

The Seven Sacraments of the Roman Catholic Church

I. Introduction

- a. True ability to interpret scripture and preserve the teachings of Christ are only fully possible within the Catholic Church. This is evidenced by the wide array of Protestantism, which hold a large amount of conflicting teachings (an example is the necessity of Baptism) even though all claim to be interpreting the Bible correctly. Although much truth exists in other Christian religions, the only infallible truth lies within the Bible and the Traditions of the Catholic Church. If Christ had not established a teaching, living, apostolic church then how could we properly understand the doctrines of the Bible? Note that 2 Peter 1:20 says "know this first of all, that there is no prophecy of scripture that is a matter of personal interpretation". And even the Ethiopian eunuch on his way to Damascus while trying to interpret scripture asks for Philip's help (who is ordained as a priest in Acts 6:5). "Philip ran up and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet and said, "Do you understand what you are reading?" He replied "How can I unless someone instructs me?" (Acts 8:30-31) Thus the church has the authority to properly teach the doctrines of faith for our salvation. This is why I am Catholic. Because without the Church I can't be sure that Christ's teachings are being properly preserved. If you read the Fathers of the Church their writings correlate with Catholic views on a ministerial priesthood, the sacraments and many other Catholic doctrines. The first Christians themselves were Catholics. Acts 6:1-6 shows the establishment of the priesthood under the apostles of the Church. **(Welcome to the St. Thomas Aquinas Forum of Catholic Theology!)**

- b. William Tyndale: 'Mystery, Babylon the Great,' written by the hand of St. John, guided by the Holy Spirit of God, on the forehead of the Church of Rome."
 - c. John Knox: Yea, to speak it in plain words; lest that we submit ourselves to Satan, thinking that we submit ourselves to Jesus Christ, for, as for your Roman kirk, as it is now corrupted, and the authority thereof, whereon stands the hope of your victory, I no more doubt but that it is the synagogue of Satan, and the head thereof, called the pope, to be that man of sin, of whom the apostle speaks." -John Knox, The History of the Reformation of Religion in Scotland, p.65
 - d. The Baptist Confession of Faith (1689):"The Lord Jesus Christ is the Head of the church, in whom, by the appointment of the Father, all power for the calling, institution, order or government of the church, is invested in a supreme and sovereign manner; neither can the Pope of Rome in any sense be head thereof, but is that antichrist, that man of sin, and son of perdition, that exalteth himself in the church against Christ." -1689 Baptist Confession of Faith
 - e. Tonight I want to discuss with you the beliefs of the Catholic church and explain to you why it is not a Christian church
 - f. Propositional statement: Tonight we will go over the seven sacraments of the Catholic church
 - i. Baptism
 - ii. Eucharist
 - iii. Penance or Reconciliation
 - iv. Confirmation
 - v. Marriage
 - vi. Holy Orders
 - vii. Anointing of the sick
- II. Baptism
- a. Taken from-American catholic

- b. For Catholics, the Sacrament of Baptism is the first step in a lifelong journey of commitment and discipleship. Whether we are baptized as infants or adults, Baptism is the Church's way of celebrating and enacting the embrace of God.
- c. Who can receive a Catholic baptism? From About Catholics web site
 - i. Anyone who has not already been baptized can receive the sacrament of Baptism in the Catholic Church. The Catechism of the Catholic Church states that “Every person not yet baptized and only such a person is able to be baptized,” (paragraph 1246).
 - ii. Baptism leaves an indelible (permanent) mark on the soul and there is no way nor any reason that one could be re-baptized.
 - iii. There are no age restrictions for baptism; you cannot be too old or too young to be baptized
- d. Why are children baptized?
 - i. Children receive baptism primarily to remove original sin, but can serve as a great family tradition in which to inculcate one’s child into the faith of the family.
 - ii. Infant baptism has been debated for centuries. First, let us appeal to the Bible. John 3:5 says, “Jesus answered, ‘Amen, amen, I say to you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit.’”
 - iii. Note that Jesus says “no one” can enter heaven in that passage. In the spirit of brevity here is the short answer straight from the Catechism: “*The practice of infant Baptism is an immemorial tradition of the Church. There is explicit testimony to this practice from the second century on, and it is quite possible that, from the beginning of the apostolic preaching, when whole*

“households” received baptism, infants may also have been baptized,” (Acts 16:15,33; 18:8; 1 Corinthians 1:16).

