

So What's The Difference

Fritz Ridenour

Chapter Two

Taken from So What's The Difference
Fritz Ridenour

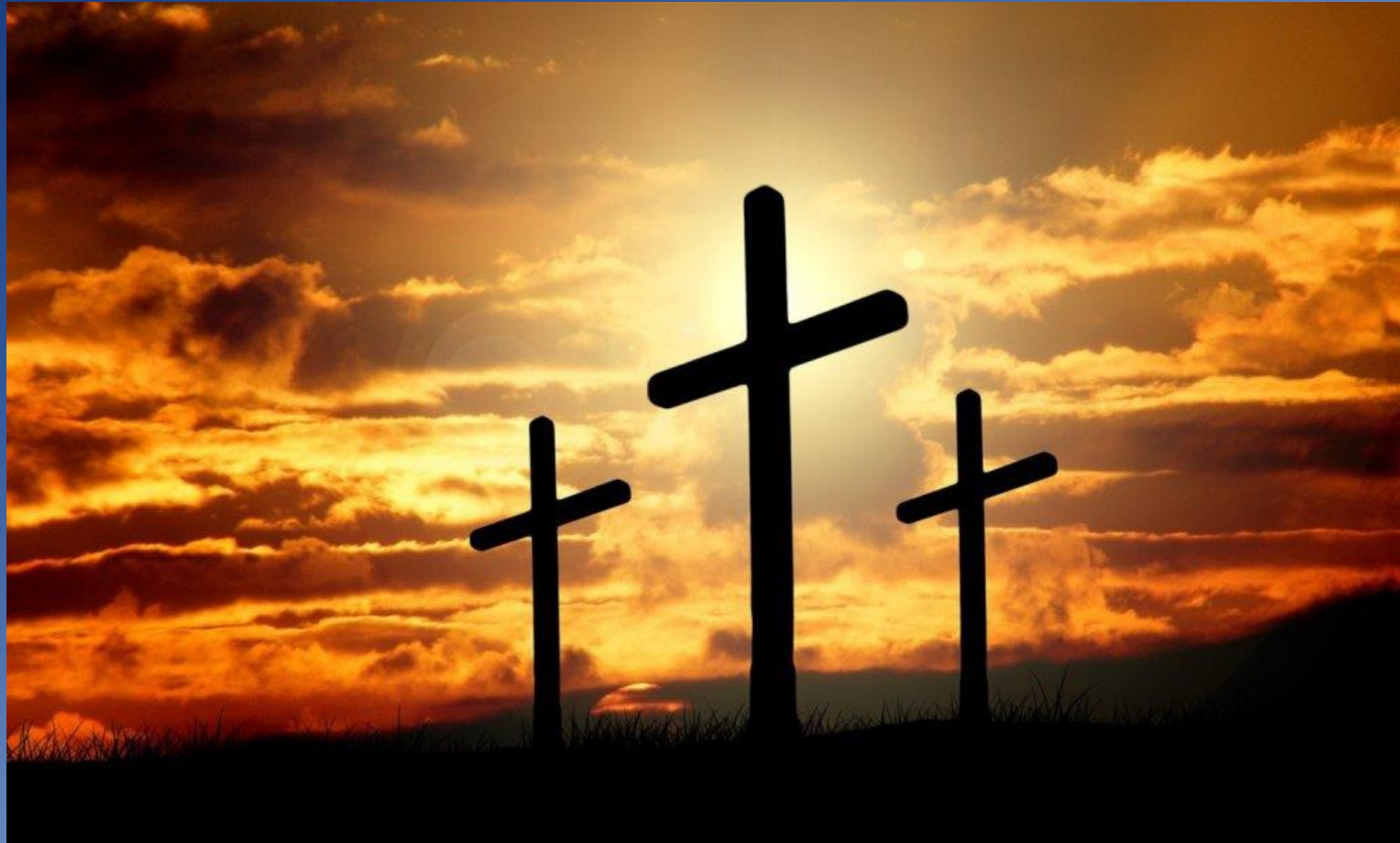
Other Parts of the Christian Tree

Roman Catholicism

Eastern Orthodoxy



Can Roman Catholics and Eastern Orthodox be Christians? Yes-Those who receive Jesus Christ as their personal savior will be saved.



Chapter Two

Roman Catholicism The One True Church?

PLUMB LINE: 1 Cor. 15:3-4

Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures...he was buried...he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.

SOLA SCRIPTURA OR THE BIBLE PLUS TRADITION?

Question one: What is Sola Scriptura?

- **Sola Scriptura** means “Scripture alone” and was one of the major battle cries of the Protestant Reformation



