

Department: In The News

Section: Analysis of Events

Article: Problems In The Priesthood: The Tip Of The Iceberg. (Part 1)

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This article could well have been entitled: “The Spiritual Darkness in the Roman Catholic Church.” The purpose of this article is to help you understand what has been behind the problems that have surrounded the priesthood and which recently gained much attention in the social, political and religious realms. The problem with moral corruption in ministry is not unusual. The nature of the recent revelations of child molestation on the part of priests and of a long term cover-up by the Catholic Church is what gained world wide attention. Though this and other revelations of immoral activity by priests in the Roman Catholic Church are very serious moral departures from righteousness, there has been much going on in this same organization that warrants exposure to the world for its many very serious departures from spiritual truth.

To one who spends much time in the sacred Scriptures, and recognizes and accepts the authority God has placed within them, it cannot be doubted that many hundreds of millions, who had hoped it would be otherwise, have perished as the result of giving heed to the many lies that have been fed to them by the upper echelon of the leadership of the Roman Catholic Church—through their decrees, their enforced tradition, their perversions of many truths of the sacred Scripture, and in their control of their captive flock of priests of the Church. This is a very sad and tragic fact.

That there are very serious departures from the Word of God in the teaching and conduct of the Roman Catholic Church is surely known by many in the leadership of the Church. No one who, in soundness of judgment, when comparing the teaching of the Lord Jesus and of His disciples (who under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit authored the New Testament Canon of Scripture) to many things that are maintained as binding upon the “faithful of the Church” by the Roman Catholic Magisterium, can come away from such a comparison and not have concluded that much of the teaching of the Church of Rome is not on the same page as the truths of the inspired Scriptures of God.

How is it possible that those in the hierarchy of that Church, who claim to be knowledgeable of the sacred Scriptures, can continue to stand loyal to a church that does not believe the One Who it claims as its Savior and Lord? May we ask you, “What do you believe is the primary root of the problems that have gained the attention of the general public in regard to the priesthood of the Roman Catholic Church?” The problem of the molestation of children by the priesthood and of sexual deviation in other ways is only a tip of the iceberg of the darkness overshadowing the Roman Catholic Church.

The Magisterium, made up of the bishops of the Roman Catholic Church, is considered to be the highest teaching authority of the Church. While the authority of the Magisterium is not considered superior to the “Word of God,” in the official decrees of the Church the teaching authority of this august leadership (venerable by virtue of positions of authority

rather than by moral leadership) is **placed alongside** the “Word of God” in its importance to the community of believers that make up the Church. Thus the most fundamental problem of the Roman Catholic Church stems from the authority the leadership claims to hold, the position they give to Sacred Scripture, and the claim of the Church that the sacred Scriptures and the “sacred Tradition” make up the “Word of God.”

It is in this realm of assumed authority in regard to sacred truth, the tradition of the church, and the destiny of the souls of men that so very many departures are made from the Sacred Scriptures. Yet the Magisterium, in its self-ordained authoritative teaching capacity, has maintained that the Roman Catholic Church “always remains faithful to the teaching of the apostles, to the brotherhood, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.”

It is, therefore, not surprising that with more than three dozen serious departures in doctrine from the sacred writings of Scripture that there should be a crisis in the priesthood. The great amount of false teaching of the church surely must and has undermined the morality of the priesthood. Priests are required to take an oath, as they are admitted to the priesthood, to obey their superiors and the authority they hold in “giving an authentic interpretation of the Word of God”—and in many other matters. (And keep in mind that in the teaching of this Church organization the “Word of God” is considered as comprising both the sacred Scriptures and the sacred Tradition.) That you may not doubt what we tell you in this, here are some quotes from the authoritative pronouncements of Vatican II governing the faith and practice of the membership of the Roman Catholic Church:

“Sacred Tradition and sacred Scripture, then, are bound closely together, and communicate one with the other. For both of them, flowing out from the same divine well-spring, come together in some fashion to form one thing, and move towards the same goal. Sacred Scripture is the speech of God as it is put down in writing under the breath of the Holy Spirit. And Tradition transmits in its entirety the Word of God which has been entrusted to the apostles by Christ the Lord and the Holy Spirit. It transmits it to the successors of the apostles so that, enlightened by the Spirit of truth, they may faithfully preserve, expound and spread it abroad by their preaching. Thus it comes about that the Church does not draw her certainty about all revealed truths from the holy Scriptures alone. Hence, both Scripture and Tradition must be accepted and honored with equal feelings of devotion and reverence.” (*Vatican Council II: Dogmatic Constitution On Divine Revelation* 9.)