(Catechism of the Catholic Church, paragraph 1252)

- e. What does the Grace of Baptism accomplish? Catholic Baptism does five things specifically.
- i. It forgives all sins that may have been committed prior to a person’s baptism including **original sin, mortal sins**, and **venial sins**, and it relieves the punishment for those sins.
 - ii. It makes the newly baptized person “a new creature.”
 - iii. It turns the person into a newly adopted son of God and a member of Christ. Baptism incorporates one into the Church which is the body of Christ.
 - iv. It brings someone into the flock of the faithful and brings them to share in the royal priesthood of Christ (1 Pet. 2:9-10). Catholic baptism gives a share in the common priesthood of all believers and it also brings about the sacramental bond of the unity of Christians. Paragraph 1271 of the Catechism says it best: *Baptism constitutes the foundation of communion among all Christians, including those who are not yet in full communion with the Catholic Church: “For men who believe in Christ and have been properly baptized are put in some, though imperfect, communion with the Catholic Church. Justified by faith in Baptism, [they] are incorporated into Christ; they therefore have a right to be called Christians, and with good reason are accepted as brothers by the children of the Catholic Church. Baptism therefore constitutes the sacramental bond of unity existing among all who through it are reborn.”*

- v. Last, but certainly not in the least, baptism leaves and indelible spiritual mark (character) of belonging to Christ on the soul. Nothing you can do will take away this mark even if you sin a million times. Those sins may not grant you salvation, but you will always carry the mark of a Christian on your soul, therefore making re-baptism impossible.
- f. What does the bible say
 - i. Acts 2:38 And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.
 - ii. Matthew 28:19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,
 - iii. It is for believers only and not for everyone.

III. Eucharist

- a. The following is from About Catholics web site
- b. Catholics consider the Eucharist as thanksgiving and praise to the Father, the sacrificial memorial of Christ and his body, and the presence of Christ by the power of his word and of his Spirit.
- c. Before it is consecrated it is just a wafer, but after the priest re-enacts the Last Supper then it is truly the body and blood of Jesus Christ. This is also known as the Real Presence. The Church has maintained since the time of the apostles that the bread that is broken and the wine that is poured becomes the actual body and blood, not that Jesus is present with the bread and the wine, nor that they are merely a symbol. In the Eucharist Christ is truly, wholly, and substantially present. The two clearest expressions of the real Presence in Scripture is in 1 Corinthians 10:14-17 and John 6:22-69.

- i. 1 Corinthians 10:14-17 -Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry. ¹⁵ I speak as to sensible people; judge for yourselves what I say. ¹⁶ The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? ¹⁷ Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread.
 - ii. John 6: 48-51, I am the bread of life. 49 Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. 50 This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. 51 I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.”
 - iii. 53-57, “Jesus said to them, ‘I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life ... For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him ... so the one who feeds on me will live because of me.’”
- d. They call this Transubstantiation.
- i. "The Council of Trent summarizes the Catholic faith by declaring: ‘Because Christ our Redeemer said that it was truly his body that he was offering under the species of bread, it has always been the conviction of the Church of God, and this holy Council now declares again, that by the consecration of the bread and wine there takes place a change of the whole substance of the bread into the substance of the body of Christ our Lord

and of the whole substance of the wine into the substance of his blood. This change the holy Catholic Church has fittingly and properly called transubstantiation.’”

- ii. So is the actually body and blood or is this figurative
- e. What the bible says-
 - i. Thankfully, Jesus made it exceedingly obvious what He meant. John 6:63 declares, “The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life.”
 - ii. Jesus specifically stated that His words are “spirit.” Jesus was using physical concepts, eating and drinking, to teach spiritual truth. Just as consuming physical food and drink sustains our physical bodies, so are our spiritual lives saved and built up by spiritually receiving Him, by grace through faith. Eating Jesus’ flesh and drinking His blood are symbols of fully and completely receiving Him in our lives.
 - iii. The Scriptures declare that the Lord's Supper is a memorial to the body and blood of Christ
 1. Luke 22:19, And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.
 2. 1 Corinthians 11:24-25, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, “This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” 25 In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.”

