
For the Glory of God

Rekindle Your Faith

The Faith in Retrospect

Quite noticeably, the winters have become more bitter and colder while summers are hotter and drier. Spring and autumn seem to flicker by all too briefly. Yet, there is one constant amid nature's course and that is the cycle of life. Like the children of God, trees bud and blossom, then wilt away and die, only to be reborn. The ever-changing climate will never affect the natural plan of God, and the cycle of birth, life, and death, even of the tree, or a flower, will never cease to exist unless God Wills it to be so. The scientific order of things in the universe is not borne of science, but of God Who created it.

The story of God is the story of faith, and of humankind, and it all begins with Jesus Christ, true God and true man. The Glory of God came to us all at the very moment Jesus Christ was born.

Forty days after Christ Resurrected from the dead, He ascended into Heaven, but, not before bidding temporary farewell to His beloved followers, the Apostles and Disciples, to who, before parting from them, He gave the directive to carry out His teachings to all the nations. To Simon Peter, also known as "Peter," Christ

For the Glory of God

Rekindle Your Faith

gave the “keys” to His kingdom on earth; His *church* to be founded “on this rock,” and whose teachings would take root as God’s Word, proclaimed in Scripture.

We read in Matthew 16: 13-20:

¹³When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?" ¹⁴They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets." ¹⁵"But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?" ¹⁶Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." ¹⁷Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. ¹⁸And 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. ¹⁹I 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." ²⁰

Jesus promised the Apostles that the Holy Spirit would descend upon them, and His beloved mother, who was with them in the upper room at Pentecost, on the 10th day after the Ascension. All present became filled with the gifts of the Holy Spirit and, thus, by the gift of tongues, enabled to spread God’s Word to all nations. They were given, too, the gifts of wisdom, discernment, prophecy and healing; the laying on of hands.

And suddenly there came from the sky a noise like a strong driving wind, and it filled the entire house in which they were. Then there appeared to them

For the Glory of God

Rekindle Your Faith

tongues as of fire, which parted and came to rest on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in different tongues, as the Spirit enabled them to proclaim. -Acts 2:2-4

With these gifts from the Holy Spirit in tow, the Apostles started off to other nations to spread the Word of God, Christ's teachings, which came to light as the formation of *Christianity*. Christ's Apostles preached the Gospel throughout the east, to the nations of Judea, Constantinople, Samaria, and Antioch, and, finally, Peter had journeyed further to Rome where he decided to establish the foundation of Christ's teachings. Thus, Rome is where the official seat of Christianity was born, despite ardent criticism that neither Peter nor Paul had ever been to Rome.

As early as 49 AD, there existed a congregation of Jewish and Christian worshippers in Rome previously forced out by the hand of the Emperor Claudius. The time frame for Peter and Paul being in Rome together is nowhere noted, with neither having had their deaths there, through martyrdom, conclusively proven, contradicting the original knowledge that Peter *did* establish the church in Rome and became there the first "Bishop of Rome." In dispute of these claims, Saint Peter's Chair being at Rome suggests that he did, indeed, go to Rome for the

For the Glory of God

Rekindle Your Faith

purpose of the faith, and proof that it was Peter, the Apostle, stems not only through the journey of his remains, but through several different accounts of witnesses reputed to have witnessed Peter at Rome. The fact that Paul does not mention Peter at all in his letters to the Romans does not satisfy the argument that Peter was not there. The Apostles Peter, and Paul (whom though an Apostle was not one of the original twelve), were not equal partners in the founding of God's Church, as originally suggested by the myth that both were said to have been martyred together.

*"But I can show the trophies of the apostles. For if you will go to the Vatican or to the Ostian way, you will find the trophies of those who laid the foundations of this church." – Caius, a member of the Church under Zephyrinus, Bishop of Rome, from the Book of Zephyrinus. **NOTE:** (The Papacy of Pope (Saint) Zephyrinus, a Roman and fifteenth Pope and Bishop of Rome, lasted from 199 to 217.)*

For those who require further proof of the establishment of the faith at Rome, and for Rome, itself, becoming the center of Christianity, the most powerful proof to date is further found with the remains of Saint Peter, discovered as recently as the 1940's in one of the most revealing and conclusive excavations on sacred ground ever to be uncovered. Minus DNA testing, the evidence that bone

For the Glory of God

Rekindle Your Faith

fragments said to belong to Saint Peter, the first Bishop of Rome, became official.

