

# Indulge us

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## The Catholic Church goes retro

More than any other religious organization in history, the Catholic Church seems to revel in applying bureaucracy to God. The church has always had a variety of reasons for this, which range from vaguely spiritual to overt lip service, but the fact remains that no other organization in history has put more steps between God and the people.

So it should come as no real surprise that the church has brought back Plenary Indulgences in this time of trial. For those not versed in the Catholic dogma, a Plenary Indulgence is essentially a way to buy one's way out of purgatory, which is the middle ground between heaven and hell. Boring but not expressly painful, purgatory is one of those things your average Catholic would like to avoid.

Of course, the church did away with the practice of actually purchasing indulgences in 1567. The modern iteration can be obtained by way of confession, followed by charitable and otherwise pious acts. Got that? The church is now providing incentives for behavior that other religions simply expect out of their faithful.

Has the failing economy had such a negative effect on the Catholic Church? Are they so strapped for cash that they will, for all intents and purposes, sell redemption?

The various motivations given by those bishops and other church higher-ups in charge of this decision have centered on the fact that, yes, there is still sin in this world. Are the faithful to believe that the Vatican has been blind to the continued existence of sin in the last few decades, or does the Church simply want to bring back another ritual of worship to further their hold over their flock?

Time and study have revealed Christ's messages to be much more in tune with individualized worship and faith in God's unconditional love and forgiveness for us all - a view of Christianity that doesn't leave much room for an organization such as Catholicism. One cannot help but wonder whether the Vatican understands this, and is making one last grasp for power and relevance. Remember that faith is connection to God; religion is only a human tool for control.

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