

Is Roman Catholicism the One True Church?

“Extra ecclesium, nulla salus” – Outside the Church, there is no salvation.

The Roman Catholic Church claims to be a visible Church and not only that but to be the only organisation established by God. This means that every member can be an antichrist and they will still form God's organisation. The structure not the people is approved by God. This doctrine of visibility implies that as long as you have your name as a member of the Catholic Church you are supporting that Church whether you like it or not. People should have it removed if they disapprove of the Catholic faith. If they don't want to be complicit in the wrong done by the Church they have to. It is obvious that this unity is only a label and is not real unity. Roman Catholicism with all its rebels and heretics who pretend to belong to it and with its being built on the rock of fake popes is only a superficial unity. It is a label not a Church. It is a cloak not a unity.

The Roman Catholic Church claims to be the one true Church and that this is proven by the Church being one, holy, Catholic and apostolic. The word Catholic conveys all time, all teachings, all nations, all eternity. It is a way of saying, "The Church has the unchangeable truth".

Naturally then Church also claims to be infallible. To believe in the infallibility of the Church requires a stupendous amount of faith and trust. You have to trust the Church and the popes that they never compromised Church doctrine. You would have to believe that Boniface VIII did not mislead his predecessor and abuse him to become pope. Why? For if Boniface did this he was no Catholic and was excommunicated. It would mean he was never really pope. You would have to believe that Pope Urban VI was really pope though his own cardinals testified that he was not and appointed a rival pope. You would have to believe that Pope Pius IX had the right to be proclaimed infallible by himself when he proclaimed that Mary was conceived without sin years before he summoned a Church council to infallibly decide that he was infallible! You would have to believe that the Church can infallibly decide which of the arguments for Jesus' existence are right. When the Church can infallibly proclaim that Jesus exists it can proclaim that. And many Catholics believe and the formula used for canonisation says it, that when the pope makes a saint that his decision is without error and infallible. Saints are made not just on the basis of holiness but on the basis of their orthodoxy. A holy person who say didn't believe that contraception was always a sin wouldn't be made a saint no matter what miracles they did or how many people he helped in life. So canonisations indirectly imply that nearly all Roman Catholic doctrines are infallible for the saints were traditional Catholics. Yet no rational person can agree that they are infallible. Thousands of similar examples and problems could be put forward. Rome requires a lot of research but demands very little then! Oh the duplicity!

IS CATHOLICISM CATHOLIC?

No if it is manmade it necessarily excludes people for being wiser than it. Also, you cannot become Catholic on a desert island. Islam is more Catholic in the sense that you can become Muslim on your own.

IS CATHOLICISM HOLY?

One of the marks of the true Church is that it must be holy. Obviously, if God starts a Church he would want it to be righteous and honest.

Roman Catholicism tells us, “The Catholic Church is holy in doctrine and is marked by the remarkable holiness of many of her children. The miracles of God show her to be true for they wouldn't be done for an unholy religion.”

This is no use for many religions claim to be holy and miraculous and to make people holy and to have plenty of holy people in them. Everybody has a talent for faking goodness.

Miracles cannot be accepted as proofs for a religion being from God because devils can pose as angels of light and fake miracles that seem good but which are for a bad direct or indirect purpose are feasible if there are devils. The miracles support false doctrines so they are unholy and a mark of unholiness in so far as they support these doctrines. For example, at Lourdes the Virgin did miracles but did nothing to correct the errors of the Church.

Individual Catholics could be holy but their creed cannot be regarded as holy. They say they are sinners. “The Council of Trent has defined that ‘after his justification a man cannot avoid, during the whole course of his life, every venial sin, without a special privilege such as the Church recognises was conferred on the Blessed Virgin’. The soul in the state of grace can therefore avoid any venial sin considered separately, but cannot avoid all venial sins taken together by keeping

itself always free from them” (page 63, *The Mother of God and Our Interior Life*). The relevant decree was made in Session 6, Canon 23, of the infallible Council of Trent. So, you can avoid venial sins like white lies but you cannot avoid the attitude that venial sins expresses – rebellion against God. This is a venial sin but is different from venially sinning by telling lies so you always sin venially in your attitude. That is what the quotation means by saying that there are separate venial sins and ones which are not separate in their way. But if you sin then you will remember that you are a sinner when you pray or serve your God. Piety is a mockery because you are letting God know that you will do good on your own terms not his. A sinner cannot do good when he or she is aware of sin. Catholic saints cheated a bit when they didn’t combat the Church’s teaching on sin.

