

# **‘A Catholic replies to Protestant questions’**

## **Catholic Intellectual Self-Defense**



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## **WHY STUDY CATHOLIC APOLOGETICS?**

*Here is what the Holy Bible says...*

1. Proverbs 18:17 (RSV) "He who states his case first seems right, until the other comes and examines him." *Don't allow the person from another religion to control the conversation. It should be a dialogue, not a monologue.*
2. Proverbs 29:18 (KJV) "Where there is no vision, people perish." *When the gospel is NOT clearly proclaimed, the people live lives of despair, despondency & hopelessness. The meaning and purpose of life can only be discovered in a relationship with God & believing in His promises. God is a Father who keeps his promises (that's clearly demonstrated throughout salvation history).*
3. Ezekiel 3:18-19 (RSV) "If I say to the wicked, 'You shall surely die,' and you give him no warning, nor speak to warn the wicked from his wicked way, in order to save his life, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood I will require at your hand . . . But if you warn the wicked, and he does not turn from his wickedness, or from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity, but you will have saved your life." *Sharing your Christ centered faith with a lost soul is a matter of life and death. Don't make the mistake of murderous lying Cain, when the Lord asked him "where is Abel your brother?" He responded to the Lord, "I do not know; am I my brother's keeper?" Wrong answer Cain, wrong answer. YES! You are your brother's keeper. That's what Ezekiel the prophet is teaching us.*
4. Hosea 4:6 (RSV) "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge." *What happened to the Israelites is happening to Catholics in the west. Lack of Catechesis has led to a society of low information Catholics that vote for politicians who promote a 'culture of death.'*
5. Matthew 22:29 (RSV) 'But Jesus answered them, "You are wrong, because you know neither the scriptures nor the power of God.'" *This verse reminds me of those who deny the 'real presence' of Jesus in the Eucharist. These naysayers declare: "How can God change bread and wine into the body, blood, soul & divinity of Jesus Christ.*
6. John 8:32 (RSV) "And you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." *This is what Our Lord Jesus Christ wants for everyone, the fullness of truth which comes from Him, through His Bride, the One Holy Catholic & Apostolic Church.*
7. Acts 17:1-3 (RSV) "...there was a synagogue of the Jews. And Paul went in, as was his custom, and for three weeks he argued with them from the scriptures, explaining and proving that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead, and saying, "This Jesus, whom I proclaim to you, is the Christ." *St. Paul engaged in apologetics as part of his preaching ministry. He is arguing against the Jews from typology and O.T. messianic prophecies to prove Jesus' credentials as the 'Messiah.'*
8. Acts 18:27-28 (RSV) "When he arrived, he greatly helped those who through grace had believed, for he powerfully confuted the Jews in public, showing by the scriptures that the Christ was Jesus." *A disciple of Jesus who was a Jew by the name of Apollos engaged in apologetics against the Jews as part of his preaching ministry.*
9. 1 Corinthians 13:6 (NAB) "it (Love) does not rejoice over wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth." *Truth and love go together. Their opposite sides of the same coin.*
10. Ephesians 4:12-15 (RSV) "for the equipment of the saints, for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the

knowledge of the son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the cunning of men, by their craftiness in deceitful wiles. Rather, speaking the truth in love...” *People don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care. Our apologetic conversations should shed more light than heat, but always grounded in truth.*

11. Colossians 4:6 (RSV) “Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer everyone.” *Be gracious in your dialogue, you want to attract people to the truth rather than repel them. St Francis de Sales said: “A spoonful of honey attracts more flies than a barrelful of vinegar.”<sup>i</sup>*
12. 1 Timothy 4:16 (RSV) “Take heed to yourself and to your teaching: hold to that, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers.” *It is important to be properly catechized, because if you lead someone astray through incorrect doctrine, your salvation is now in jeopardy*
13. 1 Timothy 6:3-5 (RSV) “If anyone teaches otherwise and does not agree with the sound words of Jesus Christ and the teaching which accords with godliness, he is puffed up with conceit, he knows nothing; he has a morbid craving for controversy and for disputes about words, which produce envy, dissension, slander, base suspicions and wrangling among men who are depraved in mind and bereft of the truth, imagining that godliness is a means of gain.” *There are some people who simply don’t want to be confused with the facts, move on, you can’t tug on green fruit. Speak the truth, say a prayer for them, move on and leave the rest to the Lord.*
14. 2 Timothy 2:15 (Douay Rheims) “Carefully study to present thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.” *Make time to study your faith. How? Watch less T.V. that’s pretty simple. T.V. for the most part is the devils tabernacle. We are called to ‘rightly handle the word of truth’ which means the opposite can be true if we don’t study, we will ‘wrongly handle the word of truth.’*
15. 2 Timothy 4:2-5 (RSV) “Preach the word, be urgent in season and out of season, convince, rebuke, and exhort, be unfailing in patience and in teaching. For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own liking to the truth and wander into myths. As for you, always be steady, endure suffering, do the work of an *evangelist*, fulfill your ministry.” *St Mother Teresa was fond of saying, ‘were called to be faithful not successful’<sup>ii</sup>*
16. Titus 1:13 (RSV) “...rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the Faith.” *Apologetics may require that you go on the offense. ‘Charity’ must be our motive when we rebuke someone.*
17. Hebrews 4:14 (RSV) “...let us hold fast to our confession.” *Our confession is JESUS & the Catholic faith. Hold on to it like someone who is shipwrecked hangs on to his lifejacket.*
18. James 5:19 (RSV) “My brethren, if any one among you wanders from the truth and someone brings him back, let him know that whoever brings back a sinner from the error of his way will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.” *If you want one verse that motivates you to share your faith, here it is! Evangelizing someone can lead to your eternal salvation as well as the person you evangelized.*
19. 1 Peter 3:15 (RSV) “...but in your hearts reverence Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to make a ‘defense’ (Greek ‘apologia’) to anyone who calls you to account for the hope that is

in you, yet do it with gentleness and reverence. . .” *This verse describes the rhetoric of a lawyer in court. We are called to give the same well-reasoned logical arguments when we explain our faith to others.*

20. Jude 3 (RSV) “Beloved, being very eager to write to you of our common salvation, I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.” *The apostle wrote this letter around 70AD. Notice, that the deposit of the Christian Faith was given in the 1<sup>st</sup> century, not the 16<sup>th</sup> century at the Protestant Reformation. It was the Catholic Church in seminal form that received this faith from the holy apostles.*

### ***THE SAINTS & HOLY MEN on APOLOGETICS***

St John XXIII: “What separates us as believers in Christ is much less than what unites us.”

St Augustine: “In the essentials; unity, in the non-essentials, liberty, but in all things, charity.”

St Augustine: “All things that are read in the Holy Scriptures, we must hear with great attention to our instruction and our salvation; but those things especially must be committed to memory that serve most to confute heretics; whose deceits cease not to circumvent or ensnare all the weaker sort and the more negligent persons.”<sup>iii</sup> He also said, “Love men, slay errors.”<sup>iv</sup>

Pope Leo XIII: “The first law of history is not to dare to utter falsehood; the second, not to fear to speak the truth.”

Blessed Christopher Buxton: “If I had a hundred lives, I would willingly lay down all in defense of my faith.”<sup>v</sup>

St. Jerome: “A dog may bark in his master’s defense, am I to stand by when God’s holy name is blasphemed? I would sooner die than remain silent.”<sup>vi</sup>

Venerable Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen: “A Catholic who does not strive to spread his Faith is a parasite on the life of the Church.”<sup>vii</sup> Venerable Sheen also said, “My conclusion is yes, there is a great struggle for the soul of the Church, and all methods of battle are necessary in order to win it.”<sup>viii</sup>

Venerable Archbishop Sheen (June 1972) addressed the Knights of Columbus and said: “Who is going to save our Church? Not our Bishops, not our priests and religious. It is up to the people. You have the minds, the eyes, the ears to save the Church. Your mission is to see that your priests act like priests, your bishops like bishops and your religious act like religious.”

Blessed John Henry Cardinal Newman: “Trust the Church of God implicitly even when your natural judgment would take a different course from hers and would induce you to question her

prudence or correctness. Recollect what a hard task She has; how She is sure to be criticized and spoken against, whatever She does; recollect how much She needs your loyal and tender devotion; recollect, too, how long is the experience gained in 1,900 years; and what a right She has to claim your assent to principles which have had so extended and triumphant a trial. Thank her that she has kept the Faith safe for so many generations and do your part in helping her to transmit it to generations after you.”<sup>ix</sup>

Pope Benedict XVI told his weekly public audience on August 29, 2012 the feast of the martyrdom of St. John the Baptist: "The truth is the truth and there is no compromise."

Gilbert K. Chesterton – “There never was anything so perilous or so exciting as orthodoxy. It was sanity: and to be sane is more dramatic than to be mad.”<sup>x</sup>

Walker Percy (1916-1990 Physician Novelist Convert) was asked why he became Catholic. He answered, “What else is there.”

### ***GOAL of APOLOGETICS***

2 Corinthians 5: 9 (RSV) “So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him.”

Galatians 6:9 (RSV) “And let us not grow weary in well doing, for in due season we shall reap, if we do not lose heart.”

1 Thessalonians 5:11 (RSV) “Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.”

Pat Madrid (world renown Catholic Apologist) often wrote as his mission statement in Envoy Magazine: “*the goal of apologetics is to teach Catholics how to explain the faith intelligently, defend it charitably, and share it effectively.*”

Apologetics equips the Church to do Christ’s will (cf. Hebrews 13:21 NAB), and to provide well-reasoned answers in the daily battle for souls. Catholic Apologetics helps us to shine the fullness of truth to our protestant brothers, the cults, the occult, false teachers, hucksters, atheist and pagans. In a perfect world we would all be Catholic and be in perfect agreement, however, that is not the case. Apologetics prefers clarity over agreement; it strives for unity based on truth. The Holy Bible correctly interpreted, and the Tradition of the Church are a one - two punch for the apologist (much like a boxer left-right combination). Apologetics anchors us to the rock-solid truths of the last 2000 years of Christianity. Catholic Apologetics, just like boxing, believes that the best defense is a good offense; we should proclaim the Gospel in the power of the Holy Spirit

with love and conviction. The apologist must be a changed man, one whose heart is inflamed with love for the Lord Jesus Christ and a faithful son or daughter of the Church.

### ***APOLOGETICS is the ART of speaking the TRUTH***

Blaise Pascal: “The Truth is not our possession, rather the truth possesses us...truth is so obscure in these times and falsehood so established, that unless we love the truth, we cannot know it.”

Pope St. Felix III: “Not to oppose error is to approve it; and not to defend truth is to suppress it; and indeed to neglect to confound evil men, when we can do it, is no less a sin than to encourage them.”

St Maximillian Mary Kolbe: “No one in the world can alter truth. All we can do is seek it and live it.”

The best antidote to misinformation is education, the best antidote to disinformation is exposure. Misinformation is the result of error and can be reversed with the right information. Disinformation is the intentional distortion of the truth and can only be checked by exposing its source. Apologetics is geared to make the complex understandable. Apologetics is not about winning arguments; it’s about winning souls. We need to argue to explain. Argument for the sake of argument is a sin. Argument for the sake of sharing the truth is a divine command. If you love Jesus, you must love doctrinal truth. Why? Because Jesus is the truth (cf. John 14:6) and His Word is the truth (John 8:31-32 NAB).

Truth seems to bother certain people and makes them feel uncomfortable. However, anybody who refuses to acknowledge the truth of the Gospel in this life will be forced to confront it at the point of death. So speak up and tell the truth as if your life depends on it, because it does. As Patrick Henry, one of our nation’s Founding Fathers, and an orator during our fight for Independence (1736-1779) said, “The battle, sir, is not to the strong alone; it is to the vigilant, the active, the brave.”

In like manner, to all my brother Catholics - we must be in this fight to advance *the truth of the Catholic Faith* for the long haul. In God’s name, we will prevail!

## **THE HOLY TRINITY**

Question 1) The word 'Trinity' is not found in the Bible?

Answer 1) This is true, but the idea is clearly demonstrated and present in Sacred Scripture. Even though the word is not explicitly used the doctrine is implicitly taught. The Jehovah's Witnesses et al. fall into the 'word thing fallacy' – which means that *if the word is not used the thing is not there*.

As the Catholic Church matured and grew, so did the theological vocabulary she used to speak about her doctrines. Terms such as "Trinity" were developed as a way to precisely express what the Church meant by "God." And though the Church's understanding of her teaching deepened and developed, she did not "invent" new doctrines. Rather, she inferred truths with certitude from other truths (namely 'Sacred Tradition'). Some of these truths, such as that there is only one God, are explicitly taught in the Bible as well as Sacred Tradition. There is an organic development of doctrine in the Catholic Church (though it never changes or ceases to mean what it once did). The First Council of Nicaea (A.D. 325) authoritatively defined as dogma the doctrine of the Trinity because it was being challenged at the time by a heretic, not because it was being invented out of whole cloth.

These days, Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, Oneness Pentecostals, Jews, Muslims and other religious groups try to convince people that the Catholic Church "invented" the doctrine of the Trinity, but that is simply false. The truth about the Trinity could not be "invented" by the Catholic Church any more than the truth about the law of gravity could have been invented by the Church — it has always been true; revealed by God Himself.

Q2) When was the word 'Trinity' first used in Christian history?

A2) The term "Trinity" was used by St. Theophilus of Antioch in the year 180 A.D. He wrote in his *Epistle to Autolycus*, a pagan critic of the Catholic Church, that God, His Word, and His Wisdom are a "Trinity" (Greek: *triados*). Some years later, Tertullian (A.D. 160 – circa 250) coined the Latin term for Trinity (*trinitas*) in his work '*On Modesty*.' He wrote about the "Trinity of the One Divinity; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit" (chapter 22).

Q3) You cannot demonstrate the doctrine of the Trinity from the Bible?

A3) The Holy Trinity is in Scripture...

**There is but one GOD**

Deuteronomy 6:4 (RSV) - "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD;



Jeremiah 10:10-11 (RSV) “But the LORD is the true God; he is the living God and the everlasting King. At his wrath the earth quakes, and the nations cannot endure his indignation. Thus shall you say to them: ‘The gods who did not make the heavens and the earth shall perish from the earth and from under the heavens.’”

There are no other gods.

Isaiah 43:10 (RSV) “You are my witnesses,” says the LORD, “and my servant whom I have chosen, that you may know and believe me and understand that I am He. Before me no god was formed, nor shall there be any after me.”

Isaiah 44:6-8 (RSV) “Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: ‘I am the first and I am the last; besides me there is no god. Who is like me? Let him proclaim it, let him declare and set it forth before me. Who has announced from of old the things to come? Let them tell us what is yet to be. Fear not, nor be afraid; have I not told you from of old and declared it? And you are my witnesses! Is there a God besides me? There is no Rock; I know not any.’”

1 Corinthians 8:4-6 (RSV) “Hence, as to the eating of food offered to idols, we know that “an idol has no real existence,” and that “there is no God but one.” For although there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth -- as indeed there are many “gods” and many “lords” yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.”

**GOD** is the Creator

Psalms 90:2 (RSV) “Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting thou art God.”

Isaiah 44:24 (RSV) “Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, who formed you from the womb: “I am the LORD, who made all things, who stretched out the heavens alone, who spread out the earth -- Who was with me?”

Hebrews 3:4 (RSV) “For every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things is God.”

Hebrews 11:3 (RSV) “By faith we understand that the world was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was made out of things which do not appear.”

The **Father** is **GOD**

1 Corinthians 8:4-6 (RSV) "Hence, as to the eating of food offered to idols, we know that 'an idol has no real existence,' and that 'there is no God but one.' For although there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth -- as indeed there are many "gods" and many "lords" yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist."

2 Peter 1:17 (RSV) "For when he received honor and glory from God the Father and the voice was borne to him by the Majestic Glory, 'This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased...'"

Ephesians 4:6 (RSV) "one God and Father of us all, who is above all and through all and in all."

### *The Father is Lord*

Genesis 2:8-9 (RSV) "And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground the LORD God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil."

James 3:8-9 (RSV) "but no human being can tame the tongue -- a restless evil, full of deadly poison. With it we bless the Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who are made in the likeness of God."

### *The Son is GOD*

John 1:1-3, 14 (RSV) "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. [2] He was in the beginning with God; [3] all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made...[14] And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father."

Colossians 1:15-16 (RSV) "He (Jesus) is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation; [16] for in him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or authorities -- all things were created through him and for him."

John 20:28 (RSV) Thomas answered him (Jesus), "My Lord and my God!"

Titus 2:13 (RSV) "awaiting our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ."

### The *Son* is *Lord*

Jude 4 (RSV) “For admission has been secretly gained by some who long ago were designated for this condemnation, ungodly persons who pervert the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.”

John 20:28 (RSV) Thomas answered him (Jesus), "My Lord and my God!"

### The *Holy Spirit* is *GOD*

Job 33:4 (RSV) “The spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life.”

Act 5:3-4 (RSV) “But Peter said, "Anani'as, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back part of the proceeds of the land? While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not at your disposal? How is it that you have contrived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God."

### The *Holy Spirit* is *Lord*

2 Corinthians 3:17 (RSV) “Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.”

### Three persons in one *GOD*

Matthew 28:19 (RSV) “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit...”

2 Corinthians 13:14 (RSV) “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.”

Genesis 1:26 (RSV) “Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth" (*This verse alludes to a plurality of persons within the Godhead*).

Genesis 11:7 (RSV) “Come, let us go down and there confuse their language, that they may not understand one another’s speech” (*This verse alludes to a plurality of persons within the Godhead*).

### God the Father has a Son

Proverbs 30:4 (RSV) “Who has ascended to heaven and come down? Who has gathered the wind in his fists? Who has wrapped up the waters in a garment? Who has established all the ends of the earth? What is his name, and what is his son's name? Surely you know!”

John 3:16 (Douay Rheims) "For God so loved the world, as to give his only begotten Son: that whosoever believeth in him may not perish, but may have life everlasting."

Psalms 2:7 (RSV) "...You are my son, today I have begotten you."

*"Begotten" is also the Greek word "monogenes" which means, unique, only, one of a kind."*

### Jesus calls himself "the Son of God"

John 5:25 (RSV) "Truly, truly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live."

John 10:36 (RSV) "do you say of him whom the Father consecrated and sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming,' because I said, 'I am the Son of God'?"

John 11:4 (RSV) 'But when Jesus heard it he said, "This illness is not unto death; it is for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified by means of it."

Matthew 26:63-66 (RSV) "But Jesus was silent. And the high priest said to him, 'I adjure you by the living God, tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God.' Jesus said to him, 'You have said so. But I tell you, hereafter you will see the Son of man seated at the right hand of Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven.' Then the high priest tore his robes, and said, 'He has uttered blasphemy. Why do we still need witnesses? You have now heard his blasphemy. What is your judgment?' They answered, 'He deserves death.'"

### The Trinity at Jesus' Baptism

#### **[Father, Son, Holy Spirit]**

Matthew 3:16-17 (RSV) "And when Jesus was baptized, he went up immediately from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and alighting on him; and lo, a voice from heaven, saying, 'This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.'"

Mark 1:9-11 (RSV) "In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan." And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens opened and the Spirit descending upon him like a dove; and a voice came from heaven, 'Thou art my beloved Son; with thee I am well pleased.'"

### The Trinity at Jesus' Resurrection

*The Father resurrected Jesus from the dead*

1 Thessalonians 1:9-10 (RSV) “For they themselves report concerning us what a welcome we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols, to serve a living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.”

Acts 17:30-31 (RSV) “The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all men everywhere to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all men by raising him from the dead.”

Hebrews 13:20 (RSV) “Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant.”

*Jesus resurrected himself from the dead*

John 2:19-21 (RSV) “Jesus answered them, ‘Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.’ [20] The Jews then said, ‘It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?’ [21] But he spoke of the temple of his body.”

*The Holy Spirit resurrected Jesus from the dead*

Romans 8:11 (RSV) “If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit which dwells in you.”

The Holy Trinity dwells in You

*God the Father lives in you*

Ephesians 4:6 (RSV) “one God and Father of us all, who is above all and through all and in all.”

*Jesus lives in you*

2 Corinthians 13:5 (RSV) “Examine yourselves, to see whether you are holding to your faith. Test yourselves. Do you not realize that Jesus Christ is in you? -- unless indeed you fail to meet the test!”

Colossians 1:27 (RSV) “To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.”

*The Holy Spirit lives in you*

1 Corinthians 6:19 (RSV) “Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God? You are not your own...”

“God is Love” (1 John 4:16 RSV) and love requires 3 things: a lover, the beloved, and loving. Complete love in 3 Persons. Love is God’s essence, His whole being.<sup>xi</sup>

Q4) If I can’t fully understand the Trinity than I can’t believe it. What difference does it make?

A4) How can man fully comprehend GOD's infinite make-up when he cannot fully comprehend his own finite make-up? For a human being to fully understand the mystery of the Holy Trinity, would be like an ant trying to understand the internet or a bug trying to understand trigonometry. A Catholic who will try to fully understand the **Trinity**, will lose his mind, but a Catholic who denies the **Trinity** will lose his soul *unless he or she is invincibly ignorant of the truth*.

Q5) Give me the most understandable explanation of the Holy Trinity for a layman?

A5): It’s a 4<sup>th</sup> century Catholic writing called the “Athanasian Creed.”

1. Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the catholic faith;
2. Which faith except everyone do keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly.
3. And the catholic faith is this: That we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity;
4. Neither confounding the persons nor dividing the substance.
5. For there is one person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Spirit.
6. But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit is all one, the glory equal, the majesty coeternal.
7. Such as the Father is, such is the Son, and such is the Holy Spirit.
8. The Father uncreated, the Son uncreated, and the Holy Spirit uncreated.

9. The Father incomprehensible, the Son incomprehensible, and the Holy Spirit incomprehensible.
10. The Father is eternal, the Son is eternal, and the Holy Spirit is eternal.
11. And yet they are not three eternal beings; there is but one eternal being.
12. As also there are not three uncreated nor three incomprehensible, but one uncreated and one incomprehensible.
13. So likewise the Father is almighty, the Son almighty, and the Holy Spirit almighty.
14. And yet they are not three almighties, but one almighty.
15. So the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God;
16. And yet they are not three Gods, but one God.
17. So likewise the Father is Lord, the Son Lord, and the Holy Spirit Lord;
18. And yet they are not three Lords but one Lord.
19. For like as we are compelled by the Christian verity to acknowledge every Person by himself to be God and Lord;
20. So are we forbidden by the catholic religion to say; there are three Gods or three Lords.
21. The Father is made of none, neither created nor begotten.
22. The Son is of the Father alone; not made nor created, but begotten.
23. The Holy Spirit is of the Father and of the Son; neither made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding.
24. So there is one Father, not three Fathers; one Son, not three Sons; one Holy Spirit, not three Holy Spirits.
25. And in this Trinity, none is before or after another; none is greater or less than another.
26. But the whole three persons are coeternal, and coequal.
27. So that in all things, as aforesaid, the Unity in Trinity and the Trinity in Unity is to be worshipped.
28. He therefore that will be saved must thus think of the Trinity.

29. Furthermore it is necessary to everlasting salvation that he also believe rightly the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ.
30. For the right faith is that we believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and man.
31. God of the substance of the Father, begotten before the worlds; and man of substance of His mother, born in the world.
32. Perfect God and perfect man, of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting.
33. Equal to the Father as touching His Godhead, and inferior to the Father as touching His manhood.
34. Who, although He is God and man, yet He is not two, but one Christ.
35. One, not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh, but by taking of that manhood into God.
36. One altogether, not by confusion of substance, but by unity of person.
37. For as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man, so God and man is one Christ;
38. Who suffered for our salvation, descended into hell, rose again the third day from the dead;
39. He ascended into heaven, He sits on the right hand of the Father, God, Almighty;
40. From thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.
41. At whose coming all men shall rise again with their bodies;
42. and shall give account of their own works.
43. And they that have done good shall go into life everlasting, and they that have done evil into everlasting fire.
44. This is the catholic faith, which except a man believe faithfully he cannot be saved.<sup>xii</sup>



## **FOUR MARKS OF THE CHURCH**

Q6) Objection: What does it mean that the Church is one, holy, catholic & apostolic? Who gave the Church these 4 marks?

A6) Catechism of the Catholic Church Section 811 - In the Creed we profess the Church to be one, holy, catholic, and apostolic. These four characteristics, inseparably linked with each other, indicate essential features of the Church and her mission. The Church does not possess them of herself; it is Christ who, through the Holy Spirit, makes His Church one, holy, catholic, and apostolic, and it is He who calls her to realize each of these qualities.

Q7) Where in the Bible does it indicate the Church Is One?

A7) The Bible indicates that the Church is spiritually and visible united as the body of Christ in:

John 10:16 (NAB) "I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. These also I must lead, and they will hear my voice, and there will be one flock, one shepherd."

*St. Joan of Arc: "About Jesus Christ and the Church, I simply know they're just one thing, and we shouldn't complicate this matter."*<sup>xiii</sup>

John 17:11 (NAB) "And now I will no longer be in the world, but they are in the world, while I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one just as we are."

John 17:21 (NAB) "so that they may all be one, as you, Father,, are in me and I in you, that they also may be in us, that the world may believe that you sent me."

1 Corinthians 10:17 (NAB) "Because the loaf of bread is one, we, though many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf."

Ephesians 4:4-5 (NAB) "one body and one Spirit, as you were also called to the one hope of your call, one Lord, one faith, one baptism."

Q8) Where does it indicate the Church is Holy?

A8) The Church is holy because it is the bride and body of Christ, therefore, as a result of her union with Our Lord she is holy.

Ephesians 5:25-27 (NAB) "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the church and handed himself over for her to sanctify her, cleansing her by the bath of water with the word, that he might present to himself the church in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish."

1 Timothy 1:15 (NAB) “This saying is trustworthy - and deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. Of these I am the foremost.”

Q9) Where in the Bible does it say the Church is Catholic?

A9) The third great historic mark of the one true Church is that this Church is ‘Catholic.’

Catholic means "universal" or “throughout all.” It refers to:

- \* The fullness of the faith she possesses.
- \* She was started at the time of the apostles – that is, the very beginning of the Christian era.
- \* The Holy Mass is celebrated in every country in the world every day.

Mark 16:15 (NAB) “He said to them, ‘Go into the whole world and proclaim the gospel to every creature.’”

Acts 9:31 (NAB) "The church throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria was at peace. It was being built up and walked in the fear of the Lord, and with the consolation of the holy Spirit it grew in numbers.”

In this verse above, the two words "throughout all" is the Greek word "*kath holes*" which is the cognate of the word "Catholic" in modern English.

Colossians 1:5-6 (NAB) “because of the hope reserved for you in heaven. Of this you have already heard through the word of truth, the gospel, that has come to you. Just as in the whole world it is bearing fruit and growing, so also among you, from the day you heard it and came to know the grace of God in truth.”

Q10) Where in the Bible does it say the Church is Apostolic?

A10) Jesus Christ founded the Church upon the apostles. They are the foundation of the Church.

Luke 22:29-30 (NAB) “and I confer a kingdom on you (apostles), just as my Father has conferred one on me, that you (apostles) may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom; and you will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.”

John 6:70 (RSV) Jesus answered them, “Did I not choose you twelve (apostles)?”

Ephesians 2:19-20 (NAB) “So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the holy ones and members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the capstone.”

Revelation 21:14 (NAB) “The wall of the city had twelve courses of stones as its foundation, on which were inscribed the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.”

## PETER, PAPACY & AUTHORITY

Q11) What did Jesus mean when he gave Peter the keys? How do I understand the conversation found in Matthew 16:19 (NAB) where Our Lord says: “I will give you (Peter) the keys to the kingdom of heaven. Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”

A11) Jesus is drawing this image of the keys (from Isaiah 22:21-22 NAB) when he gives Peter the keys of the Kingdom of heaven in Matthew 16:18-19. The keys are a symbol of authority given to the ‘chief official’ or ‘prime minister’ of the Kingdom of David. A dynastic succession was also an element of the office of ‘prime minister’ in the Old Testament. When the office was vacated, another person was selected to take his place. The Pope is Christ’s earthly representative and is the ‘prime minister’ of the Kingdom of heaven here on earth, i.e. the Catholic Church. The verse that explains Our Lord’s words and actions is found below.

Isaiah 22:21-22 (RSV) “and I will clothe him with your robe, and will bind your girdle on him, and will commit your authority to his hand; and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and to the house of Judah. And I will place on his shoulder the key of the house of David; he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open.”

This office of prime minister was permanent with ongoing succession as evidenced by Shebna being replaced by his successor Eliakim (Isaiah 22:20-21). The office of prime minister passed on through appointment by the King, and it continued as long as the kingdom of David continued. We as Christians believe that Jesus is the ultimate king (cf. Revelation 19:16) with the keys (cf. Revelation 3:7). Likewise, Jesus’ new Kingdom is based on Israel’s Kingdom. In the New Testament, Jesus gives his keys to Peter and thus we Catholics believe that Christ is the king, and Peter is the prime minister of Christ’s kingdom on earth, which is the Catholic Church! Likewise, when Peter died in 67 A.D., a successor named Linus took his place as the New Testament prime minister.

Q12) The pope is the Anti-Christ

A12) False, someone who is an Anti-Christ is described in the Bible as those who deny the divinity of Christ (1 John 2:18-23, 4:3; 2 John 1:7 NAB) and this fits the description of non-Christians like Jehovah Witness, Mormons, Muslims and Gnostics who the Church had been dealing with in the first century. There has been no Pope who has ever denied the divinity of Christ, rather they confess that Jesus is both Lord and God (John 20:28; John 1:1, Philippians 2:6; 1 Corinthians 8:6; 2 Peter 1:1 NAB) every day at Holy Mass and in their daily prayers (the Liturgy of the Hours).

Q13) The Christian Church is not a visible organization, but is made up of all true believers.

A13) Matthew 5:14 (NAB) “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid.” *The visible Church condemned the idea of an invisible Church as the heresy of ‘Gnosticism.’ The Church is visible and will remain so forever. Christ said, “Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a bushel” (Matthew 5:15 NAB). We are the light of the world and the light must be seen.*

*The idea of an invisible Church is not biblical. It's an excuse used by some to suggest that the Church went "underground" and hid itself from the world. The closest it came to going underground was during the era of persecutions under the pagan Roman emperors when Catholic Christians met in the catacombs in secret. The Roman Empire attacked the visible Church, Catholic Christians were being martyred every day and Holy Mass was being celebrated in covert locations. Pope Benedict XVI reminded young people in a 2006 general audience, "This individualistically chosen Jesus is an imaginary Jesus. We cannot have Jesus without the reality he created (The Church) and in which he communicates himself through the Church."<sup>xiv</sup>*

Q14) Christ is the only head of the Church.

A14) Matthew 16:18 (RSV) "And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock, I will build my church, and the powers of death shall not prevail against it."

*Jesus Christ is the head of the Church, but He did appoint a prime minister to build His Church. Peter was the Prime Minister (Pope) to represent the head of the Church on earth. The name "Peter" [Kepha] means a large massive rock (not a little stone as some would suggest). Christ was not building His Church simply upon Peter's recognition of who Christ is, but upon Peter himself. The powers of death shall not prevail against it (the Church). This means the Church will prevail against the evil forces of this world until the end of time.*

*"Christ appointed Peter as Pope in Syria. St. Paul converted there"<sup>xv</sup> in Syria. Dr. Taylor Marshall "explains the significance of why Christ appointed Peter in Syria at Caesarea Philippi. Caesarea Philippi (now the Golan Heights) was the place of a shrine to Caesar as god. Christ appointed Peter in this location so as to associate Peter's ministry to Rome. Christ took the Apostles on a field trip to a place where Caesar was worshiped and then instituted his Vicar there. This geographically linked Peter's ministry with the Roman mission to displace the Caesar and adopt the Empire for the purposes of the God's kingdom."<sup>xvi</sup> This is "why the Catholic Church is Roman from a simple and biblical point of view..."<sup>xvii</sup>*

Q15) Peter was no greater than any of the other apostles.

A15) Matthew 16:19 "I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Christ singled out the apostle Peter for the central position of founding his Church and gives to Peter the keys (recognized as the symbol of authority) of the kingdom of Heaven. The kingdom of heaven as seen in Daniel 7:2, 13-14 is a vision where God the Father bestows the dignity of an eternal kingdom on God the Son in a timeless moment. This kingdom bestowed to Jesus is an eternal kingdom (cf. 2 Samuel 7:10-17; 1 Chronicles 22:9-10; Luke 1:32-33 NAB). The extension of this eternal kingdom continues throughout the life of the Catholic Church with the Pope [Peter's successor] as its earthly Pastor. Our Lord gave Peter symbolic keys, which represents supreme apostolic authority. The authority of the keys gives Peter alone jurisdiction as supreme shepherd and ruler over all the Church.

Q16) Is there other proof that Peter was the preeminent apostle?

A16) Note, that Peter's name is mentioned 195 times<sup>xviii</sup> in the New Testament; more than all the other apostles combined. His name is always mentioned first in the Gospels. The primacy of Peter is undeniable. Jesus, who had already proclaimed Himself the Good Shepherd (cf. John 10:14) now, elevates Peter to his new role as shepherd of the entire flock: "When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, 'Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?' He said to him, 'Yes, lord; you know that I love you.' He said to him, 'Feed my lambs.' A second time he said to him, 'Simon, son of John, do you love me?' He said to him, 'Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.' He said to him, 'Tend my sheep.' He said to him the third time, 'Simon, son of John, do you love me?' Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, 'Do you love me?' and he said to him, 'Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.' Jesus said to him, 'Feed my sheep'" (John 21:15-17 RSV).

Q17) Why did Jesus ask Peter 3 times if he loved him? What responsibility did Jesus give Peter that was not given to the other apostles?

A17) Jesus has already promised Peter that he would be the leader of the apostles in Matthew 16:16-19. Despite, and probably to offset Peter's threefold denial of Jesus during his passion, our Lord now confers on him once again the primacy that he had promised. Jesus questions Peter three times, as if to give him a triple chance to atone for his threefold denial. Jesus gave Peter alone the jurisdiction of chief pastor and ruler over his entire fold (that means all Christians). Although all of the apostles were given the collective duty to 'tend' the sheep (Acts 20:28 NAB), only Peter was given the duty to 'feed' the sheep, that is, the followers of Jesus. This discussion between Jesus and Peter takes place prior to Jesus ascending into heaven. Peter is given the authority as Shepherd and left in charge of the sheepfold (the Church on earth) because Jesus is going to go back to heaven.

Q18) The Catholic Church cannot be the true Church due to scandals, evil Popes, etc.

A18) Matthew 22:19 "And those servants went out into the streets and gathered all whom they found, both bad and good; so the wedding hall was filled with guests."

