

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH HAS THE ANSWER

by

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*“Going therefore, teach ye all nations;
baptizing them in the name of the
Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy
Ghost. Teaching them to observe all
things whatsoever I have commanded
you: and behold I am with you all days,
even to the consummation of the world.”*

—Matthew 28:19-20

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THE CATHOLIC CHURCH HAS THE ANSWER

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH is the world's largest, and Christianity's oldest, religious body. Her 860 million members inhabit the width and breadth of the earth, comprising almost one-fifth of the total human population. She is far and away the most popular religious concept the world has ever known. Paradoxically, however, the Catholic Church is also the world's most controversial religious concept. Catholic belief is different, too different to be orthodox, say Protestants and Christian cultists. Catholic belief is too ethereal to be logical, and too strict to be enjoyable, say the humanists and agnostics. Hence to millions of people, Catholicism is not only a colossal success, it is also a colossal enigma. Of course, there has to be an explanation for these contradictory opinions—and there *is* an explanation: Protestants and others who have questions about Catholic belief too often make the mistake of going to the wrong place for the answers. Too often books written by religious incompetents are consulted. The result is incomplete and distorted information. With such information, one cannot help but see the Catholic faith as a colossal enigma.

The right place to go for information about Catholic belief—in fact the *only* place to go for complete and authoritative information—is the Catholic Church herself. As any detective will tell you, no investigation is quite so complete as an on-the-spot investigation. Hence, dear reader, if you are a Protestant, an unaffiliated Christian, or an agnostic, who wants to know the truth about Catholic belief, take this friendly advice: Seek out a Catholic priest and put your questions to him. You will find him a very understanding and obliging person. Or read this little booklet. This booklet was written by a Catholic who knows the questions you are likely to ask, as well as the answers, because once he, too, was outside of the Catholic Church, looking in. The questions in this booklet are basically the same ones he put to a Catholic priest, and the answers are basically the same ones given him by that priest. Read this booklet; then forget all the fiction you have heard about the Catholic Church, for you will have the gospel truth.

Why do Catholics believe that the universe and all life in it was created by, and is governed by, an all-powerful Spirit Being called God? What actual proof is there of God's existence and omnipotence?

Catholics believe that the universe is the creation, and the exclusive dominion, of an infinitely powerful Spirit Being, called God, because the

evidence which points to that conclusion is so overwhelming that there is no room left for even the slightest vestige of doubt. First, there is the evidence of logic. Through the process of simple mathematical-type reasoning, man inevitably comes face to face with certain indisputable principles: Everything has a cause; nothing can bring itself into existence. Obviously there is a long chain of causes in the universe, but ultimately there must be a *first* cause, an uncaused cause. This uncaused cause we call "God." (The theory of evolution, even if it could be proved, would not explain the origin of anything; evolution simply deals with what may have happened *after* matter came into existence.) Further, 1) personal creation (man) presupposes a superior Personal Creator, 2) universal order presupposes a Universal Orderer, 3) cosmic energy presupposes a Cosmic Energizer, 4) natural law presupposes a Universal Law Maker. Basic principles of reason such as these explain why so many of the world's leading scientists are firm believers in God.

Then, there is the evidence of Divine Revelation—on countless occasions God has revealed Himself by voice, vision and apparition (by means which are receptive to the human senses), and demonstrated His Omnipotence by stupendous, obviously supernatural miracles. Many of these revelations are a matter of authenticated historical record. The Scriptures, for example, are full of such accounts; and in

modern times the world has been witness to such Heaven-sent miracles as those at Fatima, Lourdes, and St. Anne de Beaupré in Quebec, Canada, where the cured have left a forest of crutches in testimony. (The Lourdes Medical Bureau is open for examination by any doctor.) In addition, there is the liquefaction of the blood of St. Januarius which still takes place in Naples each year on September 19, his feastday; the incorruption of the bodies of many Catholic saints (such as St. Bernadette, who died in 1879); and the miraculous Eucharistic Host of Lanciano, Italy, which has been scientifically proven to be human flesh and human blood, type AB—to mention only a few of the miracles still on-going in the 20th century, which point to the existence of a God.

And lastly there is the evidence of human intuition. Psychologists have long known that every human being—the atheist included—intuitively seeks God's help in times of great calamity, and instinctively pleads for God's mercy when death is imminent. Hence the renowned Voltaire, who was so eloquent in his denial of God while he enjoyed health, fame and fortune, repudiated all of his atheistic writings on his deathbed and frantically sought the ministrations of a Catholic priest. Nikolai Lenin, as he lay on his deathbed, looked around him and frantically asked pardon of the tables and chairs in the room. For as hunger for food proclaims the

existence of food, man's intuitive hunger for God proclaims the Reality, the Omnipotence and the Justice of God. Catholic belief in God, therefore, is purely and simply an expression of intellectual sanity.

Why do Catholics believe that God is three Persons, called the Holy Trinity? How can God be three Persons and still be one God?

Catholics believe there is one God consisting of three distinct and equal divine Persons—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—because on numerous occasions God has described Himself thus. The Old Testament gives intimations that there are more than one Person in God. In *Genesis* 1:26, God says, "Let us make man to our image and likeness." In *Isaias* 9:6-7, God the Father revealed the imminent coming into the world of God the Son. In *Psalms* 2:7, we read, "The Lord hath said to me: Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee." And in the New Testament, God reveals this doctrine even more clearly. For example, at the baptism of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit appeared in the form of a dove, and the voice of God the Father was heard: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (*Matt.* 3:16-17). In *Matthew* 28:19, God the Son commanded the Apostles to baptize "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." And in *1 Cor.* 12:4-6, the Bible refers to God with three names: Spirit, Lord, and God—

corresponding to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Three divine Persons in one Godhead may be incomprehensible to the human mind, but that is to be expected. How can man fully comprehend God's infinite make-up when he cannot fully comprehend his own finite make-up? We have to take God's word for it. Also, we can satisfy ourselves as to the feasibility of God's triune make-up by considering various other triune realities. The triangle, for example, is one distinct form with three distinct and equal sides. And the clover leaf is one leaf with three distinct and equal petals. There are many physical trinities on earth, therefore a Spiritual Trinity, who is God in Heaven, is not against human reason—it is simply *above* human reason.

