

Below is a transcription of the audio file of the Catechism Class given 04-17-11.

On this Palm Sunday, I will continue speaking about the IX Article of the Creed, “I believe in the Holy Catholic Church.” There is a little bit more I want to mention with regards to the unity of the Church, then we will move on to the mark of holiness.

We spoke a little bit before about this; how the Church has its triple unity. Now we come to the unity of faith because the Catholic Church alone possesses that striking unity of faith for which Our Lord prayed. If you look over things in the world today, there are probably over 300 or 3,000 (or maybe 30,000) different religions in the world today. Before the changes of Vatican II came, the Catholic Church had over three hundred million members and yet they all had One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one creed. The faith of the Catholics was one and the same everywhere. The faiths of the other thousands of churches do not have the same faith, even from country to country; you might see even two people living in the same town going to the same church. But it is the faith of the Catholics that is the bond that unites us the whole world over – our common faith. In fact, to be a Catholic means to believe precisely the truths which all other Catholics believe the whole world over, because if we do not believe what the Catholic Church teaches no matter what part of the world we live in, then we cease to be Catholics. So, no matter where someone is at on earth, if they are going to belong to the true Church, they must believe what that Church teaches. That is what the unity of faith really means.

To disagree even in one point is to cease to be a Catholic, to cut oneself off from the Catholic Church. So, therefore, when the Church was right before the changes of the Novus Ordo religion came in, wherever in the world a Catholic went (say some person in the military), no matter what country he was living in, he would always be in the same Catholic Church, hearing the same doctrines, the same Mass, the same Sacraments, the same pictures, the same Stations, the same communion rail, the same altar, with the priest offering Mass. No matter where you were at in the world, the same Mass he could follow in his daily missal.

The truths that we believe are identical with the faith of past ages. It is not only now; it is from the time of the Apostles when Jesus Christ taught them. What Our Lord taught in the “Sermon on the Mount” and what Saint Peter preached in Rome, and St. Paul in Ephesus and his other missions, even what Saint Patrick taught in Ireland, St. Augustine in England, St. Boniface in Germany, that is the same faith the world over – the faith of these saints and Apostles preached in the beginning, in all of these different countries is preached today in every Catholic Church the world over. That is why we know the Novus Ordo religion is not the Catholic religion. It now preaches the religion of man, instead of what Jesus Christ, the Apostles, and these saints throughout time, and the Doctors of the Church have taught us.

Today in the Catholic Church, it is the same as what is quoted in St. Paul’s letter to the Hebrews: “Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today, and forever.” The same is said of His Church – the same yesterday today and forever. There is no answer to the claim of the Catholic Church to possess unity of faith unless we have this belief the world over. So, people should ask themselves if there is any other church in world today which possesses unity of faith.

One Protestant preacher once upon a time wrote that he could write everything upon which those Protestants agreed on the nail of his thumb. Unity of faith is not to be found in the Protestant denominations, taken singly or collectively. In the Catholic Church alone, in the world today we find in their entirety every single doctrine taught by Christ. If you have been or might now be involved in some religious sect that does not have these same doctrines, then you know it does not have the marks of the Church and is not the Church that Jesus Christ founded. Not only the doctrines, but of course, that includes being found in their entirety – not one iota of the true faith will ever drop from the teachings of the Church or be changed because a more modern man or more modern theology came along and found the past teachings to be erroneous.

From this simple illustration, we might then reason correctly that how then could there be (on the part of any other church), any reasonable claim to be the Church of Christ since the other churches have changed what Christ taught. They added to it and subtracted from it. We need not develop that thought at length. It is too obvious if you simply look at what all of the other religions believe. They do not believe everything that Jesus Christ taught when He founded His Church. Not only does sect differ from sect, but each denomination is divided into two or more independent or conflicting branches. Even the best of them (so to speak) the one that

often times might be thought of as the closest to the Catholic Church, known as the Anglican religion (sometimes called the Episcopalian church), is itself divided into the high church and the low church and the broad church. They have all different beliefs. It is notorious that the bishops of the Episcopalian church differ completely among themselves in fundamental doctrines in matters of importance (as to the Sacrament of matrimony, and divorce). Contradictory doctrines are taught within the church of England even as to the meaning of the Sacraments themselves. So how can a church which allows contradictory doctrines to be taught, be one?