*Yes, the Church has its share of sinners today just as it did in the early Church (e.g. Judas). The first apostles were far from perfect and history hasn't changed human nature, every one of us has an inclination to sin. It's only by the grace of God that the Church remains intact. The Church is Holy because Christ is the Head and we the baptized are united to Him. The Church is Holy because the Holy Spirit is the soul of the mystical body (cf. CCC 809). The lives of the saints, miracles, incorruptibles, apparitions and conversions are the result of God's grace working in and through the Church. The Church is a hospital for sinners, not a museum of saints.*

*The Catholic Church is like Noah's ark. At the time of the great flood (Genesis 6:5-8:22 RSV), only Noah and his eight family members were saved from the great flood. Everybody outside the*

*ark died. The Catholic Church, just like Noah's ark is now the barque of Peter. The Catholic Church is headed towards heaven, if you're on Peter's barque you will be saved, if you jump off to the right or to the left you will perish. The Church is not right vs. left, it is right vs. wrong. The Church much like Noah's ark is crowded, has many animals, it stinks, the company is not very pleasant, but if you did not stay on Noah's ark despite these uncomfortable living conditions, you would have perished in the flood waters with all the rest of the wicked men. "Likewise, there is no salvation outside the Catholic Church" (cf. CCC 846-848). So, fasten your seat belts, hang in there, it may be a rough ride, but this battle ship is taking us to heaven.*

Q19) In the Church everyone is subject only to the authority of the Bible.

A19) Matthew 28:19-20 (RSV) "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age."

*These verses are known as "the Great Commission." Here Jesus teaches the apostles to baptize and teach what He taught them. He didn't instruct them to go to some cave and write a book. Jesus Himself never wrote a book. He would have been the most logical one to do so if he intended to build a Church based on a book. The Church has been teaching and preaching the Word of God for almost 2,000 years. Faith comes from what is heard [through preaching] (Romans 10:17 RSV). The Church existed before the New Testament, the apostles and their disciples did not preach with a Bible in their hands, they preached with the Gospel in their hearts because they were recipients of this Sacred Tradition.*

Q20) The Protestant denominations do not include the hierarchy that is found in the Catholic Church.

A20) Luke 10:16 "He who hears you hears me, and he who rejects you rejects me, and he who rejects me rejects him who sent me."

*The Church today reflects a hierarchy that Christ established in the early Church. The apostles were given the authority to teach in Christ's name. Again, Jesus didn't commission the multitudes to have this authority; only the 12 and their successors (cf. Acts 1:20 NAB). Without an infallible teaching authority guided by the Holy Spirit, the Church would not have lasted 2000 years. Consider the thousands of Protestant denominations which have started as direct result of denying the authority of the Catholic Church. Division within the body of Christ is not a fruit of the Holy Spirit, it is a result of the sins of the flesh, (cf. Galatians 5:19-21 NAB) plain and simple.*

Q21) The Catholic claim that Peter was the lead apostle is another false teaching.

A21) Luke 22:31-32 (RSV) "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat, but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail; and when you have turned again, strengthen your brethren."

*Peter is again distinguished from the other apostles by Jesus. Our Lord Jesus prays for Peter alone, that his faith may not fail and tells Peter he must strengthen [lead] the others. No objection from the other apostles is recorded about this leadership role given to Peter. The other apostles knew Peter was the head apostle and recognized it. Satan attacks those who are closest to God since those that are far from God already belong to Satan. The apostles were prime targets. Jesus warns Peter that he has a big bulls eye target on his back because he is the prince of the apostles and Satan wants to take him out.*

Q22) All Christians have the authority to interpret Scripture.

A22) John 14:26 (RSV) “But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.”

*During the last supper, Jesus told the apostles that the Holy Spirit would come and teach them and also remind them of all that He had taught them. In this verse, Jesus is speaking only to the apostles, not to great multitudes which he frequently addressed. He gave the governing and interpretive power to the apostles and their successors. We, as faithful Catholic Christians, submit to Christ and are obedient to His Church which leads and teaches us the doctrine of Christ through the successors of the Apostles found in the Pope & Bishops.*

Q23) The Apostles were not replaced. The Catholic idea of apostolic succession is false.

A23) Acts 1:20 (Douay Rheims) “For it is written in the book of Psalms: Let their habitation become desolate, and let there be none to dwell therein. And his bishopric let another take.” *Here’s an example of an apostle (bishop) being replaced or succeeded. Peter (the head apostle) stands up before a large crowd and tells them that Judas’s office (bishopric) must be filled. After praying to the Lord to show them who would fill the office of Judas, they cast lots. God answered their prayers by having the lots fall on the one who should be chosen (Matthias). God still guides the Church when selecting a Pope or teaching the people of God.*

Q24) There is no Apostolic Succession in the Catholic Church!

A24) False, there is a pedigree and it started with the Church finding a successor for Judas and it was Matthias (Acts 1:15-26 NAB), they appointed elders (Acts 14:21-23) who became guardians to feed the Church of the Lord (Acts 20:28 NAB). St. Paul appointed elders/priest (Titus 1:5), Bishops are appointed (1 Timothy 3:1 NAB) and so are Deacons (1 Timothy 3:8 NAB) who are successors of the Apostle and so is the Pope who can be traced back from our current Pope all the way back to Peter, the 1<sup>st</sup> Bishop of Rome.

Q25) Apostolic Succession is a Catholic invention.

A25) Acts 2:42 (RSV) “And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.”

*The apostles handed on the teachings of Jesus to their successors as this verse indicates. Apostolic succession was clearly exercised in the early Church and continued throughout history. It is true that we are called to evangelize as the apostles did, but not all are called to have the same functions as those in the ministerial priesthood. This can be demonstrated by examining the letter to Titus chapter 1 verse 5. Titus was a bishop in Crete, Paul tells him the following: “For this reason I left you in Crete so that you might set right what remains to be done and appoint presbyters in every town, as I directed you.” The word “priest” is simply an abbreviation of “presbyter.” Every Catholic Priest is also called a Presbyter as well. In fact, the official Vatican II document to the Clergy is called ‘Presbyterorum Ordinis’ Decree On the Ministry and Life of Priests, (1965). You can see from the title of this Church document ‘Priest’ and ‘Presbyter’ are used interchangeably. On the day of a candidate’s Priestly ordination he declares the following: “I am resolved, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to discharge without fail the office of the priesthood in the presbyteral order as a conscientious fellow worker with the bishops in caring for the Lord’s flock.”<sup>xxix</sup>*

“[Luther](#) and [Calvin](#) saw clearly that their position could not be maintained if apostolic succession were necessary; they therefore affirmed that apostolic succession had been lost in the Roman Church by doctrinal and moral corruption and that the true church was found only where the gospel was rightly preached and the sacraments were rightly administered. Thus, Protestant churches generally have not accepted the necessity of apostolic succession.”<sup>xxx</sup>

Q26) Peter was no greater than any of the other apostles.

A26) Acts 15:7 “And after there had been much debate, Peter rose and said to them, ‘Brethren, you know that in the early days God made choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe.’”

*The apostles hold the 1<sup>st</sup> Church Council in Jerusalem, James the lesser was the Bishop of Jerusalem,<sup>xxi</sup> yet after much discussion and debate, Peter stands up and speaks. After he speaks the Council falls silent indicating that his authority is recognized; Peter has spoken. The issue of the Gentiles regarding circumcision and the Mosaic law was settled by Peter. The first Church Council held in Jerusalem was the occasion of the first Pope exercising his authority. Jesus left Peter in charge of the Church on earth, therefore it was fitting that Peter would give the declarative pronouncement at the 1<sup>st</sup> Church Council.*

Q27) How many Popes were martyred for the Catholic faith?

A27) From Peter to Constantine there were 33 Popes. Thirty of them were martyred and two died in exile. Archbishop Sheen says 3 Popes were exiled.<sup>xxii</sup>

Q28) In the true Christian church, no one has authority over another person.



A28) Romans 12:4-5 (RSV) “For as in one body we have many members, and all the members do not have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.”

*This verse points out that there are many roles we all participate in as members of the body of Christ. We are all members of the same body of Christ, but have been given different gifts and functions to carry out within the Church. The apostolic succession is manifested in our Holy Father, the Bishops and our Priests. The teaching function of the Church (Magisterium) guides and directs the body of believers so they do not go astray and be “tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine” (cf. Ephesians 4:14 RSV).*

Q29) Once the last Apostle died, that was the end of the apostolic age and any further apostolic authority ended with his death.

A29) 1 Corinthians 3:10 (RSV) “According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and another man is building upon it. Let each man take care how he builds upon it.”

*Paul is building on the cornerstone / capstone which is Jesus Christ, He is the foundation. Jesus taught and gave authority for others to build upon that foundation. This is what the Catholic Church refers to as apostolic succession. Jesus Christ didn’t come to establish a Church only to have it fall apart with the death of the last Apostle. The Church was intended to be a visible living teaching Church. Jesus commissioned the apostles to baptize and preach the Gospel until He returns, therefore, successive replacements are necessary for the Church to teach, govern and sanctify the baptized. Much like Presidents, or Governors, or Senators, or a Chief of Police, or the Sheriff, these people have successors, the office continues beyond the death of the man.*

Q30) How can the Catholic Church claim to be one in unity?

A30) 1 Corinthians 12:12-13 (RSV) “For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.”

*The doctrines of the Catholic Church are universal and unchanging. Some Catholics may misunderstand or misrepresent the official teachings of the Church, but this doesn’t change the Church’s teachings one iota. Some members may stray, some may fall away, some may teach heresy and all will sin. But the unity of the Church (the Body of Christ) is expressed and lived out in creed, in liturgy, in government and in the sacraments. Baptized Catholics are visibly and invisibly united to each other (cf. CCC 771).*

Q31) In the Church everyone is subject only to the authority of the Bible.

A31) Ephesians 2:20 “...built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone.”

*The Church is built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets with Jesus as the capstone or cornerstone. The apostles and their successors were the authority within the early Church just as they are today. The Bible was not brought together into one book until 382 A.D. Pope Damasus I prompted by the Council of Rome wrote a decree listing the present Old Testament & New Testament canon of 73 books. Apostolic Tradition was the primary mode by which the Gospel was taught prior to the completion of the New Testament canon. Oral tradition was relied upon heavily, since many letters and gospels were still being written. No one knew which letters were truly inspired until 382 A.D. In 393 A.D. the local Council of Hippo (in North Africa) approved the present OT and NT canon of 73 books. In 397 A.D. the local Council of Carthage (in North Africa) once again approved the same OT and NT canon. It's interesting that many Protestants take these Councils as their authority for their NT canon of books. In 405 A.D. Pope St. Innocent I (401-417) wrote a letter to Bishop Exuperius of Toulouse, confirming the same 73 list of books that were approved by the Councils of Hippo and Carthage. The Catholic Church does not come from the Gospels, the Gospels come from the Catholic Church. Even Martin Luther (1<sup>st</sup> Protestant Reformer) said: "We are obliged to yield many things to those Papists (Catholics) that they possess the Word of God which we received from them, otherwise we should have known nothing at all about it." Luther is admitting that Christians owe their Bible to the efforts of the Catholic Church.*

Q32) For the true Christian the Bible alone is 'the pillar and foundation of truth.'

A32) 1Timothy 3:15 (NAB) "...if I am delayed, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of truth."

*For the Catholic, the pillar & foundation of truth is the Church, just like the Bible teaches. Paul does not tell Timothy to consult or read the scriptures to seek the truth. The scriptures do in fact contain the Word of God to be sure, but we must turn to the Church for an infallible interpretation of those revealed truths found in scripture. If we read the scriptures in concert with the Church we will see the truths in God's revelation. We are not to interpret scripture in isolation but with the heart of the Church.*

*Apologetics Story:* *One day I asked a Protestant minister friend. "If I wanted to know the truth, the absolute truth, about a certain doctrine of faith, which denomination would I go to? If I go to your church, you will tell me one thing, if I go down the street to another Protestant denomination, they will tell me another. Where is the truth?" He told me just look at your bible. Using my bible, I showed him the passage in 1 Timothy 3:15 (NAB). I shared it with him and I followed with a short explanation of the Catholic and biblical belief, that the Church is referred to as the "the pillar and foundation of Truth." When I shared this with him, there was dead silence, you could hear crickets.*

Q33) The Bible is a very easy book to understand, especially the passages on 'salvation.'

A33) Peter disagrees, he says Paul's letters on the topic of salvation are difficult to understand. 2 Peter 3:15-16 (NAB) "And consider the patience of our Lord as salvation, as our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, also wrote to you, speaking of these things as he

does in all his letters. In them there are some things hard to understand that the ignorant and unstable distort to their own destruction, just as they do the other scriptures.” *Apart from the guidance of the Catholic Church, you can distort scripture because there are some difficult things to understand if you are unlearned. The danger lies in not reading scripture in its historical context, not using sacred Tradition as an interpretive grid and employing private interpretation which is fallible.*

Q34) I can interpret the bible for myself, I don't need a church to help me.

A34) 2 Peter 1:20 (NAB) “Know this first of all, that there is no prophecy of scripture that is a matter of personal interpretation, for no prophecy ever came through human will; but rather human beings moved by the holy Spirit spoke under the influence of God.” *Private interpretation of scripture has led to the plethora of protestant denominations that do not agree on fundamental issues. Do you think it's possible that the Holy Spirit would say one thing to a Pastor and the exact opposite thing to another Pastor based on the same bible verse? Of course not! The Holy Spirit is not the author of confusion (cf. 1 Corinthians 14:33 RSV). Fr. Mendoza Pantoja, an Exorcist from the Archdiocese of Mexico says that the devil's strategy against us is to bring about confusion.*<sup>xxiii</sup>

*List of Popes:*

1. St. Peter (the Apostle) (32-67)
2. St. Linus (67-76) *mentioned in 2 Timothy 4:21. Also Jude 3 “faith has been delivered once and for all to the saints”*
3. St. Anacletus (Cletus) (76-88)
4. St. Clement I (88-97) *mentioned in Philippians 4:3*
5. St. Evaristus (97-105) *St John was writing the book of Revelation in prison during this Papacy.*
6. St. Alexander I (105-115)
7. St. Sixtus I (115-125)
8. St. Telesphorus (125-136)
9. St. Hyginus (136-140)
10. St. Pius I (140-155)
11. St. Anicetus (155-166)
12. St. Soter (166-175)
13. St. Eleutherius (175-189)
14. St. Victor I (189-199)
15. St. Zephyrinus (199-217)
16. St. Callistus I (217-22)
17. St. Urban I (222-30)
18. 18. St. Pontian (230-35)
19. St. Anterus (235-36)
20. St. Fabian (236-50)
21. St. Cornelius (251-53)
22. St. Lucius I (253-54)

23. *St. Stephen I* (254-257)
24. *St. Sixtus II* (257-258)
25. *St. Dionysius* (260-268)
26. *St. Felix I* (269-274)
27. *St. Eutychian* (275-283)
28. *St. Gaius* (283-296)
29. *St. Marcellinus* (296-304)
30. *St. Marcellus I* (308-309)
31. *St. Eusebius* (309 or 310)
32. *St. Miltiades* (311-14)
33. *St. Sylvester I* (314-35) *Council of Nicea defends the divinity of Christ*
34. *St. Marcus* (336)
35. *St. Julius I* (337-52)
36. *Liberius* (352-66)
37. *St. Damasus I* (366-83) *Council of Rome defined Canon of Scripture*
38. *St. Siricius* (384-99)
39. *St. Anastasius I* (399-401)
40. *St. Innocent I* (401-17) *St Jerome translates bible: 'Latin Vulgate'*
41. *St. Zosimus* (417-18)
42. *St. Boniface I* (418-22)
43. *St. Celestine I* (422-32)
44. *St. Sixtus III* (432-40)
45. *St. Leo I (the Great)* (440-61)
46. *St. Hilarius* (461-68)
47. *St. Simplicius* (468-83)
48. *St. Felix III (II)* (483-92)
49. *St. Gelasius I* (492-96)
50. *Anastasius II* (496-98)
51. *St. Symmachus* (498-514)
52. *St. Hormisdas* (514-23)
53. *St. John I* (523-26)
54. *St. Felix IV (III)* (526-30)
55. *Boniface II* (530-32)
56. *John II* (533-35)
57. *St. Agapetus I* (535-36) *St.*
58. *Silverius* (536-37)
59. *Vigilius* (537-55)
60. *Pelagius I* (556-61)
61. *John III* (561-74)
62. *Benedict I* (575-79)
63. *Pelagius II* (579-90)
64. *St. Gregory I (the Great)* (590-604)
65. *Sabinian* (604-606)
66. *Boniface III* (607)
67. *St. Boniface IV* (608-15) *Mohammed starts Islam 610 AD (heretical religion).*

68. *St. Adeodatus I* (615-18)
69. *Boniface V* (619-25)
70. *Honorius I* (625-38)
71. *Severinus* (640)
72. *John IV* (640-42)
73. *Theodore I* (642-49)
74. *St. Martin I* (649-55)
75. *St. Eugene I* (655-57)
76. *St. Vitalian* (657-72)
77. *Adeodatus (II)* (672-76)
78. *Donus* (676-78)
79. *St. Agatho* (678-81)
80. *St. Leo II* (682-83)
81. *St. Benedict II* (684-85)
82. *John V* (685-86)
83. *Conon* (686-87)
84. *St. Sergius I* (687-701)
85. *John VI* (701-05)
86. *John VII* (705-07)
87. *Sisinnius* (708)
88. *Constantine* (708-15)
89. *St. Gregory II* (715-31)
90. *St. Gregory III* (731-41)
91. *St. Zachary* (741-52)
92. *Stephen II* (752)
93. *Stephen III* (752-57)
94. *St. Paul I* (757-67)
95. *Stephen IV* (767-72)
96. *Adrian I* (772-95)
97. *St. Leo III* (795-816)
98. *Stephen V* (816-17)
99. *St. Paschal I* (817-24)
100. *Eugene II* (824-27)
101. *Valentine* (827)
102. *Gregory IV* (827-44)
103. *Sergius II* (844-47)
104. *St. Leo IV* (847-55)
105. *Benedict III* (855-58)
106. *St. Nicholas I (the Great)* (858-67)
107. *Adrian II* (867-72)
108. *John VIII* (872-82)
109. *Marinus I* (882-84)
110. *St. Adrian III* (884-85)
111. *Stephen VI* (885-91)
112. *Formosus* (891-96)

113. *Boniface VI* (896)
114. *Stephen VII* (896-97)
115. *Romanus* (897)
116. *Theodore II* (897)
117. *John IX* (898-900)
118. *Benedict IV* (900-03)
119. *Leo V* (903)
120. *Sergius III* (904-11)
121. *Anastasius III* (911-13)
122. *Lando* (913-14)
123. *John X* (914-28)
124. *Leo VI* (928)
125. *Stephen VIII* (929-31)
126. *John XI* (931-35)
127. *Leo VII* (936-39)
128. *Stephen IX* (939-42)
129. *Marinus II* (942-46)
130. *Agapetus II* (946-55)
131. *John XII* (955-63)
132. *Leo VIII* (963-64)
133. *Benedict V* (964)
134. *John XIII* (965-72)
135. *Benedict VI* (973-74)
136. *Benedict VII* (974-83)
137. *John XIV* (983-84)
138. *John XV* (985-96)
139. *Gregory V* (996-99)
140. *Sylvester II* (999-1003)
141. *John XVII* (1003)
142. *John XVIII* (1003-09)
143. *Sergius IV* (1009-12)
144. *Benedict VIII* (1012-24)
145. *John XIX* (1024-32)
146. *Benedict IX* (1032-45)
147. *Sylvester III* (1045)
148. *Benedict IX* (1045)
149. *Gregory VI* (1045-46)
150. *Clement II* (1046-47)
151. *Benedict IX* (1047-48)
152. *Damasus II* (1048)
153. *St. Leo IX* (1049-54) *Bishop Photius leaves Catholicism & starts Eastern Schism*
154. *Victor II* (1055-57)
155. *Stephen X* (1057-58)
156. *Nicholas II* (1058-61)
157. *Alexander II* (1061-73)

158. *St. Gregory VII (1073-85)*
159. *Blessed Victor III (1086-87)*
160. *Blessed Urban II (1088-99)*
161. *Paschal II (1099-1118)*
162. *Gelasius II (1118-19)*
163. *Callistus II (1119-24)*
164. *Honorius II (1124-30)*
165. *Innocent II (1130-43)*
166. *Celestine II (1143-44)*
167. *Lucius II (1144-45)*
168. *Blessed Eugene III (1145-53)*
169. *Anastasius IV (1153-54)*
170. *Adrian IV (1154-59)*
171. *Alexander III (1159-81)*
172. *Lucius III (1181-85)*
173. *Urban III (1185-87)*
174. *Gregory VIII (1187)*
175. *Clement III (1187-91)*
176. *Celestine III (1191-98)*
177. *Innocent III (1198-1216)*
178. *Honorius III (1216-27)* *Catholic Archbishop Stephen Langton divides bible into chapters.*
179. *Gregory IX (1227-41)*
180. *Celestine IV (1241)*
181. *Innocent IV (1243-54)*
182. *Alexander IV (1254-61)*
183. *Urban IV (1261-64)*
184. *Clement IV (1265-68)*
185. *Blessed Gregory X (1271-76)*
186. *Blessed Innocent V (1276)*
187. *Adrian V (1276)*
188. *John XXI (1276-77)*
189. *Nicholas III (1277-80)*
190. *Martin IV (1281-85)*
191. *Honorius IV (1285-87)*
192. *Nicholas IV (1288-92)*
193. *St. Celestine V (1294)*
194. *Boniface VIII (1294-1303)*
195. *Blessed Benedict XI (1303-04)*
196. *Clement V (1305-14)*
197. *John XXII (1316-34)*
198. *Benedict XII (1334-42)*
199. *Clement VI (1342-52)*
200. *Innocent VI (1352-62)*
201. *Blessed Urban V (1362-70)*

202. *Gregory XI (1370-78)*
203. *Urban VI (1378-89)*
204. *Boniface IX (1389-1404)*
205. *Innocent VII (1404-06)*
206. *Gregory XII (1406-15)*
207. *Martin V (1417-31)*
208. *Eugene IV (1431-47)*
209. *Nicholas V (1447-55)* *Invention of printing press, John Gutenberg prints 1<sup>st</sup> book, the Catholic bible.*
210. *Callistus III (1455-58)*
211. *Pius II (1458-64)*
212. *Paul II (1464-71)*
213. *Sixtus IV (1471-84)*
214. *Innocent VIII (1484-92)*
215. *Alexander VI (1492-1503)*
216. *Pius III (1503)*
217. *Julius II (1503-13)*
218. *Leo X (1513-21)* *Martin Luther starts the Protestant Reformation (revolt).*
219. *Adrian VI (1522-23)*
220. *Clement VII (1523-34)* *Father Santes Pagnini insert verses into bible*
221. *Paul III (1534-49)*
222. *Julius III (1550-55)*
223. *Marcellus II (1555)*
224. *Paul IV (1555-59)*
225. *Pius IV (1559-65)*
226. *St. Pius V (1566-72)*
227. *Gregory XIII (1572-85)*
228. *Sixtus V (1585-90)*
229. *Urban VII (1590)*
230. *Gregory XIV (1590-91)*
231. *Innocent IX (1591)*
232. *Clement VIII (1592-1605)*
233. *Leo XI (1605)*
234. *Paul V (1605-21)* *King James Bible printed in 1611 – 1<sup>st</sup> Protestant bible.*
235. *Gregory XV (1621-23)*
236. *Urban VIII (1623-44)*
237. *Innocent X (1644-55)*
238. *Alexander VII (1655-67)*
239. *Clement IX (1667-69)*
240. *Clement X (1670-76)*
241. *Blessed Innocent XI (1676-89)*
242. *Alexander VIII (1689-91)*
243. *Innocent XII (1691-1700)*
244. *Clement XI (1700-21)*
245. *Innocent XIII (1721-24)*



246. *Benedict XIII (1724-30)*
247. *Clement XII (1730-40)*
248. *Benedict XIV (1740-58)*
249. *Clement XIII (1758-69)*
250. *Clement XIV (1769-74)*
251. *Pius VI (1775-99) George Washington becomes 1<sup>st</sup> President in 1788.*
252. *Pius VII (1800-23)*
253. *Leo XII (1823-29) British Bible Society takes out Deuterocanonical books entirely*
254. *Pius VIII (1829-30) "Rapture" invented in 1830 by John Nelson Darby  
(protestant minister)*
255. *255. Gregory XVI (1831-46)*
256. *256. Blessed Pius IX (1846-78)*
257. *Leo XIII (1878-1903)*
258. *St. Pius X (1903-14)*
259. *Benedict XV (1914-22)*
260. *Pius XI (1922-39)*
261. *Pius XII (1939-58)*
262. *Blessed John XXIII (1958-63)*
263. *Paul VI (1963-78)*
264. *John Paul I (1978)*
265. *John Paul II (the Great) (1978-2005)*
266. *Benedict XVI (2005-2013)*
267. *Pope Francis I (2013-?)*

## **CHURCH AUTHORITY IS FROM HEAVEN**

In search of HEAVENS CHURCH (the issue of AUTHORITY is paramount):

[www.dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com) - 'authority'

1. the power to determine, adjudicate, or otherwise settle issues or disputes; jurisdiction; the right to control, command, or determine.
2. a power or right delegated or given; authorization.
3. a person or body of persons in whom authority is vested, as a governmental agency. To Command thoughts or to command influence of behavior.

"Question Authority," this mantra does not come from the 1960's Woodstock generation, the 1<sup>st</sup> one to question GOD'S authority was Satan. That is why he was cast out of heaven, he said, "Non Serviam" (I will not serve). Then Satan convinces Eve to question God's authority in Genesis 3:1 "Now the serpent was subtler than any other creature that the Lord had made. He said to the woman, 'Did God say, 'You shall not eat of any tree of the garden?'" *Question God's authority has been the battle cry of the non-believer ever since.*

Q35) Was Jesus ever asked about the topic of "authority"?

A35) Yes, when Jesus was questioned by the Jewish leaders "By what and whose authority do you minister?" Jesus responded with His own question, "Was John's baptism from Heaven or men?" Jesus used the Socratic method of answering a question with a question about the issue of 'authority.'

*Matthew 21:23-27 (NAB) "When he had come into the temple area, the chief priests and the elders of the people approached him as he was teaching and said, 'By what authority are you doing these things? And who gave you this authority?' Jesus said to them in reply, 'I shall ask you one question, and if you answer it for me, then I shall tell you by what authority I do these things. Where was John's baptism from? Was it of heavenly or of human origin?' They discussed this among themselves and said, 'If we say, 'Of heavenly origin,' he will say to us, 'Then why did you not believe him?' But if we say, 'Of human origin,' we fear the crowd, for they all regard John as a prophet.' So, they said to Jesus in reply, 'We do not know.' He himself said to them, 'Neither shall I tell you by what authority I do these things.'"*

Q36) Is authority important to God?

A36) The question of "Authority" is of utmost importance. We know that Jesus taught with 'Authority.' *Matthew 7:29 (NAB) "for he taught them as one having authority, and not as their scribes."*

Q37) Did Jesus respect 'authority'?

A37) Jesus respected 'authority.' In Luke 7:6-9 (NAB) it says: "And Jesus went with them, but when he was only a short distance from the house, the centurion sent friends to tell him, "Lord, do not trouble yourself, for I am not worthy to have you enter under my roof. Therefore, I did not consider myself worthy to come to you; but say the word and let my servant be healed. For I too am a person subject to authority, with soldiers subject to me. And I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come here,' and he comes; and to my slave, 'Do this,' and he does it." When Jesus heard this he was amazed at him and, turning, said to the crowd following him, "I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such faith."

Q38) In the Holy Bible, how many types of leaders are recognized by God?

A38) There are only two types of Church leaders - ministers, those with 'authority' from Heaven and those who have been 'appointed or ordained.' The first are those who have heard directly from God (Abraham, Moses, the Prophets, the Apostles, etc.) and secondly those who have been appointed or ordained (eg. Joshua, Scribes, Pharisees, Apostles, Timothy, Titus, New Testament Bishops, Presbyters, Deacons etc.) by men who have heard directly from God. The notion that a man could pick up the Sacred Scriptures, in the time of Jesus or now, and 'ordain – appoint – or authorize himself' a preacher or leader is an unscriptural notion. (See Romans 10:15 "And how can people preach unless they are [Heaven] sent?...").

Q39) Did Jesus recognize the Jewish authority at his time?

A39) Before Jesus began his scathing rebuke of the hypocrisies of the Scribes and Pharisees, in order to squelch any possible notions of insurrection, rebellion, or schisms from the "laity", he emphatically taught that the scribes and Pharisees held a position of God Ordained Authority by virtue of their succession to "Moses Seat."

*Matthew 23:1-3 (NAB) "Then Jesus spoke to the crowds and to his disciples, saying, "The scribes and the Pharisees have taken their seat on the chair of Moses. Therefore, do and observe all things whatsoever they tell you, but do not follow their example. For they preach but they do not practice."*

The Scribes and Pharisees were not perfect, nor did Jesus expect anyone to follow their less-than perfect examples, but they did hold the authority to "bind and loose," which is why Jesus commands the people to obey! The scribes and Pharisees had not heard "directly from God", but they had been appointed or ordained by the successors of a man (Moses, Joshua etc.) who had been chosen by God. Joshua began the order of succession when Moses "laid his hands upon him" and "ordained" him leader of the Old Testament 'Cahal' (Hebrew for 'Church').

*Numbers 27:15-18 (NAB) "Then Moses said to the LORD, "May the LORD, the God of the spirits of all humanity, set over the community someone who will be their leader in battle and who will lead them out and bring them in, that the LORD's community may not be like sheep without a shepherd." And the LORD replied to Moses: "Take Joshua, son of Nun, a man of spirit, and lay your hand upon him."*

*Numbers 27:22-23 (NAB) "Moses did as the LORD had commanded him. Taking Joshua and having him stand before Eleazar the priest and the whole community, he laid his hands on him and commissioned him, as the LORD had directed through Moses."*

No doubt, the Scribes and Pharisees could trace their lineage of Authority back to Moses through Jewish sacred tradition.

Q40) Did Jesus believe that all religions were the same, or did he believe there was a true religion at his time?

A40) When Jesus was questioned by the Samaritan woman regarding who had the "true religion," Jew or Samaritan, Jesus emphatically taught her that the Samaritan's worship was based on ignorance and that true "salvation" was "from the Jews" (Jesus was certainly not "politically correct!").

*See John 4:21-23 (RSV) "Jesus said to her, "Believe me, woman, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You people worship what you do not understand; we worship what we understand, because salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming, and is now here, when true worshipers will worship the Father in Spirit and truth; and indeed the Father seeks such people to worship him."*

Now, why was true "salvation" of the Jews? The Samaritans believed in God. The Samaritans believed in the Sacred Scriptures. The Samaritans held a form of moral piety. The Samaritans believed that they were the "true" religion. It is, again, a question of Heaven Sent Authority. The Samaritan people had rejected Heaven Sent Authority, namely, those Jewish leaders who sat in Moses Seat. Now, back to my point, if you don't have "Heaven's Approval" to minister, are you truly doing the "work of God?" I have to conclude that if you do not have "Heaven's Approval", you may become a spiritual "anarchist & renegade," in the class of Korah and his rebellious band of dissenters who had withstood the Heaven Sent Authority of Moses.

Q41) What happened to those who rebelled against Moses lawful authority?

A41) Read Numbers 16:1-3, 32 - this chapter shows that God's chosen people the Israelites, following Korah in his rebellion against the religious hierarchy set up by Moses. Their rebellion was against the lawful hierarchy and the result was divine condemnation. Korah was a Levite

*who descended from Kohath and headed the revolt of those Levites who challenged the privileges of the Priestly family of Aaron.*

*Jude 1: 8,10-11 (NAB) “Similarly, these dreamers nevertheless also defile the flesh, scorn lordship, and revile glorious beings...But these people revile what they do not understand and are destroyed by what they know by nature like irrational animals. Woe to them! They followed the way of Cain, abandoned themselves to Balaam's error for the sake of gain, and perished in the rebellion of Korah.”*

Q42) That was an O.T. rebellion against lawful authority. Is there a N.T. warning against rebelling from lawful Church authority?

A42) The apostle Jude warns the Church about the dire consequences of attacking and then usurping the position of the Church's hierarchy. Jude compares these heretics to Korah and his followers who rebelled against Moses and Aaron in Numbers 16. Here the scripture speaks clearly of an authoritarian hierarchy that the faithful are bound in conscience to follow. There is no evidence that this hierarchy does not exist anymore, in fact the scripture says:

*Hebrews 13:7, 17 (RSV) – “Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God; consider the outcome of their faith, and imitate their faith...Obey your leaders and submit to them; for they are keeping watch over your souls, as men who will have to give account. Let them do this joyfully, and not sadly, for that would be of no advantage to you.”*

Q43) The 1<sup>st</sup> Protestant Reformers were either Catholic Priest or Scripture scholars. How did they not see these passages calling us to follow the authority of the New Testament (Catholic) Church?

A43) I am sure that the original Protestant Reformers: Martin Luther, John Calvin, Ulrich Zwingli read & knew these passages, but they simply did not follow them because of their *hardness of heart*. It's called the selective reading & selective omission of Scripture.

Q44) Where is the True Church today which holds the "Authority from Heaven?"

A44) The authority comes from Christ the King who is God incarnate, he chooses Peter as his vicar and his Church is his kingdom.

1. Jesus was Heaven Sent. *Acts 2:36 (NAB) “Therefore let the whole house of Israel know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Messiah, this Jesus whom you crucified.”* Our Lord said that *he came down from heaven* – (cf. John 6:38, 51 NAB).

2. The Apostle Peter was Heaven sent, notice the words spoken to him by Our Lord & Savior. Jesus Christ uses the following words when He talks to Peter: "rock" – “build” – “my Church” -

"binding" - "loosing" - "keys" - "feed" - "shepherd". Matthew 16:16-19 (NAB) "Simon Peter said in reply, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." Jesus said to him in reply, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah. For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my heavenly Father. And so I say to you, you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven. Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." *Matthew wrote for a Jewish audience who was familiar with Old Testament imagery. When Jesus speaks of 'the keys of the kingdom' he is speaking in familiar Jewish terms. He is referring back to Isaiah 22 where a new prime minister to the king's palace is being appointed. Jesus our King is associating the appointment of Peter, the Prime Minister, with Isaiah 22:15-23 (NAB, which describes the office of Prime Minister who ruled in the absence of the King of Israel. In ancient kingdoms, the king delegated authority to his prime minister (or steward) to manage the business of the kingdom in the king's absence. The Prime Minister was an office of great importance (cf. 1 Kings 4:6; 18:3; Isaiah 36:3; 37:2 NAB), definitely one of the highest offices in the Kingdom of Israel. In terms of authority, the prime minister was second only to the Davidic king and Queen Mother.*<sup>xxiv</sup>



Old Testament = New Testament



King David

King Jesus

Prime Minister

St. Peter

Cabinet Ministers

Apostles

John 21:15-17 "When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, 'Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?' He said to him, 'Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.' He said to him, 'Feed my lambs.' He then said to him a second time, 'Simon, son of John, do you love me?' He said to him, 'Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.' He said to him, 'Tend my sheep.' He said to him the third time, 'Simon, son of John, do you love me?' Peter was distressed that he had said to him a third time, 'Do you love me?' and he said to him, 'Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.' (Jesus) said to him, 'Feed my sheep.'"

