

Father Giuseppe Da Corlo

The true way of Christianity

**"I DO NOT KNOW IF THE HERETIC
STILL HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY;
NOW WILL argue with THE SCRIPTURES
AND NO LONGER WITH US."**

(Saint Augustine)

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CHAPTER 1

AN URGENT APPEAL

1. TO THE CATHOLIC

The sad spectacle of a divided Christianity and discordant may well be called "the most serious scandal of our time", although this spiritual tragedy has been dragging on for more than four centuries.

For the children of the One True Church of Christ must arise spontaneously in the heart with a sense of pity towards living and fraternal brothers wandering and a feeling of gratitude to God who wanted to free us from ruin.

What is in front of our eyes is not something that could disturb our faith. Jesus had already said everything: "... there shall arise false Christ's, and false prophets, and shall shew signs and wonders seduce, if possible, even the elect. However, you be careful! I have told you all" (Mark 13:22:23)

The rest of this sad phenomenon of ferocious wolves ravage the flock of Christ, is as old as the Church. The Second Letter of Peter 1-2: "There were, however, among the peoples of the false prophets, as well as there will be among you lying teachers who will introduce sects of perdition and will deny the Lord that bought them, pulling him a speedy perdition . many will follow their licentiousness, and because of them the way of truth will be blasphemed; them for greed they will exploit you with false words, but their

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Condemnation has long been idle, and their destruction is lying in wait." St. Paul tells us then that behavior should be taken with these mischief-makers. Romans 16, 17-18 and 20: "O brothers, I urge you to open your eyes to those who create dissensions and obstacles contrary to the doctrine which you have below: keep away from them because they do not serve our Lord Christ, but their its belly and with fine talk and flattery they deceive the hearts of the simple. "

It 'time of enemy's attack: do not give up.

Are we betraying the Faith of our Fathers? Faith of thousands of martyrs that spread their blood? The faith in which they died happy our dear? Faith in which lived the greatest Italian Genes? Faith in which we were born and were educated on the lap of our mother? That Faith which flourished for two thousand years, all generations of the most civilized people?

"You live with fear in the days of our pilgrimage knowing it at the cost of perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed, but with the precious blood of Christ" (1 Peter 1: 17-19).

Repudiate the truth most comforting, the grandest and most beautiful of our religion, to listen to new errors of the enemies of the Church?

"Guard the deposit of faith (1), avoiding expressions of profound truths and contradictions of

1) The deposit is the sacred doctrine, the true Gospel.

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what science falsely so called: which some lost their adhering to the faith "(1 Timothy 6.20).

Written words seem attached to us, to save us from the current danger of being deceived by the errors of the Protestants and Jehovah's Witnesses, what St. Paul wrote to the Galatians: "I marvel that you pass by so quickly that the gospel that he called in grace of Christ, to a different one. Yet there is another gospel, but there are some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. well even if we, or an angel from heaven were to preach a gospel other than what you we have preached unto you, let him is accursed. Already we have said and I repeat it now: if anyone preaches to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let him be accursed! "(Galatians 1, 6-9).

We pray as Jesus prayed at the Last Supper, so that those who believe in him "are all one, so that the world may believe" (John 17:21). Jesus foretold: "There are more of my sheep out of this fold, you must collect and make them hear my voice, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd" (John 10:16).

The Immaculate Virgin Mother of God, our Mother and Queen, crush once again the head to the infernal serpent that once again undermines the beauty of the mystical bride of Christ, the Church.

2. PRIESTS

While the flock of Christ, our flock is attacked by the deceptions of the servants of the error, we must not

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let it be said of us as, in the words of the prophet Isaiah said God himself against the infidel rulers of his people: "His watchmen are all blind, they do not notice anything. there all dumb dogs, they cannot bark, dreaming, lying down, they love to sleep. "(Isaiah 56.10).

In this regard it should be noted that the best weapon is always diligent teaching, substantial and consistent catechism to children and adults alike. It is not without reason that the anti-Catholic propaganda on proceeding with a particular preference for those regions where the organization of the catechism is weaker and where there are no

initiatives to cultivate the religious education of adults. This becomes all serious and grave recall.

Do not defend ourselves complaining, but . organizing ourselves. A worthy Emiliano priest, Don Carlo Lidner, wrote at the time: "When fifty years ago Camillo Prampolini plagued Emilia with his socialist materialism, which, thin as it was, seemed at first even respectful of religion, priests Reggio Emilia, in most, pray the rosary, made catechism to children before admitting them to the sacraments, paraded the traditional processions, singing hymns, and who observed the phenomenon of red then with some concern, answered simply: - You will see that will pass –

The few priests who were to decisive action, lest we forget, seemed the exalted. Today we pay more - and who knows until - those unforgivable errors, derived from not having understood then, it seems that we are not taught

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enough to persuade the bitter experience that the ideas penetrate and walking. "

They are particularly urgent for us the recommendations that St. Paul to Timothy: "I charge you in front of God and Christ Jesus who will come to judge the living and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom: preach the word, be urgent in season and out of season, reprimand, encourage through all patience and doctrine. the day will come, when they will not endure healthy doctrine , but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own likings, from listening to the truth and turn to the fairy tails. carefully you, always be, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill the duties of your ministry. "(2 Timothy 4: 1-5).

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CHAPTER II

COMMON ERRORS OF PROTESTANT'S

- Bible and Tradition

a) They accept the Holy Scriptures as the only source of Christian revelation, rejecting all doctrinal heritages of Tradition and the Magisterium of the Church.

b) From the number of inspired books of Holy Scripture excluding some books of the Old Testament, other Protestants sects exclude the New Testament Epistle to the Hebrews, the Epistle of S. James, the Second Epistle of St. Peter, the Epistle of S. Jude and Revelation.

c) rejecting the Magisterium (1) of the Church, relying on the free individual test understanding of the Bible that they put in the hands of the faithful without the necessary notes of the most difficult and obscure, creating confusion and discord endless even on the most important Christian doctrine.

- Original Sin and Baptism

a) For the majority of Protestants sin

1) For the Magisterium refers to the Pope and the Bishops as teachers of the Word of God and shepherds of the flock (Acts 20:28).

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Original is a corruption of our essential nature is identified with our nature and corrupts all our work so that nothing can be good use for salvation. Faith alone justifies (- makes us righteous, sanctifies us); baptism is only a symbolic ritual of registration to Christianity.

b) For some modern cults Original sin is a personal sin of Adam, not transmissible to descendants; baptism erases personal sins, and is given only to adults who committed them. The only baptism is by immersion.

- The justification and works

a) The merits of Jesus Christ the Redeemer are applied to man of faith without through making any no real justification (sanctification) inside. The sins of man are covered, but not deleted. Protestants so ignore the supernatural and Grace.

b) Good works are a natural manifestation of the Faith, but they do not need to us to deserve eternal life due to us by the merits of Christ alone that gives to those who believe in Him works of penance are unnecessary and were never controlled by Christ.

- Christ and the Holy Trinity

Many Protestants belonging to the modern sevens liberal deny the divinity of Jesus Christ, considering teacher and example of truth and holiness,

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but not the Redeemer of men in the Catholic sense. The work of Christ is called by them Redemption in the sense that Christ has elevated humanity with its lofty teachings.

Deny consequently the SS. Trinity. Ignore the Holy Spirit, and calling "spirit of God" confuse him with the Father who they recognize God as an only divine person.

Primacy and Infallibility

Unanimously deny that Christ has given a real primacy of jurisdiction and infallibility (which they confuse with impeccability) to St. Peter and his legitimate and direct successors, the Roman Pontiffs.

- Hierarchy and celibacy

Many Protestants, especially the adherents of the modern seven liberal deny that Christ has set in His Church a hierarchy and a special priesthood. Others say that we are all priests.

- The Blessed Sacrament

Denying the effectiveness of all the sacraments (which none of them accept either numerically all), they teach that Jesus at the Last Supper instituted a ritual simply commemorating his Passion, thus denying the real presence of Jesus in the SS. Eucharist, denying the reality of the Eucharistic Sacrifice as well as unnecessary as well as

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the Cross, saying rather that the mass of Catholics is an insult to God and a violation of the Scriptures.

- Confession of sins headset

a) unanimously deny the necessity of confession made to the priest, saying that it is not of biblical origin, but late invention of the Catholic Church.

b) admit a general confession of one's sins to be done to God for the sins committed against Him and our brothers of the same faith for their offenses against them.

c) They deny the distinction between mortal and venial sin.

- Hell and Purgatory

a) Many Protestants deny the eternity of the pains of hell, preferring to believe that the bad guys as punishment for their sins are completely destroyed. Some of them even deny the immortality of the soul.

b) unanimously deny the existence of purgatory and the utility of prayers for the deceased, thus denying the reality and the usefulness of indulgences.

- Mary

a) They say that Mary is the Mother of Christ, but they say it's not you can grant the title of Mother of God against this divine grandeur of Mary hurl themselves especially those seven modern and liberal

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which deny the mystery of the SS. Trinity and consequently also the divinity of Christ.

b) they deny the perpetual virginity of Mary, they say that if Mother could not be Virgin and the majority of Protestant denies the historical reality or even the possibility of miracles. From Scripture they believe they can also get that Maria SS. had other children besides Jesus

c) They do not recognize the dogma (= truth of faith) nor that of the Immaculate Conception neither the Assumption of Mary into Heaven. For them, Maria was a lucky woman, but common.

- Images and relics

They say it is superstitious and abusive in respect of God any form of worship to the Virgin and Saints. They say the idolatrous veneration that Catholics have the relics of saints.

- The true Church of Christ

Protestants deny the value of the characteristic that Christ gave to the one and only true Church founded by him to make it recognizable to believers among many false churches. They deny that the true Church of Christ is One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. They deny this because their churches do not have these characteristics and therefore are not the true Church of Christ.

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CHAPTER III

THE BIBLE AND THE BIBLE

1. dutiful details

The Bible is one. There are not more Bibles. there is only one Bible. It is a collection of writings or books compounds by various authors over a period of time of more a thousand years.

The only Bible is divided into two parts. The first, called Old Testament was written before Jesus Christ almost entirely in the Hebrew language. The second part, to which we give the name of the New Testament, including the writings of the first disciples of Christ (Apostles and Evangelists). It was written in Greek during the first century of our Christian era.

Of the only Bible there are many translations.

The Jewish Bible or Old Testament was translated for the first time in Greek, during the third and the second century before Christ. It is called the Alexandrian

the place where it is supposed to have been made the translation, that is Alexandria of Egypt. It is also known as the Septuagint (which is usually indicated with Roman numerals LXX) from number of translators; an ancient tradition says have been seventy Jewish scholars, living outside the Palestine or specially went from Jerusalem to Alexandria.

In the Christian era, starting from the second century, both the Old and the New Testament, were translated in other languages, those living and spoken (Latin, Syriac, Slavic, etc..) to make them accessible to people with-

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converted to Christianity. In times closer to us is began to translate the Bible into modern languages (German, English, Spanish, French, Italian etc..). Today there are hundreds translations of the Bible almost all languages, including those less widely and known.

2. The Bible alone is sufficient guide?

One of the many slogans or phrases at effect frequently mentioned by the Protestant says: "The Bible is the only rule of faith. Where the Bible speaks, we speak, where it is silent, we are silent too. "

To recognize the Bible as the one and only rule of faith, is not only contrary to the teaching of Sacred Scripture, but is also contrary to the most elementary common sense. In fact, the guidance established by Jesus that all men known his doctrine must be:

- a) certain and complete
- b) accessible and understandable to all.
- c) able to resolve any dispute in religious matters.

A) The Bible is not reliable and comprehensive guide.

In fact, to say that it is the only sure guide to know the truth revealed, we must first know whether it is a book inspired by God or not.

The certainty of the divine inspiration of a book

mad or excited can say in fact that the books written by him he has been dictated (or inspired) by God.

Moreover, the Bible contains only part of the Divine revelation, so much so that in the Acts of the Apostles 20, 35 is preserved a saying of Jesus that is not reported by any of the Gospels: "There is more blessing in giving than to receive. "

Again, the apostle saint. John in his Gospel says, "Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book " (John 20, 30), "There are still many other things that Jesus did which, if they should be written every one, I think that the world itself could not contain books that would be written "(John 21, 25).

B) The Holy Scriptures were not accessible to the first Christians because they were not complete until after several years that there was a Christian; printing was invented in 1440 and therefore it was hitherto physically impossible to procure a copy for every individual believer. Even today, like yesterday many Christians, the Bible remains a closed book because there not able read.

The Bible is not understood by everyone, because there many steps that are difficult and obscure, not only for the simple people, but also for the educated. San Peter himself warns us that in the Letters of St. Paul there are "things hard to understand, which the ignorant unstable and poorly understand, as do other passages of Holy Scripture, to their own destruction " (2 Peter 3: 16).

St. Luke, in the Acts of the Apostles tells us that Ethiopian as he made his lead in the carriage was reading the book of the prophet Isaiah. Questioned by Philip if he understood the meaning of what he was reading, replied, "How can I understand if no one

gives me the explanation? "(Acts 8, 30-31).

C) The Bible on its own can not give us the opportunity to resolve all disputes in religious matters.

Tests are the contradictions that the Protestants themselves who in fact are divided among themselves in many sects, although based on the same Bible!

Therefore, the Bible is not the only rule of faith established by God to make men known the truth to believe and precepts to be observed, but it is necessary the Divine apostolic tradition. Tradition, in the Catholic concept, is the word of God is not written but handed down to us from the Apostles, under the influence of Holy Spirit. It is a rule of faith distinct from Sacred Writing, but has the same value.

If it was in fact the will of Jesus that his teaching were propagated solely by means of the Sacred Scripture, He would have written in his punch a complete treatise of his doctrine, however, He wrote nothing, nor commanded the Apostles to write. Taught and gave to the Apostles the mission of teaching ensuring their continued assistance.

Could Jesus say more clear and precise words about these?

"All authority I have been given in heaven and on earth. Go and teach all nations, baptizing them in name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,

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teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded, and behold I am with you ever day until the end of the world "(Matthew 28:18).

The Apostles understood very well that their mission was to preach the truth of Christ to the whole world, and, in turn themselves, to order their successors to continue this mission until the end of times. St. Paul is very clear in this regard:

"The things that you have heard from me, in the presence of many witnesses, entrust to trustworthy men, able to teach to others "(2 Timothy 2:2). "Command these things and teach" (1 Timothy 4:11). "Therefore, or siblings, stand firm and hold to the teachings that you have received both by speeches, either by our letter "(2 Thessalonians 2:14). And St. John In his third letter he writes: "I have so much to

write, but I did not want to write them with the pen and ink, because I hope to see you soon and then we talk face to face "(3 John 1:13-14).

From all this it is clear that the gospel was entrusted especially to preaching. The Church Faithful guardian of the word of God, has the right to seek not only in the Bible, but also in other writings and practice of Christians that lived in those ages closer to apostolic preaching. Appealing to these Christians, we consider them witnesses of the divine revelation.

The main instruments through which preserves Tradition are: the profession of faith, the sacred liturgy, the writings of the Holy Fathers, the Acts of the Martyrs, practice of the Church, the archaeological monuments.

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Sacred Scripture and Tradition, therefore, are two organs of the same religious reality that complement each other, are two expressions (written and the other oral) of the same Truth and Life, which is the same Christ and the Holy Spirit, and it takes its origin revelation. The desire to separate Scripture and Tradition of the Church, is to build the confusion of ideas which Protestants give us sad show.

And, after all, what do the Protestants do if not abolish Tradition that there have always been in the Catholic Church and replace it with another tradition that have founded them or their leaders?

Jesus himself could say to them, "This way you have cancelled the word of God by your tradition. Hypocrites! Well did the prophesy Isaiah of you, saying, In vain they do worship me, teaching doctrines that are commandments of men "(Matthew 15, 6-9).

St. Paul himself had already warned the Christians not to become slaves, letting themselves be seduced by a human tradition: "Take care that no one makes you its prey with subtle philosophical arguments and vain tricks based on the tradition of men, but not on Christ "(Colossians 2: 8).

3. The books of the Holy Bible

OLD TESTAMENT

Books Historical

Abbreviations

1 genesis	Gen
2 exodus	Ex
3 Leviticus	Lev
4 numbers	Num
5 Deuteronomy	Deut
6 Joshua	Josh
7 judges	judg
8 Ruth	Rt
9 First Book of Samuel (1 Kings)	1 Sam
10 Second Book of Samuel King (2 Kings)	2 Sam
11 First Book of Kings (3RE)	1 Kings
12 Second Book of Kings (4 Re)	2 Kings
13 First Book of Chronicles (1 Chronicles)	1 Chr
14 Second the book of Chronicles (2 Chronicles)	2 Chr
15 Ezra (Ezra 1)	Ezra
16 Nehemiah (2 Ezra)	Neh
17 Tobit	Tob
18 Judith	Jdt
19 Ester	Esth
20 1 Maccabees	1 Macc
21 2 Maccabees	2 Macc

Books Educational

Abbreviations

22 Jobe	Jobe
23 Psalms	PsI
24 Proverbs	Porv
25 Ecclesastes (Ecclesaste)	Eccl
26 Song of Solomon	Song
27 Wisdom	Wis
28 Sirach (Ecclesiasticus)	Sir

Prophetic Books

29 Isaiah	Isa
30 Jeremiah	Jer
31 Lamentations	Lam
32 Baruch	Bar
33 Ezekiel	Ezek
34 Daniel	Dan
35 Hosea	Hos
36 Joel	Joel
37 Amos	Am
38 Obadiah	Ob
39 Jonah	Jon
40 Micah	Mic
41 Naum	Nah
42 Habakkuk	Hab
43 Zephaniah	Zeth
44 Haggai	Hag
45 Zechariah	Zech
46 Malachi	Mal

NEW TESTAMENT

47 Gospel according to Matthew	Mt
48 Gospel according to Mark	Mk
49 Gospel according to Luke	Lk
50 Gospel according to John	John
51 Acts of the Apostles	Acts

Educational Books

52 Letter to the Romans	Rom
52 First Corinthians	1 Cor
54 Second Letter to the Corinthians	2 Cor
55 Letter to the Galatians	Gal
56 Letter to the Ephesians	Eph
57 Letter to the Philippians	Phil
58 Letter to the Colossians	Col
59 First letter to the Thessalonians	1 Ts
60 Second Letter to the Thessalonians	2 Ts
61 First Letter to Timothy	1 Tim
62 Second Epistle to Timothy	2 Tim
63 Letter to Titus	Titus
64 Letter to Philemon	Philem
65 Letter to the Hebrews	Heb
66 Letter of James	Jas
67 First Epistle of Peter	Pet 1
68 Second Epistle of Peter	2 Pet
69 First Epistle of John	1 Jn
70 Second Epistle of John	2 Jn
71 Third Epistle of John	3 Jn
72 Jude	Gd

Prophetic Book

73 Revelation of John	Ap
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4. How to read the Bible?

As the reader you will have noticed by reading the list the books of the Bible, they are traditionally grouped in historical books, teaching and prophetic.

This division was made because some of the Bible books intend to report historical facts, really occurred, while others are intended only to give a lesson; others want to announce future events.

The division, however, is not rigid: some "Historical" books contain parts "educational" or "prophetic" and one way or the other. Sometimes history is taught through a poetic composition (such as the story of creation in Genesis 1 and 2) or symbolic (as in Original Genesis 2).

In any case when it is clear that when a sacred Author narrate historical facts there is no reason to doubt their historicity. This is particularly evident in the Gospel narratives, written by eye witnesses or by their contemporaries worthy of the highest faith, and never contradicted even by the enemies of Christ.

If you add the perfect agreement between the narrated events in the Bible and those of profane history (1) the exact description of the places, the perfect knowledge the customs and mentality of the time, and especially the special loan that the Gospels have enjoyed among his contemporaries, to encourage them to give life to bear witness of the truth, then we understand

1) See in this regard: Werner Keller, The Bible was right, Garzanti, Milan, 1988

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that everything that is said in the Gospels is the faithful narrative of what has happened historically.

It is also essential to bear in mind that the whole Sacred Scriptures was written under inspiration of God, and thus has God as the author.

For the believer, in fact, the Bible is not only a literary-historical document, but it is also and above all God's message to humanity. The Jewish people and Then Jesus with the Apostles and the Church have always considered the Bible the word of God, and God himself its true author.

This has been possible because, "God, the composition of the sacred books ... chose the men and women who He acted ... so would write as true authors, all and only those things which He wanted to be written "(2). This special service of God is called "inspiration."

It means that to know exactly which

things God has chosen to reveal and to correctly interpret the Bible we must always take regard:

- a) the "literary genre" (historical, poetic, educational, prophetic) in which the sacred author wanted to express;
- b) of "analogy of faith," meaning that every passage of the Bible must be in harmony and not in contradiction with the rest of the divine Revelation: For God can not contradict;

2) Second Vatican Council, Dei Verbum, n. 11th

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c) the "final approval of the Church," which from Jesus Christ only who has the divine mandate and the ministry of guarding and interpreting the word of God, as it is said in more detail further on.

Besides these three basic rules, it is superfluous to remember that, for the correct interpretation of the word of God, we must always regard the context, that is, in what comes first, and after a sentence.

This elementary rule of interpretation of a text - valid also for the secular of sciences and accepted even by atheists - is ignored by some Protestant sects, especially by Jehovah's Witnesses.

