Ready-to-Go Game Shows (That Teach Serious Stuff): Catholic Teachings and Practices Edition* creates an interactive and attention-grabbing environment that makes a great first impression. Once you have the young people's attention, half your job of teaching (usually the most difficult half) is already accomplished!

Ready-to-Go Game Shows was created so that all the shows can be done easily, with minimal setup and few required materials. They really are *ready-to-go*. All you need to do is add young people, mix, and bake with high energy, and you'll get a treat that is really something to talk about. Best of all, each show has been field-tested with both younger and older adolescents who are still alive to talk about it. If at any point you are not 100 percent satisfied with this book, then you can place it in a dark corner of your bookcase where it will make you appear to be an avid reader of a lot of interesting books with weird titles.

\$10,000 Question: If you had to choose one item to take from your house before it burnt to the ground, which would you most likely select?

- A. your CD collection
- B. your jewelry collection
- C. your computer
- D. your Ready-to-Go supply box (and this book)

Best response. D

Most of that other stuff can be replaced, but once you put together your game show supply box, you'll really believe it is the most valuable thing in the world (well, close to it anyway). After you gather the suggested items, doing any of the game shows described in this book

will be 78 percent easier, leaving a mere 22 percent of the work required to achieve 100 percent MLP.

Suggested items for your Ready-to-Go supply box are these:

- a box (always a good thing to start with)
- markers
- blank paper
- pens or pencils
- a die (two dice if you are feeling really lucky!)
- tape (masking and clear)
- prizes (small items such as pencils [new or already chewed on], fast-food coupons and toys, inspirational bookmarks, leftover Halloween candy with the wrappers intact, new or slightly used toy cars)

Once you have your box all put together, keep it away from open flames and in a clean, dry place. Be sure to write in big capital letters somewhere on the box, "MY BOX." This will help deter others from thinking that it is "THEIR BOX," thereby leaving you worry free and once again, *ready-to-go*.

An Important Note About the Prize Thing

Achieving MLP is easier if these game shows are more fun than competitive. Whether the game shows are considered pure fun or do-or-die competition is under the direct control of the game show host. So you might want to make sure that everyone wins a prize or that prizes are given out at random and are all of similar value. That might mean that absolutely no prizes are awarded to anyone unless they clean up the room when the session is done. Be prepared for arguments and possible hard feelings if you decide to make these game shows more competitive than cooperative.

\$100,000 Question: What happened on 31 September 1943 that changed the world?

- A. the Triduum was built in Washington, D.C.
 - B. Thousands of cardinals were seen flocking to Rome.
 - C. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John first appeared on the *Ed Sullivan Show*.
 - D. Nothing much ever happens on 31 September.
- Best response.* D

To make these game shows learning experiences, the leader must remember that the questions (and answers) serve as only the beginning of the learning experience. For example, in answering this question, some of you may have gone to the Internet to look up the date to see what *really* happened on 31 September 1943. Others may have already concluded that nothing happened because 31 September does not exist. If you were playing this game show as part of a group, I would instruct the group members to turn to their calendars to find the correct answer, leading the group to ask the obvious question, “Who hid 31 September and why?”

These game shows can be used to review Catholic material already covered in your school or parish programs, to introduce new material, or to entertain an entire school when the special speaker does not show up for the scheduled assembly. Many of the game show questions offer *tidbits*, that is, little bits of TID (terrific information drops). You can use the tidbits to help the young people learn more about the questions’ topics. You can also use the tidbits to wow the audience by making it appear that you know just about everything there is to know about Catholic beliefs and practices—which is not a bad thing until you become a contestant yourself.

Another way to use the questions as a learning experience is to have the contestants, teams, or audience discuss what they know about each tidbit. This can lead to a brief discussion about the person or event or practice that the corresponding question refers to. Of course,

the longer a particular discussion takes place without the benefit of food, humor, or a bad joke, the more chance there is of losing the participants’ attention. Therefore the follow-up should be kept to a minimum unless the group is contained in a high-security area that is well guarded, with little or no chance of escape.