Luke 22:31-32 (NAB) "Simon, Simon, behold Satan has demanded to sift all of you like wheat, but I have prayed that your own faith may not fail; and once you have turned back, you must

strengthen your brothers." *Jesus prays for Peter alone so that he may be the support for the rest of the apostles once he has received the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.*

Q45) Were the apostles 'heaven sent' as well?

A45) Yes, All the Apostles were Heaven Sent, they held "seats of authority."

Luke 22:29-32 (NAB) "and I confer a kingdom on you, just as my Father has conferred one on me, that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom; and you will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." *Jesus is speaking to the twelve apostles in this passage.*

Luke 9:1-2 (NAB) "He summoned the Twelve and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal (the sick)."

Luke 10:16 (NAB) "Whoever listens to you listens to me. Whoever rejects you rejects me. And whoever rejects me rejects the one who sent me." *Notice the apostles spoke with the authority of Christ.*

Q46) Where do Catholic Bishops get their authority?

A46) The 1<sup>st</sup> Catholic Bishops were ordained by the Apostles and their Successors are appointed, approved and authorized by Heaven Sent Authority. We call this "Apostolic Succession."

*Acts 1:15-26 (NAB) "During those days Peter stood up in the midst of the brothers (there was a group of about one hundred and twenty persons in the one place). He said, 'My brothers, the scripture had to be fulfilled which the Holy Spirit spoke beforehand through the mouth of David, concerning Judas, who was the guide for those who arrested Jesus. He was numbered among us and was allotted a share in this ministry. He bought a parcel of land with the wages of his iniquity, and falling headlong, he burst open in the middle, and all his insides spilled out. This became known to everyone who lived in Jerusalem, so that the parcel of land was called in their language 'Akeldama,' that is, Field of Blood. For it is written in the Book of Psalms: 'Let his encampment become desolate, and may no one dwell in it.' And: 'May another take his office.' Therefore, it is necessary that one of the men who accompanied us the whole time the Lord Jesus came and went among us, beginning from the baptism of John until the day on which he was taken up from us, become with us a witness to his resurrection." So they proposed two, Joseph called Barsabbas, who was also known as Justus, and Matthias. Then they prayed, 'You, Lord, who know the hearts of all, show which one of these two you have chosen to take the place in this apostolic ministry from which Judas turned away to go to his own place. Then they gave lots to them, and the lot fell upon Matthias, and he was counted with the eleven apostles.'"*

Q47) Are there other verses showing the apostolic succession of men through the laying on of hands?

A47) In these next couple of verses we see the 'laying on of hands', 'authoritative appointments' and 'passing the baton of Authority' to chosen successors of the apostles.

- Acts 6:6 (NAB) "They presented these men to the apostles who prayed and laid hands on them."
- Acts 9:17 (NAB) "So Ananias went and entered the house; laying his hands on him, he said, "Saul, my brother, the Lord has sent me, Jesus who appeared to you on the way by which you came, that you may regain your sight and be filled with the holy Spirit."
- Acts 13:3 (NAB) "Then, completing their fasting and prayer, they laid hands on them and sent them off."
- I Timothy 4:14 (NAB) "Do not neglect the gift you have, which was conferred on you through the prophetic word with the imposition of hands of the presbyterate."
- Hebrews 6:2-3 (NAB) "instruction about baptisms and laying on of hands, resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment. And we shall do this, if only God permits."

Conclusion: With the above facts in mind, it is reasonable to conclude that the True New Testament Church is that which is subject to Heaven Sent Authority. There are many New Testament "Samaritans" today (i.e. those who reject Heaven Sent Authority). There is only ONE group of New Testament "completed Jews" that now supersedes the 'authority of the Scribes and Pharisees.' Those were the 12 apostles ordained by the Heaven-Sent Son of GOD. This is the fulfillment of the Heaven-sent Old Testament Church which was governed at the time of Christ by the ordained Successors (Scribes & Pharisees) of the Heaven Sent Joshua who was ordained by the Heaven Sent Moses who was ordained by the GOD of Heaven.

These are certainly not "new" conclusions. I have not uncovered some hidden truths that no one else has seen or taught in the past. These Truths have been taught by Faithful Christians since the days of the Apostles. It takes some people years, and a whole lot of anguish, to open their heart to the Truth. Don't be slow to recognize that you are subject to Heaven Sent Authority. The dividing line is, Heaven Sent Authority comes from JESUS to the Apostles and their successors. The Holy Scriptures concludes that "salvation" is of the True New Testament Church which holds Heaven Sent Authority. The Heaven Sent Universal (Catholic) Church today is governed by Catholic Bishops (albeit imperfect) who have been ordained (appointed, consecrated) by the Heaven-Sent Successors of the Heaven Sent Apostles!

Q48) I understand that Christ teaches with authority but does anyone picking up and reading the Bible teach with the authority of Christ?

A48) If CHRIST taught with AUTHORITY (cf. Mark 1:21-22 NAB) – ergo, his Bride (the Church) also must teach with HIS authority. Can anyone show me the verse which gives authority for any human person to found another church other than the ONE which Jesus Christ founded? Oh, do I hear crickets!



Q49) How can you trust the Catholic Church, when the bible says, “every human being is a liar?” Romans 3:4 (NAB).

A49) If every human is a Liar, how can you trust your Protestant Clergy? Aren’t they men or women? You’re implying by quoting this verse (Romans 3:4 NAB) out of context, that you cannot count on the words of any man, only God! Is that what this Scripture teaches? NO - In this passage (from Romans 3:1-4 NAB) St. Paul is replying to objections raised by an imaginary Jewish questioner. The apostle acknowledges that the Jewish people alone were given the revelation by God for them to pass it on to the other nations. The fact that SOME JEWS, not ALL JEWS were unfaithful to the mission - did not mean that God changed his plans. God’s fidelity to his promises is not affected by the way man responds, in fact human infidelity only serves to highlight God’s fidelity.<sup>xxv</sup> St. Paul stresses that Jews have remained the vehicle of God’s revelation despite their sins, though this depends on the fidelity of God.<sup>xxvi</sup>

The phrase “every human being is a liar” is hyperbole. If you take this verse literally then your Pastor is a liar, you are a liar (so I shouldn’t take your question seriously), Paul would also be a liar (since he is a man). Is that what this verse teaches? Of course NOT. The apostle is simply saying that **men are all fallible creatures, who are liable to make mistakes because of their fallen human nature, as a result, they can be wrong at times. Nevertheless, God who is TRUTH Himself will keep His promise of preserving His Church in all truth.** Below is scriptural evidence that God uses men to communicate truth.

John 16:12-13 (NAB) “I have much more to tell you, but you cannot bear it now. But when he comes, the Spirit of truth, he will guide you to all truth. He will not speak on his own, but he will speak what he hears, and will declare to you the things that are coming.”

To say that ALL MEN ARE LIARS is to take Romans 3:4 (NAB) out of context.

- 2 Peter 1:21 (RSV) “...but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.”
- Ephesians 4:11-12 (NAB) “And he gave some as apostles, others as prophets, others as evangelists, others as pastors and teachers, to equip the holy ones for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.”
- 1 Corinthians 12:27-30 (RSV)...Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. And in the church God has appointed first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, also those having gifts of healing, those able to help others, those with gifts of administration, and those speaking in different kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret?
- 2 Timothy 4:1 (NAB) “I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: preach the word, be urgent in season and out of season, convince, rebuke, and exhort, be unfailing in patience and in teaching. For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but

having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own likings, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander into myths. As for you, always be steady, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfil your ministry.”

- Amos 3:7 (RSV) “Surely the Lord GOD does nothing, without revealing his secret to his servants the prophets.”

Q50) I don’t need a teacher, I just need to read my Bible?

A50) Selected members of the family of God have particular special gifts of teaching and preaching that are supposed to be used for the good of others to build them up. Not everyone can teach on spiritual matters. Nor can everyone understand the Bible without instruction (cf. Acts 8:26-38 NAB). That’s the way God foreordained it, and that’s why the Lord set up His Church.

## TRADITION & THE BIBLE

Q51) The Bible is the only authority we need.

A51) Matthew 18:17-18 (NAB) “If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”

*If the Bible is the only authority we need, why does Matthew tell us to go to the Church to settle disputes rather than go to the Bible? The Church is not JUST the two or three witnesses or the two or three gathered in His name, but an apostolic authority given the power to bind and loose. If the Bible is all we need, why are there thousands of Bible based denominations claiming to be the church of Christ, yet teaching very different doctrines? The church that Christ established is one in unity, not many in division. Remember the oldest tactic of the devil is ‘divide and conquer.’ His strategy against the Church has not changed since he divided and conquered Adam & Eve from God in the Garden of Eden.*

Q52) The Bible is the only book we need.

A52) John 21:25 (RSV) “But there are also many other things which Jesus did; were every one of them to be written, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.”

*If the Bible was intended to be an all-inclusive handbook of how the Church should operate, be structured, and teach a Christian all they must know, why doesn't one find the method or ceremony about how to get married in the Bible? Especially since marriage is a union God established between man and woman. The marriage ceremony is in fact a tradition which has been passed down through generation's relatively unchanged beginning with the Catholic Church. In fact, Protestant denominations emulate the Catholic ceremony rite of marriage because the Bible does not tell us how to perform this ritual. The Catholic ceremony rite of marriage is part of Sacred Tradition, it has been handed down from the early Church.*

Q53) The Holy Spirit will guide each Christian in understanding the Bible for themselves.

A53) Acts 8:30-31 (RSV) “So Philip ran to him, and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet, and asked, ‘Do you understand what you are reading?’ And he said, ‘How can I, unless someone guides me?’ And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.”

*If the Ethiopian Eunuch, who was most likely wealthy and well educated, couldn't understand by just reading the Scriptures, then how are we to understand without help from an official teaching authority; i.e. the Church? The guaranteed guidance of the Holy Spirit was given to the apostles and to the Church, not to each individual believer. The Church is made up of believers, but it is the teaching function of the Church's (Magisterium) that correctly instructs the people of God on faith and morals. The Lord gave us a ‘ecclesia docens’, that is, a ‘teaching Church.*

*Let me try this analogy - America is under attack by militant Islam, a religion with no Pope or teaching authority but only a sacred book to argue over, called the Koran. Militant Islamic groups interpret the Koran literally. In this respect, Islam is quite similar to Protestantism: there's no visible head or teaching authority – only a sacred book to argue over, and the result is confusion and chaos. A lot of Protestant pastors are starting to see this. They're seeing why a religion based on a book alone isn't enough. They're realizing that Christianity needs a visible head, established by Christ himself – a Pope.*

Q54) Oral tradition is not authoritative for Christians.

A54) Acts 20:35 (RSV) “In all things I have shown you that by so toiling one must help the weak, remembering the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’”

*Here's an example of oral tradition found in the New Testament. Nowhere else in Scripture is this saying of Jesus recorded, “It is more blessed to give than to receive.” The only way that St. Luke, the author of Acts, could have known this was through oral tradition since he was not one of the original twelve apostles. He records this saying of Jesus in the Holy Bible infallibly through the guidance of the Holy Spirit.*

Q55) The Bible is the only authoritative source for God's word.

A55) Romans 10:17 (RSV) “So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes by the preaching of Christ.”

*Typically, our Catholic faith is not received initially by reading the Holy Bible. It is usually born and developed through what we hear from others (our parents, family, friends, catechist, Priest etc.). This oral transmission of faith is called the “rhema,” this is what this verse is referring too. The Bible tells us in this verse that our faith comes from hearing the Word of God. Sacred Scripture is read and preached from to be sure, but it is not the only source of God's revelation. ‘Rhema’ is a Greek word which means to preach the Gospel, none of the apostles had a Bible in their hand as they preached, rather they had the Word of God in their hearts and the guidance of the Holy Spirit. This was the basis of their apostolic preaching.*

Q56) Traditions are a Catholic invention.

A56) 1 Corinthians 11:2 (RSV) “I commend you because you remember me in everything and maintain the traditions even as I have delivered them to you.”

*St. Paul praises the Corinthians for keeping the traditions he taught them. The Corinthians didn't accuse St. Paul of inventions. He visited them, taught them through his preaching and then later wrote letters to some communities as a follow up to address various issues. How could we assume that all of St. Paul's teachings are included in letters which he wrote? St. Paul visited 22 cities in his 4 missionary journeys, yet he only wrote 13 letters:*

Q57) Where are the Cities where Paul preached?

A57) Here they are in alphabetical order...

**Antioch:** the capital of ancient Syria, the eastern capital of the Roman Empire, the modern Antakya in southern Turkey

**Antioch in Pisidia:** near the border of ancient Pisidia, a few miles south-west from modern Aksehir, Turkey

**Athens:** the greatest city of classical Greece, capital of modern Greece

**Berea:** a city of ancient Macedonia, modern Véria in Greece

**Caesarea:** a seaport of ancient Palestine, capital of the Roman province, modern Tel Aviv-Yafo in Israel

**Corinth:** a city of ancient Greece, near modern Corinth, southern Greece ([Letter from Paul](#))

**Damascus:** a city of ancient Syria, capital of modern Syria

**Derbe:** an ancient city in south-eastern Asia Minor, modern Turkey

**Ephesus:** a town on the western coast of Asia Minor, c 40 miles south of modern Izmir, Turkey ([Letter from Paul](#))

**Iconium:** capital of the ancient province of Lycaonia in Asia Minor, modern Konya in Turkey

**Jerusalem:** it was the capital of the southern kingdom of Judah and the place of the temple

**Lystra:** a city of the ancient province of Lycaonia in Asia Minor

**Miletus:** a coastal city of ancient Ionia, c 30 miles south of Ephesus, and c 70 miles south of modern Izmir, Turkey

**Paphos:** a town in south-western Cyprus on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea

**Perga:** or Perge, the capital of ancient Pamphylia in Asia Minor during the Roman period, a few miles north of modern Antalya, Turkey

**Philippi:** a city of ancient Macedonia, near modern Kavála, Greece ([Letter from Paul](#))

**Rome:** the capital of the Roman Empire and Italy, located on the Tiber River. He was executed in Rome ([Letter from Paul](#))

**Salamis:** a town located on the east end of Cyprus, 3 miles north-west of modern Famagusta

**Tarsus:** a city of ancient Cilicia on the river Cnydus near the Mediterranean Sea, southern Turkey

**Thessalonica:** a coastal city of ancient Macedonia, modern Szaloniki in northeastern Greece ([Letter from Paul](#))

**Troas:** on the coast of northern Asia Minor, modern Turkey

**Tyre:** a city on the central coast of ancient Phoenicia, modern Sur in southern Lebanon

of God, the capital of modern Israel

*St. Paul preached the Gospel in 22 cities, however, he did not write a letter to every city, he only wrote to 5 cities (they are bolded in red). The 'Word of God includes both the oral and written revelations of God (cf. 2 Thessalonians 2:15 NAB). There is a theory that says: "We know that Paul wrote at least two other letters to Corinthians (see 1 Cor 5:9; 2 Cor 2:3–4 NAB) in addition to the two that we now have..."<sup>xxvii</sup> However, the early Church deemed that they did not have canonical pedigree.<sup>xxviii</sup>*

Q58) The Bible is the only authoritative source for God's word.

A58) 2 Thessalonians 2:15 (RSV) "So then, brethren, stand firm and hold to the traditions which you were taught by us, either by word of mouth or by letter."

*The traditions that Paul speaks of are those that the Thessalonians were taught, either by spoken word or in the writing of letters. If oral traditions were to be condemned, there would have been a verse to explicitly command this. However, Paul's encouragement to the Thessalonians, to hold on to both the preached and written traditions, supports the Catholic practice and point of view, i.e. God's Word is transmitted to us in both modalities'.*

Rabbi Hayim Donin in his book entitled *To Be A Jew* explains that "we believe that God's will was also made manifest in the Oral Tradition or Oral Torah which also had its source at Sinai, revealed to Moses and then orally taught by him to the religious heads of Israel. The Written Torah itself alludes to such oral instructions. This Oral Torah ('Torah She B'al Peh) which clarifies and provides the details for many of the commandments in the Written Torah ('Sefer Torah'), was transmitted from generation to generation (p.24-25).

Jacob Neusner (Jewish scholar) points out in his introduction to the Mishnah (the codified oral tradition of Judaism) that the oral Torah "bore the status of divine revelation alongside the Pentateuch."

Jeff Cavens (Catholic Bible Scholar) writes: "The Jewish community, from which Christianity sprang, has always understood the Torah to be both written (Sefer Torah) and Oral (Torah She B' al Peh). Along with the written Torah, the Oral Torah which Moses received at Sinai was 'transmitted to Joshua, and Joshua to the Elders, and the Elders to the Prophets, and the Prophets to the Men of the Great Assembly (cf. Ethics of the Fathers 1:1). In nearly identical fashion, the Catholic Church has continued in this tradition of the Word of God coming to His people in both written and oral form. It is fair to say that the new concept of God's Word coming only in written form (Sola Scriptura) was a foreign idea to the Jews both in Moses' and Jesus' day. The Catholic teaching that Sacred Tradition and Sacred Scripture form one sacred deposit of the Word of God (cf. Dei Verbum 10) is not some new, cleverly devised system, but is a continuation of that ancient stream our forefathers stood in. The very idea of the Word of God being both in written and oral flows from our Jewish roots."<sup>xxix</sup>

Q59) Catholic traditions are man-made traditions and are condemned in the Bible.

A59) 2 Thessalonians 3:6 “Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep away from any brother who is living in idleness and not in accord with the tradition that you received from us.”

*Contrary to what many non - Catholics believe, all traditions are not condemned in the Bible. Here St. Paul says to shun those that don't follow the Holy Traditions which have been passed on to them. If all traditions are evil, why would St. Paul be telling Christians to follow them. All traditions are not evil. The Sacred Traditions found in the Catholic Church are those handed on from the apostles and are found in the writings of the early Church Fathers. Sacred Tradition is the communal sacred memory of the Church. “There is no real formation of Christian intelligence without constant recourse to the tradition of our Fathers in the faith” (St. John Paul II). G.K. Chesterton wrote “Tradition means giving votes to the most obscure of all classes, our ancestors. It is the democracy of the dead.”<sup>xxx</sup>*

*Sirach 39:1-2 (RSV) “On the other hand, he who devotes himself to the study of the Law of the Most High will seek out all wisdom of the ancients, and will be concerned with prophecies; he will preserve the discourse of notable men.” This is why Sacred Tradition is so important, the discourse of notable men and wisdom of the ancients are the early Church Fathers.*

Q60) Objection: The Bible is the only authoritative source for God's word.

A60) 2 Timothy 2:2 (RSV) “...and what you have heard from me before many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.”

*St. Paul instructs Timothy to teach others as he taught...by what he heard, not by what he read. This does not discredit the importance of Sacred Scripture, but it does discredit the idea that scripture alone is the only authoritative means in which God communicates to his people. The apostles preached and less than half of them wrote anything, thus establishing both the oral and written traditions used within the Church to hand on the faith to others. This process is called ‘catechesis’ and comes from the Greek verb ‘katekheis’ which means ‘instruction by word of mouth’ and ‘to teach by word of mouth.’*

Q61) The Bible is all we need.

A61) 2 Timothy 3:16-17 (RSV) “All scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.”

*Catholics agree with what this verse is saying...but don't take it to the extreme like some non-Catholic Christians do. It says that sacred scripture is ‘profitable’ to be sure, it does not say that it's all you need. The Bible alone concept is not supported by this verse even though many protestants may try to make a case for it. The Bible is a collection of letters and accounts of what*

*happened throughout Salvation history. It is useful to be sure, but it is not an all-inclusive handbook for being a Christian nor is it a manual on 'how to start your own church.'*

*Ponder this thought, 'Did the 1<sup>st</sup> century Christians bring their bibles to Church?' NO! The Protestant Reformation did not bring back the teaching of 'sola scriptura'; the Protestant Reformation invented it.*

Q62) Objection: The written word of God is the only binding authority for Christians.

A62) 1 Peter 1:25 (RSV) "...but the word of the Lord abides forever. That word is the good news which was preached to you."

*To proclaim the Word is to preach the Word of God. Here St. Peter states that what has been preached is binding upon all those who have heard. They must remain obedient, reverent and practice mutual love. Early Christians didn't have the Holy Bible to carry with them or read from, therefore, St. Peter is saying listen to the preached Word of God. The Catholic Church calls this orally transmitted teaching "Sacred Tradition" and is typically written with a capital "T" to distinguish it from human tradition (small "t").*

Q63) Doesn't Catholic dogma conflict with the Holy Bible?

A63) Not at all. Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger who became Pope Benedict XVI (in an article written in 1983 *Le Documentatcion Catolique*) wrote – "Dogma is the Church's interpretation of scripture." Dr. Scott Hahn states, "So if you're interpreting scripture in a way that conflicts with the Church's dogma, you're not just conflicting with the Church's dogma because the Church's dogma is by definition nothing other than the Church's interpretation of scripture."<sup>xxx</sup> *The word 'dogma' is found in scripture in Acts 16:4 (read Q17, A17).*

Q64) The Holy Spirit will guide each Christian in understanding the Holy Bible, I don't need a Church!

A64) 2 Peter 1:20-21 (RSV) "First of all you must understand this, that no prophecy of scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, because no prophecy ever came by the impulse of man, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God."

*This verse (cross referenced with John 14:16, 26; 16:13) tells us that Jesus was referring to the apostles in context. Jesus never told the multitudes that the Holy Spirit would guide them individually apart from the Church. The Holy Spirit guides us individual Christians through the Church. We are to rely upon the infallible teaching of the Church that has been handed down to us through apostolic succession for nearly 2,000 years. Personal interpretation of the Holy Bible leads to division, not unity. How many different protestant denominations claim to have the true Gospel? There are thousands of protestant denominations, they all can't be right. Which one is*



*the true Church? Not the ones founded in the Americas or in 16<sup>th</sup> century Europe, but the one founded by Jesus Christ nearly 2,000 years ago in the Holy Land - Israel.*

Q65) The Holy Spirit will guide each Christian in understanding the Holy Bible.

A65) 2 Peter 3:16 (RSV) "...speaking of this as he does in all his letters. There are some things in them hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other scriptures."

*This is a severe warning to those who try to understand the scripture on their own, especially those who are ignorant or unstable. Misinterpreting scripture can lead to the destruction of your soul. Looking to the Church to provide us with infallible teaching is our assurance of finding the truth in scripture. Reading scripture on our own is highly encouraged but it must be done in the light of Catholic doctrine and with the heart of the Church. Use the Catechism of the Catholic Church when you study the Bible as a cross reference.*

Q66) The Catholic Church is not infallible, only Jesus is infallible!

A66) Jesus is infallible, but Jesus also entrusted infallible truth to His Church (Matthew 16:18; 1 Timothy 3:15; John 14:26 NAB) which mean his apostles and their successors would speak on his behalf on earth about his infallible teachings (Luke 10:16; Matthew 10:40; 2 Timothy 2:2 NAB). If you think about it, the Scriptures are infallible, so this means the writers of Sacred Scripture also had to be infallible at least for the limited time they wrote, if not longer.

Q67) The Bible makes no sense to me, what is its basic message?

A67) *The four C's of classical Biblical Salvation history are:*

**Creation (Genesis 1)** - *this refers to acts by which God brought into being time, matter, energy, space, and life, all working together in a paradise of perfect peace according to His divine plan and purpose.*

**Corruption (Genesis 3)** – *this refers to how the effects of human evil starting with the original sin of Adam & Eve ruined God's handiwork, bringing disease, disaster, and death.*

**Catastrophe (Genesis 7)** – *this refers to the worldwide flood by which God destroyed the wickedness of the ancient world to give it a fresh start. Noah and his family in the ark were the only ones saved from the flood waters.*

**Christ (Luke 1)** – *this refers to the Son of God who conquered death by his resurrection, and who is coming again to restore paradise lost. He merited for us eternal life in His Kingdom both now and forever in the "new heavens and earth."*

*"The Bible is a drama in four acts: Creation, Fall, Redemption and Glory. God created all things with Adam and Eve at the pinnacle, making a covenant with them, but then Adam and Eve fell, introducing both moral and natural evils in creation. God then began the process of redemption, instituting a sacred, covenantal family running from Adam and Eve through Noah*

*and Abraham to Jacob, who becomes 'Israel,' the father of the twelve sons who become the twelve tribes. Israel's sacred covenantal line culminates in Jesus, the ideal Israelite, who founded the Catholic Church. The Church looks forward to Glory: the End, Judgment Day, the Second Coming. And the story does not stop. For Catholics, the story continues in the present as we await the consummation of the world. The Old Testament foreshadows the New, and the New is celebrated in the Mass. God delivers the Israelites by means of the Passover Lamb; Jesus institutes the Eucharist and dies as the new Passover Lamb; Catholics behold and receive Jesus, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, in Holy Mass.* <sup>xxxii</sup>

*For most Americans, the Bible is a source of divine inspiration, moral guidance, and the foundation of Western civilization.*

Q68) The Bible makes no sense, what is its basic message in 50 words or less?

A68) The Bible in Fifty Words:

God made - Adam bit - Noah arked - Abraham split - Joseph ruled - Jacob fooled - Bush talked - Moses balked - Pharaoh plagued - People walked - Sea divided - Tablets guided - Promise landed - Saul freaked - David peeked - Prophets warned - Jesus born - God walked - Love talked - Anger crucified - Hope died - Love rose - Spirit flamed - Word spread - God remained!

Q69) No respectable Scientist would ever read or believe in the stories of the Bible!

A69) Albert Einstein (the greatest Scientist in the 20<sup>th</sup> century) said: "Unquestionably! No one can read the Gospels without feeling the actual presence of Jesus. His personality pulsates in every word. No myth is filled with such life." <sup>xxxiii</sup>

Q70) What would you say to a lukewarm tepid Catholic in order to encourage him / her to read the Bible?

A70) *The regular use of this Holy Bible book has been known to cause radical positive, life changing alterations. All other books are words of information, but the Holy Bible is a book of transformation! We need to know the Word of God so that we can know the God that is the Word (made flesh). When we pray we speak to God, when we read the Holy Bible, God speaks to us. This book, the Holy Bible will keep you from sin, but sin will keep you from this Holy book because the Bible is a "weapon of mass instruction." The Holy Bible is a window in this prison world through which we may look into eternity. No man is uneducated who knows the Bible, and no one is wise who is ignorant of its teachings. Pray to the Holy Spirit and ask him to speak to you through the Word of God. If you do this with humility and piety, the black and white words on the pages of Scripture suddenly shine like a neon sign with a here and now message. Finally, read the Bible with the heart of the Catholic Church.*

The word Bible stands for:  
Basic  
Instruction  
Before

Leaving  
Earth.

*Make it a point to read the daily Mass readings of the Church (everyday). When you carry the Bible, Satan gets a headache. When you open it, he collapses. When he sees you reading it, he faints! Fr. Larry Richard (EWTN personality) tells his parishioners: “No bible, no breakfast, no bible, no bed.” Great advice.*

Q71) Give me the best reason why I should read the Bible?

A71) *“Ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of Christ” (St. Jerome – 4<sup>th</sup> century). It would stand to reason that the opposite is also true; ‘Knowledge of Scripture is knowledge of Christ.’ And Jesus Christ is the way, the truth and the life, nobody goes to heaven but through Jesus (cf. John 14:6).*

Q72) How many verses are there in the Catholic Bible?

A72) There are 27,579 verses in the Old Testament and 7,956 verses in the New Testament – for a total number of 35,535 verses in the Catholic Bible (NAB).

Q73) Can I regard the Bible like my weapon?

A73) Yes, much like a soldier and marine regard their rifle as their weapon, we must regard our Bible as our weapon.

This is my Rifle. There are many like it but this one is mine. My rifle is my best friend. It is my life. I must master it as I master my life.

My rifle without me is useless. Without my rifle, I am useless. I must fire my rifle better. I must shoot straighter than any enemy who is trying to kill me. I must shoot him before he shoots me. I will...

My rifle and I know that what counts in this war is not the rounds we fire, the noise of our burst, nor the smoke we make. We know it is the hits that count. We will hit...

My rifle is human, even as I, because it is my life. Thus, I will learn it as a brother. I will learn its weaknesses, its strengths, its parts, its accessories, its sights and its barrel. I will keep my rifle clean and ready, even as I am clean and ready. We will become part of each other. We will...

Before God I swear this creed. My rifle and I are the defenders of my country. We are the masters of our enemy. We are the saviors of my life.

So be it, until victory is America's, and there is no enemy, but Peace...

*This is my Bible. There are many like it, but this one is mine. My Bible is the Word of God, a mighty sword. He is my life. He must be the master of my life while I must submit my life to Him.*

*My Bible, unread by me is useless, as I too will become useless. I must read God's letter. I must use my sword in immortal combat against an enemy who is trying to destroy me. I must stand firm in the Word of God. I will...*

*My Bible says, and I know, that what counts in this war is not the sound of my prayers, the noise of my song, nor the smoke of the altar. We know that it is the word of my testimony and the blood of Christ (cf. Revelation 12:11). I will proclaim...*

*My Bible is the living breathe of God. He is my life. Thus, I will learn it as the foundation of my life. I will learn of my weakness, my strength in Christ, the grace He has imparted, the access to His throne room, and that I am blameless in His sight. I will keep my heart clean and ready, for the pure in heart will see God. Christ, the Word made flesh has indwelled me. He has...*

*Before God I make this claim. God's Word will endure forever. He is the defender of His children. He is the master over the enemy. He is the Savior of my life.*

*So be it, for the enemy is defeated, victory is His – the Prince of Peace.*

Q74) How could reading the Bible affect a Society?

A74) *"All the troubles of the Church, all the evils in the world flow from this source, that men do not by clear and sound knowledge and serious consideration penetrate into the truths of Sacred Scripture" (Saint Teresa of Avila – Doctor of the Church).*

## **WORD OF GOD**

### *Catholics*

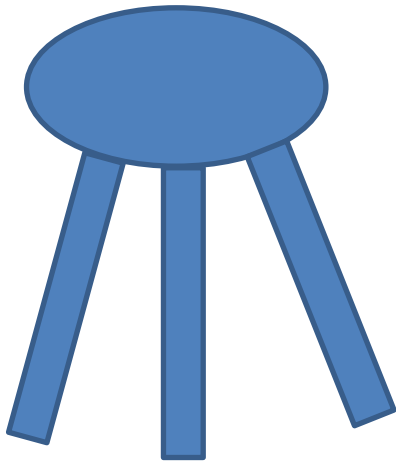
*Sacred Scripture  
Sacred Tradition  
Magisterium*

### *Protestants*

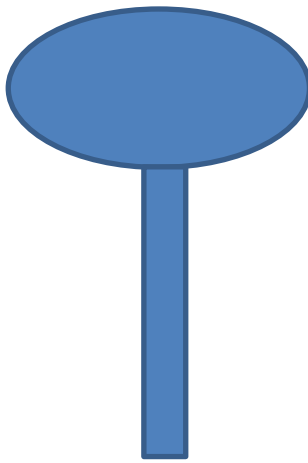
*Sacred Scripture Alone  
Personal Interpretation*

### *Secular Humanist*

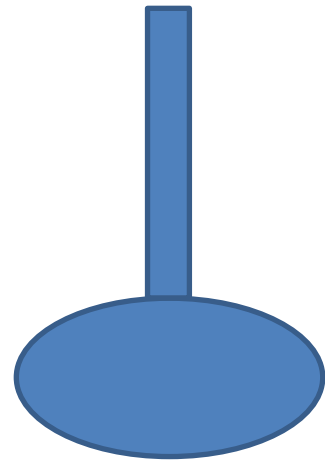
*God doesn't exist. The Bible  
is just a myth & simply religious  
literature. Reason & empiricism  
Are supreme. They refer to  
themselves as 'enlightenment  
thinkers.'*



*Catholics continue  
to believe that God  
speaks to us through  
Scripture, Tradition  
& the Magisterium.  
We sit on a firm  
foundation*



*Protestants deny & rebel  
against the authority of  
the Catholic Church and  
believe in the Bible Alone  
which is the cause of why  
there are so many  
denominations.*



*Secular Humanist  
deny the supernatural  
& spiritual. They  
only believe in what  
they can see & they  
also deny the  
authority of the  
Church because  
of its moral code.*

## WORD OF GOD – ‘LOGOS, RHEMA & GRAPHE’

Q75) The Bible is the ‘Word of God’, period, that’s it, end of discussion!

A75) Amongst Protestant Fundamentalist there is confusion in the use and translation of the phrase "the Word of God." Protestant Fundamentalist often interpret this term as automatically meaning the Holy Bible. The term, "the Word of God" is the English translation from the original Greek language used in the writings of the New Testament canon, the original text must be examined in order to determine the context as to what the sacred authors meant.

Q76) So, what does the phrase ‘Word of God’ mean in the Holy Bible?

A76) There are two Greek words used in the New Testament that have been translated over 40 times into the "Word of God." They are Logos and rhema. One of the most familiar verses in the New Testament is John 1:1 (RSV): "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." The Greek word used for the "Word of God" in this verse is Logos. Greeks saw the Logos as the core of the universe and defined it as the divine being of God. John used this Greek word to show that Christ was the ultimate and complete revelation of God incarnate. So, in this case, when Christ is identified as "the Word," it means that He is the way in which the Father gave us the fullness of revelation (Hebrews 1:1-2 RSV). In giving us His Son, the Word, Christ has said everything in regards to our salvation. Therefore when "the Word of God" is translated from Logos, it refers to Christ or His authority in delivering the message of salvation.<sup>xxxiv</sup>

Q77) The Bible describes itself as a *living and effective...two edged sword*?

A77) One verse often misinterpreted is Hebrews 4:12: "The word of God is living and effective, sharper than any two-edged sword..." A common interpretation of "the Word of God" in this verse is the Bible. However, this verse identifies the "Word of God" as Logos which, just as in John 1, refers to Christ and not the Bible. In this case, we can also let the Bible interpret itself by looking further at verse 13. It verifies that the "Word of God" in the previous verse means Christ because it says the Word is a "him."<sup>xxxv</sup>

Q78) Is there a Greek word which refers to the oral transmission of the message of Christ?

A78) Yes, the second Greek word translated into the "Word of God" is rhema. This word is different from Logos because it is not used to identify Christ, but rather the transmission of what Christ taught. In other words, this term defined how the message of Christ was passed on in the early Church.<sup>xxxvi</sup>

In order to get a better understanding of this, it is important to remember how Christ's message was transmitted. Christ gave the command to his disciples in Mathew 28:20 to go out into the world and teach people. We know this was done verbally because the first letter that Paul wrote, which became part of the Bible, did not occur for about 20 years after this commission. The early Christian Gospel was primarily proclaimed orally. Many years later when some of the

teachings of the apostles were written, they were used in conjunction with the verbal message for instructing the early Christians.<sup>xxxvii</sup>

Q79) When the Gospel is preached (the Oral Tradition), is this modality also known as the Word of God?