The holier you are the less you will be likely to sin or so you would expect. It is far more vicious to commit an easy sin than a harder one. The Church says that even the saints sinned – it might have been slight but it was still sin. Therefore the saints are the worst of the lot even if you deny that all sin is equally malicious. If a saint tells a tiny lie, even if the lie is a tiny sin the fact that they so didn’t need to commit the sin and showed contempt to the grace of God which protects against sin is by no means minor. They have insulted all the exceptional graces they received so sin-wise or intention-wise it makes no difference if they were holy or unholy for they cannot win. External goodness is not enough according to the Church. The Church says that if your conscience tells you to burn heretics you have to do it so it is intention that counts.

Roman Catholicism says that you cannot do good that deserves a reward from God unless you have his help. You can do good without it, it says. But surely this good deserves a reward? What a sectarian and ungrateful and slanderous religion this is.

The mark of holiness principally refers to the doctrine being holy, true and from God. Rome is able to say that even if the whole Church were sinful it would still be holy as it is the means of holiness and the pillar of the holy truth. She has to teach this for there are many sinners and insincere people in the Church. But her doctrine is not holy for it is wrong. There is more. Everybody complains about having doubts. One doubt puts faith out of you. You do not believe in authority if you query so much as one thing it says. Also, if you had no doubts but did not know all Catholic doctrine you could not really believe. You are only guessing that it is plausible. So there is no Church. You cannot really be a member of a Church you don’t believe in. There is no Church. There is no point in saying that holiness is the mark of the true Church when there is no Church.

One disturbing thing about the holiness of the Church is that the holiness has to come from each individual member and the Church interprets that holiness as supernatural without knowing if it really is or not. In other words, if a Catholic person does good the Church says that that person does it by the supernatural grace of God so that it is not a natural goodness and this supernatural goodness helps show that that Church bears the mark of holiness and approval by God. This is actually stealing much of the commendation due to the person and stealing it for herself because it is using the person’s goodness for unjustifiable reasons and taking illegitimate advantage of it.

The mark of holiness implies that the Catholic Church must have a holier membership and a holier doctrine than any other religion otherwise it is not a mark at all. Claiming that holiness among Catholics shows that the Catholic Church has the mark of holiness essential to being the true Church is strange considering the fact that the Church now says that the reason members of other religions and even pagans show real signs of holiness is because they follow Jesus unknowingly and through their sincerity they are counted as members of the true Church. If Buddhists are as holy as Catholics then how can the holiness mark prove the Catholic Church to be the true Church? If Buddhists are regarded as less holy then isn’t that going to encourage insulting of Buddhists and make the Catholics proud? If pride would have to come from teaching that your Church is the true Church then it follows that God cannot found a true Church or at least one that can claim to be the true Church.

Buddhists could say that Catholics are holy through their grasp of the truth learned from Buddha though they reject him. The point is once you start saying holiness is the mark of the true Church you have to say that outside visible membership of that Church there is no holiness for the argument is worthless if you start saying sincere outsiders can be holy and only look as if they are outsiders. However, it is clear that Catholics claim to have more holiness for they are fully in communion with the true Church but this still makes no difference to the point I am making for nobody can see holiness or measure which religion has the holiest members. So the Church adds to the arrogance by claiming to have the most holiness. The Church has lost the mark of holiness by abandoning it in any meaningful sense that would allow it to be a mark of the only true Church so the corporation headed by the Vatican can by no means be considered to be the true Church. The Church has no right to the name Catholic for when it opposes the mark of holiness despite paying lip-service to it for the true Church has to have the four marks of unity, catholicity, sanctity and apostolicity and each one depends on the others. The Church cannot be apostolic if it rejects sanctity for that is against the apostles so it is not united with the Church of the apostles and is therefore not Catholic for only the apostolic Church can bear the mark of Catholicity in the sense that the mark shows it to be the true Church.

