

What is Sacred Tradition?

- The teachings of Jesus Christ handed down to us through the Apostles and their successors guided infallibly by the Holy Spirit.
- Sacred Traditions can be found in:
 - the writings of the early church fathers
 - the writings of doctor's of the Church
 - the decrees of the early church councils
 - early Christian archeological findings
- The Creeds come from Sacred Tradition.
 - Some protestant churches use our creeds although they change the wording in them.
- The Bible is a tradition of the Church!
- The order of the Holy Mass is a sacred Tradition of the Church.
- Most Protestant churches do not recognize the Traditions of the Early Church. If they do recognize tradition they reject the Catholic Doctrines/Dogmas not found in scripture.
- They do this in ignorance of History → the Bible is one of these Traditions. No Tradition = No BIBLE!
- Protestants do not accept Sacred Tradition as being equal to the Bible in authority. They go by the Bible Alone! Most Protestants are unaware of the History of the Bible.... Some willfully ignore it. Ignorance is bliss!
- Recall the teaching of Infallibility → promise of Christ that the Holy Spirit will keep his Church from teaching error.

Are Catholic Traditions Biblical?

- "I commend you because you remember me in everything and maintain the traditions even as I have delivered them to you" (1 Cor. 11:2).

- "So then, brethren, stand firm and hold to the traditions which you were taught by us, either by word of mouth or by letter." (2 Thess 2:15)
- Word of Mouth → Sacred Tradition Letter → Sacred Scripture
- Traditions not found in the Bible: - *THESE ARE ALL TRADITIONS OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH!*
 - Sunday as the Lords Day
 - Dates of Christian Holidays – Tradition!! Exact dates are not in the Bible.
 - List of the canonical books of the Old Testament
 - List of the canonical books of the New Testament,
 - The doctrine of the Trinity
 - The name of the "beloved disciple"
 - Author of the Gospel of Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John.

What is Sacred Scripture?

- Sacred Scripture is contained in the writings of the Old and New Testaments → The Bible
- The Bible is a collection of 72 books written down by the Israelites and the early Church.
- The Bible is the inspired word of God written down by men who were guided by the Holy Spirit.
- The Bible was compiled or canonized through the inspiration and guidance of the Holy Spirit by the early Church at the councils of Hippo, Rome, and Carthage in around 385AD.
- It contains no errors or contradictions when properly understood.
- It was not meant to teach us about science other subjects. Reading it in this manner is wrong. It was meant to teach us about God and his salvation plan for man.
- **There are two ways to properly read scripture:**
 - **The literal sense** - the meaning conveyed by the words written down.

- **The spiritual sense** - The spiritual sense behind the word written down (*allegorical, moral and the anagogical senses*). *Words had different meanings and were used differently.*
- Keep in mind that when we read the Bible we are reading a translation from the original bible languages (Hebrew, Koine Greek, and Aramaic. We would have to be able to read these languages and understand the cultures in which they were spoke in if we want to fully understand every word written in the Bible. Impossible!

The Seven Sacraments

- From the Book of Genesis we read how Adam and Eve lost the gift of grace for all mankind.
- Out of His love for us God set in motion His plan of salvation which led up to His only Son Jesus coming into the world for our salvation.
- Through Jesus' life, death, and resurrection we are now able to receive God's grace once again.
- How do we receive God's grace? → We see through sacred tradition and sacred scripture that Jesus left us His Church to dispense God's grace through the Seven Sacraments!

What is a Sacrament?

- A sacrament is a visible sign from God which give us grace.
- The sacraments are not "magical signs or rites". They are scared ceremonies or signs instituted by God which help us to Love and grow closer to Jesus.
- The sacraments also give us the grace to become closer to one another. The Church is our Family!
- Each of the sacraments has special signs (words, actions, and or things) that bear a message for us.

The Signs of the Sacraments

- Each sign of a sacrament brings us a special message.