\$1,000,000 Question: Who was the greatest baby-sitter of all time?

- A. Pope John XXIII
- B. Eve
- C. Joan of Arc
- D. David

Best response. D (David rocked Goliath to sleep.)

To create MLP, the host needs to be more than a baby-sitter. You need to take the risk of going beyond the directions and questions in this book and make adaptations to fit the particular needs of your group. Please allow yourself maximum flexibility with each show so that it becomes *your* show. If you have fun *leading* it, then chances are, the young people will have fun *learning* it. Here are four hot suggestions for adapting these game shows.

Start Where the Contestant Is

Try rewording questions (and sometimes even answers) to make them either easier or more challenging for your audience, as the need and knowledge level demand. For example, if a contestant is asked to name the twelve Apostles, you could make it easier by having the contestant name four, six, or eight of the Apostles. Or you could make it harder by asking the contestant to name the twelve Apostles in 30, 45, or 60 seconds. To make it impossible, you could ask the contestant to name the social security numbers of the Apostles . . . in order from the lowest to the highest.

Choose the Game That Fits Your Group

Some of the game shows were created to be easier than others. Use the game shows that best match the knowledge level of the group you are working with. The easier game shows to play are these:

- “The Real Fortune”
- “Catholic Pictionary”

The game shows that are of medium difficulty are as follows:

- “Who Wants to Be a Catholic Millionaire”
- “Faithful Feud”
- “Holy, Holy, Holy Squares”

The game shows that are a bit more challenging are these:

- “Catholic Jeopardy”
- “The Church Is Right”
- “Grace Ball”

Turn Young People into Catholic Theologians

After playing a particular game and getting a feel for the way the questions are worded, invite the young people to develop, on index cards, their own questions and answers about Catholic teachings and practices. Keep the questions in your coveted Ready-to-Go supply box and use them the next time you play the game. The more often you play the games, the better chance you have for achieving MLP.

Bridge the Generation Gap

Use the game shows as a strategy for bringing parents and young people together for an intergenerational event. Pair up parents and young people so that they have to work together as contestants. This may inspire them to read or talk about their Catholic faith more at home. Or it might just encourage them to watch reruns of television game shows to learn winning strategies for the next time they play.

\$5,000,000 Question: If your best friend jumped into a swimming pool filled with a mixture of six-week-old sour milk and rotten eggs, would you do it too?

- A. Yes; after all, it is my best friend.
 - B. It would depend on what I had just eaten.
 - C. It would depend on what my best friend had just eaten.
 - D. No. (My mother always warned me this could happen.)
- Best response.* D (You are probably seeing the pattern now, right?)

That’s right, some things you just have to say no to. In fact, you might as well start to practice saying it: “No!” Try it again: “NO!” You may at times even have to expand on your new word with a phrase such as, “No, not now.” Or try it in another language, like, “Nada” or “Nyet.” Face it, once you start using *Ready-to-Go Game Shows*, you are going to have to tell the young people that there is much more to life than playing games all day long.

This may require you to train a replacement host or at least a cohost or two, who can take over the reins when you are feeling overwhelmed with your string of successful sessions using the game show approach. When you hit this “problem” (and you *will* hit this problem), why not empower a young person (or two or three) to take over for a while? Your protégés might even learn *more* by leading a show than by playing it. Then you will have gone from host extraordinaire to pure MLP genius!

Our Sponsors

Questions and answers for the game shows in this book were created using the following resources:

- Ahlers, Julia, Barbara Allaire, and Carl Koch. *Growing in Christian Morality*. Rev. ed. Winona, MN: Saint Mary’s Press, 1996.
- Klein, Peter. *The Catholic Sourcebook*. 3d ed. [Dubuque, IA]: Harcourt Brace and Co., Brown-ROA, 2000.

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Zanzig, Thomas, et al. *Understanding Catholic Christianity*. Winona, MN: Saint Mary's Press, 1997.

