

Below is a transcription of the audio file of the Catechism Class given 06-05-11.

Today, we continue speaking about the infallibility of the Church. It is important to understand that the infallibility in the New Law ought to be inferred from the fact that even in the Old Law, there existed an infallible tribunal for settling disputes. In the book of Deuteronomy we read: "If thou perceive that there be among you a hard and doubtful matter in judgment ... and thou see that the words of the judges within thy gates do vary: arise, and go up ... And thou shalt come to the priests of the Levitical race,... and thou shalt ask of them, and they shall shew thee the truth of the judgment. And thou shalt do whatsoever they shall say that preside in that place, ... thou shalt follow their sentence: neither shalt thou decline to the right hand nor to the left hand. But he that will be proud and refuse to obey the commandment of the priest who ministereth at that time to the Lord thy God, and to the decree of the judge, that man shall die, and thou shalt take away the evil from Israel."

From this verse of Scripture from Deuteronomy, we might ask, did God command acceptance of a false decision? We should realize, of course, that the very attributes of God protest against that theory; that judgment even in the Old Testament times must have been infallibly just and true. From that, we also understand that St. Paul reminds us that the Old Law was but a figure of the New when he said: "All these things happened to them in figure." So, if there was an infallible authority in the Old Law to settle difficult matters, for greater reasons, there must be one in the New Law.

Can we suppose that the Church that Jesus Christ founded is less perfect than the Mosaic dispensation? Yet we realize that Our Lord testified to the authority and truthfulness of the teaching body of the Old Law, when he also told us: "The Scribes and the Pharisees have sitten on the chair of Moses. All things, therefore, whatsoever they shall say to you, observe and do: but according to their works do ye not." Even the high priest who condemned Our Lord prophesied rightly because, as St. John says, he was "the high priest of that year." If, then, even in the Old Law, "the lips of the priests kept knowledge and the people sought the law at their mouth," How much more shall the message of Christ be delivered with infallibility?

We also know that in every human society, there is a court of last appeal that is taken as quasi-infallible at least. But in matters of conscience, a quasi-infallibility does not suffice. The Church is doing a work that demands real infallibility, and so the Scriptures testify that God has given it to her.

Moreover, it was pointed out before, the Apostles claimed the prerogative of Infallibility. St. Paul very specifically says: "We have the mind of Christ." "We have received ... the Spirit that is of God: that we may know the things that are given us from God. Which things also we speak, not in the learned words of human wisdom; but in the doctrine of the Spirit." "For Christ therefore, we are ambassadors, God as it were exhorting by us." "For our exhortation was not of error." In other words, St. Paul is claiming that he is speaking and teaching infallibly. He is not exhorting any error. "We are not as many adulterating the Word of God, but with sincerity, but as from God, before God, in Christ we speak." As St. John, the Evangelist, pronounces boldly saying: "We are of God. He that knoweth God heareth us." How could we hear him and the other evangelists and the other Apostles if they were not infallible? St. Paul sums it up: "Therefore, he that despiseth these things, despiseth not man but God: who also has given us His Holy Spirit in us." Again: "When you had received of us the Word of the hearing of God, you received it not as the word of man, but as it is indeed the Word of God."

Jesus Christ promised the Church to be infallible because He told us: "He that heareth you, heareth Me." "If he will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and publican." Are we to be lost because we refuse to hear a lie? By no means. We believe without doubt and hence "we be no more children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine."

From these teachings of the Scriptures (the inspired Word of God), every Catholic can say: "I am no surer that Christ is not a liar than I am that the Catholic Church is the infallible teacher of mankind: for it is through the ministry of the Catholic Church that I even know Christ." This is one of the main points where all Protestant religions fall away. If it was not for the Catholic Church, especially the monks who copied the Bible and preserved the teachings of the Church, the Protestants would not even have what they call their rule of faith. The Protestant religion is dependent entirely upon the Catholic Church; and her infallible teaching authority declared what is Scripture and what is true – to even have their rule of faith. From all of this, we know the truth

and we have peace in the truth. Sometimes we should even be blamed (I would think) because we rest too securely in the truth to an excess of it being a fault. We not only rest in the truth, but we sleep in the truth instead of arousing ourselves to let others know of the good fortune of spreading the true faith.