- The sacraments are more than just a “sign” as we are used to the word. These signs actual give us God’s grace!
- Sacraments actually confer Grace upon our souls.
- The power of God is present in every sacrament.
- The fruits of the sacraments are however dependent upon our disposition.
 - For example: if an atheist were to go up for communion and receive the body and blood of Christ the power of the sacrament would not be inferred to them. In fact it could be a grave sin on their part for doing so if they did this out of spite for what we believe!
 - For example: if you were to go to confession and confess that you missed mass last Sunday all the while knowing and you were going to purposely miss Mass the next Sunday for no valid reason your sins could not be forgiven because you were not contrite when you confessed.
- The power which we receive from the sacraments is not dependent on who (usually a priest) confers the sacrament.
 - For example: Let’s say that the priest who baptized you was found to be stealing money from the church to pay for his lavish lifestyle. This would not make your baptism invalid. The sacrament comes from the power of God not the priest.
- We have to make room in our hearts for the sacraments!
- The seven sacraments are:
 - 1) **Baptism**
 - 2) **Confirmation**
 - 3) **Holy Eucharist**
 - 4) **Penance (Confession/Reconciliation)**
 - 5) **Anointing of the Sick**
 - 6) **Holy Orders**
 - 7) **Holy Matrimony**

Gods Greatest Gift: Sanctifying Grace

- Because of original sin all of us are conceived and born without the gift of grace in our hearts.
- The only two exceptions to this are Jesus and Mary
 - 1) Immaculate Conception → Mary was protected by God in some special way from the consequences of original sin.
 - 2) Mary still needed a savior. God from the beginning of time protected Mary.
 - 3) *"The most Blessed Virgin Mary was, from the first moment of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege of almighty God and by virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ, Savior of the human race, preserved immune from all stain of original sin."* - Pope Pius IX, *Ineffabilis Deus* (1854)
 - 4) Protestants do not believe that Mary was conceived without sin. They often quote Rom 3:23 "as it is written, all have sinned and are deprived of the glory of God" (Rom 3:23) and they say "see no one was free from sin so Mary could not have been conceived without sin."
 - 5) As it is written → from the Old Testament
 - 6) A closer look at the passage shows that Paul is actually quoting the Old Testament (Psalms 14:3 *"they have all gone astray, they are all alike corrupt; there is none that does good, no, not one."*).
 - 7) Paul is speaking about a specific people in this verse and is not referring to everyone. Later in Paul talks about the generation of the righteous. Does he contradict himself? No! Rom 5:19 → "so by one man's obedience many will be made righteous."
 - 8) "And Mary said, 'My soul magnifies the Lord, 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; for he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name'" (Luke 1:46-49).
If Mary's soul magnifies the Lord, then how could she's have the stain of sin on her soul? Do Protestants call Mary Blessed? No! → Then they are not following scripture.

- Sanctifying Grace makes us Holy and pleasing to God and able to live in Heaven. → God's greatest gift.
- The only thing that can take away Sanctifying Grace is Mortal Sin.
 - 1) Mortal Sin separates us from the Grace of God. When we sin mortally we have injured our relationship with God. After we have been baptized the sacrament of confession is the only way to remove the stain of mortal sin from our souls.
 - 2) What is Mortal Sin? It's a very serious sin against God with separates us from His grace.
 - Three conditions are necessary for mortal sin to exist:
 - **Grave Matter:** The act itself is intrinsically evil and immoral.
 - **Full Knowledge:** The person must know that what they're doing or planning to do is evil and immoral.
 - **Deliberate Consent:** The person must freely choose to commit the act or plan to do it. Someone forced against her will doesn't commit a mortal sin.
 - 3) **An example of Mortal Sin:** Purposely and without good reason missing Holy Mass on Sunday or Holy Days of Obligation.