The Catholic Church alone makes claim to be one fold, ruled by one Shepherd. In fact, that claim on the part of other churches would be simply ridiculous as someone might realize this in a very important way; if you look at what other religions have and what they teach and how many ways they have already split apart. As one spiritual author wrote – in the United States, there are four regular bodies of Lutherans and fifteen other varieties of Lutheranism. The Presbyterian church is divided into twelve different sects. There are seventeen varieties of Methodists. Methodist Episcopal, Methodist Church South, Methodist Church North, Independent Methodist, and so on. There are twelve varieties of Mennonites, six varieties of Congregationalists. There are several varieties of conflicting bodies among the Seventh Day Adventists, and even here in Safford, there is a New Testament Baptist Church, the Fourth Street Baptist Church, and we know we have the Southern Baptist Church, the Northern Baptist Church, the Eighth Street Baptist Church, and so on and so forth. Some of them even have what we might probably think first off as even very strange names to designate their religions, such as the Campbellites, the Baptist Age to Come, Adventists, Hicksite Quakers, Christian Israelites, Cumberland Presbyterians, Free Will Baptists, River Brethren, Bible Christians, Sixth Principle Baptists, Pillar of Fire Shakers, Holy Rollers, Holy Jumpers, and so on.

Things have not changed; they just become more multiplied if we look at what is going on in the world today and what is known as the Traditionalist Movement. There are multitudes of different sects breaking off from one another, having contradictory doctrines, contradictory beliefs. That certainly cannot be the true Church, which is the same yesterday, today, and forever. This list I have just mentioned is very incomplete, but it shows that there are more and more multiplying sects continuously. This demonstrates that Protestants and non-Catholics (even if they use the name Catholic, such as the Old Catholics), keep splitting off and founding new churches. I think that if you read that book, *Bishops at Large* by Peter Anson, you will find that Arnold Harris Matthews, whom Francis Schuckardt and others supposedly claimed to trace their lineage through, founded something like 30 churches by himself. He wrote his own Pontificale Romanum because he did not want to follow the liturgy of the Catholic Church. Even if the points of disagreement are not important in the eyes of the disputants, they prove beyond a doubt, that there is no unity of faith in Protestantism.

If you look at the Novus Ordo religion, they differ from what the Church taught throughout the centuries. Read the *Catechism of the Council of Trent* as we will get into in later chapters when we cover the Sacraments and the Holy Eucharist. The Novus Ordo changed the very words that pertain to the form of the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist. They changed the matter of the Sacrament. They no longer use the proper kind of unleavened bread that Pope St. Pius V wrote about in his bull *De Defectibus*. They use everything from hot dog buns, to cookies, to chips, and who knows what? They use huge wafers almost as big around as a platter on which you serve a big meal. Having changed the form, not only the Holy Eucharist, but if you study the matter out, I believe you will find they changed matter, form, or intention to invalidate all seven of the Sacraments.

What is their belief about marriage laws? You can get an annulment almost as easily as the Protestants can go before the justice of the peace and supposedly, get a divorce. Multitudes of priests, even bishops, in the Novus Ordo church, teach that it is alright to use birth control and multitudes of so-to-speak Novus Ordo Catholics, obviously are using them; using different means of birth control, completely contrary to what the Catholic Church teaches. Of course, we know they have the table to offer up a community meal as the Protestants do, instead of the altar to offer the sacrifice of the Mass. Their baptismal ceremonies only welcome members to the community, instead of making them a child of God and an heir of the kingdom of Heaven. Their sacrifice is no sacrifice at all. The sacrifice of the Mass as we have in the true faith has only become a social entertainment, with all their drums and bands and hootenanny masses, banjos and everything else. The clowns on the stage – even their so-called pope, named John Paul II dressed as a clown. They have naked

women from the waist up read the epistle, with very little clothing from the waist down even – and that in the very presence of their so called pope! Certainly, it is not the Catholic religion. He (the Novus Ordo popes) preach the religion of man instead of the religion that Jesus Christ taught us.