Now, we have come to an important point in all of this discussion about the infallibility of the Church that Jesus Christ founded, because one church and no other claims infallibility. Now if there is a church that is infallible, it must necessarily lay claim to that title. Every church that disclaims the title is proof thereof that it does not possess the thing. For in proclaiming its own fallibility, it either tells the truth or it falls into error. If it tells the truth, it is not infallible, and if it falls into error, it is not infallible. The church that denies its own infallibility cannot be the teacher of all truth. It cannot be the pillar and ground of the truth. Therefore, there is only one church that ever claims it, and that is the Church that Jesus Christ founded. Once we know that church is infallible and does not teach us error, there is nothing left to do but listen and obey.

That brings us then to discuss the limitations of this infallibility. Infallibility of the Catholic Church can be viewed in two ways, as active or passive (as active on the side of the teaching body; as passive on the side of the hearing body). The Church is infallible in believing as well as in teaching. “Though we or an angel from Heaven preach a Gospel to you besides that which we have preached to you, let him be anathema.” “If anyone preach to you a gospel besides that which you have received, let him be anathema.” The passive infallibility is the result of the active infallibility. The faithful receive the truth because the Church teaches the truth. Hence, our Lord says: The sheep follow Him because they know His voice, but a stranger they follow not, but fly from him. So, we should realize that the Church is infallible even in hearing.

Now the active infallibility of the Church can be viewed in different ways. The Church is infallible in her daily teaching throughout the world. Those things that are taught always and everywhere are infallible truths. Therefore, we should keep that in mind because when any new teaching comes along that is different from what was taught in the past, then you know that you have departed from the truth and left the Catholic Faith, the infallible Church. Again, realize the General Councils are infallible. By a General Council we mean not merely a lot of bishops assembled, but the bishops with the chief bishop, the pope. The pope is the head of every General Council and a Council cannot be a General Council without its head. But, the infallibility of General Councils and the infallibility of the whole teaching body are consequent on the infallibility of the head with which the bishops and teachers are united. Hence, the Papal Infallibility is the real Infallibility of the Church. “Let no man seduce you, ... walking in the things which he hath not seen, in vain puffed up by the sense of his flesh, and not holding the head, from which the whole body, by joints and bends, ... groweth unto the increase of God.”

We just spoke about the General Councils of the Church being infallible and then the question might be asked, was not Vatican Council II a General Council by this definition of having the bishops with their pope? Some might want to answer, yes, but I would say no, because Vatican II taught the opposite of those things that were previously taught always and everywhere. Remember what we just said previous to that. Those things that are taught always and everywhere are infallible truths. Therefore, when changes in previous teaching of the Catholic Church are made; as it took place at Vatican Council II, and things were taught the opposite of what previously had been taught always and everywhere, then, therefore, we must conclude that Vatican II is not an assembly with a true pope. If the Vatican II bishops would have actually been assembled with a true pope, they could not have taught contrary to the past infallible teachings of the Church, because an infallible teaching can never be contradicted and the opposite taught in the future.

Now, we come more specifically to understanding what is papal infallibility. In the act of the Vatican Council (here, of course, I am speaking of the true Vatican Council of 1870), 4th Session, Constitution 1, concerning the Church of Christ, Chapter 4 we read: “The Roman Pontiff, when he speaks *ex cathedra*, that is, when he performs the office of pastor and teacher of all Christians, and by his supreme Apostolic authority defines a doctrine as of faith or morals to be held by the universal Church, possesses, through the divine assistance promised to him in Blessed Peter, that Infallibility with which the Divine Redeemer wished His Church to be endowed in defining doctrine, whether of faith or morals.”

The limitations of infallibility fall under four heads:

- 1) the person in whom Infallibility resides;

- 2) the person to whom infallible teaching is directed;
- 3) the subject matter of Infallibility; and
- 4) the form of infallible utterances.

First, the Pope is infallible when he speaks in his official capacity to the whole Church, whether directly or indirectly. Second, a decision, to be infallible, must be intended for all the faithful, whether addressed to all or to a particular person. Third, the subject-matter of Infallibility must be a doctrine of faith or morals. All of the revealed truths come under this head. Likewise, all theories of government or of science that have to do with faith or morals, and finally, all dogmatic facts that are necessarily connected with revealed truths, belong to the domain of Infallibility. The fourth point is the intention of the Pope and the form of expression tell us whether the Pope speaks *ex cathedra* or not.

We can prove the Infallibility of the pope if we prove the Infallibility of St. Peter. Everyone who is of sound mind and good will must admit that the Pope is the successor of St. Peter. The world cannot get rid of that truth. Papal succession is a clear fact that no man who knows history can gainsay. If, then, we can prove that Jesus Christ made Peter the head of the Apostles and gave him the prerogative of Infallibility, so that in his official capacity he was to be the unerring teacher of the whole Church, it follows that the Pope of the present day is also infallible.