The Gift of Sacramental Grace

- Besides giving us sanctifying grace the sacraments give us sacramental grace.
 - Recall that: Sanctifying Grace makes us Holy and pleasing to God and able to live in Heaven
 - Sanctifying Grace gives us three supernatural virtues: Faith, Hope and Charity.
- Sacramental Grace helps us in various ways. It helps us heal, transform, and confirms us to Jesus our savior.

The Virtue of Faith

- Through the virtue of Faith we receive the power to believe in God and all that He has revealed through Jesus and His Church.
- Through faith we believe that the Eucharist is the real Body and Blood of Christ. It is something that no one fully understands yet we believe.
- Through faith we believe that God is three persons in one (the Holy Trinity). Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- Faith is very important because through faith and works we participate in God's Grace.
- Without God's Grace we cannot be saved.
- Faith helps us to give ourselves to God completely.
- Faith is necessary for salvation. It makes us just or Holy in the sight of God.
- "Therefore since we are justified by Faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." (Rom 5:1)
- Does faith mean that we will automatically understand something? NO! There is a difference in believing and understanding.
- We don't have to understand something to believe in it. This is Faith!
- Faith makes it possible for us to believe in everything that Christ did and taught. We were not there to see it. "Blessed are those who have not seen yet believe." (John 20:29)
- It is a gift from God which allows us the grace to believe things we cannot fully understand
- God reveals certain truths to us through faith.

Works

- What is a work? Are they needed for salvation? → YES!
- Recall that we are saved through the Grace of God Alone and that we participate in this grace through Faith & Works.
- We are not saved by faith alone or works alone.
- Recall that Martin Luther created the belief of Sola Fide (Faith Alone) He taught that we are saved through faith alone and that works play no role in our salvation.
- Most protestant churches today believe this false theology. It was never taught prior to 1517 → The Protestant Reformation.
- "You see that a man is justified by works and not by faith alone" (James. 2:24). (THE ONLY PLACE IN THE BIBLE WHERE THE WORDS "FAITH ALONE" APPEAR)
- "So faith, hope, love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love. "(1 Cor 13:13)
- "and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing." (1 Cor 13:2)

The Sacrament of Penance

- Recall that we are all called to a new life through sanctifying grace and at Baptism our souls are purified. All sin and all punishment due to us because of sin is removed from our souls and we are made clean.
- After baptism we still have the capacity to use our Free Will and commit personal sin (Venial & Mortal)
- To remain in a state of grace Jesus gave us the sacrament of Confession to return our souls to state of Grace.
- Where does the power of the sacrament come from and how does the priest have the power to forgive sins? Simple Answer: The Power of the Sacrament comes from Jesus who passed His authority onto His Apostles. The priest act "in persona Christi" In the person of Christ!

The Eucharist

- The Eucharist - It's the most important of all the Sacraments
- During the consecration the substance of the bread and wine change into the Body & Blood of Christ. This change is known as **Transubstantiation.**
- In the Eucharist we have what we call the **Real Presence** which is Jesus' Body and Blood under the appearance of bread and wine.
- The Eucharist is not a sign – it is the real body and blood of Christ.
- We must not receive any “communion” at protestant churches.
- We can prove our belief in the Eucharist easily from sacred tradition and scripture. → John Chapter 6
- When we receive the Eucharist we must be in a state of Grace. If we are not we must first confess our sins in the sacrament of Confession.
- At the Last Supper Jesus kept His promise and fulfilled His teaching.
- We see the Eucharist in the Gospel of Saint Matthew: *“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.” (Matthew 26:26-28)*
- NO OTHER CHURCH CONTAINS THE EUCHARIST!!!!

The Immaculate Conception

- **Immaculate Conception → Mary was protected by God in some special way from the consequences of original sin.**
- Mary still needed a savior. God from the beginning of time protected Mary.

- *“The most Blessed Virgin Mary was, from the first moment of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege of almighty God and by virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ, Savior of the human race, preserved immune from all stain of original sin.”* - Pope Pius IX, *Ineffabilis Deus* (1854)
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