

The Importance of Being Catholic:

A musical comedy with some serious parts.

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Libretto and lyrics © 2024 James G. Liebner

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Cast of Characters

Lucia
Cathy
John
Peter
Shopkeeper in a bookstore
John's Mother
John's Friend
Various friends at opening prologue, the dinner table (Act 2, scene 1) and for finale.
Alexa (voice)

Place San Francisco Fall 2024

Twin sisters, both Catholic. Lucia insists on only marrying a Catholic. Cathy is open to marrying a non-Catholic, if she thinks she can convince him to become a Catholic by her piety, good example and through participation in a local church. They are both in their 20s.

Two young men. Both non-Catholic. Peter, who has no religious inclination, pretends to be a Catholic because of Lucia's strong religious convictions. John, who is an agnostic, realizes that if he is to continue dating Cathy he must make a decision about faith. They are both in their late 20s.

Lucia and Cathy have finished university and rented an apartment together in San Francisco and are participating in a local Catholic parish nearby. (Lucia is more like Mary; Cathy more like Martha in the Bible.)

Cathy met John a few months previously after she and Lucia arrived in San Francisco. Lucia will meet Peter at the beginning of the musical (Act 1, Scene 1). Although the girls are identical twins, they have unique likes as the third song, CATHY, MY SISTER, reveals. Since they have been together all their lives they know and anticipate each other's behavior. For example, Cathy is particular about a proper place for things in the apartment, whereas Lucia is not.

Peter and John are working at the same company and are mere acquaintances. They don't discover that they are dating the two sisters until Act 3.

Musical Numbers

WHAT'S IT LIKE LIVING IN SAN FRANCISCO?	Cast
CAN THIS MOMENT LAST MORE THAN TODAY?	Peter and Lucia
CATHY, MY SISTER	Lucia
HE'S WORTH CONVERTING	Cathy
WHEN WE MET	A Friend of John
YOU NEED SOME BOOKS NOW	A Shopkeeper
MY TIMID HEART	John
MOONLIGHT, SHINE ON MY LOVE	Peter and Lucia
THE TASSEL OF HIS ROBE	John and Cathy
CATHOLICS HAVE THEIR CUSTOMS	Peter
I HAVE A CONFESSION TO MAKE	Peter and Lucia
MY MOTHER'S ENGLISH MAKES ME LAUGH	Peter
OH, WHY WAS I SO CARELESS	Peter's Mother
THE LOVE OF CHRIST I KNOW YOU'LL KNOW	Lucia and entire cast
MAY YOUR LOVE BE OUR DELIGHT	Cast (finale)

Prologue

Entire ensemble is on stage except Peter's mother and shopkeeper. They are at a social event with drinks in hand and snacks nearby. They are chatting with each other as the scene begins. At this point, Lucia and Peter don't yet know each other. Audience sees all the characters chatting but their voices are not heard distinctly by the audience.

VOICE (from off stage)

What's it like living in San Francisco?

John turns toward the audience. Following John's lead, all on stage face the audience for this song which will be very lively and with high energy.

JOHN

You ask me, what's it like living in San Francisco? Let me tell you.

(Song: "WHAT'S IT LIKE LIVING IN SAN FRANCISCO?")

JOHN

I AM HAVING A HARD TIME LEAVING MY HEART IN SAN
FRANCISCO,
FINDING THE HEART TO LEAVE IT WITH IS GOING SLOW.

CAST

YOU'RE IN TECH, LET ME GUESS, YOU'RE A SOFTWARE
ENGINEER.
GETTING OLD, WITH NO WIFE, IS THE ONLY THING YOU
FEAR.

PETER

YOU WON'T MEET MANY PEOPLE SITTING ON THE DOCK OF
THE BAY,
BECAUSE FISHERMAN'S WHARF HAS REALLY HAD ITS DAY.

CAST

YOU'RE IN TECH, LET ME GUESS, YOU'RE A SOFTWARE
ENGINEER.
GETTING OLD, WITH NO WIFE, IS THE ONLY THING YOU
FEAR.

CATHY

MOM AND DAD TOLD ME, BE SURE TO WEAR SOME FLOWERS IN
MY HAIR,
BUT IN THE TENDERLOIN YOU ARE SURE TO GET A SCARE.

CAST

YOU'RE IN TECH, LET ME GUESS, YOU'RE A SOFTWARE
ENGINEER.
GETTING OLD, WITH NO GUY, IS THE ONLY THING YOU
FEAR.

LUCIA

I TOLD MOM AND DAD, CABLECARS IN THE CITY BY THE BAY,
THEY TOLD ME, YOU WILL SEE, HIGH RENT YOU'RE GONNA PAY.

CAST

YOU'RE IN TECH, LET ME GUESS, YOU'RE A SOFTWARE
ENGINEER.
GETTING OLD, WITH NO GUY, IS THE ONLY THING YOU
FEAR.

