

The Catholic Church - Double Standard of Miracles

The Roman Catholic Church teaches that we are obligated to believe in the Bible revelations and miracles but not in the revelations or miracles approved by the Church since. The latter such as the apparitions of Lourdes are optional. The Bible miracles and revelations are examples of public revelation. Lourdes is an example of private revelation.

The Church is clear that there is no new revelation from God needed since the last time one of the twelve apostles gave the word of God.

“Throughout the ages, there have been so-called ‘private’ revelations, some of which have been recognized by the authority of the Church. They do not belong, however, to the deposit of faith. It is not their role to improve or complete Christ’s definitive Revelation... The Christian faith cannot accept ‘revelations’ that claim to surpass or correct the Revelation of which Christ is the fulfilment, as is the case in certain non-Christian religions and also in certain recent sects which base themselves on such ‘revelations’.” (CCC 67).

This makes no sense. It is like saying you can believe the doctor on Thursday but you don’t have to believe what he says on a Friday.

It is though that lots of different groups report miracles or supernatural events and that they have no problem finding the academics and scientists to authenticate them. If so, then why should we believe in the Catholic Church just because a few eminent doctors say that miracles have happened and ignore say the Christian Science movement which reports miraculous mind cures verified by very intelligent and reliable people?

Religion stresses the miracles of the past when the ones of the present and the future should have more weight because they have been examined by more knowledgeable people and tested by our good scientific developments. To believe that a woman has been cured at Knock this year according to doctors is better than to believe that Jesus rose from the dead two thousand years ago. That is why the Catholic Church which claims the best verified extra-biblical miracles cannot make sense when it says we do not have to believe in these miracles but have to believe in the miracles spoken of in the Old and New Testaments.

The Church has to make belief in the extra-biblicals optional for it stakes its infallibility on the claim that what the apostles taught cannot be added to. It is certain however that modern miracles refute that claim though the miracles often deny it for a modern miracle is more convincing than anything just scribbled in some old papyrus two thousand years ago.

The Roman Catholic faith says that the Roman Catholic faith was revealed to the apostles by God. It says that since the apostles died, there has been no binding revelation. The Catholics say there is no need for any more revelation. The reason there is no revelation, revelation that has full authority and which we are obligated to believe, since the apostles is that Jesus himself was God's last word to man. Jesus gave the fullness of truth to the world through the apostles. The scriptures say that God used to speak to us by prophets but now he speaks by his Son. But Jesus left no writings and left his apostles to tell us his message promising he would be with them as much as ever. Catholics argue that the voice of the apostles is that of Jesus for he invested them with his authority. They say that the modern Roman Catholic bishops are the custodians of the apostolic message and have inherited similar authority from them.

So, in Catholic doctrine, God has not ordered us to believe anything new since the apostles.

Yet what about the miracles the Church says the saints have done to show they are in Heaven and the miraculous apparitions of Mary at Lourdes and Fatima etc and other forms of revelation that have happened since the last apostle died? The Church says they are only pointers to the revelation given by the apostles. So they just reiterate their message. They are not new revelation. We are bound to believe in the visions and miracles and revelations reported by the apostles but are not bound to believe that any real miracle happened since.

The view of some that private revelation is binding only on the persons who have visions and revelations etc is incorrect. That would be heresy for it would imply that they have experienced shows that for them at least, Jesus is not the last word. It would imply that they have more light and revelation than anybody else can have.

ECCLESIASTICAL MIRACLES

The Church says she does not bind you to accept any miracle – even an officially approved one – that was not taught or

implied by the teaching of the apostles or the Bible.

You have to believe in the biblical idea that Jesus rose from the dead and you have to believe that the Virgin was conceived without original sin which is falsely said to be implied by the Bible. Catholicism's unbiblical doctrines that are not even implied by the Bible are said to have been implied another way. The other way is: "The apostolic tradition should be believed and the Bible says so and these doctrines are a part of that tradition." The Church holds that revelation that must be believed, ceased when the last apostle died (page 4, Twenty Questions About Medjugorje; part 66,67, Catechism of the Catholic Church) and stakes her infallibility and her being the true Church on it. She says that she cannot add to that body of doctrine for in Christ God revealed himself completely (page 19, Medjugorje). She calls herself the apostolic Church for this revelation was given to the apostles and she claims to be their only legitimate successor. The apostles did not predict that Mary would appear at Fatima in 1917 so she says that nobody is bound to believe that she did. All the Church does is to declare that an apparition agrees with what she teaches and that the people are permitted to believe in it if they like (page 4). Cardinal Daly said as much in Knock in 1996 during the Armagh pilgrimage (St Martin de Porres Magazine, page 6, March 1997).