The relics of Peter, and of three successive popes, known to have existed for centuries in Rome, had been discovered first in the confines of a one thousand year old church, Santa Maria in Capella, consecrated in the year 1090.

During renovation of the church, a worker had lifted up a marble slab near the medieval altar, finding there two Roman-era clay pots with the lids inscribed, proclaiming that enclosed inside the pots were the remains of Peter and three successive popes: Cornelius, Callistus I, and Felix. Also buried in the urns were the remains of four early Christian martyrs, their names also inscribed on a stone slab inside the church.

The finding of the remains of the first Roman Catholic Pontiff, one of the original Apostles of Christ, began on Vatican Hill with the first burial site of Peter's tomb.

The Emperor Constantine, perhaps at his pious mother's (Helena) behest, ordered a church built over the tomb on Vatican Hill, and so it came to be. In the 16th century, the church built by Constantine was replaced by what is now *Saint*

For the Glory of God

Rekindle Your Faith

Peter's Basilica.

After World War II, Pope Pius XII had a team of archeologists dig beneath the Basilica in search of the tomb of Saint Peter, long a curiosity borne by the more recent church officials. The dig eventually led to the discovery of a monument-covered casket “in memorium” to Peter, as confirmed by the words written in Greek: “Petros Eni,” meaning “*Peter is here.*”

Lastly, in 1968, Pope (Saint) Paul VI had the bones forensically examined, and the conclusion drawn revealed that the bones had belonged to a male described to be in his early sixties whom lived during the first century, AD. Pope (Saint) Paul VI declared, at that time, that the bones, without question, belonged to *Saint Peter*, the beloved Apostle. The single telling of how these relics may have found their way from Vatican Hill to Santa Maria in Capella is quite convincing, and establishes further credence toward truth rather than theory.

During the Papacy of Urban II, (who occupied the Papacy from 1088-1099, preached the Crusades and ordered the first Crusade in 1095 following a compelling speech) a division occurred within the church when a second Pope,

For the Glory of God

Rekindle Your Faith

Clement III, set up a rival papacy, also at Rome, with the support of the Holy Roman Emperor, Henry IV. Urban II, arrested by Henry IV, but soon after freed, was the legitimate Pope and Bishop of Rome, and saw this incursion as a threat to the Holy Roman Church and to God's Will. In order to protect the church and its rightful heirs, Urban II had the remains of Peter and the others removed and brought to concealment at the church of Santa Maria, where, it was said, the *just* Pope had affiliations. The overall story of Urban II is worth reading should you desire to know more about his tenure as Pope.

Further proof of Peter as the first Bishop of Rome, and the first Pope, appeared in the book, ***Adversus Haereses***, written by Saint Irenaeus, circa 180, wherein he claims that Pope Linus, the second Pope and Bishop of Rome, was the appointed successor to Peter.

Since there appears to be an overwhelming consensus with regard to the authenticity of the Holy Church being established at Rome by (Saint) Peter, one has to wonder about the *schism*, and the heretical divisions, off-chutes of the one true Church of Christ. For what purpose did a series of Christian denominations

For the Glory of God

Rekindle Your Faith

evolve into existence when, in fact, Christ's intention for *one* church, one following; one shepherd, one flock, is confirmed by Scripture? The Holy Roman Church, often times referenced as the *Holy Mother Church*, thereby, perpetuated its rightful place above all others.

The Orthodox Catholic faith, while it retains Apostolic Succession of the Sacraments, cannot be deemed equally as the one Holy and Apostolic Church by virtue of having removed itself from Pontifical authority in the Schism of 1054. The Eastern and Western Orthodox remain, in essence, schismatic, with the exceptions of the Byzantine and Coptic Christian Orthodox churches who continue to remain loyal to Papal authority. To understand this and to accept it is to know the truth; that is, in summarization: Christ appointed a leader for His church, St. Peter, the Apostle, whom eventually established the church in Rome where it has remained ever since.