JOHN

I DON'T KNOW WHAT THE CITY IS BUILT ON, IT'S NOT ROCK AND
ROLL,
SAN FRANCISCO DATING BLUES ARE TAKING THEIR TOLL.

CAST

YOU'RE IN TECH, LET ME GUESS, YOU'RE A SOFTWARE
ENGINEER.
GETTING OLD, WITH NO WIFE, IS THE ONLY THING YOU
FEAR.

CAST (*facing audience and singing about each other*)

WE'RE IN TECH, CAN'T YOU GUESS, WE ARE SOFTWARE
ENGINEERS.
GETTING OLD, WITH NO ONE, IS THE ONLY THING WE
FEAR.

Song ends and the four main characters introduce themselves to the audience.

JOHN

My name is John. Yes, I'm in tech as you just heard. Just about everyone you meet here is somehow in tech. I've been dating Cathy for a few months. I guess you would call me an agnostic, if I had to put a label on what I don't believe. But since I have been dating Cathy something has come over me. I never thought dating a Catholic would mean making a decision about faith. The Catholic girls I've met in the past never seemed as religious as Cathy. I guess there is more than one kind of Catholic girl out there.

LUCIA

Let me introduce my sister, Cathy, to you.

Since Cathy met John, she has canceled her subscription to Catholic Match. But the match she has made is not Catholic. What will Mom and Dad say about that! I tell Cathy that the Douay-Rheims translation of the Bible is the best for Catholics but she swears—I tell her not to swear—but she says she swears by the Ignatius Press one. We are both in tech related fields. She is older than me by a few minutes, but I am more mature than her by...

Cathy interrupts with a sound from her throat.

CATHY

Let me tell you about my sister, Lucia. For one, she will only date a Catholic. And in a city like San Francisco, the bay does not have many Catholic fish to fry. But as you will see and hear in Act 1, her luck is about to change. Or should I say, she is about to be blessed. Although we are twins we look at life differently. She is the messy one. I do all the cleaning. She gives me advice all the time, but I just ignore it. I use make-up but she doesn't. She says she wants a Catholic man who admires her natural beauty and her inner spirituality. Since we are twins, I guess that is her way of calling me vain. Yes, I am dating an agnostic, but he seems to be searching. And in San Francisco if a man is searching for something, I can at least encourage him to search for truth.

PETER

I am the newest one on the San Francisco scene. I just got home from this year's Burning Man. First time and last time; I swear I'm done with that. Who knew it could rain so much in the desert? They could have named it Drowning Man. John and I work in the same company but we are merely acquaintances at this point. We have never worked on any project together. I have not yet met Cathy or Lucia. I was not raised in any faith but in the next scene you will see.....

Why don't we just begin the musical.

Act 1
Scene 1

Setting: A musical performance. Outdoors in a park. Evening. Entire ensemble is on stage. Only Peter's mother and the shopkeeper are not present.

As the scene opens there is music played in background (violin; perhaps the end of a classical piece). It comes to an end and the audience is heard clapping. The crowd drifts away. Lucia and Peter are in the center and remain on stage. They strike up a conversation.

PETER

Hi, I'm Peter.

It was a beautiful performance. Do you often come to such evening concerts?

LUCIA

Yes. My sister Cathy and I came with her boyfriend, John. They have gone for some coffee. I hope there will be more summer music, Evenings in the Park, in the near future. I'm Lucia.

PETER

We've never met before, but do you work in marketing at the tech company, Fall Back, Spring Forward? We did a project for your company not long ago and I seem to remember seeing your face in a mock prospective. A face I could not forget.

You're blushing.

LUCIA

You are very kind.

PETER

Can we meet again? I think we have more in common than just a love of music.

LUCIA

Perhaps there is a song we could sing together someday. I'll pray about it.

PETER

There is a song in my heart, I pray you'll hear, but I am still searching for the right key.

Song: "CAN THIS MOMENT LAST MORE THAN TODAY?"

PETER

CAN THIS MOMENT LAST MORE THAN TODAY?
OR WE SAY GOODBYE NOW AND YOU JUST WALK AWAY.
THE MUSIC WE HEARD IS STILL PLAYING IN MY HEART,
IT'S A MELODY FOR YOU AND ME.

YOU SING SOPRANO AND I'LL SING BASE.
YOU CAN PLAY THE KEYBOARD, WITH THE DRUM I'LL KEEP PACE.
THE STARS IN THE SKY WILL SHINE BRIGHTER THAN TONIGHT,
AND THE MOON WILL ADD HER GENTLE LIGHT.

LUCIA

A HARMONY HAS COME INTO PLACE.
FROM THE LOOK IN YOUR EYES, TO THE SMILE ON YOUR FACE,
KEYBOARD AND DRUMS ARE A LOVELY COMBINATION,
BUT WILL THIS LEAD TO MY SALVATION?