Why do Catholics believe that Jesus Christ was God the Son—the Second Person of the Holy Trinity? Would it not be more reasonable to believe that He was a great and holy man . . . a religious leader of exceptional talent and dedication . . . a prophet?

Catholics believe that Jesus was God the Son, incarnate in human flesh, firstly because God's physical manifestation on earth, plus all the circumstances of that manifestation, were prophesied time and again in Divine Revelation, and Jesus fulfilled that prophecy right to the letter; secondly, because He claimed that He was God

(*John* 10:30, 14:9-10 and numerous other passages), and He never deceived anyone; thirdly, because He *proved* His divinity by His impeccable holiness and the flawless perfection of His doctrine; fourthly, because only God could have performed the miracles He performed—miracles such as walking on the sea, feeding five thousand people with five loaves of bread and two fish, and, after His death on the Cross, resurrecting Himself from His own tomb; fifthly, because only God could have, in the brief space of three years, without military conquest, without political power, without writing a single line or traveling more than a few score miles, so profoundly affected the course of human events; sixthly, because only God can instill in the soul of man the grace and the peace and the assurance of eternal salvation that Jesus instills.

Why do Catholics believe that their Church is the one true Church of Jesus Christ? Wouldn't it be more reasonable to believe that Christ's true Church is a spiritual union of all Christian denominations?

Catholics believe that theirs is the one true Church of Jesus Christ, firstly, because theirs is the only Christian Church that goes back in history to the time of Christ; secondly, because theirs is the only Christian Church which possesses the invincible unity, the intrinsic holiness, the continual universality and the indisputable

apostolicity which Christ said would distinguish His true Church; and thirdly, because the Apostles and primitive Church Fathers, who certainly were members of Christ's true Church, all professed membership in this same Catholic Church (*See Apostles' Creed* and the *Primitive Christian letters*). Wrote Ignatius of Antioch, illustrious Church Father of the first century: "Where the Bishop is, there let the multitude of believers be; even as where Jesus is, there is the Catholic Church." Our Lord said: "There shall be one fold and one shepherd," yet it is well known that the various Christian denominations cannot agree on what Christ actually taught. Since Christ roundly condemned interdenominationalism ("And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand." *Mark* 3:25), Catholics cannot believe that He would ever sanction it in His Church.

Why do Catholics refuse to concede that their Church became doctrinally corrupt in the Middle Ages, necessitating the Protestant Reformation?

Catholics refuse to concede such a thing out of faith in Jesus Christ. Christ solemnly pledged that the gates of Hell would never prevail against His Church (*Matt.* 16:18), and He solemnly promised that after His Ascension into Heaven He would send His Church "another Paraclete . . . the spirit of truth," to dwell with it for-

ever (*John* 14:16-17), and He inspired the Apostle Paul to describe His Church as “the pillar and ground of the truth.” (*1 Tim.* 3:15). If the Catholic Church (which Protestants admit was the true Church of Jesus Christ before Luther’s revolt) became doctrinally corrupt as alleged, it would mean that the gates of Hell had prevailed against it—it would mean that Christ had deceived His followers. Believing Christ to be the very essence of truth and integrity, Catholics cannot in conscience believe that He could be guilty of such deception. Another thing: Catholics cannot see how the division of Christianity into hundreds of rival camps and doctrinal variations can be called a “reformation” of the Christian Church. In the Catholic mind, hundreds of conflicting interpretations of Christ’s teachings do not add up to a true interpretation of Christ’s teachings.

If the Catholic Church never fell into error, how explain the worldly Popes, the bloody Inquisitions, the selling of indulgences and the invention of new doctrines?

A careful, objective investigation of Catholic history will disclose these facts: The so-called worldly Popes of the Middle Ages—three in number—were certainly guilty of extravagant pomposity, nepotism and other indiscretions and sins which were not in keeping with the dignity of their high church office—but they certainly were

not guilty of licentious conduct while in office, nor were they guilty of altering any part of the Church's Christ-given deposit of faith. The so-called bloody Inquisitions, which were initiated by the civil governments of France and Spain for the purpose of ferreting out Moslems and Jews who were causing social havoc by posing as faithful Catholic citizens—even as priests and bishops—were indeed approved by the Church. (Non-Catholics who admitted they were non-Catholics were left alone by the Inquisition.) And the vast majority of those questioned by the Inquisition (including St. Teresa of Avila) were completely cleared. Nevertheless, the popes roundly condemned the proceedings when they saw justice giving way to cruel abuses, and it was this insistent condemnation by the Popes which finally put an end to the Inquisitions.

The so-called selling of indulgences positively did not involve any “selling”—it involved the *granting* of the spiritual favor of an indulgence (which is the remission of the debt of temporal punishment for already-forgiven sins) in return for the giving of alms to the Church for the building of Christendom's greatest house of prayer—St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. One must understand with regard to indulgences that there are always *two* acts to be fulfilled by the one gaining the indulgence: 1) doing the deed (e.g., almsgiving) and 2) saying of some prescribed prayers with proper spiritual dispositions. In the case in