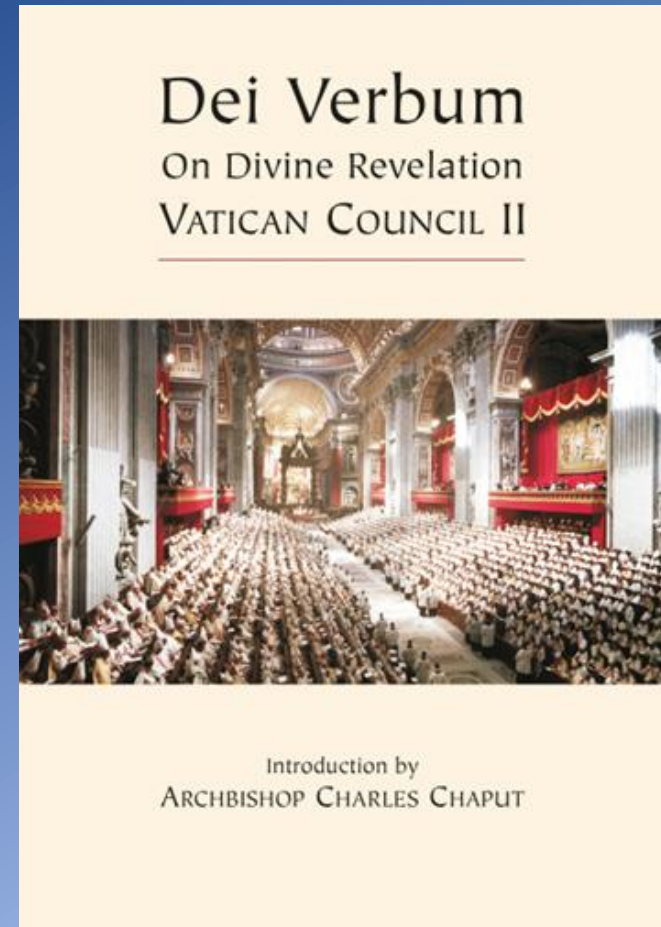
- Council of Trent (1545-1563)-The Roman Catholic Church rebuffed Sola Scriptura of the Protestant reformation and retained the right and power to interpret the Holy Scriptures according to what it believed the Bible said (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

[*]



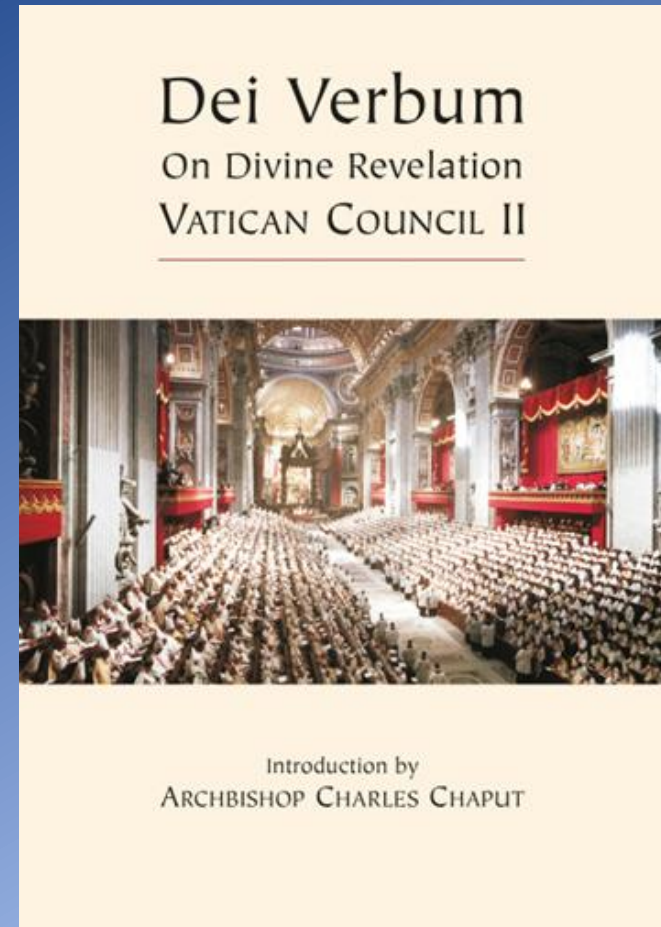
<http://hoyenhistoria.blogspot.com/2015/01/january-26-council-of-trent-explains.html>

- During Vatican Council II (1962-1965), the claims of Trent were simply upheld in a little different form.
- Among the Vatican Council II documents is the “Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation” (**Dei Verbum**).



<https://www.ctsbooks.org/product/dei-verbum/>

- This recognizes the Catholic Church assumes the correct approach to Scripture plus the traditions handed down from Catholic bishops (Sacred Tradition).
- Bishop Robert E. Barron-Auxiliary Bishop-Archdiocese of Los Angeles-How to read the Bible in the light of the great teachings of the fathers, both East and West, and within the context of sacred liturgy and church traditions.



<https://www.ctsbooks.org/product/dei-verbum/>

Why is Sola Scriptura so important?

- Evangelical Protestants believe that all the things we need to know, believe and practice are clearly stated in the Scriptures, which are given by **inspiration** of God.
- Roman Catholics maintain that the Bible is a “church-based book” since the Church wrote or at least determined what comprised the New Testament.



- Evangelical Protestants say the Church discovered the New Testament as the **Holy Spirit** made clear which writings were authoritative and inspired.