FOR WITHOUT FAITH IN THE EQUATION,
I FEAR MUSIC ALONE WILL HAVE NO FOUNDATION.
YES, THE SONG YOU ARE SINGING IS TOUCHING MY HEART,
BUT THE FAITH WE SHARE MUST PLAY A PART.

(Or: BUT FAITH THAT WE SHARE MUST PLAY A PART.)

PETER

IF IT'S FAITH YOU'RE LOOKING FOR,
NO NEED TO LOOK ANYMORE.
FOR WE WILL FIND IT IN OUR HEARTS,
AND WE WILL EACH PLAY OUR PART.

(Or: LET THE MUSIC PLAY ITS PART.)

LUCIA

I think you're great, Peter, but I have to tell you that I only date Catholics.

PETER

Of course I am a Catholic. Cross my heart and hope to die. I could never tell a lie.

Peter hides his hands behind him with his fingers crossed. Lucia has a slightly puzzled look on her face.

Act 1
Scene 2

Setting: Lucia and Cathy's apartment. Day.

The twin sisters, Cathy and Lucia, are seated on chairs or sofa. There is an end table nearby with a book on it.

While speaking the first two lines, Lucia places the book on a shelf. She then picks up a coffee cup left on the same shelf while singing the next two lines and then places the coffee cup on the table. She then sits.

LUCIA

(Spoken with some soft music in background leading into song.)

It doesn't matter where I put it, Cathy,
You'll say, it's not its place
No matter how much I clean it, Cathy,
You'll say I left a trace.

Cathy picks up a COVID box of masks

CATHY

Lucia, is there some reason we are saving this?
I think COVIDs finally gone forever.

LUCIA

(Song: "CATHY, MY SISTER")

CATHY, MY SISTER, I KNOW YOU SO WELL.
(MY) LOVING SISTER, AS FAR AS I CAN TELL.

(Lucia looks at Cathy when she sings "loving" which is meant to be humorous; she is not questioning their relationship as twins.)

WE'VE BEEN TOGETHER STARTING FROM DAY ONE.
YOU'VE MET YOUR MAN AND NOW YOUR SEARCHINGS DONE.

LUCIA

Spoken

But he's not Catholic.

LUCIA

Sings

I KNOW JOHN'S GOOD LOOKING FROM ALL YOU SAY,
HIS PHOTOS AND CARDS ARE ALL ON DISPLAY.

(She gestures with her arms to a photo)

BUT NOW COMES THE TIME TO TEACH HIM TO PRAY.
IF NOT, I SUGGEST, IT'S BEST YOU PART WAYS.

LUCIA

Spoken:

John is not Catholic, Mom and Dad would be mortified if they knew. Actually they are mortified because I told them.

Cathy makes a face.

Cathy, Is he worth it?

Lucia sits.

CATHY

Stands. Speaks John's name with tenderness

John.

(She picks up his photo and holds it close to her and then puts the photo back on the shelf in the same place she found it.)

CATHY

(Song: HE'S WORTH CONVERTING)

(Music should be very animated and playful.)

HE'S WORTH CONVERTING.
HE'S WORTH CONVERTING.
CAN'T YOU SEE, CAN'T YOU SEE, CAN'T YOU SEE?, MY DEAR.
HE'S WORTH CONVERTING. HE'S WORTH CONVERTING.
BUT IT MAY TAKE A LITTLE TIME.

HE GOES TO CHURCH NOW.
HE GOES TO CHURCH NOW.
BUT HE STANDS WHEN WE SIT AND SITS WHEN WE STAND.
HE GOES TO CHURCH NOW. HE GOES TO CHURCH NOW.
BUT I MAY TAKE A LITTLE TIME.

I THINK HE'S HONEST.
YES, REALLY HONEST.
FOR A LIE MAKES HIM BLUSH THAT HE CANNOT HIDE.
I THINK HE'S HONEST. YES, MOSTLY HONEST.
BUT I MAY TAKE A LITTLE TIME.

YOU WAIT AND SEE NOW
YOU WAIT AND SEE NOW
HE'LL BE MINE, YES ALL MINE, LIKE THE SUN THAT SHINES.

YOU WAIT AND SEE NOW. YOU WAIT AND SEE NOW.
BUT IT WILL TAKE A LOT OF TIME.

When Cathy sings the line, HE'LL BE MINE, she hugs herself. When mentioning, THE SUN, she opens arms wide and upward as if welcoming the sunshine.

Act 1
Scene 3

Setting: A park bench. *John and a friend are neighbors in the same apartment building and they are seated on a park bench having coffee.*

JOHN

I've fallen in love with a Catholic.

A FRIEND

A Catholic?

JOHN

But I'm an agnostic.

A FRIEND

They say opposites attract.

JOHN

Her name is Cathy.

A FRIEND

That sounds so pure.

