



Newsletter

"Service of and witness to the faith are necessary for salvation"

-CCC § 1816

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A visible Church

Jesus left behind a visible Church with consecrated bishops, possessing authority to teach and preach a set form of doctrine, including faith, repentance, baptism and obedience to the commandments. He actually designated a "prime-minister" to this divinely instituted ecclesiastical organization — Peter, who was to preside over the other officers of the Church and to see to it that her disciplines and doctrines were faithfully obeyed.

No one should deny the chief mission of Christ was to redeem mankind. While on earth, Christ taught a set form of doctrine and founded a visible organization or church, with bishops, priests and deacons to teach and perpetuate this doctrine. It would be unreasonable to suppose Christ established his Church with a positive code of doctrines, principles and ceremonies during his stay on earth, then on his departure allow this organization to become corrupt or disappear.

From the Gospel of Matthew, it is evident Christ consecrated his Apostles, endowed them with the Holy Spirit and conferred upon them the power of binding and loosing from sin. Christ then sent them as his special representatives to teach and practice the doctrines they received from him, which he received from the Father (Matt. 20:22-23).

St. Paul, following the example of Christ, ordained Timothy and Titus and sent them to teach, preach and ordain other faithful men in the service of Christ (2 Tim. 1:6; 2:2 and Tit. 1:5). Here then was an organized body of men, divinely appointed and ordained to sustain the Church.

From the declarations of St. Paul and other Apostles, it is clear Christ instructed them and their successors to perpetuate this ecclesiastical organization in order that His Church might be ever visible, immutable and operative. St. Paul wrote: "All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. So we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us." (2 Cor. 5:18-20)

Christ became incarnate for the express purpose of saving mankind. He intended to accomplish this by teaching His holy truths and preserving and transmitting them to future generations through an organized Church. His love for His Church was so great He willingly suffered and died for it: "Christ loved the Church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish." (Eph. 5:25-27)

Christ ordained that his Church — its institutions, its popes and its authority — should exist uninterruptedly from the days of the Apostles until the end of time. John narrates the words of Christ: "You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide; so that

whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you." (John 15:16)

On one occasion, when Christ was addressing the multitude, He distinctly recognized the superior functions of his Apostles: "Then the disciples came and said to him, 'Why do you speak in parables?' And he answered them, 'To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given.'" (Matt. 13:10-11)

The fact the first bishops and priests of the Church did not worship in temples and exercise the authority and functions of the priesthood openly and publicly may account for a hasty inference that no ecclesiastical organization or priesthood existed for the first three centuries of the Church. The bishops and priests of the first three centuries had to preach, teach, practice their religion and preserve the Scriptures in dark catacombs, caves and secluded forests. For the most part, they had to meet by stealth and at the risk of their lives. Pagan spies were at every door, watching the comings and goings of every suspected Christian, reporting every suspicious word.

In this manner, the Coliseum was furnished with an abundance of victims. Was it to be expected that under these circumstances bishops and priests would expose themselves to martyrdom unnecessarily?

Did Christ found his Church upon a rock and give the keys of the kingdom to Peter without any set form of doctrine, rules of discipline or body to exercise pastoral authority over the faithful? If not, it is probable the organization would have ceased to exist. The first Christians composed but a small portion of the population — obscure, poor, despised and persecuted. Any exhibition of Christian faith or any conversion to it was punishable by death. The very fact the Church has survived — notwithstanding the vast powers that were arrayed against her under Emperors Tiberius, Nero, Claudius, Caligula and others — proves not only a continuous Church organization but the sustaining presence of God.

In organizing this Church, Christ did not design His doctrines and sacred truths to be submitted to the people for discussion, criticism or private interpretation. He did not grant the liberty to alter and amend, nor reject them as ignorance, prejudice or whim might dictate. He did not submit his doctrines to the judgments or criticisms of the Scribes, Pharisees, Sadducees and lawyers of Jerusalem, nor to the learned governors of Rome. He never sanctioned what would now be termed as *freedom of conscience* and *private interpretation*, but demanded unconditional faith and obedience in his teaching and in the teachings of his Apostles (Luke 10:16).