Sacred Tradition and sacred Scripture make up a single sacred deposit of the Word of God, which is entrusted to the Church. By adhering to it the entire holy people united to its pastors, remains always faithful to the teaching of the apostles, to the brotherhood, to the breaking of bread and prayers...

But the task of giving an authentic interpretation of the Word of God,

whether in its written form or in the form of tradition, has been entrusted to the living teaching office of the Church alone. {Cf. Pius XII, Encycl. *Humani Generis*, 12 Aug. 1950: *AAS* 42 (1950) 568-569; *Denz.* 2314 (3886).} Its authority in this matter is exercised in the name of Jesus Christ. Yet this Magisterium is not superior to the Word of God, but is its servant. It teaches only what has been handed on to it. At the divine command and with the help of the Holy Spirit, it listens to this devotedly, guards it with dedication and expounds it faithfully. All that it proposes for belief as being divinely revealed is drawn from this single deposit of faith.

It is clear, therefore, that, in the supremely wise arrangement of God, sacred Tradition, sacred Scripture and the Magisterium of the Church are so connected and associated that one of them cannot stand without the others. Working together, each in its own way under the action of the one Holy Spirit, they all contribute effectively to the salvation of souls. (*Vatican Council II: Dogmatic Constitution On Divine Revelation* 10.)

Notice carefully these words in this last paragraph: "...sacred Tradition, sacred Scripture and the Magisterium of the Church are so connected and associated **that one of them cannot stand alone without the other.**" How can it possibly be that tradition and the authorized teaching of the Roman Catholic leadership (authorized by whom?) can stand side by side with the sacred Scripture, and that sacred Scripture cannot stand alone as the infallible guide to faith and practice? Thus you can see the Roman Catholic Church places their "Tradition" and the Magisterium on equal footing with the Sacred Scripture. Moreover, as we pointed out above, that the Roman Catholic Church can add the "sacred Tradition" to the sacred Scripture and call the combination the Word of God is nonsense. It is surely unacceptable before God. And in truth, this is blasphemy! It is taking that which is sacred, removing part of it, and adding that which is corrupt to it. This is what the Roman Catholic Church has been doing. It is all about prestige and power and control over the souls and hearts of men and the material resources of the earth.

Can you not see that this allows the Roman Catholic Church to foist upon its adherents whatever doctrine it may wish to exult to the highest level of "faith and practice" of the church. Where is the direct revelation of the Holy Spirit that God the Father has authorized the exalted tradition of the church to the place where the "Tradition" of the Church "must be accepted and honored with equal feelings of devotion and reverence" alongside the holy Scriptures?

We have just quoted for you how it is that the Roman Catholic Church does this: "Thus it comes about that the church does not draw her certainty about all revealed truths from the holy Scriptures alone." If you cannot see the tremendous error in this, it can only be that you are relatively unfamiliar with the Word of God (excluding the "Tradition" of the Church) or you are unwilling to believe truth when it is presented to you in clear fashion. Do hear what the sacred Scriptures declare:

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for

doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness  
(2 Timothy 3:16).

Notice carefully that this does not say “All Scripture and all sacred tradition” is given by inspiration of God...and is profitable...” Moreover, it is clear from this that the inspired Scriptures are to be the means of determining whether any doctrine claimed to be authoritative is in fact commanded or revealed of God. In order to be able to rightly judge what is truth from what is falsehood, you must come to realize that the Scriptures stand alone as the Divinely authorized means whereby all other doctrine, all other teaching, and whatever else may be declared as binding on man (spiritually and morally, in faith and in practice) may be judged as to whether or not they are valid and true. Any doctrine or teaching that violates, overrides, or contradicts the sacred Scriptures are not to be accepted as being approved by God and binding upon man. Those who sponsor or authorize the teaching of falsehoods for truth are themselves heretics and are not to be believed and followed.