JOHN

(Song: "WHEN WE MET")

(This song should be slow and melodic.) Some words like MET and FORGET could be held for an extended time.)

WHEN WE MET,
THE JOY OF HER TENDERNESS,
REFLECTED A HOLINESS,
A MOMENT I CAN'T FORGET.

(SHE) SHARED WITH ME,
HER FAITH IN THE DEITY.
TO ME SUCH A FANTASY,
BUT SOMEHOW SHE TOUCHED MY HEART.

CAN THIS LOVE GO ON?
I WONDER.
IS THERE HOPE FOR US?
I WONDER.
WHAT WILL BE THE WAY?
I WONDER.
TO WIN HER HEART! (The music should built up to this line.)

DEEP WITHIN,
SHE'S FILLED WITH A LOVE DIVINE.
AN ANGEL OF HOLINESS,
BUT HOW CAN I MAKE HER MINE?

CAN THIS LOVE GO ON?
I WONDER.
IS THERE HOPE FOR US?
I WONDER.
WHAT WILL BE THE WAY?
I WONDER.
TO WIN HER HEART!

IF I LOSE HER NOW,
THIS LOVE I'VE BEEN SEARCHING FOR.
THERE'S A CHANCE I WILL SEEK NO MORE,
FOR I'VE FOUND ALL I'M LOOKING FOR.

A FRIEND

I'm happy for you, John. But can you two be happy together? She is so committed to her faith. And you have none.

Act 1
Scene 4

Setting: A Bookstore that evening. (I realize that most people today buy books online. But because Peter does not know what exactly he is looking for, he needs someone who sells books to guide him. Also it would be difficult to have him talking to a computer screen with a chat person online and the chat person singing back to him.)

Peter is walking down the street thinking to himself. He stops in front of the store and before entering he addresses the audience as an aside.

PETER

I told a lie. Lucia calls herself a Catholic TRAD. Which I think means "Totally Religious And Delightful." I love her so, and I don't want to let her down. So when she asked me about my faith, I told her I too am a Catholic TRAD. But in my case TRAD means "Totally Ridiculous and Deceitful." I lied to her that I am a Catholic and now I need to learn something about what Catholics believe or she will discover my deceit and I will lose her.

Peter enters the bookstore and asks the shopkeeper for a book.

PETER

I am looking for a book.

SHOPKEEPER

Well, we have many.

PETER

On Catholicism.

SHOPKEEPER

Well, we have a few.

PETER

Are you a Catholic?

SHOPKEEPER

Yes, but I am not practicing.

PETER

You mean you got it right so you don't need to practice?

SHOPKEEPER

No, I mean I was baptized, but no longer go to church.

PETER

You mean you can be Catholic for a while and then stop?

SHOPKEEPER

No. Once a Catholic, always a Catholic. Not going to church is known as not practicing your faith. It is not considered the ideal in the eyes of Catholics. And it can have eternal consequences.

PETER

Can you educate me on Catholicism?

SHOPKEEPER

Well I'm not Pope Francis, but I've got some books I can sell you.

(Song: "YOU NEED SOME BOOKS NOW")

(The music for this song can be a reprise of Cathy's song: HE'S WORTH CONVERTING.)

YOU NEED SOME BOOKS NOW.
YOU NEED SOME BOOKS NOW.
SO YOU CAN KNOW WHAT TO SAY AND NOT TO SAY.
YOU NEED SOME BOOKS NOW, SOME CATHOLIC BOOKS NOW,
AND I'VE GOT JUST WHAT YOU WILL NEED.

A CATECHISM,

A CATECHISM,
IT'S A GUIDE TO THE LIFE THAT CATHOLICS LIVE.
A CATECHISM, A CATECHISM,
IT WILL GET YOU ON THE RIGHT TRACK.

AND HERE'S A PRAYER BOOK.
A HOLY PRAYER BOOK.
AT DAWN, NOON AND NIGHT, YOU CAN SAY YOUR PRAYERS.
WITHOUT THIS PRAYER BOOK, THIS HOLY PRAYER BOOK,
YOU'LL GET LOST ALONG THE WAY.

BUT MOST IMPORTANT,
BUT MOST IMPORTANT,
HERE'S A BOOK THAT IS CALLED THE WORD OF GOD.
IT IS THE BIBLE, THE HOLY BIBLE
IT'S THE BOOK YOU'VE GOT TO READ.

PETER

Do you have the book, Catholicism for Dummies?

SHOPKEEPER

Picks up and holds a copy for the audience to see of Catholicism for Dummies as he sings.

WHY DIDN'T YOU SAY SO?
WHY DIDN'T YOU SAY SO?
IF IT'S DUMMIES YOU WANT, DUMMIES WE'VE GOT.
WHY DIDN'T YOU SAY SO? WHY DIDN'T YOU SAY SO?
WELL I'VE GOT THAT BOOK RIGHT HERE.

SHOPKEEPER hands Peter the book, Catholicism for Dummies.