Jesus Christ announced a fixed code of religious principles and observances, directly opposed to the opinions and practices of the entire civilized world. He appointed and consecrated a special class of men as his agents, representatives and ambassadors, commissioning them to teach, practice and perpetuate His teachings. They were to teach, among other things, the necessity of faith in Him and in all His words and works, however repugnant or confusing to human reason. Christ did not give His priesthood the discretion to submit these precepts to the fallible judgments of their hearers, with

permission to accept or reject in part. They were commanded to simply declare the law and the necessity of receiving it without reservation or discussion.

If these doctrines had been submitted to the illiterate, the depraved or the skeptical public during the early and middle centuries of Christianity, not a vestige of the religion would have survived for us. A universal skepticism would have pervaded the world. This is evident from the results of modern Protestantism.

It is through the Magisterium (teaching office of the Church) that the Holy Spirit continues to guide the Church and maintains the historical continuity with Jesus Christ as Head of the Mystical Body. The Magisterium is the guardian of the Deposit of Faith; the body of saving truth entrusted by Christ to the Apostles and handed on by them to the Church to be proclaimed and preserved.

However, the Magisterium is not an entity that in itself has the power to originate doctrine — everything the Magisterium proclaims must be in total submission to the Word of God:

“Yet this Magisterium is not superior to the Word of God, but it is its servant. It teaches only what has been handed on to it. At the divine command and with the help of the Holy Spirit, it listens to this devotedly, guards it with dedication, and expounds it faithfully. All that it proposes for belief as being divinely revealed is drawn from this single deposit of faith” (CCC §86).

The Protestant rejection of the central authority of the Catholic Church, the Church established by Christ to guard His truth, has resulted in confusion and, ultimately, religious chaos.

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The first 31 popes were martyrs for the Faith as were the 60th pope, St. Silverius and the 76th pope, St. Martin. Of the first 60 popes, 58 were declared Saints.

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A Dialogue

Not long ago, I was introduced, as a Catholic evangelist, to a man and his wife. The husband immediately and vehemently began to attack the Catholic Church. This surprise attack had been unwarranted and I must admit it took a lot of self-control for me not to give back in kind. Instead, I listen to what he had to say and then began a point-by-point refutation of his misunderstandings.

Needless to say, his knowledge of Catholicism and Church history was clouded by his hatred of the Church. I sensed that there had to be some underlying reason for his unreasoned violent assault.

When I asked if he practice any religion he stated that he was a Messianic Jew. He then asked, how I could justify the Catholic Church's persecution of the Jews in the Middle Ages. I replied, “There was and is no justification for anti-Semitism at any age, but, you should not judge the Church by the actions of certain of her members. An example of this is the recent pedophile scandal. The Church abhors and has always vigorously condemned such behavior. The fact that a small minority of priests molested children does not mean that all priests are child molesters. If we judge any church by the conduct of her members, then no church would be found worthy.”

We must judge a church by its teachings. As for Christianity, the judgment criteria should be whether or not those teachings can be traced to Jesus and His Apostles.

We then began to discuss a myriad of other religious issues. He mis-quoted the Catechism of the Catholic Church again and again. It seemed to me that he was reading into the Catechism what he wanted to believe. Fortunately, I am familiar enough with the teachings of the Church to know whether or not his understanding was correct. It is not uncommon for anti-Catholics to quote the Catechism and then

try to tear down their misunderstanding. I explained that in order to understand the Catechism correctly, it is most often necessary to refer to the explanatory footnotes on the bottom of each page. It is not enough to know what the Church teaches, but equally important are the foundations for these beliefs in both the Bible and Sacred Tradition.

This conversation lasted over two hours and in the end, we parted as friends. We agreed that we would continue our dialogue by E-mail.

As I was leaving, his wife took me aside and thanked me for taking so much time with her husband. She then explained that he had been a victim of sexual abuse by a Catholic priest when he was a young boy at a Church sponsored event. He had been brought up by devout Catholic parents and had been violated by a man who represented the Church. This betrayal created a deep wound that continues to fester and has colored his view of the Catholic Church to this day.

It is my sincere hope and prayer that the balm of forgiveness will heal the pain that he carries so deep within. Only when he is finally able to forgive and bury the past will there be a new resurrection and a return to the saving grace of the sacraments instituted by our loving savior. Please take a moment now to offer a prayer, or perhaps offer attendance at your next Mass for this man's healing.

What they Really believe!

