

APOLOGETICS

Beginning Apologetics 1: How to Explain & Defend the Catholic Faith -

Eucharist:	Not <i>Sola Scriptura</i> : [Tradition also!!!] Mt 16:13-20	Apostolic Primacy: Mt 16:13-19	Confession: Jn 20:19-23	Prayer to Saints: 1 Jn 3:1-27	"Father": Mt 23:1-12	Baptism: Jn 3:5	Not <i>sola fides</i> : Gal 5:6	Can lose salvation: Mt 24:13	Church founded by Christ: Acts 11:26?
John 6	Mt 16:13-20	Mt 18:18	2 Cor 5:17-20	Jn 15:1-57	Acts 7:2, 22:1	Mk 16:16	1 Cor 13:2	2 Tim 2:12	Acts 11:26?
Mk 14:22-24	Mt 18:18	Lk 22:31-32	James 5:13-16	Eph 4:4,15-16?	1 Cor 4:14-15	Acts 2:38	Jn 14:21?	Rom 11:22	Igantius (110AD)
Mt 26:26-28	Lk 10:16	Jn 21:15-17	Jn 20:21	1 Cor 12:12-27	1 Thes 2:11	Rom 6:4	Mt 19:16-17	Heb 6:4-6	"Catholic"
Lk 22:17-20	2 Thes 2:15, 3:6	Acts 15:7		Rom 12:5,10,14-16?	1 Tim 1:2	Titus 3:5	James 2:24,26	Phil 2:12	One until 1517
Lk 24: 30-35	Jn 21:25*	Gal 1:18-19		Rom 8:35-39	Titus 1:4	1 Pet 3:20-21	Eph 2:8-10	1 Cor 9:27	
1 Cor 10:14-17	1 Cor 11:2	Mt 19:27	Purgatory:	Rom 15:30		Mt 3:11		2 Pet 2:20-22	
Early church fathers:	1 Pet 1:25	Mk 8:29?		Eph 6:18-19					Change Doctr?:
St. Ignatius of Antioch	Rom 3:28	Lk 12:41?		2 Thes 3:1	Statues:		Penances:	Tradition:	
St. Justin Martyr	2 Peter 3:15-16	Acts 5:1-11		James 1:14-15		Infant Baptism:			Jude 3?
St. Irenaeus	See <i>early fathers!</i>	Jn 6:69		Rev: 21:27	Ex 25:18-19?		Mt 4:17	Mt 15:3	
St. Cyril of Jerusalem	*Not all written:	Lk 9:32		1 Pet 1:15-16	Mass as Sacrifice:	Num 21:8?	Rom 5:18-19	Acts 16:31?	Mk 7:9
	2 Tim 2:2	Mk 16:7		Heb 12:14?		1 Kings 6 & 7	Mk 10:14	Mt 19:16-17?	Col 2:8
	1 Cor 11:2?	Acts 2:14,37,41		Mt 12:32			Acts 16:15,33	1 Cor 13:1-3	1 Cor 11:2
Celibacy:	4 Senses: Literal, Allegorical, Moral, & Anagogical.	Lk 6:14-16?		1 Cor 3:15?			1 Cor 1:16		2 Thes 2:15, 3:6?
		Acts 3:6-17		1 Pet 3:18-20					Rom 3:3-4
Mt 19:10-12		Acts 1:13-26		1 Pet 4:6					2 Tim 2:13?
1 Cor 7:32-35?				2 Mac 12:44-46					Mt 13:24-30,47-48
1 Cor 7:8				1 Cor 15:29-30?					