PETER

I don't want to become a Catholic, I just need help pretending to be one.

PETER pays for the book and leaves.

Act 2
Scene 1

Setting: Lucia and Cathy's apartment

Table is set for dinner. All are seated. There are additional friends at table. Although John is known to not be religious he is called upon and encouraged to lead the group of Lucia and Cathy's friends in prayer. Peter is absent.

CATHY

John, why don't you try and lead us in prayer. You can't make a mistake saying a prayer. God understands.

The group bows their heads in prayer and remains so throughout the song. Only the audience hears the following spoken and sung lines. Light dims on table. John stands and the light is only on him.

JOHN

Looking upward as if towards heaven and then in the direction of Lucia and then directly above the heads of audience indicating a heavenly direction.

Yes, I (*he emphasizes I*) could make a mistake saying a prayer. Let me see if I remember how they begin.

He awkwardly tries to make a Sign of the Cross. He touches his forehead but then quickly moves his hand back and forth a few times not sure which shoulder to touch first and then gives up.

He speaks in a desperate voice:

God, if you exist and if you are able, teach me to pray. I don't know what words to say. Cathy, loves you, but I don't know who you are. And if you are the one touching my heart now, I guess I have spent my life running from you. Oh, God teach me to pray.

JOHN

(Song: "MY TIMID HEART")

ONE STEP FORWARD, THEN TWO STEPS BACK,
THAT'S BEEN MY LIFE'S STORY.
NOT FACING TRUTH AND FLEEING GOD,
NEVER REACHING GLORY.

MY TIMID HEART WON'T DO ITS PART,
I GIVE IN TOO EASY.
I RUN AWAY WHEN I SHOULD STAY,
NOW LOVE CALLS ME TO PRAY.

(This line could be: LOVE NOW CALLS ME TO PRAY.)

*I CAN'T DREAM MY WAY INTO A NEW WAY OF ACTING.
I MUST ACT MY WAY INTO A NEW WAY OF LIVING.
AN IF I LIVE THIS WAY, STARTING EACH NEW DAY,
THEN I'M ON MY WAY TO MY DREAM.*

THE MOUNTAIN THERE THAT I MUST CLIMB,
T'REACH MY DESTINATION,
A STRUGGLE SURE, I CAN ENDURE,
AND BE' A NEW CREATION,

*I CAN'T DREAM MY WAY INTO A NEW WAY OF ACTING.
I MUST ACT MY WAY INTO A NEW WAY OF LIVING.
AND IF I LIVE THIS WAY, STARTING EACH NEW DAY,
THEN I'M ON MY WAY TO MY DREAM.*

I GUESS I NEED TO TURN TO GOD,
TO TRY'N FIND AN ANSWER.
IF COURAGE MEANS FIRST FACING FEARS,
HUMBLE PRAYER HE'LL ANSWER.

ALL AT TABLE

All at table raise their heads and say,

AMEN.

CATHY

Alexa, please open a bottle of red wine for us.

ALEXA (voice)

Sorry, Cathy, you know I am mobility challenged.
(Or: Sorry Cathy, I have many abilities, but not mobility.)

Act 2
Scene 2

After the meal, Peter arrives. Up to this point neither John nor Peter know that they are dating sisters. And all four have never been together in the same place. So when Peter arrives, John and Cathy have begun clearing the table and washing dishes in the kitchen off stage. Lucia answers the door and calls to John and Cathy who are off stage, and to the remaining friends at table that she is going out for a walk. Peter and Lucia go out for a walk in the evening moonlight.

LUCIA

What a beautiful moonlit evening.

PETER

(Song: MOONLIGHT, SHINE ON MY LOVE)

FLOATING OVER THE HILLTOPS,

(this line could be: FLOATING OVER THE BAY BRIDGE to make it more local to San Francisco)

WHITE CLOUDS SILVER IN MOONLIGHT.
MOONLIGHT, SHINE BRIGHT ON MY LOVE,
GUIDE MY SWEETHEART IN YOUR LIGHT.

*SHINE, SHINE, MOONLIGHT.
SHINE YOUR LIGHT ON MY LOVE.
SHINE, SHINE, MOONLIGHT.
SHINE YOUR LIGHT ON MY LOVE.*

LUCIA

YOUNG MEN SEARCHING FOR SWEETHEARTS,
COURTING GIRLS IN THE MOONLIGHT,
YOUNG GIRLS SEARCHING FOR SWEETHEARTS,
COURTING BOYS IN THE MOONLIGHT.

*SHINE, SHINE, MOONLIGHT.
SHINE YOUR LIGHT ON MY LOVE.
SHINE, SHINE, MOONLIGHT.*

SHINE YOUR LIGHT ON MY LOVE.