Let us look at several more areas of serious departure from the sacred Scriptures. The Catholic Church has continued to add insult to the glory of God in adding many “glories of Mary.”

“The Catholic Church has always and with justice put all her hope and trust in the Mother of God. She who is associated with him in the work of man’s salvation has favor and power with her Son greater than any other human or angelic creature that has ever obtained or ever can obtain.” (Pope Leo XIII, *Supreme Apostolatus*)

“We have a confident hope that God will at length let himself be moved and have pity upon the state of his Church, and give ear to the prayers coming to him through her whom he has chosen to be the dispenser of all heavenly graces.” (Pope Leo XIII, *Superiore Anno*)

“Holy Mary, Mother of God: With Elizabeth we marvel, ‘And why is this granted me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?’ Because she gives us Jesus, her son, Mary is the Mother of God and our mother; we can entrust all our cares and petitions to her: she prays for us as she prays for herself: ‘Let it be to me according to your word.’ By entrusting ourselves to her prayer, we abandon ourselves to the will of God together with her: ‘Thy will be done.’

Pray for us sinners...By asking Mary to pray for us, we acknowledge ourselves to be poor sinners and we address ourselves to the ‘Mother of Mercy,’ the All-Holy One. We give ourselves over to her now, in the Today of our lives. And our trust broadens further, already at the present moment to surrender “the hour of our death” wholly to her care. May she be there as she was at her son’s death on the cross. May she welcome us as our mother at the hour of our passing to lead us to her son, Jesus, in paradise.” (*Catechism Of The Catholic Church 2677*)

“We are then, it will be seen, very far from attributing to the Mother of God a productive power of grace—a power which belongs to God alone. Yet, since Mary carries it over all in holiness and union with Jesus Christ, and has been associated by Jesus Christ in the work of redemption, she merits for us *de congruo*, in the language of theologians, what Jesus Christ merits for us *de condigno*, and she is the supreme Minister of the distribution of graces.

And from this community of will and suffering between Christ and Mary she merited to become most worthily the Reparatrix of the lost world and Dispensatrix of all the gifts that Our Savior purchased for us by His death and by His blood.” (Pope Pius X, *Ad Diem*)

Again in the above quotations we have it, from the pen of the highest leadership of the Roman Catholic Church, instances of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. In the above Mary is credited with a position and authority she does not have, one of these being the Dispenser of graces to the church—“the supreme Minister of the distribution of graces. (Pope Pius X, *Ad Diem Illum Laetissimum*, No. 14, quoted in James McCarthy, *The Gospel According To Rome*, 218.)

According to sacred Scripture it is the Holy Spirit alone who dispensed the benefits of Calvary to the church of Jesus Christ. Here is the Scriptural proof of this truth:

Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you. And when He is come, He will convict the world concerning sin, concerning righteousness, and concerning judgment. Concerning sin, because they believe not in Me. Concerning righteousness, because I go unto the Father, and you see Me no more. Concerning judgment, because the prince of this world is judged. I have many things to say unto you but you can not bear them now. Nevertheless, when He the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth; for He shall not speak of Himself, but whatever He shall hear, that shall He speak; and He will show you things to come. He shall glorify Me; for He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father has are Mine; therefore said I, that He shall take of Mine, and shall show it unto you. (John 16:7-15).

“Now there are distributions of gifts, yet the same Spirit; and there are distributions of ministrations, but the same Lord. And there are distributions of operations, but it is the same God Who works all in all. And the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit. For to one is given, by the Spirit, word of wisdom; to another, word of knowledge by the same Spirit; To another, faith by the same Spirit, to another, gifts of healings by the one Spirit; To another, workings of miracles; to another, prophesy; to another, various kinds of tongues; to

another, the interpretation of tongues. Now the one and the same Spirit works [produces] all these dividing to every man severally **as He wills.**” (1 Corinthians 12:4-11)

“Now **the fruit of the Spirit** is love, joy, peace, longsuffering [patience], kindness [gentleness], goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control...” (Galatians 5:22-23a).