Seventh-Day Adventists believe: “Death is a Sleep. Death is not complete annihilation; it is only a state of temporary unconsciousness while the person awaits the resurrection” ... “**The Abode of the Dead.** The Old Testament calls the place where people go at death *sheol* (Hebrew), and the New Testament *hades* (Greek). In the Scripture, *sheol* simply means the grave. The meaning of *hades* is similar to that of *sheol*. The grave is not a place of consciousness. Since death is a sleep, the dead will remain in that state until the resurrection, when the grave (*hades*) gives up its dead (Rev. 20:13).” *Seventh-Day Adventists believe...A Biblical Exposition of 27 Fundamental Doctrines*, pp 352-353.

For a refutation of this belief see pamphlet #111 on the Society's website.

Taking “Father’s” Hand

The late Alec Guinness, esteemed actor and movie star, wrote in his autobiography of playing the part of a Catholic priest. A little boy approached Guinness as he was wearing a Roman collar while on location for a film and took the actor's hand with sublime trust and innocence. The boy called Guinness "Father." The youngster's tenderness struck the actor so powerfully that Guinness was prompted to investigate the Catholic faith, and eventually converted to Catholicism.

Evangelization tip of the Month

The “Pamphlet Apostolate.” See that there is a large pamphlet rack in the vestibule of your church. If your church is without one, offer to buy one and stock it with our timely and attractive pamphlets, downloaded free of charge from www.pjpiiioe.org. Always carry them with you and occasionally, leave a pamphlet in a bus, taxi, barber or beauty shop, telephone booth, or doctor's office (with permission of course). Those of you that are in a service

business that requires your customers to wait can provide pamphlets in your waiting rooms.

Remember, “Whoever brings back a sinner from the error of his way will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins (James 5:19).

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Adam was but human—this explains it all.
He did not want the apple for the apple’s sake,
he wanted it only because it was forbidden.
The mistake was in not forbidding the serpent;
then he would have eaten the serpent.
—Samuel Langhorne Clemens (Mark Twain)

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Jewish Indulgences?

The Church’s doctrine on indulgences is a legitimate outgrowth of Jewish belief in an afterlife and an individual’s final judgement before the throne of God. Orthodox Jewish belief is that the final judgement is but the culmination of a series of annual judgements, which take place on Yom Kippur (The Day of Atonement), the most important day in the Jewish liturgical year. Ten Days of Penitence also called the “Days of Awe” or the “High Holy Days” preceded the Day of Atonement. These Days of Awe are the first ten days of the month of Tishri, from Rosh Ha-Shanah, literally meaning “head of the year,” to Yom Kippur. According to ancient belief, God keeps a record book of our actions, both good and evil. It is during the High Holy Days that God determines who shall live and who shall die in the coming year. During these first days of the New Year that God opens the book and writes therein the names of those who will live through the coming year. The central theme of the Days of Awe is repentance, or *teshuvah*, literally meaning “returning to one’s self.” The preceding Hebrew month of Elul is set aside as a time for reflection and soul-searching in order that the Days of Awe might be entered into with the proper spirit. According to Jewish tradition, there are conditions necessary for teshuvah—regret for past negative behavior, willingness to confess sins before God and a resolve to amend wicked behavior. In the words of the Psalmist, “depart from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it” (Ps. 34:30). The opportunity to repent extends until the end of the tenth Holy Day, the Day of Atonement, when Jews fast as a sign of contrition. Jews will visit the graves of their loved ones just prior to the Days of Awe in the belief that the deceased can intercede in heaven on behalf of the living. This stems from the belief that the patriarchs had stored up an excess of merit for themselves and that the surplus could be transferred for the benefit of the living. These concepts are analogous to the Catholic belief in the Communion of Saints and the Treasury of Merit in Catholic theology. It is through the application of the superabundant merits of Christ and the saints that indulgences are granted through the exercise of the power of the keys given to Blessed Peter and Peter’s successors.