Hume said we must only believe in miracles when the people lying or being mistaken would imply a greater miracle than the event they reported. But he held that this never happened. He is certainly right that a miracle should only be believed as a last resort. The Catholic Church surprisingly has the same attitude for it is hostile to visions and miracles that have not been recorded in the traditions of the apostles and accepts them reluctantly. The Church always opposes visions in the early days and this has happened with Lourdes and all authenticated ones. Catholics are obliged to believe the Bible miracles but the most the rest of the accepted ones get is a declaration that they are compatible and supportive of the faith and that if the people want to believe in them let them. The Church says it has the right to revoke approval of an apparition if further light comes up.

The Church is being inconsistent for allowing people to believe in non-Bible miracles if they want and forbidding the Bible ones getting the same treatment. If they are optional then people may disbelieve and if people may disbelieve a miracle it should not be authenticated. The point about miracles is that if God does them to teach us then we should believe in them. It is arbitrary to pick miracles that may be believed and ones that may not. Yet this error is the core doctrine of the Church!

If the Catholic Church really were the true Church the miracles would not be happening.

MIRACLE DOUBLE STANDARD

The Roman Catholic Church says we are not under obligation to believe in any apparition or miracle even when they are approved by the Church that has taken place since Bible times. We are obliged to believe in the miracles reported in the Bible for it is the word of God and doesn't err. This is a dishonest double-standard. You can't believe without evidence, if you try all you do is assume or guess which is not believing. If we believe that the Bible is true we must find evidence that its miracle stories are true. But if we may reject the non-biblical miracles then that is saying the evidence doesn't matter. If evidence for miracles doesn't matter then the evidence for the Bible doesn't matter either. This is so simple and obvious that if we accuse the Church of stupidity or deliberate distortion one thing is for sure, it cannot be trusted and it is the body that takes the authority to declare miracles false or true. Would a God of truth really do miracles for a religion like that?

The Church says that you may deny or doubt her optional miracles as long as you have a logical reason to (xvii, Raised from the Dead) but you must never attack the Bible ones for revelation ceased with the apostles (page 142, Catholicism and Fundamentalism). To oppose the optionals without good logical reason would be to slander the commission that concludes that they happened by calling it stupid or dishonest. It is our duty to believe what the evidence presents. But she commands us to believe in the resurrection even though she says that we should reject it if the evidence is not good enough but if we want to stay Catholic we have to believe in the resurrection. She arbitrarily commands us to believe this and tells us that we can believe that if we wish. The Church is sneakily making a difference where there is none. Both the optional and compulsory miracles can't be different if evidence for them is all that counts. So, Mary appearing at Fatima is just as binding on us and as convincing as the resurrection if both are real well-vindicated miracles of God. But they are not and there are millions of problems with them so they are not of divine origin.

Theologians might say that Catholics are obliged to believe the Bible miracles and the others are optional because the former can be proved better to be real and from God. This is untrue. We have only one or a few reports and just one testament for most of the Bible ones. But at Fatima, where Mary supposedly appeared in 1917 we have more. We have thousands who said they saw the sun spin. What sense does it make to say that the resurrection of Jesus which was only known through visions (empty tombs prove nothing) and visions of Mary are not equal in value? The evidence for the Bible wonders is appalling for no cross-examination or medical evaluation of the witnesses is possible or was ever performed. And even if the gospels were written one year after the crucifixion they would not prove the resurrection for it is still more likely that a mistake was made by some writer that the gospeller's sources all sprang from than that a resurrection really happened. We don't know the circumstances but they could have been right for such a mistake to take off. With miracles

even what seems to be an excuse for not believing the account is not an excuse for the standard has to be as strict as possible.

