

The Roman Catholic Church

has always been identified with Christianity because it upholds four fundamentals of the Christian faith:

- The deity of Christ,
- The Triune God,
- The virgin birth, and
- The bodily resurrection and return of Christ to the earth.

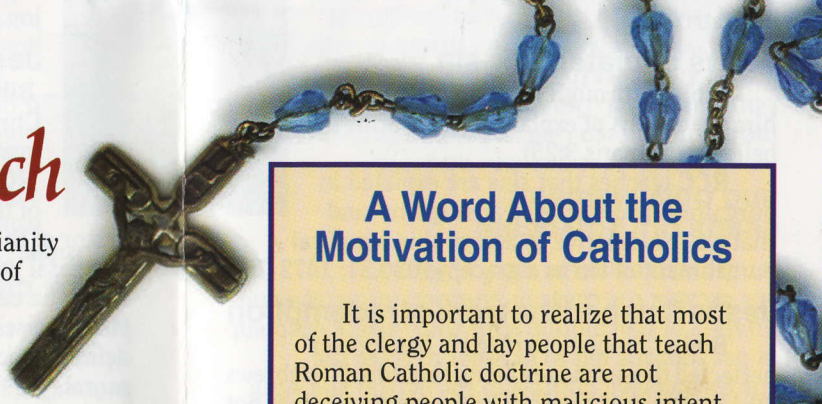
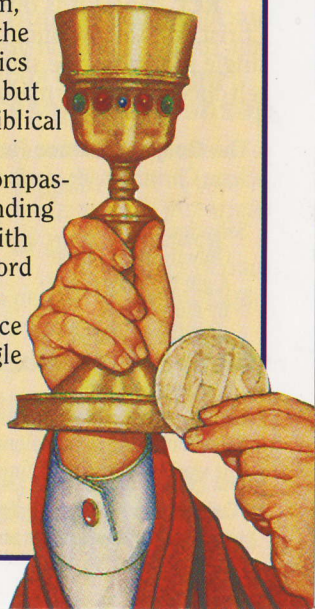
However, Catholic teaching opposes the doctrine that is *most essential* to the Christian faith—the *doctrine of justification by faith alone*. The Vatican not only denies this doctrine, but also condemns anyone who believes it. Other Catholic doctrines deny that Christ's work of redemption is finished and that His atonement is sufficient. For this reason Roman Catholicism must be identified as an apostate church and Catholics need to be evangelized.

In spite of this there are some Catholics who do not adhere to all the teachings of their church and have had a genuine born-again experience. Still, with over one billion Catholics in the world and a growing ecumenical movement to unite all religions under the power and influence of the pope, the truth about Roman Catholicism must be told.

A Word About the Motivation of Catholics

It is important to realize that most of the clergy and lay people that teach Roman Catholic doctrine are not deceiving people with malicious intent. They are simply passing on what has been taught to them, believing that it is the truth. Many Catholics have a zeal for God but it is not based on biblical knowledge.

Prayer, love, compassion, and understanding are needed along with the power of the Word of God to penetrate their hearts. Patience is needed to untangle Roman Catholics from the dogmatic web in which they are held captive (Colossians 2:8).



Some Roman Catholic traditions and the year they were decreed:

	431	500
AD	Proclamation that infant baptism regenerates the soul	The Mass instituted as a reenactment of the sacrifice of Jesus.

	1000	1079	1090	1190
	Attendance at Mass made mandatory under the penalty of mortal sin	Celibacy of priesthood, decreed by Pope Gregory VII		The granting of indulgences established to reduce time in Purgatory
	Rosary, repetitious praying with beads, invented by Peter the Hermit			

A Brief History of Catholicism

There have been two streams of Christianity flowing side by side since the birth of the church at Pentecost 2000 years ago. One is the apostolic church which includes everyone born of the Holy Spirit by hearing and believing the Gospel of salvation (Ephesians 1:13). This church, which is the Body of Christ, submits to the Lord Jesus Christ and His Word as the supreme authority for faith and truth. The other stream is made up of apostate churches which have departed from the faith of the apostles and, as a result, now believe and teach another gospel. These churches follow the teachings and traditions of apostates who have been influenced by deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons (1Timothy 4:1).

Apostates began departing from the true church in the first century as evidenced by writings of the apostles. John wrote, "They went out from us, because they were not really of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us" (1 John 2:19). At the end of Paul's ministry he warned: "I know that after my departure savage wolves will

come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them" (Acts 20:29-30).