Citing verses of the Bible, regardless of their context, do not tell us what the Bible says really, but what they want the Bible to say!

5. Sacred Scripture, the biblical canon

Under the name of Holy Scripture, or the Bible indicate all of the 73 sacred books of which it is composed: 46 the Old Testament and 27 New Testament. the criterion for discerning the books inspired by God than those uninspired is the acceptance of them by the Apostles and their legitimate successors, to whom Jesus entrusted the task of teaching the truth.

That is clearly understood from the Sacred Scripture:

- "As the Father has sent me, also I send you "(John 20:21);

- "Go and make disciples of all nations ... teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you "
(Matthew 28:19-20);

- "He who hears you hears me, and he who rejects you rejects me "(Luke 10:16).

In fact, the legitimate successors of the Apostles, that is, the first popes and the first bishops (see chapters IX and X), faithful to the command of Jesus to teach the truth, condemned books as inspired by God in the Gospels Apocrypha (3). Also pointed to the list (or rule) of each and all of the inspired books of the Bible as early as the Synod (4) of Rome in 382 and that of Carthage in 397, that is, one thousand and three hundred years before the birth of the Protestantism.

Nevertheless, the leaders of Protestantism, of the 73 books of the Bible have accepted only 66 refusing seven: Tobit, Judith, Wisdom, Sirach, Baruch First and Second Maccabees (5) and, some Protestant sects, the Epistle of St. James, this way distributing to the Christian people an incomplete Bible.

Yet about the fakes of the Book of God, the Lord said in Revelation: "To whom will add something, God will give to him the plagues described in this book, and if anyone takes a few words of this book, God will take away from him the tree of life " (apocalypse 22: 18-19).

3) The apocryphal gospels were Gospels written typically by

heretics and were full of fabulous tales about Jesus

4) The is a meeting of Synod of Bishops convened by the pope

5) See in this respect the chapter V: the deuterocanonical books.

The Protestant Bibles also have no known clarifying and they, therefore, favor erroneous interpretations, many passages from the Bible, there, also are translated so inaccurate and biased.

Just because the Sacred Scriptures can be correctly understood by the faithful, the Church has determined that not be put into circulation the Bibles without the Imprimatur (6) of the competent ecclesiastical authority and without notes that explain to the readers the difficult passages; For these reasons, the Catholic Church believes that it is not allowed to read the Bible without notes clarifying and the Imprimatur of the Roman Church. It is according to the Scripture this way of doing? Yes, of course! in fact St. Peter writes that the Word of God "there are some things hard to understand, the ignorant and the unstable distort, as the other Scriptures, to their own destruction "(2 Peter 3:15-16).

But there's more! In the same letter (Chapter 1, verse 20) Peter says: "... no prophecy of Scripture - and this is all word of prophecy as God and the proclamation of Christ - is subject to private interpretation. "

Going against this clear warning of the Bible, Luther (the founder of the Protestantism) laid the foundation of his teaching, the principle of free examination of Holy Scripture, according to which everyone is entitled to draw from the Bible

6) **Imprimatur** is a Latin word that means "to be printed. "With it the ecclesiastical authority authorizes the printing of the Bible or other religious books.

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- According to his own private interpretation - the doctrine to believe (and the freedom to establish their own sect or Church).

Leaving everyone the freedom to interpret the Bible as they wants, it does not help the way of salvation, but it becomes a stumbling block, since everyone can interpret it according to their own convenience or their whim. For which you may have cases of people who know the Bible by heart, but they do not understand anything!

It is Jesus himself who said. He says that his listeners (who knew the Bible) peering the Scriptures, because they thought in them the eternal life; and yet they did not understand anything about them, for

they refused Him and his Gospel, that the Scriptures had preached for centuries! (John 5: 39-40).

Protestantism also consist in evangelization peoples in distributing Bibles without the necessary support of the Church's Magisterium, that is without the correct interpretation of the Word of God which is given by the legitimate pastors of the Church (see chapter IX and X).

But what's the point of distribute Bibles if each person can interpret it as he wants? How will you know who will interpret in the right way? And then Jesus did not say distributed Bibles and discuss, because the free Comparison of interpretations sprout the truth. Instead, he said: "Train ... baptized...teach " (Matthew 28:18-20). And it was to the Twelve that he said it.

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6. The principle of authority

Protestants reject the principle of authority in block and profess the free interpretation of the Bible. As this is contrary to the Holy Scripture itself we have already seen. But it is also the reason that it is against Protestants and not just the Bible.

In fact, if in a state is left a open interpretation of the application of the code of laws would the reign of chaos. For this reason, all States have the Constitutional Court, which gives a straight interpretation of the code of laws and decisions are indisputable and regulations for the judges.

Among Protestants, not having a supreme authority religious, were born hundreds of sects (and are born always new ones), because each one feels entitled to give his own interpretation of the Bible.

The only exceptions are the major Protestant groups, in which the principle of authority, driven by door, he returned from the window. For they have replaced the authority and infallibility of the Pope with the Luther, Calvin and other Protestant leaders. And this makes understand many things to those who want to understand

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Jesus, however, has put in his only true Church an infallible authority, constituting St. Peter, first Pope, and in the Apostolic College (and not in Luther, Calvin and other Protestant).

This was understood so well by the Apostles when among Christians rose early doubts on matters of faith (on circumcision and the prohibition of eating meat sacrificed to idols) they gathered in the year 51 in

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Jerusalem and established how Christians should conduct (Acts chapter 15).

St. Paul himself repeatedly went to Jerusalem to compare his doctrine with Peters and the other apostles to not frustrated his preaching as he says (Galatians 2.2).

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CHAPTER IV

The deuterocanonical

1. Differences in Bibles

Then there is a mathematic quantity difference , between the Bible of the Catholics and the Protestants, which is the number of the books. In fact, the Protestants Bible in its first part or old Testament contains seven books less than the Catholics. They are: Tobit, Judith, Wisdom,

Ecclesiasticus (or Sirach), First and Second Book of Maccabees, Baruch, Letter of Jeremiah.

These seven books absent in the Protestants Bible and which are present in the Catholics are called deuterocanonical. Therefore, the Catholics Bible in its first part or Old Testament contains 46 books, while the Protestant has only 39. the difference between the two Bibles is obvious mathematics.

Among the deuterocanonical, there is also the Second Book of the Maccabees, as in this book there is a solid foundation for the Catholic doctrine of Purgatory (2 Maccabees 12.39 to 45), we recall briefly the reasons that the Catholic Church considers as inspired and therefore an essential part also the seven books of the Bible deuterocanonical.

2. Justification

The word deuterocanonical comes from the Greek deuterios (= Second) and kanon (= standard, rule, license fees).

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Calling the seven deuterocanonical books listed above this is not to say that they are second, to the other books of the Bible, as to dignity, that is, inspiration. Under this aspect, they are equal to the other 39 books. Only to say that the Catholic Church has recognized them as inspired at a later time than the others. In other words, as there were some doubts for them, the Catholic Church first wanted to make sure the exhortation of the Apostle (1 Thessalonians 5:21) on the origin of the deuterocanonical. When the Church had secure evidence about their nature or dignity of the inspired books, they declared part of the canon or rule of faith.

Why?

The fundamental reason is the fact that the deuterocanonical are included in the Bible called the Septuagint. Now that, that Bible was widely used by early Christians, by the Apostles and Evangelists, and is mentioned abundantly in the inspired books of the New Testament.

The version of the LXX (Septuagint), spread among all

Jews throughout the world Greek-Roman, was in the hands of heralds of the Gospel an effective tool of conquest, first among the Jews themselves, then among the pagans. The Septuagint was the ally of the Gospel. Of the 350 citations of the Old Testament in the New It is estimated that about 300 correspond to the Septuagint. the Bible of the Septuagint is the main source of these quotes.

From this undeniable historical fact and we must deduce at least two conclusions:

The first. If the Church at the time of the Apostles made extensive use of the Septuagint Bible, which CONTAINS-

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also said as a result of the deuterocanonical books, is a clear sign that these books were considered by the Apostles and Evangelists as inspired as the Word of God. The true Church of Christ of all time can and should do the same.

The second. The Jews, whom the Apostles and Evangelists preaching the Gospel, had no difficulty in accepting the whole Septuagint Bible, considering how inspired even the deuterocanonical. This is a clear sign that even among Jews there was the conviction that the deuterocanonical could be considered part of the Bible. The Church, which is the true people of God (Galatians 6.16), can continue to do the same.

3. Origin of the Bible of the LXX

A bit of history about the origin of the Bible Seventy may shed more light on the issue we are dealing with.

The Bible called the Septuagint (LXX) or the Septuagint is the first translation in a different language - the Greek language - The books held sacred by Jews and almost all written in Hebrew. Was made in Alexandria in Egypt, between the third and second centuries BC, and is therefore also called Alexandrina.

At the time of this translation, the list of the Jews religious books was not so determined and closed as it was after. Experts in the field believe that there were at least three editions of Hebrew Scriptures. One of these (along canon) contained also deuterocanonical, in another (canon

short) were absent. Behind the translation of the Septuagint there is a long fee..

It is also historically established that the translators of the Seventies, in doing the work of translation, did not act independently by the religious authorities of Jerusalem. It seems indeed that the religious authorities of Palestine have sent to Alexandria some learned rabbis for the translation for the benefit of Jews living outside the Palestine.

As things done, it appears that the religious authorities of Jerusalem have never disputed the translation of the Seventy, which also contained the deuterocanonical as an integral part of the Bible. Between the two communities - That of Palestine and that of Alexandria - reigned good relations, especially with regard to the Sacred books. Common was their faith if not the country; common also the source of faith, though the number differed books considered sacred. These good relations could not be explained if the Alexandrians had considered some sacred books repudiated by Jerusalem. In Scriptures concerning the Jews were quite tight intransigent.

Two historical records confirm the above.

a) At the time of Jesus and the early Church, there was a synagogue in Jerusalem for the Jewish of Alexandrian (Acts 6, 9). Now it is known that in the synagogues, at the center there was the reading of the Bible (Luke 4:16-21). In the synagogue at Jerusalem for the Alexandrians was certainly read and explained the Bible

Seventies, which also contained the deuterocanonical. Does not result that the religious authorities in Jerusalem have banned or challenged this interpretation.

b) A piece of news that we read in the Gospel of John, clearly indicates that the Jews of the

Palestine, no less than those in the Diaspora (dispersion =) did not ignore the deuterocanonical, in fact, were inspired to them for their services. In the tenth chapter of the Gospel of John, verse 22, it is said that occurred at that time the Feast of Dedication. This festival was celebrated, then as now, by the Jewish community worldwide. It is called in Hebrew "party Hanukkah". However, the establishment of this party speaks only in Deuterocanonical and precisely 4.36 to 59 in 1 Maccabees and 2 Maccabees 1,1-2.19; 10.1 to 8. During this festival was read the first book in one piece of the Maccabees. It is difficult to explain this fact without admit that at the time of Jesus all Jews believed the deuterocanonical as sacred.

We can conclude by saying that there was a time in which the seven deuterocanonical books were later called part of the Holy Scriptures. What happened after?

4. Origin of the Hebrew Bible

In addition to the Septuagint Bible, we now have the Hebrew Bible, the one that generally relate modern translations of the Old Testament when you qualify as a translation from the original texts. How Did the Hebrew Bible have origin? what period was his issue?

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As we have already mentioned, at the time that was made the translation of the Septuagint canon or official list of the Hebrew Scriptures had not yet determined and closed as it was after. There were several editions or lists (or charges) of books that the Jews believed sacred. That there was a degree of flexibility about the number of inspired books. But this attitude underwent a change towards the end of the first century after Christ. Why?

As is well known in 70 AD Jerusalem was occupied and partly destroyed by the Romans. Israel As a nation ceased to exist. There remained only the religion as a common heritage and bond of a people dispersed. To retain and contain more this units, rabbis or religious leaders of the Jews, who detained great authority among the people, they decided to establish

in a precise and definitive which were the Sacred Scripture books and which not. Using criteria to us unfortunately unknown, of the manuscripts that existed they chose some copies and destroyed those not conform to them. So gave rise to what is usually called a textus receptus (= text accepted) or better to the Jewish Bible today in our possession, excluding other traditions or issues they considered less authoritative.

This fate befell the deuterocanonical. Why?

Among the criteria certainly not critical and the scientific scholars of biblical history we enumerated above three.

a) The first seems to have been the fact that the deuterocanonical were recent composition and therefore fully reflected the "traditions of fathers. "

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b) The second because it was not written in the Hebrew language.

c) The third because they were included in the Seventy Bible widely used by Christians. The rejection of Septuagint Bible in hate of the Christians that appropriated, dragged with it the definitive rejection of deuterocanonical

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CHAPTER V

Bible and Tradition

PROTESTANT THOUGHT:

a) Single Source of Revelation is the Bible.

b) The only way to know the divine revelation:
reading and free examination of the Scriptures

ALLEGED BASIC BIBLE:

a) John 20.31: "These things are written
so that you do believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and
believing you may have life in his name. "
Mark 7.13: "You make vain the word of God
with the tradition that you taught. "

b) John 5.39: "search in the Scriptures"
2 Timothy 3.15: "The Holy Scriptures are the
virtue that will give you the wisdom that will lead you to salvation
through the faith in Jesus Christ. "So God invites
each of us to read the Bible because only it has
the power to lead us to salvation to anyone who reads it with
faith.

YOU ANSWER:

a) Even the Catholics, faithful executors of the passages quoted,
reject any purely human tradition that is
in conflict with the teachings of Christ. however, they
fully accept the word of God, and that is whether God
has given it by writing, whether He has transmitted it
orally by the way of a divine Tradition

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its existence is also clearly stated in the
Bible.

b) The words of Jesus reported by John (5.39)
were not said in commanding tone, in fact the complete verse
says, "You search in the Scriptures, thinking to
have eternal life in them, and now its them that
bear witness to me, yet you refuse to come
to me to have life. "From those words
it results that the Jews customarily read the sacred
Scriptures, but just as the Protestants or the witnesses
Jehovah's not the meaning of it and placed
in contradiction with them. Jesus himself says:
"Your accuser is Moses, in which you store
hope "(John 5:45).

In the passage quoted from the Letter to Timothy, saint Paul urges him the Sacred Scripture, of which Timothy already had been illuminated by Paul: "But you remain balance in what you have learned and which you believed, knowing from whom you have learned "(3.14).

Paul himself repeated as it was necessary the work of teachers and scholars authorized for the correct interpretation the word of God: "God himself who has established some as pastors and teachers ... this so we are no longer be children tossed by the waves and swept away by every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, by their craftiness which tends to deceive "(Ephesians 4, 11.14).

In the Christian faith there for is not allowed the self-taught. If it is always dangerous to entrust to a young the textbooks so that those above and without the help of a secure master he is preparing to

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examinations, this would be particularly impossible when the book is the Bible.

Difficult for the sublimity of the doctrines which it contains, then the Bible is made difficult to interpret for the diversity of time, language and environment which it was written and handed down to us from various centuries make it even more obscure the doctrine. The Divine doctrine has Provided this our perplexity, with give us a living and infallible Magisterium for the interpretation of the Sacred Scriptures. excluded or denied this teaching, we see how the doctrines are most contrary supported or defended by appeal to the same biblical texts: thus was born the tower of Babel of Protestantism that – which full of unreasonableness - Accepted all the contradictory interpretations, but excludes at priori and in principle the Catholic one!

To give a reliable interpretation of the thought of the Divine to his children, the Church desires that all editions of the Bible are full of notes, this is not to restrict the freedom of the readers. Indeed! The texts of the Italian poets are put in the hands of our students, but rich of notes just to help in the proper understanding the thoughts of our great writers. What would you say a professor who delivered it to the pupils editions devoid of notes clarifying and entrust to their free fantasy interpretation of those works?

1. Bible and the Church's Magisterium

Catholics and Protestants agree that there are a number of sacred books containing the Word of God and called the Bible, that books for excel-

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lence the fundamental problem for all is knowing which way humanity can come to determine how many and which are the books that contain the Divine revelation and that make up the Bible. In fact:

- a) the same books considered sacred can not testify their divine origin; anyone could write a book attributing divine authority, and so draw in great deception the readers (exe the Quran);
- b) even the historical fact that for centuries these books were considered as sacred can be subject sure that these books are really the source of God, even the ancients may have made a mistake without a certain guide;
- c) neither can it be left to the judgment of the individual accepting or reject some of these books, because it suited whether or not his ideas or beliefs.

So if God has given to mankind books containing his Word, that must guide us to eternal life, must have also given us a absolute certainty way we can know how many and which are these sacred books.

Furthermore it is necessary this medium to understand also in its correct sense of the Bible, often difficult and obscure even . St. Peter said : "... in scriptures there are things hard to understand that the ignorant and unstable distort, as well as the other scriptures, to their destruction "(2 Peter 3:15 - 16). And the same St. Peter writes, "Know this: no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation " (2 Letter of Peter 1.20).

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In Acts 8.30 to 31 the Ethiopian questioned by deacon Philip if he understood the scriptures he was reading, replied, "How can I understand if no me explains it? ". Only Protestants have this privilege!

In vain God gave us the Sacred Scriptures if we could not know with certainty the books that contain and much less understand them in their proper meaning. So God must have given us a living teaching, perpetual and infallible (1) to get us off the impossible of knowing and understanding his divine Word.

Origin of this teaching: It is known historically Two thousand years ago Christ preached his doctrine, attributing divine authority and calling Himself God. To prove the truth of his statements worked wonders and miracles which historical truth is certain in an absolute manner.

1) For the Magisterium refers to the Pope and the Bishops in quality of teachers of the Word of God are ministers of Word and shepherds of the flock (Acts 20:28). It is said live Magisterium in the sense that these ministers and pastors, by the will of Christ, present are in his Church in every age of history. Are its representatives (Luke 10:16) to raise awareness men of all times his teaching given once for all (Jude 3). Not his own teaching, but the teaching of Christ. The Pope and the Bishops only teach what Christ taught without adding or subtracting anything. To what they teach is contained in the deposit of faith (1 Timothy 5:20). the Holy Spirit guide them in the knowledge of the whole truth (John 14:26).

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From those same books, undisputed historical - recognized by Catholics and Protestants - written by witnesses Eye of absolute truth, from which we know mission and doctrine of the Man-God, is also clearly he founded a Church to which has given an Magisterium authoritative, perpetual and infallible. We prove it with the following steps New Testament.

a) authoritative Magisterium

Matthew 28.18-19: "Jesus said to them approaching: I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. go therefore, and teach to all nations ...".

Mark 16:15: "Then he said to them, Go in all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. "

John 20.21: "Jesus then said: Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you. "

2 Corinthians 10.3-5: "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God's power pulling down of strongholds, destroying the arguments and

every proud obstacle that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and making every thought captive to obey Christ. "

1 Thessalonians 2.13: "We thank continuously God, because you are receiving the word of God we heard, you have accepted, not as the word of men, but, as it really is, the word of God, which shows its effectiveness in you who believe. "

Luke 10.16: "He who hears you hears me, who rejects you rejects me. "

b) perpetual and infallible Magisterium

Matthew 28:20: "Behold, I am with you all the days

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until the end of the world "(Christ then will help them always).

Mark 16.16: "Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned "(God can not impose such absolute adherence to a teaching - that is, a teaching - that is not infallible).

John 14.16-17: "And I will pray the Father, and he will give you another Paraclete, because it remains for forever with you, that is the Spirit of truth, ... you know it because abides in you, and shall be in you "(This Spirit is apparently infallible).

Acts 1:8: "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit When the Holy has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth. "

Rightly, then, S. Paul calls the Church: "Pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Timothy 3.15).

The various Protestant sects - who do not accept this external Magisterium and human that God has given divine authority and infallibility - they give a demonstration more evident the need for this, and the errors which inevitably falls rejecting.

Protestants, denying the infallibility of the Magisterium of the

church, they are forced to admit their personal infallibility in the correct interpretation of the Bible. But this is not proven from the Bible and denied by the facts!
And why then Protestant pastors are concerned about explain the Bible to the people and not rely on the private interpretation?

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The Church, the only faithful guardian and authorized of the Bible, has defended the integrity, infallibility and divine authority, through the centuries against all error and will against any insinuation.

The Church, therefore, has been shown to have enhanced always, more and more of the Protestants, the Holy Bible, always trying to save this sacred deposit from any violation heretical, always remembering always the Divine said, "Do not give what is holy to dogs, neither throw your pearls in front of swine because they trample with their feet, and turn against you and tear "
(Matthew 7.6).

2. The divine-Catholic Tradition

Too many people believe that the Gospel was the first criterion of truth of the Christian world. Instead, there is something that exists before the writings of the New Testament: catechesis (that is the teaching) oral Church.

The Church counts many martyrs before one books was wrote of the New Testament.
When the Gospels were written, they were not that the inspired synthesis of oral catechesis of the Apostles.

Saint Luke wanted to explain to his friend Theophilus what he had written because he would know the truth the words that had been ordered. tradition, therefore, the Catholic concept is all that God has taught men and was not been written in the Bible.

So much so that "the Gospel", so used in the profane As in the Bible, means "good news, good news, "and not" written book. "

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Jesus did not write anything, neither he commanded the Apostles to write, but commanded them to preach his doctrine.