Reason says that if a miracle such as a cure at Lourdes or an apparition cannot be rationally and scientifically explained except in terms of a miracle then it follows that something checked with modern science and which is near our day has more right to be believed than things reported in a book thousands of years ago. And a miracle that is happening today has more weight than Lourdes or Fatima or anything that took place before our greater and improved scientific knowledge and progress.

We read in the Bible (1 Kings 17) that during a famine the prophet Elijah stayed with a widow and her son. They shared the last of their food with him a little meal and some oil. In return for this the jar with the meal miraculously never ran out and neither did the oil. Amateur magicians can do better today. A starving widow and son were in no position to be good at making sure that they weren't being tricked. No investigation was undertaken. The Jews just took it for granted that the miracle was true. No God would do such a ridiculous miracle. But the point of the whole story is that investigation cannot be lawful. The Bible itself encourages gullibility in the face of reported miracles. Catholics are sinning by investigating miracles.

We can't interview the apostles or do forensic tests on the empty tomb of Jesus. We have only one testimony in the Bible or anywhere that Moses divided the waters of the Red Sea and if you believe everything you hear from one person you will be a joke.

Catholicism's miracles supposedly indicate that it is the true and right Church and to be obeyed but by merely happening they say something totally contrary to that. Rome says Catholics are not bound to believe anything that is not in the Bible or in what is not implied by it so if that is wrong then Catholicism is just another man-made cult for it is error-ridden. The miracles are not attributable to God or to a supernatural being with integrity. If God is the source of miracles and is so bizarre then why can't it be that miracles are the signs of something just as or more bizarre? The Devil would not do them for he could do better and start a Church that allows some forms of sin and says they are the keys to salvation if he wants people in Hell. It is most probable that miracles are clever hoaxes and are verified through misperception and mistakes and/or deception. God and the Devil see into hearts and know more than we ever could. Satan then could do a miracle that converts sinners to God and is an exact mimic of what God would do but which is intended to cause as much sin or harm as possible indirectly. For example, miracles make unbelievers blaspheme. Satan hates God so much that he would do a miracle just so that one tiny extra sin would happen that would not otherwise have taken place.

Despite Catholic doctrine, apparitions and miracles which dish out threats of divine chastisement and plagues and wars that will come if the message is not heeded, must necessarily be accepted as equal to scripture. They would actually be superior to scripture because they are more relevant to today and it makes sense to listen to today's convincing miracles than yesterday's.

Prophetic visions lead to supporters urging that scripture will have to be seen through the eyes of the apparition and its attitudes. Scripture cannot speak on its own for it has to be interpreted in accordance with the visions so the visions have the real say. Even if apparitions are inferior to scripture there is a sense in which they are superior for once they are accepted they colour the way the scriptures are interpreted.

The main point I want to make is simply this: to predict earthquakes and other disasters as coming chastisements of God is extremely serious business. You need exceptionally good evidence before you can say that. The utterances of the apparitions would need the right to be considered scripture before they could tell us such things. When an apparition says things like that it is claiming underhandedly to be issuing inspired scripture. The Catholic must deny the divine source of the nasty threats in apparitions which is the same as saying that no apparition can be trusted for most of them make terrifying prophecies. It would mean that since some deceiving supernatural power exists no apparition however orthodox can be trusted in. Perhaps the Catholic must deny the sufficiency of the revelations given once and for all through Jesus Christ which means that the faith is left wide open to new innovations and revelations that could swamp and smother the gospel and lead to millions of sects.

The Catholic Church puts testimonies before physical miracles that we can test for ourselves like communion wafers turning into visible human flesh, holy people living without food and drink, saints not decaying and stigmata and vanishing tumours that were there yesterday and gone today. For example, the Church approves the Lourdes visions on the word of Bernadette but has not given official permission to believe the vast majority of the equally or better "proven" physical evidences for miracles. It is illogical to put testimony before physical evidence. The Church is too biased and dishonest to be trusted.

Nobody can say such miracles are given to support the claims of the Church for that is not what they do when thought about correctly.

It is wiser to believe a miracle that can be tested scientifically. If God does some of these they should all be like that and when they are not we can be positive that they have nothing to do with him. So, if both the testable and the testimonial miracles happen then miracles have no message except that science is nonsense. Miracles are evil and when they happen in the Catholic Church they evilly back up the double-standard regarding miracles that the Church has set up.

