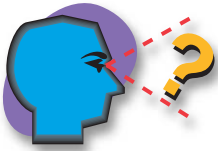
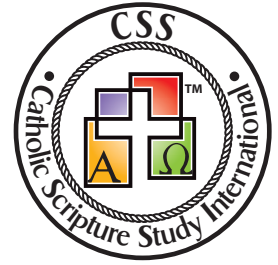


# Revelation

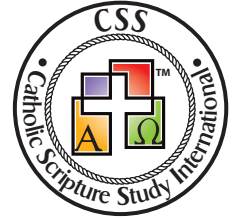


## Suggested Responses to the Questions

**Note:** Be sure to answer all the questions yourself before reading the suggested responses in order to make the most of this study.

### Revelation 4:1-11

1. “The Kingdom of God” is on the other side of the door in Revelation 3:20, in Revelation 4:1 and in the Gospel of Luke. Paragraph 1026 of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* explains: “By his death and Resurrection, Jesus Christ has ‘opened’ heaven to us.” According to Luke 13:27, Jesus will exclude “workers of iniquity” from the Kingdom of God.
2. Catholics who participate in the Mass on earth are in some mystical way raised to heaven to participate in the liturgy there at the same time. Paragraph 1136 of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* explains: “Liturgy is an ‘action’ of the *whole Christ (Christus totus)*. Those who even now celebrate it without signs are already in the heavenly liturgy, where celebration is wholly communion and feast.”
3. To be in a “state of grace” means to be free from mortal sin. Paragraph 1861 of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches: “Mortal sin is a radical possibility of human freedom, as is love itself. It results in the loss of charity and the privation of sanctifying grace, that is of the state of grace.” Paragraph 1385 explains that Catholics must be in a state of grace when receiving the Body and Blood of Jesus in the Eucharist: “Anyone conscious of a grave sin must receive the sacrament of Reconciliation before coming to communion.”
4. *Responses to the first part of this question will vary.* Some adjectives to describe this image of God in heaven are: majestic, regal, glorious, mysterious, grand, awe-inspiring, brilliant, and colorful. The prophet Isaiah sees God seated on a throne surrounded by angels singing: “Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory.” In the passage from Isaiah, there’s burning coal on the altar and smoke fills the house. Ezekiel also describes God on a throne (that looks like sapphire) with the appearance of fire around and brightness and a rainbow.
5. In Genesis 9:8-17, the rainbow is a sign of the covenant God made with Noah after the flood. The repeated emphasis of the number seven in the book of Revelation links the apostle John’s prophetic vision with the Old Testament covenants between God and his people.
6. In Revelation 4:5, the “seven torches of fire” are the “seven spirits of God.” Paragraph 696 of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* explains that fire is a symbol of the Holy Spirit: “Fire symbolizes the transforming energy of the Holy Spirit’s actions.”



## Suggested Responses (cont.)

7. The four living creatures described by the prophet Ezekiel had the form of men, but each of them had four faces and four wings. In Ezekiel 1:5-11, the prophet writes: “Their legs were straight, the soles of their feet were like the sole of a calf’s foot; and they sparkled like burnished bronze. Under their wings on their four sides they had human hands. . . . Each had the face of a man in front, . . . the face of a lion on the right side, . . . and the face of an ox on the left side, . . . and the face of an eagle on the back.” In Revelation 4:6-8, the four living creatures are on each side of the throne, full of eyes in front and behind. Like Ezekiel, the apostle John also describes creatures who resemble a lion, an ox, a man and an eagle. The creatures in the book of Revelation each have six wings, and they never cease to sing to the Lord.
8. The six-winged seraphim envisioned by the prophet Isaiah sing: “Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.” The creatures described in Revelation 4:8 sing: “Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!” The two songs begin the same but end differently. Christians today echo this song in the *Sanctus* of the Mass. Pope John Paul II preached that all creation not only proclaims God’s existence but eagerly awaits his coming.
9. In Revelation 4:10-11, the 24 elders worship the Lord by falling down, casting their crowns before the Lord on the throne, and singing: “Worthy art thou, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for thou didst create all things, and by thy will they existed and were created.” Paragraph 1138 of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* describes these 24 elders as “servants of the Old and New Covenants.”
10. Paragraph 2642 of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* explains how the Church on earth participates in glorifying God: In communion with all the martyrs, prophets, and saints who have gone before us into the Kingdom, who “all sing the praise and glory of him who sits on the throne and of the Lamb. . . . The Church on earth also sings these songs with faith in the midst of trial. By means of petition and intercession, faith hopes against all hope and gives thanks to the ‘Father of lights,’ from whom ‘every perfect gift’ comes down. Thus faith is pure praise.”

*Responses to the Questions for Reflection will vary.*