Cost of a Bible

Before the invention of movable type and the printing press in 1450, the Bible was laboriously copied one word at a time by scribes who devoted their lives to providing the Holy Scriptures to those who could read. It has been estimated that it would take at least ten months for a writer of those days to produce a simple copy of the bible; longer if it contained embellishments in the form of artwork. If a scribe worked ten hours per day, six days per week, for forty-four weeks, (2,640 hours) and was paid the present minimum federal wage of \$5.15 per hour, it would cost \$13,596 to transcribe one Bible. This does not include the cost of materials. Another authority has estimated that 427 skins of parchment would be necessary and that the total cost of a Bible

would therefore be approximately \$50,000.00. With the monks, of course, it was a labor of love. Nevertheless, in those days the Bible was a costly book; usually chained in churches for its safekeeping.

The Bible in English

During the earlier part of the so-called “Dark Ages,” the Bible was in the Latin language, because Latin was the universal language among those who could read. It was the scholastic language of Europe. Those who could not read Latin could not read at all. And when this condition changed, translations of the Bible were made. Caedmon, a monk in England in 680, and Venerable Bede in 735, translated the Bible into English (or rather the Saxon tongue). Alfred the Great, of England, was translating it when he died in 870.

St. Thomas More, Chancellor of England under Henry VIII, says, in 1535, “the whole Bible, long before Wyclif’s day, was by virtuous and well-learned men translated into the English tongue, and by good people with devotion well and reverently read.” Wyclif lived about 1400 and claimed to have made the first translation of the Bible into English.

Who Made the Devils?

A body of heretics called the Manichees, taught that there are two Gods, one the author of good and the other the author of evil. A priest in catechism class asked: “Who made the angels?” “God,” answered the children. “And who made the devils?” he continued. No one wanted to say that God made the devils, so they all looked at each other and were silent. At length a little girl ventured to say: “Father, God made the angels and some of the angels made themselves devils.”

Luther and the Devil

During the height of his popularity, Luther was almost continually under the influence of morbid impressions. His chief hallucinations consisted in visions of Satan, and of men with horns and tails, with the features of animals, converted into various inanimate objects, dressed in all sorts of strange and fantastic garbs, some foaming at the mouth, others roaring and screaming with rage. While staying at the castle of Wartburg, he declared that he had conferences with the devil. He described the appearance, voice, and manner of his satanic friend; had arguments with him concerning private Masses; acknowledges that the devil got the best of the argument, and convinced him that the Mass was idolatrous. Convinced of his errors; he decided to follow Satan’s advice and never celebrated Mass again.

The Four Marys

Many non-Catholic Christians believe the Blessed Virgin Mary had children after the birth of Jesus (see Matt. 12:46; Mark 3:32; Luke 8:19; John 2:12). Papias clears up the confusion:

Mary, the mother of the Lord; Mary, the wife of Cleophas or Alpheus, who was the mother of James the bishop and apostle, and of Simon and Thaddeus, and of one Joseph; Mary Salome, wife of Zebedee, mother of John the evangelist and James; Mary Magdalene. These four are found in the Gospel. James and Judas and Joseph were sons of an aunt of the Lord’s. James also and John were sons of another aunt of the Lord’s. Mary, mother of James the less and Joseph, wife of Alpheus, was the sister of Mary, the mother of the Lord, whom John names of Cleophas, either from her father or from

the family of the clan, or for some other reason. Mary Salome is called Salome either from her husband or her village. Some affirm that she is the same as Mary of Cleophas, because she had two husbands. –The Fragments of Papias (second century AD)

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You know what the Mass is. But do you show that you appreciate it by having one specially offered up for yourself every year? Do you?

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Why I became Catholic

Ronald A. Knox

Ronald Knox was the son of an Anglican Bishop of Manchester, England. He was born in 1888; was educated at Eton and Balliol College, Oxford; became a clergyman of the Church of England, and was elected a fellow of Trinity College, Oxford, in 1910; he entered the Catholic Church in 1916.

"I suppose it is inevitable that after the question, 'Why did you become a Roman Catholic?' Anglicans and others should proceed to the question, 'What does it feel like?'"

In answer to this, I can register one impression at once, curiously inconsistent with my preconceived notions on the subject. I had been encouraged to suppose, and fully prepared to find, that the immediate result of submission to Rome would be the sense of having one's liberty cramped and restricted in a number of ways, necessary no doubt to the welfare of the Church at large, but galling to the individual. I have been overwhelmed with the feeling of liberty, the glorious liberty of the sons of God. It was not till I became Catholic that I became conscious of my former homelessness, my exile from the place that was my own. I now found ease and naturalness, and stretched myself like a man who has been sitting in a cramped position. I found harbourage, the resting place which God has allowed to His people on earth."