In the letter to the Hebrews says, "In recent days God has spoken to us by his Son his "(Hebrews 1:2). Has spoken, not written. Jesus said to the Apostles (Matthew 28:19): "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations. "He did not say: Go and write. Jesus did not say: Those who read or who listen to Scripture listen to me. But he said: "He who hears you hears me "(Luke 10:16).

Of all the apostles, only two wrote, and wrote several years after the death of Jesus and in the meantime what they were obliged to believe the early Christians? only what was preached, that is the tradition or oral teaching.

St. Paul writes: "How then (people) can invoke (Christ) without first having believed in him? And how can they believe without having heard? And how can they hear without someone preacher? ... Faith comes from hearing and hearing by the word of Christ. "(Romans 10, 14-18)

The apostolic writings of the New Testament, are occasional and incomplete and contain only partially preaching, teaching, and the facts of Christ. Saint John proves it 21.25: "There are still many other things which Jesus did, which if you want to write to a to the whole world, I think, could not contain books that would be written. "

In his third letter St. John writes: "I many so things to write, but I did not want write

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with pen and ink. But I hope to see you soon and then we'll talk face to face "(3 John 13-14).

From all this it appears that the gospel was entrusted especially for preaching. The Church, therefore, in order that nothing may be lost to the Word of God has the right to seek not only in the Bible but also in writings and practice of Christians that lived in the early centuries

closer to the Apostolic preaching, that is, Tradition.

Protestants do not even have the right to use the Bible as a divine book, while rejecting the infallible magisterium of the Church, are unable to prove the divine origin of these books and legitimacy of their preaching!

3. The "word" before "the letter."

So - we repeat - when Catholics speak of Tradition, they refer to the teaching of oral of Jesus and the Apostles, not reported by the Gospels and from the apostolic writings, but which has the same authority of Holy Scripture, because it comes from the same sources, that's Jesus and the Apostles.

St. Paul writes explicitly: "Brethren, be firm and hold the traditions which you were taught, so that our word as our letter "(2 Thessalonians 2:15). The same Saint Paul, writing to the Corinthians says to them: "I delivered you the first what I also received "(1 Corinthians 15:3). The "word" then, before the "letter".

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It is precisely this tradition - which has nothing to do with the words of men - sent to hands by Christ to the Apostles and transmitted by these word of mouth to others that the Catholic Church wants to speak and the protested unreasonably reject.

That their refusal is even more unjustified if we think that Jesus did not write nor ordered to write his doctrine, but passed it on to his living voice Gospel message, so that the Apostle John as he since he could say in his Gospel: "There are many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they were written one by one, do not know if the world itself could contain the books that would be written " (John 21:25).

When the Apostles - after the Ascension of Jesus into the Sky - scattered among the nations to preach the Word of God, the Gospels and the other writings of the New Testament

did not yet exist. They had to wait twenty to sixty years before they were all written. From which it is clear that the word of God transmitted orally - that is, Tradition - preceded in time the written one, the New Testament, and has consequently the same authority!

The same list of inspired books (exe, the fee Bible) is by tradition (exe of teaching transmitted by word) that we know it. The Protestants can perhaps prove by the Bible that their 65 or 66 sacred books are the word of God?

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CHAPTER VI

ORIGINAL SIN AND BAPTISM

PROTESTANT THOUGHT:

- a) For some Protestant sects Original sin is a personal sin of Adam, not transmissible to descendants.
- b) For the majority of classic Protestants however, is the concupiscence of sin Adam had essentially corrupted the human nature so that to take away all freedom and possibility of good action.

ALLEGED BASIC BIBLE:

- a) Ezekiel 18.20: "He who has sinned and not another must die, the son dose not bear the iniquity of the father, neither the father bears the iniquity of the son. "
- b) S. Paul talking of the concupiscence calls it sin: "O wretched man that I am! Who has delivered me from this body of death? The grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord, so that I myself am with the mind servant of God's law, with the flesh at the law of sin. "(Romans 7: 24-25)

YOU SAYS:

- a) God Himself says that the personal sins will not be transmitted and will pay the penalty who committed them: its

that right and we believe. Faithful to the Bible but we affirm that is transmitted to all men the sin

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that Adam committed as headman of the human general and depository of supernatural gifts, conferred not only for himself (as an individual) but for all his descendants.

b) Original Sin is not the lust that does not eliminate the possibility of acting well. That man remains free in his actions, despite the lust that seeks to divert it, is stated by the same St. Paul who writes: "Each of us will receive his own reward according to his work, as we are collaborators of God "(1 Corinthians 3:8-9).

1. Original sin in Adam is transmitted to his descendants.

Adam and Eve were placed in a joy and privilege by God (Genesis 2:8 to 15). they were free from lust (Genesis 2:25); feeding on tree of life they would not die (Genesis 2:9).

God exposes the progenitors to the test, forbidding them to eat the fruit of the tree of good and evil (Genesis 2:17). God threatens them with "physical" death on offenders (Genesis 2.17, 3.3, 3.4). Failed the test and committed the sin (Genesis 3:6), God inflicts the sentence of; punishment, with the consequence of the first sin, it is the following:

- a) The lust: (Genesis 3:7 and 3:11);
- b) Pain (Genesis 3:16-19);
- c) The physical death (Genesis 3:19);
- d) The curse and the enmity of God (Genesis 3, 15:03, 22-24).

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Now let the prove that this first sin passed to all the descendants of Adam, as a subject received the title of Duke from his Sovereign with the right to pass it on to his children, rebelling against his Lord loses all title and privilege, and He forgives him, without their fault, all his children, so it happened to Adam and his descendants. He was in fact head of the human race and repository of supernatural gifts conferred not only for himself (as

individual), but also for all his descendants. This is proved in a striking way by the Holy Bible.

St. Paul wanting to show the benefits of Redemption of Christ, puts it in opposition the old Adam.

Romans 5, 12-21: (12) "As a result of a single man sin entered into the world, and through sin death, and so death passed upon all men, because all sinned ... (15) but the gift of grace is not like the trespass if by the fall of one (Adam) many died, much more the God's grace and the free gift in the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abounded on all men ... (18) so as to the guilt of only one has bestowed upon all men to condemnation, so for the work of justice of only one pours over all men the justification that gives life. (19) Similarly, as for the disobedience of only one (Adam) many were made sinners, so also by the obedience of only one (Jesus) will all be made righteous. (20) But where abounded the sin we have over abounded of grace, (21) because, as sin reigned in death, so reigns

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the grace through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. "

Very clear are these words of Saint Paul which, however, only occasionally speaks in this place Original sin, whose doctrine is spread everywhere in all his writings.

The argument of St. Paul is very effective: Adam sinned (Genesis 3:6), and God struck him with the conviction physical death (Genesis 3:19), now: death, condemnation of sin, then passed to all the descendants of Adam, therefore - if you do not want to think that God is unjust punishing the innocent - all descendants of Adam are guilty of the same sin.

Therefore the Apostle is right to conclude : v. 19: "By one man's disobedience all were made sinners. "Because of this certainty of faith, the Church baptizes even children who have not committed personal sins.

St. Paul then lifts our spirit from this bleak vision of spiritual poverty, making stand out, the consequences of sin, the overabundance of sanctifying grace of Christ, who has freed us

from sin so that it is no longer in us: vv. 20-21:
"But where sin abounded, grace over abounded there,
for how sin had reigned in the death,
so reigns the grace of justice,
eternally, through Jesus Christ our Lord. "

After the words with which the Genesis has made us
know the guilt of Adam and its sad consequences,
St. Paul has shown us that we, also, descendants

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of this unhappy father, bear the infamy of
the family name and the effects of its punishment. It is a sad observation,
but it is also the only reasonable explanation
all the evils that haunt us in our lives.

2. What the original sin is not

a) The Original sin doesn't consists in lust.
If, as many Protestants, claim Original sin
consisted in lust - that is,
strong inclination to evil - this sin, we will always
take with us, as a sign of Divine malediction
even after Baptism, so this sacrament
does not take away the lust.

Differently however, St. Paul, thinks it, which in the letter to
the Romans 8.1 says: "Nothing is more
worthy of condemnation in those who are in Christ
Jesus. "The Baptism, therefore, even if leaving the lust,
cleanses us from sin, just because the
things are not the same.

St. Augustine describes beautifully the
effects of justification: "The grace completely renewed
man from all his sins, but
does not free him from all the evil "(M. L. 44.844). the lust
is precisely one of these evils that the grace
does not free us.

b) The Original sin is not a essential corruption
of the nature, following the doctrines of Luther,
many Protestants say that the sin of Adam
corrupted nature, depriving it of the means that
were required to do good ,the essentially

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corrupted man can not do but sin: the law of sin which reigns supreme in its members removes any freedom and every possibility to operate the good.

Even this pessimistic statement, so degrading for man and so convenient for those who do not want to be bothered by the need of operating good, is in sharp contrast with the clear statements of the Sacred Scripture as we shall see further ahead.

3. What is the Original sin?

The Church, interprets the symbolism authentically to the language of the Bible according to the light of the New Testament and Tradition, teaches us that our pro parents, Adam and Eve, were constituted in an state "of original holiness and justice." the grace of original holiness was a participation in the divine life.

Instead, the inner harmony of the human person, harmony between man and woman (Genesis 2:25), the harmony between the first pair and all creation constituted the state called "original justice". As long as he remained in the divine intimacy, man would not have died (Genesis 2:17 and 3:19), nor suffer (Genesis 3:16). The man was free from the triple concupiscence (1 John 2:16) that made him the slave of pleasures of the senses, covetousness for earthly goods and the affirmation self against the dictates of reason. For the sin of our pro parents all will be lost the harmony of original justice.

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Man, tempted by the devil, abusing of his Freedom has disobeyed to the commandment of God in which consisted the first man's sin. with this sin man has preferred himself to God and made a choice against his own good. Created in a state of holiness, man was destined to be fully "Divinized" by God in glory. seduced by the devil, he has wanted to become "like God" (Genesis 3:5); but without God, and not according to God

The Scripture portrays the tragic consequences of this first disobedience. Adam and Eve lost immediately the grace of original holiness (Romans 3:23). They are afraid of the God (Genesis 3,9 - 10) of which they had made a false image, namely that of a jealous God jealous of his own prerogatives (Genesis 3.5).

The harmony in which they were placed, thanks to original justice, is destroyed, and the mastery of

spiritual faculties of the soul over the body is shattered (Genesis 3:7), the union of man and woman is put under tension (Genesis 3:11 to 13), and their relationships will be marked by lust and the tendency and enslavement (Genesis 3:16). Harmony with creation is broken: visible creation has become hostile man (Genesis 3:18-19). Finally the consequence explicitly announced in the event of disobedience (Genesis 2:17) will be achieved: and man will return to dust, the dust from which it was derived (Genesis 3:19). The death enters into the history of mankind (Romans 5:12).

All men are involved in the sin of Adam. St. Paul clearly states it: "For one man's disobedience, all were establish

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sinners "(Romans 5:19)," As a result of a single man sin entered into the world, and through sin death, and so death has reached all men, because all have sinned "(Romans 5:12). The universality of sin and death, the Apostle contrast, however, the universality of salvation in Christ: "How, then, for the fault of one is poured upon all men to condemnation, even so for the work of justice of one (Christ) is poured upon all men the justification that gives life "(Romans 5:18).

How has the sin of Adam became the sin of all his descendants? All mankind is in Adam as a single body of a single man. For this unity of mankind all men are involved in the sin of Adam, as well as all are involved in the justice (that is the salvation) of Christ.

However, the transmission of the Original Sin is a mystery that we can not fully understand. But we do know of the Revelation that Adam had received original holiness and justice not only for himself, but for all the human nature: yielding to Tempter, Adam and Eve committed a personal sin, but also this sin affected the whole nature and corrupts the human nature, that they transmit in a lapsed.

It is a sin which will be transmitted by propagation to all mankind, that is, the transmission of a human nature deprived of holiness and the original justice I. This is the Original sin is a sin "Contract" and not "committed", is a state not a personal

act. That is why the Church has administered baptism also to the children who have not committed personal sins.

Original sin consists in the deprivation of original holiness and justice, but human nature not been totally corrupted: it is wounded in his own natural forces, is subject to ignorance, suffering and the power of death, and inclined to sin (this evil inclination is called "concupiscence").

The Baptism, by imparting the life of Christ's grace, deletes the original sin and turns man back towards God, but the consequences of that sin on nature, weakened and inclined to evil, persist in man and leading him to spiritual battle.

In the baptized, remains the lust thereof: but, being left for the test, can not harm those that do not consent and that are opposed with the grace of Jesus Christ. In fact "does not receive the crown who has not competed "(2 Timothy 2:5).

But why did God not prevent the first man from sin? St. Leo the Great responds, "The ineffable Christ's grace gave us goods better than those that the envy of the devil has deprived us. "And St Thomas of Aquinas says: "God allows there to be evil to draw from it a greater good. "From here the St. Paul saying, "There where the sin increased, abounded grace "(Romans 5:20). And the song of 'Exultet: "O happy fault that you have deserved such a and so great Redeemer. "

4. The Baptism of Children

Expelled all out of heaven with Adam, there is no other way to return, if not the way offered us from our divine Redeemer Jesus: "Unless one is reborn through water and the Holy Spirit can not enter the kingdom of God "(John 3:5).

The Baptism is therefore an absolute necessity for all, therefore also for children, children of Adam, born with the stain of his guilt. The Protestants deny the necessity of baptism for children, for two reasons:

a) Some deny that they have the Original sin Document against the very clear words of St. Paul.

b) Other demand in the child who receives baptism the ability to accept the faith, appealing to St. Mark 16:16: "He who believes and is baptized will be saved ... "and St. Matthew 28:19:" ... make disciples of all nations baptizing them ... ".

We answer: Jesus with those words sent the Apostles to preach to all nations, it was evident that the Apostles were not to preach to the infants, but to adults, from which Christ requires faith before baptism; for children, of which there is no mention here, is always categorical statement the words of St. John 3:5 on the necessity of baptism for everyone.

The fact that infants don't understand anything the baptism does not mean that it can not be validly received. It's as they contract without original sin without knowing it coming into the world without friendship with God (Romans 5:19), so it's also not strange that they get released of it without their knowledge.

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So true that St. Paul states that he baptized whole families in which there were evidently children: 1 Corinthians 1:16; Acts 16:15 and 16:33. It 'a logical consequence of the rest of the already exposed doctrine of St. Paul, who says further: "As everyone die in Adam all will be justified in Christ "(1 Corinthians 15:22).

Jesus said, "Make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28, 19), that's all the peoples of the earth without distinction of age. There is, therefore, in the words of Jesus there is no exclusion of the children, rather they are all included in that. in Nowhere in the Bible is said to be baptized only adults (1).

Catholic parents must act accordingly to their faith, as soon as the baby is born, is registry office of the town hall of the place in which is born and becomes citizen of the State as a result of nationality and of the interest of the parents, without any free choice of the child, so you do no wrong to the child

1) In stark contrast to criticize Catholics, they baptize their new followers, even if not have about 30 years. Jesus therefore is no longer a model by follow? Two weights and two measures, hypocritically! About witnesses Jehovah's separate sect of Protestants Adventists, there to say that while they accuse others of influence children in a certain direction, they strictly forbid to their children to hear other heading, except that of their newspaper

The Watchtower. But there is much worse refuse their children blood transfusions until they die even before these creatures have done any religious choice .. Two weights and two measures, again damage of the ignorant!

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be baptized in the faith that he will then confirm his will with a careful study of Sacred Scripture: this is indeed the only way to prevent his exclusion from heaven, if he should die with Original sin.

Of this outstanding benefit immediately procured by parents, every Christian should be grateful for as for the law procured the greatest legacy to him.

How did the early Christians regulate about baptizing children? In the history of the early Christians there is the practical interpretation and faithful execution the command of Christ and the apostolic preaching. St. Irenaeus (a. 140-202) says: "Christ came to save all those who through him are reborn in God, all I say, infants, children, and children "(Adv. Haer. L. II c. 22, n. 4).

Origen (a. 185-254) says: "The Church received from the Apostles the tradition of giving baptism also to the children "(Commentary on the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans, I, n. 9). The Apostolic Constitutions (a. 400) ancient, command: "Baptize your children" (VI, 15).

To the errors of the Protestants we still respond with the authoritative words of a great Doctor and a great Saint. St. Augustine (a. 354-430) in respect says: "Anyone who says they are made alive in Christ even children who die without baptism, this certainly goes against the apostolic preaching, and condemns the whole Church which for this fact hastens to baptize infants, because without doubt it is believed that they can not otherwise

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be made alive in Christ "(Letter to St. Jerome, 166, Ed. Maur., T. II, coll. 769-770).

5. The baptism of immersion

It was certainly the most used in the early centuries of the Catholic Church as the most suitable to symbolize the real death to sin and resurrection to a new life in Christ (Romans 6:4). But this was never the only

way to baptize. In Acts 2, 41, it is said that St. Peter after his first speech Pentecostal Baptized 3000 people baptized in Jerusalem, and now Jerusalem is situated on a hill bathed by Kidron, a small stream. How could he baptize 3000 people in those conditions except with our baptism by infusion?

In the Acts of the Apostles (16, 33) tells how at the prison at Philippi Paul baptized at night the jailer and all his family. an ancient Roman tradition tells how, while they were prisoners in the Mamertine prison, Peter and Paul baptized the two jailers process and converted Martiniano with water from the miraculous spring that however, did not lend itself to baptism by immersion.

Certainly in the early days of the Christianity both children and adults are severely sick and bedridden could not be baptized by immersion, but obviously for infusion.

The Didache or Doctrine of the Twelve Apostles by of unquestionable historical value, which dates back to 90-100 AD, describing the baptismal rite, speaks of baptism by immersion and infusion: "If you do not have

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running water, baptize in other water: if you can not baptize in cold water, baptize in hot water. If you do not have neither the one nor the other, pour upon the head of baptized three times the water in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit (Ed Funk, VII, 2-3).

It is evident from these words that even in first apostolic times when St. John was still alive, recognized the value of both baptismal rite, although that for immersion was the most commonly used.

The word baptize means to wash, and in this sense it is also used in Holy Scripture. Now, is lavender symbolic so much to those who are immersed in water, as to who receives for infusion. Tertullian says: "Wash the body and the soul is purified."

The Church has never denied the validity of baptism by immersion, and indeed even today there are dioceses in which the Church allows the use of this baptism. So, again, almost all the Eastern rites practiced baptism of immersion. The Latin Catholic Church has preferred, however, by infusion for obvious reasons

opportunities, convenience and respect for a so great a Sacrament.

On the other hand can the Protestants prove with the Bible that Jesus has established a certain amount of water to be used in baptism and which parts of the body should be washed because the sacrament of baptism is valid?

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6. We should baptized in 30 years?

The Protestants say that we must be baptized at the age of 30 years because at that age Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist in the Jordan River. Evidently they do not know the Bible or deliberately deceive the their naive followers.

In the New Testament refers expressly to two baptisms: one administered by John, said precisely the Baptist (so is the Baptizer), and the one Following Jesus instituted, then giving orders to his disciples to administer to all nations (Matthew 28:19).

The baptism of John had not in itself the virtue of burning sins as the Baptism established by Jesus John himself insisted on this same essential distinction: "I baptize you with water for penance, but he that cometh after me is mightier than Me ... He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire " (Matthew 3:11).

It is clear that the baptism of John the Baptist stands radically from the Christian baptism. First because it was a rite temporary, linked to a time particular historical (that's is the expectation of the Messiah), while the Christian baptism is forever (Matthew 28:19; Acts 19:1-7). Then it was different also for the effects. in fact John's baptism was only an invitation to conversion; it was a preparation for the real baptism in the Holy Spirit and fire that would set Jesus

So much so that John initially refuses to baptize Jesus and says, "I need to be

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Baptized by you and you come to me? "(Matthew 3:14). with these words John himself admits that Jesus baptism was infinitely superior to his own.

So why di Jesus want to be baptized? Jesus himself says to John that refused to baptize him:

"Leave it for now, poached convenient for us to fulfill all righteousness "(Matthew 3:15). The justice of God, that is his plan of salvation, also demanded that, that Jesus would join the crowd and made it all similar to sinners, so John could indicate him to all. The baptism of Jesus, that is, it was not an act of penance for the conversion and the forgiveness of sins, because Jesus had no sins (1 Peter 2: 22), but the appointment of God so that with Baptist, seeing the Holy Spirit descend upon Jesus, came to know that He was the Messiah and could with certainty indicate to the people of Israel that awaited him.

In fact, God had told John that the man of which he saw the Spirit descending was the Messiah. John seeing Jesus said, "Behold the Lamb of God, behold who takes away the sin of the world ... I came to baptize with water so that you be revealed by Israel. "And John bore witness, saying: "I saw the Spirit descend as a dove from heaven and rest on him ... He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, the man on whom you will see the Spirit descend and remain is he who baptizes in the Holy Spirit. And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God "(John 1:29-34).

Now who says you have to be baptized to 30 years as Jesus did, shows not to know the difference

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Of the baptism of John and that of Jesus. Its Just true that St. Paul at Ephesus baptized only people who had received baptism from John.

"Paul said, What baptized did you receive?". "The John's baptism, "they said. Paul then said: "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who would come after him, that is, in Jesus. "After hearing this they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus (Acts 19:1-7).