We also know the Novus Ordo has a new religion and new beliefs which are manifested in their so-called liturgy (always wearing white vestments at funerals because their new belief is that all people go to Heaven when they die). They no longer wear black. They no longer mourn for the departed souls in purgatory the way the Catholic Church teaches us to do. The leaders of the Novus Ordo church, the so-called popes, even tell us that the Muslims worship the same god as the Novus Ordo people. Few even attempt to go to confession. There is a fellow over here across the road who I visited with not too long ago (supposedly, a Novus Ordo Catholic, although he was raised in the true faith being about the same age or about a year or so older than me), but he told me very few people go to confession. I think he attempts to go maybe once a year, but they do not have the Sacraments that give grace. Most of them have given up praying grace before and after meals, and even before Vatican II got very far underway, they started locking the churches. They do not have the Real Presence there anyway, so they may just as well do that to keep people from stealing what material things they have because they do not have God living within their church.

If you want to see some satanic churches, go look at the new Novus Ordo buildings. The new church dedicated to Padre Pio has a lot of freemasonic symbolism in it. It is built just like a freemasonic hall and is certainly anything but holy. Therefore, they do not have unity of faith. They do not have the same faith taught throughout the world. They even have their own version, and now people have told me that Benedict XVI is contemplating or working on or shifting things back to all of the Novus Ordo people offering the Latin services again. This will be a very diabolical thing because now that they have done away with the priesthood, even if they offer services according to the rubrics of Pope St. Pius V, it would not be a valid Mass because they do not have valid priests to offer that Mass, having changed the Sacrament of Ordination.

So, then we move onto the second part of the unity of worship. All Catholics everywhere believe and partake of the same worship at the same altar. As I mentioned, a soldier (whether he be in England, Belgium, France, Africa, Germany, China, USA, South America, or wherever), has the same exact Mass from his daily missal. He goes into any building that is a true Catholic Church anywhere in the world and he will hear the same Mass, see the same kind of statues and paintings familiar to us that he saw in his hometown as a child. He will see the baptismal fonts, the confessionals, the same ceremonies, the same Stations of the Cross, the same sacred vessels, and the same sacred vestments. In any church, in any part of the world, a Catholic is at home. Certainly, therefore, the Catholic Church possesses unity of worship and unity of faith.

Is that true of any other church? Obviously not. Some hold divine services one way and some in another. Even in, of course, the Novus Ordo religion and the Traditionalist Movement, there is quite a variety of different liturgies that they follow. They certainly do not have unity of faith or even unity of worship. If they promote the Rejecters heresy, known as the Feeneyite heresy, they do not have unity of worship. They do not wait until Holy Saturday (if they are logical) for the baptism of the catechumens because their heretical belief is that no one can be saved as a catechumen. So if they really believe what they profess and profess their belief exteriorly, it would seem to me they would baptize their catechumen the very day that they thought he had sufficient catechetical instructions to believe the Catholic Faith.

The third part of unity I would like to cover is titled the unity of government. All of the members of the vast body of the Catholic Church throughout the world are inseparably united to their one chief as the members of the human body are joined to its head. The faithful of each parish are subject to their immediate pastor, who is subordinate to his bishop. Every bishop or Christian acknowledges the jurisdiction of the bishop of Rome, the successor of St. Peter, the head of the Catholic Church. The pope is supreme and he, of course, is only the visible head. He receives his jurisdiction directly from Jesus Christ, the invisible head and Founder of the Catholic Church. The voice of the Pope carries weight even to the ends of the earth when he writes an encyclical, gives an allocution, writes a Bull, gives his sermons, teaches the world whether it even be by radio or what means, it is the same for all Catholics whether they be in Africa or Asia or America or Europe, Australia, China, Russia (wherever they are at), even the islands of the sea. All hear his voice, and it is passed

down as often as you read the encyclicals. He exhorts the bishops, who are to exhort the priests, who teach it to the faithful.

In what society or state that the world has ever seen, has there been such perfect unity of government as in the Catholic Church? Can this be said of any non-Catholic body? Other churches have no common head, but a different one in every country. For example, they would have a king in one country and in another (maybe the archbishop, such as the Archbishop of Canterbury), and in another country, there is no head at all. Many Protestants recognize that this is a very harmful state of affairs and have tried to remedy it, but they cannot change it.