3. It is not the actual consumption of His physical body and blood.

IV. Penance or Reconciliation

- a. On the subject of salvation and the penance of sin, Vatican Council II stated: "Therefore, the Church announces the good tidings of salvation to those who do not believe, so that all men may know the one true God and Jesus Christ whom he has sent and may be converted from their ways, doing penance (Vatican Council II, p. 6).
- b. "The full taking away and, as it is called, reparation of sins requires two things.
 - i. Firstly, friendship with God must be restored. Amends must be made for offending his wisdom and goodness. This is done by a sincere conversion of mind.
 - ii. Secondly, all the personal and social values, as well as those that are universal, which sin has lessened or destroyed must be fully made good.
 - iii. This is done in two ways.
 1. The first is by feely making reparation, which involves punishment.
 2. The second is by accepting the punishments God's just and most holy wisdom has appointed. From this the holiness and splendor of his glory shine out through the world. ...
- c. "The doctrine of purgatory clearly demonstrates that even when the guilt of sin has been taken away, punishment for it or the consequences of it may remain to be expiated or cleansed. They often are. In fact, in purgatory the souls of those 'who died in the charity of God and truly repentant, but who had not made satisfaction with adequate penance for their sins and omissions' are cleansed after death with

punishment designed to purge away their debt" (Vatican Council II, p. 64)

- i. I will get to purgatory in a second but first confession

d. Confession

- i. The penitent is the one confessing his/her sins and seeking forgiveness.

- ii. There are three things that the penitent must do for reconciliation with the Lord.

1. The penitent must make an act of contrition and that means to be fully sorry for the sin(s) committed and to firmly resolve that he/she will not sin again.
2. The penitent must confess his/her sins to a priest. The reason for this is given in the answer to question number 2.
3. Also, the penitent must make satisfaction for the sins.

- iii. In the Confessional

1. The priest will welcome you. Begin by making the Sign of the Cross. A simple formula can get you going: "Forgive me, Father, for I have sinned. My last confession was ___ days/months/years ago and these are my sins."
2. You then list the kind and number of your sins (e.g. I missed Mass 3 times; I lied 20 times).
3. The priest may ask you questions and/or offer you counsel. The priest will give you an appropriate penance (e.g. "For your penance, please pray 2 Hail Marys).
4. The priest then invites you (the penitent) to make an Act of Contrition. There are no required words,

although you need to include that you are sorry and that you will amend your life.

5. A commonly used Act of Contrition is the following: My God, I am sorry for my sins with all my heart. In choosing to do wrong and failing to do good, I have sinned against You, whom I should love above all things. I firmly intend, with the help of Your grace, to sin no more and to avoid whatever leads me to sin. Our Savior, Jesus Christ, suffered and died for us. In His name, my God, have mercy.
 6. The priest then prays the prayer of absolution (forgiveness): God the Father of mercies, through the death and resurrection of His Son, has reconciled the world to Himself and sent the Holy Spirit among us for the forgiveness of sins. Through the ministry of the Church, may God give you pardon and peace. I absolve you from your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
 7. You answer, "Amen."
 8. The priest may then say, "God has forgiven your sins. Go in peace." You respond, "Thanks be to God." You then leave and as soon as possible complete the penance the priest has assigned to you.
- e. Purgatory-What is taught by the catholic church
- i. "purification, so as to achieve the holiness necessary to enter the joy of heaven," which is experienced by those "who die in God's grace and friendship, but still imperfectly purified" (CCC 1030).