As soon as Our Lord selected Peter, he marked him out in a special manner for the office of Pope. Peter's brother, Andrew, met Our Lord first. He came to Peter and said: "We have found the Messiah." Then, he brought Peter to Jesus, and Jesus looking upon him said: "Thou art Simon, the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas," which is the Syro-Chaldaic for "Peter" or "rock." Jesus Christ gave St. Peter this new name, a name which signified his office as the foundation of the Church. God never gave a new name without a purpose. He changed the name of Abram to that of Abraham. Jacob was changed to that of Israel. Our Lord's own name, Jesus, was meant to show forth the Savior. God says, "To him that overcometh, ... I will give ... a new name." We must conclude, then, that Christ meant something when he bestowed the name "Cephas" on Simon Peter.

Later in Our Lord's life, he conferred on St. Peter both the Primacy and the Infallibility. You are probably familiar with the text: "And Jesus came to the quarters of Cesarea Philippi and He asked His disciples saying: Whom do men say that the Son of Man is? But they said: Some John the Baptist, and other some Elias, and others Jeremias, or one of the prophets. Jesus saith to them: But whom do you say that I am? Simon Peter answered, and said: Thou art Christ the Son of the Living God." Jesus Christ, Our Lord, praises Simon for that profession of faith. "And Jesus answering said to him: Blessed art thou Simon Bar-Jona, because flesh and blood has not revealed this to thee, but My Father who is in Heaven. And I say to thee: That thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build My Church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give to thee the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven. And whatsoever thou shall bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in Heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in Heaven."

In English the full force of our Lord's words does not come out. The identity of "Peter" and "rock" is not obvious. But in the language which our Lord used there is only one word for both Peter and rock – "Thou art *Cephas*; and upon this *cephas* I will build My Church." The English language does not express this identity that clearly. However, when we understand it correctly, who can deny that Jesus Christ thus made Peter the FOUNDATION of His Church?

If Peter is the foundation of the Church, can He be swept away by error and lies? If the foundation is swept away, how could it be built upon the rock (quoting the parable that Jesus Christ told elsewhere)? What is to be the fate of the Church if its foundation can be destroyed? If Peter is not infallible, when he fulfills those four conditions, then the Church is not infallible. If the Church is not infallible, the gates of hell can prevail against it. If the gates of hell can prevail against the Church, the words of Jesus Christ are false. If Christ's words are false, Christianity is a sham. So, do you see where we are landing if you deny papal infallibility to the true successors of St. Peter? Anyhow, St. Peter is the foundation of Christ's Church, according to His own words. Therefore, we must recognize the Church in which Peter is the foundation, and to do so is to be a Catholic.

Elsewhere the keys signify power and authority. Jesus Christ says of Himself in the Apocalypse: "I have the keys of death and of hell." Peter and his lawful successors have power and authority over the Kingdom of Heaven. How could this be said if he were not an infallible guide to those who would enter Heaven?

Because of his papal infallibility, we read so often in the New Testament where St. Peter is given the place of prominence. His name leads in every list of the Apostles. He was not the first to be called or the first to meet Our Lord, but his name leads in every list of the Apostles found in Sacred Scripture.

St. Peter was the first to perform miracles after the Ascension of Our Lord. St. Peter was the first to address the Jews after the descent of the Holy Ghost. He was the first to make converts from the Gentiles. When a successor was to follow Judas, it was Peter that spoke, and only Peter, to appoint the new member. In the First Council of Jerusalem, Peter's was the principal speech. There was, of course, much disputing, but when Peter spoke, all held their peace. Have you ever taken notice that St. James, the apostle, was bishop of Jerusalem? He was a cousin of Our Lord, a very dear and near disciple. He was cast into prison and finally put to death. Was there any extraordinary commotion made about him among the churches? We have no evidence that there was from the Scriptures or even from the traditions of the Church. Peter also was put into prison, but mark the great difference. "Prayer was made without ceasing by the Church unto God for him," until an angel of God delivered him. In the same manner, throughout the history of the Church prayers are offered for the true successors of St. Peter.

Because this dogma of the papal infallibility is often questioned, it might be well to remember how St. Peter is distinguished above the rest of the Apostles:

"Simon, and they that were with him."

"Peter, and they that were with him."

"Peter, standing up with the eleven."

"Peter, and the Apostles answering said."