Beginning Apologetics 2: How to Answer Jehovah's Witnesses & Mormons -

Divine Jesus:	Not 144,000:	Soul Death:	Lasting Church (vs Great Apostasy):	End of Public Revelation:	Not many gods:	Celestial Marriage:			
Jn 20:28-29	Mt 5:11-12?	Gen 1:27		Jude 3	Gen 3:5?	Mt 22:23-33			
Mt 1:23	Phil 3:20-21	Jn 4:24	Mt 7:24-27	2 Tim 2:2	Ex 20:2-3	Mk 12?			
Jn 14:6,9	2 Kings 2:11	1 Sam 28	Mt 16:13-18	Mt 28:18-20	Deut 6:4	Lk 20?			
Col 2:9	Heb 11:5	Mt 10:28	Mt 18:15-18	Jn 14:26	Isaiah 43:10				
Titus 3:4, 6?	Lk 13:28?	Mt 17:1-8	Mt 28:20	Jn 16:12-13	1 Cor 8:4				
Mt 28:19	1 Thes 4:13-18	Lk 16	1 Tim 3:15	Heb 1:1-2	Eph 4:5-6				
Mt 24:14,27,37-42	1 Jn 3:1-2	Rev 6:9-10			Jn 17:3				
Mk 13:24-27	Rom 8:16-17		Canon of Bible in 400 AD	False Prophecy:					
Lk 12:40	2 Pet 1:4								
Lk 21:25-28	Gen 5:24	Eternal Hell:			Baptims of dead?:				
Rev 3:11?			Early church fathers taught Catholicism!	Deut 18:20-22					
Rev 16:15, 22:20	Blood Transf:	Mt 3:12							
		Mk 9:43			Cor 15:29-31				
	1 Cor 10	Rev 20:10			Alma 34:31-35				
		Mt 18:8			Alma 5:28,31				
		Mt 25:46			Mosiah 16:5,11				
					Mosiah 26:25-27				

Beginning Apologetics 4: How to Answer Atheists & New Aqers -

				2 Cor 11:14	1 Jn 4:1,16	Ex 3:14	Heb 9:27	2 Pet 2:20-22	
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Beginning Apologetics 5: How to Answer Tough Moral Questions -

				Gen 1:26-27	Rom 2:5-10	1 Jn 5:16-17	Mt 22:37-40	Rom 1:18-20	Mt 28:18-20
									Lk 10:16
Moral Princ's:	Abortion:	Euthenasia:	Contraception:	Reprod Tech:	Sexuality:	Drinking OK:	Drunkenness:		
Rom 3:8	[N/A]	Col 1:24	Gen 38:6-10	[N/A]	[N/A]	Gen 27:25	Prov 20:1		
Gen 2:16-17		5th Commandment				Dt 14:23-26	Is 5:11,22		
						Ecccl 9:7	Eph 5:18		
						Is 25:6			
						Jn 2:2-10			
						1 Tim 4:23			

(Apologetics 4 & 5 have few bible refs but cite CCC & tradition & papal documents. See Chacon's writings.)

Beginning Apologetics 6: How to Explain & Defend Mary -

OT Typology:	NT Fulfillment:	Doc Development:	Scriptural Mother:	JC as "1st Born": (legal not literal)	Perpetual Virginity:	Immac Concept: (Not literal "all", as Adam, Eve, Jesus & Mary excepted.)	Mary's sinlessness:	Other:	
Gen 3:15-17	Lk 1:42,26-56,48	[N/A]	Jn 19:26-27	Psalms 89:27?	Mk 3:21?		Acts 5:15-16	Acts 19:11-12	
Judges 4:17-22	1 Cor 15:45-47		Jn 1:29?	1 Sam 16?	Mt 15?	Rom 3:9-10	Lk 1:28	1 Tim 2:1-8	James 5:16
Judges 5:24	Rom 5:(14)*			Col 1:15	Jn 19:27	Psalm 14 ref	Gen 3:15	Mt 26:44	Lk 18:10-14
Judith 12-13:(18)	Rev 12:(1,17)	Mother of God:		Ex 34:20	Acts 1:13-14?				Rev 4:8
Judges 9:50-55	* JC gifts outweigh Adam's damage.	Lk 1:35,43						Ark ---->	Mary:
Ex 26:33,44:20		Mt 1:23,22-25		Assumption:				Ex 40:34-35	Lk 1:35
		Gal 4:4				(Mary would not go home with John if had other children!)		Num 9:15	Lk 1:26,40
								2 Sam 6:11,14-16	Lk 1:43
									Lk 1:44
									+ Early Father's

(Early church fathers and Prot reformers insist Mary is Mother of God!)