Under what head are the Novus Ordo and the Traditionalist Movement? It is obvious that the American bishops do not obey even the Novus Ordo popes and it is a striking, glaring, obvious truth that the Traditionalist Movement clerics are not under any head. Every bishop and even every priest seems to be the pope on his own. So how can they be the Catholic Church that Jesus Christ founded that has unity of faith, unity of worship, and unity of government? This Church that has this triple unity is found exclusively in the Catholic religion, the Catholic Church that Jesus Christ founded! That is the second reason why we believe that we belong to the true Church founded by Jesus Christ, namely because it possesses unity.

Every other organization in the world wears out, changes, disorganizes, and breaks up. The Catholic Church stands forever the same. If the Catholic Church was not divine, She would also have gone to ruins thousands of times, years ago. There are more discordant elements in Her than in any other organization on earth. Take the fact, that She, the Church, and Catholics throughout the entire world – we know that It is filled with every nationality on earth. Although the members that make up the Catholic Church have different epodes, different passions, ambitions, aims, temperaments, and different cultures, It has already lasted for over 2,000 years. Yet everything is coordinated, ruled, and directed with the precision of the laws of nature.

Extremes of thought and culture meet in her bosom and where they are blended into unity. Modern civilizations and ancient barbarism hurled their forces against Her, and yet, each in turn, knelt at Her feet and became Her children. Empires passed away, yet the Catholic Church stood erect amid the ruins. There have been upheavals and disturbances in Her life, but these have only served to emphasize the difficulty of Her course and the triumph of Her God-given forces.

On the one hand stands discordant Protestantism, lacking doctrinal unity and repudiating most of the Sacraments of Christ and tending falsely to dissolve either into continually increasing subdivisions or into total disbelief. On the other hand stands united Catholicism, immobile amid the ebb and flow of human innocence, invincible against the attacks of heresies, indifferent to the rise and fall of empires, superior to schisms and heresies, steadfast in persecution, calmly watching the dissolution of the different sects throughout the world over the ages. Thus has the Church of God changelessly endured and so She will endure changelessly until Christ, Her founder, shall come again.

Therefore, we should every day get on our knees and humbly thank God for having called us into this true Church and fervently pray with humility for the grace of perseverance in living the truth Faith until the end of our lives. For we belong to the wonderful Church founded by Jesus Christ, wonderful in faith and in Sacraments, in doctrine and in ceremony, in language ever one and the same, whether in village or metropolis, in chapel or cathedral, whether in America, Europe, Asia, Africa, or the islands of the sea. Everywhere and at all times, She is one and the same (the only church that is one and the same). For Christ, Her founder, the night before He died prayed for Her unity: “That they may all be one Father, as Thou, Father in Me, and I in Thee, that the world may believe that Thou hadst sent Me.” This is the unity that we have such a great blessing of belonging to this Faith, therefore, be on our guard if anyone ever tries to teach us something contrary to what the Church has always taught. The Church, that is as Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today, and forever. Let us reject them immediately as our great enemies and be faithful to the faith of our baptism. Next Saturday, the catechumens will be baptized in the true Faith. Let us renew our own baptismal vows and be faithful to them until the end of our lives.

At this time, then, let us continue on with considering the second mark (as well as an attribute of the Church), the Holiness of the Church. Dryden wrote a beautiful little poem and part of it reads:

“A milk white Hind, immortal and unchanged,

Fed on the lawns, and in the forest ranged,
Without unspotted, innocent within,
She feared no danger, for she knew no sin.”
Dryden, “The Hind and the Panther.”

That is the Church that Jesus Christ founded, without spot or wrinkle. Saint Paul also teaches this in his letter to the Ephesians. Christ also loved the Church and delivered Himself up for it, that He might sanctify it, cleansing it by the laver of water in the word of life, that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish.

That is why when we pray the Apostles Creed, such as when we pray the most Holy Rosary, we profess to believe in the Holy Catholic Church. Who is She that cometh forth as the morning rising, fair as the moon, bright as the sun. Thou art all fair and there is no spot in Thee because this Church is holy.