- ii. It notes that "this final purification of the elect . . . is entirely different from the punishment of the damned" (CCC 1031).
- iii. The purification is necessary because, as Scripture teaches, nothing unclean will enter the presence of God in heaven (Rev. 21:27) and, while we may die with our mortal sins forgiven, there can still be many impurities in us, specifically venial sins and the temporal punishment due to sins already forgiven.
- iv. Two Judgments
 - 1. When we die, we undergo what is called the particular, or individual, judgment. Scripture says that "it is appointed for men to die once, and after that comes judgment" (Heb. 9:27).
 - 2. We are judged instantly and receive our reward, for good or ill. We know at once what our final destiny will be. At the end of time, when Jesus returns, there will come the general judgment to which the Bible refers, for example, in Matthew 25:31-32: "When the Son of man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate them one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats." In this general judgment all our sins will be publicly revealed (Luke 12:2-5).
 - 3. Augustine said, in *The City of God*, that "temporary punishments are suffered by some in this life only, by others after death, by others both now and then; but all of them before that last and strictest judgment" (21:13).

4. It is between the particular and general judgments, then, that the soul is purified of the remaining consequences of sin: "I tell you, you will never get out till you have paid the very last copper" (Luke 12:59).

f. Indulgences

- i. "[The Roman Catholic Church] 'teaches and commands that the usage of indulgences -- a usage most beneficial to Christians and approved by the authority of the Sacred Councils -- should be kept in the Church; and it condemns with anathema [cursing by ecclesiastical authority] those who say that indulgences are useless or that the Church does not have the power to grant them.'" (*Vatican Council II*, p. 71)
- ii. a Mass said for the benefit of someone in purgatory—

g. What does the bible say

- i. The concept of confession of sin to a priest is nowhere taught in Scripture.
- ii. First, the New Testament does not teach that there are to be priests in the New Covenant.
- iii. Instead, the New Testament teaches that all believers are priests.
- iv. First Peter 2:5-9 describes believers as a "holy priesthood" and a "royal priesthood."
- v. Revelation 1:6 and 5:10 both describe believers as "a kingdom of priests."
- vi. In the Old Covenant, the faithful had to approach God through the priests.
 1. The priests were mediators between the people and God.
 2. The priests offered sacrifices to God on behalf of the people. That is no longer necessary.

- vii. Because of Jesus' sacrifice, we can now approach God's throne with boldness (Hebrews 4:16).
- viii. The temple veil tearing in two at Jesus' death was symbolic of the dividing wall between God and humanity being destroyed. We can approach God directly, ourselves, without the use of a human mediator.
- ix. Why? Because Jesus Christ is our great High Priest
 1. Hebrews 4:14-15 Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. 15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.
 2. And the only mediator between us and God For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, (1 Timothy 2:5).
 3. The New Testament teaches that there are to be elders (1 Timothy 3), deacons (1 Timothy 3), bishops (Titus 1:6-9), and pastors (Ephesians 4:11) – but not priests.

V. Confirmation

- a. From about Catholics- Confirmation is a sacrament of initiation which completes baptism through sealing in Holy Spirit and anoints the recipient as priest, prophet, and king.
- b. What are the effects of Confirmation?
 - i. In short it is the full outpouring of the Holy Spirit as once granted to the apostles on the day of Pentecost. Confirmation brings Catholics a deepening of baptismal grace and unites us more firmly to Christ. It increases

the gifts of the Holy Spirit and leaves an indelible mark on the soul just like baptism.

- c. What are the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit? The seven gifts of the Holy Spirit received through Confirmation are
 - i. Wisdom,
 - ii. Understanding,
 - iii. Knowledge,
 - iv. Fortitude or Courage,
 - v. Counsel,
 - vi. Piety or Love, and
 - vii. Fear of the Lord.
- d. What does the bible say
 - i. The Bible is silent on the matter of such a ritual. In fact, the idea that a person can “confirm” to another that he/she is in the faith is denied in Scripture.
 - ii. Each individual must determine the state of his/her soul based on several criteria.
 - iii. First, we are confirmed by the Holy Spirit who lives in our hearts. “The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children” (Romans 8:16).
 - iv. When we accept Christ as Lord and Savior, the Holy Spirit takes up residence in our hearts and gives us assurance that He is present and that we belong to Him, and He also teaches and explains spiritual things to us (1 Corinthians 2:13-14), thereby confirming that we are new creations in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17).
 - v. We are also confirmed in the faith by the evidence of our salvation.
 1. First John 1:5-10 tells us that the evidence of our salvation is manifested in our lives: we walk in the Light, we do not lie, we confess our sin.