Beginning Apologetics 8: The End Times -

			[Selected, see Chacon material]						
Date of Coming?:	Visible Return:	Suffering holy:	Prayers for dead:	Indulgences: ???	Heaven:	Hell:	Finality at death:		
Lk 17:22-25	Rev 1:7	Col 1:24	2 Tim 1:16-18	Mt 18:18	1 Cor 2:9	Mt 25:41,46	Jn 9:4?		
Acts 1:7	Mt 24:27,30,31-32	Rom 8:17-18	1 Cor 15:29	Jn 20:22-23	Rom 8:19-23	Mt 8:12	Ez 33:18-19?		
	Mt 25:31	Mt 16:24	1 Pet 1:6-7			Lk 16:19-23			
	Acts 1:9-11	Jn 16:33	Lk 18:1-8			Mk 9:43-49			
	Mk 13:22	Acts 14:22				Mt 5:29			
Sudden	Lk 17:22-37	Rev 13:7-8		Mary:		Lk 12:4-5			
		We will suffer at 2nd coming		Rev 12:1-17					
		1 Pet 1:6-7							

Beginning Apologetics 7: How to Read the Bible (Interpreting & Defending Sacred Scripture) -

Thru mat univ:	Public Rev: (Prophets)	Why read Script?:	As a whole: (vs out of context)	Trad & Bible:	Canon:				
Wis 13:1-5	Ex 3:14	2 Tim 3:16	Psalm 14:1 e.g.	Rom 5:12?	[See Chacon for info on early Church fathers, Biblical scholarship, sources, language, etc!]				
Rom 1:20			Jn 3:16 misinterp!	[See Typology]	* Protestants' reject (James), Wis, Sirach, Judith, Baruch, Tobit, 1&2 Macc, parts of Dan & Esther.				
			Mt 19:17		Not added by RC, but rejected by Reformation of 16th C. Original canon formed by 400 AD! Accepted!				
		Caution in interp:	1 Cor 13:1-13		Accepted by early Church fathers!				
Natural Law:			James 2:24?						
Rom 2:15		2 Pet 3:16							

ARGUMENTS AGAINST HERESY & VALIDITY OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH:

