



RELIGIOUS FREEDOM WEEKLY

from

Americans for Freedom of Religion

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Elementary Catechism on the Constitution of the United States

Written by Arthur Stansbury for the Use of Schools - Copyright 1828

A catechism is defined as a text giving the basic principles of a religion or of a specific subject, usually by using a question and answer format. For Catholics learning the truths of our faith, the Baltimore Catechism was the standard text used from 1885 to the late 1960s. Fifty or sixty years later many Catholics can recite, word-for-word, much of what they learned by memorizing answers from the Baltimore Catechism.

Arthur Stansbury, a Presbyterian minister, wrote basic lessons on the Constitution as a catechism, with chronological questions and answers to teach students the facts of the Constitution along with a moral patriotism imbued in this “highly favored” ‘birthright.’”

As we approach the annual Constitution Week of Sept. 17-23 and the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 2025, each of us would benefit from a review of the Constitution which protects our religious freedom and the other rights from our Creator. Stansbury’s introduction to the book urges “...the Constitution’s principles are simple, its features plain and obvious, and its brevity surpassing all example...It is certainly a most reprehensible negligence to remain in ignorance of it.”

“In the first place, consider how happy and how highly favored is our country, in having a system of government so wisely calculated to secure the life, liberty and happiness of all its citizens.” “In the next place, remember that this precious Constitution, thus wise, thus just, is your birthright. It has been earned for you by your fathers, who counselled much, labored long, and shed their dearest blood, to win it for their children.”

“To them it was the fruit of toil and danger. To you, it is a gift. Do not slight it on that account, but prize it as you ought. To undervalue it is one of the surest ways to lose it. Take pains to know what the Constitution is - the more you study, the higher you will esteem it. The better you understand your own rights, the more likely you will be to preserve and guard them.” *Arthur J. Stansbury, Elementary Catechism on the Constitution of the United States: Copyright 1828*

Learn more: Stansbury’s book available from Amazon.com for \$8.00 And follow this link to take the free online course from Hillsdale College. *Constitution 101: The Meaning and History of the Constitution*
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