Read Scripture, Yes- Interpret It, No

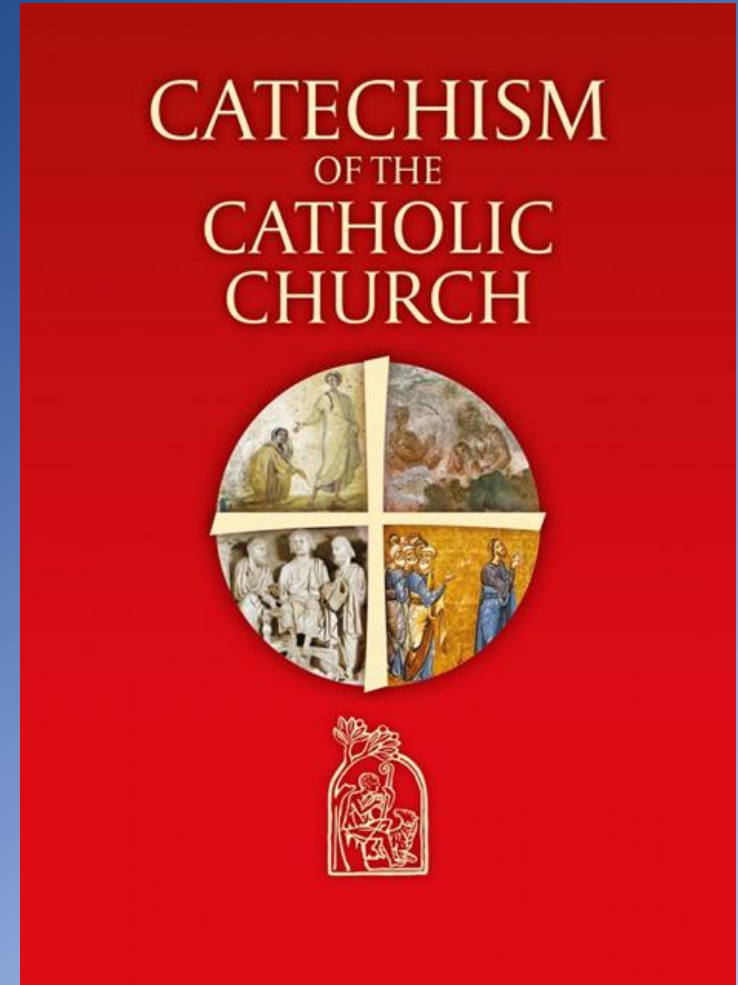
- The Dei Verbum document states that the manner of interpreting Scripture is ultimately subject to the judgment of the Church which exercises the divinely conferred commission and ministry of watching over and **interpreting** the Word of God.



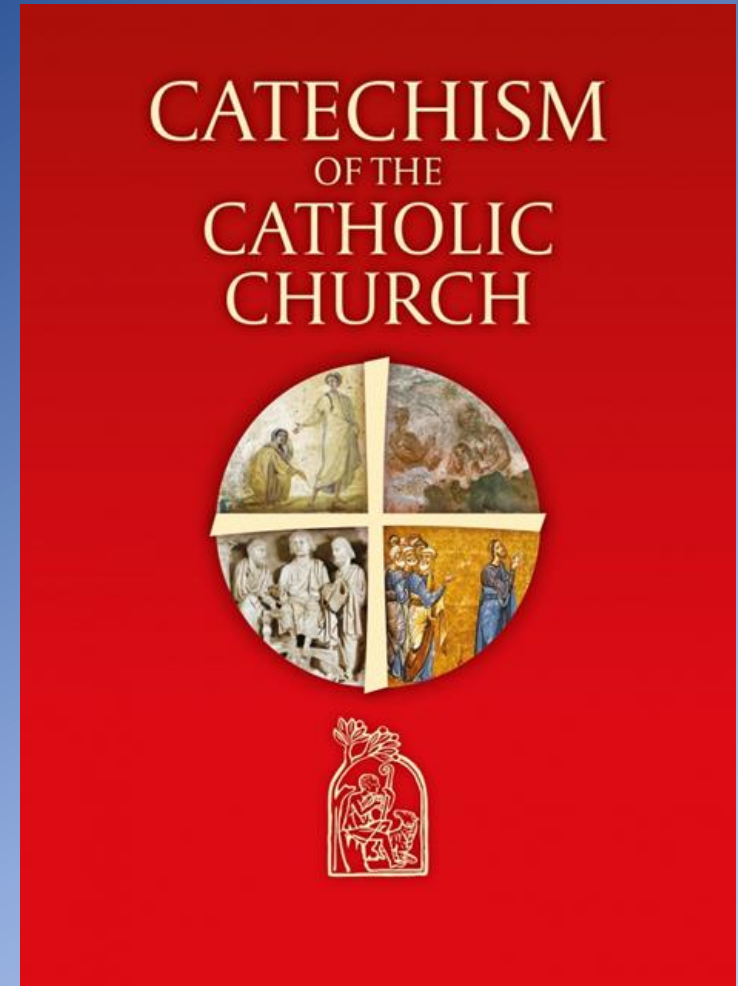
- Matthew 16:13-20 gives the Catholic Church the claim for scriptural interpretation [*_]
- “And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”



- According to the **Catechism** of the Catholic Church, Jesus named Peter the “rock” of his Church.
- The Roman Catholic Church feels that Peter and the other apostles are the foundation of the Church.



- Therefore, all authority rests within the Roman Catholic Church.
- Jesus does not say directly that He will build his Church upon Peter himself, but upon “this rock.”
- The Greek text clearly refers to Peter as petros (meaning a small stone) and to “this rock” as *petra* (meaning a very large Gibraltar-size rock). (Matthew 16:18-19) [*]



Saved by Faith or Faith Plus “Works”?

- Protestants rely on **sola** **fide** (*sola-feda*-faith alone) for their source of salvation.
- The Catholic believes that the Christian must rely on faith plus good works.