A79) This mode of transmission is called 'Tradition.' It was the authoritative way in which Christ's message was first delivered. Paul, in 2 Thessalonians 2:15 (NAB), gives us a great interpretation of Tradition: "Hold fast to the traditions that you were taught, either by an oral statement or by a letter of ours." 'Tradition' is Christ's authoritative teachings in both verbal and written form. As a result, when the word **rhema** was used, it meant the oral message of Christ along with some of the written letters. The apostles and their successors did not have a complete Bible to teach from because it was not canonized until approximately 400 A.D.<sup>xxxviii</sup> Here is a classic example of 'Oral Tradition' or **rhema**. "We give thanks to God unceasingly, that in receiving the word of God from hearing us, you received not a human word but, as it truly is, the word of God, which is now at work in you who believe (1 Thessalonians 2:13)."

Q80) Is there Biblical evidence that Christ's message was initially transmitted orally?

A80) One of the many verses that show how Christ's message was initially transmitted is Hebrews 13:7 (RSV): "Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God; consider the outcome of their life, and imitate their faith." The "Word of God" here is the spoken truth that refers to the authoritative Tradition in oral form. Here is another example of the 'oral preaching' of the Gospel, "We have therefore sent Judas and Silas, who themselves will tell you the same things by word of mouth (Acts 15:27 RSV)."<sup>xxxix</sup>

Q81) Doesn't St. Paul call the Holy Bible the *sword of the Spirit*?

A81) No, people mistakenly believe that the phrase *sword of the Spirit* means the canonized Bible. Ephesians 6:17 reads: "Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." Here "the word of God" is translated from the word **rhema**. This verse is interpreted as the 'oral Tradition' which means Christ's message in both oral and written form. Again it would be impossible for the complete Bible to be interpreted as the "Word of God" here because it was not in existence until the 4<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>xl</sup>

Q82) When does the Holy Bible refer to the written Word of God?

A82) When a New Testament author wanted to specifically refer to the written Scripture rather than both the oral and written Traditions, the Greek word, **graphe** was used. So, when they wanted to identify collectively all of the books that were considered part of the Old Testament Scripture, they used this term more commonly than the Word of God. An example is 2 Timothy 3:16 where he says, "All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful in teaching . . . ." Here Paul uses the word, **graphe** to refer to the collection of inspired books that made up the Scriptures of his time which was only the Old Testament.<sup>xli</sup>

Q83) I think that every time the Holy Bible mentioned the phrase *the Word of God*, that was a reference to the Holy Bible?

A83) Often people think the phrase, "the Word of God" in the Scriptures mostly refers to the Holy Bible. When attention is paid to the context of the passage and the original text, we see that most of the time the phrase "the Word of God" does not refer to the Bible, but to something else such as Christ, His authority, or the authoritative Traditions in both oral and written form.<sup>xlii</sup>

Q84) Please give me clarity on this term *the Word of God* from the Holy Bible?

A84) We need both, the spoken 'Word of God' (*rhema*) in addition to the written 'Word of God', the 'Scriptures' (*graphe*) to learn more about the 'Word of God' (*Logos*) made flesh (Jesus Christ) and have a personal covenant relationship with Him. Five Gospels record the life of Jesus. Four you will find in the Holy Bible, and the fifth you will find in the Holy Land. According to Holy Land experts Fr. Mitch Pacwa and Steve Ray, if you go to the Holy Land, the world of the other four Gospels will open up to you.

Q85) What about the word "homily", is that word in the Bible or did Catholics just make it up?

A85) The word homily is derived from the Greek word ὁμιλία *homilia* (from ὁμιλεῖν *homilein*), which means to have communion or hold verbal intercourse with a person.<sup>xliii</sup> In this sense *homilia* is used in 1 Corinthians 15:33. In Luke 24:14, we find the word *homiloun*, and in Acts 24:26, *homilei*, both used in the sense of "speaking with" ...It is the oldest form of Christian preaching.<sup>xliv</sup>



## **MARY & THE SAINTS**

Q86) Mary was not born sinless for the Bible says, “all have sinned.”

A86) Genesis 3:15 (RSV) “I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.”

Let’s break this verse down: “I (God the Father) will put enmity (total separation) between you (Devil) and the woman (Mary), and between your seed (Devils followers) and her seed (Jesus); he (Jesus) shall bruise your head (Devil), and you (Devil) shall bruise his heel” (Jesus body which is the Church).

*This verse is a prophecy which implies that Mary would be without original and actual sin. Not only do we have the Virgin Birth here implied, because the text says the Messiah would be born of “the seed of the woman” (the “seed” is normally of the man), but notice “the woman” is not included as “the seed” of the devil. She—along with “her seed,” which is Christ—is portrayed to be in a separate category. Both the woman and her seed are revealed to be in opposition to the devil and the devil’s seed, i.e., all who have original sin and are “by nature children of wrath” as St. Paul describes this fallen state in Ephesians 2:3 (RSV). Moreover, “the woman” seems to have a prominence in the text that is quite unsettling. “The seed” of the woman, which again is Christ himself, is only mentioned in relation to her. While there can be no doubt that “the seed” of the woman is Jesus Christ, who is shown to be in absolute opposition to the devil, and therefore, free from sin. However, the emphasis of the text seems to be on “the woman.” Hence, it certainly seems fitting that both “the woman” and “her seed” would be free from ever having been “by nature, children of wrath.” Ergo, both would be free from all sin.*

*Moreover, we know that babies and mentally ill people have not committed actual sin, so the “all have sinned” does not mean every single person.*

Q87) The Bible says Jesus had brothers.

A87) Genesis 14:14 (Douay Rheims) “Which when Abram had heard that his brother Lot was taken captive, he numbered of the servants born in his house, three hundred and eighteen, well appointed; and pursued them to Dan.”

*In most translations the verse will refer to Lot as Abram’s “brother,” but we know he is the son of Abrams brother Haran. There are no Hebrew words for “cousin” or “nephew”, therefore the term “brother” was commonly used. Some translations will more appropriately use the term “kinsman” to indicate a family relationship.*

Q88) Matthew 1:25 (NAB) indicates that Joseph and Mary had marital relations after Jesus birth. She had a number of other children by Joseph, her husband. *This fact is clearly expressed* by the statement that Jesus was her “firstborn son” and that Joseph “knew her not *until*” Christ was born.

A88) If Jesus was the “firstborn,” wouldn’t this imply *at least* a *second-born*? The answer is No. Exodus 13:1-2 (NAB) tells us something very important about the “firstborn” in Israel: ‘The Lord said to Moses, “Consecrate to me all the firstborn; whatever is the first to open the womb among the people of Israel, both of man and beast, is mine.”’

Notice, an Israelite baby is not called “firstborn” because there is a “second-born.” They are called firstborn at birth, because they were the 1<sup>st</sup> child to open the mother’s womb. They would still be called 1<sup>st</sup> born even if they are an only child. Moreover, “firstborn” is a title that does not necessarily have anything to do with time at all. In Colossians 1:15-17 (NAB), Jesus is referred to as the “firstborn” of God the Father in eternity.

“He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation; for in him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.”

In the verse above, Christ is referred to as first-born (Gr.—*prototokos*<sup>xlv</sup>) from all eternity. Time is not even a consideration here, because God is outside of time. It is a title representing a primacy of place. Christ is clearly said to be the eternal firstborn, not because there is a second-born or third-born of the Father. No, the Son is the *only begotten* of the Father in eternity as John 3:16 (Douay Rheims) reveals, yet he is still referred to as “firstborn” before time and creation.

“Begotten” is also the Greek word “monogenes” which means, unique, only, one of a kind<sup>xlvi</sup> as we see in John 1:14 (Douay Rheims).

When a protestant claims that “he [Joseph] knew her not until she had borne a son”, this means he *did* eventually *know* her sexually (according to Protestants).

But this implication is unfounded. The word “until” in Matthew 1:25 (NAB) does not imply that Mary and Joseph had relations after Christ. In the Bible the word “until” means that some action did or did not occur up to a certain point. This verse shows that usage. The word “until” is the Greek conjunction “heos” which does not imply a reversal of the prior situation. Uses of the word “until” in similar idiomatic expressions are found all over Scripture. At times, we use it this way in English as well.

- For example, I may say to a friend, “*Until* we meet again, God bless you.” Would that necessarily mean, “*After* we meet again, God curse you?” Or, “*After* we meet again, I want that blessing to stop!” Of course not! The word “until” did not change my intention in this example.
- Here is another example, “My Dad was faithful until he died!” It doesn’t imply he was unfaithful after he died, that’s impossible. The word “until” means ‘up to this point,’ that’s all it means.

I could accumulate countless instances of this usage. Here are some obvious biblical examples:

1. 2 Samuel 6:23 (KJV): “Therefore Michal the daughter of Saul had no child unto (*until*) the day of her death.” *Does this mean she had children after she died? Of course not, that’s impossible.*
2. I Timothy 4:13 (RSV): “Till I come, attend to the public reading of scripture, to preaching, to teaching.” *Does this mean Timothy should stop teaching after St. Paul arrives? Of course not, St. Paul wants him to continue preaching every day in season and out of season.*
3. I Corinthians 15:25 (RSV): “For he (Christ) must reign *until* he has put all his enemies under his feet.” *Does this mean Christ’s reign will end after He has put all His enemies under his feet at the General Judgment? By no means! Luke 1:33 (RSV) says, “He will reign over the house of Jacob forever and of his kingdom there shall be no end.”*
4. Matthew 28:20 (NAB): “And behold, I am with you always, [*until*] the end of the age.” *Does this verse mean Christ will not be with us after the end of the (earth) age? Of course not! He will always be with us and never leave us or forsake us.*

*These are examples of how the word “until” is used and the action of the main clause continues beyond the main clause, rather than ceasing and changing direction. The protestant understanding of the word “until” can lead to other misinterpretations. This is evident in the protestant interpretation of Matthew 1:25 (NAB). Mary and Joseph did not have marital relations after the birth of Jesus Christ so therefore they had no other children. It’s interesting to note that the Bible never uses the phrase “the children of Mary” or “the children of Joseph & Mary.” Why? Because she was a perpetual virgin before, during and after the birth of the Son of God.*

Q89) A Protestant quoted Mark 6:3-4 (RSV) to argue that Mary had other children. It reads, “Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of **James** and **Joses** and **Judas** and **Simon**, and are not his sisters here with us?” And they took offense at him. And Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honor, except in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house.”

A89) Point #1 – the Bible never, never, never says “the children of Mary” or “the children of Joseph” anywhere.

Point #2 - In biblical languages, the word ‘brother’ has a wide semantic range, it was used for many relationships that were not brothers. For example: King Solomon is calling his girlfriend my ‘sister’ in Song of Solomon 4: 9-10, 5: 1. We see Abraham calling his nephew Lot my brother in Genesis 13: 8, 14: 14 yet that was his nephew, we know this from Genesis 11: 27, 12: 5. In Acts 1: 14-16 the disciples are called the ‘brothers’ of the apostles and Jesus.

Point #3 - Galatians 1:19 (RSV) – it says that **James** (the lesser) is the ‘brother’ of the Lord, but in Matthew 10: 2-3 (RSV) we have the list of the apostles and both **James** are mentioned and none of them is the son of **Joseph**. **James** the greater is the son of Zebedee and **James** the lesser

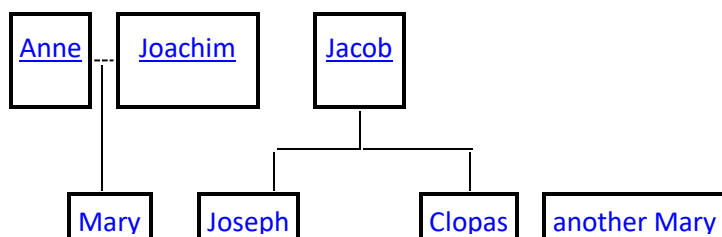
is the son of Alphaeus. In other words, they are not the son of Joseph and therefore they are not the sons of Mary. They are not the blood brothers of Jesus. These two are the only '**James**' mentioned in the N.T. James the lesser (son of Alphaeus) who wrote the book of **James**, and in chapter 1 verse 1 he calls himself a servant of Jesus and in verse 2 he calls all the believers 'brothers.'

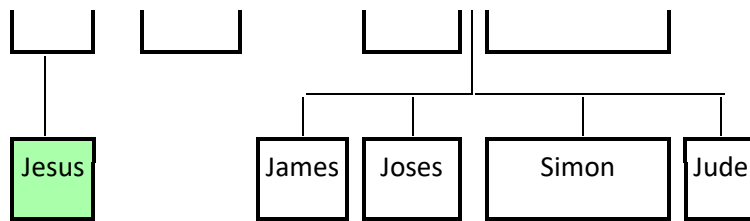
Point #4 - The next alleged blood brother called **Jose**: In the Orient, the Jews, the Arabs, the Palestinians and Lebanese never give their children their father's name. In the Semitic culture it is forbidden to name a child after a living parent.<sup>xlvi</sup> This is completely opposite the American experience where we have 'Juniors' or the 1<sup>st</sup>, or the 2<sup>nd</sup> or the 3<sup>rd</sup>. This is common for us, however in the bible you will never find a Jewish person giving his son his very own name. This Jewish custom would indicate that **Jose** (abbreviation of Joseph) could not be Joseph's son, therefore not Mary's son either. Jose is not a blood brother of Jesus. Ask a Protestant to show you one instance in the bible where a Jewish father gives his very own name to his son, it is found nowhere. Furthermore, we know that Joseph was a 'righteous man' (Matthew 1: 19 NAB), that is, he was a faithful Jew to God, his religion and Jewish tradition. Now here is a biblical argument: In Matthew 27:56 & Mark 15:40 **Joseph** is the brother of **James** (the lesser), which means they are sons of Alphaeus. If he is a son of Alphaeus who was married to another Mary, who [per tradition] was the sister of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Point #5 - The next alleged blood brother called **Judas**: We see that in Acts 1:13, **Judas** is the son of **James** (RSV). It says **Jude** of **James** (in the Douay Rheims translation), which means brother of **James**. Now we know that none of the **James**'s in the bible are blood brothers of Jesus. Therefore, if **Judas** is a son of **James** or brother of **James** he is not a blood brother of Jesus. In fact in Jude 1 he calls himself a servant of Jesus and brother of **James**. Now, if he was Jesus blood brother, he certainly would have mentioned it in this letter.

Point #6 - The last alleged blood brother called **Simon**: He is not mentioned in any other verse of the Bible. What we do know is from tradition<sup>xlvi</sup> is that he was a cousin of Jesus, son of Alphaeus who was a brother of St. Joseph. The Roman Martyrology says that Simon of Jerusalem was the son of Clophas, the brother of St. Joseph.<sup>xlvi</sup> It is also possible that **Simon** is the Apostle known as **Simon** the Canaanite [Matthew 10: 4, Mark 3: 18], who is also called **Simon** the Zealot [Luke 6: 16, Acts 1: 13]. In other words, he is not a son of Joseph of Mary. The Protestant historian Finis Jennings Dake affirms in his 'Annotated Study Bible' that **Simon** is the cousin of Jesus.

In the article "The 'Brethren of the Lord'" in *A Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture*<sup>1</sup>, gives the following tree.





Point #7 - The same understanding is true for the word *sister*, it was also used in a wide semantic range. For example, in the Gospel of John 19:25 (NAB), Mary of Clopas is called "the sister" of Mary, the Mother of Jesus. Obviously, St. Ann and St. Joachim would not have named two daughters "Mary"; instead, the "sister" used here denotes a cousin relationship.

Q90) How could Mary have been taken directly to heaven?

A90) 2 Kings 2:11 (RSV) "And as they still went on and talked, behold, a chariot of fire and horses of fire separated the two of them. And Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven."

*There were assumptions that took place in the Old Testament, for example Enoch (Genesis 5:24 RSV) and Elijah were taken directly to heaven (body & soul). The Catholic Church teaches that Mary was also taken to heaven. Note the word "taken;" God did it, not Mary. The difference needs to be made between "ascension" and "assumption." Jesus ascended; Mary was assumed into heaven from what is now the 'Church of the Dormition of Mary' in Jerusalem, "where the Virgin Mary is said to have fallen asleep for the last time, just before she was taken into Heaven"<sup>li</sup> body and soul at the end of her earthly life. We call this the Assumption of Mary. "In the basement of this Church there is a statue of the sleeping Holy Mother."<sup>lii</sup> This also explains why there are no bodily relics of Mary as are typically prevalent with other saints, the reason being is that she is in heaven with her body.*

Q91) Objection: "Why do Catholics call Mary *the Mother of God*?"

A91) Matthew 1:23 (RSV) "Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and his name shall be called 'Emmanuel'" (which means, 'God with us').

*Matthew quotes Isaiah 7:14 (RSV) which foretold the birth of Jesus Christ. The verse states that the child's name means "God with us." The mother of this child must be the mother of God with us, i.e. Jesus. Mary is the mother of Jesus and therefore the Mother of God. Catholics honor Mary in the same way Jesus honors her. Jesus kept the fourth commandment (honor your father and mother) perfectly, dishonoring your parents was a sin for the Jews (Deuteronomy 21:18-21; Leviticus 20:9 RSV) and He never sinned (cf. Hebrews 4:15 RSV). We as members of the body of Christ are called to imitate Jesus Christ (cf. 1 Corinthians 11:1 RSV), and we do so by honoring*

*His Mother, Mary. Jesus calls us his brothers (Hebrews 2:11-12; 17 RSV) therefore Mary is our Mother in the order of grace.*

Q92) When Catholics pray to Mary and the saints, they are praying to dead people, this is condemned in Deuteronomy 18:10-11.

A92) Matthew 22:31-32 (RSV) Jesus said: "And as for the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was said to you by God, 'I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? He is not God of the dead, but of the living."

*The holy people (or saints) who have gone before us to the Father are more alive than we are. As this verse says, God is the God of the living not of the dead. Jesus makes this clear by naming Abraham, Isaac & Jacob as being alive. Deuteronomy 18:11(RSV) forbids the conjuring of spirits from the dark underworld (sheol) in order to talk with them through a medium (ie. séance or the ouija board). This is not what the Catholic Church teaches or practices. We are asking fellow members of the Body of Christ who have achieved their heavenly goal to pray for us. That's their primary ministry at this point in heaven, all the saints are assigned the ministry of intercession (praying for us) in heaven. We do "pray to her" (cf. CCC 2679).*

Q93) Objection: Catholics practice vain repetitious prayer condemned in Matthew 6:7 (NAB).

A93) Matthew 26:44 (RSV) "So, leaving them again, he went away and prayed for the third time, saying the same words."

*It is true that sacred scripture condemns vain repetitious prayer. The rosary, though it contains many of the same prayers, is not in vain, just as Jesus prayers identified in this verse were not vain. If the mind and heart are focused on God, who can say these prayers are in vain. Most people who attack the rosary don't understand it is a prayer of meditation upon the mysteries of the life of Jesus Christ. Frequent meditation upon these mysteries can only draw one closer to Jesus Christ. Try it and see! The chosen people of God and Our Lord Jesus were Jews, they prayed repetitious prayers during Jewish Liturgies. We meditate upon the life of Christ and His Mother because scripture tells us to meditate upon "whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, whatever is worthy...if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things (Philippians 4:8 NAB)."*

Q94) I admit that the 'Our Father' is in the Bible, but the 'Hail Mary' was invented by you Catholics, it's not biblical?

A94) Not true, here you go: "Hail (Mary), full of grace, the Lord is with you" (Luke 1:28). "Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb (Jesus)" (v.42). Holy Mary – "you have found favor with God" (v.30), Mother of God – "mother of my Lord" (v.43) – "pray for us sinners" - "pray for us (sinners),(Colossians 3:4; 1 Thessalonians 5:25; 2 Thessalonians 3:1)."

*Pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death:* By asking Mary to pray for us, we acknowledge ourselves to be poor sinners and we address ourselves to the "Mother of Mercy," the All-Holy One. We give ourselves over to her now, in the today of our lives. And our trust broadens further, already at the present moment, to surrender "the hour of our death" wholly to her care. May she be there as she was at her son's death on the cross. May she welcome us as our mother at the hour of our passing to lead us to her son, Jesus, in paradise (CCC 2677).

One of the most powerful means of private devotion for increase in grace is the Holy Rosary. It is a complete meditation on holiness — the holiness of the life of Our Blessed Lord, delivered to us by Our Blessed Mother, who is always presenting to us Her Divine Son. The holy rosary prayed properly is the Christian meditation on the life of Christ through the eyes of Our Lady – and the Bible says, “Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things (Philippians 4:8 RSV).” *Our Lord & Our Lady are all these things, true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, gracious, excellent, praiseworthy – therefore we think about them in the holy rosary.*

Psalm 63:6 (RSV) “...I think of thee upon my bed and meditate on thee in the watches of the night.”

Q95) The Bible says Jesus had brothers.

A95) Matthew 27:56 (RSV) “among whom were Mary Mag’dalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of the sons of Zeb’edee.”

*The verse shows that some of those identified as Jesus brothers in Matthew 13:55-56, were not his brothers but most likely his cousins. There was no word in Hebrew for cousin or near relatives, so the Jews just used the word brother(s) for these relationships. This occurrence is not uncommon in the Bible. Genesis 14:14 refers to Lot as Abrahams brother but we know he is Abraham’s nephew from Genesis 11:27. A similar practice exists even today of referring to people in the congregation as “brother” or “sister.” Moreover, Protestants, Muslims, Jews, Policemen, Firemen, Marines, Soldiers, Football Players, Wrestlers, Bikers, Gang members et al. refer to each other as brothers, yet they don’t come from the same uterine Mother.*

Q96) Those in heaven can’t hear our prayers, they’re dead.

A96) Mark 12:26-27 (NAB) “And as for the dead being raised, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the passage about the bush, how God said to him, ‘I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?’ He is not God of the dead, but of the living; you are quite wrong.”

*The saints in heaven are more alive and aware of what's going on than we are. They're not separated from the Body of Christ but actually, more united to Him and therefore more united to us. Their love for us is now totally pure and they desire God's blessings and salvation for us. Asking them to pray for us is similar to asking a holy friend to pray for us. It is precisely because of the mediation of Christ that we can pray for each other because 'we are in Christ (cf. 1 Corinthians 12:27; Colossians 3:3 NAB)'. Yes, Christ is the one mediator between God and man, but "we share in Christ (Hebrews 3:14 NAB)," therefore we also share in His mediation (in a subordinate role).*

- *Dwight L. Moody: "One day you'll hear that Dwight L. Moody is dead. Don't believe it for a moment. I'll be more alive than ever."*
- *Hank Hanegraaff, the (protestant) Bible Answer Man: speaking about his deceased Father wrote: "Today, Dad is more alive than he ever was on this earth. And this is just the beginning, the best is yet to come."<sup>liii</sup>*

*James White (Protestant apologist) at the Great debate; Long Island New York against Patrick Madrid (Catholic apologist), July 2002. A question from the audience was directed to James White. "If Mary and the other saints supposedly can't handle all our prayers from us on earth because they are not God, how is it then possible for satan to tempt all of us as constantly and consistently as he does? Do you believe satan to be omniscient?"*

*James White: "No it is through his demons."*

*Patrick Madrid: "This is a clear example of dodging a bullet because that question was right on target. In other words, the devil is a creature, and St. Peter tells us in his 2 Epistle "Satan is like a roaring lion prowling around" he doesn't say satan and his crew, but satan himself, the devil. So, there is a unique and personal quality to satan and the individual being himself carries out, and the questioner was absolutely right. This is something that is going on, on a global scale, effecting billions of people, and Dr. White just dodged the bullet by saying it's the demons doing it. I think everyone in the room understands the force of the question, that a creature is performing an incredible action that we can't understand how it can be done but the fact is this creature is capable of doing it and the extension of that thought is that the saints in Heaven even more so because they are in Christ and through his grace are capable of doing astounding things.*

*Ephesians 3:20 (RSV) "Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think..." This is why we believe that the saints can hear us from heaven and pray for us, precisely because of the power of God working in them, enables them to do far more for us than we can even think of or imagine.*

*Q97) Do the saints know what's happening on planet earth?*

*A97) God has joy in heaven over the conversion of a sinner (cf. Matt 18:13). God shares his joy with us & the saints in heaven (cf. John 15:11; 16:20-24; 17:13). They (saints & angels) rejoice in*



heaven over the conversion of a sinner (cf. Luke 15:7). The Bible tells us there are angels in heaven in Luke 15:10 and saints in heaven in Revelation 6:9-11; 7:9-10. *Jesus says in heaven they rejoice which indicates that they can see and hear us. The souls in heaven have a concern for us below and rejoice at our repentance. They're aware of what's happening on earth, remember, the saints make up that 'great cloud of witnesses that surround us (cf. Hebrews 12:1 NAB)'. We don't know the mechanics of how this happens, but we know from scripture that it happens. Here is clear evidence.*

Revelation 5:13 "Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, everything in the universe, cry out: "To the one who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor, glory and might, forever and ever." Notice John hears EVERY creature in heaven and on earth and he is not omniscient (only God is). In fact, John is sitting in a prison on the Island of Patmos as he writes this. Yet, by divine permission John who is still alive on earth, or maybe caught up in heaven temporarily in ecstasy is able to hear EVERYONE. This demonstrates that Our Lady and the saints in heaven, by divine permission are able to hear our prayers on earth as well.

Q98) Why are the prayers of the saints in heaven more powerful than the people at my church?

A98) The saints are citizens of heaven (cf. Phil 3:20 NAB). They have face to face fellowship with God (cf. 1 Cor 13:12 NAB). God gives the saints his glory (cf. John 17:22). The saints are "spirits of just men made perfect (Hebrews 12:22-23 RSV)," therefore the saints are 'righteous men' and we know that the "prayers of a righteous man has great power in its effects (cf. James 5:16 RSV)."

Q99) What about 1 Timothy 2:5 – Jesus is the ONLY mediator between God and men. How can you call on the saints to pray for you?

A99) The text that Protestants believe disallows asking the saints to pray for us is 1 Timothy 2:5 "For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." However, the word "one" in v.5 is "heis" in Greek which means "first or primary." It doesn't use the Greek word "monos" which means "sole, only, exclusive one." However, we must remember that Christian mediation through intercessory prayer is qualitatively different from the mediatorship of Christ, and it is only possible because JESUS CHRIST is the one mediator between us and the FATHER. Because of his death on the cross we can go boldly into the presence of the FATHER and pray, intercede, petition, and supplicate on behalf of others. Another reason there's no conflict between asking fellow Christians for prayers and believing that JESUS is the one mediator between GOD and man is that JESUS shares His other unique roles with us (in lesser ways of course). Intercessory prayer originates in Jesus Christ, our Eternal High Priest (Hebrews 3:1), who is interceding now in heaven (Hebrews 7:24-25). This divine intercession then flows from Christ into the members of His Body through the Holy Spirit (John 15:1-5). The biblical principle of interceding for others in prayer is perfectly reasonable to Protestants. Ask if he has any objections to one Christian praying for another. He'll say 'no'. Then remind him that asking Christians in heaven to pray for us is essentially the same thing as asking a Christian on earth to do so. If he disagrees with this line of reasoning, point out that if

asking Christians in heaven to pray for us conflicts with Christ's mediatorship, than asking Christians here on earth to pray for us conflicts for the same reason. If a Protestant wants to say that 1 Timothy 2:5 eliminates intercession by Christians in heaven, it then also eliminates intercession by Christians on earth. But this would be a serious misreading of the text. Far from excluding Christians from a share in Christ's mediatorship, Paul is actually emphasizing that we share in it through intercessory prayers. Our intercessions are effectual precisely and only because Christ is the one mediator. JESUS allows us and the saints to share in his ministry of prayer as subordinate mediators because we are all the family of God.

Q100) Why do Catholics believe Mary was born without sin [Immaculate Conception]?

A100) Luke 1:28 (RSV) "And he came to her and said, 'Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you!'"

*The angel Gabriel states that Mary is full of grace ("kecharitomene" [Greek] = perfected in grace). Some translations use "highly favored", which is a modern translation, however, "full of grace" was the translation written by the greatest Scripture Scholar St. Jerome (4<sup>th</sup> century). "Full of grace" means there's no room for sin. This verse (full of grace or highly favored) indicates that she was extremely special. Luke 1:37 (RSV) "For with God nothing shall be impossible." While Romans 3:23 (NAB) states "all have sinned." This does not include Mary just as it does not include Jesus Christ, babies, the mentally retarded or Adam and Eve before the fall. "All" in this case (Romans 3:23 NAB) is used in a general sense without specificity about exceptions. If I have a party at my house on a Saturday, then tell my co-workers on Monday, "Hey, all Phoenix came to my party." Obviously, this is hyperbole, I am speaking in a general sense, without specifying who was not there.*

*We also know Mary was very special to God because the origin of her name is Egyptian (the Jews were slaves to Egypt for 430 years). The name 'Mary' means "cherished", "beloved". The name 'Mary' in the Hebrew culture means "one loving Yahweh" or "one beloved by Yahweh". The Orientals say the name 'Mary' means – "the beautiful" or "the perfect one."<sup>liv</sup>*

Q101) Why does the Catholic Church teach that Mary was always a virgin?

A101) Luke 1:34 "And Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I have no husband?"

This verse shows that Mary was a virgin at the time the angel Gabriel appeared to her. This response suggests that she had taken a vow of virginity in which to live out her life. Our oversexed, carnal, porn ridden society today views this as a strange and improbable relationship between Mary and Joseph. It could also be said that it would be strange and improbable to give birth to the Son of God and have Him living in your house. Vows of virginity and celibacy were not uncommon for the Israelites, you have the example of Moses (after he received the 10 commandments), Jeremiah, Elijah, John the Baptist, St. Joseph, St. Paul, the Essenes, Jesus Christ and Mary. This total consecration of oneself was (and is) a way of honoring and *glorifying*

*God with your body* (1 Corinthians 6:19-20 NAB). In heaven, everyone will be celibate. The Catholic Church's men & woman who choose to live a celibate life for God are *living eschatologically*.

*Mary is a **type** of the 'eastern gate of the Jerusalem Temple (Ezekiel 44:1-2 RSV)'. The prophet describes the presence of God passing through the temple gate, and the Lord commands for the gate to be kept shut forever. If God commands this for an earthly Temple which has been destroyed and no longer exists, how much more fitting it would be for God to shut the temple of Our Lady's womb, since He passed through there. The gate of her womb should be shut forever. A tradition found in the Gospel of Mary 8:12 (a 2<sup>nd</sup> century 'apocryphal' letter written by an unknown author) states that Mary was kept chaste always. "Joseph thereupon, according to the command of the angel, married the virgin, and did not know her, but kept her in chastity." Also, another ancient letter, the Protoevangelium 10:20 states "Then Joseph arose from his sleep and glorified the God of Israel, who had shown him such favor, and preserved the Virgin."*

Q102) How does the incarnation 'recapitulate' the fall of Adam & Eve?

A102) Luke 1:34-35, 38 (NAB): "But Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be [*the Incarnation*], since I have no relations with a man?' And the angel said to her in reply, 'The Holy Spirit shall come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore, the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God'...Mary said, 'Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word.' Then the angel departed from her."

In this verse, we have the recapitulation of the fall of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. There are three main characters in Eden: Adam, Eve and the Devil. In Luke 1, we have the Son of God awaiting the free will response of Mary to the Archangel Gabriel's annunciation in order to become incarnate.

- Eve listened to the message of the devil and through her intercession brought death to her husband and the entire human family.
- In the New Covenant, Mary listens to the word of the archangel—or the Holy Spirit through the archangel—and her *fiat* (let it be done...) brings life to the entire human family!

Notice that in both scenarios, the role of the "woman" is critical to salvation history. Both *Adams* are affected powerfully by both *Eves*! The 1<sup>st</sup> Adam is condemned for "listening to the voice of [his] wife" in Gen. 3:17 (NAB). The 2<sup>nd</sup> Adam, the Son of God becomes incarnate only through the "yes" of his Mother, *the New Eve*.

Q103) Can Mary's perpetual virginity be argued from the Hebrew language?

A103) The Rabbinic scholar and Brother Anthony Opisso states: “By stating it in those terms the archangel declared to Mary that God would enter into a marital relationship with her, causing her to conceive His Son in her womb, for ‘to lay one’s power (*reshuth*) over a woman (*Targum to Dt 21:4*)’ was a euphemism for ‘to have a marital relationship with her.’” Moreover, ‘to overshadow’ (Luke 1: 35 NAB) by spreading the *wing* or *cloak*, is derived from *tellal* = shadow. Thus, *to spread one’s cloak (tallith)* over a woman means to cohabit with her (*Kiddushin 18b, see also Mekhilta on Exodus 21:8*).” This is the language of Yahweh for his bride Israel, “I am married to you” (Jeremiah 3:14 RSV) and “your maker is your husband (Is 54:5; Jr 31:32 NAB).” Listen to the language of intimacy from the Lord to his bride Israel: “You developed, you grew, you came to full womanhood; your breasts became firm and your hair grew...you were naked...and I saw that you were now old enough for love so I spread my cloak over you...I gave you my oath, I entered into a covenant with you and you became mine, says the Lord (Ezek 16:7-8 NAB).”<sup>lv</sup>

Joseph was a righteous man and a devout law-abiding Jew (Mat 1:19 NAB). He knew that neither he nor any other man had anything to do with Mary’s pregnancy because an angel told him. “Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit; she will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins (Mat 1:20-21 RSV).” Brother Anthony says, “[Joseph] having been enlightened by an angel in a dream regarding her pregnancy, and perhaps further by Mary concerning the words of the archangel Gabriel to her at the Annunciation, Joseph knew that God [the Holy Spirit] had conducted himself as a husband in regard to Mary. She was now prohibited to him for all time, and for the sake of the Child and Mary, he could only live with her in an absolutely chaste relationship.”<sup>lvi</sup> Since Mary is the spouse of the Holy Spirit, and He is called *the Advocate* (John 14:16; 26 NAB), it is fitting that Mary would take on the last name of her spouse – *Mary gracious Advocate* (cf. prayer ‘Hail Holy Queen’).

Q104) Why do Catholics consider Mary so important?

A104) Luke 1:41-42 (RSV) “And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and she exclaimed with a loud cry, ‘Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb!’”

*Through the power of the Holy Spirit, Elizabeth singled out Mary as God’s most blessed woman. In verse 48, Mary says that all generations will call her blessed. Why don’t Protestants see her as important and blessed? Even Martin Luther had the highest regard for Mary. It’s only within the last couple of hundred years that such a disregard and disdain for Mary has emerged. This was not the attitude of the early Church, of Christians before, or immediately after the Protestant Reformation. Psalm 45:9 (RSV) says that the Queen Mothers “name will be celebrated in all generations; therefore, the peoples will praise you forever and ever.” Mary is the Queen Mother.*

Q105) Why do Catholics call Mary ‘The Mother of God?’

