

Abstract

This research project aims to explore whether or not Self-help can be found within the Catholic Church. This research project highlights the presence, significance, and prevalence of Self-help within religion, more specifically the Catholic Church. The Catholic Church provides many resources that allow for the opportunity for individuals who seek it to practice and adopt the concept of Self-help. Resources can range from counseling services for addicts or those who suffer some type of abuse, Bible study sessions, and movements within the Church that can help implement Self-help in one's life. One of the movements that will be discussed in this research project is the Neocatechumenal Way; its main focus is on the idea of Self-help for every individual, both for people both outside and inside the movement.

Self-help can be found in the Catholic Church and can be found if you seek it with an open mind. The Bible, The Catechism of The Catholic Church, online Catholic services, and a Self-help book written by the Pope in 2016 are just some of the resources that can show the presence of Self-help within the Church. Many times, the church is perceived negatively; it can be seen as an institution that is all about creating a positive image for itself, and can be shadowed by scandal within the church. Though this institution (Catholic Church) can be considered as a tool for an individual seeking Self-help, not the answer to Self-help but a tool that can be used in someone's journey to find it. The general notion of Self-help can be found not only within the Church but also within the religion itself (Catholicism). Analyzing the Catholic faith and its tools, specifically the Church, can really help one to see the presence of Self-help within the Catholic Church; it allows entry of a different perception of Self-help and the Catholic Church.

Links to posts for Research Project on Openlab

[Revised Annotated Bibliography and Revised Proposal](#)

[Research Proposal and Annotated Bibliography with three annotated sources](#)

[Lightning Presentation Link With Abstract](#)

Cover Letter

Dear Professor Belli and Readers,

At the beginning of this research project I did not know what to expect from this project. We had just finished our meditation project which was very unique and a project in which I have never taken part in. At the stage of brainstorming and figuring out what I wanted my research project to revolve around and coming up with my proposal I did not know what I wanted to focus on. Especially finding something that I would enjoy writing about and really go into depth about for the project. One specific memory came to mind and it was recalling a moment at the beginning of the semester which was when we were going over and looking at readings. More specifically we were discussing the “Secret” by Ronda Byrne and the concept of the Law of Attraction. It sparked my curiosity when I started scrutinizing the concept of the Law of Attraction in order to propose something for my research project. And what came out of it was the realization that it was very similar to the concept of religion, any religion. The idea that you can tap into this greater being in order to accomplish or receive whatever it is you want in life is similar to religion whether it is monotheistic or polytheistic. This led me to choose the topic in which I would revolve my project around. I first decided to speak about Self-Help within religion but soon realized it was very general and if I spoke about multiple religions the project would be very difficult and I would not have been able to have enough time to have a project in which I was satisfied with. Therefore, I decided to narrow it down to a religion in which I am familiar with and have personal experience in, Catholicism.

Next was the difficulty of deciding whether to speak on whether Self-Help can be found within Catholicism or the Catholic Church. The difference was that in order to discuss finding it in Catholicism I would have to go into the concept of praying and “rituals” that Catholics partake in, in order to find a form of Self-Help. With discussing Self-Help within the Catholic Church I would have to look into the resources provided by the Church and the religion itself which created a perfect balance in discussing both about the religion and tools within it that could help individuals find a form of Self-Help for themselves. So was born the question of, “Is Self-Help present within the Catholic Church? ”. At the beginning of my research I based it all off my personal experience within the church. I grew up in a very Catholic household so I had my own experience to take account of while I began my research. I first began by citing and researching two of the most influential and important sources that I would need to build my research project. The first being the Bible and the second being the Catechism of the Catholic Church. The Bible was an essential tool that every Catholic has and uses in order to better their relationship with God or used to help themselves understand the purpose of life. The Catechism is in a sense a guideline and rule book to explain what is the purpose of the Catholic Church and what is its job

in the world and in society. Anyhow this is how I began my project and what led me to pursue this specific topic. Overall it was very difficult to get to that point and decide what to write about.

It was difficult because I was honestly very skeptical about this class since the beginning of the semester and then beginning a research project on a concept/idea in which the class revolved around was a challenge. But I realized that as long as I kept an open mind in the process it became easier to figure out a topic in which I would enjoy researching and speaking about. One thing that I learned from this project is that rough drafts are an essential part of the writing process. I have always known this but I have never taken it as seriously as I have in college. This project also helped me realize that the sooner I find a topic which I really enjoy and look forward to talking about it the more time I will have to create a project in which I am satisfied with. One thing I found in my research is that the Catholic Church and Catholicism in a way revolve around the idea of Self-help, particularly a unique aspect of Self-help. Self-help is when someone seeks to find routines, activities, or actions that allow them to better themselves spiritually, physically, or mentally. My research concluded that the Catholic Church and Catholicism provide tools like the Bible and the Church in order to help individuals constantly scrutinize the different things that happen in life. Everything from suffering to the beautiful things in life. This research and scrutiny of the topic really allowed me to have a different perception of the purpose of both the religion and the Church. Though gaining this different perception now, it was a challenging journey to meet all the requirements to complete the project.

I struggled to find articles on the concept of Self-help within the Catholic Church which led me to use the Bible and documents like the Catechism of the Catholic Church for my research. Not only was it difficult to find sources that spoke about the topic but I also struggled in finding sources that critiqued the idea of Self-help being present within the Catholic Church. I have realized it is not much of a topic that is discussed enough to have many journals and articles that speak on this topic. So this grunt work of research was good for me to help build a special connection with this project and become sort of an expert on the topic. I went on to do some of my own in person research by creating and having conversations with people who were part of the church including active parishioners and people deeply involved within a specific movement, The Neocatechumenal Way. This really allowed me to find the meaning of this project and what it can mean to others which allowed me to enjoy this project. These experiences allowed me to be able to write freely with the thought that this was something I was enjoying and it would be something to be proud of. Overall this research project helped me realize that keeping an open mind will always make certain experiences easier even when you're skeptical of certain situations.