- **Salvation by faith alone:** It is to selectively misinterpret the Bible to conclude that it is by faith alone that saves! That is heresy!!! Many Biblical references to the necessity for good works that flow from that faith. Just because you accepted Jesus into your life does not mean you cannot fall into sin and lose one's soul. Can't just do what you please as long as you have faith! Nor does the Church teach salvation by good works alone! Good works without the faith in God that animates them are not efficacious. Must be Faith and Works! Paul says faith without charity is nothing (see 1 Cor 13:2; + Matt 16:27, 10:42, Heb 6:10, 2 Tim 4:7-8). Salvation by faith alone is a man-made doctrine and unheard of prior to the 16th C!!!
- **Praying to Mary and the Saints:** Church law **forbids** the worship of Mary, and the Saints! Catholics seek their intercession and prayers due to their holiness and closeness to the Lord. Many miracles have occurred because of this kind of prayer! This tradition goes back to earliest times. Part of doctrine of Communion of Souls and Saints. (See Eph 19, Acts 12:7, Heb 1:14, and Luke 15:16.)
- **Doctrine of Purgatory:** This doctrine has existed since the primitive Church, though the word itself was not used until later. (See 1 Cor 3:15 & Heb 12:23.) Ancient Christian tombs contained prayers for the dead, which is senseless if there is only Heaven/Hell! Only mortal sin condemns us to Hell, venial or lesser sin can be atoned for between Earth and Heaven. (See James 3:2 & Rev 21:27.) Common sense as well, since few of us are perfect at death. Faith alone does not suffice, as some people are far more virtuous than others. (See above for error of salvation by faith alone!)
- **Confession to a priest or Sacrament of Penance:** Has biblical basis (see John 20:21-23 & Matt 18:18). St Peter was given the Keys of the Kingdom, sins are forgiven or held bound. This does not preclude confession directly to God and accepting his forgiveness. That too. But absolution is a sacrament that the Church provides via the priest, in response to confession and repentance. It is also therapeutic to confess sincerely to a priest who can provide advice. The Church teaches that frequent use of this sacrament gives strength in fighting sin.
- **Sacrifice of the Mass:** Christ offers Himself to the Father, re-enacting the Calvary sacrifice. At Mass, we unite ourselves in Christ's worship of His Father, absorbing Christ's saving grace during the Mass. The presence of Christ as the Body and Blood of Jesus in the Eucharist is based on Matt 26:26-28, Luke 22:19-20, Mark 14: 22-24, John 6:48-52 & 54-56, & 1 Cor 10:16.) This has been the belief and practice of the Church since the most primitive times, continuously. Not until the 16th C did that doctrine become questioned by the Protestant Reformation. +Many miracles have occurred associated with the Eucharist!
- **The priest being called "Father":** Based on concept of the ministry partaking of the Fatherhood of God, and the Priesthood of Jesus (the High Priest). (See 1 Cor 4:14-15, Luke 14:26 & Matt 23:9.) When Christ spoke against being called "father," he was referring to any "fatherhood" apart from the Fatherhood of God, if you look at context.
- **Fasting:** Part of Church tradition since the beginning of the Church. Paul fasted (2 Cor 11:27) as well as Apostles (Acts 14:22). Christ Himself fasted (Matt 4:12 & 17:20). A sacrifice known to purify the soul and lead to a spirit of humility and poverty before God.
- **Celibacy and Chastity:** Also biblical (Matt 19:27-29 & 1 Cor 7:32-22). Priest and religious is called upon to give up all to follow Jesus and serve His people. Otherwise our hearts are divided. Paul taught that the single and chaste state is ideal for serving God.

- **RC Baptism:** Follows method used by Apostles (in *Didache*) themselves. Also, Christ “came up out of the waters” is not the same thing as total immersion. A misinterpretation. Nothing wrong with immersion, but there is no prohibition against sprinkling on the head. The early Church used water poured on the head as a matter of fact. And the Apostles also baptized entire households, adults as well as infants! So no prohibition against infant baptism. Primitive Church baptized infants. It not only ensure salvation, but gives graces to the Child that aids in sanctification process. (See Rom 6:3-4, Luke 3:21, Acts 16:15, 1 Cor 1:16 & John 3:5.)
- **Concerning Divorce:** “What God has joined together...” (Matt 19: 3-6). The Bible is clearly opposed to divorce (see 1 Cor 7:10-11, Matt 19:9, Mark 10-12 & Luke 16:18.)
- **Teaching Authority of RC or Magisterium:** Christ founded a teaching Church which immediately began teaching of Christ, animated by the Paraclete, the Holy Spirit (HS). (See Rom 10:17, Matt 28:19, Mark 16:15, 20.) Christ's Gospel was to be the source of all saving truth and moral discipline, and in keeping with the Lord's command, it was handed on in two ways: *orally* (the words, preaching, example, institutions they established), Tradition, and *in writing* inspired by the Holy Spirit, Sacred Scripture (CCC 74-76, 81-82, 96; *Dei Verbum* [DV] 7, 8). In order that the full and living Gospel might always be preserved in the Church, the Apostles left bishops as their successors, giving them their own position of teaching authority, which living transmission is also guided by the Holy Spirit and transmits in its entirety the Word of God which has been entrusted to the Apostles by Christ the Lord and the Holy Spirit (CCC 77-79, 81; DV 8). Both Scripture and Tradition flow out of the one well-spring of the one Word of God (CCC 80, 97; DV 9, 10). Now the teachings of the Apostles began immediately, but the acceptance of what various writings came to be accepted as Sacred Scripture (i.e., the formation of the "canon" of the Bible, both OT and NT, CCC 120) evolved slowly over time, and was not settled until the Council of Rome in 382 AD (and St. Jerome began work on the Latin Vulgate the following year). Thus a “Bible only” belief is lunacy!!! Plus, the fact the Bible is interpreted differently by everyone.