2. James 2 makes it clear that the evidence of faith is the works we do. We are not saved by our works, but our works are the evidence of the saving faith in us.
 3. Jesus said, “By their fruits you will know them” (Matthew 7:20).
 4. The spiritual fruit produced in us by the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22) is the confirmation that He lives within us.
 5. Therefore, we are told to “examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you— unless, of course, you fail the test?” (2 Corinthians 13:5).
 6. In addition, Peter tells us to “make your calling and election sure” so that we will “receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 1:10-11).
- e. The final “confirmation” of our salvation is, of course, in the future.
- i. Those who are true Christians, the Bible tells us, will persevere to the end, “eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will also confirm you to the end” (1 Corinthians 1:7-8 NKJV).
 - ii. We are sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise, “Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory” (Ephesians 1:13-14).
 - iii. This, then, is the true meaning of confirmation—salvation was purchased by the blood of Christ in

whom we have faith, it is evidenced by our walk with Him, and it is confirmed to us by the Holy Spirit within.

VI. Marriage

- a. Marriage, also known as matrimony, is a sacrament in the Catholic Church; it is the union of one male to one female in order to come closer to God and is the appropriate venue in which to bear children.
- b. Marriage is a sacred covenant between each spouse with each other and with God.
- c. A sacrament is an outward expression of inward grace. Sacramentally speaking, each spouse in the marriage acts as a conduit of God's grace to the other spouse, hence the reason it is a sacrament. Christ is the source of this grace and the spouses serve as Christ to each other.
- d. A Catholic is permitted to marry a baptized non-Catholic and is referred to by the Church as a mixed marriage.
- e. Annulment church says that you did not meet one of the following criteria
 - i. Each person must be baptized.
 - ii. Each person is entering into the marriage upon their own free will; neither person could be coerced into marriage.
 - iii. Each person must not be impeded by any natural or ecclesiastical law.
- f. Interesting note- If your previous marriage was not annulled and you chose to remarry, then no, because you would be in adulterous relationship and in a state of mortal sin. Otherwise it is perfectly acceptable to receive the Eucharist if you are divorced.
- g. What does the bible say about marriage and divorce-
 - i. Genesis

- ii. Matthew 19:9 And I say to you: whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery.”

VII. Priesthood

- a. What are the effects of this sacrament?
- b. Holy Orders confers a special grace upon the recipient that enables him to act as a representative of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:20), Head of the Church, in his triple office of priest, prophet and king.
- c. Holy Orders, also, like Baptism and Confirmation, confers and indelible spiritual character and can never be repeated and is not a temporary grace or temporary effect of grace.
- d. The Catechism says, “It is true that someone validly ordained can, for grave reasons, be discharged from the obligations and functions linked to ordination, or can be forbidden to exercise them; but he cannot become a layman again in the strict sense, because the character imprinted by ordination is for ever. The vocation and mission received on the day of his ordination mark him permanently.”
- e. The New Testament teaches that there are to be elders (1 Timothy 3), deacons (1 Timothy 3), bishops (Titus 1:6-9), and pastors (Ephesians 4:11) – but not priests.

VIII. Anointing the sick

- a. What is Anointing of the Sick?
- b. Anointing of the Sick is a sacrament which gives one grace as strengthening, and peace and courage to overcome the difficulties that are associated with disease, illness and dying.
- c. “Illness can lead to anguish, self-absorption, sometimes even despair and revolt against God. It can also make a person more mature, helping him discern in his life what is not essential so that he can turn toward that which is. Very often

illness provokes a search for God and a return to him.”
(Catechism of the Catholic Church, paragraph 1501)

- d. Anointing of the Sick is a gift of the Holy Spirit. It also creates a union with the Passion of Christ (Jesus’ suffering on the cross). Just as Christ suffered and was glorified, one also receives grace through suffering, a consequence of original sin, so that there is healing of the soul.