The modern Roman Catholic Church evolved out of the original apostolic church of sanctified, persecuted believers. In the fourth century, Constantine attempted to unite a fragmented Roman Empire by merging paganism with Christianity. Converts to this apostate Christianity came with their own gods, statues, relics and pagan practices. By the 12th century the Roman Church had become the world's most powerful institution. The pope offered crusading armies earthly riches and eternal bliss to kill Muslims, Jews and Christians who rejected papal supremacy.

In the following centuries the Catholic Church ignored Christ's unyielding rebuke of religious leaders who nullified Scripture with their tradition. The Council of Trent, not only declared tradition to be equal to the authority of Scripture, but also dared to say their tradition had become the Word of God.

1215	1438	1545	1854	1870	1922	1950
Transubstantiation, proclaimed by Pope Innocent III and Confession of sins to priests, instituted by Pope Innocent III	Purgatory elevated from doctrine to dogma by Council of Florence	Tradition claimed equal in authority with the Bible by the Council of Trent	Immaculate Conception of Mary, proclaimed by Pope Pius IX			
			Infallibility of the Pope, proclaimed by Vatican Council	→		
			Virgin Mary proclaimed co-redeemer with Jesus by Pope Benedict XV	→		
						AD Assumption of the Virgin Mary into heaven, proclaimed by Pope Pius XII

Glossary of Catholic Terms:

With references from the *Catholic Catechism*, 1994.

Apocrypha—Fifteen writings recorded during the 400 years between the Old and New testaments. Twelve of them were declared inspired and added to the Catholic Canon in 1546.

Apparition—The perception of a disembodied person often associated with an urgent message. The Vatican has authenticated many visual and audible encounters with the Virgin Mary throughout the world.

Eucharist—A wafer claimed to contain the body, blood, soul and divinity of Jesus Christ (1374), that is to be worshipped, consumed, and sacrificed (1378).

Indulgence—The means of remission of the temporal punishment for sins. It is gained by good works and can be applied to the sins of the living and the dead (1471–79).

Infallible teachings—The pope and bishops are incapable of error when proclaiming a definitive doctrine pertaining to faith and morals (891).

Mass—The continuation of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ at Calvary (1367) which carries on the work of redemp-

tion (1405), appeases the wrath of God and atones for the sins of the living and the dead (1371, 1414).

Mortal sin—A grave sin committed with full knowledge and consent (1857). Those who die in this state descend into hell (1035).

Penance—The sacrament of confessing sins committed after baptism to a priest for forgiveness and reconciliation to God and the Church (1456).

Purgatory—A place where those who die in God's grace are punished and purified by fire for sins that have already been forgiven (1030–32, 1471).

Rosary—An expression of devotion to Mary, developed in the 11th century by Peter the Hermit, using beads to count 53 repetitious prayers to Mary, six to the Father, and six to the Trinity.

Sacraments—Seven efficacious signs of grace that are necessary for salvation and by which divine life is dispensed (1129).

Venial sin—A sin that merits only temporal punishment and does not deprive the sinner of grace, friendship with God or eternal happiness.

Doctrine of Jesus

Jesus the Savior

Bible: "He saved us, not because of any righteous deeds we had done, but because of His mercy" (Titus 3:5).

Roman Catholic Church teaches that "by His death and resurrection, Jesus Christ has 'opened' heaven to us" (1026). Each person attains His own salvation by grace and good works (1477).

Jesus the sinless Redeemer

Bible: "For you know it was not with perishable things...that you are redeemed...but with the precious blood of Christ" (1 Peter 1:18,19).

RCC teaches that Mary is the sinless co-Redeemer. "Without a single sin to restrain her, she gave herself entirely to the person and work of her son; she did so in order to serve the mystery of redemption with Him...being obedient she became the cause of salvation for herself and for the whole human race" (494).

Jesus our Advocate and only Mediator

Bible: "God is one, one also is the mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Timothy 2:5, 1 John 2:1)

RCC teaches that Mary "did not lay aside [her] saving office but by her manifold intercession continues to bring us the gifts of eternal salvation." She "is...Advocate...and Mediatrix" (969).

Jesus expiates our sin

Bible: "Through his blood, God made him the means of expiation for all who believe" (Romans 3:25).

RCC teaches that sins are expiated in purgatory through "a cleansing fire" and that we "must strive to accept this temporal punishment of sin as a grace" (1030,31; 1472-75).

Jesus finished the work of redemption

Bible: "By one offering He has forever perfected those who are being sanctified" (Hebrews 10:14). "Unlike the other high priests, He does not need to offer daily sacrifices" (Hebrews 7:27,28).