Eugenio Zolli

Eugenio Zolli, the former Chief Rabbi of Rome, converted to Catholicism and was baptized in the Basilica of St. Mary of the Angels on February 17, 1945. He took the name Eugenio in honor of Eugenio Pacelli–Pope Pius XII, who led the Church through World War II and the postwar years, and did so with such wisdom that respect for the papacy reached an all-time high. His mother was a German-Jewess and on her side of the family there was actually 130 years of rabbinical tradition. As Chief Rabbi of Rome, the Gestapo offered a substantial reward for his capture. Yet, he offered himself as hostage to the Nazi forces then occupying the city if they would release several hundred of his fellow Jews.

Jews, and especially the Rabbis of the Orthodox group, do not become Christians light-mindedly, nor without powerful help from God. When he was asked why he had given up the Synagogue for the Church, he gave an answer that showed his understanding of his present position: "I have not given it up. Christianity is the integration, completion or crown of the Synagogue. For, the Synagogue was a promise, and Christianity is the fulfillment of that promise. The Synagogue pointed to Christianity: Christianity presupposes the Synagogue. So you see, one cannot exist without the other. What I converted to was the living Christianity."

When Zolli was asked why he had not joined one of the Protestant denominations, which are also Christian, he answered: "Because protesting is not attesting. I do not intend to embarrass anyone by asking: 'Why wait 1,500 years to protest?' The Catholic Church was recognized by the whole Christian world as the true Church of God for 15 consecutive centuries. No man can halt at the

end of those 1,500 years and say that the Catholic Church is not the true Church of Christ without embarrassing himself seriously. I can accept only that Church which preached to all creatures by my own forefathers, the Twelve (Apostles) who, like me, issued from the Synagogue."

Questions from our members

What is the current Church stand on ordaining men with homosexual tendencies?

A homosexual person, or one with homosexual tendencies, "is not fit" to receive priestly ordination, says the Vatican. This position is stated in a letter written by the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Sacraments, published in the November-December issue of the dicastery's bulletin "Notitiae." The letter was in response to a bishop's query. The letter, written in Italian, explains that an unidentified bishop appealed to the Congregation for Clergy, to inquire if it is licit to confer priestly ordination on men with manifest homosexual tendencies.

The Congregation for Clergy presented the request in turn to the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Sacraments, whose prefect at the time of the response (May 16) was Cardinal Jorge Medina Estevez.

As explained in the letter, the Congregation for Divine Worship, before replying, consulted the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

The response is focused in a paragraph of the letter that reads as follows: "Ordination to the diaconate and the priesthood of homosexual men or men with homosexual tendencies is absolutely inadvisable and imprudent and, from the pastoral point of view, very risky. A homosexual person, or one with a homosexual tendency is not, therefore, fit to receive the sacrament of Holy Orders."

The Congregation for Divine Worship explains that in its response, it is "conscious of the experience resulting from many instructed causes for the purpose of obtaining dispensation from the obligations that derive from Holy Ordination."

What do the initials I. H. S. and I. N. R. I. stand for?

The letters I. H. S. form a monogram for devotional use of the name of Jesus. It is frequently noted, especially on the vestments of the priest worn at Mass. The letters are popularly taken to mean references to Jesus, Hominum Salvator, Latin words for Jesus, Savior of Men or Jesus Man's Savior.

The inscription I. N. R. I. was placed over our Lord's head on the cross. I. N. R. I. are the first four letters of the Latin words "Jesus Nazarenus Rex Judaeorum," meaning, "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews."

Going Against the Crowd

Everyone knows how hard it is to walk in one direction when the crowd is pushing in the other. He who reaches his destination by fighting his way through a crowd of surging in the opposite direction needs plenty of muscle and lots of determination, as well as an indifference to the pushing and elbowing he receives. It is much easier to turn around and go with the crowd. Going against the crowd is not easy when it is a matter of opinion and conduct. Probably you know plenty of people who always agree with the majority, and do as the others are doing. That is the easy way, of course, but manly and womanly people are thinking of something besides ease. If you want to keep your self respect, you must say and do rightly, regardless of the thoughts and actions of the crowd. -*Intermountain Catholic*, March 12, 1927