I point this out because I have been informed that the translation of the King James bible has corrupted this last text concerning "other" before the word Apostles. They like to say Peter and the other apostles answering said... but that is not what the Scriptures truly read. They read Peter and the Apostles, answering said... These translators and the Protestants who use the King James bible must have felt that the text was conclusive of Peter's preeminence, that Peter was something more and above the rest of the mere Apostles.

Others who have read the Bible might exclaim; did not St. Paul withstand Peter to his face? You should read that verse and passage again and read it carefully. Instead of arguing against the preeminence of Peter, it argues for it. Peter was at fault, and Paul withstood him. The incident gets its importance only by reason of Peter's preeminence. Besides, elsewhere, St. Paul acknowledges Peter's superiority. He went up and tarried with Peter fifteen days. St. Paul consulted St. Peter on his teaching, as he said, "lest perhaps I should run, or had run in vain."

It is also a noticeable fact that Jesus Christ taught the people out of Peter's ship. He ordered the same tribute coin to be paid for Peter and Himself. On the night of His Last Supper, He prayed especially for Peter that his faith should not fail and that he should be the means of confirming his brethren. Jesus said: "Simon, Simon, behold Satan has desired to have you" (meaning all of the Apostles), "that he may sift you as wheat." Of course, the devil wanted the whole Church. However, Jesus went on to say: "But I have prayed for *thee*" (in other words for Peter alone) "that *thy* faith fail not."

Peter's faith cannot fail because Christ's prayer is an efficacious prayer; as we learn when Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead. "Father, I give Thee thanks that thou hast heard Me. And I know that Thou hearest Me always." We have something still further, for our Lord continues: "And thou being once converted, confirm thy brethren." In other words, take special notice that the brethren do not confirm Peter, but Peter confirms them. The bishops do not confirm the pope, but the pope makes the bishops and the faithful sure of the true doctrine. How could Peter confirm his brethren in the Faith if he could error in the Faith?

These are the mysteries for those who do not believe in papal infallibility. They will not answer those kinds of questions. How could Peter teach the faithful and not error, or else Jesus Christ prayed and His prayer was not efficacious. I pray for thee that thy faith fail not. Therefore, Peter and his lawful successors are infallible in matters of faith and morals to the universal Church.

A short time before His Ascension, Jesus also said: "Simon, son of John, lovest thou Me more than these?" Peter believed that he loved His Master, but since his sad denial of Him he had learned not to presume any more. Before his denial, he had said: "Although all shall be scandalized in Thee, I will never be scandalized."

But, humbled by his fall, he does not say that he loves the Lord more than the rest, but he answers simply, “Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee.” Then Our Lord said: “Feed My lambs.” Again, Our Lord asked him the same question and received the same answer, and said again: “Feed My lambs.” A third time, Our Lord put the question to Simon Peter: “Simon, son of John, lovest thou Me?” We realize that St. Peter was troubled, but his heart was right and true and he simply replied: “Lord Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I love Thee.” Only then, did Jesus Christ say to him: “Feed My sheep.”

Now we ask, what is it that constitutes a flock? Is it not both the lambs and sheep? The flock of Jesus Christ consists of pastors and people. St. Peter teaches, and he is head of both the bishops (the sheep) and the priests and the laity (the lambs). Peter is empowered to feed the whole flock. We shall know if we truly belong to the flock of Christ if we get our spiritual food from Peter (in other words if we believe what the popes have taught throughout the ages). If a new religion comes along and no longer teaches and believes and accepts what the popes have taught throughout history, then they are not of the same flock; they are not of the Church that Jesus Christ founded.

Some people might also question you some day and make statements, such as, mere man cannot be infallible. We only need to answer, the pope is but the organ of the Holy Ghost. Could not God have made Peter infallible? If you say, he cannot make a poor, weak sinful man an infallible teacher of His truth, then ask them to explain how can the evangelists in writing the books of the New Testament be infallible? Or again, if the pope is not infallible, how do the evangelicals say that every regenerate soul is infallible. In other words, they think everyone can interpret the Scriptures and have a true interpretation, although history and facts prove them otherwise, as the religions do nothing but contradict one another, teaching contrary from the same texts of Scripture. If they do not believe the evangelists were infallible and the other authors of the New Testament especially, then again, their whole rule of faith falls to nothing. If the Bible is teaching error, they have nothing to base any of their doctrines on (if that is what you call their beliefs). So, strange as it may be, the evangelicals basically teach that every man is infallible when he reads and interprets the Bible; but when the pope tries his hand at it, he is invariably wrong. What a contradiction! They do not even read what the Bible told us as I just spoke about, proving that Peter was set aside and made infallible by Our Lord, Himself.