We repeat: the baptism of Jesus which is fully different from that of the Baptist. The baptism of Jesus buries the sinner in Christ's death (Colossians 2:12) where it exits through the resurrection with him, as a new creature, a member of the Mystical body of Christ and animated by the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:13), it is a bath that purifies (Ephesians 5.26), it is a new birth: "If one is not born from water and the Spirit, he can not enter the kingdom of God " Jesus said in Nicodemus (John 3: 5).

So when John the Baptist announces the baptism of Jesus as a baptism of fire ("he will baptize you in

Holy Spirit and fire "Matthew 3:11), he means clearly that, in contrast with his baptism, the baptism of Jesus will establish itself in the power of God to remove sins. In fact, the fire in the Bible is a symbol of various interventions of God in the things of this earth. Sometimes used to indicate the action of the Spirit of God to purify the conscience (Isaiah 6.6 to 7; Zechariah 13.9).

Jesus preferred to speak of water (John 3:5) because it is a symbol of purification (1 Peter 3: 20 -

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21) and in Psalm 50, 9 and in Ezekiel 36.25 serves to indicate the cleansing from sin. In the Christian baptism the water obtains from the Holy Spirit a virtue or supernatural force that purifies lava not a physical dirt, but spiritual.

Peter, the chief of the Apostles, explains how the Christian baptism, by the symbolic element material (water), accompanied by the invocation of salvation addressed to God, erases every sin in the soul, by virtue of the redemptive work of Jesus culminated in Resurrection: "This water was a image of the baptism that now saves you. The Baptism is not a body wash to remove the dirt, it is instead an invocation to God, made in good conscience. the baptism saves you because Christ is risen. "(1 Peter 3:21-22).

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CAPITOLOVII

THE JUSTIFICATION

PROTESTANT THOUGHT:

- a) Our sins are covered by Justice (that is ,by the holiness) and by the merits of Christ.
- b) Our salvation is free: to be saved is enough the faith.

ALLEGED BASIC BIBLE:

- a) Psalm 31.1: "Blessed is the man to whom is entrusted the guilt and forgiven the sin. "
- b) Romans 3: 27-28: "Where is your pride then?

It has been excluded! By what law? From that of works? No, but by the law of faith. we believe that man is justified by faith apart from the law of works. "(Acts 16.31; John 6.28 to 29).

YOU ANSWER:

a) Nothing can be said to be covered and hidden in front of God, if not when it is completely gone: sin is not covered except when it is rendered non-existent by the mercy of God that everything clears and forgives. The remission of sins is not therefore not a simple simulation of God, but it is a real cancellation that purifies and makes the sinner righteous. It must be understood that the words of Psalm 31, it can be deduce from all other verses.

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b) The only our works, and more less the works of the Mosaic Law, couldn't save us: the justification is the result of God's mercy and merits of Christ. Our works acquire their value from the merits of Christ and the faith we have in Him But since both the Redemption is the faith we have in Christ are free gifts of Him, Paul sings a hymn of thanksgiving to God who has made all our salvation, should not preclude, in fact, making more apt our cooperation.

The Holy Bible, after having described the happy condition of our first parents in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2.8 to 15), tells us with bitter ease the fall of Adam and Eve (Genesis 3:6), and the conviction that God launched against them (Genesis 3.14 to 24) and against all their unhappy descendants. The lust of the pain, physical death, the curse and the enmity of God, thereby became the sad heritage of all mankind.

The most serious and the most tragic consequence of sin was certainly this: the man was a friend become an enemy of God, created in righteousness original had become unjust and sinner from innocent that he was, he was stained with guilt that made him worthy of eternal curse of God's the genius of Michelangelo, in the vaults of the Sistine Chapel, he had good reason to show the progenitors in the throes of a crying: had ended sadly most greatest tragedy in history. In the midst of convictions divine, but came out the cry of hope (Genesis 3:15):the friendship contracted with Satan, **reason** enmity with God one day would have ceased. That man would then return to be friend of God: rimade

just, pure and innocent could still look with hope to the lost paradise. all this was accomplished through the redemptive work of Christ who worked the justification, that is the salvation of mankind: "The blood of Jesus Christ ... cleanses us from all sin "(1 John 1:7).

1. In What consists the justification.

The Protestants teach that after the first sin, human nature was so corrupted, that man must necessarily sin, and after the Redemption accomplished by Christ man can be justified (that is made right), and it is in fact, the only condition is that he has full confidence in Christ who has redeemed with his blood: this trust, by the justification of the sinner. His sins still remain in him, but God does not see them because they are covered by the holiness and righteousness of Christ. Hidden behind this curtain defensive man will necessarily continue to sin, but trust in the merits of Christ, who is the guarantor for him, make it right and worthy of reward before God, regardless of his works.

Quite different is the concept of justification in Catholic doctrine, drawn faithfully from the very teachings of God. That sinful man could rise from the state of sin to the state of justice (that is holiness), it is necessary that sin is forgiven, erased, destroyed.

It is necessary that God restores the sanctity of the soul lost: this can not take place if God does not work in the soul a complete transformation of the sinner by an act of His merciful omnipotence: the Grace is indeed a divine gift by which God makes

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The soul partaker of the divine nature (2 Peter 1: 4), cleansed from all stain of sin and giving it again the right to the eternal inheritance of heaven (Galatians 4: 4-7). The Bible - contrary to what Protestants say - Proof that justification is a destruction of sins and new birth.

a) The Justification is a true remission of sins speaking to the people of Jerusalem, St. Peter called all to repentance with these words: "Repent therefore and be converted so that your sins are forgiven "(Acts 3:19). To the expression

"Are forgiven", corresponds a word that is in greek properly means "delete, destroy" with the same sense in fact the same word is used in Colossians 2, 14; Revelation 3, 5; Isaiah 43, 25.

It is, therefore, a real destruction of sin. God supremely true and just could not bless as pure and innocent a man in whom clothes still sin. Saint Paul speaks very clear words that should be able to illuminate all other difficult passages of the doctrine of the great Apostle: "Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor robbers will inherit the kingdom of God such were some of you, but you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God "(1 Corinthians 6, 19-11). The insistence of St. Paul on the same concept, repeated with different expressions, makes us understand that it is a purification radical and a cancellation fully of all sins.

In the Letter to the Romans, 5, 19, the Apostle compares the consequences of the sin of the first

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Adam and the effects of the redemption accomplished by second Adam, that is Christ, "As for disobedience of one, many were made sinners, so that for the obedience of one, many will be made just. "

Here you have a perfect parallelism between the "form sinners "and the" right up ": as in the first part of it was a pity that tainted the soul stripping every man from the friendship of God ', so in the second case it must consist of a justification (sanctification) real, not a pitiful disguise divine, but for a complete purification interior makes us truly worthy of the friendship of God St. Paul is right then to conclude: " There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not according to the flesh "(Romans 8:1).

b) The Justification is a complete renovation, is a new birth: St. Paul says that baptism for which we have the first justification, is a washing of renewal and regeneration (Titus 3:5).

Of this new birth Jesus also spoke with Nicodemus: "Truly, I say to you, unless one is born again

of water and the Holy Spirit he can not enter the Kingdom of God "(John 3:5). In this new birth which purifies us and makes us holy, dies the old man in us forms of sin and the new man in grace and holiness is formed: "The new man, the one created according to God in righteousness and true holiness " (Ephesians 4:24; Romans 6:4; Galatians 3:27). he's right St. Paul then to call the Christian "new creation" (Galatians 6:15; 2 Corinthians 5:17).

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This is therefore a real renewal, of a true and complete inner transformation of man. This is precisely the concept of justification that Catholic Church has faithfully taken from Sacred Bible.

2. Cooperation needed: faith and works.

That the redemption of Christ is our justification (sanctification) is a free gift of divine mercy sinful humanity, it says clearly St. Paul in the Letter to the Ephesians 1.7: "In Him (Christ) we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace, which he has plenty of bestowed upon us. "In order for this gift that God provides us produces in us his fruits needs our cooperation. God Himself demands we have faith in Jesus and good works.

a) Necessity of faith in Jesus Christ. sending the apostles to continue his mission of salvation around the world, Jesus said to them, "Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved; whoever does not believe will be condemned " (Mark 16:16). Jesus said to his enemies: "... If ye believe not that I am you will die in your sins" (John 8:24).

John the Baptist prepared the way of the Lord, placing the people to accept with faith the words of the Savior who was already in the midst of them: "He that believeth in the Son has eternal life, but whoever does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God will dwell on him " (John 3.36). The author of the Letter to the Hebrews appropriately concludes: "Without faith it is impossible to please to God "(Hebrews 11:6).

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- b) The need of good works. The Protestants say that good works are not necessary and do not help to deserve salvation and an increase in glory in Heaven. But Jesus said explicitly: "Not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father " (Matthew 7:21), and he added: "If you love me, observe my commandments "(John 14, 15).

From the New Testament is on almost every page that faith, to be true and authentic, it must be accompanied by good works. Saint James has clear expressions as to unreasonably the position of those Protestants who, while denying necessity of good works, accept his letter of the canonical writings of the New Testament

He writes: "Be of those who put in practice the word and not only hearers deceiving yourselves " (James 1: 22). And in an even more clear way writes: "What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has the faith but has not the works? That maybe that faith can save him? ... Faith without works is death "(James 2, 14-17). To not accept this obvious teaching, contrary to their ideas, almost all Protestant sects excluded from their Bible's the Letter of St. James!

The teaching of Jesus, however, is quite similar to the one of St. James. The rich young man who asks what he should do to inherit eternal life, Jesus did not answer simply to believe, but he said: 'If you want to enter into eternal life, observe the Commandments "(Matthew 19:17).

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Jesus says to the young man: "if you want." This means that salvation depends on its own free will and freedom. And if it is necessary to observe the Commandments to be saved it is clear that faith on its own is not enough, but wants also the works, which result much more than useless. That's why the Lord insists on it even in the last book of the New Testament: "Yes, I am coming soon, bringing my reward with me to make every man according to his works "(Revelation 22, 12).

Meritorious works. We have seen that the good works are necessary to complete our faith. if the works are done in a state of grace, they deserve paradise because it is that what God has wanted in his goodness!

The reason is obvious: in this case the works are carried out not only by man, but man- and God together, present in the soul of the righteous through grace. However, if to perform them is only man alone, by his own natural powers and without the help of grace, they are not sufficient for the acquisition of eternal life.

And that things are just so Jesus himself tells us that: "I am the vine, you are the branches, he who abides in me and I in him will bear much fruit, because without me you can do nothing "(John 15:5).

And the works done in this state of grace are far from useless and indeed constitute a prerequisite for eternal life, It is clear from the fact that when "all men will appear before the judgment of God " (Romans 14:10) to receive the eternal reward, which

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will be according to their works: "You know that each will receive from the Lord for what they have done of good "(Ephesians 6:8). St Paul's says bluntly: "Do not be deceived, that you can make fun of God each will gather what he sows. Those who sow in the flesh, the flesh reap corruption; who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. And do not weary in doing good, if we do not devote at its time to reap "(Galatians 6, 7-9).

The works good or bad have a decisive in the judgment of Christ on the day of court judgment. Jesus, announcing the reward of the righteous, enumerates the facts of good works for which they are awards: "I was hungry and you gave me something to eat ..." (Matthew 25.34-46). And it is precisely because the judgment divine will cover the finished work that St. Paul several times makes the lists of evil deeds that excludes from the kingdom of God, concluding that "those who do such works will not inherit the kingdom of God "(2 Corinthians 5:19-21).

Not only that, but God has promised a reward proportionate to the good works done in life. Taught us by Jesus: "The Son of Man will come in the glory of his Father, and then he will reward every man according to his works "(Matthew 16:27). St. Paul confirms this: "God will render to every man according to his works "(Romans 2.6); "Each will receive his reward according to his work "(1 Corinthians 3:8)," He who sows sparingly poorly also reap "(2 Corinthians 9:6).

In the final judgment, God will reward the righteous in proportion of their work: "Their works, in fact, accompany them" (Revelation 14:13).

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We must therefore endeavor because our Christian life is always full of good works: "Everyone, in fact, we must all appear before the judgment of Christ, each one to receive the reward for the good works while we were still in the body, whether good or bad" (2 Corinthians 5:10).

"Standing this way the case - rightly St. Jerome - now depends on us to prepare a prize proportionate to our virtues" (ML 23.329).

3. The works of penance.

Of all the good works, those that create more difficulty and discomfort to the Protestants are the works of penance. After trying to prove that the good works are not necessary, they say that the works of penance are unnecessary and even foreign to the teachings of the Gospel! Let us recall again the Holy Bible, always willing to believe the word of God, even when the truth that we are taught is not easy nor pleasant.

Jesus prepared for his great work of the apostolate with a solemn fasting: "He fasted for forty days and forty nights, he was hungry" (Matthew 4.2). Even John the Baptist was preparing for the coming of Christ from the fasting and penance: "John wore a garment of camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey" (Matthew 3:4). It is because of his spirit of penance John deserves to Praise from Jesus (Matthew 11, 8-11). To those who observe him because he did he not let his disciples fast Jesus says, "The day will come

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when the bridegroom will be taken from them, and then in those days will fast" (Luke 54.35). Condemned fasts hypocrisy of the Pharisees, Jesus taught how to fast: "But you when you fast, anoint your head and wash

face ... "(Matthew 6:17).

Faithful to the teaching and example of Jesus, even the early Christians fasted. St. Paul affirms it but of himself: "mistreated my body and make it slave, because that does not happen that after I have preached to others, I remain condemned "(1 Corinthians 9:27). The Didache, one of the most venerable documents of The early Church, recommends fasting before conferring of baptism.

Maybe some of us will say, I've believed, then I will be saved! This will be true if you will have your professed your faith with works. It is in fact the only true faith in which there is no contradiction between words and deeds. St. Paul alluded to this when talking about the false believers said: "... they claim to believe in God, but then they disown him by their works "(Titus 1.16).

St. Gregory the Great (Om. 29 on Vang.)

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CHAPTER VIII

HIERARCHY AND CELIBACY ECCLESIASTICAL

PROTESTANT THOUGHT:

- a) Jesus established a Church without democratic hierarchy (1) and without a special priesthood.
- b) Clerical celibacy is condemned by Bible.

ALLEGED BASIC BIBLE:

- a) 1 Peter 2: 9: "You are a chosen race, royal priesthood". All Christians therefore have equal powers; only God can be called their Father and Master

(Matthew 23.9 to 10).

b) 1 Timothy 3.2 to 12: St. Paul says that the Bishop must be "the husband of one wife" and "good manager of your own home "(Titus 1:6).

1 Corinthians 9.5: "Do we not have the right to conduct around us a believing woman, sister in faith, as do the other apostles and Cephas? ". one know from the Gospel that at least Peter had a wife.

WE ANSWER:

a) In Exodus 19, 6, God says to the Jewish people:

1) The Hierarchy is the together of the Pope, the bishops and the Priests linked together in a relationship of subordination and obedience.

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"You shall be for me a kingdom of priests, a holy folk.

"The Jews, however, were not all kings, or not all priests, nor all saints! God refers to the election of all the Jewish people to have part in his divine favors of grace.

The passage from St. Peter: "You are a chosen race, royal priesthood "(1 Peter 2: 9) does not mean - as Protestants say - that all Christians have equal powers.

It is true that Christ, high priest and unique mediator, has made of the Church "a kingdom of priests for his Father "(Rev. 1, 6). The whole community of believers - the Church that is - it's like the priesthood.

The baptized, that is, by Baptism have become live "stones for the construction of a spiritual building, for a holy priesthood "(1 Peter 2: 5).

But Baptism gives a share in the priesthood only of the faithful which differs essentially and by grade, from the ministerial or hierarchical priesthood of bishops and priests. In fact, while the faithful exercise their common priesthood offering to God a spiritual worship - that is, living with faith, hope and charity, which is the life in the Holy Spirit - the priesthood ministry is at the service of the faithful. It is one of means by which Christ unceasingly builds up and drive his Church, that his people. Precisely for this Therefore, it is transmitted by its own sacrament, that is, the sacrament of Holy Orders, as will be shown

later.

For the simple fact that also in the Catholic Church - from the most remote antiquity - is recognized as valid the baptism conferred by anyone going to do with this rite that means the

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Church, one can not conclude that all the Christianity have, by the will of Christ, the same priestly powers. The reason for this universal grant divine about baptism, it is evident: it is a sacrament absolutely necessary to salvation. Gods will was that this extreme mean of Salvation must not be missing to anyone. Faced with a patient who requires a particular surgery, none of us would dare an action: it is the task of the specialist. If instead it happens that we to find ourselves next to a person who is drowning, everyone has the duty to rescue urgency when possible. You do not need a specialist, it is for all a duty of humanity and Christian charity.

b) St. Paul demands that the bishop, who was chosen between married, being celibate still rare in those times, was the husband of one wife and no more wives then, if his wife died to one that was made Bishop, he could not get married! It was the first step toward celibacy. It is also true that St. Peter was married, but he left his wife to follow Jesus (Matthew 19.27-29).

1. Ecclesiastical hierarchy.

Hierarchy means "sacred parental" or "sacred power" and denotes to that group of people who are legitimately invested and who exercise above the simple faithful. Protestants deny the Christianity preached by Christ that all parentally distinguish one from another faithful believer. of the Church they would like to make a flock without a shepherd, an army without officers, a ship without a helmsman.

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☒ To test their ideas, not just pretend to ignore or attempt to evade the many clever loopholes texts of the New Testament that speak of this distinction, but (strange thing for them!) they appeal to history of religions to show that not all Religions have had a specific priesthood, giving as proof of no little ignorance. In fact:

a) The Greek and Roman religion, Eastern religions

and religions of the Mysteries, have always had a their priesthood. The current pagan religions, even the most barbarian, recognize a special priesthood, as evidenced by the greatest scholars.

b) The author of the Letter to the Hebrews attests the need for a specific priesthood for the benefit of humanity: "Every priest chosen from among men, is appointed to act on behalf of men in that pertaining to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins " (Hebrews 5:1).

c) It is with much evidence from Scripture that the Jewish people, God's chosen people and the figure of the future holy people purchased by Christ (Letter of St. Peter 2.9), there was a priesthood itself, clearly identified, with power to offer gifts and sacrifices:

Exodus 29,1 God commands Moses, "Behold also what you will do to them, that they may be consecrated to me in the priesthood ... ".

Exodus 30.30: "And thou shalt anoint Aaron and his sons, and they sanctify, so that I exercise the priesthood. "

The priesthood in the New Testament: Christ considers central work of his mission of salvation to

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favor of men, constitute a particular group which may judge and sanctify the faithful appease divine justice, make propitious Heaven to men. he one supreme Mediator and High Priest of new law, taking part in the men he selected his power and wants it to be perpetuated over the centuries. is unique the priesthood, the priesthood of Christ participated in the men. One is the power of the authority that God the Father gave to Christ, and Christ communicated to the Apostles and successors.

The evidence of the Bible is overwhelming: we proceed by order.

a) Christ prepares the Apostles sacred authority: Luke 6.13: "Jesus called his disciples and chose from them twelve of them, whom he also called "Apostles". Christ healed especially spiritual formation of the Twelve, speaking clearly of the mysteries of Kingdom: Matthew 13, 11: "Why you are allowed to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, that to others is not granted. "

b) The promise of this sacred authority: Christ promises to the Apostles in Matthew 18.18: "Verily I say unto that whatever you shall bind on earth shall be bound

in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. "

c) Jesus gives the Apostles the only authority in the his Church:

- He gave them the mandate to proclaim his Gospel throughout the world: "Go and make disciples all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to

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observe all that I have commanded you. Here I am with you always, to the end of the world "(Matthew 28, 18-20).

- He gave them his authority: "He who hears you hears me, and he who rejects you rejects me "(Luke 10, 16); "He who receives you receives me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me "(Matthew 10, 40).

- After his resurrection, Jesus appears to the Eleven Apostles and gives them the power to forgive sins: "Receive the Holy Spirit. To who you forgive the sins will be forgiven, to those who you do not forgive them will not be forgiven "(John 20, 21).

- During the Last Supper, instituted the sacrament of SS. Eucharist, Jesus gives to the Apostles, the exclusive present, the power to celebrate the Eucharist saying to them: "Do this in memory of me" (Luke 22:19). As a result of these divine words the Apostles became the first Christian priests (1 Corinthians 11: 25).

Jesus never gave such divine powers to the crowd of his followers (not even to the Virgin Mary), but always only to the Apostles

d) The Apostles made use of the powers granted by Jesus In fact they made use of the powers granted by Christ: "And they went forth and preached everywhere" (Mark 16:20), gave to the faithful laws and regulations (Acts 15, 28, 1 Corinthians 11, 34), they issued judgments and inflicted punishment (1 Corinthians 5, 3-5, 4, 21); baptized (Acts 2:41); celebrated the Lord's Supper (Acts 2, 42-46; 20:27); transmitted powers by imposing other of the hands (Acts 6:6; 14.22; 1 Timothy 4:14; 2 Timothy 1:6, Titus 1:5).

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This sacred power exercised only by the Apostles. The Apostles exercised real power in the Council of Jerusalem (Acts 15). Peter and John go to Samaria to found the Church already prepared by the deacon Philip (Acts 8:14). The Apostles believed, themselves according to the testimony of St. Paul, "ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God" (1 Corinthians 4:1), Christ's ambassadors, as God urges through them (2 Corinthians 5:20), as announcers from the "word of reconciliation" and holders of the "ministry of reconciliation" (2 Corinthians 5:18).