<https://martin-seow.blogspot.com/2013/10/raising-hands.html>

The Seven Sacraments:

- Baptism-erases original sin. The believer keeps sanctifying grace only through “spiritual battle” (good works)
- Confirmation-Filling of the Holy Spirit-this happens at age 12. The person is sealed with the Holy Spirit. Compare this to Ephesians 1:13 [✱]



<http://stjohn-frederick.org/baptism/>

- The Holy Eucharist-Holy Communion-transubstantiation (elements are transformed into the actual body and blood of Christ)
- Penance-confession of sins to a priest and the reconciliation for those sins by the sinner



<https://denvercatholic.org/a-deeper-desire-for-the-eucharist/>

- **Anointing of the Sick**-formerly called extreme Unction-prayer and anointing of the sick or dying believer in the faith of the Church
- **Holy Orders**-Catholic ministers are ordained at three levels: bishops, presbyters (**priests**) and deacons
- **Matrimony-marriage**-divorce and remarriage cut the Catholic off from Eucharistic communion but not from the Church



<https://camdendiocese.org/anointing-the-sick/>

- The Holy Eucharist and Penance are two very significant **differences** between the Protestants and Roman Catholics.
- Christians do not need continuing forgiveness (Heb. 9:27-10:14). [✘]
- Christians do not need **penances**-Catholics believe in “mortal sins” (grave offenses) and “venial” [venial] sin (less serious offenses).



<https://www.catholic365.com/article/6357/the-sacrament-of-penance-and-sanctifying-grace.html>

- Romans 3:23 states that all have sinned and have fallen short of the glory of God and are justified freely by his grace (Eph. 2:8-10). [✳]
- Our works are a result of our faith.



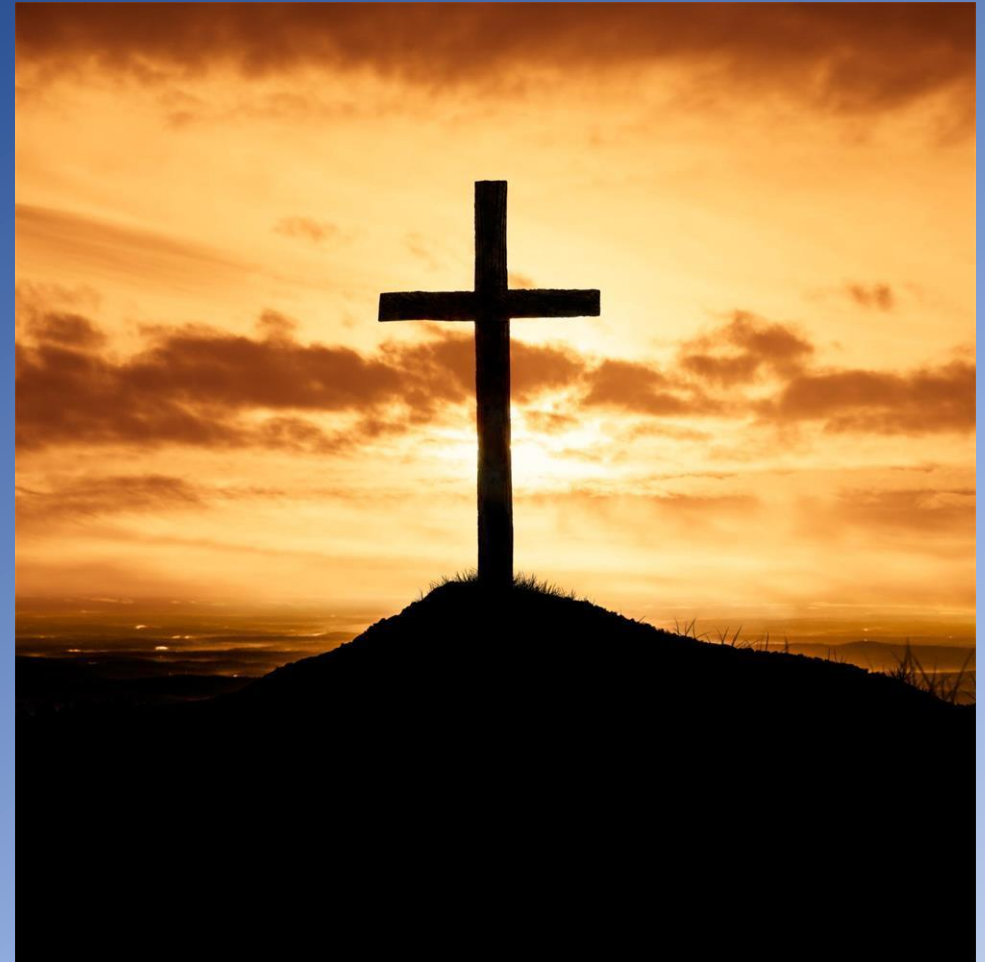
<https://www.catholic365.com/article/6357/the-sacrament-of-penance-and-sanctifying-grace.html>

How do Catholics view salvation?

- Catholics believe that Christ's blood has become the instrument of **atonement** for the sins of all men. However, they insist that faith in what Christ did on the cross in and of itself is not enough.
- Catholics believe that justification and sanctification are considered as the same process.



- Catholics believe faith in Christ is the beginning of salvation which lays the foundation for justification. The Catholic will then build on this foundation by doing **good works**.
- Justification translates in the Greek as dikaiōo [de-ki-yō]-this means “to recognize” or “to be declared righteous”



- Salvation comes by only one way-faith in what Christ did for them on the cross (Rom. 3:21; 10:4; 1 Cor. 1:30; Phil. 3:9; John 5:24; John 3:16; John 6:25-29) [✘]
- This will clear up misconceptions of James 2:14-26 [✘] [✘]
- Sanctification is not just a declaration of the mouth (James 2:18)



<https://www.cruciformcoc.com/sermons/the-cross-is-at-the-center/>

How do Catholics and Protestants View Sanctification?