The word “holy” has many applications. It is given to persons, places, and things. Places, buildings, altars, vestments, vessels and the like are called holy because they are consecrated to Him who is holy. Doctrines, rites, laws, and practices are holy when they tend to produce holiness in men or because they are conformable to right reason, or because they have been authorized or sanctioned by God’s will. So, we have here the doctrines of the Church are holy. The doctrine that teaches devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus as the main devotion; however, as the CMRI church teaches, the Sacred Heart of Jesus is not for our times. The Church is holy in Her rites and Her laws. The rites of the Church, the rituals the priest uses requiring the abjuration of error and profession of faith from those who have belonged to non-Catholic religions before they receive the Sacraments. These abjurations and these rites of the Church, the liberty of the Church is almost totally ignored in the world today even by those who call themselves Catholics. The laws of the Church are totally disregarded. It is a song of the new religion and the Traditionalist Movement that Canon Law is not for our times. They do not follow the laws regarding the consecration of bishops, the laws regarding the religious vows, the Rejecters (the Feeneyites) do not regard the Canon Laws that pertain to baptism because they do not believe and do not think they are bound by the laws of the Church, which have been solemnly promulgated. But remember, the Church is holy when It has laws that have been authorized and sanctioned by God’s will. The laws of the Catholic Church were authorized by Pope Benedict XV in his encyclical, *Providentissima Mater Ecclesia*.

Besides the laws, the rights, and the doctrines of the Church, we also realize that personal holiness is moral rectitude before God. Personal holiness means conformity to God in union with Him by grace. If you are completely conformed in every way (if your will is in perfect uniformity with God’s holy will), then you are holy – very holy. The Saints come from all walks of life. They were in every occupation, but they had one common thing that each of them united itself to the others; that was their uniformity with the will of God. That is why in that book, *Counsels of Perfection for Christian Mothers*, the author points out that the Blessed Virgin Mary was the model for all holiness. That was because She was the most perfect of creatures united to the will of God.

But, we are not all as holy as the Blessed Virgin Mary. None of us ever will be, but we are all called to be saints. We know, therefore, there are many different grades of personal holiness. The grade that implies simply the state of sanctifying grace may be called “common.” Nevertheless, if we are in the state of sanctifying grace, God lives within us, and God is holiness. Therefore, if we are in the state of sanctifying grace, we are holy. We have at least the most basic grade of holiness called “common.” But above the common grade is that reached by those who follow evangelical counsels and do works that are not strictly speaking obligatory. The evangelical counsels are often referred to as the vows that are taken in the religious life. But even the laity in the world can live these counsels in a very special way, especially if they are Third Order members and, because of their Rules, are often required to do so according to their state of life. But still higher than this second grade of following the evangelical councils and doing some works that are not strictly required, comes the “heroic” degree of sanctity, which proves that God, in a special manner, is with those who practice it.

Remember what I spoke about in earlier catechism classes with regards to the dart board. We should all strive to be in the very center. We must strive to obtain a very high degree of sanctity if we are wise. If we meditate on the four last things and see the vanities of the world and how long eternity lasts, we will be very

strongly encouraged and inspired to follow the path that leads to a high degree of sanctity. That is the only sure way to stay within the bull's eye, the center of the target, aiming for eternal life with God. If we are very careless in the way we live (have little regard to committing venial sins, although we do not intend to commit mortal sins), then sooner or later and most probably always sooner, we will commit a mortal sin and fall off the target all together on the outside, where we are not even in the state of grace. We are no longer holy. We are not in union with God. So, whether we consider the Church in its entirety as something consecrated to God, or whether we consider it as something tending to its purpose and practices to produce righteousness, or finally as having in fact produced and therefore as actually containing saintly members, the Church is holy.