IX. Other practices

- a. Praying to the saints
- b. Mary –Immaculate conception
- c. Mary in the Old Testament
 - i. She appears as a prototype of the second Eve in the creation narrative. After human-kind sins in the Garden of Eden, God says to the serpent (Satan), “I will put enmity you and the woman and between your offspring and hers. He will strike at your head, while you strike at his heel,” (Gen. 3:15).
 - ii. In Israel the ark of the covenant sheltered by the meeting tent represented the presence of God. “Put the ark of the commandments in it...then a cloud covered the meeting tent and the glory of the Lord filled the dwelling,” (Ex. 40:3,34).
 - iii. In the Luke birth account the angel said to Mary, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will over-shadow you,” (Lk. 1:35). Mary is the ark of the new covenant.
- d. The following is from the catholic teaching-
 - i. It’s important to understand what the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception is and what it is not. Some people think the term refers to Christ’s conception in Mary’s womb without the intervention of a human father; but that is the Virgin Birth. Others think the

Immaculate Conception means Mary was conceived "by the power of the Holy Spirit," in the way Jesus was, but that, too, is incorrect. The Immaculate Conception means that Mary, whose conception was brought about the normal way, was conceived without original sin or its stain—that's what "immaculate" means: without stain. The essence of original sin consists in the deprivation of sanctifying grace, and its stain is a corrupt nature. Mary was preserved from these defects by God's grace; from the first instant of her existence she was in the state of sanctifying grace and was free from the corrupt nature original sin brings.

- e. From Catholic answers
 - i. The historic Christian practice of asking our departed brothers and sisters in Christ—the saints—for their intercession has come under attack in the last few hundred years. Though the practice dates to the earliest days of Christianity and is shared by Catholics, Eastern Orthodox, the other Eastern Christians, and even some Anglicans—meaning that all-told it is shared by more than three quarters of the Christians on earth—it still comes under heavy attack from many within the Protestant movement that started in the sixteenth century.
 - f. The issue of Catholics praying to saints is one that is full of confusion.
 - g. It is the official position of the Roman Catholic Church that Catholics do not pray to saints or Mary, but rather that Catholics can ask saints or Mary to pray FOR them.
 - h. The official position of the Roman Catholic Church is that asking saints for their prayers is no different than asking someone here on earth to pray for us.

- i. However, the practice of many Catholics diverges from official Roman Catholic teaching.
- j. Many Catholics do in fact pray directly to saints and/or Mary, asking them for help – instead of asking the saints and/or Mary to intercede with God for help.
- k. Whatever the case, whether a saint or Mary is being prayed to, or asked to pray, neither practice has any biblical basis.
 - i. The Bible nowhere instructs believers in Christ to pray to anyone other than God.
 - ii. The Bible nowhere encourages, or even mentions, believers asking individuals in heaven for their prayers.
 - iii. Why, then, do many Catholics pray to Mary and/or the saints, or request their prayers?
- l. Catholics view Mary and the saints as "intercessors" before God. They believe that a saint, who is glorified in Heaven, has more "direct access" to God than we do.
- m. What does the bible say
 - i. Therefore, if a saint delivers a prayer to God, it is more effective than us praying to God directly. This concept is blatantly unbiblical. Hebrews 4:16 tells us that we, believers here on earth, can "approach the throne of grace with confidence."
 - ii. First Timothy 2:5 declares, "For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."
 - iii. There is no one else that can mediate with God for us. If Jesus is the ONLY mediator, that indicates Mary and the saints cannot be mediators.
 - iv. They cannot mediate our prayer requests to God. Further, the Bible tells us that Jesus Christ Himself is interceding for us before the Father: "Therefore He is able to save completely those who come to God

through Him, because He always lives to intercede for them" (Hebrews 7:25).

- v. With Jesus Himself interceding for us, why would we need Mary or the saints to intercede for us?
- vi. Whom would God listen to more closely than His Son?
- vii. Romans 8:26-27 describes the Holy Spirit interceding for us. With the 2nd and 3rd members of the Trinity already interceding for us before the Father in heaven, what possible need could there be to have Mary or the saints interceding for us?