- Protestants see sanctification as the progressive work of growing in Christ and becoming a **mature** Christian.
- Works are very important to the evangelical Protestant and to the Roman Catholic, but each views works differently.



- Evangelical Protestants believe they are fully **justified** (declared righteous) through faith in Christ and that this naturally leads to the fruit of good works, as they grow in the Christian life as God has planned for them to do (Eph. 2:8-10). [[*](#)]
- Catholics, however, do not believe that faith alone provides justification but that they must **work** for justification all their lives.



<http://adamfengshui.blogspot.com/2008/10/doing-good-deeds.html>

- Catholics blend justification and sanctification together as one process.



<http://adamfengshui.blogspot.com/2008/10/doing-good-deeds.html>

What is Purgatory?

- Catholics believe that they do not pay sufficiently the temporal punishment for their sins through their acts of penance while on earth. They still expect to face punishment for sins in **purgatory**, a special place of cleansing where payment for sins is completed and believers are made fit for heaven.



<https://aspoonfulofsugardesign.blogspot.com/2021/07/purgatory-prayers-help-10000-souls.html>

- Part of the Catholic reasoning for purgatory is that, because sinners have failed to make themselves perfect, they could not be happy with an all-perfect God (Rev. 21:27) [✱]
- Purgatory is not a torture chamber but is a place where the soul submits to the burning, purifying love of God.
- The soul sheds itself of immature self-love, and the real self emerges perfected.



<https://aspoonfulofsugardesign.blogspot.com/2021/07/purgatory-prayers-help-10000-souls.html>

What are indulgences

- Catholics believe those in purgatory cannot help themselves, but Catholics left back on Earth can enable them to obtain heaven more quickly by praying for them, offering Mass for them and doing forms of good works, which includes gaining **indulgences**.



- According to the Catechism, those seeking indulgences want to shorten their own or someone else's time in purgatory.
- Prayers and good deeds are two acts that can be endowed with the privilege of indulgences.



- The Catholic Church uses the power originally given to Peter to bind and loose **sins** (Matt. 16:19). [✘]
- Since the church is built upon “Peter,” the Church can intervene in favor of individual Christians by opening for them a “treasury” of the merits of Christ and the saints.



<https://www.catholicsun.org/2020/10/28/vatican-extends-time-to-obtain-full-indulgences-for-souls-in-purgatory/>

- Indulgences means that God is “**indulging**” (being kind to) by giving the believer from an inexhaustible supply of spiritual merits that have accumulated in the Church’s treasury through the work of Christ and the prayers and good works of the Virgin Mary and the saints.



- An indulgence is a kind of “pardon for sin” that can be partial or complete.
- A complete indulgence can be granted only by the **Pope**.
- A partial indulgence can be granted by bishops, archbishops and cardinals.



- These partial indulgences are usually expressed in units of time-days or years.
- These indulgences **lessen** the time that one will stay in purgatory.



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- These partial indulgences are usually expressed in units of time-days or years.
- These indulgences lessen the time that one will stay in purgatory.



How do Catholics view Mary?

- Early Catholic teachings stated that Mary's virginity continued after the birth of Jesus and that she never had any more children. (See Mark 6:3) [[*](#)]



- Other traditional doctrines include the **Immaculate Conception** (Mary was conceived without sin and lived a sinless life); and the Assumption (Mary was taken up body and soul directly to heaven)

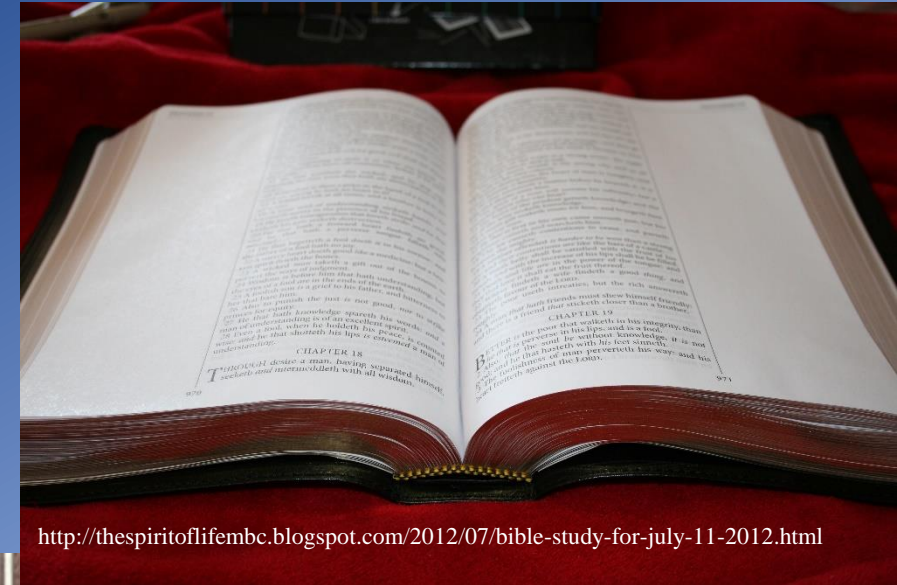


- Beginning in the late nineteenth and continuing into the twentieth century, Mary has held the position as co-mediator with Christ between God and man.
- See 1 Timothy 2:5 [[*](#)]