Without a supreme authority apart from the Bible, there is the danger of making the Bible fit our own paradigms, instead of stretching our paradigms to match true doctrine. That is why there are many thousands of Protestant sects now. There is no brake on personal interpretations of the Bible. There is almost a religion for every individual. The Catholic Church is unified and universal, and has continued with the same doctrines since Christ! Protestantism has generated chaos, not unity! Babel not the Bible, since no central guarantee of true interpretation. The "Bible only" approach leads to heresy and schism. Besides, the Bible cannot explain itself! To prove the Bible using the Bible is circular and fallacious! It is not like some fundamentalist cookbook! Private subjective interpretation invariably leads to heresies and error!!! We need the teaching authority of the Church, animated by the HS as promised by our Lord, to explain the Bible and its applicability to current age. The Bible itself states it does not contain all that Christ did our taught (e.g., Jn 21:25). He sent us the Holy Spirit at the birth of the Church to continue the teaching/preaching through the Apostles and their successors. The apostles entrusted the "Sacred deposit" of the faith contained in Scripture and Tradition to the whole Church, the *sensus fidei* (CCC 84, 91-93, 99, 889; DV 10). The task of giving an authentic interpretation of the Word of God, whether in Scripture or Tradition, has been entrusted to the living, teaching office of the Church alone, the “Magisterium,” which is the servant of the Word of God, and all it teaches comes from this single deposit of faith

(CCC 85-87, 100; DV 2). The Magisterium's task is to preserve God's people in profession of the true faith without error, and to do this Christ endowed the Church's shepherds (pope and bishops) with the charism of infallibility in matters of faith and morals (CCC 889-890). Infallibility can be exercised by the Pope and the body of bishops together, especially in Ecumenical Council, and also when the Pope speaks “*ex cathedra*” to proclaim a doctrine pertaining to faith or morals (*Lumen gentium*, 25). He is speaking the truth of Christ under the influence of the HS, as promised by Christ! (See 2 Thes 2:15, 2 Tim 2:2, John 20:30 & 21:23-25, also 2 Peter 1:20 & 3:16, & Acts 8:30.)

In summary, since the canon of the Bible did not exist until almost 400 AD, authority was principally by word of mouth, by Tradition – even as to which existing writings might be appropriate to use in the Liturgy or followed as the rule of faith. Much of the teaching via Tradition (word of mouth) did not necessarily get into the Bible. But, according to references above, we are commanded to follow and obey the teaching authority of the Church. The Church obeyed such authority before the canon of the Bible was determined by the Church at the Council of Rome in 382 AD, and the Church still obeys the living, apostolic Tradition along with Sacred Scripture – the one Word of God, the one deposit of the Faith. The canon of Scripture could not be compiled and approved until the end of the persecutions (Edict of Milan, 313 AD). Also, much apocrypha and many documents coming from various communities had to be evaluated by all the shepherds for authenticity and discerned under the guidance of the Holy Spirit for true inspiration, which took time. Finally, in the First Century even the OT canon was not set and had to be determined by the Church (along with the NT canon), and there were opinions even into the Second Century that the OT no longer had validity and the Church had to be guided by the Holy Spirit to definitively reject such ideas and come to understand the divine inspiration and permanent value of the OT as true Word of God (CCC 121-123), interpreted in light of the NT, and the NT read in light of the OT (CCC 128-130). But even after the canon of Scripture was determined, a complete Bible was too expensive to produce for the average person until the invention of mechanical, movable print in the 15th Century!!! Bibles were copied by hand (very labor intensive) predominantly by monks until then, so no one could afford one. But the Bible was read in the Churches and typically was available for anyone to come into the Church and read from at any time. (The Church was certainly no Bible destroyer! The Roman Catholic Church preserved the Bible and other literature! The Roman Catholic Church, once the canon was determined, immediately produced, through St. Jerome, a translation of the entire Bible into the common language of the people (Latin), and even was the first to produce an English translation of the Bible, the Douay Version – it was not King James! The Church is not against Bible reading and did not burn Bibles! What it DID do was burn heretical translations by Tyndale and Wycliffe, and others, which would have corrupted people’s faith! It was to protect people – not for the sake of burning Bibles themselves, which is absurd!) So most individual Christians did not have a Bible for 15 centuries! Now are all of those many ‘un-Bibled’ Christians thereby allegedly going to Hell???)