PETER

IN THIS WIDE-WORLD OF SWEETHEARTS,
BOYS WILL FIND ONE IN MOONLIGHT

LUCIA

IN THIS WIDE-WORLD OF SWEETHEARTS,
GIRLS WILL FIND ONE MOONLIGHT.

PETER

SHINE, SHINE, MOONLIGHT.
SHINE YOUR LIGHT ON MY LOVE.
SHINE, SHINE, MOONLIGHT.
SHINE YOUR LIGHT ON MY LOVE.

LUCIA

IF YOU PROMISE IN MOONLIGHT,
HE WILL MAKE YOU HIS SWEETHEART.

PETER

IF YOU KISS HER IN MOONLIGHT
SHE WILL MAKE YOU HER SWEETHEART

PETER and LUCIA

SHINE, SHINE, MOONLIGHT.
SHINE YOUR LIGHT ON MY LOVE.
SHINE, SHINE, MOONLIGHT.
SHINE YOUR LIGHT ON MY LOVE.

SHINE, SHINE, MOONLIGHT.
SHINE YOUR LIGHT ON MY LOVE.
SHINE, SHINE, MOONLIGHT.
SHINE YOUR LIGHT ON MY LOVE.

Act 2
Scene 3

Setting: A church

At a church the next day towards evening. A stained-glass image of a Christ is projected on wall of the stage. Church lighting is dim. Sun is setting but shines its last light through the stained-glass.

JOHN

While gesturing towards the image of Christ.

I feel I want to touch Him. But my faith is too weak.

(Song: "THE TASSEL OF HIS ROBE")

JOHN

THE TASSEL OF HIS ROBE,
I LONG TO TOUCH.
HE BECKONS UNTO ME,
TO COME TO HIM.
I WANT TO GIVE MY LOVE TO HIM.
HE WANTS TO GIVE HIS LIFE TO ME.
IF I COULD ONLY TOUCH,
THE TASSEL OF HIS ROBE.

JOHN

Spoken with soft music

I'm too wicked to be near you.
I'm sinner can't you see.
I've got a past I'm not proud of,
A sad life centered on me.

CATHY

Spoken with soft music

Don't be afraid, he knows you well,
He came to set you free.

His love will satisfy your heart.
And he will hear your plea.

JOHN and CATHY

Sung duet (lyrics should be capitalized as above but they don't fit together on one page.)

JOHN

There's a healing that I'm needing.
A wound that needs a cure.
There's a cross I've been avoiding.
At last a love so pure.

The tassel of his robe,
I long to touch.
He beckons unto me,
To come to him.
I want to give my love to him.
He wants to give his life to me.
If I could only touch,
The tassel of his robe.

CATHY

There's a healing that you're needing.
A wound that needs a cure.
There's a cross that needs embracing.
At last a love so pure.

The tassel of his robe,
You long to touch.
He beckons unto you,
To come to him.
You want to give your love to him.
He wants to give his life to you.
If you would only touch,
The tassel of his robe.

Song ends with an embrace.

CATHY

John, I think it's time we set the date.

JOHN

For our wedding?

CATHY

No, for your baptism.

Act 3
Scene 1

Peter and Lucia go for a walk in a park. They stop at a park bench and sit.

PETER

Lucia, there was so much incense used at Adoration last evening, I thought the fire alarm would go off in church. You Catholics, I mean, we Catholics, believe in moderation in everything except incense.

LUCIA

For some things, more is better. Like the truth.

Lucia's phone rings and she takes a call. Peter sings to the audience.

PETER

(Song: "CATHOLICS HAVE THEIR CUSTOMS")

THIS IS ALL A BIT PUZZLING.
THE MANY THINGS THEY DO.
THE CATHOLICS HAVE THEIR CUSTOMS.
I THINK I'LL NAME A FEW.

FROM PRAYING TO ST. CHRISTOPHER.
BEFORE THEY DRIVE THEIR CAR.
NOT SAYING GESUNDHEIT, "ACHOO"
YOU MUST SAY GOD BLESS YOU.

(The word "achoo" might need to
be spoken or imitating a sneeze
sound with a pause in the music.)

AND THERE'S HOLY WATER WATING,
EACH TIME YOU GO TO CHURCH.
IS IT TO WASH AWAY MY SINS?
I'LL HAVE TO DO RESEARCH.

OH NO, IT'S A SACRAMENTAL,
NOT A SACRAMENT.
CONFESSION IS THE SACRAMENT
THEY SAY I MUST REPENT.

I DON'T KNOW HOW AN APPLE COULD,
HAVE AN EFFECT ON ME.
BUT EVE AND ADAM ATE THEIR FILL,
UNDER THE APPLE TREE.

THEY SPEAK OF JESUS AS THEIR FRIEND,
THEY SAY HE DIED FOR ME.
HE'LL COME AGAIN ON THE LAST DAY
ON THAT THEY ALL AGREE.