¹⁷Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. ¹⁸And 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. ¹⁹I 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

For the Glory of God

Rekindle Your Faith

***earth will be loosed in heaven."*²⁰ – Mathew 16: 17-20**

Peter went on to become the first Bishop of Rome, and "Pope" (which means "father," "papa"), the Holy Father and head of the Holy Roman Catholic ("Catholic" meaning "universal") Church. Prior to his martyrdom in Rome under the Emperor Nero, sometime after 64AD, Peter had appointed his successor, *Linus*. The line of Apostolic Succession from Linus, whose papacy existed between 67 AD and 76 AD, then passed to Anacletus, and, afterward, down through the ages to present day Popes, (Emeritus) Benedict XVI, now on record as the oldest living Pope in Church history, and Francis I. The line of succession will continue as such until the final Pope, prophesied by St. Malachy of Ireland (1094 A.D. - 1148 A.D.) is one to be named *Petrus Romanus*. If St. Malachy's prophecy is to be believed, *Petrus Romanus* will vacate Rome upon Christ's return. However, according to the unapproved-as-of-yet apparitions at San Sebastian de Garabandal, Spain, four young seers there claimed that the "Virgin of Carmel" spoke of the *four* popes who would prevail after the death of the then presiding Pope, John XXIII. The young girls said that while the Virgin mentioned three

For the Glory of God

Rekindle Your Faith

successive popes, she, also, told them that she was not counting one because his term would be very short. Unknown at that time, it would be Pope John Paul I whose brief succession to the Papacy lasted thirty (30) days. Counting, thus, from Pope (Saint) Paul VI, to Pope (Saint) John Paul II, and Pope Benedict XVI, whose term was, also, brief, Pope Francis I could be the fourth pope, or in considering the brief Papacy of Benedict XVI, there may be one more pope to succeed Francis.

(More on the apparitions of Garabandal will appear later on.)

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The single prevailing church where Christians can receive a full Apostolic Blessing passed down from Jesus Christ is the *Catholic* Church, with the Holy Mother Church the complete retainer of the *fullness* of the faith dating back to when Christ walked the earth. The Holy Roman Catholic Church continues to maintain and preserve sacred traditions, the fullness of the sacraments, centuries-old dogma, the order of priests as established by Melchizedec; *the Magisterium of the Church*, an explanation of the latter as follows from A *Catholic Dictionary* (1951) and *Catholic Essentials.net*:

For the Glory of God

Rekindle Your Faith

"Defined as "the Church's divinely appointed authority to teach the truths of religion". In other words, Our Lord gave His Church the authority to teach the faithful about what is expected of them, and that is what the Church has done consistently from the start.

The Magisterium of Catholic Church teaches the faithful in two ways;

1) **Solemn Magisterium:** is Church teaching which is used only rarely by formal and authentic definitions of councils or Popes. This includes dogmatic definitions by councils or Popes teaching "ex cathedra"

2) **Ordinary Magisterium:** this second form of Church teaching is continually exercised by the Church especially in her universal practices connected with faith and morals, in the unanimous consent of the Fathers and theologians, in the decisions of the Roman Congregations concerning faith and morals, in the common sense of the Faithful, and various historical documents, in which the faith is declared...

Examples of the Solemn Magisterium of the Church (also called "ex cathedra teaching"):

- The decisions made during the General Councils of the Catholic Church.
- Papal encyclicals on "The Immaculate Conception" (1849) and "Defining the Dogma of the Assumption" (1950)

Examples of the Ordinary Magisterium of the Church:

- Universal teaching of the Church such as other papal encyclicals (when not written in "ex cathedra" form), universal references such as the Summa Theologica, and writings of Saints that are continually utilized by the Church and passed from Pope to Pope without objection.

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Summary

Whatever has been taught by the Catholic Church since the time of Christ, either through "solemn" pronouncements of Councils or Popes, or by unanimous "ordinary" every day teaching, MUST be believed by all Catholics, per what Our

Lord said in Scripture and what the first Vatican Council confirmed. Refusing to do so is called "heresy" and places one outside of the Catholic Church."