A105) Luke 1:43 “And why is this granted me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me”?

*Elizabeth refers to Mary as the “Mother of my Lord.” The term “Lord” for the Jewish people refers to God. Lord & God are synonyms for the Jews. This does not imply that Mary was the mother of God the Father or God the Holy Spirit; only of Jesus; True God and True Man. To deny that Mary is the Mother of God, is to deny that Jesus is God, and NO Christian would deny that Jesus is God, that would be heresy.*

Q106) Catholics worship Mary.

A106) Luke 1:47-48 (RSV) “and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has regarded the low estate of his handmaiden. For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed...”

*Catholics do not worship Mary! Here the Bible records Mary’s own words that says, ‘all ages [generations] will call her blessed.’ Catholics are only doing what the Bible says by giving her the honor she deserves. Why don’t Protestants do likewise? If Mary had not agreed to do the will of God, where would we be today? Mary also acknowledges that she needed a savior. We are freed from our original sin at baptism (through sanctifying grace) while Mary was preserved from original sin at her conception (through prevenient grace). God’s grace is not limited by time. God saved her from original sin in anticipation, while God saved us through baptism after having contracted original sin.*

To quote an analogy that I’ve read: Suppose a man falls into a deep pit and someone reaches down to pull him out. The man has been saved from the pit. Now imagine a woman walking along and she is about to fall into the pit, but at the very moment that she is about to fall in, someone holds her back and prevents her from falling in. She too has been saved from the pit, but in an even better way: She was not simply taken out of the pit; she was spared from falling into the muddy pit in the first place. In this way, God became her savior in a very special way and hence, she praised him in her ‘Magnificat’ (Luke 1:47 RSV).’ She has more reason to call God her savior than we do, because He saved her in an even more glorious manner.

Read Jude 1:24-25 (RSV): “Now to him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you without blemish before the presence of his glory with rejoicing, to the only God, our Savior through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever - Amen.” *Mary was saved because her Savior prevented her from falling into sin. That’s why she is called, “Full of Grace (Luke 1:28 RSV).”*

Q107) The Bible says Jesus had brothers.

A107) John 19:25 (RSV) “So the soldiers did this. But standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Mag’dalene.”

*With this verse and in Matthew 27:56 (RSV) , we see that the Blessed Virgin Mary had a sister or sister in law also named Mary. This Mary was the mother of James and Joseph, who would be considered the cousins of Jesus.*

Catholic Answers explains: Because neither Hebrew nor Aramaic (the language spoken by Christ and his disciples) had a special word meaning "cousin," speakers of those languages used either the word for "brother" or a circumlocution, such as "the son of the sister of my father." But circumlocutions are clumsy, so the Jews used "brother." The writers of the New Testament were brought up to use the Aramaic equivalent of "brothers" to mean both cousins and sons of the same father—plus other relatives and even non-relatives. When they wrote in Greek, they did the same thing the translators of the Septuagint did. (The Septuagint was the Greek version of the Hebrew Bible; it was translated by Hellenistic Jews a century or two before Christ's birth and was the version of the Bible from which most of the Old Testament quotations found in the New Testament are taken).<sup>lvii</sup>

In the Septuagint the Hebrew word that includes both brothers and cousins was translated as adelphos, which in Greek usually has the narrow meaning that the English "brother" has. Unlike Hebrew or Aramaic, Greek has a separate word for cousin, anepsios, but the translators of the Septuagint favored adelphos, even for true cousins. You might say they transliterated instead of translated, importing the Jewish idiom into the Greek Bible. They took an exact equivalent of the Hebrew word for "brother" and did not use adelphos in one place (for sons of the same parents), and anepsios in another (for cousins). This same usage was employed by the writers of the New Testament and passed into English translations of the Bible. To determine what "brethren" or "brother" or "sister" means in any one verse, we have to look at the context. There are about ten instances in the New Testament where "brothers" and "sisters" of the Lord are mentioned (Matt. 12:46; Matt. 13:55; Mark 3:31–34; Mark 6:3; Luke 8:19–20; John 2:12, 7:3, 5, 10; Acts 1:14; 1 Cor. 9:5). When trying to understand these verses, note that the term "brother" (Greek: adelphos) has a wide meaning in the Bible. It is not restricted to the literal meaning of a full brother or half-brother. The same goes for "sister" (adelphe) and the plural form "brothers" (adelphoi). The Old Testament shows that "brother" had a wide semantic range of meaning and could refer to any male relative from whom you are not descended (male relatives from whom you are descended are known as "fathers") and who are not descended from you (your male descendants, regardless of the number of generations removed, are your "sons"), as well as kinsmen such as cousins, those who are members of the family by marriage or by law rather than by blood, and even friends or mere political allies (2 Sam. 1:26; Amos 1:9 NAB).<sup>lviii</sup>

Q108) Mary had other children.

A108) John 19:26 (RSV) "When Jesus saw his mother, and the disciple whom he loved standing near, he said to his mother, 'Woman, behold, your son!'"

*If Mary had other children, it would not have been appropriate for Jesus to assign her into the care of John. In the Middle East, the next of kin (not some friends) cares for the aged parents. The alleged “other children” or “brothers” would have been responsible for taking care of their widowed elderly mother. This would have been especially true in the Jewish culture which was much more familial than the modern-day western culture.*

Q109) Why do the Catholics call Mary ‘the Mother of God?’”

A109) Galatians 4:4 (NAB) “But when the time had fully come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law...”

*In Paul’s letter to the Galatians, he points out that God’s Son was born of a woman. Jesus, the son of God the Father, is God (the Son) who became incarnate in Mary’s womb. Some people incorrectly believe that the Catholic title for Mary as “Mother of God,” means that we believe Mary gave birth to the Creator and therefore pre-existed God. This is not the Catholic Church’s teaching regarding Mary. By calling Mary “theotokos”, which means “God Bearer,” this comes from having a proper understanding that Jesus Christ is a divine person.*

Q110) Jesus was called the first-born (cf. Romans 8:29 NAB), so He must have had brothers and sisters.

A110) Colossians 1:15 “He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation...”

*The word “first-born” was a legal term under the Mosaic Law (Exodus 6:14 NAB) referring to the first male child born to Jewish parents regardless of any other subsequent children. Even though Jesus is the first-born of Mary, this does not imply that Mary had a “second born,” a “third born” and so on. This verse (Colossians 1:15) shows that Jesus is the first-born of God the Father, who has no other divine children. If non-Catholics make the assumption that Mary had other children based on the term “first-born,” in Romans 8:29 (NAB), then God the Father must have had other divine children like Jesus. To believe this would be heresy.*

Q111) Catholics practice vain repetitious prayer condemned in Matthew 6:7 (NAB).

A111) Revelation 4:8 (RSV) “And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all round and within, and day and night they never cease to sing, ‘Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!’”

*Here we have angels in heaven praising God day and night saying the same thing over and over. If these were vain repetitions, God would not allow it in heaven. God didn’t condemn repetitious prayer; only vain repetitious prayer. If prayers are said with heartfelt adoration and praise for God, they are not in vain? Who is to judge whether someone is praying in vain? Do we know their hearts? Only God can read our hearts. Repetition is not the problem; the key operative word is VAIN repetition. That is, not praying from the heart. The language of love is repetition.*

*How many times will a lover tell the beloved that he loves her, and she never tires of hearing these tender words.*

Q112) Those in heaven can't hear our prayers.

A112) Revelation 5:8 (RSV) "And when he had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each holding a harp, and with golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints..."

*The prayers of the saints (Christians on earth) are being offered to God by the twenty four elders (the saints in heaven). Here we see that the saints in heaven hold an office of intercession for those on earth. What petitions would the saints in heaven have to offer God if it weren't for the petitions we give them? The saints in heaven are perfectly happy and have NO needs. If the saints in heaven couldn't hear our prayers, then this would imply that they are separated or cutoff from the Body of Christ. In fact, they are more alive than we are (cf. Mark 12:26-27 RSV) and are more closely united to Christ than we are. The saints occupy a fulltime ministry of intercession for us on earth. They (the saints in heaven) carry our prayers (the Christians on earth) in these golden bowls full of incense to Jesus Christ our Savior. 'Incense' is a metaphor for 'prayers' rising to heaven (cf. Psalm 141:2; Revelation 8:4 RSV).*

Q113) Are there any other examples of Saints in Heaven praying for us in the Bible?

A113) Yes, in Jeremiah, Baruch, Tobit, 2 Kings, 2 Maccabees, Revelation & Hebrews 11.

"There is some evidence of a Jewish belief in intercession" of the saints in heaven for us on earth.<sup>lix</sup>

'The Merits of the Fathers' known as 'Zechut Avot' is the idea that the good deeds of the (Jewish) ancestors contribute to the welfare of their (Jewish) descendants - Here are some examples of 'Zechut Avot' which is congruent with the Catholic belief that the saints in heaven pray for us on earth (aka: the communion of the saints).<sup>lx</sup>

Jeremiah 15:1-2 (NAB) "The LORD said to me: Even if Moses and Samuel stood before me, my heart would not turn toward this people. Send them away from me and let them go. 2 If they ask you, "Where should we go?" tell them, Thus says the LORD: Whoever is marked for death, to death; whoever is marked for the sword, to the sword; whoever is marked for famine, to famine; whoever is marked for captivity, to captivity." *The present passage is God's word to Jeremiah, it is a word of judgment on Judah. In 589 BC, Nebuchadnezzar II (king of Babylon) laid siege to Jerusalem, culminating in the destruction of the city and its temple in the summer of 587 BC. Verse 1 is based on a doctrine known as the 'merits of the fathers': note what it says, "Even if Moses and Samuel stood before me, my heart would not turn toward this people." The Jews on earth believe that the righteous saints pray for them before God in the afterlife. In this verse God is telling Jeremiah (who died 586BC) that even if Moses (who lived from 1393 to 1273 BC) and Samuel (who lived from 931 to 877 BC), both of whom lived on earth way before Jeremiah.*



*Notice, even if these two great saints (who are in the presence of God at the time of Jeremiah) intercede for the Jewish people before God himself, He will not listen to their plea.*

Jeremiah 31:15 (RSV) – [End of Rachels mourning] “Thus says the LORD: "A voice is heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping. Rachel is weeping for her children; she refuses to be comforted for her children, because they are not." [16] Thus says the LORD: "Keep your voice from weeping, and your eyes from tears; for your work shall be rewarded, says the LORD, and they shall come back from the land of the enemy. [17] There is hope for your future, says the LORD, and your children shall come back to their own country.”

*When the text says, "A voice is heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping." The Hebrew word Ramah is the name of the city where Rachel is buried. The text indicates that Rachel is "weeping" for her children even after her death. And her "voice is heard." Who hears her voice? God does! This is one of the definitions of prayer. According to the Random House Dictionary of the English language, "A devout petition to, or any form of spiritual communion with, God or an object of worship."*

*The text indicates that she is not just weeping in despair, but she is directing her tears toward God, who is the only one who can heal her and her children for whom she weeps. In verses 16-17 of Jeremiah 31, God responds to Rachel: "Thus says the LORD: "Keep your voice from weeping, and your eyes from tears; for your work shall be rewarded...and they shall come back from the land of the enemy." This indicates that God responded to her petition.*

*\*Jeremiah was called to be a prophet in 626 BC to 586 BC<sup>lxi</sup>*

*Rachel was the 2<sup>nd</sup> wife of Jacob (aka Israel – Genesis 35:16 NAB), she bore him two sons; Joseph and Benjamin. She died after giving birth to her second son [circa 1900 B.C.]. Rachel is said to mourn since she was the ancestress of Ephraim, the chief of the northern tribes. “After the tribes of Ephraim<sup>lxii</sup> and Benjamin were exiled by the Assyrians, Rachel was remembered as the classic mother who mourns and intercedes for her children.<sup>lxiii</sup> Jeremiah 31:15, says that 'Rachel is weeping for her children' (RSV). This is interpreted in Judaism<sup>lxiv</sup> as Rachel crying for an end to her descendants' sufferings and exiles following the destruction by the Babylonians of the First Temple in ancient Jerusalem (in 587B.C.).<sup>lxv</sup> According to the Midrash,<sup>lxvi</sup> Rachel spoke before God: "If I, a mere mortal, was prepared not to humiliate my sister and was willing to take a rival into my home, how could You, the eternal, compassionate God, be jealous of idols, which have no true existence, that were brought into Your home (the Temple in Jerusalem)? Will You cause my children to be exiled on this account?" God accepted her plea and promised that, eventually, the exile would end and the Jews would return to their land.<sup>lxvii</sup> While the text does not give a command to pray to Rachel. It seems to me that her prayers are pretty powerful because God responded to them. The story of Rachel is a classic example of the Jewish teachings known as “the merit of the fathers.”*

In the book of Maccabees, we see another scene of those in the afterlife in the presence of God praying for those on earth.

2 Maccabees 15:11-16 (RSV) “He (Judas Maccabees) armed each of them not so much with confidence in shields and spears as with the inspiration of brave words, and he cheered them all by relating a dream, a sort of vision, which was worthy of belief. [12] What he saw was this: Onias, who had been high priest, a noble and good man, of modest bearing and gentle manner, one who spoke fittingly and had been trained from childhood in all that belongs to excellence, was praying with outstretched hands for the whole body of the Jews. [13] Then likewise a man appeared, distinguished by his gray hair and dignity, and of marvelous majesty and authority. [14] And Onias spoke, saying, "This is a man who loves the brethren and prays much for the people and the holy city, Jeremiah, the prophet of God." [15] Jeremiah stretched out his right hand and gave to Judas a golden sword, and as he gave it he addressed him thus: [16] "Take this holy sword, a gift from God, with which you will strike down your adversaries."

*This book was written about 124 B.C., the High Priest Onias (who died in ch.4:34) was murdered by Hellenist occupiers and the Jeremiah the Prophet (who died in 586 B.C.) were seen praying for their people and the Holy city. Nicanor, a commander in the Syrian army planned to slaughter the Jews on the sabbath. Because they would not break the sabbath by fighting, they would be easily killed. "Nevertheless, he did not succeed in carrying out his cruel plan" (15:5). "Maccabeus remained confident, fully convinced that he would receive help from the Lord" (15:7). He had a dream that Onias the high priest and Jeremiah, the prophet was interceding in heaven for the Jews. "Nicanor and his men advanced to the sound of trumpets and battle songs. But Judas and his men met the army with supplication and prayers. Fighting with their hands and praying to God with their hearts, they laid low at least thirty-five thousand, and rejoiced greatly over this manifestation of God's power" (15:25-27). We clearly see the intercessory prayers of the saints in heaven (15:12-16) where Jeremiah and Onias are praying in the afterlife before the Lord for Judas Maccabees who is here on earth. Death no more destroys or even separates God's people. That is why the author to the Hebrews could say in 12:1(RSV) "Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us..."*

2 Kings 6:15 (RSV) ‘When the servant of the man of God rose early in the morning and went out, behold, an army with horses and chariots was round about the city. And the servants said, “Alas, my master! What shall we do?” He said, “Fear not, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them.”’ *The Syrian King goes out with an army to arrest Elisha and so they surround the town of Dothan where the prophet is living. Elisha's servant is terrified, but the prophet prays to the Lord to open the man's eyes spiritually: in an instant he sees a vast heavenly army arrayed in invisible ranks with their chariots of fire ablaze in the sky. Elisha the prophet asks the Lord to strike the Syrian army blind and so he does. This ends Syria's attack*

*upon Israel. This verse indicates that Gods chosen ones on earth, are surrounded by heavens army, the saints and angels. Another example of this great cloud of witnesses.*

Baruch 3:4 (RSV) “O Lord Almighty, God of Israel, hear now the prayer of the dead of Israel and of the sons of those who sinned before thee, who did not heed the voice of the Lord their God, so that calamities have clung to us.” *Pre-Christian Judaism had various notions of the afterlife and of what it all might have to do with us. Among them was the notion (reflected here) that the dead might still somehow pray to God and the twin notion (also reflected here) that our prayers and theirs (not to mention we and they) might still be related somehow. That is practically all you need in order to have all the essential elements for what Catholic teaching calls the doctrine of the communion of saints. The New Testament likewise reflected this belief when Jesus remarked that all are alive to God, when it recorded the appearance of Moses at the Transfiguration, and when Paul declared that we are all "members of one another" (Romans 12:5 RSV) and that neither life nor death can separate us from God (Romans 8:38-39). Because of this, we can pray for (and ask prayers of) members of the body of Christ whether their zip code is on Earth or in Heaven. The saints are known as ‘the democracy of the dead’ and they can still vote or better, ‘pray’ before God in the afterlife.*

Now to the book Revelation. We see in chapters 8:4-5 and 5:8 that both angels and men are in heaven praying to God. In 5:8, the 24 elders (saints in heaven) have "golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints." The text seems very plain. While we do not believe that these disembodied spirits are actually carrying around golden bowls (this is obviously symbolic language), we believe that they are receiving the prayers of the saints (on earth), and, in turn, they are taking those prayers to God. The ‘saints’ in this context is a reference to those on earth who are followers of Jesus Christ. In the case of the angels, we see God responds to these prayers and effects change on the earth as is demonstrated by "Then the angel took the censer and filled it with fire from the altar and *threw it to the earth*" (Rev. 8:5 RSV).

The angel Rafael said in Tobit 12:12 (RSV) “And so, when you and your daughter-in-law Sarah prayed, I brought a reminder of your prayer before the Holy One; and when you buried the dead, I was likewise present with you. [13] When you did not hesitate to rise and leave your dinner in order to go and lay out the dead, your good deed was not hidden from me, but I was with you. [14] So now God sent me to heal you and your daughter-in-law Sarah. [15] I am Raphael, one of the seven holy angels who present the prayers of the saints and enter into the presence of the glory of the Holy One.” *In the book of Tobit, we see the angel the archangel Rafael clearly saying that he is an intercessor for Tobit before Almighty God.*

A cloud of witnesses!

Hebrews 12:1 (RSV) “Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the

race that is set before us.”

The great thing about the "cloud of witnesses" Hebrews mentions here is that they are not schleps who are sitting in the stadium, lazily cheering for the team while they pound beer and wolf pretzels. They are the Team. Every one of the witnesses in the cloud has been down on the field where you are now. Everyone is a champion. That's why they are cheering. They know you can run the race of holiness in the Spirit because they did it themselves. Today, ask the heavenly witnesses, the saints of Jesus in this mystical stadium, to help you with their prayers and to join you in giving praise and glory to God, our heavenly Father.

CCC-956 “Being more closely united to Christ, those who dwell in heaven fix the whole Church more firmly in holiness. . . so by their fraternal concern is our weakness greatly helped.”

Q 114) Jesus is our only intercessor (1 John 2:1 NAB). Nobody else can be an intercessor.

A 114) It is true, that intercessory prayer originates in Jesus Christ, our Eternal High Priest, who is interceding now for us in heaven (cf. Hebrews 7:24-25 NAB). This divine intercession then flows from Christ into the members of His Body through the Holy Spirit. That’s why we are called to make intercessions, prayers and petitions for all men, especially those in authority (c.f. 1 Tim 2:1 RSV). Remember, the saints in heaven are perfected members of the body of Christ.

Q115) What Biblical proof is there that Mary’s body is in heaven?

A115) Revelation 12:1-2 (RSV) “And a great portent appeared in heaven, a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars; she was with child and she cried out in her pangs of birth, in anguish for delivery.”

*Here’s a woman in heaven about to give birth to a son who will rule all nations (Revelation 12:5 RSV). The woman fled into the desert after she gave birth (Revelation 12:6 NAB) as did the Holy Family when they fled to Egypt to escape King Herod. Revelation 12 unmistakably reveals Mary in heaven. Keep in mind that God is not limited by time. Even though these events happened 2000 years ago, God sees all things in one instant (and he reveals some of these events to John the apostle) because in heaven time doesn’t exist. This verse shows Mary in heaven as a cosmic queen and the New Testament Ark of the Covenant. Here is what I mean...*

*The Ark of the Covenant in the battle of Jericho (cf. Joshua 6:15 NAB) culminated on the seventh day, they marched around the city seven times and the seven priests blew their seven trumpets. The walls of Jericho fell down and the Israelites took the city captive. Seven trumpets are blown in heaven beginning in Revelation Chapter 8 and the seventh trumpet blows in Chapter 11:15. On the heels of this last trumpet being blown, John is looking at the Ark of the Covenant in heaven which was long lost to the Jews (in the days of Jeremiah<sup>lxxviii</sup>), suddenly the Ark fades or morphs into the Blessed Virgin Mary, who appears in heaven (Chapter 12) in victory as a cosmic queen. This demonstrates that Mary is the new Ark of the Covenant.*

Q116) Why do Catholics refer to Mary as their mother?

A116) Revelation 12:17 (RSV) “Then the dragon was angry with the woman, went off to make war on the rest of her offspring, on those who keep the commandments of God and bear testimony to Jesus. And he stood on the sand of the sea.”

*This verse shows how we (Christians) are considered “her offspring”, by keeping God’s commandments and bearing witness to Jesus. The woman identified in Revelation 12:1 (RSV), is the woman who gives birth to a “male child, destined to rule all the nations,” this male child refers to Jesus. The ‘dragon’ is the devil, the ‘woman’ is Mary, the mother of Jesus & our Mother. Based on this verse anybody who bears testimony to Jesus & keeps Gods commandments is a son or daughter of Mary.*

Q117) The Bible says: ‘I am the LORD; that is my name! I will not give my glory to another or my praise to idols (Isaiah 42:8 RSV).’ ‘To another’ includes Mary, you can only give glory to God, not Mary.’

A117) The quote from Isaiah is correct, but your conclusion is wrong when you said, “to another” includes Mary. It is obvious from Isaiah 42:8 (RSV) that God does not share His ‘glory’ with false pagan idols, that’s the context. However, Jesus (who is God) does share His ‘glory’ with the saints including Mary? How do I know this? Jesus answers your question.

“And I have given them the glory you gave me, so that they may be one as we are one (John 17:22 NAB).”

*Jesus is giving His glory to others (in the body of Christ). Your quote from Isaiah is being taken out of context, and a text without its context becomes a pretext. In Isaiah 42:8, God will not share his ‘Glory’ with false pagan idols of Babylon & Assyria. Mary and the saints are not false pagan idols, they are saints in heaven, and as Jesus said, “I have given them the glory.”*

*Dr. Scott Hahn (Scripture scholar) says: “God did not make the world in order to gain glory for himself, but to give glory, to share his glory with his creatures one hundred percent. Mary his mother is the masterpiece of this glorification, and that implies her active participation, by grace, in all the works of the Holy Spirit who fills her with his life.”*

Sirach 44:1, 7-8, 10, 13, 15 (NAB) “I will now praise the godly, our ancestors, in their own time...all these (saints) were glorious in their time...Some of them left behind a name so that people recount their praises...Yet these also were godly; their virtues have not been forgotten...their glory will never be blotted out...at gatherings their wisdom is retold, and the assembly proclaims their praises.” Psalm 45:17 (RSV) says about the Queen Mother: “...all generations...peoples will praise you forever and ever.”

Q118) Doesn't giving Mary the title of "Queen of Heaven" fall into the idolatrous worship of a feminine, pagan deity condemned in the Old Testament. According to anti-Catholic Fundamentalist author Dave Hunt, The only 'Queen of Heaven' mentioned in Scripture is a Babylonian goddess (idol) named 'Ishtar' which was worshipped by the pagans and to which the Jewish women gave offerings, bringing the wrath of God upon them.<sup>lxix</sup> Some protestants say Catholic's are worshipping the Babylonian goddess 'Ishtar' when we honor 'Mary' because she is like this false goddess 'Ishtar' who is called the 'Queen of Heaven' in Jeremiah 44:15-19 and we call Mary the 'Queen of Heaven.'

A118) It is true that the Old Testament mentions a false goddess known as the 'Queen of Heaven' (cf. Jeremiah 7:18; 44:15-17 NAB) which is the Assyrian-Babylonian fertility goddess 'Ishtar.' But since the Catholic Church doesn't worship 'Mary' as a deity — whether as 'Ishtar' or any other goddess — this objection is flawed or a 'non sequitur.' Furthermore, the fact that a false goddess in the Old Testament was called the "Queen of Heaven" does not mean Mary cannot rightly be given the title in an altogether different sense, as the Queen Mother of the King of Kings in the New Testament. For example, the pagan king of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar, is called the 'king of kings' by Daniel (Daniel 2:37 NAB), yet this doesn't preclude Jesus from being called by the very same title in Revelation 17:14; 19:16 (NAB. False deities (gods) in the Old Testament were often called "god" or "lord". Does that mean we cannot invoke the true God by these titles? The fact that a particular title is idolatrously used in one context doesn't preclude it from being used non-idolatrously in another. The fact that the Devil (or the wicked King of Babylon, depending on your interpretation) is called "the morning star" in Isaiah 14:12 (NAB) does not mean we cannot use the same title to refer to Jesus, as in 2 Peter 1:19 (NAB) and Revelation 22:16 (NAB).

The Queen Mother in ancient Israel wore a crown (cf. Jeremiah 13:18 NAB) and sat beside the King (cf. Nehemiah 2:1-8; Psalm 45:9 NAB). Our Lady is now the Queen Mother in Heaven because Jesus her son is the "King of ages (cf. Rev 15:3 RSV; 1Timothy 1:17 RSV)."

*The destiny of all Christians is to reign as royal sons and daughters with Christ in heaven (Revelation 1:6; 5:10 NAB), and to receive our own crown in glory bestowed on us by Christ the King. Mary is the preeminent Christian, she was the first one in the body of Christ to receive her crown in heaven (cf. Revelation 12:1-5 NAB) from her Son who is the King of kings (cf. Revelation 19:16).*

*Not with standing certain fears Martin Luther had about a misuse of the term, he taught that the title "Queen of Heaven" was "a true enough name and yet does not make her a goddess."<sup>lxx</sup>*

Q119) An anti-Catholic like Jack Chick (now deceased) would say: ‘Mary is nothing special, she was a sinner like everyone else, God just used her and then kicked her to the curb. She doesn’t deserve anymore praise and honor than you and I. In fact, praising her is unbiblical. Anybody who praises her cannot be spirit filled.’

A119) On the contrary, spirit filled people praise her. In Luke 1:41-42 (RSV) it reads “And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and she exclaimed with a loud cry, “Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb! And why is this granted me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?”

Non-spirit filled people that imitate the devil spew hatred & lies against her. Sacred Scripture says: “The serpent (devil) poured water like a river out of his mouth after the woman (Mary), to sweep her away with the flood (cf. Revelation 12:15 RSV).” *“The river of water symbolizes the destructive forces of evil unleashed by the devil.”<sup>lxxi</sup> Today the devil attacks our lady by blasphemies against the Immaculate Conception, her perpetual virginity, her divine maternity, fomenting indifference and hatred against Our Lady.<sup>lxxii</sup> This is how demons attacks us, they use words to tamper with our thoughts (cf. Genesis 3:1-7; 1 Timothy 2:14; Matthew 4:1-11 NAB), Satan is known as a liar, accuser, deceiver and slanderer. The word ‘Devil’ in Greek means ‘slanderer.’*

Q120) Did Jesus ever pray the rosary?

A120) No, because JESUS is the rosary! Actually, JESUS may have prayed the rosary when he was a child. I can imagine Our Lord when He was a baby pulling on Our Lady’s dress to ask her a question saying (10 times) – “Ma ma ma ma ma ma ma ma ma.” I guess that would qualify as the praying the rosary. *Actually, the holy rosary was given to St. Dominic of Guzman in the 12<sup>th</sup> century by the Blessed Virgin Mary. The rosary is a meditation on the 4 Gospels, the rosary is the Bible of the poor & illiterate. The rosary is our unbiblical cord to God, as St. Louis de Montfort said, “To Jesus through Mary.” If GOD came through Her to us, then why can’t we go through Her to Him?*

## **STATUES, IMAGES & RELICS**

Q121) Catholics worship idols and make graven images.

A121) Exodus 25:18-19 (RSV) “And you shall make two cherubim of gold; of hammered work shall you make them, on the two ends of the mercy seat. Make one cherub on the one end, and one cherub on the other end; of one piece with the mercy seat shall you make the cherubim on its two ends.”

*God commands the making of two angelic images which are to be placed on the Ark of the Covenant. The Ark contained the holiest items known to the Israelite people. Images and statues are not forbidden by God. It is the worship of ‘graven images’ or ‘statues’ that God forbids. Catholics do not worship statues, images or paintings, Catholics worship God alone. The image of Jesus, Mary and the saints are used for reflection and a focal point to remind us of those we love, admire and honor, just as a family picture may remind us of a departed loved one.*

Q122) Catholics worship idols and make graven images.

A122) Numbers 21:8 (RSV) “And the LORD said to Moses, ‘Make a fiery serpent, and set it on a pole; and everyone who is bitten, when he sees it, shall live.’”

*God commands Moses to make an image (sculpture) of a serpent and mount it on a pole so that those who had been bitten by poisonous snakes would be cured. Imagine that, an image that heals people when you look at it. Just as Christ was placed on a pole (the cross) for all to see, this too is an image that can heal. This is why a crucifix is used during exorcisms, because it has been known to bring healing and deliverance to the afflicted. The statues, paintings and images in our homes and in our Churches remind us of those in the family of God that we love.*

Q123) Catholics worship idols and make graven images.

A123) 1 Kings 7:29 (RSV) “and on the panels that were set in the frames were lions, oxen, and cherubim. Upon the frames, both above and below the lions and oxen, there were wreaths of beveled work.”

*God commands the making of images to be placed on the walls inside the Holy Temple of Jerusalem. If images and statues were inherently evil, why would God order that they be crafted and placed in his Holy Temple? It is the worship of images, that is ‘idolatry,’ that’s what God forbids. As Catholics, we use statues and paintings to show honor and to remind us of those we love. Praying before a statue of Jesus does not imply we are worshipping the statue any more than someone kneeling and praying with a Bible in hand.*

Q124) Catholics bow down before images and statues, that’s idolatry?

A124) False, idolatry is not a posture, but it starts with the interior disposition of the heart (Ezekiel 20:16 NAB). For example, Joshua and the elders fell with their faces on the earth right



before the Ark of the Lord (Joshua 7:6 NAB) which is made of acacia wood and gold without worshipping it. Now if you bow before a man with the intention of worshipping him, that's wrong (cf. Acts 10:25-26 NAB) or if you bow with the intention of worshipping an angel (cf. Revelation 19:10, 22:8 NAB), that's wrong. But if you bow down with the intent to honor or show respect to a man and woman (1 Kings 2:19; Genesis 33:3; Exodus 18:7 NAB) or bow to Angels (Genesis 18:2 NAB) then it's not wrong according to the Holy Bible. Furthermore, the New Testament never mentions the temporal prohibition of making statues or images as idolatrous, the NT says idolatry for the Christian is the love of money and sexual immorality (cf. Col 3:5; Eph 5:5 NAB). The ban placed upon the Israelites to make statues and images in Exodus 20 was temporal, it was lifted in Exodus 25-26 (NAB) by God himself, however the ban against idolatry is forever!

Q125) Catholics bow before images. Clearly, the Scriptures consider **BOWING before images an act of worship** (cf. Exodus 20:4,5 NAB). The Bible states in Romans 11:4 (NAB) "I have left for myself 7000 thousand men who have not knelt to Baal."

A125) This is the typical Protestant approach to scripture. I guess I am hell bound because I bowed [physically] before my parents for 21 years before I went to bed at night. When I proposed to my wife, I bowed before her. My kids bow before me [on bended knees] before I bless them at night. Protestant apologist believe 'bowing' to anyone must be considered worship, not mere honor in many instances. I guess the Protestant Englishman who bows before the Queen and calls the Judges, "Your Worship" are going to hell also. I guess all Asians & martial artist [of all nationalities] are going to hell because they 'bow' down before each other [as a mutual sign of respect]. Obama bowed before the Saudi Arabian King, the Japanese Emperor and the Chinese President (in 2010), was he worshipping them? This protestant argument is like straining at gnats while you swallow a camel [refer to Mat 23:24 NAB].

- If 'bowing' always means worship than why did the Patriarch Isaac utter these prophetic words to his son Jacob. "Let peoples serve you, and nations bow down to you, be lord over your brothers, and may your mother's sons bow down to you" [Gen 27: 29].
- Abraham bowed down before the Hittites [Genesis 23:7-9, 12].
- Joseph was governor over the land of Egypt when his brothers came to visit him. They knelt down before him with their faces to the ground [Genesis 42:6].
- Joshua bowed down and did obeisance before an angel but committed no sin in doing so [Joshua 5: 14].
- Ruth bowed down to the ground before Boaz in gratitude [Ruth 2: 8-10].
- The Shunamite woman bowed down before the prophet Elisha after he raised her child from the dead [2 Kings 4:37], but she was obviously not committing idolatry by doing so.
- Neither was Lot, when he 'bowed down' before two angels of the Lord in Genesis 19:1.
- Nor was David sinning against the commandment when he 'bowed down and did obeisance' before King Saul [1 Samuel 24:8].

- Bathsheba and Nathan the prophet were also blameless when they 'bowed down in honor' before King David, while the monarch was on his deathbed [1 Kings 1:16, 25].
- When Jacob and Essau had their dramatic reconciliation, we read: "He himself went on before them, bowing himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother" [Genesis 33:3 RSV].
- And Jesus says about the saints in heaven that he will make the unbelieving Jews bow down before them in Revelation 3:8-9 (NAB). . . "Behold, I will make those of the synagogue of Satan who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie - behold, I will make them come and bow down before your feet, and learn that I have loved you."
- Jesus had to bow to wash the feet of the disciples (cf. John 13:12).
- Other examples of legitimate bowing down in honor before human beings are found in: Genesis 23: 7:13, 33: 4-7, 42: 6, 48: 9-12; Numbers 22: 31; 1 Samuel 20: 41, 25: 41.
- The Hebrew word for "bow down" is "shachach" which means to lie prostrate. This same word is used both in the passages that prohibit bowing (Exodus 20:5) and in some passages of those that should show bowing as legitimate (eg. Gen 27:29).<sup>lxxiii</sup> Shachah: prostrate, especially in homage to royalty or to God. To bow down, crouch, fall down, humbly beseech, do reverence, worship, to humble oneself, to stoop, or to bring low.

If bowing down always means worship, not mere honor, then the bible indicts many Holy People within its pages doing so. One can see how this type of crabbed argumentation, so common to Protestant polemics against the Catholic Church, is merely hollow. This line of argument is a good example of the shallowness of standard anti-Catholic arguments. The biblical evidence that I have shown clearly demonstrates two things: 1) The mere act of bowing, is an action performed to show respect to a friend of God, is not just tolerable, but admirable; and 2) Honoring God's friends is a good thing and it is a way to honor and Glorify God.

By way of analogy, when I hold my daughter's hand, it is quite different from when I hold my wife's hand. It is the same action but the feelings, my emotions and intentions are totally different, yet it is the same gesture.