- **Bible-Only Christians:** So are all those Christians without access to a Bible (a personal copy, or the vast majority, ability to read), especially before the end of the 4th Century, going to Hell since they weren’t “Bible Christians”?! There are other sources of Truth from Christ, via the Holy Spirit, besides the Bible, namely Tradition and the Teaching Authority of the Church. This authority keeps the interpretation of individuals from

deviating from sound doctrine. Otherwise, people are subject to interpret the Bible according to their own paradigms! Becomes Babel not Bible! The Vatican & Pope are like a supreme court for valid interpretations of the Bible! **Now, this is an important point:** *Since it was the Roman Catholic Church that approved and compiled the Bible as we know it, and since the Protestants accept the Bible essentially as it was compiled and approved at 382 AD, it is assumed the RC was infallible when it did so, that is acting under the HS and without error. Why would this same Church, reliable in 382 AD, be unreliable now? Christ promised he would be with the Church until the end of time. That he would give us the HS to guide and protect us. He further promised us that Satan would not be victorious against the RC! If we are allegedly corrupt now, under the influence of Satan, fallible and in error, than Christ's promises were not kept. And that is impossible, as God is not unreliable!*

- **Authority behind Reformation?:** WHY did the Protestants feel they had the authority to leave the one true Church for 15 centuries, to change doctrines they did not like, and begin their OWN churches? Under who's authority? God's? Who promised he would be with His Church until the end of time? See Gal 1:8 for Paul's view on this! Paul was against disunity and multiple voices. There is one shepherd and one flock, not many shepherds and many flocks! Also, when one studies what the lives were like of the so called reformers, most were unhappy with the fact the pope would not give them license to follow their flesh, as in the case of Henry VIII and Luther. Hence, the Protestant churches begun during reformation and afterward are based on HUMAN doctrine not DIVINE doctrine! (See 2 Tim 4:3 on heresy and false teachers!!!) The very multiplicity (33,800 in 500 years!!!) of Protestant churches & doctrines is testimony against them! Is one of those sects the one true Church???! Were they there when Christ gave Peter the Keys of the Kingdom? By what and Who's authority have they broken from the one Universal Church after 1500+ years?! By Luther's? Calvin's? Mary Baker Eddy's? Joseph Smith? Who gave them authority to found a separate church???! The Church **never** created new doctrines, but merely proclaimed the one, same doctrine of Christ to different times and audiences according to their needs. Unlike the Protestant religions, the Roman Catholic Church does NOT change doctrines or morals. E.g., the Anglican Lambeth Conference in 1930 accepted contraception! Until that time **no** Church embraced that! The Church always taught it is against God's law, the natural law, to place a block in front of life; births are seen as the means of populating Heaven. Also, it is seen as a virtue to practice self-denial rather than indulge the flesh. If there are appropriate reasons to space children apart, use abstinence and natural family planning!
- **Papacy and Apostolic Succession:** See Matt 16:18-19, 18:17, & 28:18-20, Heb 13:17, Luke 10:16 & 22:32, Gal 1:8, John 1:10 & 21:15-17, Acts 13:2 & 5, 15:23 & 28, & Titus 1:5. The promised HS exists in the teaching authority of the Church, and is infallibly expressed "*ex cathedra*" by the Pope, or Pope and Bishops together, and the teaching authority of the Church validates authentic interpretations of Holy Scripture. The above refs speak for themselves! There were three corrupt popes, yes. But they did not alter doctrine, contrary to Protestant myth! Also, even though "pope" was not a term used in the Bible, the succession is clear. The Bible also did not use the terms Trinity, Bible, or Incarnation either. But the realities these terms refer to are certainly in the Bible. These are often used by Protestants against the RC Church.
- **Christ's Promise of the Holy Spirit being with the Church:** See John 14:16 & 26, 16:13, Acts 1:8, 1 Tim 5:15, & Matt 28:19-20. These references utterly refute the