A Final Word

If you are still reading this introduction, then you have gone way too far. Please stop immediately and get started playing some games. After all, they are all set and *ready-to-go!*

WHO WANTS TO BE A CATHOLIC MILLIONAIRE



Object of the Game

This game is modeled after the popular game show *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire*. The entire group is invited to participate in a Fast Thinking preliminary round to decide who will be the lucky contestant that sits in the Nervous Kneeler's seat. The winner of the Fast Thinking round gets to try to answer five questions about the Catholic faith in order to win 1,000,000 virtues. Each final-round contestant is afforded one of two possible lifelines that can be used to help answer any one question.

HOW THE GAME IS PLAYED

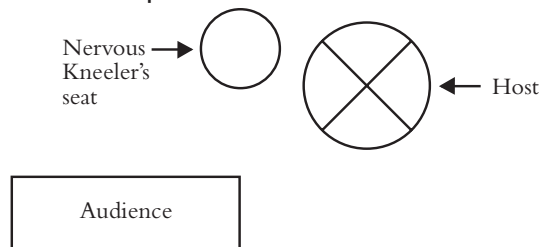
Players

- one host
- contestants (who can include the entire group)

Supplies

- slips of scrap paper or index cards, and pencils for everyone
- responses for the Fast Thinking questions on pages 21–38, written on newsprint or an overhead for all to see
- a watch or clock that displays seconds
- prizes

Room Setup



Game Directions

1. The game show host gathers the contestants around the table, and distributes slips of paper or index cards, and pencils, to all for the Fast Thinking question. The host instructs the contestants to write their name on their paper, and the numbers 1 through 4 down the left side of the paper. Then the host tells the group that a question will be read, with four responses listed on the newsprint (or overhead). The contestants must write the responses down in the correct order as indicated by the question. Only the letter corresponding to each answer needs to be written on the paper.

2. The host reads a Fast Thinking question from the questions-and-answers section on pages 21–38. As soon as the contestants write the letters in the order that they think is correct, they stack their papers on the table in order, with the paper of the first person to finish on the bottom of the pile. After all the lists are placed on the table, the host turns the pile over and begins checking them for accuracy. The first person whose list is correct gets to sit in the Nervous Kneeler's seat for the next series of questions. All the other contestants take seats in the audience until the round is completed.

3. During the Nervous Kneeler's round, the host asks the contestant in the Nervous Kneeler's seat up to five questions, one at a time. The questions become increasingly difficult, and each has four possible answers. When the contestant is thinking through an answer, the host encourages him or her to do so out loud so that all can hear what's going on in the contestant's mind. Once the contestant has selected a final answer, the host involves the audience by asking what they would answer and why. Then the host reveals the correct answer and the tidbit information that is provided.

4. The contestants may choose *one* lifeline from the two options listed below, which they may use to help them answer any *one* of the questions. The host explains these options at the beginning of the game and determines their use during the game.

- *50/50*. The host deletes two incorrect answers, leaving the correct answer and one incorrect answer to choose from.
- *Poll the Audience*. The audience use a show of hands to indicate which answer they think is correct.

Remember, each player gets to use only *one* lifeline during his or her turn in the Nervous Kneeler's seat.

5. As soon as a player misses a question, the game is over for that player and a prize (if any) is awarded. A new round starts with the next Fast Thinking question. Everyone who has not already had a chance in the Nervous Kneeler's seat participates in the new round.

Prizes

Try to secure donations of various prizes from area businesses that are frequented by young people (such as fast-food restaurants, record stores, amusement parks, bowling alleys, and dollar stores), or use various amounts of candy as prizes. Separate the prizes into five categories: 100-, 1,000-, 10,000-, 100,000-, and 1,000,000-virtue prizes. For example, players might get one Tootsie Roll if they correctly answer the 100-virtue question, three Tootsie Rolls if they make it through the 1,000-virtue question, five Tootsie Rolls if they make it through the 10,000-virtue question, and so on.

Variations on the Game

Team play. Divide the group into teams, direct the teams each to develop five questions and possible answers (from easy to difficult) for the other team or teams, and then invite the teams to take turns hosting a show for the group.