The Holy Mother Church, through the centuries, has had her share of good popes, and bad popes, who, after all, were, and continue to be, human (sinners) and, therefore, *fallible*, with the exception of being *infallible* only when speaking *ex cathedra*, in faith and dogma.

Pope (Saint) John XXIII, founder of Vatican II, transformed The Holy church beginning in 1962, provoking the church within itself to an ongoing struggle between the contemporaries and the traditionalists, still ongoing today. The excessive transformation of the Holy Church by Pope John XXIII has been deemed heretical to some, and has caused much furor over the years. Archbishop Carlo Maria Vigano', one of the traditional clergy whom remains hard-pressed upon returning to tradition, has called for the eradication of Vatican II, the latter, for many, a sad and confusing time in the memory of the Holy Church.

For the Glory of God

Rekindle Your Faith

In Pope (Saint) Paul VI's 1969 ***Missale Romanum***, the one and only papal act regarding the promulgation of the new Missal, there is no mention of prohibiting the use of the 1962 Missal or abrogating Pope (Saint) Pius V's bull ***Quo Primum***.

Pope (Saint) John XXIII, known indirectly as "the Pope of change," is credited with the decision to embrace the idea of a culture of "tolerance" toward other denominations and faiths set apart from the Holy Roman Church while at the same time maintaining the status of the one Holy and Apostolic Church as the supreme Church of God. At the onset, many Roman Catholic clergy and parishioners found this aspect of tolerating other faiths highly offensive to Jesus and to the integrity of the church. Today, the matter of "tolerance" has become second-nature to non-traditional Catholics.

And, yet, In the ***Lumen Gentium***, we are made to understand that "*The one church of Christ subsists in the Catholic church.*"

Pope (Saint) John Paul II undertook to review the changes brought about by Vatican II including the prerequisite for "tolerance." In his ***ut unum sint***, the much beloved Holy Father called for the unity of *all* Christians when addressing the

For the Glory of God

Rekindle Your Faith

issue of alternate religions and their existence outside of the Holy Church.

While it is truth that God is everywhere; omnipotent, omnipresent, there remains the fullness of the Holy Church, unique unto itself. In all honesty, there should be no argument regarding the matter. However, while there are now numerous, well-established Christian denominations, each serves one constant belief: that Jesus Christ is Savior and Lord, and that He died upon the Cross for our sins.

Despite the adversity, *all* Christians who believe in God and acknowledge Jesus Christ as Savior, and who believe in the Gospel, will know salvation. To not be Catholic does not make one a non-Christian. At the same time, not all Christians are Catholic.

Pope (Saint) John Paul's ***Decree on Ecumenism*** "*emphasizes the presence in her [Christ's Church] of the fullness of the means of salvation. Full unity will come about when all share in the fullness of the means of salvation entrusted by Christ to His Church.*"

In the Roman Catholic faith we are taught that Jesus and God are one in the

For the Glory of God

Rekindle Your Faith

same. Following His Passion, Christ resurrected from the dead to show humankind that we, too, will, one day, be resurrected after death into eternal life, but only if we believe in Him.

As Catholics, we believe in the Holy Eucharist as the true body of Christ offered at Mass in remembrance of Our Lord's Passion and death upon the Cross. We believe that the whole presence, body and blood, of Jesus Christ is permanently enshrined in the Holy Eucharist.

We believe in drinking of the wine, as the blood of Christ, poured out for many as a reminder of the precious blood spilled by Our Lord during His Passion.

As Catholics, we believe in the Blessed Virgin Mary and behold a great devotion to her.

Catholics believe in saints and angels, and that they, in their respective ways, are helpers and messengers from God. We believe that they intercede on our behalf to Jesus, the Son of God who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, was born of the Virgin Mary, and became man.

Catholics also believe in the Holy Bible as The Word of God, never to be altered

For the Glory of God

Rekindle Your Faith

or taken for granted. It is not a living document.

Catholics believe in the Holy Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Ghost (Spirit), that they are one in the same, all three; God forever. We believe in the Holy Ghost (Spirit) Who proceeds from the Father and the Son and who, with the Father and the Son, is adored and glorified.