Protestant contention that the RC failed for a thousand years until the Reformation (500-1500 AD). That claim is absurd on the face of it, yet is believed by millions!!! Also, if the Church truly had moved away from sound doctrines during the Middle Ages, how could the Church have generated so many great saints during this period? If the RC became doctrinally corrupt, the gates of Hell would have prevailed against it, which means Christ would have deceived us (see Matt. 16:18). Also, Christ promised the HS would be with the Church until the end of time. Finally, how can so many competing denominations and doctrinally various interpretations add up to the Truth? God is not a God of disunity and chaos! Human teaching is not God's teaching.

- **Visible Unity of the RC:** See Rom 12:5, Eph 4:3 & 5:3, John 10:16, Rom 12:4-5, John 17:21.
- **Universality of the RC:** See Matt 13: 47, 18:15, 22:2, 13:24, & 2 Tim 2:20.
- **Pictures and Statues:** See Exodus 25:18 (gold cherubim on the Ark of the Covenant for the Tabernacle), 25:31 ff. (flowers on lampstand); 1 Kg 6:18 (carved gourds and flowers for the temple), 1 Kg 6:23 ff. (cherubim for the Temple), 1 Kg 6:29, 32, 35 (Temple walls, doors carved with cherubim, palm trees, flowers), and Nu 21:9 (Moses making serpent image) approved by John 3:14. None of these Scriptural "graven images" were prohibited, and were never worshipped as idols. The extensive Christian tradition of pictures, icons and statues are never worshiped as idols either – absurd! They are aids in elevating our hearts to seek the prayers and intercession of our Blessed Mother and the holy saints. Catholics know these are merely plaster representations, we do not view them as somehow animated, nor that it is the same to pray to a saint as to God! Anyone who thinks that is ignorant of Catholicism! All Protestants and others who call themselves Christian use statues in their manger scenes and Christmas crèches, and also have holy pictures.
- **Vestments:** See Exodus 28:4; regarding Holy Water, see Numbers 5:17; and regarding Relics, see Exodus 7:10, Matt 9:20-21, Acts 5:15-16 & 19:12. Again, regarding relics, we do not see them as magical items, but as representations of the great saints we revere and whom we are seeking to model ourselves on and whose intercession we seek! It is comparable to having a memento of a deceased loved one nearby, which connects us with that person. Similarly with statues and pictures, they are like photos of those we love.
- **The Inquisitions:** The abuses were actually state sponsored (Spain and France, e.g.), and were roundly condemned by the popes. The Church supported and created the Inquisition to interrogate schismatics and heretics, but did not endorse torture or death. The process became appropriated by temporal authorities, and then became abused!
- **Indulgences:** These were not “sold” but were actually for alms. Did become abused, yes, but not a doctrinal issue. They were human and became overzealous. Needed reform, true, but the basic doctrine was not in error, the exercise of this doctrine became misused.
- **The bottom line:** *The RC is often misunderstood and much ignorant argumentation is used against us as. We need to armed with as much real information as possible about our rich heritage so that we cannot not only adequately defend ourselves and our Church, but also show why their denomination is indeed in error and they should consider joining the one and true and only truly authentic Christian Church, the Church of saints and miracles and the sacraments. The Church founded by Christ via the Apostles with the Holy Spirit as guide.*