RCC denies it is finished. "The sacrifice of Christ and the sacrifice of the Eucharist are one single sacrifice...the same Christ who offered Himself once in a bloody manner on the altar of the cross

is contained and offered in an unbloody manner" (1367). The sacrifice is "offered in reparation for the sins of the living and the dead" (1414).

His life, death and resurrection provided the only way to be saved

Bible: "There is no salvation in anyone else, for there is no other name in the whole world given to men by which we are to be saved" (Acts 4:12).

RCC denies this by claiming the Catholic Church "is necessary for salvation" (846) and claiming "the plan of salvation also includes those who acknowledge the Creator, in the first place amongst whom are the Muslims" (841).

His shed blood is the only remission for sins

Bible: "Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness" (Hebrews 9:22). "Since these [sins] have been forgiven, there is no further offering for sin" (Hebrews 10:18).

RCC teaches "an indulgence is a remission before God of the temporal punishment due to sins whose guilt has already been forgiven, which...may be applied to the living or the dead" (1471).

Jesus cleanses us from sin

Bible: "When He [Jesus] had cleansed us from our sins, He took His seat at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven" (Hebrews 1:3). "Christ...presents you to God holy, free of reproach and blame" (Colossians 1:22).

RCC teaches that "all who die in God's grace and friendship, but still imperfectly purified...undergo purification, so as to achieve the holiness necessary to enter the joy of heaven" (1030).

Jesus, Head of the Church

Bible: "He has put all things under Christ's feet and made Him, thus exalted, head of the church" (Ephesians 1:22,23).

RCC teaches that the Pope, "by reason of his office as Vicar of Christ, and as pastor of the entire Church has full, supreme and universal power over the whole Church, a power which he can always exercise unhindered" (882). He exercises infallibility when "he proclaims by a definitive act a doctrine pertaining to faith or morals" (891).

Jesus the soon-coming King

Bible: "This same Jesus, who has been taken away from you into heaven will come back in the same way you have seen Him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11)

RCC teaches that Jesus returns *daily* to the

altars of Catholic churches to be worshipped: "The body and blood...soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ...is truly, really and substantially contained" in the Eucharist (1374-78).



The Gospel of Grace Reveals:

Jesus Christ, His life, death and resurrection¹

Salvation is...

Only through Christ²

A gift of God's grace³

By faith alone³

Attained by Christ⁴

At the moment a sinner believes the gospel⁵

Secured by God⁶

Sins are expiated by Christ's blood⁷

Salvation glorifies God alone⁸

The work of salvation is finished⁹

The Gospel of Roman Catholicism Reveals:

A religious system of sacraments, indulgences, purgatory, and prayers for the dead (1032;1471-79,1498)*

Salvation is...

Through the Roman Catholic Church (846)

Merited by doing good works (1815,1821,2010,2027)

By faith plus the law, sacraments, and good works (1129,1131)

Attained by man (2010, 2027)

A process from baptism through purgatory (161-2,1254-55)

Never assured in this life (1036,2005)

Sins are expiated by suffering in purgatory (1030-31)

Mary and all the saints are also glorified (1476-77)

This work continues with daily sacrifices (611,1405)

¹1 Corinthians 15:1-4, ²Acts 4:12, ³Ephesians 2:8,9, ⁴Romans 5:9, ⁵Ephesians 1:13,14, ⁶John 10:27-30, ⁷Romans 3:25, ⁸Ephesians 1, ⁹John 19:30

*The numbers in parentheses denote paragraphs in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (see bibliography).

Doctrine of Salvation

Salvation is proclaimed in the gospel

Bible: "It is the power of God leading everyone who believes in it to salvation" (Romans 1:16). It is the good news of Jesus Christ, His life, death and resurrection according to the Scriptures" (1 Corinthians 15:1-4). "If anyone preaches a gospel to you other than the one you received, let a curse be upon him" (Galatians 1:9).

RCC preaches a different gospel by demanding additional requirements for salvation including: the sacraments (1129), meritorious masses (1405), church membership (846), purgatory (1030), indulgences (1498), and baptism (1256).

Salvation is of God, not of man

Bible: "When you heard the glad tidings of salvation, the word of truth, and believed in it, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:13). Those "who believe in His name were begotten not by...man's willing it, but by God" (John 1:13).

RCC teaches "Baptism is the sacrament of regeneration...without which no one can enter the kingdom of God" (1213, 1215).

Salvation is through faith, not works

Bible: "Salvation is yours through faith. This is not of your own doing, it is God's gift, neither is it a reward for anything you have accomplished, so let no one pride himself on it" (Ephesians 2:8,9). "Yet in no way can a man

redeem himself, or pay his own ransom to God. Too high is the price to redeem one's life; he would never have enough" (Psalm 49:7,8).

