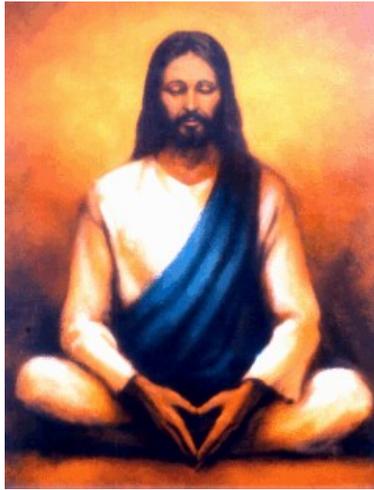


# **WHY CHRISTIANITY?**

Christianity has a particular emphasis of sharing, service, love, peace and inclusiveness, qualities which are greatly needed in our troubled world. The example of its founder Jesus Christ has provided spiritual inspiration for many cultures and generations over the last two thousand years.

It is a continuation and modern day manifestation of the western mystery traditions. If we look back into the early church we find that many of its teachings are based on Greek philosophy, thanks in part to St. Paul and some of the early Church Fathers. The best of the past and the present have always been available in Christianity.



## **WHAT IS SPECIAL ABOUT CHRISTIANITY?**

Its great emphasis is communal worship. The new age which we have now entered is said to be an age of group work. Christianity is ideally placed to offer this to spiritual seekers.

Its greatest teaching is on the quality of love. Christ came to bring this quality in humanity. Our world today is experiencing the birth pains of a new realisation that only love, goodwill and co-operation can lead us to new heights of human spiritual achievement and happiness.

Esoteric Christianity has a profound significance for today. Through the ancient rituals developed and practised within the church over hundreds of years, human nature has had a strong connection and bond with its divine source. Through His Church Christ has kept His promise, “Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the World”. (Matt. 28:20). A more universal knowledge of the Christian story gives a greater understanding and depth which is both rational and mystical.

## **TWO ASPECTS OF CHRISTIANITY**

There have been two main movements within Christianity. The first and most ancient is sacramental Christianity, the second and of equal importance is what is termed reformed Christianity. The latter has as its central inspiration the bible and its teachings.

### **WHAT IS SACRAMENTAL CHRISTIANITY?**

Sacramental Christianity offers spiritual seekers the opportunity to directly experience upliftment and a deeper sense or awareness of God for themselves. Through the spiritual energy of the seven sacraments each person can draw closer to The Christ within and without. The sacraments are rituals, the most important is 'The Holy Eucharist' (or Mass) which is performed in an oratory or church at an altar in the East.

### **WHAT ARE THE SEVEN SACRAMENTS?**

The Seven Sacraments of the Church are Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Matrimony, Absolution, Unction (Healing), the Holy Eucharist and Holy Orders. The apostolic Succession is conferred in the Episcopate in Holy Orders.

# WHAT IS THE APOSTOLIC SUCCESSION?

The Apostolic Succession is an unbroken line of initiatory succession and spiritual power passed from Bishop to Bishop starting from the twelve Apostles of Christ. This initiatory power comes from the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. The Apostolic Succession is essential to the validity of the Seven Sacraments and the 'inner spiritual work'.



## WHAT DOES THE LIBERAL CATHOLIC CHURCH GRAIL COMMUNITY TEACH?

Firstly and most importantly, that each person is a part of the One Divine Source, the Christ Life.

Secondly, that each of us is here to discover the Christ within ourselves and to make it a living reality in our lives and to return to the One Divine Life from which we all came. 'Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?' 1 Corinthians 3:15-17.

To do this, each person must be completely free intellectually and spiritually. Because of this, freedom of thought and belief are very important in The Grail Community. Each person is free to believe according to their own understanding, experience and studies.

The Liberal Catholic Church Grail Community is not Roman Catholic, Protestant or Evangelical, it is an Apostolic, mystical, liberal and esoteric church.

We are a Trinitarian Church, teaching that The Divine manifests itself in the three aspects of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The idea of God as a Trinity is not exclusive to Christianity and is also found in Hinduism and the mythologies of Ancient Egypt and Greece.