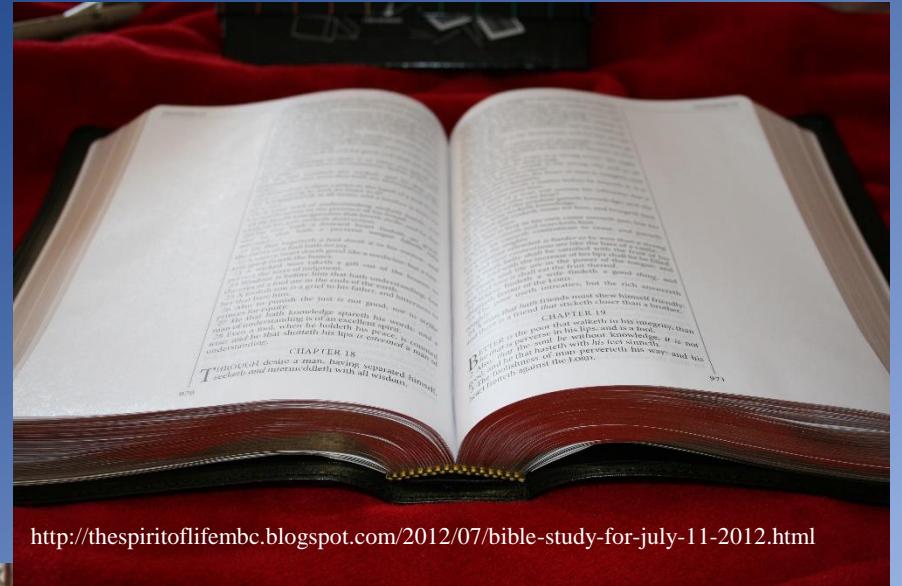


Major differences between Roman Catholics and Evangelical Protestants

- Catholics claim that Scripture and “Sacred Tradition” are **equal** in authority.
- Protestants say the Bible is the sole guide for faith and practice (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 1 John 1:9; Romans 3:23-28; Eph. 2:8-9) [*]



- Rome says the teaching authority of the Roman Church as been entrusted to **interpret** the Bible for Catholics, who are not to interpret it for themselves.
- Protestants say that individual Christians can trust the **Holy Spirit** for guidance as they read and interpret the Bible for themselves (John 14:26:2 Tim 3:14-17) [[*](#)]

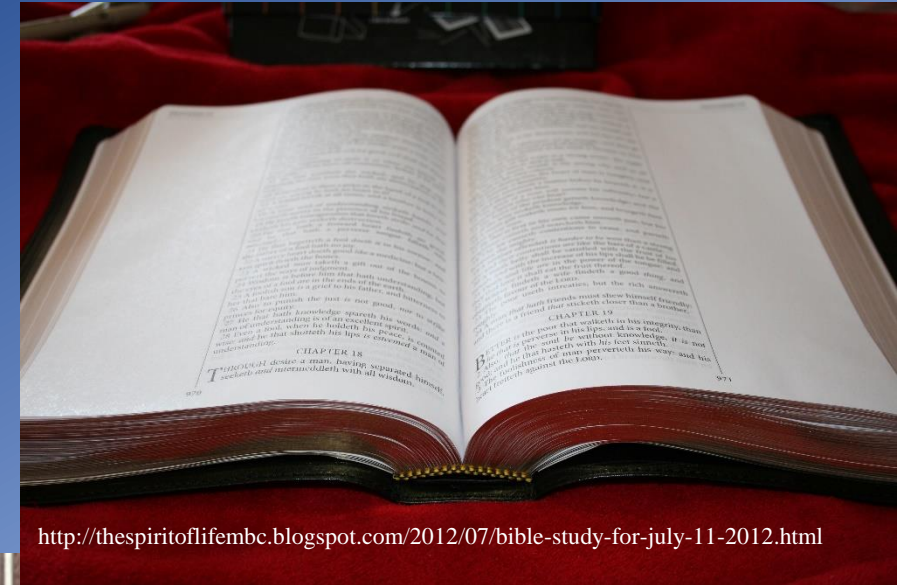


<http://thespiritoflifembc.blogspot.com/2012/07/bible-study-for-july-11-2012.html>



<https://thoughtsandprayersforthefaithful.com/2021/07/21/a-motu-proprio-from-pope-francis-on-the-celebration-of-the-latin-mass>

- Catholics teach that Peter was the first pope, and that through apostolic succession other popes have succeeded him each serving as “vicar (substitute or agent of Christ)”



<http://thespiritoflifembc.blogspot.com/2012/07/bible-study-for-july-11-2012.html>