The sanctity of the Church, as I mentioned at the beginning here, is both an attribute and a mark. As an attribute, it may be viewed in several ways. First in its Author or Founder, secondly in its essence or constitution, thirdly in its aim or end, fourthly in the means it employs, and fifthly in the members which compose its body. The sanctity or holiness as a mark (or note) of the Church is found especially in the body or members of the Church, and implies the practice of exalted virtue, even the heroic form. The Church is also known to be holy by the sanctity of all the doctrines it teaches and by the reasonableness of its practices. The Church is ruled by the Holy Ghost, Who does nothing inordinate. Therefore, the Church never does anything unreasonable in any of its practices, or any of its liturgies. It never teaches anything unreasonably. There are mysteries we do not understand, but not one of the mysteries of the Catholic Church is contrary to right reason.

Again, the sanctity of the Church may be considered in two ways, as active or as passive. Active sanctity of the Church is its constant solicitude and efficient exertion and industry in rendering its members holy by the doctrines and motives it inculcates and by the regulations and observances it employs as a means. Sanctity viewed passively is an effect of active sanctity, and the possession of virtue and grace by members of the Church. Simple reflection will make us realize that the Church is holy in all of these different ways. Take the Church in general, in its essence, it is easily shown that the Church of God ought to be holy. We know, then, that the Church is holy. Scriptures are filled with talking about the holiness of the Church. This is the law of the house upon the top of the mountain, all its borders round about is most holy. When God is said to dwell in a place, it is because by His sanctifying grace, He operates there. Wherever God by sanctifying grace operates, there is holiness. That is why it is said that if we are in the state of grace, we are holy, although we may not have obtained that high degree of holiness that God wants us to obtain. If we persevere in the state of sanctifying grace, we will be with the all Holy God for eternity.

Again, you have often heard the Catholic Church called the Body of Christ, the Mystical Body of Christ. Pope Pius XII even entitled any encyclical by that name. Christ's body is not dead because Christ dies now no more. Death shall no more have dominion over Him. So, the Church lives by the very life that Christ lives. The Catholic Church is spoken of as the spouse of Christ and He loves it with the love of a spouse. In turn, He is loved by it. Where there is mutual love between God and a creature, there is holiness. So, if we have a mutual love, we are in the state of sanctifying grace. We truly love God above all created things. There is holiness.

Although the Church is holy, we must realize that not all of the members of the Church are holy. Remember that we remain a member of the Catholic Church after being baptized unless we fall into heresy, apostasy, or schism, or are excommunicated. Even if we commit mortal sin, we are still a member of the Church, although we will only have a deeper place in hell if we die in that state of mortal sin. But the members of the Church are not all holy. The Church is known as the pearl, which should be sought at any sacrifice. It is the treasure hidden in a field. It is a leaven that transforms the wicked world. But the Church is also the net that encloses both good and bad fishes; the flock that consists of both sheep and goats until the general judgment day when God will set the sheep on the right and the goats on His left, and tell them: "Be gone ye cursed of My Father into the everlasting fires, which was prepared for the devil and his angels."

The Church is known as that which contains vessels of honor and vessels of dishonor. The Church itself, though, is the instrument for sanctifying its members. It is not the Church's fault if we do not become holy, even in this time of spiritual crisis when we do not have regular access to Mass and the Sacraments. We still have everything necessary to obtain a high degree of holiness. Keep in mind as you see people giving scandal and bad example that not all of the members of the Church are already transformed, but hopefully, they will be

transformed during the state of obtaining a higher degree of holiness and glory. Admonish the sinners (if it is proper that you do so at the time) to bring them to holiness is one of the works of mercy.

We can also infer the holiness of the Church from the purpose of its being. Every society is founded for some purpose. One society is formed for the purpose of social intercourse among its members, another to advance their temporal interests, another for promoting literary pursuits, a fourth for furthering political ends, but we are speaking about the Church founded by Jesus Christ. That society is for the sanctification of its members. That is the purpose for which it was created or why Jesus Christ founded His Church. For this is the will of God, your sanctification. Again, God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto sanctification. For the grace of God, Our Savior, hath appeared to all men, instructing us, that denying ungodliness and worldly desires, we should live soberly and justly and godly in this world, looking for the blessed hope and coming of the glory of the great God and Our Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all iniquity and might cleanse to Himself a people acceptable, a pursuer of good works.