History maybe does not absolutely demonstrate the dogma of Infallibility, but it fails to destroy it. That no doctrinal error has ever been taught by the Church creates a presumption and a strong probability that She is endowed with the power that guards Her from error. If the Church could be proved to have erred in the past, the claim of Infallibility would be overthrown. But all the ingenuity of Her enemies have been unable to point out one error of Her doctrines, nor one contradiction in Her ex cathedra declarations. All of the hammering of heresies and infidelities has never struck one spark of falsehood from the rock of Peter. As St. Augustine says: “This is the rock over which the proud gates of hell prevail not.” So, every day, let us pray for the grace to understand the dogma of Papal Infallibility and to live and die in that true Church that never teaches us error and heresy, and to reject every error and heresy and new doctrine that contradicts anything the Church taught in the past.

Now, we have come to basically the last thing I will probably cover in this section on the IX Article of the Apostles Creed regarding, “I believe in the Holy Catholic Church.” It is the subject of the indefectibility of the Church. Indefectibility belongs to the essence of the Church. It means not only that the Church has never failed, but that it cannot fail. Indefectibility asserts, in spite of all opposition, the duration of the Church up to the end of the world, with all its powers and properties, both internal and external, as it was first constituted and endowed by Christ.

There is something I would like to point out from a book, *The Doctrine on the Mystical Body of Christ* by Reverend John J. Burke. On page 186: “The integrity of the hierarchy is divinely given. The Council of Trent so declares, ‘If anyone say there is not in the Catholic Church a hierarchy instituted by the Divine Will, which hierarchy consists of bishops, priests, and ministers, let him be anathema.’” From this Council of Trent, Session 23, Canon 6, as found in Denzinger’s 843, we note that the Council of Trent used the plural, and from this, I have concluded there must always be at least 2 bishops, 2 priests, and ministers. From what we have learned concerning the doctrines of when the Popes teach Infallibly in their Encyclicals and Bulls and in their teaching with their Ordinary Magisterium; we must conclude that the indefectibility of the Church means that there will

always exist the Church teaching and the Church taught. Remember the Catholic Church is a society composed of two types of people: shepherds and sheep.

Pope St. Pius X wrote in the Encyclical *Vehementer*, Feb. 11, 1906, A.A.S. 39 (1906), p.8:

“The Church is essentially an unequal society, that is, a society composed of two types of people: shepherds and sheep.”

The Acts and Decrees of the Vatican Council (1870) teach the following **dogma**:

“The Church is a **PERFECT** and **HIERARCHICAL** society. In this respect, She is NOT a society of EQUALS in which ALL the faithful enjoy the SAME rights. Not only because, among the faithful, some **are CLERGY** and others laity, but above all, because there **IS IN THE CHURCH A POWER INSTITUTED BY GOD** in order to SANCTIFY, to TEACH and to GOVERN, which certain ones have received and OTHERS HAVE NOT.”

The Catholic dogma clearly teaches that there is in the Catholic Church bishops who have the power from God to sanctify, to teach, and to govern. The infallible dogma taught by The Acts and Decrees of the Vatican Council (1870) is clear in teaching that the Catholic Church cannot consist of ONLY the laity! Therefore, everyone who denies or rejects the dogma that there are bishops in the Catholic Church that have the power to SANCTIFY, to TEACH and to GOVERN; are no longer members of the Catholic Church, the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ. They are separated from the Catholic Church because they do not accept all of Her dogmas; and if they die in that state they cannot be saved!

The Catholic DOGMA clearly teaches that the Catholic Church will always have a permanent, LIVING magisterium. However, priests and the laity are not part of the magisterium, but only Catholic Bishops are part of the magisterium of the Catholic Church.

Remember, The Acts and Decrees of the Vatican Council (1870) teach the dogma that: “The Church is a PERFECT and HIERARCHICAL society.” Consequently, we must conclude that there must always be a living Catholic hierarchy consisting of bishops, priests, and other ministers.

Remember the dogma found in DZ 1957 which teaches, “Therefore, Jesus Christ instituted in the Church a **living**, authentic, and likewise permanent magisterium.”

The Encyclical *Satis Cognitum* teaches that the living *Magisterium* is the teaching authority of the Church.

The teaching authority of the Church is the **teaching Church** (*Ecclesia docens*); and these of necessity must be Catholic bishops who have an office, authority, and jurisdiction received through the lawful and true successor of St. Peter.