Next to the Apostles, in the early Church, appear presbyters and deacons. these collaborators of the Apostles were chosen from the community, but received office and power not from the community, but by the Apostles themselves (Acts 6, 6: establishment of first seven deacons, Acts 14, 23: establishment of presbyters).

e) The Apostles transmit the sacred powers received from Christ to other men chosen by them themselves. in Acts 1,15-25 of the Apostles selected Matthias instead of Judas the traitor and joined their group. The same St. Paul passed, according to the will of Christ, its sacred powers to others, for example to Timothy and Titus. Transmitted to them:

- The power of teaching: "Preach the word, admonish, exhort ... do the work of announcer evangelist, fulfill your ministry" (2 Timothy 4.2 to 5), "But you teach what is befits healthy doctrine" (Titus 2:1);

- The power commands: "These things you must teach, recommend and rebuke with all authority.

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No one dares to despise you" (Titus 2:15)," Do not accept charges against a presbyters ... those which are guilty rebuke them in the presence of all ... do not have haste to lay hands not to make you an accomplice of sins of others" (1 Timothy 5:19-21);

- The power to sanctifying: "That's why I left you at Crete because amend what remains to be done and why appoint presbyters in every town, according to the instructions I gave you" (Titus 1:5).

f) These sacred powers must be transmitted in the Church until the end of the world. The continuity of hierarchical authority derives, in fact, necessarily from that the Church wanted by Christ will last until the end of the world. Jesus said to the Apostles that He

would be with them as preachers of the Gospel until the end of the world (Matthew 28:20), it is impossible that the Twelve would continued to live until the end of the world, if not by their successors. Jesus had sent the Apostles around all the world to preach the Gospel to all creatures (Mark 16:15): it is now impossible and historically unreal the Twelve preached all over the world and all creatures except in the continuers of their mission.

So Christ instituted a priesthood real and specific which was to last for ever in the Apostles and in their successors. The Word of God says explicitly: "No one can attribute this dignity, but he who is called by God "(Hebrews 5:4). The Pope, our Bishops the Priests and are therefore the only legitimate heirs and successors of the Apostles in the government of the Church. How could the priesthood miss in the new religion of Christ, which is the perfect religion, if

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even the most barbarous nations have had it, because required by the concept of religion?

2.The imposition of the hands.

For the Protestant bishops and presbyters of The early Church are the same as elderly, that is, simple Christians, distinct by age and prudence, to which collegially would be entrusted with the government of Local churches. The terms are therefore synonymous; Bishops and presbyters , that is, indicate the elderly.

This error arises from the concern of the translators Protestant Bible, such as the King James Version, to change almost always episcopo (bishop) and a presbyters in elderly, even when it means and means in clearly the bishop and the priest of the New Alliance, wanted by Christ in his Church.

Protestants remember Matthew 23.8 where it is recalled that one, the Christ, is our Master and we are all brothers, but neglect to add that Christ himself ordered them to teach all nations (Matthew 28:19), as well as neglect to say that the early Christians "devoted themselves to the teachings of the apostles "(Acts 2:42), and that God has set some in the church as teachers (1 Corinthians 12:28-30).

This text says that God himself in the Church

has awarded first place to the Apostles, assigning them the threefold office of teaching, sanctifying and to govern: "Teach ... baptizing them ... teaching them to observe ... (Matthew 28:19-20) and the power to "bind and loose" (Matthew 18:18), already

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conferred upon Peter together with the "keys of the kingdom of Heaven "(Matthew 16.18-19, Luke 22:32; John 21:15 - 17).

These characteristics of the Apostles, as we have already seen, are not limited in time, but must last until the end of the world, so much so that Christ ensures that the gates of hell will never prevail against His Church.

The concern not to leave the Church without managers authorized grows day by day in the Apostles as they approach their death and emerge especially in the three letters of St. Paul to his disciples Timothy and Titus, who - after a period of dressage - had given respectively the Christian communities of Ephesus and Crete (1 Timothy 1, 3; 2 Timothy 1, 6; Titus 1, 5).

The references made here about the task of the bishop, it is clear that for St. Paul the bishop must exercise teaching and the government, that is, functions themselves of the Apostles! St. Paul exhorts then repeatedly Timothy and Titus to preserve and defend "healthy doctrine", taking away the other heresy. the transfer of the episcopal ministry and powers takes place through the rite of hands (1 Timothy 4:14; 2 Timothy 1:6), made by who already has this gift (in this case: Paul and the board of priests).

Using the same laying on of hands Timothy and Titus transmit, to others, their powers (Titus 1, 5, 1 Timothy 5, 22). Is this really the beginning of the unbroken chain that binds to Apostles sacred ministers (bishops and priests) of the

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Catholic Church, and it is always like that in the Catholic Church is sent as a gift of Christ to His Church.

Through the rite of priestly ordination a Christian shall be established and ordained a priest, distinguished essentially from other Christians, as a baptized is essentially and really distinct from a non-baptized person. This is not to form "a special caste and privileged "as the Protestants - the caste system, as you know you have for birth - but for God's call that you have through the rite of hands. This is therefore essentially divine powers, that only God can give.

Saint Paul puts in highlights: "Every man should regard us servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God "(1 Corinthians 4:1), and in order to better understand the unique mandate, the author of the Letter to Hebrews says, "*For every high priest chosen from among men is appointed to act on behalf of men in things pertaining to God, in order to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins*" (Hebrews 5, 1), and then warned: "No one can attribute this dignity, but he who is called by God " (Hebrews 5, 4).

From these biblical passages is more than evident essential difference which exists between the Apostles honored of the priesthood and the other disciples who had no such gift, and consequently the difference between the simple those consecrated priests and laity.

Protestants, quoting Psalm 51, Psalm 1 and 32, 5, remember that it is God to forgive sins, but forgot to add that Jesus himself gave such a wonderful power to men (Matthew 9.8) and precisely

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to the Apostles: "To whom you forgive the sins will be forgiven, to those who do not forgive them will not be forgiven "(John 20: 21-23). That there happen revile the mercy of God as did scribes mentioned in St. Mark (Mark 2, 6 - 7). About the Cardinals, that are also bishops, are closest collaborators of the Pope with special tasks in the Catholic Church.

3. clerical celibacy

A lily caught in a rough hand is contaminated; ecclesiastical celibacy, in the mouth of the Protestants, profane and ignorant of the spirit of God, becomes a crime because they can not understand this beautiful flower from the Holy Bible. In the Old Testament was required an actual purity from those who ate of loaves priesthood (1 Kings 21:4).

The example of Christ, who nurtured among the lilies (Song 2.16, 6.2, 4.5) and a preference for the chaste, who always inculcated chastity as a means of greater love for Him, should be such as to close the mouth to those who, although calling themselves Christians and pastors inspired, throw the their insult and slander against those who, following the example of Christ, consecrated to God their chastity.

Jesus himself predicted that a host of courageous would follow for this arduous journey: "I disciples said to him: If such is the human condition with his wife, it is not expedient to marry. answered Jesus to them: All men take not this word, but only those to whom it is given ... who can understand understand "(Matthew 19:10-12).

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St. Paul, writing to the Christians of Corinth, he praises the perfect chastity: "Compared to what you have wrote, it is good for a man not to not marry "(1 Corinthians 7.1).

"Then I say to the unmarried and to the widows: It is good for them if they remain as I am "(1 Corinthians 7.8).

"I think it's good for the man to remain as he is "(1 Corinthians 7:26).

All the seventh chapter highlights the virginity over marriage. If St Paul addressing simple urges them to remain faithful virgins in order to better perform their religious duties (1 Corinthians 7, 32-33) how better it is to observe celibacy those who have received from Christ the same mission of Paul and life consecrated to the worship of God and the salvation of souls?

Therefore the Church faithful interpreter of the thought of Christ put celibacy as a prerequisite for those who want to receive the priesthood in the Latin rite (2). In the Eastern rites it requires celibacy for bishops.

It is a foretaste of the glory and eternal bliss:

"For in the resurrection they neither marry nor marriage, but are like angels of God in heaven " (Matthew 22, 30).

Andor Kozma, the famous Hungarian poet, although being a Protestant, about celibacy clergyman said: "The Catholic clergy celibacy enjoy such independence that others oppose only for the reason that they have neither strength nor idealism to imitate him. "

2) Even the Council of Elvira in Spain (300-306 years)

imposed celibacy to all clergy

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Vincent Boyd, who was head of the American Episcopal Protestant Church, he said: "Look at the Catholic Church thousands of its priests, hundreds of nuns, to serve God and neighbor without limitation, in the hardest places, voluntarily gave up everything that men and women consider desirable in life. I tell you that as long as we and the priests of other faiths are not able to show their spirit of sacrifice and total surrender, We can never compete with the effectiveness and results obtained from the Catholic Church. "

4. The monastic life

Even less reasonable is the wonder of the Protestants for the establishment of monastic life in Catholic Church, when giving the start was Jesus Himself, approving and praising John the Baptist in His austerity and solitude (Luke 7, 24-35), living Himself for forty days in the desert – which St. Paul also did for three years - and teaching with his life of poverty and renunciation of worldly goods mortified : "And all who for my sake and the gospel have abandoned brothers, sisters, father, mother, houses and fields, will receive one hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life " (Matthew 19:29).

Nothing so strange about the Catholic Church - caring spiritual progress of his children - has always cherished the invitation of Jesus and encouraged and structured, as St. Paul did for widows (1 Timothy 5, 3-16), the religious life and monastic

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for groups of faithful, decided to get up close Christ as the divine model of consecrated life, through the practice of the evangelical counsels (chastity, poverty, obedience) in the collection and penance. It such great Saints gave the monastic life! Suffice remember St. Francis of Assisi, St. Anthony of Padua, St. Benedict, St. Pio of Pietrelcina ...

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CHAPTER IX

RECORD and infallibility

PROTESTANT THOUGHT:

- a) Peter had no primacy over the other Apostles, nor ever was elected Head of the Church.
- b) Nor Peter and his successors had the gift of infallibility, denied by the facts and history.

ALLEGED BASIC BIBLE:

- a) Ephesians 5, 23: "... Christ is head of the Church ..." (1 Corinthians 3: 11).
- b) Matthew 16: 23 "But Jesus turned, and said to Peter go away from me, Satan: thou art an offense ... ". Peter for his mistake is condemned as the last of the Apostles.

WE ANSWER:

- a) Christ is the Supreme Head of the Church and Only visible and invisible, Peter is made up of Christ himself, his vicar in the visible Church who entrusted him with full powers before ascending to heaven, nothing is taken away the rights of Jesus on his Church: Peter governed precisely with the authority conferred by Jesus
- b) Peter does not understand the why of the divine plan Jesus rebukes him calling him "Satan", he however, had not yet received the Holy Spirit, or

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yet had been given primacy. For the rest, nobody has ever thought that neither Peter nor the Supreme Popes were impeccable, though infallible as must be clear that it is one of the infallibility mentioned, and the other is impeccability that no Catholic attributed to the Pope

1. The Primacy of St. Peter

Christ said that the foolish man builds his house above the sand (Matthew 7: 26). He, infinite Wisdom, having to build his Church, he thought of a foundation

Solid as a rock and hard as steel.
Prepared him, promised it, and finally gave it to St.
Peter.

A. Preparation of Primacy: As with all
great events of his life, even since
to give the primacy to Peter, Christ repeatedly
prepares the mind of the Apostles to understand
the event. In fact:

a) Jesus changed Simon name to, John 1, 42:
"You are Simon son of Jonah: you shall be called Cephas
(rock) which means Peter. "So God had changed
Abraham s name (Genesis 17, 5) to indicate the
his new mission.

b) Peter is the favorite of Christ, witnessing the glory
of the Transfiguration (Matthew 17: 2) and participates in agony
Garden of Gethsemane (Matthew 26, 37).

c) Peter is assisted by a special grace in all
great events: the confession of the divinity of
Christ (Matthew 16, 16), the Eucharistic discourse (John
6, 68-69).

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B. Promise of Primacy: Matthew 16: 13-19: "The people
Who says that he's the Son of Man? They said:
Some say he is John the Baptist, others Elijah, others
Jeremiah or one of the prophets. And you, Jesus asked them, who
say that I am? Simon Peter answered You are the Christ,
the Son of the living God. Jesus said: Blessed are you,
Simon, son of Jonah, because neither flesh nor blood
has revealed you, but my Father who is in
heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and upon this rock
I will build my Church. And the gates of Hell not
never prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the
Kingdom of Heaven: whatever you bind on earth shall be
bound in heaven and whatever you loose on earth
shall be loosed in heaven. "

Despite various attempts of the Protestants of purely ridiculous
and rationalists of all time, this step is of absolute authenticity
of literature, of unquestionable historic and stringent probative force.
It is puerile effort to affirm that Christ pronouncing
the words: "And upon this rock ..."
has pointed out himself. Jesus, in fact, always aimed at
Peter, that goes on saying to him: "I will give unto thee the keys of the
kingdom of heaven "!

Jesus certainly spoke in Aramaic, and used the
same word (Aramaic has no other) gender-neutral,
both to indicate Peter (Cephas) to indicate that rock
(Cephas): there is such a perfect identity between Peter and

rock. From the very clear words of Christ we obtain therefore clearly:

a) Peter is made the foundation of the Church. in every society (and the Church founded by Christ is a company) the principle fundamental of unity is the authority: So Peter is the first authority of the Church.

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b) To Peter will be given the keys of the kingdom of Heaven, the keys are in profane use and biblical symbol of supreme authority. To Peter therefore will be granted the supreme authority.

c) Peter will have unlimited power to loose and bind and his judgment will be confirmed in heaven. therefore was promised by Christ full and absolute authority in the Church.

C. Contribution of the primacy to Peter, Jesus had said of himself: "I am the good shepherd" (John 10, 11), also announced that the pastor would of been smitten and the sheep scattered (Mark 14, 27). But anyway Jesus wanted to console the Apostles, saying them: "I will not leave you orphans" (John 14, 18). In fact, this is how Jesus wanted to provide for his flock its perpetual care visible. John 21, 15-17: "When they had dined, Jesus said to Simon Peter: Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these? He replied: Yes, Lord, you know I love you. He said to him, Feed my lambs. Again Jesus asked Simon son of John, do you love me? He replied, Yes, Lord, you know I love you. Jesus said to him: Feed my lambs. For the third time Jesus said to him: Simon son of John, do you love me? Peter was grieved because had said to him the third time: Do you love me? and said, Lord, thou knows all things, thou knows that I love you. Jesus said to him: Feed my sheep. "

From the passage cited is derived clearly:

a) Flock of Christ is His Church (John 10, 11).

B) "Feeding" use so profane as the Bible, means to exercise a power of true jurisdiction.

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c) Peter is established by Christ, the universal pastor of his Church, therefore Peter has the Primacy of Peter of true jurisdiction over the whole Church.

2. Primacy of the Roman Pontiff

a) Peter must have perpetual successors in the Record.

1) Peter is the foundation of the Church, but the Church founded by Christ will last until the second coming of Jesus at the end of the world: therefore Peter will last until then in his successors as the foundation of the Church.

2) Peter was made universal Pastor of the flock of Christ, but this flock will last until the end of world, then Peter will have successors in his office Shepherd, until the end of the world.

3) Christ gave to His Church, the monarchy, which can not be changed except by Christ himself: So Peter as head of the Church will Successors forever.

b) The Roman Pontiff is the successor of Peter in record:

According to what we have said, Peter, will of Christ, will always have a successor until will last the Church. This successor must be known to the whole Church, and he himself must be aware of his great mission.

Since the death of Peter today, no one else was universally recognized as the Successor of Peter, nor no one else has given this supreme mission and authority, if not the Roman Pontiffs, who uninterrupted

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have succeeded in the Chair of Peter; there for the Roman Pontiff is the will of Christ the only, true, legitimate successor of Peter in government full of the whole Church.

At this very strong argument, that withstands denials or contradictions, we could add text of the Holy Fathers, the Popes, Councils, emperors, of heretics, of schismatics, of indifferent and atheists who have always recognized in the Roman Pontiff, the legitimate Successor of Peter, the Rock of the fundamental Church, the Vicar of Christ.

And what they thought of themselves the Bishops of Rome? Approximately around the year 90 a painful issue stirred the Christian community in Corinth: for effective mediation is used to Clement Bishop of Rome, the which intervenes with a letter full of authority. he

knows how to command in the name of God: "the disobedient who would be entangled in serious sin "(letter to the 1 Corinthians 1). I Corinthians bend to his influential decisions. When Pope Clement wrote this letter The Apostle John was still living in neighboring church of Ephesus were alive many of the successors of St. Paul, the evangelist of Corinth. If the Corinthians not turn to Saint John, it means that recognize superior to him the Bishop of Rome. for a long time this letter of Pope Clement will be preserved and read in the liturgical assemblies as document sacred (Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, IV, 23).

St. Jerome (340-420) wrote to Pope Damasus: "After Christ, I follow your bliss, that I join in communion with the See of Peter. I know that above that rock is built the church "(letter 15, L.M. 22, 355).

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St. Augustine (254-430), after the decree of Pope Zosimus against the Pelagians, satisfied wrote: "Above this point of doctrine were sent to Rome acts two councils of Carthage and Rome responded with a final sentence: the discussion is over, and God desire for an end soon, the error "(ML 38, 123). S. Pier Crisologo bishop of Ravenna (406-450) calls the heretic Eutyches to abide by the decisions of Pope Lion "as the blessed Peter still lives and governs from its original site "(M.L. 54, 143).

A good reason, then exclaimed St. Leo the Great (440-461): "The blessed Apostle Peter persevering granite in the strength of the rock, never abandoned the reins of the Church of Christ "(Sermon III 54 ML, 146).

After the Council of Chalcedon (451 year), the Fathers who participated in the council, full of enthusiasm, confirmed the significant decisions stating: "Peter has spoken by the mouth of Pope Leo."

Harnack himself, Protestant scholar, was to refute ignorance of the Protestants, before admitting evidence of historical documents that in the first centuries "The Church of Rome was undoubtedly the first of Christianity "(Memory read at the Academy of Berlin on 02.06.1896).

3. St. Peter, the visible head of the Church

Jesus is mentioned in the Holy Scriptures "cornerstone" on which it is established the kingdom of heaven on earth (Isaiah

28, 16). This prophecy also refers to St. Peter and indicates the fulfillment in Christ:

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"Draw close to him (Christ) living stone, rejected by men, but choice and honored from God You, too like living stones, are being built on top of him "(1 Peter 2, 4-6).

From these biblical passages depart for Protestants deny that St. Peter is the head of the Church and the foundation on which Jesus has built. To be fair true, no one in the Catholic Church has never denied that Jesus Christ is the head and the foundation of Church, but we do not see why he, after having His Resurrection to return to the Father, could not put Peter in the government of the Church - instituted by him as a society of men and therefore visible - which His Vicar and representative. With this assignment in Peter, Christ did not give up being the foundation and head of the Church, but simply gets a representative that does in the world, in the course of centuries, in a visible way his stead.

In the Gospel appears clear that Jesus during the period of his public life was concerned mainly to form the group of the Twelve, to entrust the continuation of his mission.

In this group emerges Peter, both in the life of Christ, and after Pentecost, as head of the Twelve. Peter does not become head of the Church by their own will, or by decision of the other Apostles, but for free choice and expressed will of Jesus in the Gospel capture evidence of Jesus' special love Peter. Already at the first meeting changes him the name "Tuart Simon the son of Jona: thou will be called Cephas, which means Stone "(John 1: 42). The change of

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name, in biblical style, it indicates a change of mission.

In addition, Jesus always has some preference for Peter, he does walk on water (Matthew 14, 29); for Peter and himself pays tribute gouged out of the mouth of a fish (Matthew 17, 27), for Peter so please particular (Luke 22, 32) to Peter first washes feet (John 13, 6), appears to him after his resurrection, before the other apostles (Luke 24, 25).

Of this pre-eminence of Peter the apostles are fully convinced: Peter and John go to the tomb on the morning of the resurrection, John arrives before, but dares not enter until after Peter (John 20: 8). Peter expresses a desire to return fisheries, and the other apostles certainly follow it. Whenever you do in the Gospels the list of Peter will always occupies the first place, while not because he is the first to be called (Matthew 10, 2; Mark 3: 16, Luke 6, 14). In the group of the three Apostles beloved, whom Jesus called to his side in moments as solemn as the Transfiguration and the agony of Gethsemane, Peter is always the first, James and John followed him. Even when the whole group Twelve is indicated in a general way, the Evangelist use the formula significant: "Peter and those who were with him "(Mark 1: 36).

But above so clear signs of prominence, we have already seen in the Gospels as Jesus promises primacy to Peter and gives him (Matthew 16: 15 - 19). In the passage from Luke 22: 31-32 we read that Jesus, after praying for Peter for his faith not

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fails, entrusted him with the task of consolidating the faith of others. Because of these words in the divine Christ the fortunes of the Church remain linked forever Peter.