RCC teaches salvation through faith plus works. People can obtain their own salvation and at the same time cooperate in saving their brothers through good works and indulgences (1477, 1479).

Salvation is by grace, not merit

Bible: "All men are now undeservedly justified by the gift of God" (Romans 3:24). "It is not because of their works, otherwise grace would not be grace" (Romans 11:6).

RCC denies justifying grace is undeserved: "We can merit for ourselves and for others all the graces needed to attain eternal life" (2027).

Salvation rejected is Hell

Bible: "Those who do not acknowledge God nor heed the good news of our Lord Jesus...will suffer the penalty of eternal ruin" (2 Thessalonians 1:8,9).

RCC teaches that "Immediately after death the souls of those who die in a state of mortal sin descend into hell, where they suffer...eternal fire" (1035).

Bibliography of Sources Quoted

The New American Bible. Catholic Biblical Association, Wichita, Kansas: Catholic Bible Publishers. 1978/1979 Edition. All Scripture quotations are from *The New American Bible*.
Catechism of the Catholic Church. San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 1994.

The Roman Catholic Path to Eternity



*The merits of the elect go into the church treasury in heaven, so they may be distributed to the faithful in purgatory for their salvation
(*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1471-19)

(SELF) RIGHTEOUSNESS

Merited through obedience

"Since they did not know the righteousness that comes from God, they sought to establish their own" (Romans 10:3 paraphrase). Also Romans 3:10.

Water Baptism

Venial sins

Good works & sacraments produce merit*

Mortal sin

UNRIGHTEOUSNESS

Void of grace, destined for hell



Heaven

Dying with enough righteousness sends you straight to heaven

Dying somewhere in between without perfect righteousness sends you to purgatory

Dying in mortal sin (unrighteousness) sends you to hell

DEATH

The Biblical Path to Eternity

RIGHTEOUSNESS (OF GOD)

Credited through justification

"He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of His mercy" (Titus 3:5). Also Philippians 3:9, Romans 5:17, 2 Corinthians 5:21.

Faith in Christ Alone
Salvation (John 5:24)

Sanctification (1 Thessalonians 5:23)

Justification is a permanent verdict by God that declares a sinner righteous because of his faith in Christ. God continues to see the sinner as if he were righteous even if he sins, because the basis for justification is the righteousness of Christ. Sin or holy living has no effect on justification. A person either has the righteousness of God and is destined for heaven, or is unrighteous and destined for hell. The righteousness of God is given as a gift to those who trust in God's one and only provision for their sins—the substitutionary atonement and resurrection of Christ (Romans 3:21-26, 4:2-9, and Ephesians 2:1-9).

Only those justified by God will be glorified by God at death (Romans 8:30)



Heaven

Rejecting Christ and His gospel leaves you condemned to hell (John 12:48)

DEATH

UNRIGHTEOUSNESS

Spiritually dead, destined for hell

Questions that may help determine a Roman Catholic's eternal destiny:

1. Are you sure of going to heaven when you die? Catholic teaching states that anyone who claims to have the assurance of salvation through God's power or mercy has committed the sin of presumption (2092).
2. Do you know what God's righteous justice demands for all sin? Catholic teaching states venial sins do not bring death to the soul or eternal punishment (1472).
3. Do you believe purgatory purifies you of your sin? This belief denies the sufficiency of Christ's sacrifice for the expiation of sin (1473).

Preparing Catholics For Eternity

Roman Catholics can prepare themselves for eternity only by obeying the first command of the Lord Jesus Christ. He called everyone to “repent and believe the Gospel” (Mark 1:15). To repent is to forsake all efforts to save oneself through sacraments, good works, indulgences, purgatory, obeying the law or participating in the sacrifice of the Mass. To believe the Gospel is to trust the Lord Jesus Christ alone—His death for the forgiveness of the complete punishment for sins and His resurrection for justification and a right standing before God (Col. 2:13-14; Rom. 4:25). It is only by grace—God's unmerited, undeserved favor—that sinners can receive the gift of eternal life. Once received it can never be lost or revoked (Rom. 11:29).

Proclaiming the Gospel Ministry was founded in 1991 by Evangelist Mike Gendron, a former Roman Catholic of 37 years and a graduate of Dallas Theological Seminary. Mike's book *Preparing Catholics For Eternity*, along with other Gospel tracts, videos and bi-monthly newsletter are offered to help Roman Catholics grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ.



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