Because it is a dogma that there must be a **living**, authentic, and likewise permanent magisterium; it follows with correct logic that it is also a dogma that there must also be a **living**, authentic, and likewise permanent hierarchy who are Catholic Bishops.

The Encyclical *Satis Cognitum* also teaches that the Episcopal order necessarily belongs to the ESSENTIAL CONSTITUTION of the Church. Consequently, the Indefectibility of the Catholic Church includes the dogmatic truth that the Episcopal order of the teaching Church (*Ecclesia docens*) will last until the end of the world.

How else can we conclude anything except that there must be a living authority consisting of Catholic Bishops in the Catholic Church at all times until the end of times? That is the way that Jesus Christ founded His Church. It was first constituted with a living authority with bishops who had real jurisdiction coming from God through Saint Peter and his lawful successors.

Indefectibility includes two thoughts: perpetuity and immutability. Perpetuity of the Church has reference to the continuous and unbroken existence in time. It does not mean that some fragments of Christianity, battered and broken and scattered will survive here and there, but perpetuity of the Church asserts that the Church which Christ founded upon His Apostles will continue to flourish. The Church will last until the end of time. The Church which is called Catholic is indeed the identical society that Jesus Christ founded. Therefore, other things are included besides perpetual and immutable; it is indestructible and indefectible. The Catholic Church alone has a continuous being from the time of the Apostles to the present day without the slightest alteration or innovation of Faith, or in any article of revealed truth.

Her adversaries have acknowledged her ancient existence. They cannot assign a time short of the Apostles in an apostolic age in which She began to be, although they do contend that She has changed from something else to what She is. Some opponents of the Church point to the 16th century (others to earlier in the 5th or the 4th, or others even to the 3rd or 2nd century) when the Church made all of Her changes and left off being what Jesus Christ founded. Basically then, the Church you might say laughs at these jarring judgments, for, as She was the true Church when St. Paul wrote to the Romans, “Your faith is spoken of in the whole world,” She never could cease to be the same. The rule of faith which She follows, and the promises of her divine Founder are unimpeachable history in every age. The literature and monuments of Christian antiquity will still remain. Even the heresies that have been broached and the schisms that have broken away, and the futile efforts of Her enemies to show her fall or failure, all prove her still extant and still the same. The perpetuity of the Church is nothing but Her Catholicity in duration. It is her unity and identity in time. The four marks and the attributes of the Church cannot ever cease to exist until the end of time.

The dictates of common sense, together with a knowledge of man’s religious needs, and the purpose and aim of Christ in instituting the Church, logically prove that the Church ought to be perpetual. The Church ought to endure as long as there is work for It to do, as long as souls are to be saved, as long as there are people upon earth. There will always be men who need to be taught the truth and the proper message given through the Church that Jesus Christ intended. The Church was founded for saving souls. Its charter and commission extend to the last surviving son of Adam. Therefore, it must endure. We should take note of what Sacred Scripture also tells us which must be fulfilled. Those Scriptures I am referring to are the passages that explain what will happen at the end of times. Scriptures must need be fulfilled and they explain that there will be a great falling away from the Faith towards the end of time (just before Antichrist begins his reign and during that reign). Do not be shocked and sent away from following the true Faith just because Scriptures are being fulfilled in our time. The Four Marks and Attributes of the Catholic Church must be knowable and known, and all its powers by which it can perform its mission must remain.

This is basically what we mean when we assert that the Catholic Church is indefectible. Let the Church lose but one of its essential qualities and mark the result. For example, deprive the Church of its Apostolic authority, which is its essential form of government, and there remains no longer any efficient principle of unity. Remember that the Encyclical *Satis Cognitum* teaches that the Episcopal order necessarily belongs to the **ESSENTIAL CONSTITUTION** of the Church. But it is impossible for the Catholic Church to lose any of its essential qualities.