In John 21, 15-18, after asking him for three times, "Peter, do you love me more than these?" Jesus repeats "Feed my lambs ... Feed my sheep. "are these divine words and solemn with which it is given to S. Peter's primacy, not only of honor and precedence, but also of jurisdiction (that is full control and absolute authority). He is given the full command to feed, that is to govern, manage and defend the whole flock of Christ (members and bishops), that will grow over the centuries.

Christ, who was proclaimed the Good Shepherd the one fold to which calls are all sheep (John 10: 1-18), proclaims now Pastor of his Peter's flock, which is so formed foundation Church's visible (and invisible remains Christ always!), final judge that binds and melts, leader and guide of the sheepfold of Christ, representative and Vicar on earth of the Son of God and as such depository of a single authority in the world.

4. Peter and Paul

The Protestants have tried in every way to destroy the foundation of the Primacy, denying that Peter came and died in Rome (see about what the next chapter). And the better to succeed in this attempt, the Protestants have always tried to oppose to Peter

- In the authority and teaching

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St. Paul, deliberately ignoring that it was the same St. Paul to recognize in Peter - he calls only Cephas, as he called the Lord - the head of Church.

In fact, when he returned from Arabia - where he had withdrawn before turning to the preaching of the Gospel - his first thought was to go to Jerusalem to not meet with the other apostles, but only with Peter. "Three years later - he writes to the Galatians - went up to Jerusalem to make the acquaintance of Peter, and abode with him fifteen days, "(Gal. 1: 15-18).

Moreover, from the book of Acts there was a clear fact that Peter began from the beginning - without encountering the slightest opposition on the part of the Apostles - a carry out his duties as head of the Church. It is in fact Peter at the Last Supper, in the midst of the brothers (about 120), took the lead and proposed the election of a new apostle to replace Judas (Acts 1: 15-22), it is Peter on Pentecost speaks to the people for first name and the other Apostles (Acts 2, 14-36), it is Peter works the first miracle in confirmation of faith (Acts 3: 1-11), Peter is at the head of the Apostles defended in the face of the glory Delmaestro Sanhedrin (Acts 4, 5-12), and it is Peter who still presides in Jerusalem the first Council of the Church (Acts 15: 7).

5. The episode of Antioch.

The episode of Antioch (Galatians 2, 11-14) is exploited - but wrongly - by all opponents of the Primacy of Peter. Here's how things went: Peter

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was in Antioch where there had been the first conversions Gospel to the Gentiles (Acts 11.19-24). in such Peter town used to take meals with the Christians came from paganism, heedless of the ancient Jewish custom which did not permit to do so.

Meanwhile, some Christians came to Antioch of Jewish origin, looking even some Jewish customs. Then Peter took no more meals with Christians converted from paganism. Her behavior urged others to do the same and this provoked the intervention of Paul. Why is Saint Peter behaved in this way? Certainly not because he thought that the Mosaic Law was still necessary to salvation. Paul himself recognizes him (Galatians 2: 14-16). For Peter to Paul as the customs the old Jewish law had no value. only faith in Christ saves.

Why Peter did so? For reasons of conscience, "Of consciousness, not his, but those of others" (1 Corinthians 10, 29). Peter was afraid to disturb the conscience of the new Judeo-Christian arrived not yet mature in the faith and therefore subject to a crisis of conscience. Paul did not see a error in the conduct of Peter, but only the danger the others could fall into error. For Peter he had apostatized from the faith, but only simulated, acted in a way that is different from what was thought to respect for the conscience of others.

The intervention of Paul, therefore, was not aimed at correcting A theoretical error of Peter, but to do so reflect on the dangerous consequences for others of his excessive caution. That being the case,

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the episode of Antioch test everything the opposite of what they all say opponents of the Primacy of Peter. In fact: Paul sees in Cephas (= Peter) is not an Apostle like the others, but someone whose behavior is in extending the life of the Church, because for Paul what Peter says or does is normative and instrumental (1 Corinthians 9: 5). Moreover, one must add that the function supreme driving does not preclude other help Peter with constructive criticism to make good the His mission for the edification of the Church.

6. St. Peter the first Bishop of Rome

Such a record - as is obvious - there was to stop Peter and cease with him. The Church, instituted by Christ, as a visible and lasting, it would not could never fail of her head, as a consequence the

supreme powers conferred on Peter, had to survive and transmitted to him in all their integrity to its Successors, the Roman Pontiffs. They are the heirs legitimate because of the primacy of Peter exercised in Rome a large part of his apostolate, by establishing its headquarters as the center of government of the whole Church and dying martyr for the faith on the Vatican hill.

This primacy of the Pope was always something so peaceful that no one ever dared to challenge. even the ancient Eastern patriarchs of Jerusalem, Antioch and Alexandria - the only ones who could advance some claim - recognized as their leader the Bishop of Rome because the successor of Peter.

The Protestants, denied the coming and death of Peter in Rome - two facts to which it is intimately connected Primacy of the Pope - affirm that the primacy of the Pope

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is an invention made very late in the year 607. but in making such free affirmation they have not realize that they have solemnly denied by the Council of Ephesus in 431. Eleven sitting there in July, Papal legate Philip made this significant statement: "... it is known at all times that the most blessed Peter chief of the Apostles, the pillar of faith and foundation stone of the Catholic Church, received by Jesus Christ, the keys of the kingdom of the heavens and the power to bind and loose, which to date and for all the times he lives and judges in his successors. the his successor and lieutenant in the order, our Pope, Bishop Celestine, has sent us as his representatives to this council ...".

The coming of Peter in Rome we can not doubt because it is he himself who does know. in closing In fact, his first letter to Christianity he will adds: "We greet the church that is in Babylon" (1 Peter 5, 13). In the environment of the Judeo-Christian early days, when there was continued persecution, name of Babylon was used to indicate the currently Rome. The fact that Protestants accept evidence only biblical, we omit here to bring the many very valid and literary evidence (1) and archaeological which demonstrates conclusively that Peter was and died in Rome, truth admirably confirmed from excavations carried out from 1940 onwards in the subsoil of St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. What then St. Peter died as Bishop of Rome, is from the ancient liturgical feast – remember

1) E. Zoffoli: The true church of Christ, Rome, 1990, pp..

given by many ancient authors - from the usual festivities century III, even before Christianity, February 28 380, be declared the state religion by Theodosius, time when the Catholic Church had not yet lost - According to the same Protestant - its own identity and had remained faithful to the Gospel.

Moreover, St. Peter and St. Paul are called "Princes of the Apostles" not in the sense of power and domain, but because they were mainly that with their preaching and glorious martyrdom have built up the Church of Christ.

In order to challenge the supreme authority to Peter, Protestants cite Matthew 20, 26-28: "... those who want to become great among you shall be your servant, and whoever wants be first among you must be your slave "(quote also 1 Peter 5:1). But both of these texts are not against authority, only indicate the way in which exercise it, that is, the spirit of service "just as the Son of man came not to be served, but to serve and to give his life a ransom for many " (Matthew 20, 25-28).

Jesus was just talking about the "leaders" of the nations, this confirms that he, speaking to the Twelve, they considered "leaders" of the Church. The lesson was so well understood that Pope Gregory I (+ 604) chose for himself the title "Servant of the servants of God" that his title successors still retain.

Whether the task entrusted to St. Peter does not cease with his death, it is also by the various images used by Jesus in his regard. for example

that of the "rock" on which Christ would build His Church, so that "the gates of hell do not prevail never against it. "In this it is evident that either Peter or its function should never have absence until the end of the world.

7. The "Treasury of St. Peter"

In the Gospel it is recommended to have the excised heart riches and goods of this world: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven " (Matthew 5:3). But nowhere is banned to the Supreme

Pope to accept an offer for the needs of Church and its charities. St. Peter himself and other apostles accepted the money and administered and assets of the Christian community to distribute to poor and widows, and they were so abundant that had to entrust the task to the seven deacons (Acts 4:32 - 37). Moreover, even the Twelve - led by Christ living - had money coming and administered from the offerings, and Judas was the cashier (John 12, 6).

If in the Middle Ages - when the civil powers and spiritual were not well defined and the Popes were forced to defend with arms especially during the barbarian invasions and Muslim faith and Christian civilization - rulers did their pious and generous gift of vast estates forming the so-called "Patrimony of St. Peter," that there is reason to be scandalized if they drew the Popes to help the poor? And what today is called "Treasury of St. Peter" and the same papal palaces, with art treasures they contain, are perhaps owned by the Pope or rather heritage and pride of the whole Christendom?

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8. The word "Pope" is not found in the Bible!

So say the Protestants. But for that matter, even the term "Trinity" appears in the Bible, yet the same Protestants use it safely and it affirm the doctrine.

The name "Papa" we do not find in the Holy Scripture, but it clearly states what this involves office in the government of the Church. the term "Papa" (from the Greek Papas = father) indicated in the first time the task of the bishop in general, but then was reserved for only the Bishop of Rome. What has been given to the Pope from 'wicked Emperor Phocas in 607 - evangelical Protestants as they say - is the result of pure ignorance. Indeed we find two centuries before Foca. San Pier Crisologo (+ 450) by writing to the bishop Eutyches, condemned for his heresy urged him to perform what he had imposed "the most blessed Pope of Rome. "

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CHAPTER X

THE COMING OF PETER IN ROME

PROTESTANT THOUGHT:

The historicists of Protestantism already have admitted the coming and the martyrdom of St. Peter in Rome. However, there are still those who stubbornly deny this fact to have a last-ditch pretext to deny the right of the Roman Popes in the Primacy of Peter.

ALLEGED BIBLICAL BASIS:

Second Epistle to Timothy 4:11 and 16: "Only remains Luke with me ... At my first defense no one is been close, all deserted me that if take them into account. "From these words that Paul wrote from Rome is evident that Peter was not with him.

ANSWER:

Probably Peter was not in Rome when Paul wrote the letter. It simply follows that, if Peter was in Rome, he had to be there before or after the letter was written. Moreover it is well known that the Apostles arrived in a city not stopped permanently in it: it is dedicated to the apostolate and were continuing mission to neighboring regions, while remaining tied to a particular center of their business. We also observe that if Peter was then in

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Rome, Paul never mentions it in order not to put the Apostle in difficult position before the authorities civilians. Another hypothesis is very likely that Paul intends to speak only of that narrow group of collaborators in the apostolate who had followed him from the East.

1. Peter's in Rome: Biblical evidence.

The coming of Peter in Rome and especially his martyrdom in that city are the reasons of the Primacy Roman. If Peter had not come to Rome and not he ended his days there, we would have had the Primacy, but not the Roman primacy. today, no scholar of value (even among non-Catholics) points doubt the coming of Peter in Rome and his martyrdom under the emperor Nero. Exceptions are some Protestant minorities tenaciously linked to ancient preconceptions.

We have an incontestable proof in the Bible the presence of Peter in Rome, of which I am convinced

the majority of biblical scholars from various denominations Christian. This test is given by the words with which Peter himself closes his First Letter: "I greet the community that has been elected together with you and dwells in Babylon "(1 Peter 5:13).

Babylon indicates the location where Peter wrote his letter. What is this place? This location is Rome because the name of Babylon is in place of the of Rome. This way to call Rome was common among the Jews at the time when St. Peter wrote his Epistle. In fact, after the conquest the

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Roman occupation of Palestine (63 BC.) Rome had become for the Jews, the symbol of the city that stands against God as the ancient Babylon's King Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings, chap. 25). Then in the Jewish world began to call Rome Babylon. The Christians followed this terminology.

An eloquent confirmation is given to us by the Apocalypse, where the author often speaks of Babylon the Great (Revelation 14.8, 16.19, 17.5, 18.2), sitting on the seven packages (17.9). The use of call Babylon the city of Rome is also widely proven in the literature contemporary Jews, how the Sibylline Oracles and the Apocalypse of Baruch.

Nor on the other hand it is possible to think the old Babylon of Nebuchadnezzar. And this for two reasons mainly. First of all there is the slightest trace in the Bible and in history that Peter was in Mesopotamia, where it had been founded Babylon. And then because at the time of Peter the town no longer existed because it had already been destroyed in 126. C. by parts (1).

2. historical evidence

St. Clement of Rome was bishop of Rome, third successor of St. Peter. Shortly after 90 writes to the Christians Corinth to restore order and peace in that community. As for us writes:
"Let's get under our eyes the good Apostles: Peter ...

and Paul, who were in the midst of a very good example. "

1) See Treccani Encyclopedia, vol. V, p. 732

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Note first of all that Clement joins in death the two apostles Peter and Paul. Now no one doubts the martyrdom of Paul in Rome. There is therefore no reason to doubt the martyrdom of Peter in Rome itself and in the same circumstances. In addition, Clement says: "... were in the midst of a very good example. "here Clement stands as a witness to those events. And since he lived in Rome and wrote that 'in the midst of shows us quite clearly that Rome was the site of a beautiful example of witness Christian given by Peter and Paul.

St. Ignatius almost contemporary to Clement, 107 in writing to the Christians of Rome says: "I will not I give orders like Peter and Paul ... " .

So Peter and Paul had given orders, had instructed the Christians of Rome. Di Paolo know which has investigated the Christians of Rome and by means of a written, which is precisely his Letter to the Romans, both at speakerphone during his imprisonment in Rome (Acts 28.2 - 28).Of Peter there is no writing addressed to the Church of Rome. On the contrary, he wrote, as already we have seen, a letter from Rome to the Christians of Roman provinces.

St. Irenaeus in his work Against Heresies (Book 3, paragraphs 2 and 3) states: "But as would be too long to enumerate in this paper the succession of all the churches, we will question the and ancient church known to all, founded in Rome by the two most glorious Apostles Peter and Paul.

Having founded and built the church, the Blessed Apostles who handed the episcopal government to

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Lino ". Irenaeus states unequivocally that the founders of the Church of Rome were Peter and Paul. Origen ensures that Peter came to Rome, there was crucified upside down (Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, lib. III, 1.2). Porphyry, anti-Christian philosopher (d. 304), also affirms the coming of Peter in Rome saying, " Peter, the favorite of the Apostles, and many times taken kept in prison and reviled, finally died in Rome on the cross (Porphyry, perished Matanoias).

3. The Tomb of St. Peter's in Rome

If historians assure us remember with evidence that St. Peter came to Rome, their testimony is confirmed and strengthened by the excavations of the Roman catacombs.

In the catacombs of St. Sebastian has found a graffiti wall (= entries) with these sentences: "Petro Paulo et Tomius Caelius refrigerium feces "(I Tomio Celio I did invocation and libation to Peter and Paul "Peter et Paul orate pro Victore" (Peter and Paul pray for Victor). These invocations prove of course, that there were resting near the bodies of the two Apostles. The calligraphic writing then, corresponds to the Rustic Roman characters used in Rome in the third century after Christ.

Even in the cemetery near the Via Salaria Ostrianum is found this inscription: "Coemeterium fontis S. Petri ... ubi Petrus baptizavit "(Cemetery of the source of St. Peter ... where Peter baptized). Many paintings and art of Roman sculptures I-IV d. C. lead the image and the name of the Apostle Peter.

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Since it was known that many ancient testimonies on the Vatican hill was venerated the tomb of St. Peter. Around the year 200 the priest Gaius, in controversy with the heretic Proclus wrote, "I can show you the trophies of the Apostles. If you would like the Vatican or editing your on the Via Ostiense find the trophies of the founders of this Church "(Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History lib. Chapter II. 25, 6-7). It is Peter and Paul. The first, buried on the Vatican hill, the second buried along the way Ostiense, where today stands the great Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls.

St. Jerome informs us that St. Peter was buried at the Vatican where he is worshiped all over the world. And St. Paulinus of Nola, was in the habit of going every year to Rome to venerate the tomb of the two Apostles (2). When the Emperor Constantine - long before Jerome and Pauline lived - he built the ancient Basilica at the Vatican was well known that in that place had been buried and revered for centuries the Apostle Peter. The problem of the tomb of Peter did not arise. The thing was certain. Even the Christian writer Eusebius revealed that, "The names of Peter and Paul have a real dominance in the monuments of the existing cemeteries in the city of Rome "(Ecclesiastical History, lib. II, chap. 25, no. 5).

The excavations under the basilica Vatican confirmed the existence of the tomb of the Apostle Peter.

The first explorations in the years 1939-1949 have revealed:

2) Catholic Encyclopedia, Vatican City, 1952, vol. IX, p. 14-16.

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- That in that location there was originally a cemetery;

- That a grave had been carefully prepared so as to become monumental tomb;

- What about this tomb there are traces numerous demonstrating the rush of devotees since the ancient times. What tracks? Many graffiti (invocations written), and 1900 coins left as offering by pilgrims from all over the world. Have been identified 231 coins of the Roman Empire and 27 of the Byzantine Empire, and lots of times rear. We ask ourselves:

- Why just that place was the destination of many pilgrimages and subject to such veneration?

- Why this phenomenon did not occur in any city of the Roman Empire?

- Why only in Rome, the Vatican Hill?

The only explanation is the presence of Peter in Rome and his martyrdom in Rome. But there's more. The excavations at the tomb of St. Peter, taken in 1952 by Margaret Guarducci, gave results surprising. Under the current papal altar of the basilica St. Peter's has found a kind of funerary shrine, leaning against a wall (called "red" for the color) and particularly valuable for the numerous graffiti decrypted by the same archaeologist.

All contain invocations to Peter, which is associated sometimes Christ and Mary. One of these invocations says: "Peter, pray to Jesus Christ, the holy men Christians buried near your body "(Observer Romano, 11.22.1952). Of decisive importance, finally,

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another graffiti in Greek (PETROS ENI), that is **PIETRO IS HERE IN (3)**.

But with the tomb were also discovered the relics of S. Peter.

The result that occurred in June 1963 examining the bones found in the tomb was the following: the bones of a single individual, male, whether robust, of old age (between 60 and 70 years). this result was to coincide with historical and archaeological (4).

So the Catholic Church, presided over by the Pope, Bishop of Rome is the only one founded by Jesus because dates back to Peter, whom he has chosen as Teacher and Shepherd the universal Church.

Today serious historians of the Protestant Churches have changed their minds and admitted, for quite some time, coming and the martyrdom of St. Peter's in Rome. one of them, Harnack says: "The Martyrdom of St. Peter's in Rome was once denied by the biased prejudices Protestants (is a Protestant who speaks!) and, subsequently, preconceptions of critical partisans ... There is scholar which currently hesitate to recognize that this was a error "(5).

3) M. Guarducci, The tomb of Peter, Studium, Rome , 1959.

M. Guarducci, The tomb of St. Peter Rusconi, Milan 1989.

4) The relics of St. Peter, in the Vatican and Christian Rome, Vatican City, Rome, 1975.

5) altkierchlichen Chronologie der Literatur, I, Berlin, , 1897, p. 244

4.The infallibility of the Pope

The Catholic doctrine of papal infallibility is clearly taught in the Bible. It was only formulated, not invented by the Councils. The first time since First Vatican Council, the second time instead Second Vatican Council has confirmed and proposed (6). In the last century, to reject the mistakes that destroyed the very foundations of the faith, the Church had reaffirm officially, the First Vatican Council of

1870s, the doctrine of the primacy of the Bishop of Rome and especially of papal infallibility.

Jesus has given to Peter of this indispensable prerogative that he might preserve it intact from errors the sacred deposit of faith. Without such a gift, already time the Church would have foundered amid the dangers of heresies.

Announcing to Peter and the other Apostles the assaults that Satan was preparing against them, Jesus promised to Peter (and only to Peter!) Its particular assistance: "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded to sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and you have turned again (it would in fact shortly thereafter denied him three times) strengthen your brethren "(Luke 22, 31-32).

From this prayer of the Son of God - of course infallible - and the promise of its continued assistance that is provided to Peter, living in

6) Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, n. 25.

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his successors, the infallibility of teaching, always believed and accepted by the faithful from apostolic times, but declared truths of faith mentioned Vatican council I.

Following this pronouncement is cried scandal between Protestants and have mistakenly assumed that the Pope was declared even impeccable. The Pope can sin just like any other man (so much so that even he admits), but it is infallible when he speaks on matters of faith and morals as we will try soon with the Holy Scripture. However, due to the fact that the Pope can not sin for this remains compromised his infallibility, so how about the fact that a judge does not look in his privacy law, it does not follow that do not have value judgments that decision in court. The infallibility - according to the Council - is this: when the Pope speaks ex cathedra, that is, as Pastor and Teacher of the whole Church (and not as a theologian private) in matters of faith and morals regarding all the faithful, He - by virtue of divine promised to him in the person of Peter - can not err and its definitions in are infallible.