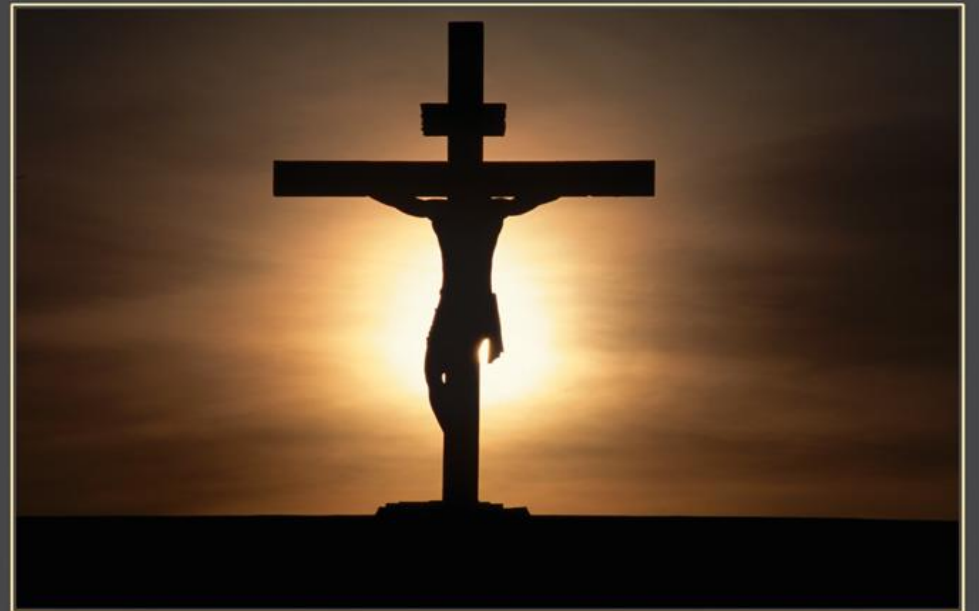


<https://thoughtsandprayersforthefaithful.com/2021/07/21/a-motu-proprio-from-pope-francis-on-the-celebration-of-the-latin-mass>

- Protestants believe that Christ is the **foundation** for the church (Catholics misunderstand Matt. 16:19). Peter is translated petros (detached stone) while this “rock” is translated petra (bedrock)
- Catholics teach that the pope is **infallible** when he speaks on matters of faith and morals



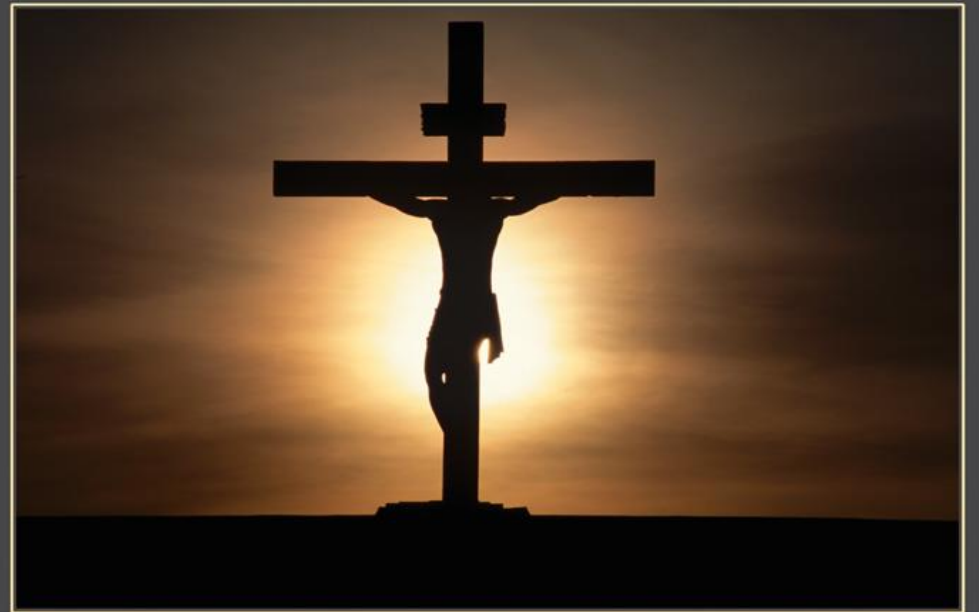
<http://thespiritmagnus.blogspot.com/2011/12/quick-bible-answers-rockin-with-st.html>



The Lamb of God

<http://www.freejesuschristwallpapers.com/2010/07/jesus-on-cross-wallpaperspictures-and.html>

- Protestants reply that no human being is infallible, and only Christ is head of the Church (Rom 3:23; Eph. 1:22) [*]
- Catholics claim that salvation is secured by faith in Christ **plus** good works and grace conferred through the seven sacraments of the Church.



The Lamb of God

- Protestants reply that salvation is secured through **faith alone** in Jesus Christ's atoning sacrifice on the cross (Rom 3:24; Eph. 2:8,9; John 3:16) [[*](#)]
- Catholics blend justification and sanctification into one process, as the believer must work to merit eternal life.



- Protestants believe God justifies the believer by declaring him or her righteous, and that sanctification is a **lifelong** process of becoming holy as God works within. (2 Tim 3:14-17; Eph. 2:8-9) [*]



- Catholics believe they cannot pay for all their sins in this life, and at death they go to **purgatory** for an undetermined time to be made totally fit for heaven.
- Protestants, believing they are justified by faith in Christ and nothing else, trust that they will go straight to heaven where sanctification is complete in Christ's presence. (2 Tim. 4:6-8; Phil. 1:23-24; Luke 23:43 [*] End---



Hebrews 9:27-10:14

27 And just as it is destined for people to die once, and after this comes judgment, 28 so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him.