The Scripture from John Chapter Sixteen is given to show that it is the Holy Spirit Who convicts sinners of the error of their way—and brings them to repentance. Is it not grace that leads a sinner to repent of his rebellion against God? It is not Mary but the Holy Spirit Who gives men grace to believe. “...according as God has apportioned to every man a measure of faith” (Romans 12:3b). “God made this apportionment in His wisdom and in His love” (Lenski, Romans 755), and the Holy Spirit executes the will of the Godhead.

It is the Holy Spirit Who works in God’s child to produce the fruit of the Spirit. He is also the One Who distributes the supernatural gifts to the church to energize His servants in the work of ministry. No human being has ever been entrusted with the management of God’s grace to man. It requires the intelligence and wisdom of the infinite God to know what are the deepest needs of each of His children and what to give and when to give of the help and other gifts of the abundance of His grace. This is solely a responsibility of the Holy Spirit, Who resides in the believer to impart to each the help, the grace each needs.

The heart (of unredeemed man) is deceitful above all things,  
and desperately wicked; who can know it? (Jeremiah 17:9)

Only God can fully fathom the hearts of every member of the race of Adam. Therefore, only He can know what are the true needs of His creation. The task of giving out the graces of the Holy Spirit belongs to Him. He is fully qualified and equipped to do this. Why should He need any help? He alone apportions what is His alone to give.

Nor is Mary to be held in any higher esteem than the Scripture permits. There are many aspects of the exaltation of Mary that can be covered that show the error of the Church in the unauthorized exaltation of this highly privileged woman. Mary is not Mediatrix (*Catechism* 969) of all grace, nor is she the Mother of God, or a Coredemptrix in suffering with Him in her motherly love. Pope Pius XII wrote in his encyclical, *Mystici Corporis*: she “offered Him on Golgotha to the Eternal Father together with the holocaust of her maternal rights and her motherly love.” How can those who claim to be so wise, and so in touch with the heart of God, err so greatly?

We know this is strong language and will not be accepted by many in the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church. But the truth must be told in love. This organization has been under attack for its false teachings for many centuries. In regard to its claims of the unchallengeable authority of its “Tradition;” of inerrancy in the teaching of its

Magisterium, when serving in official capacities in the development, clarification, or expression of doctrine; of its right to decide or declare of the fate of souls it claims to serve; and of its right to anathematize those true believers of other branches of Christianity who hold differing views of doctrine from that of the Church of Rome, it remains unrepentant before God.

When the wonderful apostle Paul disputed with the Jews at Thessalonica, Scripture reveals that he “reasoned with them out of the Scriptures” (Acts 17:2). This was the basis he used to proclaim Jesus and to seek to convict these Jews they erred in not recognizing and accepting the Savior Whom the Father had sent. And some believed and some did not. Those who refused to believe the truth that was presented to them caused such a stir that Paul and Silas were forced to leave the city. When people refuse to hear so as to truly understand and apply the truth that is being presented to them, because they do not want to admit they have been in error, and because this might lead to their rejection by their supporters and companions and superiors, they often resort to strong opposition to those who expose the error of their ways.

This has been the posture of the Roman Catholic Church ever since its institution. It is the belief of the writer of this article that very soon God is going to do something marvelous to gain the attention of the leaders and many of the adherents of the Roman Catholic Church. Sacred Scripture declares that the “gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations” (Matthew 24:14) before the end comes. For far too long the Roman Catholicism has enslaved and deceived the majority of the people it claims to have been aiding in their submission to the Church and in their Christian walk and service of the kingdom of God.

We have said there are at least three dozen doctrines taught by the Church of Rome that are serious departures from Scripture. Here is a list of some of them:

1. When the Roman pontiff speaks *ex cathedra*, that is, when in the exercise of his office as shepherd and teacher of all Christians he does not and cannot teach false doctrine. (First Vatican Council)
2. The Magisterium, the council of bishops of the Church, when teaching or declaring doctrine related to faith and morals, as in the Ecumenical Councils, cannot err.
3. That the Vatican and the Ecumenical Council claim supreme authority over the Church and require unquestioning obedience to their decrees.
4. There are at least a dozen falsehoods that are held as foundational to the life of the Roman Catholic Church covering the place of Mary in the Church, including, but not limited to, the following: that she is the Mother of God, that she sits as Queen of heaven, that it is appropriate to give her worship and to direct one’s requests to her, that she was free of original sin and never sinned throughout her life, never knew a man and had children, that at her death her body did not undergo decay and so God took her up to heaven, that she is Mediatrix of all grace (“...no one can approach Christ accept through His mother.”), that she offered Christ on Golgotha to the

Father as a sacrifice when He was dying on the cross, that she is also Coredemptrix, and that it is “chiefly due to her leadership that the gospel has spread so rapidly to all the nations of the world.”