5. Biblical evidence of infallibility

We have evidence of this in the Bible infallibility?
Certainly!

a) Jesus prayed that Peter was able to confirm his brothers (Luke 22, 31-32). It is logical to think that Christ's prayer has been effective, and that Peter

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in expounding the doctrine of God is infallible, because if could be wrong, not only would not confirm the Truth the Brethren, but would lead them into error.

b) Christ promised that he would build his Church on Peter's faith: "You are Peter and upon this rock I will build my Church "(Matthew 16: 18). Jesus continues to build His church, during of history, the teaching of the Roman Pontiffs that happen to Peter. Therefore faith and teaching of the Roman Pontiffs can not contain correct, otherwise Christ constructs his Church about the error.

c) If Peter personally or in his successors could be wrong, the whole Church of Christ would fall into error, such as a house built on sand, and not would be between peoples "pillar and ground of truth "(1 Timothy 3: 15). The express will of Christ, this did not happen and will never happen: "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it "(Matthew 16, 18).

d) If the use of the keys (Matthew 16, 19), ie the power to interpret the Scriptures correctly, you are not exhausted with the work of Peter, but it is inherited from its successors in the primacy (that is by the Popes), it follows that their interpretation of the Scriptures will always be correct, otherwise their service to open or close would be detrimental to the needs of God's Kingdom

e) Similarly if Christ assured Peter that all what would bind or loose on earth, it would be been bound or loosed also in heaven, that is from God (Matthew 16, 19), it follows that the decisions of the Successor of Peter in his specific function

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Head of the Church, will have a corresponding sanction from God, and therefore can not be incorrect decisions.

f) Jesus entrusted to Peter for all his flock, as a shepherd tied to Christ by a large love, guide to safe pastures and defend him from any ferocious wolves (John 21, 15-17). Even the successors Peter must ensure that the flock of Christ safe pastures and defend it from enemies. this would be impossible if their teaching could contain errors, that is the Popes, in the function of pastors universal can not err in matters of faith and morals.

The Protestants are instead saying that they have a Bible infallible and this is enough for them. But what is to have a Bible infallible if he who reads is not infallible and interprets it in his own way? own because the Protestants admit the free interpretation Bible Churches there are different and conflicting between them.

6. The Pope can be called "Holy Father"?

If Catholics call "Holy Father," the head of Universal Church, which deny the truth of the Bible? Do not make the same Anglicans, who call "His Grace" their Primate, and the Eastern Orthodox "His Beatitude" their Patriarch? and Jesus himself did not says "blessed" Peter? (Matthew 16, 17).

The Protestants cite Matthew 23, 9 to condemn Catholic use of the term "father" for the sacred ministers. Leave out though - as they often do - indicate the context of the sentence.

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From the context of the whole discourse of Jesus is clear that he wants here only correct the abuse that this term were members of the synagogue: they loved to be called "fathers", but then were far from prove such. Jesus does not intend not abolish the right use of that title, but imparts a lesson in humility, as it does elsewhere in the Gospel. the Lord, therefore, did not intend to exclude the leaders of the community harbored the noble sentiment of spiritual fatherhood towards Christians.

St. Paul exhorts Christians to be imitators of God, precisely in the goodness and love (Ephesians 5, 1). And what greater imitation of God there can be in those who are called to lead the Christians except that the fatherhood of God? He wrote to the Christians of Corinth: "I am writing these things as beloved children. Though you have ten thousand teachers, but certainly not many fathers in Christ, because it is I who have begotten

in Christ Jesus through the gospel "(1 Corinthians 5 14-15).

Paul considered himself and is called the father of those who he bore spiritually in Christ. perhaps he was not aware of Jesus' words in Matthew 23, 9? Who would dare to attribute to him such ignorance? And So why has not had any trouble due the title of father?

Even with the Christians of Galatia, the Apostle had used the same language: "My sons that I am again in travail until it is formed Christ in you "(Galatians 4: 19). And with the same affection father son Paul calls the slave Onesimus, that he had converted to Christ and generated in

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chains (Philemon 10). From Paul's letters show that the relationship of Christians to Paul were based on feelings the spiritual son ship.

But there is much more. What they say is the Protestants against the Holy Scripture. In fact, Jesus did not want to abolish Scripture (Matthew 5: 17-18). Now in Scripture the right use of the title of father is widespread. In the book of Judges 17, 9-10 and 18, 19 for two Sometimes it is said that some Israelites they give to the priest the title of father. There is no condemnation of such a mode of expression.

In addition, the Prophet and King David calls his father Saul because he is the legitimate sovereign long as it is in life. David says, "Do not stretch out my hand on my Lord, for he is the anointed of the God and Father "(1 Samuel 24: 11-12). Finally, even the king of Israel called fathers the prophets, their spiritual leaders: "Now Elisha fell ill with the disease, so it would be dead. Josh, king of Israel came down to him and burst into tears at the before him shouting: My father, my father! (2 Kings 13, 14).

No wonder, consequently, that it is called "Holy Father," the Pope, the Vicar of Christ and head of the entire Christian world

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THE HOLY EUCHARIST

PROTESTANT THOUGHT:

- a) The Supper instituted by Christ is simply a rite commemorating his Passion.
- b) There can be no other sacrifice after the only and infinite sacrifice of Christ.

ALLEGED BASIC BIBLICAL

- a) John 6, 64: "It is the Spirit who gives life, the flesh profits nothing. The words that I have spoken are spirit and life. "So when Jesus answered, after talking to Capernaum of his flesh that was to be food and his blood that had to be drunk, had been questioned by the disciples on the meaning of his mysterious words. In the spirit therefore, that is, symbolically, to be understood also other words Jesus spoke on this topic.
- b) In the letter to the Hebrews 10, 10-14 speaking clearly the unique offering of Christ for which we are sanctified.

ANSWER

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- a) The Jews, reasoning according to the flesh, they thought that Jesus wanted to give her body to food and drink, and when the Last Supper Jesus instituted the Eucharist, the apostles understood according to the spirit,

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what food it was and the words of Christ aroused no doubt, as we shall show more forward.

- b) The Mass is not a new redemptive sacrifice, but it is the same sacrifice of the Cross continued on our altars by the express will of Christ (Luke 22, 19, 1 Corinthians 11, 25).

1. The promise Of 'Eucharist

Jesus well knew that the Jews would have remained stunned in front of a truth so sublime and so tried to prepare their minds with a tremendous miracle. St. John in his Gospel, in fact, tells the miracle of the five loaves with which Jesus fed over five thousand people (John 6, 1-13).

This great miracle of Jesus served to occasion to promise solemnly Holy Eucharist and he did that in the synagogue of Cafànao. then said Jesus: "Verily I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because you ate of the bread, and were filled. Try not the food that that perishes but for eternal life, which the Son of man will give you. "The Jews asked for a sign particular to believe in Him saying that their fathers had believed in Moses because he had given them the manna, the mysterious food that is coming every day from the sky. Jesus answered, "Truly I tell you, not Moses gave you the bread of heaven, but my Father gives you the true bread of heaven, because the bread of God is he which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world. They said, Lord, evermore give us this bread!

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Jesus answered them: I am the bread of life! ... your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and are dead. I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats this bread will live forever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh given for the life of the world "(John 6: 26-35).

So Jesus made the solemn promise the Eucharist, that is, said that he would give to eat His Body.

2. the Consecration

Jesus promised and maintained. He to implement its divine plan chose the last day of earthly life; this is a significant factor, because the last day of life is particularly important. Therefore, Jesus, before beginning his Passion, the Apostles gathered in the Upper Room, and here he made the last Dinner. His divine Heart that had been waiting for supreme moment for the establishment of the sacrament Eucharist and therefore, he set at the table, said, "I earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before you die "(Luke 22, 15).

After dinner, here is the solemn moment! And 'Jesus the God-man who, having loved men wanted them loving to the end. We see Jesus! he lifts eyes to heaven, he turns to the Eternal Father, almost to ask for permission to operate the great miracle; and after having given thanks, he takes a loaf of bread and holding in his divine hands, blesses it, breaks it and gives to his disciples saying, "Take and eat this is my body "(Matthew 26, 26).

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Powerful words, because uttered by God himself. The bread, while retaining its natural appearances, that is, weight, color, taste, shape, ... is no longer bread, but the true and real body of Jesus Christ. In the body there is also his Soul and his Divinity.

After this, Jesus takes the chalice with wine, turns his eyes to heaven thanking the Eternal Father, the blesses and gives the Apostles saying, "Drink ye all of because this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured for many for the forgiveness of sins "(Matthew 26, 27).

As for the bread, so for the wine you repeat the miracle. The wine, while preserving their natural qualities, ie color, flavor, weight, ... has become the Blood true and real Jesus, that is his Body, the Soul and its his Divinity.

The Protestants strive to demonstrate that the Lord did not intend to consecrate the bread, but only wanted to bless him and give food to the Apostles as a simple symbol of His Body, and to be able to prove their silly interpretation, say that when Jesus said, "This is my Body ", he touched with his hand to his chest to signify that his body was not the consecrated Bread, but Himself.

Clearly, the strangeness of this interpretation. Why do not tell Jesus what did he say? And how to tie the two phrases "take and eat" and "This is my body"? If it was as they say the Protestants, when Jesus said, "Take and drink, this is my blood "then showed what the Apostles? Instead the Gospel points out clearly that Jesus says

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the words "poured out for you" referring to the contents of the cup! He comes here about Martin Luther. he in his booklet "Short Confession of the Holy Sacrament" wrote: "For my efforts to demonstrate that Jesus has instituted the Eucharist, not I can succeed because the passage of Sacred Scripture is too strong. "

The Protestants say that Jesus spoke of Housing and Blood in the synagogue in Capernaum, but wanted to talk in a symbolic way. For when the Apostles asked for an explanation of what he had said, he replied: "It 's the Spirit that gives life, the flesh profits nothing; the words that I say to you are spirit and life "(John 6: 64). The truth is that Jesus did not speak at all so symbolic, he said plainly, "I will give to eat my body and give you to drink my blood. " The Jews who listened, took literally the words the Divine Master, so much so that they were discussing among them, saying, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat? "(John 6: 52).

If Jesus had spoken in a symbolic way, would immediately correct interpretation of the Jews; instead not only corrected but argued most strongly what he had already said, "Verily I say unto you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. About eats my flesh and drinks my blood has life everlasting and I will raise him up at the last day. Why my flesh is real food and my blood is true drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood, remains in me and I in him "(John 4: 54). So Jesus spoke of the Body and Blood, talked of eating and drinking.

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The disciples did not understand in what way would could occur about Jesus and said, "This language is hard to understand, and who can hear it? ". They did not think that Jesus was speaking of a fact block. The Divine Master then strengthened his say: That is, you do not understand what I'm talking about a prodigy? And then put forward another wonder: "What if you see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? ", ie with the his body off the ground and disappear among the clouds. Even the disciples were hesitant to believe and thought humanly, that is imagined to have cut to pieces the body of Jesus, as you cut into the butcher's meat, and eat it all this is reason according to the flesh. Then Jesus, in order to understand that would feed his body really (1), but in a prodigious, full of mystery, that is

in the form of the Eucharist, he concluded: "It 's the Spirit gives life, the flesh profits nothing "(John 6: 63).

As if to say: "The senses and human reasoning does not can make people understand what I say. Only the Spirit can give the exact understanding of my words "

(John 14, 26).

Jesus appeals to the courage of faith that is the result the Spirit.

1) The words of Christ: "eat my body and drink of the my blood "in a symbolic sense mean: hate me, calumny, tear me to pieces, If, then, is to be understood, how they want the Protestants, in a figurative sense, Christ he said to his Apostles: In order that you may have life it is necessary that you hate, slander, and author tear me to pieces me giver of true life! What nonsense! On our altars, therefore, there is not only a symbol of the body and blood of Christ, but Jesus is truly present and alive is true

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A worthless sophisticated reasoning and proud the carnal man. So Jesus does not retract the His statement about real equality between its flesh and blood, and the food and drink that he he gave to his disciples so that they had the life. "The words that I say to you are spirit and life" - that is, are sublime things, higher than human thoughts - and they give true life.

But the need for Jesus to accept the reality of his flesh as food and his blood as drink he found his listeners willing to make a courageous decision.

"Many went back, and walked no more with him "(John 6: 66). The Twelve, however, and many others with them and after them have professed their faith with the clear and courageous statement:

"Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of life eternal "(John 6: 68).

Only faith accepts the real presence of the Body and Blood of Christ in the consecrated bread and wine. believing means courage to join with what a person says, indeed worthy of our faith, even though my senses do not perceive, and eyes can not see. And no deserves so much our faith as our God and Savior Jesus, who is the Truth, the faithful witness and true, the Word of God (John 14, 6 and 1, 1; Revelation 3: 14).

A Don Giuseppe Tomaselli (2) once a Protestant asked, "How come you Catholic priests established to consecrate the bread and wine as the Lord did? So believe Jesus Christ to be the same number?



That maybe he consecrated him, one could in some so admit. But how to support a poor priest could do the same?

- She therefore thought that Jesus wanted to establish the Eucharist solely to communicate only once the Apostles and that he did not intend to leave the earth perpetually this sacrament? His thinking, dear friend, is not true. Jesus in fact speech in the synagogue of Capernaum did not resolve the word to the only Apostles, but at the entire population. he said, "Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life and I will raise him up at the last day" (John 6: 54). Therefore they should not be only the Apostles to merit eternal life and the glorious resurrection, but all men should have have this beautiful lot. If Jesus had wanted the consecration had been a simple case isolated and exclusive for the Apostles, it certainly would not have spoken to the people, as it did not concern him.

Wanting to Jesus who perpetuate this Sacramento, as soon as he consecrated the bread and wine, immediately gave to the Apostles and their successors, power to perform the same miracle of consecration. In fact, he added: "Do this in memory of me" (Luke 22, 19).

The Apostles understood the thought of Jesus, and when He had left the world, they repeated the consecration. Protestants for you the testimony of St. Paul is the highest authority. Well, Saint Paul consecrated and communicated the faithful, indeed watched very that the early Christians should approach with reverence

receive the Eucharistic Bread, and having noticed the abuses in this regard, he wrote a letter to the faithful of the city Corinth, remembering that "he who eats and drinks unworthily the Body and Blood of Christ, eats and drinks his conviction, not distinguishing (ordinary bread) the Body of the Lord" (1 Corinthians 11: 29).

There is no doubt that the Apostles have had the power to consecrate and they really have consecrated. The successors of the Apostles, that the Pope, the Bishops and priests, and as long as they have inherited will the Church of Jesus Christ will continue to inherit the power to consecrate the bread and wine.

The last words that Jesus spoke about Eucharist has this sense: Whenever you do this (that is holy things), do it in memory of me, that is reminding you of what I intended to do and thinking of me. Having a person's memory, means think.

-But why Jesus Christ, if you really wanted to stay still alive and true in the world, did not want to stay in human form? Humanity would have believed so better and there would be more satisfaction.

- As Jesus chose to remain in the ground under the Eucharistic form, is a sign that this is the most useful to men. In fact, in front of a Host Consecrated, if we kneel and pray, exercise faith, which is the first virtue that concerns And then God, if Jesus had remained in the world in the form natural, who could feed him? Who would had the courage to drink his blood? ... not that is to say with the great St. Thomas Aquinas:

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"We love prostrate so great a sacrament."

Here is the essential difference between Catholics and Protestants: the first with Christ, the second without Christ!

This explains the one hand the solemnity and grandeur and the splendor of the rites of the Catholic churches, and other the coldness and desolation of the Protestant worship halls, from which Christ is absent!

3. Establishment of the Eucharistic Sacrifice

S. Paul writes: "In the same way, after supper, also he took the cup, saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood: this do every time you drink it, in remembrance of me "(1 Corinthians 11: 25).

Matthew writes: "And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all, because this is my blood of the covenant, poured out for

many for the forgiveness of sins "(Matthew 26: 27-28).
From those words:

a) Christ at the Last Supper offered a true sacrifice:
"This is the blood of the New Covenant"; similar
expression had been used by Moses in Exodus (24, 8;
Hebrews 9: 19-20) when he was close alliance between God and the
chosen people with a real sacrifice.

b) presents Christ to the Apostles his blood as
blood sacrifice that would be offered to God for the
Redemption of mankind.

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4. Catholic Mass or Holy Protestant Supper?

From the Gospel we know that Jesus instituted the Eucharist
during the rites of the Jewish Passover supper and rituals that
included a precise protocol with the traditional
lamb, bitter herbs, the song of certain psalms, certain formulas
blessing on earth, Jerusalem, etc..

all this takes place in the Holy Supper of the Protestants?
Certainly not. And then how can they say that
it is identical to that of Jesus?

It was the Apostles (only present) and not to others
Jesus said, "Do this in memory of me" (Luke
22, 19), and only they, therefore, they could adapt
changing the rite, for example, the language, the songs complementary
ceremonies and other features of the celebration.

And this made the Catholic Church,
given that it is the immediate and direct inherited
Apostles. Leaving unchanged the substance of the celebration
Eucharistic up to the scrupulous preservation
the words of institution, the Church has replaced -
according to the changing needs of the times - the primitive
Aramaic language Greek, then Latin, and today the languages
modern.

Even some of the material employed by Jesus, the Church
Catholic has always used bread and wine, though
not always admitted all the faithful by the glass (and this
because it does not need to Communion and for reasons
practical easy to understand). As for the host, what if
not unleavened bread (that is unleavened) such as
Jesus used?

Of these and similar issues that do not affect certain
the substance of the Eucharist, you need to Protestants

divert attention from the most important thing

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on the other hand, completely different the holy Supper of the Protestants from that of Jesus; namely the fact that it does not is celebrated - as Jesus commanded - by Apostles, nor by their lawful successors, but from a simple baptized! In addition, they distributed the bread in their dinner is simple bread, the bread distributed in the Holy Catholic Mass instead is the Body and Blood of Jesus!

5. The Eucharistic Sacrifice predicted by Malachi

That the Holy Mass is however also true sacrifice, already prophesied in the Old Testament, the prophet Malachi, which clearly announces the end of the sacrifices of the old law and a new and pure sacrifice that would have replaced them: "I have no pleasure of you, said the Lord of hosts, I do not accept the offering of your hands! As from the rising of sun to its setting my name is great among the nations, and in every place incense is offered to my name and a pure offering, for my name is great among the nations, said the Lord of hosts "(Malachi 1, 10-11).

The new sacrifice prophesied by Malachi is performed by Jesus on Calvary, resubmitted to us in the Holy Mass. If the Mass was not a real sacrifice, identical to that of Calvary, Malachi's prophecy could not be regarded fully fulfilled, because the only way the sacrifice of the Cross is celebrated "in every place" and "the rise of the sun to its setting. "

In fact, the sacrifice of Calvary was not offered in every moment of the day - "from sunrise to

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its setting "- but at a given time, without even the possibility of being able to repeat, was also offered not "everywhere" of the earth - as indicated by the prophecy - But only in one place, namely on Calvary.

In Masses celebrated in different times and places different is always the same Holy Sacrifice of the Cross which is made present, thanks to the words of consecration Jesus had said, and in the name of Him, not by a repeated

any baptized, but by the priest by virtue of Sacrament of Orders which gives him such power.

6. The true sacrifice Dinner

Whether it's true sacrifice emerges from the words of Jesus: "This is my body," adding: "that is given for you." It is an addition that gives the words of Jesus as a sacrificial meaning. For the bread-Body given to be eaten clearly gives the idea of sacrifice in use among the Jews, who ate a part of the victims sacrificed to participate in the benefits arising from the sacrifice (1 Corinthians 10: 18). "It is given for you, "that is given over to death for you, as a ransom for your redemption and salvation.

The value of sacrifice seems very clear even in the words of consecration of the wine. All three Synoptic Gospels (3) report the words of Jesus in the

3) The word synoptic can be rendered in Italian with *visa* together. They are called the Synoptic Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luca because they can be arranged in three parallel columns and seen together, that is assess at a glance the similarities and differences.

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as follows: "This is my blood shed for many or for you" (Matthew 26, 28, Mark 14, 24, Luke 22, 20). Now the blood shed for many involves necessarily the idea of sacrifice, especially as Matthew specifies: "In the forgiveness of sins" (Matthew 26, 28). The sins are forgiven through the sacrifice (Hebrews 9: 22). And it is important to note that Jesus says the words "poured out for you" referring to content the cup! "It 'shed for you" for the remission of your sins. Now lay down his life and shed blood for the forgiveness of sins is to offer a sacrifice. It is striking the word "data-shed for you", which indicates that the body of the Lord, killed by crucifixion the next day, she's there on the table last Dinner.

To confirm this, St. Paul contrasts the canteen and the Eucharistic Sacrifice to the victims and real sacrifices the pagans (1 Corinthians 10.14-21). So Jesus Last Supper has established a true and real sacrifice.

7. real Presence

The oldest (4) on the establishment of the Mass, as well as on the will of

4) The First Letter to the Corinthians should be placed among the writings the oldest in the New Testament, the Gospels previous and the Acts of the Apostles. It was written at a distance of just twenty years since the Lord's Supper. They were still in life almost all the apostles and most of the immediate disciples. All of Jesus preached the same doctrine (1 Corinthians 15:11). Now about the Lord's Supper, Paul stated in the same letter: "I received from the Lord what that in my turn I sent you "(1 Corinthians 11: 23).

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Lord to celebrate it until his second coming are those of S. Paul in his First Letter to the Corinthians. from this examination showed unequivocally that the faith and the cult of SS. Eucharist are kept in the Catholic Church with the utmost fidelity to the teachings of the Lord.

St. Paul reminds the Christians of Corinth what the Lord's Supper, repeating in detail the story institution as he had learned from reliable source: "I received from the Lord what in fact that in my turn I sent you "(1 Corinthians 11: 23).

The Apostle has strong words of condemnation for the behavior of those Christians. They, in fact, for their way of acting, showed not to distinguish between the common Bread and wine from bread and wine -Body and Blood of the Lord. Such behavior is a very serious offense against the Body of Christ: "Whoever so unworthy, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord, will be guilty of profaning the Body and Blood of the Lord. everyone therefore examine himself, and so eat of the bread and drink this cup, because he who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment upon himself "(1 Cor 11, 27-30).

