

SERVANTS OF JESUS COMMUNITY STATEMENT OF FAITH

“As for us, we hold to what we believed ten and twenty years ago; to what our forefathers believed one hundred years ago, and one thousand years ago, and to that which the whole Catholic (Christian) world has always believed.” Brother Solomon Le Clerq (Martyr French Revolution).

PREAMBLE:

The Servants of Jesus Community is an ecumenical community comprised of Christians from Protestant, Roman Catholic and Orthodox traditions as well as believers who have no historical denominational affiliation. Catholics in our Community hold to all that the Catholic Church believes and teaches as laid out in the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

Our members share the following beliefs that have been held in common by mainline Christians for the last two thousand years.

Truth

1. The whole Bible is uniquely inspired by God and is therefore wholly trustworthy and, with the teaching of the church of supreme and final authority in faith and life. (2 Timothy 3:16-17, 2 Peter 1:21).
2. We believe that the Bible, comprising the Scriptures in the Old Testament and New Testament, teaches the truth about essential beliefs of the Christian faith including who God is, who Humanity is, what the Gospel is and what response God requires from his people. The Bible is our rule for faith and practice as well as the major ecumenical Councils of the church such as Nicea 325 AD and Chalcedon in 451 AD. (Deuteronomy 10:12-13, Psalm 119:105, Mark 1:15; John 20:31, Romans 12:1-2)
3. The character and attributes of God; His everlasting power and divinity are shown in the created universe which is consistent with the specific teachings of the Scriptures. (Psalm 19:1, Romans 1:20)

God

4. We believe in God, who is eternal and self-existent, revealed as one being in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who act together in creation, providence, redemption and restoration. (Matthew 28:19, Colossians 1:12-16)
5. We believe in Jesus Christ, the eternal son of God, who was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He lived a sinless life, ministering in teaching, healing, and miracles. He was crucified and died on our behalf. He rose from the dead and ascended into heaven, where he is now seated and exalted at the right hand of the Father as the risen Lord and intercessor. He will return to judge the living and the dead. (John 1: 1-14, 2 Corinthians 5:21, Romans 8:34, Colossians 1:9-10, 1 Timothy 3:16)
6. We believe in the Holy Spirit, fully divine, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. He convicts the world of guilt in regard to sin, righteousness and judgment. The Holy

Spirit regenerates and sanctifies us in Christ, and guides believers into all truth, empowering us for service in the world. (John 3: 5-7, John 14: 16-18, John 15: 26)

7. In His death and resurrection, the Lord Jesus Christ took the place of humanity, making full payment for the sin of all people. For those who accept his gift of grace and exercise faith in Him, He secures forgiveness, a right relationship with God, a new life now and everlasting life at the end of history. (Romans 3:23-26, 2 Corinthians 5:21, 1 Peter 1:3, 1 Peter 2:24)

Humanity

8. God has created humanity in His image and ascribed dignity, sanctity and worth to human life from conception until death. God requires human life to be accorded respect and to be protected from harm (Genesis 1:27, Psalm 139:13-16, Exodus 20:13)
9. God has created humanity as distinctly male and female and has ordained a normative connection between binary biological sex and a person's true self-conception as male or female. (Genesis 1:27, Matthew 19:4)
10. God calls some people to marriage, and some to a single state: one is not inferior or superior to another, and both have dignity, according to the Bible. God has instituted marriage between one man and one woman for life to be the only Scriptural covenantal, sexual and procreative union for humanity which signifies and mirrors the covenant love between Christ and his Church. Married couples must be sexually faithful to each other. Sexual relationships outside of marriage between one man and one woman are contrary to God's will and command for humanity (Genesis 2:23-24, Matthew 19:5-6, Ephesians 5:22-32)
11. God has instituted the family as the central social structure and parents have the primary responsibility for bringing up their children. God has also instituted the church to make disciples from all the nations and provide spiritual teaching. He has established civil government to make laws, keep civic order and promote human flourishing. Each of these institutions has distinct roles and responsibilities which overlap but one should not usurp the role of the other. (Genesis 1:28, Mark 12:17, Romans 13:1-7)
12. Humanity, originally created for a relationship with God, has turned away from God and thus become sinful by nature and practice, unable by any personal merit or effort to restore that relationship. This fall has corrupted human identity and purpose, impacted sexuality, family and social relationships and has separated humanity from fellowship with God. (Genesis 1:26-31, Romans 1:18-32, Romans 3:23, Titus 3:3-7)