Again, St. Paul tells us the purpose of the Church when he wrote – that you may be blameless and sincere children of God without reproof in the midst of the crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as light in the world. St. Peter described the Church when he called it a chosen generation, a kingly priesthood, a holy nation, a purchased people. But the Catholic Church is holy, not only in its aim, but also in its action. Although many do not answer the call, many are called, but few are chosen. Most reject the call of God. The Church invites everyone to a holy life. With St. Peter, it says – according to Him that hath called you who is holy, be you also in all manner of conversation, holy. Again, he wrote – wherefore brethren, labor the more that by good works you make sure your calling an election, for doing these things, you shall not sin.

But, of course, one of the most important points when speaking of the holiness of the Church is to realize that Its Author is holy. Jesus Christ founded the Catholic Church in which we are members. He is the head over all the Church which is His body. Not one person on earth, who truly understands the divinity of God and believes in Christ's divinity, will deny His sanctity. Even Christ's bitterest enemies at the time He walked on earth could not prove one point against His character, though challenged to the test. Remember when Jesus Christ told them (or asked them) – which of you shall convince Me of sin? Even those who were sent to apprehend Him were captivated by the power of His discourse and confessed their failure because never did man speak like this man. The verdict of the multitude that witnessed His miracles was that He had done all things well. St. Peter affirms that Christ was one who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth. At the time of His baptism, the eternal Father gave testimony to the same truth, saying, this is My beloved Son in Whom I am well-pleased. God could only be well-pleased in His divine Son, if He was all holy. Even the spirits of evil were forced to acknowledge His holiness – I know who Thou art, the holy one of God.

The primal cause of the holiness of the Church, as well as its claim for its sanctity as a society, is clearly set forth by St. Paul in these words to the Ephesians: Christ also loved the Church and delivered Himself up for it that He might sanctify it, cleansing it by the laver of water and the word of life; that He might present it to Himself, a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish. We realize, of course, only one Church fulfills these things that point to its holiness.

The Church, Herself, employs all the means necessary to sanctify its members, and those means are also holy. First, I would point out that the Catholic Church alone, the only Church founded by Jesus Christ, teaches to mankind the whole message of Jesus Christ. This Church was commissioned to preach the whole gospel, not a part of it. When He sent His Apostles forth, Jesus said to them: Go ye into the whole world and preach the gospel to every creature, teaching them to observe ALL things whatsoever I have commanded you. This verse of Scripture, then, reminds us that there is no authority given here to minimize or mutilate the gospel. There is no power given to extend or extenuate the message of Christ. There is to be no teaching of a fractional faith, no preaching of truncated truth. The whole lesson, painful or pleasant, was to be inculcated, but when the Reformers in the 16th century started all of the new churches, they got rid of the painful parts, such as fasting, vigils, watches as night, keeping the laws of marriage (instead of having divorces -- more than the civil law even). But that is not the gospel Jesus Christ commissioned His Apostles to teach. We are to observe ALL things whatsoever Christ commanded us.

We must therefore observe that those who claim as a sole rule and source of faith merely the written word cannot teach the whole of God's message. Jesus Christ left this earth without having written anything except a few words, and those in the sand. Was the world to learn only from the written word? Obviously not. If so, then nothing was to be believed for there is no recording of what Jesus Christ wrote (although the spiritual authors hint that maybe wrote the sins of those who wanted to condemn that woman). When they read their own sins, then when Jesus said to them, he who is without sin, let him cast the first stone, they all left beginning with the eldest. Let us remember the message sent into the world was a spoken word. Jesus Christ, Himself, taught by word of mouth and He gave His disciples no command to write His doctrine. Their manner of teaching is apparent from the Scriptures themselves, which the Protestants say is their sole belief. We read in the Acts of the Apostles about the word of God spoken. St. Paul writes to the Romans: The word of faith, preached. He goes on to teach the Colossians: The gospel heard and preached. Again, to the Thessalonians: The word of the hearing of God, received and believed. Saint Paul tells the Corinthians: For I delivered unto you first of all, which I also received. Then He wrote to Timothy: The things which thou hadst heard by me of many witnesses, the same command to faithful man; who shall be fit to teach others also.