5. That baptism removes original sin and is one’s birth as a Christian
6. That in the mass and in the Eucharist there is a continuation of the Lord’s sacrifice on Calvary.
7. Purgatory exists as a place to satisfy unexpiated punishment before entrance is gained into heaven.
8. That works are necessary as an adjunct to obtain full justification.
9. That penance is necessary to satisfy for sins committed, and that indulgences are a means of gaining remission from temporal punishment for sins.
10. That “sacred tradition” is placed alongside of sacred Scripture and that both must be accepted and honored by all.
11. The requirement of celibacy as the norm to be accepted into the priesthood of the Church of Rome.
12. The defiling oath that is required of those entering into the priesthood to give unquestioning obedience to the official teaching of the church and to their superiors.
13. The refusal of the Church to acknowledge that the blood atonement of Christ on Calvary, offered once and for all time, can have nothing added to it. That the Lord’s death on Calvary fully atoned for the sins of man is not the accepted doctrine of the Church of Rome.
14. The use of the Rosary
15. The doctrine of the “Treasury of Merit.”
16. Prayers to saints.
17. Misapplication of the sacrament of baptism.
18. The place of works.
19. The employment of such sacraments of the Roman Catholic Church as the Crucifixes, scapulars, holy water, ringing of bells, observing holy days, Stations of the Cross, the use of statues, the sign of the cross, miraculous medals, pictures of the saints, ashes on the forehead—and there are others.
20. The use of the confessional.
21. Absolution
22. Merited rewards and the increase of grace.

There are so many errors in the teaching and tradition of the Roman Catholic Church that the only wise thing for any Roman Catholic, who loves Jesus, is to come out from that Church persuasion. It is recognized that for most Roman Catholics this is not an easy thing to do. What may be done. Well here what Scripture commands of all believers in Jesus:

“Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”  
(2 Timothy 2:15)



This Sacred Scripture commands us to study the word of truth. The Bible is the word of truth. So you are authorized by Scripture to study it for yourself to learn what it is that God would have you do, and how He would have you conduct your life. No one commits a sin in studying their Bible. Therefore, you have Divine authorization to find out for yourself what the Bible commands, what is truth about a matter and to compare this to the claims of any Church organization. It is not a sin to also seek for books that claim to expose the errors of a Church system. Ask the Lord Jesus to help you in this and believe Him that the Holy Spirit will guide you into all truth. Recall we quoted from John what Jesus told His disciples:

“But the Comforter, Who is the Holy Spirit, Whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things...” (John 14:26a).

Think you not that this does not include you and me and everyone who yearns to know the truth about life and salvation and living in righteousness before the Father. This is declared for the benefit of whomsoever will come to Jesus to receive Him as his Savior and Lord. God wants you whole and bound to some ungodly tradition and unholy teaching of men. He will help you wherever you are. He can be relied upon to lead you to where you know what is truth and what is a lie of the deceiver. Look to Jesus and to the written word of God for guidance and instruction in living a holy life. There is no authorization to look to Mary, or any other saint as the source of truth. Others may help. But there is nothing wrong in testing what others say by what is declared in the sacred Scripture. It and Jesus alone is to be our guide. For Jesus is the word of God. So trust Him. Pray to the Father in the name of Jesus. And expect the Lord to work with you to solve the problems of life you face.

Once you have seen the truth about the very great amount of errors in the Roman Catholic Church the Holy Spirit will work with you to get you out of that swamp of traps and confusion and into the light of the pure and undefiled word of God.

God bless you in your desire to know the truth about the Roman Catholic Church.

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