The Feminine is very important in spiritual work and we see The Holy Lady Mary not just as the Mother of Jesus but as a manifestation of the Feminine Aspect of Deity and as Queen of the Angels.

Fearing God and a fear of being punished or spending an eternity in hell have no place in Liberal Catholic thought or teaching at all. God is Love and therefore can only be experienced and manifested by Love.

Many of our members choose to be vegetarian, non-smoking and non-drinking, as a spiritual discipline and also out of respect for living things. This is of course not a requirement and is a choice for each person to make.

We have what is called an open altar. This means that all are welcome to attend our services, from whatever previous experience or none at all. Each person is encouraged to hold on to what ever they may have found to be true in the past and build on that foundation. We offer what may be thought of as a way of the heart. People are encouraged to find Christ for themselves.

We are catholic in its original meaning, that means universal in our approach, and liberal in that all are free to hold their own views on the spiritual life.

All spiritual paths are respected and valued in The Grail Community including those of other faiths and Christian denominations. All pathways lead back to the One Divine Source. "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." (John 10:16).

We have a beautiful Liturgy, or order of service, which seeks to inspire all who use it. It is positive and uplifting, believing that we are all part of the Divine and that only our highest and most profound thoughts, emotions and beliefs about ourselves, each other and God are a fit vehicle for our worship and service.

From the very early days of Christianity the Angels have been viewed as vitally important. We see the Angels not just as messengers of God but as co-workers and co-creators, assisting in ritual, healing, nature and all spiritual endeavours.

The Grail Community teaches the ancient doctrine of reincarnation as it believes this to be consistent with early Christian teachings and scriptures. Christ himself said, in speaking of John the Baptist: "And if ye will receive it, he is Elias, which was for to come." (Matt. 11:14). His words mean "if you are capable of understanding, John is the reincarnated Elias, whose coming was prophesied." It also teaches the law of universal harmony (also known as karma), "Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." (Galatians 6:7).

The Grail Community offers teachings which are both rational and mystical at the same time.

We believe that each person can find God for themselves through the sacraments, meditation, prayer and selfless service to humanity. No barriers are placed between a person and their own personal search for the Divine Life within.

# WHY A GRAIL COMMUNITY?

## *The legend of the Holy Grail:*

There are many tales of the quest for the Grail. Some involve a stone others a chalice as, for instance, in the fabled knights of the round table. Most tales involve the death of many who try to obtain it, and always the Grail is believed to bestow immortality upon its finder.



## *The Grail in the human sense:*

The Grail Community believes that the Holy Grail represents the body of the inward soul. It is a cup into which all that is most precious, as it were the gold within the life of each personality, is gathered during each incarnation. Thus the Grail contains that which is most sacred to each one of us, the best within us. The search for this Grail is our search for the God within. When we finally achieve our goal we too gain immortality in the house of God, spoken of by Our Lord in the words, "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you". (John 14:2).

We in The Grail Community believe fervently in this search of the soul for its true home. We have set up a community within the worldwide Liberal Catholic movement because we wish to emphasise brotherhood and believe that true community does this. Through our

centres we seek to engender this sense of community, we would wish always to act in a way which supports the struggle of each person to realise the best in themselves. We have a policy of respecting each individuals privacy and dignity and encourage our members to always respect others personal boundaries and privacy. You are very welcome to contact one of our centres for more information or to attend a service, study group or meditation.

# **WHERE CAN I FIND THE LIBERAL CATHOLIC CHURCH GRAIL COMMUNITY AND TAKE PART?**

The Grail Community is present and has many centres in the United Kingdom and in Kenya.

More information and times can be found either through our website:

[www.lccgrail.org](http://www.lccgrail.org)

Or through our email address:

[info@lccgrail.org](mailto:info@lccgrail.org)

Or by telephoning the headquarters of The Liberal Catholic Church Grail Community in Devon in the United Kingdom:

+44 01237 424737