The same can be said of when I kiss my mom and when I kiss my wife, same action but totally different categories of love in my heart.

Q126) Relics are just another Catholic superstition.

A126) 2 Kings 13 (RSV) "And as a man was being buried, lo, a marauding band was seen and the man was cast into the grave of Eli'sha; and as soon as the man touched the bones of Eli'sha, he revived, and stood on his feet."

*This verse is just one scriptural example of how God brought about miracles using the bones of a saintly person. Relics of the saints are not items of superstition. Many people throughout the centuries have been healed by God through bone fragments or pieces of clothing belonging to holy men and women. God can use any means He chooses to bestow His grace, blessing and*

*healing upon His people. Catholicism is not gnostic, we don't reject matter as something evil. Matter is good, God created matter and God even became incarnate. Relics flow from the incarnational principle, where we see God using matter (like the bones of Eli'sha) to communicate His grace to us.*

Q127) Relics are just another Catholic superstition.

A127) Matthew 9:20-22 (RSV) "And behold, a woman who had suffered from a hemorrhage for twelve years came up behind him and touched the fringe of his garment; for she said to herself, 'if I only touch his garment, I shall be made well.' Jesus turned, and seeing her he said, 'Take heart, daughter; your faith has made you well.' And instantly the woman was made well."

*Here we see a simple tassel on the cloak of Jesus becomes an instrument of healing. The woman's faith was also vital to the healing, however, God used a material object as a means to communicate His healing grace. Our faith is not a superstitious faith but a gift from God which trusts in God's divine will. We must be open to God's grace in our lives regardless of its source. It may be a neighbor, a stranger, a sacred song, an inspirational painting, a story, a sacramental or a relic of a holy man or woman.*

Q128) Relics are an evil pagan practice that Catholics have adopted.

A128) Acts 19:11-12 (RSV) "And God did extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul, so that handkerchiefs or aprons were carried away from his body to the sick, and diseases left them and the evil spirits came out of them."

*Relics are typically items that have been touched by those who lead holy lives. The relics in this verse are the items touched to Paul. These physical relics (handkerchiefs & aprons) heal the sick through the power of God. If these items healed the sick 2000 years ago, why can't they do the same today? Is God limited? No, He is not. God is the same yesterday, today & forever. Relics of the apostles and other holy men and women continue to be used by God to work miracles today.*

Q129) Holy men cannot bring about anybody's healing? Only God can.

A129) Acts 5:15 (RSV) "so that they even carried out the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and pallets, that as Peter came by at least his shadow might fall on some of them."

*Here the image of Peter's shadow heals the sick. God can use any means He chooses to work miracles. If the shadow of Peter can be used by God to heal, why not a piece of his clothing? It is superstitious to believe that items themselves contain miraculous power. The Church has always recognized the power of God being manifest in & through relics or images that bring about miraculous events. However, in every instance God is the efficient cause of healing, in this verse, Peter's shadow is the instrumental cause of the healing.*

## PURGATORY

Q130) Prayer for the dead is a waste of time since purgatory does not exist.

A130) 2 Maccabees 12:46 (RSV) “Therefore he made atonement for the dead, that they might be delivered from their sin.”

*The Jews didn't consider praying for the dead a waste of time. Jesus was a Jew and He never condemned the practice of praying for the dead or offering atonement for them. In fact, He prayed for the dead on several occasions, however, because He is God, power came forth from Him and they came back to life. Praying for the dead was and is a common practice for the Jews. The above verse shows a situation in which Israelite soldiers were found to have worn a type of good luck charm which was forbidden. They were killed in battle against the Greeks and thus died committing an act of superstition which required atonement for offending God. This presumes an intermediate state where atonement can be made. Jews call this intermediate state “Sheol,” Greeks call it “Hades,” and Catholics call it “Purgatory.” Those in heaven don't need prayer, those in hell will never get out, therefore prayer for them is pointless, this verse calls us to pray for the dead who are in “Sheol” (the place of the righteous dead).*

Q131) Purgatory is not found in the Bible.

A131) Matthew 12:32 (RSV) “And whoever says a word against the Son of man will be forgiven; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come.”

*This verse implies that some sins can be forgiven in the next age (or “world” in some translations). If someone dies and goes to hell, they will not be forgiven of their sins. Moreover, there is no sin to be forgiven in heaven since nothing unclean may enter heaven. Therefore, the only logical explanation is that this verse refers to an intermediate dimension in eternity where sins are expiated. The Catholic Church calls this place purgatory, the Jews call it sheol, and the Greeks call it hades.*

Q132) Sin is a sin, all sins are the same. Mortal and Venial sins are not Biblical.

A132) 1 John 5:16-17 (RSV) “If any one sees his brother committing what is not a mortal sin, he will ask, and God will give him life for those whose sin is not mortal. There is sin which is mortal; I do not say that one is to pray for that. All wrongdoing is sin, but there is sin which is not mortal.”

*Mortal and Venial sins are Biblical. John identifies two types of sin in this verse. He distinguishes the difference between the varying degrees of sin. Some sins are deadly [mortal] and will kill the life of grace required for our salvation. Venial sin [not mortal] is still sin and is also an offense against God, however it is not considered deadly. This is a parallel of society's laws – you have felonies and misdemeanors, killing an innocent person is not morally equivalent to shop lifting, common sense will tell you that.*

Q133) Purgatory is not in the Bible.

A133) 1 Corinthians 3:14-15 (RSV) “If the work which any man has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. If any man’s work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire” (Greek word for “fire” is “puros”).

*Let’s examine the following words in this verse: (1) man’s work, (2) burned up, (3) he will suffer, (4) he himself will be saved, (5) through fire. This cannot be referring to the fires of hell because nobody will be saved in hell – it’s eternal. This cannot be referring to heaven, because nobody is suffering losses or being burned up in heaven. This verse is a reference to the suffering one must undergo for purification. The Jews call this place where the soul is purified “sheol,” the Greeks call this place “hades,” Catholics call this place “purgatory.” The name ‘purgatory’ is not in the Bible but the doctrine of purgatory is certainly there. The Catholic Church gave this doctrine a name for the purpose of identification. Similarly, the Catholic Church also gave us the name ‘Trinity’, the ‘Incarnation,’ the ‘Hypostatic Union,’ etc. Purgatory is the final purification for one who is already saved but not fully purified in order to enter heaven, because nothing unclean can enter heaven (cf. Revelation 21:27 NAB).*

Q134) Praying for the dead is in violation of Deuteronomy 18:10-11 (NAB).

A134) 2 Timothy 1:16-18 (RSV) “May the Lord grant mercy to the household of Onesiph’orus, for he often refreshed me; he was not ashamed of my chains, but when he arrived in Rome he searched for me eagerly and found me - may the Lord grant him to find mercy from the Lord on that Day - and you well know all the service he rendered at Ephesus.”

*Here is the context, Onesiphorus is dead. Jews believe in praying for the dead. Why would Paul ask God to ‘grant mercy’ to someone who is dead if he knew his prayers would not benefit the dead person? Paul (a good Jew) knew that his prayers would benefit his dead friend Onesiphorus. Those who are dead need our prayers just as we need theirs. Only God knows who is in purgatory, but this shouldn’t prevent us from praying for deceased family members and friends. Those in heaven and hell do not benefit from our prayers but God disposes and distributes our prayerful intentions according to His divine will and gives ‘grace’ to those who need them.*

*As far as Deuteronomy 18:10-11, the context is to not pray to the dead by using a medium, channeler, or a séance.*

Q135) Heaven and Hell are the only two destinations for the human soul immediately upon death, there is no purgatory.

A135) 1 Peter 4:6 (RSV) “For this is why the gospel was preached even to the dead, that though judged in the flesh like men, they might live in the spirit like God.”

*It is true that heaven and hell are the only two eternal designations for the human soul. However, here Peter says that Jesus preached to the dead! Who were these dead? They could not*

*have been in heaven since heaven had yet to be opened, moreover, it could not have been hell, since those in hell would not benefit from hearing the Word of God, nor is the gospel preached in hell. Therefore, logic dictates that there is a third dimension in eternity. Catholics call it 'Purgatory'; where all the vestiges of selfishness, prideful nature, disordered self-love, and disordered appetites are purged from our soul before entering heaven.*

Q136) Purgatory is another Catholic invention.

A136) Revelation 21:27 (RSV) "But nothing unclean shall enter it (heaven), nor anyone who practices abomination or falsehood, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life."

*This verse shows the logical necessity for 'purgatory'. We are all sinners and will require God's mercy to enter heaven. Even though we may be forgiven for our sins, there is still a price to pay; "I tell you, you will never get out until you have paid the very last copper [penny] (Luke 12:59 RSV)." To stand before God we must be perfect in every way. Even the effects of the smallest "white" lie that's already been forgiven will require purification prior to our entry into heaven. 'Purgatory' is Gods final rush of sanctification in our soul, it makes us perfectly 'clean' and 'holy' so that we can enter into heaven.*

## **FAITH, WORKS & SALVATION**

Q137) For the true Christian, all sins are forgiven; past, present & future.

A137) Matthew 6:14-15 (RSV) “For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father also will forgive you; but if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”

*This verse makes it clear that our future sins are not forgiven until we forgive. If we don't forgive our brothers, we will not be forgiven. The future action that is implied in this verse shows that the protestant doctrine “once saved, always saved” was not taught by Jesus. To be forgiven from our sins, we must also be repentant and confess to the Catholic Priest who has been given the power by Jesus Christ to forgive sins (John 20:21-23 NAB). The idea that we are forgiven of all past, present and future sin without having to continually repent is unbiblical. “If we think that we stand firm, take heed, lest we fall (cf. 1 Corinthians 10:12 RSV).” This verse warns us against the sin of ‘presumption.’*

Q138) Our actions are of no consequence; Jesus did all that's necessary for our salvation.

A138) Matthew 7:21 (RSV) “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.”

*We must do the will of the Father to enter heaven. Professing ‘Jesus as Lord’ is a true statement but that isn't enough. Even those that work miracles in the name of Jesus and who preach the Gospel in His name are not assured a place in heaven. We must do the Fathers will and walk in the “obedience of faith (Romans 1:5; 16:26 NAB).” Through false teachings, the devil has convinced many people today that they have a “free ticket” to heaven. This is NOT biblical and those who believe in this theology of ‘cheap grace’ are jeopardizing their salvation.*

Q139) Once we are “saved,” our conduct is irrelevant.

A139) Matthew 16:27 (RSV) “For the Son of man is to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay every man for what he has done.”

*It is very clear from this verse that we will be judged by what we have done or what we have failed to do. Just believing and saying the “protestant sinners prayer,” (which is not found in the Bible), isn't enough. “Even the demons believe (James 2:19),” yet they're all going to hell, so believing is not the only thing required. We must do the will of God by keeping the commandments. Our life as a disciple requires ‘faith’ and ‘works’ (in obedience to the Gospel).*

Q140) Jesus did all that's necessary for our salvation. Nothing we do affects that.

A140) Matthew 19:16-17 (RSV) “And behold, one came up to him, saying, ‘Teacher, what good deed must I do, to have eternal life?’ And he said to him, ‘Why do you ask me about what is good? There is only One who is good. If you wish to enter into life, keep the commandments.’”

*We are sinners and must come to God through a loving faith (cf. Galatians 5:6 NAB). A loving faith is shown by how well we keep God's commandments. By God's grace and an act of our will to love Him with our whole heart, mind and body we can keep the commandments. The 10 Commandments didn't become the 10 suggestions once the Messiah came into the world. Our actions must be in concert with the will of God which means we must abide by His commandments. The commandments were given to us in order to teach us how to live a godly life, lest we destroy ourselves which godless humans are prone to do. The 10 commandments are God's natural law written in our hearts which even the pagans are bound to follow.*

Q141) Once saved – always saved.

A141) Matthew 24:13 (RSV) “But he who endures to the end will be saved.” *Perseverance in your Catholic faith to the end of our earthly life is required for our salvation. We must continue to love God and our neighbor throughout our earthly life. Our love must be dynamic (not static) which requires that we “do” something to show our love (see the ‘spiritual & corporal’ works of mercy - CCC 2447). Just as a husband or wife must show their love for one another, we must show our love for God in ways of service. Throughout the Bible, God has always required obedience from his people as a demonstration of their love. Jesus opened the gates of heaven for us but we must still walk toward them & through them in a state of grace with a soul full of love. “At the end of our life, we will be judged by how much we loved (St. John of the Cross).”*

Q142) The Bible says, “as it is written: ‘There is no one just, not one; there is no one who understands...All have gone astray...there is not one who does good, [there is not] even one’ (Romans 3:10-12 NAB).

A142) Matthew 25:21(RSV) “His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a little, I will set you over much; enter into the joy of your master.’”

*Jesus just called someone ‘good,’ so much for the protestant claim. The verse from Romans 3:10-12 is taken out of context by Protestants. Read Psalm 14:1-3, this is where St. Paul borrowed this verse from. According to Our Lord Jesus Christ, there are people who ‘do good’, that’s why there will be a reward in the afterlife (heaven). When Mary anointed the feet of Jesus (cf. Mark 14:6), our Lord Jesus told her, “She has done a good thing for me.” However, we cannot ‘do good’ by ourselves where we can boast and say, “see Lord, I have done a good thing.” It is God at work in us both to will and to work for his good pleasure (cf. Philippians 2:13). Whatever ‘good’ we do it comes from cooperating with God’s grace and we thank Him for it. Other verses exhorting us to ‘do good’ are found in: Matthew 5:16, 12:35; Luke 6:27-33; Galatians 6:10.*

Q143) The Bible says, “as it is written: ‘There is no one just, not one; there is no one who understands...All have gone astray...there is not one who does good, [there is not] even one’ (Romans 3:10-12 NAB).

A143) Luke 1:6 And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.



*This verse is referring to Zechariah & Elizabeth as being 'righteous'. This verse quoted by Protestants "...there is not one who does good, [there is not] even one (Rom 3:10-12 NAB)", is clearly taken out of context. This verse from Romans (3:10-12) is quoted from Psalms (14:1-3.) However, when you read Psalm 14 in context, the Psalmist is talking about two types of people, the 'wicked' who eat up God's people and then, in verse 5, the generation of the 'righteous.' When a protestant quotes this verse in Romans 3:10-12, they are quoting it out of context in order to make a pretext against Catholic doctrine. Also, look at all the examples of "righteous" people in the Bible: Genesis 6:9, 7:1, 38:26; Luke 2:25, 5:32, 15:7, 23:50; Romans 5:19; Hebrews 10:37-38. The Bible defines "righteousness" as simply doing that which is right (cf. 1 John 3:7-10; Acts 10:35 NAB).*

Q144) Jesus did all that's necessary for our salvation. Nothing we do affects our salvation.

A144) John 14:21 (RSV) "He who has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me; and he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him."

*We must also keep God's commandments. The "once saved, always saved" Protestant theology is not biblical. As this verse indicates, we must do more than just accept Jesus as our personal Lord and Savior and say the sinner's prayer (as good as those things are). Our love for God is reflected in what we do, how we act, what we say, etc. Our salvation is not a done deal. The Christian must carry his cross (cf. Matthew 16:24 NAB) and work out his salvation with fear and trembling (cf. Philippians 2:12 NAB) one day at a time. Heck, even our careless words can lead to our damnation (cf. Matthew 12:36-37 NAB).*

Q145) Our 'faith alone' in Jesus Christ is sufficient for our salvation. 'Faith alone' is all that is needed.

A145) Romans 2:5-8 (NAB), "But by your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed. For he will render to every man according to his works; to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life; but for those who are factious and do not obey the truth, but obey wickedness, there will be wrath and fury."

*Paul's strong warning in this verse indicates a harsh judgment from God for those that don't persevere in 'good works'. Those who are selfish, wicked & evil will be repaid for immediately upon their death. Our salvation can be lost if we don't do the will of the Father. What is required of us is a 'faith working through love' (cf. Galatians 5:6 NAB) for God and neighbor that perseveres till the end. What we do during this life has eternal consequences and "he will render to every man according to his works (Romans 2:6 RSV)."*

Q146) We become 'saved' because God declares us 'righteous' when we accept him as personal Lord and Savior, however, we are NOT made righteous – this is the error taught by the Catholic Church.

A146) Romans 5:19 (RSV) “For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by one man’s obedience many will be made righteous.”

*We are not just declared righteous (as Martin Luther, the founder of the Protestant revolt taught). Because of Adam we are not just declared sinners, we are made sinners. So it is with our righteousness, we are made righteous. This verse clearly shows the real distinction of our sinfulness from our righteousness. Both are made, not declared. To deny that we are not made ‘righteous’ is to deny that we are made ‘sinners’ because of Adam. We are not only ‘called’ children of God, ‘we are’ children of God (1 John 3:1 NAB). In other words, we become what God declares.*

Q147) Paul tells the Roman Christians that they are already saved.

A147) Romans 8:24-25 (NAB), “For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.”

*We hope in our salvation and the Bible says, “we wait for it with patience (Rom 8:25).” Salvation is not determined solely by accepting Jesus as our personal Lord and Savior, this is necessary, but it’s not enough because ‘salvation’ is a process. If our salvation were a done deal, why would we need to hope in patience? To hope in something implies that a risk is associated with it. The risk here is the risk that we may not be saved in the end. We must practice patience and continue to actively hope in our salvation. To hope in our salvation is a good start but it will not determine the final verdict of God’s judgment.*

*Here is another verse that demonstrates ‘salvation is a process’: “Like newborn babes, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up to salvation (1 Peter 2:2 RSV).”*

Q148) My Salvation cannot be lost.

A148) Romans 11:22 (RSV), “Note then the kindness and the severity of God: severity toward those who have fallen, but God’s kindness to you, provided you continue in his kindness; otherwise you too will be cut off.”

*We must endure to the end or risk being cut off from the tree just as some of those in Israel (God’s chosen people) were cut off, while others (Gentiles) were grafted in (Romans 11:16-21 NAB). God acts severely toward those who turn away from him but those who remain faithful will merit His kindness. There are those who claim that our salvation cannot be lost while they continue to sin as though it makes no difference. We all sin and must be ever vigilant to overcome all sins lest we be cut off like some of God’s chosen people were in the Old Testament.*

Q149) 1 John 5:13 says we can know we have eternal life.

A149) 1 Corinthians 4:4-5 (RSV), “I am not aware of anything against myself, but I am not thereby acquitted. It is the Lord who judges me. Therefore, do not pronounce judgment before

the time, before the Lord comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart. Then every man will receive his commendation from God.” *St. Paul certainly didn’t judge his soul to be eternally secure.*

*In 1 John 5:13, we must read what is written prior to this verse. St. John gives us a criterion, so we can know if we have eternal life. He writes, “If you keep the commandments (2:3 RSV),” “do not love things of the world (2:15 RSV),” “if our hearts do not condemn us (3:21),” “those who keep the commandments abide in Him (3:24 RSV),” “if we love one another (4:12 NAB),” and “we must love our brother (4:20).” So, let’s recap, if you obey the things John writes prior to chapter 5:13, you may know you have eternal life. To “know” does not mean full certitude. For example, I can say “I studied all weekend, so I know I’m going to pass the test on Monday.” All this means is that I have confident assurance. That’s why he says in 1 John 5:14 (NAB), “And we have this confidence in him...” Additionally, just read 1 Corinthians 4:4-5, it shows that God will judge us at a future time, only God knows who will be saved.*

Q150) Once a person accepts Jesus as their personal Lord and Savior, they can’t lose their salvation.

A150) 1 Corinthians 9:27 (RSV) “...but I pommel my body and subdue it, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified.”

*St. Paul tells the Corinthians that there isn’t an absolute assurance of salvation. He fears for his own salvation though he has been a servant of God and aided in spreading the Gospel by his preaching. He realizes that he may yet fall into serious sin and thereby be “disqualified” from heaven. If the apostle Paul was concerned about his own salvation, shouldn’t all Christians imitate Paul’s concern for their own salvation.*

Q151) Once you are saved, you cannot lose your salvation.

A151) 1 Corinthians 10:12 (RSV) “Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall.”

*If your salvation is guaranteed upon “accepting Jesus as your personal Lord and Savior,” why would St. Paul write such a warning to those in Corinthians? This is because our salvation is not guaranteed. We must be diligent and work out our salvation lest we fall. God grants us grace to overcome temptations and avoid falling into sin if we remain close to Him and frequent the Holy Sacraments he gave us.*

Q152) ‘Faith’ is all that is needed, ‘Works’ are a Catholic addition to God’s plan of salvation.

A152) Galatians 5:6, “For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is of any avail, but faith working through love.”

*A common misunderstanding lies in the phrase “works of the law” (Romans 3:28-31 NAB) juxtaposed with ‘works of faith out of love and service to God’ (cf. Matthew 25:31-46 NAB).*

*'Works of the law' mentioned by Paul, were the required rituals of the Jewish law that were often done without sincere love for God. They became just another ritual you had to do to meet the Jewish requirement. We Catholics can still fall into this same trap by "ritualistically" attending Holy Mass without a sincere attempt to draw closer to God from our hearts.*

Q153) Faith is all that is needed for salvation.

A153) Ephesians 2:8-10 (RSV) "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God - not because of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them."

*Catholics believe that we are saved by God's grace. Nothing we do can merit this gift of grace which is initially given to us at baptism (cf. CCC 1992, 1997, 2003). However, it's what we do with the gift of faith that is important. It must be an obedient faith (cf. Roman 1:5; 16:26 NAB) that is not only professed in Creeds, but preached by our actions (cf. James 2:18-26). Our faith & love for God must show in our actions and works (cf. CCC 2447). 'We are God's workmanship, we were created for 'good works' which God prepared in advance for us to do (cf. Ephesians 2:10 NAB).'*

Q154) Catholic "works" are part of their man-made traditions.

A154) Philippians 2:12-13 (RSV) "Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for God is at work in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure."

*The Philippians were bound to obey St. Paul's message by working out their salvation in fear and trembling. Why should we do any different if we are truly the New Testament Christians of today? Our conduct is critical; it will determine how God will judge us at the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of Christ (cf. Matthew 25:31-46 NAB). This should stir a holy fear within each of us to strive to do the will of the Father 24 hours a day 7 days a week. Neither St. Paul nor any of the other New Testament writers portray an absolute assurance of salvation that many of today's preachers falsely promote.*

Q155) For the (protestant) born again Christian, salvation is guaranteed.

A155) 2 Timothy 2:12 (NAB) "...if we persevere, we shall also reign with him. But if we deny him he will deny us."

*Perseverance is required to enter heaven. If salvation is absolutely assured, never to be lost once we're "saved", then why do we need to persevere to enter heaven as the Scriptures tell us? We must run the race to the finish line. There is no winning by default or forfeit. Jesus says in Luke 9:23 that in order to follow Him, a person must deny himself and take up his cross daily. This does not agree with the idea of "once saved, always saved" or the "health and wealth" gospel*

*being proclaimed by many Protestants today. Also, if you deny Our Lord by word or action (and don't repent) He will deny you and you will lose your salvation.*

- Matthew 10:33 (NAB) “But whoever denies me before others, I will deny before my heavenly Father.”

Q156) Works are not necessary for salvation.

A156) James 2:24-26 (NAB), “You see that a man is justified by works and not by faith alone. And in the same way was not also Rahab the harlot justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out another way? For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so faith apart from works is dead.”

*Works are required for ‘saving’ faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. The term “faith alone” introduced by (the heretic) Martin Luther and used by many non-Catholic Christians is not a biblical teaching. This is the only verse in the whole Bible that contains the words “faith” and “alone” in the same sentence. This verse states the total opposite of Martin Luther’s false doctrine. Our faith must be obedient and fruitful. It must produce goodness, or our faith is dead. God’s grace gives us both our faith and the ability to work out our salvation by pursuing a life of virtue.*

Q157) Catholics don’t know how to ‘Get Saved.’ The ‘Romans Road’ (devised by Evangelical Protestant Christians) tells you how to be saved. Pay attention you unsaved Catholics!

#### Romans Road of Salvation<sup>lxxiv</sup>

1. Everyone needs salvation because we have all sinned.  
Romans 3:10-12 & 23 (RSV) *As the Scriptures say, “...as it is written: None is righteous, no, not one; no one understands, no one seeks for God. All have turned aside, together they have gone wrong; no one does good, not even one...(23) since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”*
2. The price (or consequence) of sin is death.  
Romans 6:23 (RSV), *“For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”*
3. Jesus Christ died for our sins. He paid the price for our death.<sup>lxxv</sup>  
Romans 5:8 (RSV), *“But God shows his love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.”*
4. We receive salvation and eternal life through faith in Jesus Christ.  
Romans 10:9-10 & 13 (RSV) *“...because, if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For man believes with his heart and so is justified, and he confesses with his lips and so is saved...(13) For, “everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved.”*
5. Salvation through Jesus Christ brings us into a relationship of peace with God.  
Romans 5:1 (RSV), *“Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

Romans 8:1 (RSV), “There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.”

Romans 8:38-39 (RSV), “For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

If you believe the Romans Road leads to the path of truth, you can respond by receiving God's free gift of salvation today. Here's how to take a personal journey down Romans Road:

1. Admit you are a sinner.
2. Understand that as a sinner, you deserve death.
3. Believe Jesus Christ died on the cross to save you from sin and death.<sup>lxxvi</sup>
4. Repent by turning from your old life of sin to a new life in Christ.<sup>lxxvii</sup>
5. Receive, through faith in Jesus Christ, his free gift of salvation.

A157) The Romans Road is an Evangelical Protestant Christian technique used to evangelize people with the scriptures. It is found in virtually all Protestant evangelization tracts, pamphlets in some way shape or form. Here is some straight talk! The ‘Romans Road’ is a misuse of sacred scripture. St. Paul did not write his epistle to the Romans to tell people how to ‘get saved’. Nor did he write this epistle to 1<sup>st</sup> century Christians to give them an absolute assurance of their salvation. St. Paul was not in Ephesus with a bunch of letters from distraught Christians asking him how to get saved! To put it quite simply, this was not the intention of the letter to the Romans; it was not even a blip on his radar screen. There was a burning question in his mind, and that is ‘How can the Abrahamic covenant be fulfilled?’ And so we see St. Paul masterfully tracing salvation history back to the fall, ultimately to make sense of God’s plan for the Jews and the Gentiles. It’s not so much that the ‘Roman Road’ technique is false, there is some truth there, the problem is that this demonstrates that you can go to a text or combination of texts and find the answer to any question you want. This destroys any sense of how to read the bible critically. This method undermines our ability to understand any written work. This is known as: Deconstructionism, this is how I heard Dr. Scott Hahn define it in a lecture – *it is a method of literary analysis which originated in France in the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century, which is based on a theory that, by the very nature of language and usage, no text can have a fixed coherent meaning. Literally ‘deconstructionism’ takes a text or verse apart, disassembles and rearranges it. Most Fundamentalist and Evangelicals are opposed to modernism and yet they read the bible as Deconstructionist. This way of reading sacred scripture does violence to the text. By using this methodology of cut & paste you can get the works of ‘Shakespeare’ ‘Cicero’ or ‘Virgil’ and make them say just about anything that suits your fancy.” Post Modern Deconstructionism – “is when you take scripture and make it mean anything or make it mean nothing.”<sup>lxxviii</sup>*

## **BAPTISM**

Q158) Baptism is only a symbol.

A158) Ezekiel 36:25-27 (RSV), “I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleanness, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will take out of your flesh the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to observe my ordinances.”

*This is a prophecy by Ezekiel of what was to come in the New Testament. Water would be sprinkled on the people and the Spirit would be given to them, this is a prophecy of the sacrament of baptism. They would be given new hearts and they would become the people of God abiding in His love and given the grace to keep His commandments.*

Q159) Infants cannot be baptized because babies are incapable of believing.

A159) Matthew 8:13 (RSV), “And to the centurion Jesus said, ‘go; be it done for you as you have believed.’ And the servant was healed at that very moment.”

*Jesus cured the centurion’s servant because of the centurion’s faith. But was the servant a believer in Jesus? We do not know, but it did not matter because the centurion had faith. So it is the same with the parents of an infant; the faith of the parents is sufficient for the baptism of their infant. God’s grace can be conferred vicariously through someone else’s faith. Another example of vicarious faith is promised in Acts (16:31 RSV) - And they (Paul & Silas) said (to the Philippian Jailer), “Believe in the Lord Jesus and you and your household will be saved.”*

Q160) Infants cannot be baptized because babies are incapable of believing.

A160) Matthew 9:2, 6 (RSV) “And behold, they brought to him a paralytic, lying on his bed; and when Jesus saw their faith he said to the paralytic, ‘Take heart, my son; your sins are forgiven’...But that you may know that the Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins—he then said to the paralytic—‘Rise, take up your bed and go home.’”

*Often in the Bible it was the faith of others that healed their loved ones by God’s grace. Here Jesus not only healed the man, but forgave his sins because of the (vicarious) faith of his friends. This supports the Church’s teaching that the faith of the parents is sufficient for the baptism of their infant children much like the faith of parents in the Old Testament was sufficient to have the boy circumcised<sup>lxxix</sup> in the Temple.*

Q161) Baptism is only a symbol. It has nothing to do with our walk with Christ.

A161) Matthew 28:19 (NAB) Jesus said: “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit...”

*Jesus commanded the apostles to make disciples of all nations. How was this to be done? By baptizing them, they would be united to Christ (Romans 6:3-4; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Galatians 3:27 NAB). This command is explicit and requires one to be baptized in order to be a disciple of Jesus Christ.*

Q162) Baptism is only a symbol. We are not saved, nor do we receive the Holy Spirit when we are baptized.

A162) Mark 16:16 (RSV) all generations...peoples will praise you forever and ever “He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.”

*Jesus gave this command to the apostles just before He ascended into heaven. He specifically said that we need to believe and be baptized. Jesus Himself submitted to baptism and the spirit descended upon him. He was baptized not because He had to, but to show us by example what we must do in order to receive sanctifying grace & divine sonship.*

Q163) Infants cannot be baptized because babies are incapable of believing.

A163) Luke 18:15-16 (RSV), “Now they were bringing even infants to him that he might touch them; and when the disciples saw it, they rebuked them. But Jesus called them to him, saying, ‘let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of God.’”

*Infants were brought to Jesus, so he could touch them. But why was this done? The parents knew if Jesus touched the infants, they would receive a special blessing. The children didn’t know this, but the “faith” of the parents was sufficient for the child to receive a blessing. Similarly, it is through faith that Catholic parents bring infants to the sacrament of baptism. Through this sacrament they are freed of original sin, receive sanctifying grace and made members of the Body of Christ.*

Q164) Baptism is only a symbol. We do not receive the Holy Spirit when we are baptized.

A164) John 3:5 (RSV) “Jesus answered, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.’”

*The water and the Spirit are one in the same act. When Jesus was baptized with water the Spirit came upon Him. The water and Spirit are not separate actions as non-Catholics assume. Some protestants claim that ‘born of water’ represents a woman’s amniotic fluid referring to a natural birth “and the Spirit” refers to baptism. This is not Biblical nor is there any proof that this was taught or believed in the early Church. The word “born of water and the Spirit” cannot be separated, it’s one thought and one action concurrently. Jesus is teaching Nicodemus supernatural realities, not what happens at a hospital maternity ward. The water (matter), the Trinitarian formula (form), and the Minister performing the rite according to do what the Church teaches (intention) is what brings the Holy Spirit upon the candidate.*

Q165) Infants cannot be baptized because babies are incapable of believing.



A165) Acts 2:38-39 (NAB), “And Peter said to them, ‘Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children and to all that are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him.’”

*St. Peter said that the promise was made to adults and children, but he did not specify the age. Are we to believe that there were no infants included in this promise? Was the promise given only to children over the age of accountability? Babies do not need to repent because they have not reached the age of reason (which is between 7 & 8 years old), but the Lord in His mercy still grants children the gift of the Holy Spirit as demonstrated by this verse. God wishes to bless even infants. In Luke 18:15 (NAB) it says: “People were bringing even infants (Greek “brephe) to him that he might touch them...”*

Q166) Objection: Infant baptism is not Biblical.

A166) Acts 16:15 (RSV), “And when she (Lydia) was baptized, with her household, she besought us, saying, ‘if you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay.’ And she prevailed upon us.”

*It is safe to assume that infants may have been baptized in Lydia’s household. The Bible doesn’t make this point clear, so to say that the Bible disproves infant baptism, this assertion is not Biblical. There is more Biblical evidence to suggest that infants were baptized, though not conclusive. However, the early Church Fathers who were the disciples of the first century apostles taught and practiced infant baptism. Obviously, they learned this through Sacred Tradition which is the ‘communal memory of the Church.’ How can someone today claim that they have greater insight into the practices of the early Church? They can’t. This is why we must devote ourselves to “seek out all wisdom of the ancients, and... preserve the discourse of notable men (Sirach 39:1-2 RSV).”*

Q167) Infant baptism is not Biblical.

A167) Acts 16:31, 33 (RSV), “And they said, ‘Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household’ ...And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their wounds, and he was baptized at once, with all his family.’

*Sacred Tradition tells us that infants were included in baptism. The Bible doesn’t specifically address infant baptism, but this verse and the one prior does implicitly point to infant baptism. The Bible alone theory (invented by Martin Luther the 1<sup>st</sup> Protestant) that says infant baptism is not biblical seems to forget that not everything Jesus did and said is included in the Bible (cf. John 21:25 NAB). Blessed John Henry Newman, a convert to Catholicism from the Church of England wrote: “To be steeped in history is to cease to be a Protestant.”*

Q168) Objection: Baptism is only a symbol.

A168) Acts 22:16 (RSV), “And now why do you wait? Rise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on his name.”

*St. Paul is sharing his conversion testimony. He was persecuting Christians. God, working through Ananias, healed his sight. Paul (formerly known as Saul of Tarsus) was committing grave sin by persecuting and imprisoning Catholic Christians. So, Ananias told him to be baptized and his sins would be washed away. This verse proves that baptism is much more than a symbol. It cleanses us from original (and personal) sin and joins us to the Body of Christ.*

Q169) Baptized is only a symbol. It has nothing to do with our walk with Christ.

A169) Romans 6:3-5 (NAB) “Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.”

*We were baptized with water and the Spirit (John 3:5) to remove original sin and thus unite us to the body of Jesus Christ. Our old selves were buried with Christ in baptism. Because he died for our sins and was raised from the dead, he’s given us the grace & power to live in the newness of life through the sacrament of baptism. Baptism is no mere symbol, we become a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17 NAB) through this sacrament, there is a metaphysical change in the soul.*

Q170) Infant baptism is not biblical.

A170) 1 Corinthians 1:16 (NAB), “I did baptize also the household of Stephanas. Beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized anyone else.”

*St. Paul baptized the household of Stephanas. The Bible does not say whether there were infants in the household or not. Most likely, there were children and infants in many Jewish households. However, we cannot declare from the Bible one way or another, so we must turn to the Sacred Tradition of the Church. If you hold to the Bible alone theory, you cannot deny that infants were baptized nor can you prove they were because the Bible does not specify an age. However, it can be reasonably assumed or inferred based on this verse and the others I have previously shown that infants were baptized as well.*

Q171) Baptism is only a symbol. It has nothing to do with our walk with Christ.