When a miracle or apparition insinuates that Catholic doctrine is wrong the Church rejects it immediately and does not even bother investigating scientifically or otherwise. When that is done the Church has no right to claim that only miracles that indicate the veracity of the Church's doctrine happen. When that is done the Church has no right to say it is honest, open and objective when it comes to miracle reports. The lies suggest that miracle reports are used by the Church in order to unduly exercise an influence on people.

Catholics have three options if they want to make sense of the ecclesiastical miracles. 1, deny the miracles that are not biblical; 2, make them superior to the Bible; 3, declare them proven but deny they are from God. The first fits Catholic doctrine for it denies that miracles happen today which is what some Catholics especially progressive ones believe. Plus nobody is bound to believe the non-biblical miracle accounts or in Lourdes or Fatima. The second denies that Catholicism is the true Church and makes visionaries have more authority than the pope. But if Catholicism is a false Church then how could visions that back it up be from an honest God? The third means that the evidence for Jesus is weaker than the evidence against him. It says miracles were his credentials and since the Devil always does miracles that seem kindly there is no way of being sure which are his or which are God's. But Jesus' would be probably satanic in origin because if the ecclesiastical miracles cannot be shown to be God's work how could any miracles, even Jesus', be an exception? Jesus said his miracles were his credentials so Jesus then would be guilty of using fake evidence that he was sent by God and full of God's power to do miracles.

The Catholic Church says that the Bible cannot be added to or that the canon is closed until Jesus comes back to inaugurate the reign of God on the earth and the last judgment. But it should be adding the statements of its apparitions to the Bible if it wants to believe in apparitions.

The Catholics say that the apparitions and miracles do not add to the faith but uphold and verify the faith given to the apostles. They draw attention to it. But did the apostles say that Mary would cure people at Lourdes? Did they say that there will be great spiritual and temporal disasters if the world is not consecrated by the whole Church to Mary like the Virgin said at Fatima? Of course they are additions.

These miracle apparitions deny that the Church has the right to decide if they are from Heaven or not for they attempt to authenticate themselves without the Church. The Lourdes Lady said, "I am the Immaculate Conception." The Fatima Lady said, "I am the Lady of the Rosary". The Medjugorje Lady said, "I am the Virgin Mary. I am the Queen of Peace". In other words: "No matter who says otherwise, this is a real revelation from Heaven for I say so." Moreover, the apparition never tells the children she appears to that the Church must decide. The apparitions are anti-Catholic because they attack the authority of the Church without which there can be no faith and no Church. It is interesting that the early Church did not call in experts to decide if its visions of Jesus were real! It is clear that both the resurrection visions of Jesus and the later visions such as Lourdes all oppose authority even when it is a well-meaning and cautious authority and so they cannot complain if we ignore their appeals for conversion and obedience to their commands. They are for dogmatic propaganda and not for bettering people as people. The Church will turn a blind spot to this as long as people rashly assume that miracles indicate that the Church should be obeyed and given donations.

To make the extra-biblical miracles optional is the same thing as saying that they are not needed at all. When God does unnecessary miracles that shows that God is showing off or he is fixing his blunders. The believer can admit neither. A God who does either of these is not fit to be God. The Catholic miracles philosophically imply that God does not exist! Incredible but true!

The Church today warns that most modern apparitions and miracles promote a God who is harsh and frightening and who is threatening punishments. It condemns such apparitions. Curiously, you can be excommunicated for denying that the Virgin Mary was conceived without sin but you will not be excommunicated for supporting an apparition that teaches an off-putting view of God! So questioning a dogma about Mary is a bigger sin than insulting God! It is obvious that the Church is more worried about its authority to make dogmas and order people to believe than in God. Any apparition that supports a Church like that is fit only for condemnation.

The Church rejects absurd miracles. If a statue of the Virgin Mary was reported even by reliable sources to have come to life and sang John Brown's Body the Church would disbelieve in the miracle. A miracle that is not absurd but which purports to verify and promote nonsensical doctrine then is also to be dismissed. And Catholic doctrine is far from sensible.