If the Catholic Church loses any of its essential qualities, then it ceases to be a society; and this is just what happened with the Traditionalist Movement. They lost apostolic authority. Those who are honest will admit they have no mission and no jurisdiction, no authority coming through the Church. Therefore, it should be obvious there remains no longer any efficient principle of unity in the Traditionalist Movement. That is why there is no unity in the Traditionalist Movement nor even unity within the Novus Ordo religion with all their new doctrines. If we substitute another ruling principle instead of Apostolic authority, the whole entity is changed. We have no longer the same authority and the same society. It has ceased to be the Church of Christ. Again, that is the perfect summary of the Traditionalist Movement. It has ceased to be the Church of Christ because they no longer have the power of jurisdiction. Pope Pius XII very clearly teaches that, “Jurisdiction passes to bishops only through the Roman Pontiff.” It is a fact that the Traditionalist Movement bishops must admit as true, that not even one Traditionalist Movement bishop received jurisdiction only through the Roman Pontiff. Therefore, they are no longer a part of the same society that Jesus Christ founded. Among many other problems, the Traditionalist Movement is deprived of its Apostolic authority; which is the essential form of government in the Catholic Church founded by Jesus Christ. The Traditionalist Movement bishops claim they carry on Apostolic Succession. However, because none of them receive the power of jurisdiction, they do not carry-on apostolic succession.

Again, take away the Infallibility and no extrinsic bond of unity or of faith remains. If we change, destroy, or subvert the principle of the deposit of faith, what becomes of the burden of belief, the mind and soul of the Church? Where shall we find sanctity when faith, the beginning and the root of justification, can be tampered with, rejected, or destroyed? If everybody can come along now a days and teach their own religion, how can

we have the true Faith? He who came “a priest forever” and a sacrifice for all men, a mediator for all men, wished His Church to be perpetual. If we consult the predictions and promises, whether of the Old or the New Testaments, the Scriptures proclaim the perpetuity and immutability of the Church. “A child is born to us and a Son is given to us, and the government is upon His shoulders.” “His empire shall be multiplied,... He shall sit upon the throne of David,...to establish It,... from henceforth and forever.” From these verses of Scripture, we should realize the three things are asserted here.

- * First, the coming of Christ;
- * Second, the establishment of His kingdom;
- * Third, that His kingdom is to endure forever.

Again, we read in the Scriptures: “I will make a perpetual covenant with them,” says Isaias, “not according to the covenant which I made with their fathers, ...the covenant which they made void.” The Jews made void the ancient covenant. The new covenant differs from it in this, that it cannot be made void.

The Church is called the city of God. As the psalmist says: “As we have heard, so have we seen, in the city of the Lord of hosts, in the city of our God: God has founded It forever.” Again, the Church is called a mountain and then we read: a mountain in which God is well-pleased to dwell for there the Lord shall dwell unto the end, said King David in his Psalms. To all these things it should be obvious, the Church must last until the end of time.

The New Testament is even more explicit and more emphatic. First, it foretells the perpetuity of the Church and the kingdom of Christ. In St. Luke’s gospel we read: “He shall be called the Son of the Most High and He shall reign in the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there shall be no end.” So, Our Lord says, as we quoted in St. Matthew’s gospel, “Upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” Three things are here predicted:

- * First, that Christ will build His Church;
- * Second, that the powers of hell will oppose His Church;
- * Third, that these powers can never triumph over His Church.

Now, if the Catholic Church were not infallible, immutable, and indefectible, these things could not have been said. But they were said by Jesus Christ, the Eternal Truth, and therefore, the Church is infallible, immutable, and indefectible. If the Church could cease to be, if it could change from the truth, if it could teach error, the powers of hell would prevail over It. “But, the word of the Lord endureth forever.” This word, which by the gospel has been preached unto you, St. Peter reminds us -- the Church will last forever teaching the truth. If this council or this work be of men, it will come to not, but if it be of God, you cannot overthrow it, was the judgment of Gamaliel. Those who said that the Church was sunk for 800 years in scandal and idolatry must have forgotten the promises of God. The Church cannot fail in any way, neither in extension nor in action, nor in aim. We have seen that Christ promised the help of the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Truth through His Church. “I will ask the Father and He shall give you another Paraclete that He may abide with you forever.” The Holy Ghost dwells in the Church, much as our soul dwells in our body. It is by the perpetual indwelling of the Paraclete that the Church is preserved One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic, infallible and indefectible. Men cause separation; men disagree; men are weak. The human side of the Church is full of sin. If it were not for the divine help vouchsafed to the Church, what a mess man would have made of It. It would have departed nearly twenty centuries ago. As soon as It got started, It would have departed if it depended only upon men and not upon divine help.

The members and even the ministers of the Church can claim but little credit for its progress and its preservation. Human wisdom is certainly not the cause of its propagation. On the contrary, the Church flourishes in spite of human faults. The greatest obstacles the Church experiences are from its own unworthy members. We have also already seen another reason for the indefectibility of the Church and of the promise and assistance of Our Savior. “Behold, I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world.” Here, again, three important points are presented:

- * First, the presence of Christ is promised to His Church (I am with you);
- * Second, His continual presence is promised (I am with you all days);
- * Third, His perpetual presence is promised (I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world).

