

Ask the Deacon Article for January, 2016

Ask Deacon Mike

I have been at funerals where the person had not been a practicing Catholic. Some of these people had never been to church in all of the years I knew them. Why does the Church bury these lapsed Catholics?

Often it is not clear why a Catholic has lapsed. The Church wants to fulfill the wish of Christ that all be saved. It is not proper for us to pass judgment on the spiritual state of others, particularly if we have not been with them during the last minutes of their life.

Remember that at the last moment the good thief had a change of heart, and Christ welcomed him into paradise. The parish priest or hospital chaplain will look for any indication that the individual wished to die in good terms with the Lord. Given that indication, the priest will not withhold any of the spiritual benefits of a funeral Mass that can be given the deceased and those close to him or her.

Is there any difference between atheist and agnostics, or are they just two names for the same thing?

There is definitely a difference between the two. Many people confuse the terms, and some people who are really agnostics mistakenly give themselves the label of atheist.

An agnostic is someone who claims that they do not know whether there is a God or---more broadly---what if any religion is true. An atheist, on the other hand, denies that there is a God.

The difference in a nutshell: The agnostic says he doesn't know if there is a God, while the atheist says he does know and there isn't.

At what point do the bread and the wine become truly the body and blood of Christ?

The bread becomes the body of Christ when the words of the consecration complete the sentence, i.e., when the object "body" (modified by the adjective "my") completes the subject "This" and the verb or predicate, "is". Once the thought is articulated : "This is my body", the change takes place.

The same goes for the wine becoming his blood. Sister told us that knowing the parts of speech would help us in the future---Sister scores again!

Email me with any questions!!!!

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