A171) 1 Corinthians 6:11 (RSV), “And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.”

*The Corinthians were once given over to shameful vices mentioned in the previous verse. “You have been washed” refers to baptism and its purifying effect (cf. Acts 22:16; Hebrews 10:22 RSV). “You have been sanctified,” which is a synonym for ‘made holy,’ implies a state of consecration by the Holy Spirit, this has also been conferred at baptism (cf. Ephesians 5:26*

RSV). *You have been justified, which means to be placed in a state of justice & made a child of God. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ is a status which gives us: purification from sin, sanctification, and justification – these are the consequences of baptismal incorporation into the body of Christ.*<sup>lxxx</sup>

Q172) Water baptism is not necessary.

A172) 1 Corinthians 10:1-2 (RSV) “I want you to know, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea...”

*In the Holy Bible the word “cloud” typically refers to the Holy Spirit (CCC 697) or the presence of God. As Moses led the captives to freedom through the waters of the Red Sea, the cloud of the Holy Spirit was with them. In the same way, baptism requires both the Holy Spirit (cloud) and the water (sea). Moreover, Israelites of all ages passed through the sea to freedom. Infants were included in this Exodus which led to their freedom from death, just as we are freed from original sin (spiritual death) in Baptism.*

Q173) Baptism is only a symbol. It has nothing to do with our walk with Christ.

A173) 1 Corinthians 12:12-13 (RSV) “For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.”

*Christ is one, just as the human body is one, in spite of the diversity and number of its members. To be baptized into one body means that we are incorporated into the risen, glorified body of Christ, so that the Church, the assembly of the baptized, is the manifestation and extension of the Lord’s body in this world. The Church is the body of Christ because it is composed of members who share in the life of the Risen Lord.*

Q174) Infant Baptism is not Biblical.

A174) Colossians 2:11-12 (RSV) “In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of flesh in the circumcision of Christ; and you were buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead.”

*Circumcision was the physical sign that incorporated the Israelites into the Old Covenant. The law commanded that male babies were to be circumcised on the eighth day after their birth. God takes a covenant relationship very serious. Moses, after coming down from the mountain, was going to be killed by God because he had not circumcised his baby (cf. Exodus 4:24-27 NAB). Circumcision is never commanded in the New Covenant because baptism fulfills in the New Covenant what circumcision fulfilled in the Old Covenant. Both circumcision and baptism incorporate you into the family of God and gives you the status of being God’s child.*

Circumcision is defined as “the cutting and, specifically, the removal of the prepuce, or foreskin, from the penis.”<sup>lxxxix</sup>

Q175) Baptism is only a symbol. It has nothing to do with our walk with Christ or salvation.

A175) Titus 3:5-6 (RSV) “he saved us, not because of deeds done by us in righteousness, but in virtue of his own mercy, by the ‘washing’ (Greek ‘baptismos’) of ‘regeneration’ (Greek ‘palingenesia’ also means ‘new birth’) and renewal in the Holy Spirit, which he poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior...”<sup>lxxxii</sup>

*At baptism, we are regenerated (born again) and receive the Holy Spirit. Baptism washes away original sin, redeems us and gives us the grace of justification we lost through Adam and Eve's sin. This verse also shows the two elements of baptism that are linked together; 1) water, 2) the Holy Spirit just like we saw them linked in John 3:5. Now the complete mercy of God is bestowed on us at baptism as we receive divine sonship freely and gratuitously in and through Jesus Christ.*

Q176) Baptism is only a symbol. It has nothing to do with our walk with Christ or salvation.

A176) Hebrews 10:22 (RSV) “let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies ‘washed’ with pure water.”  
*‘Hearts sprinkled and bodies washed’ is an allusion to baptism. Its waters make outward contact with the body but effect an inward cleansing of the heart.*<sup>lxxxiii</sup>

*You are sprinkled and washed clean of all past sins at baptism. We were given a new heart and a new spirit (as prophesied in Ezekiel 36:25-27 NAB) in baptism. This verse shows that sprinkling was prophesied as one of the modes for baptism. One of the earliest sources of Christian writings,<sup>lxxxiv</sup> known as ‘The Didache’ (The Teaching of the Twelve), which was written around 60 A.D., states that baptism can be done by pouring, sprinkling and immersion.*

Q177) Baptism is only a symbol. We are not saved by baptism.

A177) 1 Peter 3:20-21 (RSV) “...who formerly did not obey, when God’s patience waited in the days of Noah, during the building of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were saved through water. Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a clear conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ...”

*St. Peter is recalling Noah and his family who were saved from the flood. The ark represents the Church. The water of the flood represents baptism. Thus, we are saved through baptism by being brought into the Church (which is Peter’s barque) for outside the Church is the ocean of death where sinners drown unto damnation. St. Peter believed that baptism saves us, yet many protestant Christians today don’t believe this? They have been misled through the practice of the private interpretation of scripture (cf. 2 Peter 1:20 NAB) and the rejection of Sacred Tradition.*

Q178) The Catholic Church teaches the Trinitarian formula for baptizing, but the bible teaches to baptize in the name of Jesus only (Acts 2:38 NAB). How do you respond?

A178) Jesus specifically said to baptize in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit (cf. Matthew 28:19 NAB). Now, for Peter to change it to baptize in the “name of Jesus only” is a misunderstanding and a bad interpretation of Scripture. First of all, Jesus is God, and what he teaches can’t change (cf. Malachi 3:6; James 1:17; Hebrews 13:8 NAB). Secondly, others were baptized into the baptism of John the Baptist. Therefore, the phrase to *baptize in the name of Jesus* was said to distinguish it (cf. Acts 19:17 NAB) from John’s Baptism. Third, where it says that the apostles baptized in name of Jesus (cf. Acts 8:16, 10:48, 19:5) is not a formula for baptism. The phrase in *the name of Jesus* means to be under the authority of Jesus (cf. Acts 4:18, 5:28, 40 RSV). In other words, the apostles baptized by the authority of Jesus using the Trinitarian formula they were taught by Jesus himself. It’s just like when I use to say after serving an arrest or search warrant to a suspect, “Sheriff’s Department, you’re under arrest!” It was a roundabout way of saying that *I as a Deputy Sheriff am arresting you by the authority and in the name of the Sheriff of Los Angeles County*. Lastly, according to the Didache which is the teaching of the twelve apostles written between 70 to 110AD, tells us to baptize in the Trinitarian formula.

## CONFESSION

Q179) Catholic Priests cannot forgive sins.

A179) Matthew 9:6-8 (NAB) “But that you may know that the Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins—he then said to the paralytic – ‘Rise, take up your bed and go home.’ And he rose and went home. When the crowds saw it, they were afraid, and they glorified God, who had given such authority to men.”

*This verse says that not only was the authority to heal given to men, but also the authority to forgive sins. “Men” is used in the plural. If this only referred to Jesus, it would have read, “who had given such authority to a man” (used in singular). The people of the New Testament understood that Jesus gave the authority to forgive sins to men. This was a ministerial authority given to select men and guided by the Holy Spirit to continue Our Lords ministry of divine mercy. There is no expiration date in the Holy Bible on this gift and authority ‘to forgive sins’ which has been given to select ordained men in the Catholic Church.*

Q180) Catholic Priests cannot forgive sins.

A180) Matthew 18:18 (RSV) “Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven...”

*Our Lord Jesus Christ had already given St. Peter the power to bind and loose, now He gives it to all the apostles. Whatever the apostles declare on earth, it will be likewise ratified in heaven. Why? Because they stand in the person of Christ himself, ergo, they speak with his authority. If they bind a sin, it is bound in heaven which means God will recognize the authority he gave them. If God recognizes the authority He has given to His Bishops and Priests, shouldn't we also recognize a Catholic Priest's authority? Of course we should!*

Q181) Catholic Priests cannot forgive sins.

A181) Luke 17:3-4 (RSV) “Take heed to yourselves; if your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him; and if he sins against you seven times in the day, and turns to you seven times, and says, ‘I repent,’ you must forgive him.”

*While only God can forgive sins unto salvation, He expects us to forgive each other. In this verse, Jesus is talking to the disciples and telling them that they are to forgive their repentant brother of their sins (also: Matthew 6:14-15 RSV). But the protestant argument says that only God can forgive sins. We as say people have the power to forgive sins committed against us, but we do not have the same power that Catholic Priests do. The Priest is a chosen instrument of God who forgives our sins on God's behalf and with God's authority. However, we are mandated to forgive one another as specified in the “Our Father” if we want to be saved.*

Q182) Catholic Priests cannot forgive sins.

A182) John 20:21-23 (NAB) Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I send you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.'"

*God the Father send Jesus with His authority. On the Sunday of the Resurrection, Jesus sends out the apostles with His authority. Jesus breathed on the apostles, this is HUGE. The only other time God breathed on someone was when He breathed life into Adam (cf. Genesis 2:7 NAB). Jesus now breathes life into the apostles which means He gave them the authority that the Father had given Him. In order to know which sins were to be forgiven and which sins were to be retained, the apostles must have heard the penitent's confession. The Bible does not say anywhere that this ministry of reconciliation expired after the death of the last apostle. We know the gifts of God are irrevocable (cf. Romans 11:29 NAB) and all the gifts will be with us until the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of Christ.*

Q183) James McCarthy (protestant apologist) says that the correct translation of John 20:22-23 (RSV) is not, "If you forgive the sins of any, their sins will be forgiven them," or "If you forgive the sins of any, their sins are forgiven them," but "If you forgive the sins of any, their sins have been forgiven them." Why? The Greek original of this text uses the perfect tense for the second "forgiven" and "retained" in each clause. What is the perfect tense? Put simply, it denotes an action that is already in a culminated state. Therefore, when the Apostles forgive sins, they "already have been" forgiven by God. James McCarthy concludes that God's forgiveness precedes the Apostles' actions. Therefore, the Apostles are merely claiming that God has already forgiven one's sins.

A183) The New American Standard Bible seems to support this rendering of the verbs for "forgive" and "retain." Did the Apostles really forgive sins, or did they merely declare to those who came to faith that their sins had already been forgiven by God? Since there has been an appeal to the Greek, we too will address the Greek in this passage. McCarthy is correct in stating that the verbs for "forgive" and "retain" at the end of each clause are in the perfect tense. He is also correct in saying that the perfect tense signifies an action that has reached its culmination. For this reason, it is usually rendered in the past tense "have been." I say usually because there are exceptions, and this passage is an exception. The Protestant reference work, A Translator's Handbook on the Gospel of John edited by Barclay M. Newman and Eugene A. Nida, explains the correct rendering of these verbs. In general, it may be said that the perfect tense expresses a past action which results in a present state, and on that basis, it has been argued that God's action of forgiveness (they are forgiven) is therefore said to have taken place prior to the offering of forgiveness through Jesus' Disciples (if you forgive people's sins). But in a conditional sentence the perfect tense is used with essentially the same meaning as the present and the future, except that it emphasizes the continuous character of the action? So, the first part of verse 23 may be rendered 'If you forgive people's sins, God also forgives them, and they remain forgiven.' Since Jesus' words to the Disciples are conditional ("If you forgive? If you retain"), the perfect tense is rendered either in the present "their sins are forgiven:" or in the future "their sins will be forgiven." God's extension of forgiveness either takes place at the same time as the disciple's action or after it but not before. This rendering of the present or future tenses is followed by

some of the most respected translations of the Bible, such as the Protestant: Authorized Standard Version, Revised Standard Version, New Revised Standard Version, New International Version, King James Version, New King James Version, and the New English Version, as well as the Latin Vulgate. The question remains. Why does the New American Standard Version translate this passage as, "If you forgive the sins of any, their sins have been forgiven them," and not with the present or future tense? If the New American Standard is known for anything, it is known for its exacting attention to verb tenses. In this case, it did render the verbs according to their tense, but it did not provide the reader with the data to correctly interpret it. In summary, Jesus did in fact give the Disciples, and through them to their successors, the institution of the Sacrament of Penance or Confession. The Greek text supports this interpretation, and potential parallels do not detract from its correct meaning. In this respect, it seems the gospel of James McCarthy does not comport with what God has revealed in these passages.<sup>lxxxv</sup>

Q184) *Catholic Priests cannot forgive sins.*

A184) 2 Corinthians 2:10 (Douay Rheims Catholic Bible) "And to whom you have forgiven anything, I also: for, what I forgave, if I have forgiven anything, it was for your sakes in the person of Christ..." *The Douay Rheims is a formal translation of Scripture translated from the Greek which uses the phrase "prosopon Christos."*

*Jesus personally forgives sins through his appointed ministers. St. Paul matter-of-factly employs this concept of acting in the 'person of Christ' (Latin Vulgate: "persona Christi") in the context of forgiving sins, without any felt need to defend it. 'In persona Christi' is a Latin phrase which translates literally as "in the person of Christ." This is an important theological concept of the Catholic Church referring to the action of a priest while celebrating a sacrament. The Priest acts 'in the person of Christ.'*

*Let's look at the King James Bible (oldest protestant bible, 1611 A.D.) It reads:*

*"For to this end also did I write, that I might know the proof of you, whether ye be obedient in all things. To whom ye forgive anything, I forgive also: for if I forgave anything, to whom I forgave it, for your sakes forgave it in the person of Christ" (2 Corinthians 2:10 KJV). The King James is a formal translation of Scripture translated from the Greek which uses the phrase "prosopo Christou."*

*Here is a modern translation of the Bible for Catholics.*

*2 Corinthians 2:10 (NAB) "Whoever you forgive anything, so do I. For indeed what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, has been for you in the presence (Greek "prosopo") of Christ."*

*The 'New American Bible' is a dynamic equivalency translation and not a formal equivalency translation.*

*The Greek word St. Paul uses here for "presence" found in some modern Bible translations (such as the New American bible quoted above) is the Greek word "**Prosopo**", which means **Person**. He is telling the Corinthians that he forgave sins **in the person of Christ**.*



*\* Formal Equivalency - attempts to translate the source text WORD for WORD into another language.*

*\* Dynamic Equivalency - attempts to convey the THOUGHT expressed in the source text using equivalent expressions from a contemporary language like English ('thought for thought' translating).*

Q185) Catholic Priests cannot forgive sins.

A185) 2 Corinthians 5:18 (NAB) “And all this is from God, who has reconciled us to himself through Christ and given us the ministry of reconciliation.”

*The apostles and their successors were given the ‘ministry of reconciliation’ not only to preach the Word, but to heal the body and soul of God’s people. Healing the soul is done through the ministry of reconciliation, which unites us with the body of Christ. The ‘ministry of reconciliation’ is called the ‘sacrament of reconciliation’ today, they are both interchangeable terms. Only the function of a Priest celebrating the sacraments is called a ‘ministry,’ what lay people do is called an “apostolate.”*

Q186) Catholic Priests cannot forgive sins.

A186) James 5:14-16 (RSV) “Is any among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith will save the sick man, and the Lord will raise him up; and if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man has great power in its effects.”

*Who is St. James talking about in these verses? In context, he is talking about going to the “elders” of the Church who can heal your body and soul. James did not teach that we could go to the just any willy nilly, to receive the “anointing” and the forgiveness of sins. First, he told us to go to the “elders” in verse 14. Verse 16 continues with the word “therefore,” what’s important to note is that word ‘therefore’ is a conjunction that connects verse 16 back to verses 14 and 15. In other words, it is the “elders” to whom we are to confess our sins to (according to St. James).*

*The word “elder” is the Greek word “presbuteros” which is literally translated “presbyters.” The word ‘Priest’ is the abbreviation for ‘presbyter,’ the English word ‘priest’ has ‘presbyter’ as its etymological origin. Clearly it is the ‘presbyters’ (aka: ‘priests’) who are to be summoned, not a lay person. So, we see that God does forgive our sins – through the priest, according to St. James.*

## **HOLY EUCHARIST**

“New survey of Americans' knowledge of religion found that atheists, agnostics, Jews and Mormons outperformed Protestants and Roman Catholics in answering questions about major religions, while many respondents could not correctly give the most basic tenets of their own faiths. Forty-five percent of Roman Catholics who participated in the study didn't know that, according to (Catholic) Church teaching, the bread and wine used in Holy Communion is not just a symbol, but becomes the body and blood of Christ.”<sup>lxxxvi</sup>

Q187) Jesus was only speaking symbolically not literally regarding His real presence in the Holy Eucharist.

A187) Isaiah 55:11 (NAB “...so shall my word be that goes forth from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and prosper in the thing for which I sent it.”

*The prophet Isaiah says when God speaks things happen. Jesus is God incarnate, He spoke the words, “This is my body,” and so it was. When God spoke at creation, “Let there be light,” immediately there was light. When Jesus raised Lazarus from the tomb he spoke the words, “Lazarus come out,” and Lazarus was raised from the dead. The power of God’s word can and will do what they are intended to do. St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas<sup>lxxxvii</sup> says that when Jesus spoke the words at the last supper, “this is my body” the bread in his hands became his body. He held himself in his hands.<sup>lxxxviii</sup> How can he do this you might ask? “For God all things are possible” (Matthew 19:26 NAB).*

Q188) Jesus died once for all. Catholics says the ‘Mass’ is a sacrifice. However, no further sacrifice (offering) is necessary but for the once and for all sacrifice of Jesus on Calvary.

A188) Malachi 1:11 (RSV) “For from the rising of the sun to its setting my name is great among the nations, and in every place incense is offered to my name, and a ‘pure offering’ (Hebrew word is “mincha”); for my name is great among the nations, says the LORD of hosts.”

“Here the Lord declares that the Old Testament sacrifices would be abolished and an entirely new sacrifice would replace them. There are three salient characteristics to the prophecy: the sacrifice will be: (a) ‘from the rising to the setting of the sun,’ (b) ‘in every place,’ and (c) ‘among the Gentiles.’ With such specific qualifications, this sacrifice can only refer to a future, continual and world-wide- sacrifice. Malachi could not be referring to a new sacrifice in his own time, for the Levitical Law would not allow it. It could not refer to a sacrifice among the dispersed Jews, for these could neither be offered over the whole world nor was the priesthood intact in foreign countries. He could not be referring to a sacrifice among the heathen nations for they had no such mandate at that time. This prophecy can only be fulfilled when the nations of the earth gather in the New Testament Church (cf. Matthew 28:19-20, Acts 1:8 NAB).”<sup>lxxxix</sup> Did you know that “300,000 times a day the chalice with the precious blood is lifted up somewhere

*around the world, 4 chalices per second containing the blood of Jesus Christ,<sup>xc</sup> thus fulfilling the prophecy of Malachi, that the gentile nations would be presenting this 'pure offering.'*

*The translation "offering" in Malachi 1:11(RSV) is from the Hebrew 'mincha', it is an offering made to God of any kind whether grain or animals, which includes the sacrifice of animals.<sup>xc1</sup>*

*Jesus Christ the Son of God died in 33 A.D. in chronological time (Greek "cynos" time). God lives outside of time, He lives in "Kairos" time, which means everything is ever present before him. Even the death of His Son is ever present before Him. At 'Holy Mass' this ever present reality of Calvary comes down to our altars like Jacobs ladder. Heaven touches earth, divinity touches humanity, and eternity enters into time in every Catholic altar as the words of Jesus are pronounced and the Holy Spirit is invoked by the Priest.*

Q189) At the Last Supper Jesus was only speaking symbolically regarding the Holy Eucharist.

A189) Matthew 26:26-28 (RSV) 'Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, 'Take, eat; this is my body.' And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, 'Drink of it, all of you; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.'"

*Jesus fulfills at the Last Supper what he prophesied about a year earlier in John chapter 6, that he would give them his flesh to eat. When Jesus fed the 4,000 and 5,000 in the hill country respectively, he was preparing us for even a greater miracle that he would do at the Last Supper. Jesus blessed the bread and gave it to his apostles. Just as the bread was multiplied in the feeding of the multitude 2000 years ago, so, the bread (at Mass) changes and feeds the multitude today. We call this change "transubstantiation," which means the change of the substance of the bread and wine into the substance of the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ, so that only the "accidents" of bread and wine remain after the consecration. This was believed by eastern and western Christians until Martin Luther denied and taught something different in the 16 century. This theological rupture is called 'the protestant reformation' (I prefer to call it the 'protestant revolt').*

Q190) Jesus was only speaking symbolically regarding the Holy Eucharist.

A190) Luke 24:30-31 (RSV) "When he was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed, and broke it, and gave it to them. And their eyes were opened and they recognized him; and he vanished out of their sight."

*Two disciples were walking on the road to Emmaus and they met Jesus (whom they did not recognize.) He spoke with them and explained the scriptures to them regarding the prophecies concerning the Messiah. Finally, Our Lord was made known to them when He "took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them." At this moment, their eyes were opened and they recognized Jesus. These two disciples were not in the upper room at the last supper, but the 'real presence of Jesus' was made known to them in the Holy Eucharist. Jesus makes his 'real presence' in the Holy Eucharist known to all of His true disciples.*

Q191) The bread is only a symbol. Jesus was speaking symbolically.

A191) John 6:48-51(RSV) “I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that a man may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any one eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread which I shall give for the life of the world is my flesh.”

*In this passage, Jesus is reminding the Jews of their ancestors who were nourished with the manna that fell from heaven during the time Moses was leading them to the promise land. Those people actually ate real bread, not symbols of bread. Jesus is telling them that not only will they eat bread, but it will be His flesh. In verse 51 Jesus says, “The bread, which I shall give for the life of the world is my flesh,” this is promised sometime in the future. If Jesus would not have fulfilled this prophecy of giving us ‘super-essential bread,’ this would make Jesus a false prophet – and NO Christian believes that. This ‘super-essential’(Greek: ‘epi-ousios’) bread is the holy Eucharist (cf. CCC 2837).*

Q192) Jesus was only speaking symbolically regarding the Holy Eucharist.

A192) John 6:53 (RSV) ‘So Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have no life in you...”’

*The Jews began questioning Our Lord, “How can this man give us his flesh to eat?” Notice, Jesus did not change his teaching, in fact, He intensified his explanation by saying “truly truly I say to you.” This phrase in Hebrew means “I solemnly swear to you.” After this teaching many Jews left him, including some of his disciples. The Holy Bible says that some disciples never followed him again after that statement. Did these followers walk away because Jesus was talking about a mere symbol? Of course not! They knew exactly what he meant. It was precisely because they could not accept or believe Jesus Christ’s message (like many today still don’t.) That is why they walked away from Him. Catholics take Jesus words in this passage literally, there is no other way of interpreting these words.*

Q193) Jesus was only speaking symbolically regarding the Holy Eucharist.

A193) John 6:54-56 (RSV) “...he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him.”

*In John 6:48-59 (RSV), Jesus says we must ‘eat’ his flesh ‘seven’ times. The word ‘eat’ used in Greek is the word “trogo.” The word “trogo” literally means to ‘gnaw’, to ‘chew’ or to ‘munch’. Some Protestants say he was speaking symbolically based on John 6:63, but they take Jesus literally in John 3:3 (RSV) when he says we must be “born again” only once. Look at John 4:24 “God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in Spirit and truth.” Protestants will admit that God is ‘spirit’ and not ‘symbolic’. If Jesus were just speaking symbolically, He would have been obligated to call those back who walked away from Him (in John 6:66 NAB).*

*They understood he wasn't speaking symbolically, that's why they left him, they refused to believe in this doctrine of 'the real presence' that came from Our Lords lips.*

*\* John 6:63 (NAB) "it is the spirit that gives life, the flesh is of no avail, the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life." These words do not deny the reality of 'the real presence', after all how can you dismiss what Our Lord just said 7 times, that we must "eat" his flesh. Our Lord is saying in verse 63 that the only way you can understand and accept what he just said is by the power of the Holy Spirit, in your carnal nature and in your human reasoning, you will not comprehend or accept what He just said. Only the illumination of faith provided by the Holy Spirit will make the words of Jesus comprehensible to your soul.*

Q194) Jesus was only speaking symbolically regarding the Holy Eucharist.

A194) 1 Corinthians 10:16-17 (NAB) "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread."

*St. Paul is clearly telling us here that the bread and cup contain the body and blood of Christ. He does not say the cup of blessing or the bread we break is a 'symbol' or 'representation' of the body and blood of Christ. This verse clearly teaches 'the real presence' of Jesus in the Holy Eucharist, not 'the real absence.' The Holy Eucharist is referred to as the Blessed Sacrament of the Catholic Church. A Sacrament is an outward sign instituted by Christ to give grace. We receive sanctifying grace when we receive the Holy Eucharist humbly and worthily.*

Q195) Jesus was only speaking symbolically regarding the Holy Eucharist.

A195) 1 Corinthians 11:23-25 (RSV) "For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, 'This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.' In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.'"

*St. Paul is teaching the Church in Corinthians what Jesus had given to him personally. Again, St. Paul quotes Our Lord Jesus' words from the Last Supper: "This is My body." Jesus gave the apostles and their successors the authority to do what He does. "Do this in remembrance of me," literally means, as Jesus changed the bread and wine into his flesh and blood, he gave the apostles the power and authority to do likewise. The word "remembrance" doesn't just mean to remember a past event. "In relation to God, how the liturgical memorial renders present the past actions of God as a living reality for the worshiper."<sup>xcii</sup> The Jews in the Old Testament and at the time of Jesus Christ use this word in the religious context which means; "to make a passed event present" (Hebrew "Zakar"), or in another way to understand is the past and present are in effect merged.<sup>xciii</sup> This is what happens at every Holy Mass, the passed event of the Last Supper and Calvary is made present here and now at every Catholic Mass.*

*Holy Mass looks to Jesus yesterday. It reaches into the past, to the Last Supper, to the crucifixion, to the resurrection, and it makes those events and their power present here, on every Catholic altar.*

*Holy Mass is a Theandric Action – The action of the God-Man which transcends time and space because he is eternal. This is how JESUS in the person of the Priest consecrates bread and wine and changes it into his body and blood.*

*The\*an"dric - [Greek; god + a man.] Relating to, or existing by, the union of divine and human operation in Christ, or the joint agency of the divine and human nature.<sup>xciv</sup>*

Q196) Jesus was only speaking symbolically regarding the Holy Eucharist.

A196) 1 Corinthians 11:27 (RSV) “Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of profaning the body and blood of the Lord.”

*Obviously, to be found guilty of murdering someone is more serious than taking a picture of a person and throwing darts at it, or taking a statue of someone and then destroying it. You would have to actually kill an individual to be found guilty of the heinous crime of murder. So, it is with the Holy Eucharist, you cannot be found guilty of profaning the body and blood of Our Lord Jesus, if it is only a symbol. However, because the Holy Eucharist is the ‘real presence’ of Jesus, is precisely why Paul says you can be guilty of profaning his body and blood if you receive Holy Communion in mortal sin. Why? Because you are taking God who is HOLY, into your unholy body.*

Q197) The Eucharist is only a symbol.

A197) 1 Corinthians 11:29-30 (NAB) “For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment upon himself. That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died.”

*You cannot bring judgment upon yourself from eating or drinking a symbol. The context of this verse refers to the bread and wine being Jesus’ real body and blood. Webster’s Dictionary defines “discern” as, “to perceive by sight or some other sense of - by the intellect.” The other sense we possess is our Faith, the term is called “sensus fidei”(CCC 92). Partaking of the bread and wine without recognizing that it is the body and blood of Christ is a very serious offense against God. Some Bible translations state that you bring “condemnation” (judgment) upon yourself.*

Q198) Jesus died once for all. The Eucharist is only a symbol.

A198) Hebrews 8:1, 3 (RSV) “Now the point in what we are saying is this: we have such a high priest, one who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven,...For every high priest is appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices; hence it is necessary for this priest also to have something to offer.”

*Jesus Christ died on the cross in real time about 2000 years ago, but His death extends beyond time. His action on the cross 2000 years ago redeemed everyone from Adam until the end of time. Jesus is the High Priest in heaven forevermore, but what could He be offering? He is continually offering Himself to the Father. That is why in Revelation 5:6, He is standing at the altar in heaven looking as though He'd been slain. Archbishop Fulton Sheen said that Jesus is showing the Father his 5 bloody wounds continually.<sup>xcv</sup>*

Q199) Jesus died once for all. The Eucharist is only a symbol.

A199) Revelation 5:6 (RSV) “And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders, I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, with seven horns and with seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth...”

*Jesus is standing at the altar in heaven as the high priest, offering Himself for the world. We forget that we are restricted in time here on earth but in heaven there are no such restrictions because there is no time in heaven. Jesus sees what happened yesterday, today and what happens in the future, as if it were happening at the same time. Every event is eternally present to God who lives outside of chronological time. Jesus is the Lamb of God who offered himself once for all in earthly time, but in eternity, He offers himself perpetually to the Father. We partake of Jesus perpetual offering of his body and blood at each Holy Mass. To put it simply, at every earthly Sacred Liturgy (Mass) we are united to the perpetual Heavenly Liturgy and so we receive the heavenly manna from the Lamb of God in heaven.*

Q200) What are the 4 different views taught within Christianity on the Eucharist (Holy Communion)?

A200) The correct view is that when receiving Holy Communion, you are receiving the real body and blood, soul and divinity of Jesus Christ under the appearance of bread and wine. This is called transubstantiation, as taught by the Catholic Church for about 2,000 years. 2] The second slightly incorrect view is what Martin Luther taught. That in Holy Communion you are receiving ‘bread and wine’ along with Jesus Christ who is really truly present (along with bread and wine). This is called ‘consubstantiation.’ 3] The third view as taught by Protestant Reformer John Calvin deviates more from the truth. He taught that when receiving Holy Communion, you are receiving ‘the body and blood of Christ’ which has become that, because of your personal belief (rather than through the sacramental action of the Priest). In other words, the faith of the believer transforms the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ. 4] This fourth view was taught by Protestant Reformer Ulrich Zwingli which is the view that most protestants embrace today. This view is the most incorrect, he taught that when receiving Holy Communion, you are receiving ‘bread and wine’ which symbolizes the spirit and teaching of Jesus.

Q201) Does the phrase ‘New Testament’ refer to the Eucharist or to the 27 books in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the Holy Bible?

A201) Dr. Scott Hahn is fond of saying, “Yes, the New Testament was a sacrament before it became a document according to the document (cf. Luke 22:19-20 RSV).”

Concluding remarks: I can apprehend the doctrine of the real presence of Jesus Christ, but I admit I cannot comprehend it. As the Church Father's stated – *the Eucharist is a mystery that causes us to tremble and yet attracts us*. Or as St Thomas Aquinas says, "faith will tell us Christ is present, even though our human senses fail."



## CONFIRMATION

Q202) Objection: You only receive the Holy Spirit when you accept Jesus as your Lord and Savior.

A202) Acts 1:6-8 (RSV) “So when they had come together, they asked him, ‘Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?’ He said to them, ‘it is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has fixed by his own authority. But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth.’”

*The apostles had already received the Holy Spirit on Resurrection Sunday when Jesus breathed on them. When the Church was born at Pentecost, the apostles received the power of the Holy Spirit again. This confirming power of the Holy Spirit provides the grace for spiritual maturity and empowers the individual with the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit (Piety, Fear of the Lord, Knowledge, Understanding, Wisdom, Counsel and Fortitude). We received our personal Pentecost at Confirmation (CCC 1302).*

Q203) You only receive the Holy Spirit when you accept Jesus as your Lord and Savior.

A203) Acts 8:14-17 (RSV) “Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent to them Peter and John, who came down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit; for it had not yet fallen on any of them, but they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit.”

*You receive the Holy Spirit in baptism, thereby making you a temple of the Holy Spirit and a child of God. At Confirmation you renew your baptismal vow and receive special (sanctifying) graces in order to take on your role responsibly as a member of the Church. The sacrament of confirmation gives one the power to live the teachings of the gospel and become a soldier of Jesus Christ (cf. 2 Timothy 2:3 NAB). The seven gifts of the Holy Spirit are received at baptism and are brought to maturity with the sacrament of confirmation. This verse shows that some believers in Samaria had not received the fullness of the Holy Spirit therefore, Peter and John confirmed them by the laying on of hands and praying over them.<sup>x cvi</sup>*

Q204) You only receive the Holy Spirit when you accept Jesus as your Lord and Savior.

A204) Acts 13:2-3 (NAB) “While they were worshiping (Greek – “liturgizing”) the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, ‘set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.’ Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off.”

*Here is a perfect example of the laying on of hands and how the Holy Spirit uses individuals (like bishops and priests) to transmit grace to others through the sacraments. This verse also shows how the Holy Spirit was given to these individuals at the Sacred Liturgy (aka Holy Mass), this is what the Greek word ‘liturgizing’ refers to. They are then sent forth to live and teach the gospel*

*of Jesus Christ. This is precisely what we are called to do when we receive the sacrament of confirmation. We become soldiers of Christ the King and Our Lady the Queen, thereby commissioned to spread the Kingdom of Christ on earth.*

Q205) You only receive the Holy Spirit when you accept Jesus as your Lord and Savior.

A205) Acts 19:5-6 (RSV) On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them; and they spoke with tongues and prophesied.

*This is normative Christianity, as new adult Christians coming into the Church, the disciples receive baptism then confirmation. This is a perfect example of how new Christians are sealed with the Holy Spirit through the laying on of hands by an apostle (or by a successor of the apostles). It is not enough to just believe, “Even the devils believe...(James 2:19 RSV),” you must receive that strengthening or completion of the Holy Spirit through the sacrament of confirmation which is the ministry of the apostles by the laying on of hands.*

## MARRIAGE & DIVORCE

Q206) Contraception is not condemned in the Bible.

A206) Genesis 38:9-10 (RSV) “But Onan knew that the offspring would not be his; so when he went in to his brother’s wife he spilled the semen on the ground, lest he should give offspring to his brother. And what he did was displeasing in the sight of the LORD, and he slew him also.”

*The marital act must be open to human life. When you consummate your marital covenant with your spouse and use contraception, you are making a mockery of God’s sacrament by denying and blocking God’s way of making a trinity of you. The Catholic family is called to be ‘alter trinitas,’ another trinity. When you were married the two of you were joined by God and made one. When you consummate this covenant and God wills that you conceive a child, the two of you that were one are now three, but yet one family (a type of trinity). Contraception goes against God’s mandate to “be fruitful and multiply (Genesis 1:28 RSV).”*

Q207) Can’t you divorce and remarry on the grounds of adultery?

A207) Matthew 19:4-6 (RSV) “He answered, ‘Have you not read that he who made them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, for this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one?’ So they are no longer two but one. What therefore God has joined together, let not man put asunder.”

*God unites us in a marriage covenant. The Sacrament of Marriage is not a contract that can be broken when things get tough, stressful, difficult or whenever we fall out of love (because we think the grass is greener on the other side). A contract is an exchange of material things, a covenant is an exchange of persons. A covenant is a sacred family bond. I give myself to you as a gift and you give yourself to me as a gift. God witnesses and seals the bond between the two. Therefore, this should not be taken lightly, but is meant to be a lifelong commitment of choosing to love our spouse even when it is difficult. Love should not be based solely on feelings because feelings are not the measure of reality. Love is an act of the will, feelings come and go.*

Q208) Can’t you divorce and remarry on the grounds of adultery?