Hence, we see the gospel of Christ was in the beginning an oral message to mankind. Since His ascension, however, some portions of it have been written, but there are also many other things which Jesus did, which if they were written every one, the world itself, I think, would not be able contain the books that should be written (as St. John wrote). The Church is the author of the New Testament. She knows its message and its meaning. She alone reveres the Bible rightly, but She never forgets that She is the teacher and guardian of all revealed truth, whether the spoken or written word.

Another point we can make about the holiness of the Church is shown in the character of the persons whom it holds up as heroes and proposes as models. Everyone has their exemplar. Every individual is influenced by his ideal. For instance, bad and good are molded after some accepted model. That is why in the world today there is such a movement to get people to imitate the rock stars and the athletes... hold them up as their models; this magical stuff going around instead of holding up the Saints as the models for their children to imitate and to follow.

Now the Church holds before the people as examples; first of all Jesus Christ, the God-man, secondly, Mary, His Immaculate Mother, thirdly, Christ's dearest friends, the Saints, who by their heroic virtues have won the crown of life. The Church does not only praise Christ, but She commands Her children to imitate Him when She tells us of His humility, His charity, His meekness, His holiness. It is that His virtues may become exemplars of ours. Christ is preached in the Catholic Church from one end of the year to the other. Jesus is as the Church; and the Church is as Jesus, Its Founder – the same yesterday, today, and the same forever.

If you are old enough to have had the privilege of living when the Church was flourishing better before Vatican II came along, then you know that the sermons were given not about the news or the politics of the time, but to edify and to uplift, to admonish, to correct, as St. Paul told Timothy to do; to lead the faithful to holiness. Take a witness of the Sunday sermons of Fr. Francis Hunolt. He does not teach of political things, but he certainly gives examples of what Catholic parish priests and the assistant pastors would preach to the people on Sundays; the same way with the Sunday sermons of the Great Fathers of the Church. They explained the gospel word by word or at least verse by verse. They always exhorted the people to live a holy life. Be ye holy because I, the Lord your God, am holy. Be you therefore, perfect, as also your Heavenly Father is perfect. Be you therefore followers of God as most dear children. This is what the Apostles tell us and this is what true Catholic priests teach their faithful who come to Church to hear their sermons.

The fact alone that nearly all the sects, at least in the last centuries, have exhibited an unnatural hatred toward the Mother of Christ, is patent proof that they are not of God. Mary Immaculate, the Maiden Mother from whom the prophets wrote and the poets have sung. Mary is that model the Church holds up that we should all follow.

“Mother, whose virgin bosom was, uncrossed
By the least shade of thought to sin allied,
Woman above all women glorified,
Brighter than the Eastern skies at daybreak strewn

With fancied roses, than the unblemished moon
Before her wane begins on heaven's blue coast,
Purer than foam and central ocean tossed,
Mary, our tainted nature's solitary boast."

Yet, how many self-professed Christians who seem to have no care are included in Mary's prophecy – that henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. Most false religions have very little use for the Mother of God. But let us never forget our blessings and that the Church of which we are members was tutored by Mary. In the person of St. John, It took Mary for Its Mother. From Her, St. Luke learned the minutest details of Our Savior's conception and birth and infancy. Without Mary's testimony, the chain of evidence of the story of man's redemption could not be supplied. Mary kept all these words pondering them in Her heart, and before Her Assumption into Heaven and before Her death, She related all of that to the Apostles and to the Evangelists as recorded in the Scriptures.

There is much that could be said about the Blessed Virgin Mary and how all true Catholics love and honor and show their true devotion to Mary, but I will conclude the day by saying this – whoever hates My mother, may as well, hate Me. He who hates the Mother of Jesus, can scarcely be called a friend of Jesus Christ or call Christ his friend.

Thank you for visiting <http://www.JMJsite.com>. Please tell others about this website and pray much more. Saint Alphonsus Maria (the great Doctor of prayer) reminds us that: "Those who pray will certainly save their souls, and those who do not pray will certainly lose them." Read the sermons and listen to the audio files. "Ignorance is the mother of all evils." Do penance for Jesus told us: "Unless you do penance you shall all likewise perish." The devil is never far away from those too busy to pray! If Truth stands in your way, you are going on the wrong path!

Ora pro nobis,
Patrick Henry