



April 27, 2026

Faith Matters: Reflections from Morocco and the Pillars of Faith

Hello Saints,

Recently, Mary and I had the incredible opportunity to travel through Morocco, a truly stunning country. Its landscapes are remarkably diverse, featuring everything from the snow-capped Atlas Mountains and the coastal beauty of the Atlantic and Mediterranean to vast agricultural lands and the majestic Sahara Desert. We were privileged to visit each of these regions, sharing meals and conversations with local families ranging from farming communities and upper-middle-class households to nomadic tribes in the Sahara. We found the people to be exceptionally hospitable and engaging. Today, Morocco's population is approximately 99% Muslim, with the remainder composed of Christian, Jewish, and Baha'i faith communities.

Our visit coincided with Ramadan, one of the Five Pillars of Islam. During this month-long fast, participants abstain from food and drink from before sunrise until after sunset. It was remarkable to witness the deep devotion and commitment to this practice; many businesses and restaurants closed during the day, only coming to life after dark. Our guide, who was of Berber (Amazigh) descent—a group that predates the 7th-century Arab conquest—offered us profound insights into the Muslim faith.

The Muslim faithful worldwide observe the **Five Pillars of Islam**:

1. **Shahada:** The profession of faith that there is no god but Allah, and Muhammad is His messenger.
2. **Salat:** Performing ritual prayers five times a day, often at a mosque, though it can be done at home or work.
3. **Sawm:** Fasting during the holy month of Ramadan.
4. **Zakat:** Giving a portion of one's wealth to those in need.
5. **Hajj:** Making a pilgrimage to Mecca if one is physically and financially able.

Observing this sincere dedication caused me to reflect on the "pillars" of my own Christian faith and how they support my spiritual journey.

Reflections on the Pillars of the Christian Faith

The first pillars that came to mind were **Baptism and the Lord's Supper**. While the nuances of Baptism are often debated, I view it fundamentally as a profound act of God's love and grace. Similarly, the Lord's Supper is a vital celebration of Christ's love and His redemptive work for us. Though different traditions observe it at varying intervals—weekly, monthly, or quarterly—I personally find that frequent celebration serves as a powerful and necessary reminder of our faith.

Another essential pillar for me is the **Apostles' Creed**. Although we do not recite it multiple times a day, it serves as a concise and reassuring summary of what we believe. I find it a beneficial practice to read or recite it slowly, allowing the mind to focus on God's attributes and His enduring love:

I believe in God the Father, Almighty, maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ His only son our lord. Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, Born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried, he descended into hell.

The third day He arose from the dead. He ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of the saints, the forgiveness of sins. The resurrection of the body and life everlasting.

Finally, a cornerstone of my daily life is the **Lord's Prayer**. Reciting it almost every morning acknowledges God's sovereignty and our identity as His children. It serves as a daily reminder of His constant provision and the forgiveness of our sins.

I hope that reflecting on these pillars provides you with the same strength and comfort they offer me.

~Written by Bill Blacquiere

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