As Roman Catholics, we have a prominent directive considered to be obligatory and that is, praying for the departed souls in Purgatory. These suffering souls need the help of prayers from the living because they cannot pray for themselves. They can, and do, pray for us, and they will be made aware of those who pray for them. Many of these souls agonize as they endure spiritual *cleansing*, perhaps through fire. Their need for support from the living to sustain them throughout this necessary punishment for sin will inspire hope that they will eventually see Heaven and meet God.

As Roman Catholics, we believe in one Holy and Apostolic Church founded by Jesus Christ, and upon Christ's return, the new Kingdom of God will be all the faith

For the Glory of God

Rekindle Your Faith

we will need.

As Roman Catholics, we believe in one baptism for the remission of sins, and that once you are baptized in the Roman Catholic faith, you are upheld in the faith for eternity, even if you stray from the fold and become a member of another denomination or religion.

As Roman Catholics, we are disciples of Jesus Christ and should rely on the Will of God to carry us throughout our days, spreading good will to all we meet along the way, and speaking “God” to all who need to hear the good news of the kingdom here on earth.

As Roman Catholics, we believe in Heaven, Hell, and Purgatory, and understand that we cannot be forgiven for our sins without repentance and the Sacrament of Confession, and Penance, and that we will not be admitted to Heaven without full repentance for all sins committed while on earth.

Catholics believe in the sanctity of marriage between a man and a woman, and that *all* life is sacred and precious in the eyes of God. We are taught that while divorce may be acceptable due to certain situations, only by annulment can a

For the Glory of God

Rekindle Your Faith

divorced couple remarry in the Catholic Church. Divorced couples may not receive Holy Communion without annulment of previous marriage(s).

As Roman Catholics, we are taught that being homosexual, in and of itself, is not a sin, however, the act of same-sex relationships and behavior is not only a sin, but that these acts are an “abomination” to God.

As Roman Catholics, we have earned the right to stand up for our faith and to live by it, and **we boldly refuse and rebuke Satan and his minions**, having been exorcised of the evil one upon Baptism into the faith.

As Roman Catholics, it is obligatory to respect the Papacy which carries the true representative of Christ here on earth. However, when the Holy Father appears to be straying from his post, it can be difficult for faithful Catholics to accept anything less from the leader of the Holy Church and this can create disassociation and confusion. It is *not* inappropriate for a faithful Catholic to defend God should the one chosen by Him fail to comply with God’s Will.

The Sign of the Cross is a prayer unto itself. For Roman Catholics, the sign of the cross is conducted by using the right hand to replicate the cross, forehead,

For the Glory of God

Rekindle Your Faith

chest, left shoulder, right shoulder, while saying the words: **“In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost (Spirit), Amen.”**

Roman Catholics are taught to believe in all of the above, yet, there are active Roman Catholics who will mock the faith by proclaiming sin as they attempt to excuse those sins by maligning *the Word* to have it appear as if Christ, today, would condone certain of these sins, i.e. abortion, homosexuality, and adultery. Shamefully, these types of people, including many politicians and celebrities, have never read the Bible, nor would they know the true extent of Christ’s intolerance for evil and the sins of those who do not think they need to repent or ask forgiveness for what they do, which includes the sin of placing themselves above God.

Sadly, today, the people of the world continue their drastic move away from God with more motivation toward self-indulgence and worship of material objects. Cell phones, ipads, computer games, and social media may do well to promote global camaraderie, however, these material objects fail to promote oneness with God. We must take the time to get to know God and bring Him into

For the Glory of God

Rekindle Your Faith

our daily lives, even if only an hour a day is all we can spare to spend in His presence, or to offer prayers. Each day that you come to know God and Jesus Christ will exist a far brighter day and more peaceful than the days you had spent without Him. God created us and we owe Him our lives. Our soul belongs not to us, but, to God alone, Who created it. Remember this when you desire to desecrate your body with tattoos and self-inflicted wounds; that our bodies are temples of the soul and should be free of unwarranted alterations including the altering of genes such as in transgender surgeries. To desecrate our bodies is to defile God.