If the Catholic Church is one Church it is because it excludes anyone who is considered to be a heretic. Any group then

could claim to be one Church on that basis so Jesus and his Church don't know what they are talking about. The Church was once almost entirely Arian, that is, it denied the deity of Jesus Christ (page 98, Reason and Belief). Using the four marks argument then often involves dishonesty or blindness.

Rome says that Jesus founded one Church and that she is that Church. It is pride to say that for even if Jesus said his Church would never fail he never said the same of the Vatican. If Jesus thought he did then if he started a so-called Church this result could not possibly be from God or holy and he would be marked as a phoney.

CATHOLICISM APOSTOLIC?

The creed Catholics say at Mass tells them that there is one apostolic Church. Jesus left his gospel and religion in the hands of the apostles meaning that if a Church claims to be the true Church then it must claim to be everything that the apostles would want it to be. It must claim to be true to the apostles' doctrine and to have been founded upon them (Ephesians 2:20). It must be able to prove it.

But even if the Church agrees with the apostles in most things there is no evidence that she agrees with them in all so the claim to be apostolic is just a guess. Most of Rome's dogmas cannot be traced back to the apostles. This proof is no good. Bible-only religions are a safer bet.

And there is plenty of evidence and proof that Roman Catholicism is a religion made up after the apostles. There is no proof that much of the New Testament itself is true to the apostles for they had nothing to do with writing many of the books in it. The Church would have to deny the stance of the scholars who say that most of the books were not written by who they say they were and would have to say they are all totally apostolic to have more hope of seeming to be the apostolic Church.

When some of Rome's doctrines are provably false and hypocritical she cannot tell people to believe that "she is faithful to apostolic doctrine and that demonstrates her loyalty to the revelation of God." If apostolic doctrine is right then she is wrong and if it is wrong she is still wrong.

Rome claims to have derived its sacramental powers from the apostles but there is no evidence for that serious claim. Sacraments aren't mentioned in the Bible at all. It never says that certain rites have the power to give grace from God.

The Catholic Church does not take the word of the apostles that it is the true Church but the word of the bishops and priests. Therefore it is really hostile to the apostles. There is a contradiction between the Church saying it is the true Church because it was founded by and wholly devoted to Christ and it saying that it is also apostolic for the apostles were authorised to preserve the doctrine of Christ. To follow what apostles say about Jesus is not the same as following Jesus. It is following their portrayal and as for their claim that Jesus authorised them plenty of others who contradicted them have made that claim. This is why Christians in Corinth said they were for Christ and not the apostles (1 Corinthians 1:12) – Corinth had an inadequate understanding of Pauline Christianity so don't think that they were going directly to the historical records about Jesus instead of listening to the apostles and if they had Paul would have proved that Jesus authorised the apostles to rule the Church in his stead - and were shot down by the wily St Paul who evilly knew that they had a point and still wanted to slap them down.

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, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age" (Mt 28:19, 20). This text is the basis of the Catholic claim that the apostles had all Jesus' teaching and passed it on to the Church.

If proof or evidence that the apostles and Rome are of one mind in religious teaching existed it would prove that the doctrines of Rome are as hateful as theirs was. The apostles preached lies and blasphemy in the name of God. And if Rome wants to be called apostolic then she is making herself as bad as they were.

Lastly

As we learn from *Lost Christianities* by Ehrman, too many divisions and sects and opinions in a religion show it is a false religion or a religion made up by people and not revealed by God. In the early Church, Irenaeus said that the followers of the Gnostic Valentinus were just led astray by falsehood as shown by how much they disagreed with one another and how each one gets a revelation that contradicts somebody else. Tertullian wrote, "Where diversity of doctrine is found, there, then, must the corruption both of the Scriptures and the expositions thereof be regarded as existing" (Prescription 38). What matters is not the fragile unity of any denomination but the religion has a whole. Christianity as a whole is full of divisions and one group's core teaching is regarded as unChristian by the next one!

The Catholic Church regards its claim to be the true visible Church to be its biggest credential for it argues from this that it is the only visible Church that can trace its origin back to Christ. But this claim is bogus and making it is sufficient proof that the Church is bogus. If Jesus is the head of the Church then he decides who really belongs to him and who comprise the Church so if the Church is not clearly defined to us it is to him. An invisible Church on earth does not mean the Church is invisible to him.

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