THEY KNEEL AND SIT AND STAND AND KNEEL
IT'S HARD TO KNOW MY PART,
BUT I DETECT THERE'S SOMETHING HERE
I FEEL IT IN MY HEART

PETER

Who was on the phone?

LUCIA

It was my sister, Cathy. She and her boyfriend, John, are coming to meet us here and we will grab some coffee and chat.

John and Cathy enter the scene.

John sees Peter and recognizes him from work.

Act 3
Scene 2

JOHN

We're dating sisters! I guess that makes us future brothers-in-law.

Lucia and Cathy glance at each other.

PETER

I have to confess something.

LUCIA

Confessions are offered each Saturday at 4:00 PM in church.

PETER

I mean, Lucia, I have something to confess to you. Can you forgive me?

(Song: "I'VE A CONFESSION TO MAKE.")

I'VE A CONFESSION TO MAKE.
AND I KNOW YOUR HEART WILL BREAK.
BUT I HAVE BEEN LIVING A LIE,
NOW I FEAR YOU'LL SAY GOODBYE.

ON THE NIGHT THAT WE FIRST MET,
A NIGHT I CANNOT FORGET.
YOU ASKED IF I AS YOU BELIEVE,
YOU, MY LOVE, I DID DECEIVE.

I CAN'T GO ON PRETENDING,
AND YOU, MY LOVE, OFFENDING.
CATHOLIC I HAVE NEVER BEEN,
TOLD A LIE, YOUR HEART TO WIN.

SHALL I GO ON EXPLAINING?
IN HOPE OUR LOVE MAINTAINING.
FORGIVENESS I ASK OF YOU.
AND OUR LOVE BEGIN ANEW.

PETER

Can you still love me?

CATHY

I'll have to pray about it. Perhaps, I'll have to pray a novena. You can look that up in your book, Catholicism for Dummies.

PETER

You knew all along?

CATHY

I had my doubts.

PETER

Doubts are acceptable in Catholicism.

CATHY

But not in relationships.

PETER

My mother is coming into town tomorrow to meet you. Will you still see her?

CATHY

Yes, Peter, of course. You lied to me, your mother didn't.

Act 3
Scene3

Setting: Peter's apartment. Day

Peter's mother is coming to meet Lucia. Peter's mother is from an unnamed foreign country. She speaks with an accent. She enters after this scene in which John and Peter are talking and preparing for Peter's mother to arrive. Lucia and Cathy arrive just before Peter's mother.

All are seated on sofa or chairs.

JOHN

Tell us about your mom.

PETER

Well she is from the old country but she learned English here. She struggled with it when I was growing up; she does much better now. When I was a child she used to mix up English expressions. For example, she mixed up the sayings, "You are pulling my leg" and "You are buttering me up" and it came out, "You are buttering up my leg."

(Song: MY MOTHER'S ENGLISH MAKES ME LAUGH)

PETER

MY MOTHER'S ENGLISH MADE ME LAUGH
SHE MIXED IT ALL UP.
IT'S NOT HER FAULT; SHE'S NOT FROM HERE,
BUT WHAT SHE SAYS IS LOVE.

SHE COOKED AND CLEANED AND CLEANED SOME MORE,
I ALWAYS MADE A MESS.
I DON'T KNOW IF MY FRIENDS LIKED ME,
OR LIKED HER COOKING BEST.

SHE SCOLDED IN A FUNNY WAY,
SHE MIXED UP NOUNS AND VERBS.
AND WHEN SHE WENT TO BUY ME CLOTHES,
MY FRIENDS CALLED ME A NERD.

AND WHEN SHE TOLD ME TO BE GOOD,
SHE'D SAY, "DON'T DO STUPID." (If these four lines don't work,
AND WHEN I KISSED A PRETTY GIRL they could be dropped.)
SHE'D YELL, "LITTLE CUPID."

HER LOVE FOR ME IS MOTHERLY,
HER HEART JUST SAYS IT ALL.
THE WORDS SHE SAYS MAY MAKE ME LAUGH,
BUT LIFT ME WHEN I FALL.

JOHN

She sounds delightful. I look forward to meeting her.

Act 3
Scene 3

*Peter's mother enters. He hugs her and he introduces her to all.
Previously Peter has shared with his mother his love for Lucia. And he explained that Lucia will only marry a Catholic. Mother reveals that Peter was baptized a Catholic but never raised in the faith after his father died young. Since Peter is a Catholic after all, there is nothing stopping Lucia from marrying him.*

PETER'S MOTHER

It's all my fault, I won't deny it. I lost my way in raising you. Although I had you baptized a Catholic when you were an infant, I never raised you in the faith. Can you forgive me?

PETER

Peter glances at Lucia.

Forgiveness is the topic of today. I hope forgiveness makes our love stronger.

PETER'S MOTHER

(Song: "OH, WHY WAS I SO CARELESS?")