The Church which the Scriptures say will last until the end of time was Christ's Church. If It were mutable, It would not remain for if It should change essentially, It will lose its identity. But, Christ's Church must prevail, therefore, it cannot change its essential features. Christ's Church is immutable because It is perfect. "I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do," said Our Lord. "All things whatsoever I have heard of My Father, I have made known to you." There was to be no tinkling with truth revealed. Jesus Christ left a Church and a message that needed no patching to be perfect. Part of Christ's work was to found a Church that would teach the same truth until the end of the world. Therefore, as dark as things may seem in the Catholic Church today, we know that somewhere upon the earth, the truth will always prevail. There will always be members of the Church that Jesus Christ founded, and that indefectible Church will always remain (and teach exactly the same) as It was when it was founded upon St. Peter and the Apostles.

Of course, we realize the Apostles, before the first Pentecost, were weak and not very well educated in the Faith, so to speak. They did not comprehend the full force of Christ's message. But the Holy Ghost was promised and supplied for their frailties: "The Paraclete, the Holy Ghost, will teach you all things and bring all things to your mind, whatsoever I shall have said to you." Change in the Church, if such a thing were possible, would come about either by addition or by diminution of the deposit of faith or by cessation in the constitution or organization of the Church. But neither of these things has taken place. Those who say the Church changes because they know of a new definition of doctrine, or a new development, or anything put forth, forget that the Church is like the householder mentioned by Our Lord: "Who bringeth forth out of His treasure new things and old."

Keep this well in mind my dear friends in Christ; to define a doctrine is not the same as teaching a new truth. To define a doctrine is to be exact in teaching it, but to teach does not mean to invent. The Church in every age has defined doctrines, but She has never invented any doctrine. The doctrine of Christ's divinity was defined in the Council of Nice in the year 325. The unity of Christ's personality was defined in the Council of Ephesus in 431. The dogma of the immortality of the human soul was not defined until the 5th Council of Lateran in 1512. While the dogma of the personality of God was undefined until the Vatican Council, which also defined papal infallibility in 1870. To those who charge the Church with adding to the deposit of faith when She defines any doctrine, defies the words of an ancient writer -- the ancient doctrines charged to Her as new show when and how and from what hands they grew. She claims no power, when heresies grow bold, to coin new faith, She but declares the old.

Her faith today is the faith once delivered to the Saints, for which St. Jude exhorts us to content earnestly.

The truths that Peter and Paul preached are those that have been taught and believed in the Catholic world today, according as they have delivered them unto us who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the Word. Nor has the constitution of the Church been altered. Neither has its organization suffered any essential change. The Church is that house built by the wise builder on a rock and the rain fell and the floods came and the winds blew and they beat upon that house and It fell not. So, the Catholic Church will never fail because It was founded upon the rock, St. Peter, and his lawful successors.

While in Herself, She is perfect and nothing can progress beyond perfection, the Church began with its admirable organization and She has retained It intact. She began with a complete Creed and She has kept it complete as Christ commissioned His Church to teach us to observe all things whatsoever He had commanded. The Church has never hesitated to impart the whole truth. St. Paul calls the clergy of Ephesus to witness that He had not failed to declare to them all the counsels of God. He anathematizes anyone who teaches a doctrine different from that which he preached. Outside of this one true fold, everything fluctuates. "They vary, hence they err," says Bossuet. That again is a summary of the Novus Ordo and the Traditionalist Movement. They vary and hence, they err. They lack the stability of truth.

I will conclude this class basically by saying that we know the Church has had its trials and tribulations and we must expect to have them to the end. Our Lord clearly foretold all this: "If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. In the world, you shall have distress, but have confidence, I have overcome the world." There are those who might fear for the Church, but the Church is indefectible and will last until the end. So, to summarize all of these things we have spoken about concerning the article of the Creed, "I believe in the Holy, Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints", I will say:

- * One in faith and worship and in rule;
- * Holy without a wrinkle, spot or stain;
- * Catholic in territory, time, and truth;
- * Apostolic in doctrine, orders, and authority;
- * Visible, a light that never can be hid;
- * Infallible in things of faith and morals;
- * Immutable, impregnable, and perpetual.

This is the Church that Jesus Christ founded. Let us pray fervently and earnestly every day to live and die as members of this true Church: “The Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.”

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