PowerPoint presentation. If you or someone in the group has access to PowerPoint and presentation equipment, use it to display the questions and answers with a professional look.

Youth teaching younger children. Help the group take the show on the road, hosting it for younger children's groups or classes, basing the questions and answers on what the younger children are studying at the moment.

CATHOLIC MILLIONAIRE—QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Round One

Fast Thinking question. Put the following saints in the order they lived, starting with the earliest:

- A. Elizabeth Ann Seton
- B. Francis of Assisi
- C. Peter
- D. Augustine of Hippo

Answer. C, D, B, A

100-virtue question. Which of these is *not* a sacrament in the Catholic church?

- A. Confirmation
- B. Holy Orders
- C. Reconciliation (also called Penance)
- D. kneeling

Answer. D

Tidbit. Kneeling is a posture of prayer, not one of the seven Catholic sacraments.

1,000-virtue question. The stations of the cross are usually connected with which special day?

- A. Christmas
- B. Good Friday
- C. Immaculate Conception
- D. Crossing Sunday

Answer. B

Tidbit. The traditional stations of the cross consist of fourteen scenes or pictures highlighting the Passion of Jesus. The stations begin with Jesus being condemned to death and end with the body of Jesus being placed in the tomb. Many parishes feature a prayer experience involving the stations of the cross on Good Friday, the day that commemorates the death of Jesus.

10,000-virtue question. Which of these parts does not occur at Mass during the liturgy of the word?

- A. opening prayer
- B. Gospel reading
- C. creed
- D. responsorial psalm

Answer. A

Tidbit. The Mass is divided into four distinct but connected parts: the introductory rite (which includes the opening prayer), the liturgy of the word, the liturgy of the Eucharist, and the concluding rite.

100,000-virtue question. The initials *INRI* stand for what?

- A. “In God we trust”
- B. “Jesus Christ has risen”
- C. “Jesus is Lord”
- D. “Jesus of Nazareth, king of the Jews”

Answer. D

Tidbit. *INRI* is the Latin abbreviation for *Iesus Nazarenus Rex Iudaeorum*, which was written on a sign the Romans placed over Jesus on the cross, “accusing” him of impersonating a king.

1,000,000-virtue question. Which was the first ecumenical council ever held?

- A. Chalcedon
- B. Nicaea I
- C. Ephesus
- D. Lateran I

Answer. B

Tidbit. An ecumenical council is a gathering of bishops from around the world that is convened by the pope to make decisions regarding the teachings of the church. At the First Council of Nicaea, held in 325, the original Nicene Creed was developed. The current version of that creed is the only Christian creed accepted mutually by the Catholic, Orthodox, and major Protestant churches.

Round Two

Fast Thinking question. List these ministers in the order in which they are ordained or elevated, beginning with the first:

- A. bishop
- B. priest
- C. cardinal
- D. transitional deacon

Answer. D, B, A, C

100-virtue question. The sacrament that begins with water used as a symbol and includes a white garment and a candle is called what?

- A. Confirmation
- B. Baptism
- C. Reconciliation (Penance)
- D. bubble bath

Answer. B

Tidbit. Baptism is the first sacrament in the process of Christian initiation, followed by Confirmation and the Eucharist. The sacrament of Baptism welcomes an individual into the Christian community and the family of God.

1,000-virtue question. Which of these prayers is *not* said during the rosary?

- A. Lord’s Prayer
- B. Magnificat
- C. Glory Be
- D. Apostles’ Creed

Answer. B

Tidbit. The rosary does not include the saying or singing of the Magnificat, which Mary proclaimed during the Visitation, when she called on her cousin Elizabeth. All the other prayers mentioned, along with the Hail Mary, are prayed during the rosary.

10,000-virtue question. What does an acolyte do?

- A. assists the priest at the altar
- B. welcomes people as they enter church
- C. oversees the pastoral council
- D. proclaims the readings at Mass

Answer. A

Tidbit. An acolyte is also known as an altar server. He or she serves the priest during the Mass and carries the crucifix or candles, or both, during the procession.