The Gospel

13. Humanity's only means of restoring relationship with God is through salvation. Salvation is initiated in the believer solely by the grace of God, accomplished through the work of Jesus dying on the cross and applied by the Holy Spirit. Salvation is a free gift accepted by faith and includes the removal of guilt, being set apart for God, a new life of increasing transformation into the likeness of Jesus and eventually the

resurrection to everlasting life. (Ephesians 2:8-10, Romans 8:28-30, Matthew 25:34-36)

14. Believers experience salvation when they are declared righteous by God as they commit their lives to Jesus in repentance and faith. This conscious commitment is made possible only by the work of the Holy Spirit within the individual; it is not a meritorious work. (John 3:16, Ephesians 2:1-10)
15. We believe in the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit, who convicts people of their sin and inspires repentance and faith. The Holy Spirit transforms believers into the likeness of Jesus Christ.
16. We believe that the church, the body of Christ, is the community of people who confess faith in Jesus Christ. While universal, the church is local in expression and witness. It exists for worship, fellowship, evangelism, discipleship, and mission. Gifts of ministry are given by Christ to strengthen and mature the church. (Ephesians 3: 4-10, Matthew 28: 19-20)
17. We believe in the baptism of the Holy Spirit, which is a transformative experience, distinct from and subsequent to salvation. It is available to all believers and is often accompanied by the initial evidence of speaking in tongues. It results in empowerment for effective witness to the world.
18. Satan is a personal spiritual being, opposed to God and the salvation of humanity, sworn to enslave and destroy the human race but his ultimate purpose has been brought to nothing by the Lord Jesus Christ. (Genesis 3:1-15, Matthew 4:1-11, Revelations 20:10, Colossians 2:15)
19. The Lord Jesus Christ will personally return in glory and judgement to bring eternal life to the redeemed and eternal destruction to the unrepentant, establishing a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness, where there will be no more evil, suffering or death. (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, 2 Thessalonians 2:1-8, Revelations 22:12, 17-20)

The Response

20. Until Jesus returns, God calls believers to respond to the Gospel by living as restored disciples of his Kingdom in a broken world with a commission to spread the Gospel, to make disciples and to engage in personal, relational, communal and civic conduct that is transformed by the Gospel and which serves as an example to the world. (Matthew 28:19-20, Matthew 5:13-16)
21. Obedience to this missional commend of Christ includes baptising new believers in water baptism in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is a public declaration of a person's faith in, and identification with, the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We also recognise infant baptism as a valid baptism.
22. Believers are equipped by the Holy Spirit, who imparts spiritual gifts to believers for ministry to one another, the church and the world.
23. Believers are called to personal conduct which:
 - 23.1. conforms to the example of Jesus;

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- 23.2. rejects sinful actions and seeks to do good works;
- 23.3. demonstrates the fruit of the Spirit; and
- 23.4. recognizes that the body of the believer is the temple of the Holy Spirit;
- 23.5. affirms and reflects the truth of the Bible about the nature of human beings, created, male and female, in the image of God.

(Galatians 5:16-24, 1 Corinthians 6:19)

- 24. Believers are called to relational conduct that conforms to and reflects the teaching of the Bible concerning human sexuality and marriage. Therefore:

- 24.1. outside of marriage, a believer must live a life of chastity;
- 24.2. children are a natural blessing of marriage; and
- 24.3. parents must instruct and care for their children and provide for their physical, spiritual, and educational upbringing.

(Genesis 1: 26-27, Psalm 127:3-4, Ephesians 5: 22-33)

- 25. Believers are called to communal conduct which includes the use of their gifts for works of ministry, including communicating the gospel to others, making disciples, loving each other, loving one's neighbours including through ministries of mercy and compassion, and active witness in the world. (Hebrews 10:25, Romans 12:4-8)
- 26. Believers are to proclaim and participate in the Lord's Supper which he gave to his Church, through his Apostles, as a corporate act of remembrance of his sacrifice until he returns. Our members do this in accordance with their denominational affiliation. (Matthew 26:26-29)
- 27. Believers are to pray in faith for healing and miracles that the Church witnesses to today as the continuing ministry of Jesus Christ through his body, the Church.
- 28. Believers are called to civic conduct which includes being salt and light to the world, obedience to the civil authorities in all things which do not contradict the Word of God and a commitment to living quietly and peaceably as a blessing to the community in which the believer is placed. (Matthew 5:13-16, Jeremiah 29:7, 1 Peter 2:13-17, 1 Timothy 2: 1-4)
- 29. Believers are still sinful by nature and practice and they will never perfectly respond to God's call in this life so must continue in repentance and faith relying on the grace of God as well as extending grace to others. However, it is only by striving to respond in faith to God's call that believers will find true meaning and purpose to live a fulfilled life. (Romans 7:23, 1 John 2:2, Jeremiah 31:34, 1 John 1:7)