1 For the Law, since it has only a shadow of the good things to come and not the form of those things itself, can never, by the same sacrifices which they offer continually every year, make those who approach perfect. Over---

2 Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, because the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have had consciousness of sins? 3 But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year. 4 For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins, 5 Therefore, when He comes into the world, He says, “You have not desired sacrifice and offering, But You have prepared a body for Me; 6 You have not taken pleasure in whole burnt offerings and offerings for sin. 7 “Then I said, ‘Behold, I have come (It is written of Me in the scroll of the book) To do Your will, O God.’ ”

Over---

8 After saying above, “Sacrifices and offerings and whole burnt offerings and offerings for sin You have not desired, nor have You taken pleasure in them” (which are offered according to the Law), 9 then He said, “Behold, I have come to do Your will.” He takes away the first in order to establish the second. 10 By this will, we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all time.

Over---

11 Every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins; 12 but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God, 13 waiting from that time onward until His enemies are made a footstool for His feet. 14 For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified. [*]

Ephesians 2:8-10

8 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; 9 not a result of works, so that no one may boast. 10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them. [*]

Philippians 3:8-9

8 More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them mere rubbish, so that I may gain Christ, 9 and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith...

John 5:24

4 “Truly, truly, I say to you, the one who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.

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John 3:16

16 “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish, but have eternal life.

John 6:25-29

28 Therefore they said to Him, “What are we to do, so that we may accomplish the works of God?” 29 Jesus answered and said to them, “This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent.” [*]

James 2:14-26

14 What use is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone says he has faith, but he has no works? Can that faith save him?

15 If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, 16 and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, be warmed and be filled,” yet you do not give them what is necessary for their body, what use is that? 17 In the same way, faith also, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself.

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18 But someone may well say, "You have faith and I have works; show me your faith without the works, and I will show you my faith by my works." 19 You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder. 20 But are you willing to acknowledge, you foolish person, that faith without works is useless? 21 Was our father Abraham not justified by works when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar? 22 You see that faith was working with his works, and as a result of the works, faith was perfected;

Over---

23 and the Scripture was fulfilled which says, “And Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness,” and he was called a friend of God. 24 You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone. 25 In the same way, was Rahab the prostitute not justified by works also when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way? 26 For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead. [✱]

Ephesians 2:8-10

8 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not of yourselves [*works*], it is the gift of God; 9 not a result of works, so that no one may boast. 10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them. [[*](#)]

Revelation 21:27

27 and nothing unclean, and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life. [[*](#)]

Matthew 16:19

19 “I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven.” [*]

2 Timothy 3:16-17

16 All Scripture is inspired by God and beneficial for teaching, for rebuke, for correction, for training in righteousness; 17 so that the man or woman of God may be fully capable, equipped for every good work.

1 John 1:9

9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous, so that He will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

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Romans 3:27-28

27 Where then is boasting? It has been excluded. By what kind of law? Of works? No, but by a law of faith. 28 For we maintain that a person is justified by faith apart from works of the Law. [*]

John 14:26

26 But the Helper, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and remind you of all that I said to you.

2 Timothy 14-17

14 You, however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned them, 15 and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 16 All Scripture is inspired by God and beneficial for teaching, for rebuke, for correction, for training in righteousness; 17 so that the man or woman of God may be fully capable, equipped for every good work. [*]

Romans 3:23

23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God...

Ephesians 1:22-23

22 And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and made Him head over all things to the church, 23 which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all. [*]

Romans 3:22-24

22 but it is the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe; for there is no distinction, 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus...

Ephesians 2:8-9

8 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; 9 not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

Over---

- John 3:16

16 “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish, but have eternal life. [[*](#)]

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2 Timothy 4:6-8

6 For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. 7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; 8 in the future there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.

Over---

Philippians 1:23-24

23 But I am hard-pressed from both directions, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for that is very much better; 24 yet to remain on in the flesh is more necessary for your sakes.

Luke 23:43

42 And he was saying, “Jesus, remember me when You come into Your kingdom!” 43 And He said to him, “Truly I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise.” [*]

2 Timothy 3:16-17

16 All Scripture is inspired by God and beneficial for teaching, for rebuke, for correction, for training in righteousness; 17 so that the man or woman of God may be fully capable, equipped for every good work. [*]

Ephesians 1:13

13 In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of the promise... [^{*}]

James 2:14

14 What use is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone says he has faith, but he has no works? Can that faith save him?

15 If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, 16 and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, be warmed and be filled,” yet you do not give them what is necessary for their body, what use is that? 17 In the same way, faith also, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself. [*]

Mark 6:2-4

2 And when the Sabbath came, He began to teach in the synagogue; and the many listeners were astonished, saying, "Where did this Man learn these things, and what is this wisdom that has been given to Him, and such miracles as these performed by His hands? 3 Is this not the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James, Joseph (Joseph), Judas, and Simon? And are His sisters not here with us?" And they took offense at Him. 4 Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not dishonored except in his hometown and among his own relatives, and in his own household." [*]

1st Timothy 2:5

5 For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and mankind, the Man Christ Jesus, 6 who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony given at the proper time. [^{*}]

Matthew 16:18-19

18 And I also say to you that you are Peter [Petros], and upon this rock [Petra], I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it. 19 I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven.” [*]

Matthew 16:13-20

13 Now when Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He was asking His disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” 14 And they said, “Some say John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah, or one of the other prophets.” 15 He *said to them, “But who do you yourselves say that I am?” 16 Simon Peter answered, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” 17 And Jesus said to him, “Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven.

Over---

18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it. 19 I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven.” 20 Then He gave the disciples strict orders that they were to tell no one that He was the Christ. [*]