OH, WHY WAS I SO CARELESS?
IN RAISING YOU, MY SON.
THE GIFT I SHOULD HAVE GIVEN,
TRUE FAITH INSTEAD OF NONE.

CAN YOU FORGIVE ME, DARLING?
HOW MUCH I LET YOU DOWN,
BUT CHRIST HIS LOVE IS GIVING,
A LOVE, NEW LIFE, A CROWN.

IT WAS A POOR DECISION,
THAT I DEEPLY REGRET.
WHAT JOY THAT YOU HAVE FOUND HER,
TRUE LOVE THAT YOU HAVE MET.

THIS WOMAN THAT YOU LOVE, DEAR,
LUCIA IS HER NAME.
SHE'LL BE THE ONE TO GUIDE YOU,
AND TAKE AWAY MY SHAME.

AND THEN TOGETHER WE WILL
JOIN HEARTS AND HANDS IN PRAYER.
FOR THERE IS STILL TOMORROW,
I LEAVE YOU IN HER CARE.

MAY CHRIST HIS LOVE ENRICH YOU,
MAY YOU HIS LOVE EMBRACE.
AND ALL YOUR DAYS TOGETHER,
HE FILL YOU WITH HIS GRACE.

PETER

Mother, I love you. You tried your best.
They embrace.

Peter turns toward Lucia.

And Lucia, my love, it turns out, I am a Catholic. So there is nothing stopping us from getting married.

LUCIA

First, you have to propose. Second, you have to show me the ring. Third, my sister has to agree.

PETER

Lucia, will you marry me?

LUCIA

I'll pray about it. And then you need to sign up for the RCIA.

Lucia embraces Peter and then she suggests they all go to church together tomorrow morning, a Sunday.

Dialogue to be written to lead into song.

LUCIA (later joined by entire group)

Finale.

(Song: THE LOVE OF CHRIST I KNOW YOU'LL KNOW)

I KNOW YOU KNOW NOE VALLEY,
I KNOW YOU KNOW I LOVE THAT PLACE.
I KNOW A CHURCH IN NOE VALLEY,

YOU'LL KNOW NO LIMITS TO GOD'S GRACE.

YOU'LL KNOW THE JOY OF FELLOWSHIP.
THE BODY 'N BLOOD OF CHRIST YOU'LL SHARE.
THE FULLNESS OF GOD'S LOVE YOU'LL KNOW,
WHEN VOICE AND HEARTS LIFT UP IN PRAYER.

ON DIAMOND STREET IS WHERE WE'LL MEET,
THIS SUNDAY THERE WE'LL MEET AND GREET
GOD'S PEOPLE AS THEY COME TO PRAY,
AND ASK THE LORD TO LEAD THE WAY.

ST PHILIP'S IS THE CHURCH I KNOW,
A PLACE WHERE LOVE FOR GOD WILL GROW.
AS CLOSE TO HEAVEN HERE BELOW.
THE LOVE OF CHRIST I KNOW YOU'LL KNOW.

FINALE

CAST

LORD,
OUR HEARTS ARE RESTLESS, UNTIL THEY REST IN YOU.
OUR MINDS ARE CLOUDED UNTIL WE SEE YOUR LIGHT.
YOUR LOVE HAS MADE US.
YOUR LOVE HAS SAVED US.
MAY YOUR LOVE BE OUR DELIGHT.

LUCIA (Sung to Peter)

I FORGIVE YOU, PETER, FOR TELLING A LIE.
LET'S BEGIN A FRIENDSHIP WITH CHRIST AS OUR GUIDE.
YES, YOU ARE CATHOLIC,
A ROMAN CATHOLIC.
MAY OUR HEARTS IN CHRIST ABIDE.

PETER

IN BAPTISM A GRACE WAS GIVEN TO ME.
THE ONE I WAS MISSING, I'M COMING TO KNOW
HIS LOVE HAS SAVED ME
YOUR LOVE ASSURES ME
OUR LIFE IN CHRIST WILL NOW GROW.

CATHY

WE'VE JUST BEGUN WALKING THIS JOURNEY WE'RE ON,
IT'S A JOURNEY WITH THE GOAL OF SALVATION.
YOUR SEARCHING LED YOU,
TO GOD WHO SAVES YOU.
HE IS OUR DESTINATION.

JOHN

THE JOY AND HOLINESS THAT FLOWS FROM YOUR HEART,
HAVE MOVED ME TO SEARCH FOR THE ONE WHOM YOU LOVE.
HE ALSO CALLS ME.
HIS LOVE HAS TOUCHED ME.
AND FINDING HIM IS TRUE LOVE.

CAST

LORD,
OUR HEARTS ARE RESTLESS, UNTIL THEY REST IN YOU.
OUR MINDS ARE CLOUDED UNTIL WE SEE YOUR LIGHT.
YOUR LOVE HAS MADE US
YOUR LOVE HAS SAVED US
MAY YOUR LOVE BE OUR DELIGHT.

End