A208) 1 Corinthians 7:10-11 (RSV) “To the married I give charge, not I but the Lord, that the wife should not separate from her husband (but if she does, let her remain single or else be reconciled to her husband) and that the husband should not divorce his wife.”

*Marriage is a vocation, not a vacation. If problems develop within your marriage, the couple is permitted to live separately but the marriage can never be broken because it is a covenant made by God. No civil court, attorney or judge has authority over God’s covenants. Our secular society treats marriage as a contract that can be broken, they call it ‘no fault divorce.’ God is the one that made this union, therefore, He is the only one with authority over it. Divorce is not an option for a Christian. God hates divorce (cf. Malachi 2:16 RSV). The term “divorce” found*

*in Matthew 5:32 (RSV) describes an 'annulment', that is, there were impediments at the onset of the marriage, thereby making it invalid.*

Q209) Can't you divorce and remarry on the grounds of adultery?

A209) 1 Corinthians 7:13-14 (NAB) "If any woman has a husband who is an unbeliever, and he consents to live with her, she should not divorce him. For the unbelieving husband is consecrated through his wife, and the unbelieving wife is consecrated through her husband. Otherwise, your children would be unclean, but as it is they are holy."

*The baptized Christian has been consecrated and made holy (cf. 1 Corinthians 6:11 RSV); also, the Christian is a member of Christ body (cf. 1 Corinthians 6:15). Because the unbelieving spouse becomes one flesh with the believing spouse in the marriage union, the unbelieving spouse potentially shares in this consecration and graces. This sharing in the consecration of God's grace vicariously and potentially makes the unbelieving spouse holy. The vicarious faith of the parents can also save their family members (cf. Acts 16:31 NAB). Wow, God is so merciful - Alleluia!*

Q210) Can't you divorce and remarry on the grounds of adultery?

A210) 1 Corinthians 7:39 (NAB) "A wife is bound to her husband as long as he lives. If the husband dies, she is free to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord."

*Christian marriage has God's seal on it and cannot be broken. God's Word does allow you to separate, but once separated you may not remarry until your spouse has died. If you marry after a divorce, you are committing adultery and causing your partner to commit adultery. Why? Because marriage is a covenant that God has established and we (mankind) cannot make it void. Scripture says: "What God has joined together, let no man separate (cf. Matthew 19:6 NAB)."*

Q211) Can't you divorce and remarry on the grounds of adultery?

A211) Ephesians 5:25-28 (RSV) "Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. Even so husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself."

*We are called to love our spouse to the point that we would die to protect them, we should be willing to pour out our life for them. We take Jesus as the perfect example, He willingly gave up His life for us. The apparent exception in Matthew 5:32 (NAB) does not allow for divorce. The Greek word for "unchastity" found in Matthew 5:32 (NAB), refers to cases in which the couple are blood relatives, this consanguineous relationship was forbidden according to the Law of Moses (Leviticus 18:6-16 NAB). Therefore, the marriage was never really valid and therefore recognized as a nullified marriage, in this case an annulment would be granted.*

Q212) Do I have to support my family when I get married?

A212) 1 Timothy 5:8 (NAB) “If any one does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his own family, he has disowned the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.”

*Jesus provides for our souls, therefore, we are to provide for our family members. Paul also writes: “If anyone will not work, let him not eat (2 Thessalonians 3:10 RSV).” As an able bodied person, we should not be homeless beggars or vagabonds, we cannot lay back and expect God to provide for us. God will provide for us only to a certain point, we must roll up our sleeves, work and toil for our daily bread. If we are not trying to help ourselves and our families, why should we expect God to provide for us? This is the deadly sin of sloth. Once we have established a family within marriage, we are obligated to provide for them (spiritually and physically). This is one reason why Scripture prohibits divorce and remarriage. Today, the number one reason for poverty in America is divorce and fatherless households.*

Q213) Objections: Traditional marriage is old fashion, it’s not ‘progressive,’ we need to keep up with modernity. Our age has given us no ‘fault divorce,’ ‘cohabitation,’ ‘same sex marriage,’ ‘50 shades of gray sexual bondage agreements,’ and ‘prenuptial agreements’ before the Las Vegas justice of the peace. Don’t you consider this progress?

A213) Progress is good when it comes to technology but not when it comes to morality. God’s moral laws are fixed, they are immutable, they cannot change. Morality cannot progress, technology can and should.

“Anyone who is so ‘progressive’ as not to remain in the teaching of the Christ does not have God; whoever remains in the teaching has the Father and the Son (2 John 9).”

William Ralph Inge said: “He who marries the Spirit of the Age will soon find himself a widower in the next.”

## **PRIESTHOOD & CELIBACY**

Q214) Catholics break Christ's command to "call no man father."

A214) Judges 17:9-10 (RSV) "And Micah said to him, 'From where do you come?' And he said to him, 'I am a Levite of Bethlehem in Judah, and I am going to sojourn where I may find a place.' And Micah said to him, 'Stay with me, and be to me a father and a priest, and I will give you ten pieces of silver a year, and a suit of apparel, and your living.'"

*Micah has asked the young Levite to stay with him, but why did Micah ask him to be his father and priest? Levites were the priests of God, so Micah knew he was a priest? But, Micah also knew that the Levites were spiritual fathers, because the priests were called to father the children of Israel. These verses show how spiritual fatherhood was practiced in the Old Testament. It is from the Catholic Priest today that we receive our spiritual guidance and so we fittingly call them Father.*

*Based on Scripture, in some cases celibacy can be preferable to marriage. Some people live without marriage by reason of a birth defect or surgery or castration by wicked men. In these instances, the state of celibacy is not always by one's own choice. There are some that choose to remain celibate and dedicate their lives to God and work to build up His Kingdom here on earth through their life of prayer, sacrifice and ministry. Catholic Priest, brothers and nuns who have given themselves to God deserve our utmost respect for the life of service they have chosen. Everybody in heaven will live as virgins, our celibate Catholic clergy show us here on earth how we will live in heaven.*

Q215) Catholics break Christ's command to "call no man father."

A215) 1 John 2:14 (RSV) "I write to you, fathers, because you know him who is from the beginning. I write to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the evil one."

*St. John could not deliberately disobey Jesus time and again by using the word "father" in his letters. Obviously St. John did not understand the words of Jesus "call no man father" (in Matthew 23:9 NAB) the way some non-Catholics understand them. St. John did not hold "earthly fathers" in the same regard as our "Heavenly Father." Catholics understand and recognize the meaning of Christ's word just as St. John did. In other words, God can be called Father, your Dad can be called father and a Priest can be called father, it is the same word, but in an entirely different sense.*

Q216) Objection: Catholics break Christ's command to "call no man father."

A216) Philemon 10-11 "I appeal to you for my child, Onesimus, whose father I have become in my imprisonment. Formerly he was useless to you, but now he is indeed useful to you and to me."

*St. Paul did not have his own children, he was single and celibate, but as an Apostle and Bishop of the Church, he calls his flock his children. This demonstrates that he sees himself as a “father” within the Church. This is why taking a Bible verse out of context can lead to many misunderstandings. Such is the case with Matthew 23:9 (call no man “Father.”) It’s of paramount importance to read Sacred Scripture with the heart of the Church, using Sacred Tradition as an interpretive grid and understood in light of the teachings of the Catholic Church.*

Q217) Catholics break Christ’s command to “call no man father.”

A217) Romans 4:16-17 (RSV) “That is why it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants—not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham, for he is the father of us all, as it is written, ‘I have made you the father of many nations’—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.”

*Would St. Paul be deliberately disobeying Jesus by calling Abraham ‘father?’ Of course not! St. Paul understood Jesus’ words and His intentions correctly, after all, his writings were inspired by the Holy Spirit. The love, honor and reverence we have for God is different than the love we have for our earthly fathers and priests. We show our priests human honor and respect because they are our spiritual fathers here on earth. Divine honor worship and adoration is reserved for God alone.*

Q218) Catholics break Christ’s command to “call no man father.”

A218) 1 Corinthians 4:14-17 (RSV) “I do not write this to make you ashamed, but to admonish you as my beloved children. For though you have countless guides in Christ, you do not have many fathers. For I became your father in Christ Jesus through the gospel. I urge you, then, be imitators of me. Therefore, I sent to you Timothy, my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, to remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach them everywhere in every church.

*St. Paul the apostle calls himself a spiritual father to the Corinthians because he gave them the gospel. All fatherhood, whether natural or priestly is subordinate to God the Father and is derived from God the Father. So, when we are asked, “Why do you call your priests father?” A Catholic should respond with, “Why don’t you call your pastors or ministers father?” St. Paul – apostle and pastor (cf. Ephesians 4:11 NAB) called himself to the Gentiles their ‘father’ in the faith.*

Q219) Catholics break Christ’s command to “call no man father.”

A219) 1 Timothy 5:1-2 (RSV) “Do not rebuke an older man but exhort him as you would a father; treat younger men like brothers, older women like mothers, younger women like sisters, in all purity...”

*The Catholic Church is the worldwide family of God, and thus, we should treat our Christian brothers and sisters as family. Our Catholic priests are the heads of our earthly Church family*

*which is our local Parish. The priest also gives us spiritual birth through baptism, feeds us spiritually through the Eucharist, heals us through confession, strengthens us in confirmation, unites us sacramentally in matrimony, and send us to heaven with the anointing of the sick. This is why his fatherhood requires our upmost respect. As Christians united in the mystical body of Christ, we are closer (spiritually speaking) to one another, than our blood family members who are not Christians or who are fallen away and lukewarm.*

Q220) Catholics break Christ's command to "call no man father."

A220) 1 Thessalonians 2:10-11 (RSV) "You are witnesses, and God also, how holy and righteous and blameless was our behavior to you believers; for you know how, like a father with his children, we exhorted each one of you and encouraged you and charged you..."

*Once again, St. Paul mentions himself and the leaders of the church as spiritual fathers in relation to its members. Referring to a man as a spiritual father is not what Jesus was condemning, that is a misreading of Matthew 23:9. In fact, St. Matthew uses the word 'father' to describe earthly relationships over 39 times in chapter 1 of his Gospel. So what is Jesus saying? The context of Jesus' condemnation was to the Pharisee's who suffered from vainglory, narcissism and were lording over the people. Jesus teaches that we are to give God our Father the honor, love, praise, adoration and reverence that is reserved for Him alone and not to any man. Catholics are obedient to Christ and understand what Jesus taught regarding this issue, there is God the Father who is in a class all by himself, then there are spiritual and earthly fathers who play a subordinate and derivative role to God the Father. All of scripture and the immediate context must be considered when studying the Holy Bible in order to properly understand the text.*

Q221) People are called to be fruitful and multiply, not to be celibate.

A221) 1 Corinthians 7:7-9 (RSV) "I wish that all were as I myself am. But each has his own special gift from God, one of one kind and one of another. To the unmarried and the widows I say that it is well for them to remain single as I do. But if they cannot exercise self-control, they should marry. For it is better to marry than to be aflame with passion."

*When you are married, you naturally spend the majority of your time with your spouse and family. However, certain people are called and chosen to devote all their time to Christ as St. Paul did. This vocation is a special gift given by God that most people in today's secular world find difficult to understand. Even so, this lifestyle of total surrender reveals a higher calling from God in the service of His bride the Church. It is very sad that the secular world today is against this gift St. Paul identified as a higher calling (vocation). When you read obituaries, you will find some people die of sexual promiscuity (Aids and STD's), however, you will never read about someone dying because they were chaste virgins.*

Q222) People are called to be fruitful and multiply, not to be celibate.



A222) Matthew 19:11-12 (RSV) “But he said to them, ‘Not all men can receive this precept, but only those to whom it is given. For there are eunuchs who have been so from birth, and there are eunuchs who have been made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. He who is able to receive this, let him receive it.’”

Q223) People are called to be fruitful and multiply, not to be celibate.

A223) 1 Corinthians 7:32-34 (RSV) “I want you to be free from anxieties. The unmarried man is anxious about the affairs of the Lord, how to please the Lord; but the married man is anxious about worldly affairs, how to please his wife, and his interests are divided. And the unmarried woman or girl is anxious about the affairs of the Lord, how to be holy in body and spirit; but the married woman is anxious about worldly affairs, how to please her husband.”

*St. Paul is encouraging believers of giving yourself totally to God just as he did. Married people share their time with their spouse, children and the Lord. St. Paul clearly states that the man is “divided” between matters of this world, family and God. On the other hand, priests or nuns are not distracted by family responsibilities, ipso facto, they can focus their lives in the service of God and building up His Kingdom on earth. If you are called to the religious life, be sure of this, the Holy Spirit will provide you with all the graces necessary for this special vocation.*

Q224) The Priesthood ended with Christ, the apostles were not ‘priests’.

A224) Romans 15:15-16 (RSV) “But on some points I have written to you very boldly...because of the grace given me by God to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles in the priestly service of the gospel of God...”

*St. Paul has just called his apostolic ministry to the gentiles a ‘priestly’ service. Obviously, he saw himself as a ‘priest’ of Jesus Christ the high Priest of the New Covenant.*

Q225) The Priesthood ended with Christ.

A225) Hebrews 3:1 says that Jesus Christ is our High Priest.

*In the Old Testament the Israelite High Priest was the sovereign spiritual leader, however, there was also a subordinate priesthood known as the Levitical priesthood. The Old Testament is the type, the New Testament is the anti-type. Jesus is now our High Priest and he has a subordinate priesthood in the Catholic Church. In fact, the word ‘priest’ is simply the abbreviation of the word ‘presbyter’ which is a ministerial office in the N.T.*

Presbyter’s - 1 Peter 5:1, Acts 15:4,6,22, Titus 1:5, 1 Timothy 5:17, James 5:14, 3 John 1:1, Acts 11:30, Acts 14:23, Titus 1:5, Acts 20:17, Acts 16:4, Acts 21:17.  
Presbyter - 3 John 1, 2 John 1:1, 1 Peter 5:1, 1 Timothy 5:19.

Q226) The Priesthood ended with Christ.

A226) 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13 (RSV) “But we beseech you, brethren, to respect those who labor among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves.”

*Catholic Priests are leaders and overseers of a parish and bear much responsibility before God. They are ordained to teach, govern and sanctify God’s people, this is a difficult job. We should honor them (cf. 1 Timothy 5:17) for they are in “persona Christ” when they exercise their priestly ministry. Love your priest, for not even an angel can bring to you the body and blood of our Blessed Lord nor does an angel have the hands of Christ. Only those with the sacrament of holy orders can absolve us of our sins. We must respect and submit to their lawful authority, they are literally the hands and feet of Christ here on earth. If you notice every time Hollywood makes a movie on the ‘devil’, it is the Catholic Priest that is always depicted as the demons immortal enemy. Demons know that the Catholic Priesthood continues Christ ministry of saving, sanctifying and setting people free from the bondage of sin.*

Q227) The Priesthood ended with Christ.

A227) 1 Timothy 4:14-16 (RSV) “Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophetic utterance when the elders laid their hands upon you. Practice these duties, devote yourself to them, so that all may see your progress. Take heed to yourself and to your teaching; hold to that, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers.”

*St. Timothy possesses a “spiritual gift,” he was ordained the Bishop of Ephesus. This was conferred on him in a particular moment, “by prophetic utterance,” through the laying on of hands by the presbyter’s, (a Bishop is also a presbyter). The imposition of hands was an ancient gesture in the O.T. expressing solidarity between the one who imposed and the recipient, it also conferred authority from the elder to the novice. In the N.T., the tradition of imposing hands is mentioned in a variety of contexts; 1) as a gesture of blessing (Matthew 19:15 NAB), 2) of healing (Mark 6:5 NAB), 3) of conferring the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:17 NAB) and 4) of conferring a church office (Acts 6:6 NAB).*

Q228) The Priesthood ended with Christ.

A228) 1 Timothy 5:22 (RSV) “Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands, nor participate in another man’s sins; keep yourself pure.”

*In this verse, the imposition of the laying on of hands refers to ordination. St Timothy is instructed not to ordain a man until he is certain of his qualifications; or else, St. Timothy would be responsible for the sins of the unworthy presbyter (priest). The Catechism mentions at least eight different ways we participate in someone else’s sin (cf. CCC 1868). St. Paul also provides St. Timothy with spiritual direction, i.e. to remain free from sin. To ‘be holy’ means to ‘be set apart.’ The priesthood requires a great level of holiness; One must be holy to lead others in holiness. This adage is true: holy Priest, holy Parish.*

Q229) The Priesthood ended with Christ.

A229) 2 Timothy 1:6-7 (RSV) “Hence I remind you to rekindle the gift of God that is within you through the laying on of my hands; for God did not give us a spirit of timidity but a spirit of power and love and self-control.”

St. Timothy was the bishop of Ephesus, he enjoyed a permanent “gift” of consecration by virtue of his ordination through the “laying on of...hands” by St. Paul. This verse says essentially the same thing that we read in 1 Timothy 4:14. St. Paul tells St. Timothy that he must exercise those gifts which he received at his ordination through his priestly ministry. After all, bishops are essentially priests who enjoy full apostolic authority. The priesthood did not end with Christ, it has simply been transformed into “a better covenant, enacted on better promises (Hebrew 8:6 NAB),” by “Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant (Hebrews 12:24 NAB).” This is why St. Paul exhorts St. Timothy to exercise his priesthood with “a spirit of power and love and self-control (2 Tim 1:7 RSV).” The Catholic Church understands and continues to carry out St Paul’s directives.

Q230) The Priesthood ended with Christ.

A230) Titus 1:5 (NAB) “For this reason I left you in Crete so that you might set right what remains to be done and appoint *presbyters* in every town, as I directed you...”

After being released from his house arrest in Rome (AD 60-62), St. Paul commissioned Titus as the Bishop of Crete. Remember St. Paul was taught directly by Our Lord Jesus. He met and conferred with the apostles in Jerusalem to make sure he was teaching correctly. St. Paul’s method of operation was first to evangelize a community, next, to lay the foundations of the Church and leave the work of further development to others that he would appoint (2 Corinthians 10:16; Romans 15:20-21 NAB). St. Paul later (circa AD 65), wrote a letter to St. Titus (Bishop of Crete), that his first duty is to appoint presbyters (priests).

So, where are the bishops and priests of modern “New Testament” protestant denominations?

Q231) The Priesthood ended with Christ.

A231) *Protestants agree with the unique High Priesthood of Jesus Christ, but they do not believe in the ministerial priesthood of the Catholic Church. I listened to a debate several years ago between Fr. Mitch Pacwa S.J. and the late Protestant apologist Walter Martin. Dr. Martin argued that there could no longer be a practicing priesthood because the book of Hebrews describes Jesus’ priesthood as “nontransferable.” Dr. Martin argued about a string of words found in Hebrews 7:24 “But he {Jesus}, because he remains forever, has a priesthood that does not pass away.” Dr. Martin makes a similar argument in his book - ‘Kingdom of the Cults’ where he interprets the same string of words to rule out any possibility of a Mormon priesthood. Unfortunately for Dr. Martin, his understanding of the word “aparabaton” needs some updating. The most authoritative New Testament Greek Word dictionaries expressly deny that “aparabaton” means unable to be passed on. Rather, this word in Greek means ‘unchanging’, ‘unalterable’ or ‘inviolable’. It is never used anywhere to mean “unable to be passed on” as it is rendered in the Protestant Bible, this erroneous interpretation demonstrates the anti-Catholic bias by the translators.*

Q232) Luther taught that we are “all priests,” there is no “ministerial priesthood in the New Testament.

A232) *The book of Hebrews says, “Therefore, holy brethren, who share in a heavenly call, consider Jesus, the apostle and high priest of our confession (cf. Hebrews 3:1 NAB)”... “For we share in Christ (3:14 RSV).” Scripture also says in 1 Peter 2:5 that the entire baptized act as priests offering up spiritual sacrifices to God. The whole point of the New Testament is that, “only the mediation of Christ is efficacious (cf. Hebrews 9:11-14). Christ is a High Priest of a new kind (Hebrews 7:11-15 RSV). Because of the connection between law and priesthood, the change of priesthood involves a change of law...for a relationship with God, the author insists, is not through the observance of the Jewish Law, but through faith, hope and love.”*

*Thus, the Catholic Church also teaches that all Christians are priests, instead of calling this the priesthood of all believers, Catholicism refers to it as the ‘universal priesthood.’ This is distinct from the ‘ministerial priesthood,’ which is only held by some within the Christian community. The idea that there can be two parallel priesthoods, one common to the people and one composed of fulltime ministers, is not foreign to the Bible. The places where the N.T. uses the phrase kingdom of priests are quotations from Exodus 19:6, where God tells Israel, “You shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.” Yet a few verses later, God tells Moses, “Go down and warn the people, lest they break through to the Lord to gaze and many of them perish. And also, let the priests who come near to the Lord consecrate themselves, lest the Lord break out upon them (Exodus 19:21-22 RSV).” Notice, even though God had just said all Israel would be a kingdom of priests, there was still a special, parallel priesthood called to fulltime service. This was even before the institution of the Aaronic priesthood in Exodus chapter 28 and 29, and so we can deduct from the O.T. that there can be a separate, ministerial priesthood apart from the royal priesthood of the laity. The ministerial and royal priesthood united to Christ the High Priest are called to offer spiritual sacrifice to the Father which is “the blood of the eternal covenant (Hebrews 13:20).*

## **ANOINTING OF THE SICK**

Q233) Holy water, oil and other objects are superstitions.

A233) Matthew 26:12 (RSV) “In pouring this ointment on my body she has done it to prepare me for burial.”

*Oil was already used in the Old Testament to anoint God’s chosen ones. In the above verse our Blessed Lord allows the woman to pour oil on him and anoint Him. This practice is very Jewish, moreover Our Lord would not have allowed it, if it was a pagan superstitious practice. He would have corrected her if this was a pagan practice since He is the “Truth” personified.*

Q234) Holy water, oil and other objects are superstitions.

A234) Mark 6:13 (RSV) “And they cast out many demons and anointed with oil many that were sick and healed them.”

*In the Old Testament anointing with oil was a way of investing someone with power. One example would be the anointing of King Solomon upon his ascent to the throne (1 Kings 1:39). This rite signified divine approval and sanctified the recipient. Anointing with oil could also signify the consecration of someone or something for a holy purpose. Anointing the sick with holy oil leads to spiritual healing and at times physical healing. This practice was done by the apostles and it has been done for almost 2,000 years up to this very day in the Catholic Church.*

Q235) Holy water, oil and other objects are superstitions.

A235) James 5:14 (RSV) “Is any among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.”

*Scripture mandates that a person be anointed with oil when they are sick. This rite, along with prayer of the elders (Greek: presbyter), healed the sick person. Catholic priest minister this same sacrament today when someone is in risk of dying due to illness, accident or pending a serious surgery. God uses material things such as oil along with the prayers of the priest as a means to distribute sanctifying grace to His people.*

## **SIGN OF THE CROSS**

Q236) Making the sign of the cross is unbiblical. Why do you focus on the cross, Jesus is alive, He's no longer on the cross?

A236) 1 Corinthians 1: 23 (RSV) "but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles..."

1 Corinthians 2:2 (RSV) "For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified."

Galatians 3:1 (RSV) "O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified?"

Galatians 6:14 (RSV) "But far be it from me to glory except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world."

Galatians 6:17 (RSV) "Henceforth let no man trouble me; for I bear on my body the marks of Jesus."

Ezekiel 9: 4 (RSV) "Go through the city, through Jerusalem, and put a mark upon the foreheads of the men who sign and groan over all the abominations that are committed in it. And to the others he said in my hearing, 'Pass through the city after him, and smite; your eyes shall not spare, and you shall show no pity; slay old men outright, young men and maidens, little children and woman, but touch no one upon whom is the mark.'"

*Judgment always begins in the house of God (1 Peter 4:17 NAB) and those Israelites in the days of Ezekiel who were engaged in idolatry and abused the holy things of God incurred His judgment. The Israelites that were spared were those that did not worship false gods, they were sealed with the Hebrew letter 'Tau' which is the form of a 'cross.' This sign (the cross) was the mark that singled out the ones who were to be spared out of the destruction of Jerusalem the first time it was destroyed in 587 B.C. In Revelation 7:3 (RSV), John the Evangelist alludes to those servants of God in the 'New Jerusalem' as being marked with the sign of the cross that Ezekiel spoke about.*

Q237) So why do you make the sign of the Cross?

A237) Some things become so familiar that we take them for granted. A good practice would be to stop and think about what we're doing when we make the Sign of the Cross. The Cross is the center of Christianity; it signifies the deepest surrender to God's will. As we recall at the Baptismal ceremony, "We die with Christ to rise again in Him." When I make the sign of the Cross, I affirm my own surrender to God's will. While tracing the sign over my body, I pray for the grace that I will live as a member of God's kingdom and a faithful 'soldier of Christ' (cf. 2 Timothy 2:3 RSV).

Q238) Can you explain the catechesis of the sign of the Cross?

A238) CCC 1235 – The *sign of the cross*, on the threshold of the celebration, marks with the imprint of Christ the one who is going to belong to him and signifies the grace of the redemption Christ won for us by his cross.

1. One God (bring fingers together - index finger and thumb).
2. Father, Son and Holy Spirit (3 remaining fingers straight up).
3. Jesus came down to earth to save us (from head to stomach). Romano Guardini the great theologian prior to Vatican II stated: "Cross yourself from head to stomach, from shoulder to shoulder."
4. God saved us through the cross and transferred us from left (the damned) to right (the elect) cf. Matthew 25:31-33 (RSV). Pope Innocent III (13th century) said: "Make the sign of the cross from left to right, which means from death to life, from misery to glory." The saints also teach that the left signifies 'justice' the right signifies 'mercy.'
5. We love God with all our mind, heart, soul and strength. Touching your head refers to your 'mind', touching your shoulders refers to your 'strength', and touching your heart refers to your 'soul', this is the first and greatest commandment.
6. We belong to the Lord Jesus Christ and are sealed with the sign of the cross and nothing will ever separate us from his love (were sacramentally branded through baptism).
7. Holy water is a reminder that we are under oath, it reminds us of our baptismal promises and our oath of Christian sonship and citizenship.

Q239) Why do we make the sign of the Cross?

A239) Probably no action identifies a person as a Catholic Christian so easily as the Sign of the Cross. From the earliest times of the Church, this sign of the cross was used in all the Sacraments, and as a means of recognizing other Christians in time of persecution. In the earliest times of the Church, the sign of the cross was drawn by the thumb on the forehead, in much the same way as Catholics *cross* themselves on the forehead, lips and breast, before the reading of the Gospel at Holy Mass.

Just like the Jews do not want the world to forget about the Holocaust so they make movies, documentaries, they have museums and they give tours to the Holocaust locations. We as Catholic Christians do not want the world to forget the incredible Passion of Christ and what it cost him to redeem the world & make atonement for our sins.

Q240) Is making the sign of the Cross found in the early Church or is it a modern custom?

A240) The Christian writer Tertullian (160 A.D. - 225 A.D) wrote for Fathers to teach sons: "In all our travels, in our coming in and going out, in putting on our clothes and our shoes, at table, in going to rest, whatever we are doing we mark our forehead with the sign of the cross."

Saint Ephrem the Syrian (306 A.D. - 373 A.D.) wrote: "My son, mark all you do with the sign of the life giving cross. Do not go out from the door of your house until you have signed yourself with the sign of the cross. Do not neglect to make that sign whether you are eating or drinking, or going to sleep, whether you are at home, or going on a journey. There is no habit to be compared with it. Let it be like a wall that protects you and your conduct; teach it to your children so that they may faithfully learn the custom."

Saint Augustine of Hippo in the 4<sup>th</sup> century (Sermon on Psalm 141) said: "Let me not have my forehead bare - let the cross of my Lord cover it."

St. Athanasius (296-373) writes that it was the Sign of the Cross, along with their faith, that empowered the martyrs to scoff at death:<sup>xcvii</sup> "All the disciples of Christ despise death; they take the offensive against it and, instead of fearing it, by the sign of the cross and by faith in Christ trample on it as on something dead...If you see with your own eyes men and women and children, even, thus welcoming death for the sake of Christ's religion, how can you be so utterly silly and incredulous and maimed in your mind as not to realize that Christ, to Whom these all bear witness, Himself gives the victory to each, making death completely powerless for those who hold His faith and bear the sign of the cross?"

St. Athanasius (296-373) later explains that the Sign of the Cross and the name of Jesus Christ puts demons to flight: "These things which we have said are no mere words: they are attested by actual experience. Anyone who likes may see the proof of glory in the virgins of Christ, and in the young men who practice chastity as part of their religion, and in the assurance of immortality in so great and glad a company of martyrs. Anyone, too, may put what we have said to the proof of experience in another way. **In the very presence of the fraud of demons and the imposture of the oracles and the wonders of magic, let him use the sign of the cross which they all mock at, and but speak the Name of Christ, and he shall see how through Him demons are routed, oracles cease, and all magic and witchcraft is confounded.**"<sup>xcviii</sup>



## Endnotes:

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- <sup>xi</sup> "Library : What is Love?" *Library : What is Love? | Catholic Culture*. N.p., n.d. Web. 11 Feb. 2017. <<http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?recnum=9375>>.
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- <sup>xiv</sup> "General Audience of 15 March 2006: Christ and the Church | BENEDICT XVI." *General Audience of 15 March 2006: Christ and the Church | BENEDICT XVI*. N.p., n.d. Web. 10 Mar. 2017. <[http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/audiences/2006/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_aud\\_20060315.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/audiences/2006/documents/hf_ben-xvi_aud_20060315.html)>.
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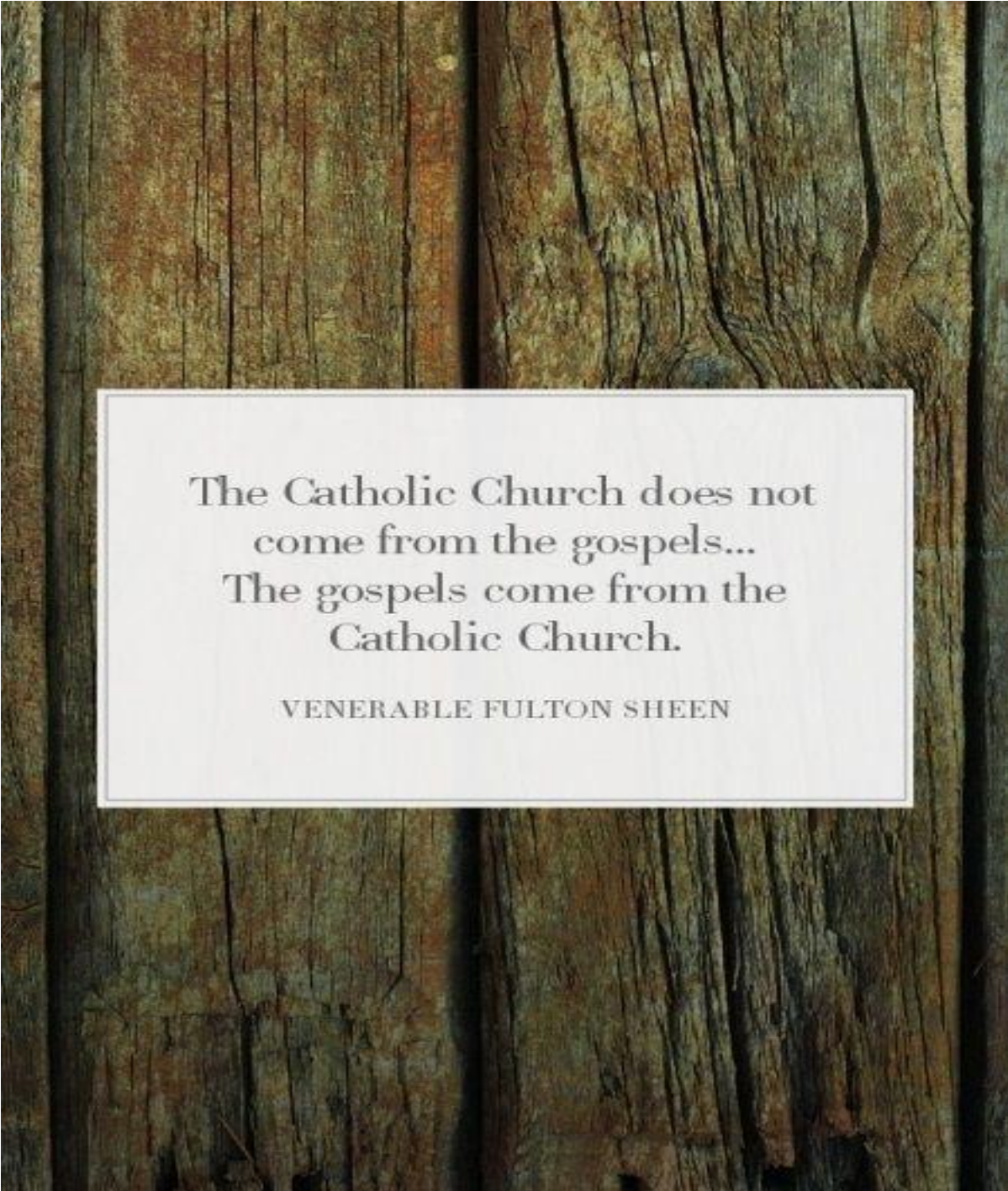
### **Prayer for the Conversion of Protestants**

Let us pray, O most beloved Lord Jesus Christ, who has redeemed the world at the price of thy Most Precious Blood, look down in Thy mercy upon the protestant Christians who are still outside thy fold, and let the full blazing fullness light of Thy Truth to shine upon them. Multiply O God, the true messengers of the Gospel, inspire them with fervor, make them fruitful in good works, and bless with Thy grace their zeal and their labors, so that the protestant Christians may be fully converted to Thee, their Creator and Redeemer. Recall the stray sheep of Thy fold, and bring them back to the bosom of Thy one true Church. Hasten, o dearest Savior the happy advent of Thy Kingdom on earth, draw all men to the treasures of Thy Sacred Heart, so that all may share in the priceless benefits of Thy Redemption in the eternal happiness of Heaven – Amen.

O Mary, Mother of Mercy and Refuge of Sinners, we beseech thee to look with pitying eyes upon the Protestant people. O Seat of Wisdom, enlighten their minds, so that they may come to know that the Catholic Church is the one true Church of Christ. Complete their conversion by obtaining for them the grace to believe every truth of our holy faith. Once more united to us by the bonds of divine charity, they will sing with forever thy glorious praises. "Rejoice, O Virgin Mary, thou alone hast destroyed all error in the whole world". Our Lady of the Atonement, intercede for us. That their may be fulfilled the prayer of thy Divine Son, "That all may be one," Amen



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The Catholic Church does not  
come from the gospels...  
The gospels come from the  
Catholic Church.

VENERABLE FULTON SHEEN