S. Paul clearly states that those lacking of respect toward the bread and the wine, lack of respect for the Body and Blood of Christ. This is understandable only if in the bread and consecrated wine is the real presence, though mysterious, the Body and Blood of Christ. If it were simple bread and wine - eaten dinner in a symbolic to commemorate the death of Jesus, just as they do the

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Protestants - S. Paul would not have said that "Eats his own condemnation those who eat unworthily, without discerning the Lord's body. "

St. Elizabeth Seton a Protestant Episcopalian converted to Catholicism, in Autobiographical Notes writes: "When I went for the first time in the church of the Virgin of Montenero in Livorno, a young Englishman next to me at the time of the elevation, murmured: "And 'their real presence."

My mind flew instinctively to the text of St. Paul in 1 Corinthians 11, 29 and I thought, "If our Lord is not there, because the Apostle threat? How can he criticized for not discerning the Lord's Body if the body is not present? How could those who eat unworthily, eat their sentence, if the Blessed Sacrament is nothing more than a common bread? How is it possible to be guilty the Body and Blood of the Lord if that bread and that wine there is neither body nor blood of the Lord? " (5).

8. sacrificial nature

Telling the history of the institution of the Eucharist St. Paul reminds the words of the Lord in the way following: "This cup is the new covenant in my

5) M. D. Poinset, extraordinary and fascinating life Elizabeth Seton, New Town Publishing, 1976 p. 175.

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Blood: do this, whenever you drink it in memory about me. For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes "(1 Corinthians 11: 25-26).

explanation:

a) Notice, first, that the chalice is the content a cup well determined, which is what Jesus kept the evening in the hands of the Holy Supper, and also that in the assemblies of Christians Corinth contained the consecrated wine, S. Paul says that is, that implements the New Covenant or the Covenant Lord.

Now we know that the New Covenant was implemented through the Blood of the Lamb, that of Jesus Christ offered on the cross once for all (Hebrews 9, 26, John 1:29; Revelation 5, 12).

Since even the contents of the chalice implements the New Alliance, there must be something common between wine consecrated and sacrifice of the Cross, otherwise the words gave the chalice would not make sense.

b) The same S. Paul helps us to understand how they are immediately after things when he writes: "For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes " (1 Corinthians 11: 26).

So eat the consecrated bread, drink the contents the cup is equivalent to proclaim, to make that This sacrificial death of the Lord. The Eucharistic rite is therefore called memorial, remember that actual not merely symbolic, much less sunny

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words, death-sacrifice of Christ. in the Holy Mass is repeated through signs the only valid sacrifice offered by Christ once and for all, with shedding blood, to enter into the new Covenant not it comes to new sacrifices, but one sacrifice - that of the Cross - sacramentally renewed (that is mysteriously, but really) on our altars for the salvation of the world until the second coming of Lord. This is the will of Christ.

It is for this absolute certainty, so clearly established in Sacred Scripture that the Catholic Church has always paid adoration to the consecrated Host, declaring the truth of faith in the Real Presence Christ in the Eucharist. He then just smile the lightness (and ignorance) with which states in a brochure Protestant: "The adoration of the host was sanctioned by Pope Honorius III in 1220. thus the Roman Church worships a God made by the hands of men. This practice is the height of idolatry and is absolutely contrary to the spirit of the Gospel. "

9. The Holy Mass

In telling how the events took place in the last Lord's Supper, both Paul and Luke have preserved

some very significant words of Jesus: "Do this in memory of me "(Luke 22, 19). "Do this in memory of me ... Whenever you drink it, do this in memory of me "(1 Corinthians 11: 24-25). It is clear that Jesus was referring to the future. He gave the his followers to repeat the command, even during the

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his absence, what He had done on that memorable Dinner. And also the power conferred by the command to do the work that he had done, that is, perpetuate His Presence in the midst of his means the bread and wine consecrated, and with the presence his sacrifice.

The power that Jesus gave to his disciples behaved therefore also a priestly character. those to who had been given the command to repeat the Lord's Supper - We can say that rite - were also made priests. Not because Christ has successors, as the Levitical priesthood in ancient Israel (Hebrews 8, 24, 7, 1). He, Christ remains forever. Risen from the dead, is alive and has a priesthood that does not pass (Hebrews 7: 24). But he found the way of exercising his eternal priesthood by those who Paul describes as "collaborators of God "(1 Corinthians 3, 9, 2 Corinthians 6, 1).

The faithful disciples of Jesus understood very well the will of their Master, and, beginning with the earliest times, after the Ascension, gathered in assemblies liturgical, that is, divine service and prayer, to proclaim the Lord's death through the celebration of the Last Supper and communicate with his Body and His Blood.

The testimony of St. Paul is clear and unambiguous. To the faithful of Corinth he thought with words severe to celebrate with the utmost respect of the Supper Lord (1 Cor 11, 17-29). By the way the Apostle expresses is no doubt that in meetings Christians the main point was the celebration the Lord's Supper. This occurred with both the

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word, that is, remembering what Jesus had done, both with the rite, that is, repeating the Dinner and communicating to the Body-bread and wine-the Blood of Christ. We repeat: the meetings of the early Christians had as a highlight the celebration of Holy Communion.

10. The example of Paul

Paul himself observed the command of Jesus and celebrating the Lord's Supper, or the Mass, during his apostolic journeys. A typical case is that recounted in Acts 20.7 to 11 for the circumstances extraordinary that accompanied it: "The first day of the week we were there gathered together to break bread, Paul talked with them, as he had to leave the next day, prolonged his speech until midnight. A boy named Eutychus, overwhelmed by the sleep, he fell from the third loft, and was taken up dead. Paul went down, threw himself on him, hugged him and said: "There is still unsettled in life." Then went up, broke bread and ate it, and after talking until dawn, he left "(Acts 20.7 to 11).

Remarks:

a) There is no doubt of the Supper of Lord, that is a celebration of the Eucharist. In fact, the expression "breaking of the bread" had become for Christians the formula to indicate the Lord's Supper.

Thus are expressed in the narrative of the Synoptic Gospels institution (Matthew 26, 26, Mark 14, 22, Luke 22, 19). in Thus St. Paul expresses 1 Corinthians 10:16 where certainly speaks of the Lord's Supper: "The bread which we break is a communion with the Body of Christ? (See also Luke 24, 30).

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b) The structure of the celebration is essentially similar to that of the Holy Mass, which perpetuates in time the sacred rite in accordance to the command of the Lord (1 Corinthians 11:26). There was the Liturgy of the Word clearly indicated by the long conversation of Paul, who no doubt spoke of the Lord and missionaries of their own experiences, that all things contribute to the formation of the New Testament. And there was the Eucharistic liturgy, whose essential moments are listed in the breaking of the bread and eat it, by asking the Holy Communion.

c) As for the day of the week we are told explicitly that the rite of "breaking bread" occurred "in the first of Saturdays", that is the first day after the Sabbath which is the first day of the week Jewish. That day for Christians had become "day assembly "(1 Corinthians 16:2), in memory of Resurrection of the Lord (Matthew 28.1). Since the time ancient was called "the Lord's day,"

dominicus dies, that is on Sunday. Paul is thus celebrated at Troas Mass on Sundays.

11. The Mass: how many times?

The Apostle recommends that the faithful of Corinth to celebrate dignity the Lord's Supper "when gathered together "(1 Corinthians 11:20). The expression Greek, which corresponds to when, is " whenever you gathered. "Now it is certain that the Christians in the time of St. Paul and every time you gather together a once a year, but very often, especially in the "day of the Lord ", that is the Sunday (1 Corinthians 16.2;

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Acts 20:7; Revelation 1:10). Also in those meetings celebrated the Lord's Supper (Acts 20,7-9), and more times a year.

Moreover, in any part of the Bible it is said that the Lord's Supper is to be celebrated only once year (14 Nisan). Jesus did not assigned any time to celebrate the Lord's Supper. He only said: "Do this in memory of me "(Luke 22:19, 1 Corinthians 11:24). From St. Paul then we know that Christians celebrated the Lord's Supper "as long as they gathered together "(1 Corinthians 11:20).

12. Some of the oldest evidence

In the time that followed the death of the Apostles, and then always, true Christians have continued to celebrate Lord's Supper, as Jesus had commanded and as they had faithfully done his disciples immediately .

Among the earliest evidence must be remembered those of the Didache, also known as the Doctrine of the Apostles, composition of which dates from the late first century of the Christian era and is therefore almost contemporary Fourth Gospel and the Apocalypse:

"Every Sunday, the day of the Lord, meeting, broken the bread and make the thank you, after you have confessed your sins, so that your sacrifice may be pure. Anyone who has a quarrel with his companion, fails to meet you before they are reconciled, for is not profaned your sacrifice. so in fact says the Lord: "In every place and every time I is offered a pure sacrifice, for I am a great

King, the Lord said, and my name is admirable among the nations "(6).

Even Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, who was martyred in Rome in 107 AD. C., testified that "The Eucharist is the flesh of our Savior Jesus Christ, the flesh which suffered for our sins and that the Father, in His goodness, He rose again "(7). To Ignatius is the bread of the Eucharist "the medicine of immortality, the antidote for death, but to live in Jesus Christ always "(8). Seeing her approaching martyrdom wrote: "I have no pleasure of nourishment of corruption nor the pleasures of this life. I want bread of God, which is the flesh of Jesus Christ, of the seed of David; and how I want to drink his blood, which is love incorruptible "(9).

Here again the testimony of Justin, that Ignatius ended his life in martyrdom to the half of the second century: "This food we we call Eucharist. We do not take this as a common bread and common drink, but as Jesus Christ our Saviour , who took flesh by virtue of Word of God, took flesh and blood for our salvation, so nurturing, consecrated with prayer Thanksgiving formed from the words of Christ and they eat the blood and meat assimilation ours, is, according to our doctrine, meat and blood Christ incarnate. The Apostles, in their Memoirs those Gospels that Jesus handed down

- 6) The Didache or Doctrine of the Apostles, ch. XIV.
- 7) Letter to the faithful of Smyrna, VII, 1.
- 8) Letter to the faithful of Ephesus, XX, 2.
- 9) Letter to the faithful of Rome, VII, 3

Christ gave them this command: he took bread and he had given thanks he said to them: Do this in remembrance of me; this is my body, and took the cup, and similarly gave thanks, and said, This is my blood, and their only offered them "(10).

13. faithful stewards

"One should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God, as it required of stewards that they be found faithful "(1 Corinthians 4:1-2). These words of the Apostle can be taken up by the Catholic Church also with regard to the administration of the Holy Dinner, which is one of the greatest mysteries of God has below and to the teaching and practice of the divine Master and as the Apostles and early Christians time believes and teaches the sacrificial character of Holy Supper and the Lord's real presence in the bread and wine consecrated. Here is the profession of faith Pope Paul VI:

"We believe that the Mass, celebrated by the priest representing the person of Christ by virtue of power received through the Sacrament of Orders, and we offered in the name of Christ and the members of the Body mystic, is the sacrifice of Calvary rendered sacramentally present on our altars.

We believe that as the bread and wine consecrated by the Lord at the Last Supper were changed in His body and his blood, which would soon be were offered for us on the Cross, at the same

10) The First Apology, ch. 66

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so the bread and wine consecrated by the priest are changed into the Body and Blood of Christ gloriously reigning in Heaven, and we believe that the mysterious presence of the Lord, under what continues to appear to our senses as before, is a true, real and substantial.

This mysterious change is called the Church, very appropriately transubstantiation. The bread and wine have ceased to exist after the consecration, so that from that time are the Body adorable and Blood of the Lord Jesus The unique and invisible existence of the Lord glorious in heaven is not

is multiplied, but is rendered present by the sacrament in many places on earth where Mass is celebrated. "

14. Comments

In this profession of faith before the truth is that "Holy Mass is the sacrifice of Calvary rendered sacramentally (that is, mysteriously, but really) present on our altars. "What is the meaning of these words?

a) We must not imagine, first, that the Holy Mass is a new sacrifice of Christ, who "was offered once and for all in order to remove the sins " (Hebrews 9:28). But it is also true that "He, as remains forever, has a priesthood that does not pass; always lives to make intercession "for us (Hebrews 7.24 to 25, Romans 8:34).

This means that Jesus Christ is permanently in the history of making a gift of Himself to Father. This its bid, except for his intervention- of

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salvific, is expressed mainly in a direct and explicit, in the memorial set up by him, that is, in celebration of Mass. For this reason it is a new presence, a new aspect of the one sacrifice, that is the Cross. In the Holy Mass Christ is the victim, Christ is the bidder, because he himself has found how to sacrifice himself through signs (the bread and wine) and the ministry of those to whom he said: "Do this in memory of me" (Luke 22:19; 1 Corinthians 11, 24). Masses are many though, remember, renewing it in an effective manner that is salvific, the one sacrifice of Christ, his commitment to save us.

b) Is not it true that men are used to recall, that somehow make this a fact or event of great historical importance? the Jews celebrated Easter to remember, almost to renew, the great event of deliverance from Pharaoh (Exodus, chapter 12. Deuteronomy, ch. 16). It was a memory which made this a great event with its religious office and saving. Similarly the Holy Mass does not forget the sacrifice of the Cross at Instead of this makes for an effective topical the salvation of all men.

"We believe that the mysterious presence of Lord is a true, real and substantial. "It is the usual language of the Catholic Church in order to clarify

the way in which it believes the Person of the present Lord in the bread and wine consecrated by excluding errors and misunderstandings.

a) True excludes a purely symbolic presence. It would be too little, indeed incorrect, to say that the bread and

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wine are symbols of the Body and Blood of Christ. Let's take an example. The arrow that a group of scouts marks the entrance to the forest is used to indicate their presence in the forest. But the scouts or their field are not in the arrow. This is only a symbol of their presence. Not so the bread and wine consecrated. They do not indicate that Christ is present elsewhere. Presence true to say that Christ is there in the bread and wine consecrated: no need to look elsewhere to find it.

b) Real excludes well as a purely symbolic presence or emblematic and at the same time puts in emphasize that in the bread and wine consecrated there is Person of Christ continually renews its offering to the Father and gives himself as food to the real His disciples for the preservation and growth of the their supernatural life. "My flesh is true food, and My blood is drink indeed "(John 6:55).

c) Substantial finally mean that the Eucharist Christ gives himself.

15. Transubstantiation

To indicate this mode of presence of the Lord, that is not purely symbolic, the Catholic Church has adopted the word transubstantiation. With this term to indicate a substantial change in the bread and wine, which are "transubstantiated" in Body and Blood of Christ crucified and risen. In the Eucharist there is no local movement the glorious Body of Christ is seated at the right hand of the Father after the Ascension.

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Remaining what it is, it is the glorious Lord this instead of something else, namely the bread and wine - their essence - that only dumb. Of course remains the mystery. This is just an effort of the mind human, that is the best way to express what

says that the Word of God, what the Bible says, without betray it or minimize it or frustrate. For those who understand, the mystery is an inseparable dimension of faith, of the true faith, which is acceptance of invisible realities on the basis of divine revelation.

Protestants say: But the word "transubstantiation" there is in the Bible.

You respond:

a) There is not the word, but there is certainly the thing, supernatural reality that the word expresses full fidelity to the Bible. In this case, the word transubstantiation wants to express the true meaning the formulas used by the Eucharistic Lord: "This is my body, this is my Blood."

b) The Protestants use many words that are not in the Bible to spread their errors. For example, say that the bread and wine are blessed emblems. In the Bible there is the word emblem. How come the Protestants and Jehovah's Witnesses have no qualms to use it? (Matthew 7.3 to 5).

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CHAPTER XII

CONFESSION

PROTESTANT THOUGHT:

- a) God alone can forgive sins committed against Him
- b) The only prerequisite for forgiveness is faith.
- c) In the Bible the word "metanoia" that Catholics interpret as "contrition or repentance," it means simply "change the board and change will. "

d) We must confess to each other failings mutually committed.

ALLEGED BIBLICAL BASIS:

a) Mark 2:7: "Who can forgive sins but God only? "

b) The Philippian jailer question Paul and Silas: "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" And those replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved" (Acts 16.30 to 31). Paul and Silas did not tell him thus: If you want to save, go and confess your sins! this I Catholics say

c) Matthew 4:17: "Jesus began to preach, say, Repent (strayed from your will sin): for the kingdom of God is near. It is not

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therefore, that penance according to the Catholics justifies, but a moral disposition to the coming of the kingdom of God

d) "Confess to one another your sins and pray for one another to be saved " (James 5:16).

ANSWER :

a) Of course, only God can forgive sins you can not, however, prohibit such power to communicate to others! We confess to God directly if God himself had told us to do so. But Jesus in Gospel has never said that to have the forgiveness of we must confess our sins to God directly. Instead gave such power to his Apostles saying: "Receive the Holy Spirit, to forgive the sins of will be forgiven and to forgive those who do not do not will be forgiven "(John 20:22-23).

b) The Philippian jailer had not yet been baptized. In faith, which as a first condition for save imposed on him, will be included a duty to recognize the divine power that God has given men to forgive sins.

c) The Holy Bible does not merely exhort the sinner to change their lives and to scare him with the divine punishments - as claimed by the Protestants - but praises and inculcates the pain and punishment for the sin committed, in order to have forgiveness. David, for example, test continuous remorse for his sin because it was a offense against God, and said: "My sacrifice, O Lord,

is a contrite spirit: thou, O Lord, will not despise a broken and contrite heart "(Psalm 50, 5-6 and 19).

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Through the prophet Joel, God warns that the guilty, "Turn to Me now sincerely fasting, weeping and wailing, torn your hearts, not your garments, and turn unto the Lord because it is your merciful and gracious "(Joel 2:12-13).

Jesus and the Apostles, which so often recommend penance, do not understand it otherwise. the "Metanoia" in both the Septuagint and the New Testament, is not a simple mutation will - As claimed by Luther - but it implies a sorrow soul that manifests itself in sacrifice. to example Jesus with the people complaining incredulous of Galilee says that Tyre and Sidon "They did penance (matanòesan) in sackcloth and ashes " (Matthew 11:21).

d) The "one another" in Greek means not only reciprocity, but also: "man to man". Saint Paul recommends Ephesians (5:21) to be subject "to each another out of reverence for Christ "which obviously wishes mean "the subjects to superiors," and not vice versa. So we have to confess to priests, the such as St. James speaks soon after. The passage from St. James (5, 16) refers, therefore, to the use of confessing sins in the first Christian community. This could be done only by priests (ie the priests) of which, in fact, St. James speaks in verses following 14 and 15.

Ecclesiastes 7.20: "For there is not a man on earth so just who does good and does not sin. "

1 John 1:8-10 "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in

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us ... If we say that we have not sinned, we make God a liar, and his word is not in us. "

It is God's word, unfortunately confirmed in a tragic way the sad history of mankind, which he inherited from

Adam's original sin: "For all those we miss in many ways "(James 3:2).

1. The forgiveness of sins

The New Testament and the same reason they tell us: only God can forgive sins. Jesus to the paralytic Capernaum had said, "Son, your sins are forgiven. Now some of the scribes were sitting thought: Why does this man speak thus? He blasphemy! Who can forgive sins but God only? " (Mark 2:5-7).

But Jesus was God, then he could forgive sins. In fact, to prove the miracle, he replied: "Now because you know that the Son of Man has on earth have the power to forgive sins, I say to you (to paralytic): 'Get up, take your mat and go home yours!. And on the instant the paralytic was healed "(Mark 2:10 - 11).

Furthermore, only God can establish the conditions and ways in which you can obtain forgiveness of sins. Both the Old and New Old Testament, God inculcates the necessity of repentance inner and the change of his own will: "Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; remove the evil of my sight of your actions. Cease to do evil, learn to doing good, relieve the oppressed, protect the orphan

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no, defend the widow. Said the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow: and if they be red like crimson be as white as wool (Isaiah 1:16-18).

In the New Testament Jesus asks repeatedly as an indispensable condition for the remission of sins, repentance and repentance. this doctrine we find illustrated in the parable of the son the prodigal (Luke 15:11-32) and the publican (Luke 18.9 - 14). The very nature requires it. Christ perfecting law (Matthew 5:17) set for the forgiveness of sins these other two indispensable conditions:

A) The fraternal charity. Jesus taught in prayer the Apostles, we say: "Forgive us our

debts, as we forgive our debtors "

(Matthew 6:12, Luke 11:4).

Matthew 5:23-24: "Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go first be reconciled to your brother. Then come back to the altar and offer your gift. "

Mark 11:26: "If you do not forgive, neither will your Father forgive you your sins. "

B) The confession of one's sins to the priest.

I feel with the very clear words of the Gospel: the Apostles, after the resurrection of Jesus, had gathered in the Upper Room. Suddenly there appeared to them The risen Jesus and said: "As the Father has sent Me, I also send you. "Having said this he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins, they are forgiven them, and whose pardon, they are retained "(John 20:21-23).

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In this way Jesus did, the promise made to the same Apostles in Matthew 18:18: "All that you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed also in heaven. "

It is clear from the words shown:

a) Jesus gives the Apostles just the same authority that He had been given by the Father: "As the Father has sent Me, I also send you "(John 20:21). in Supper the Apostles were gathered and the doors were closed for fear of the Jews, no one in those situations wanted to share their fate dangerous! For they alone, therefore, Jesus gives extraordinary power to forgive sins.

b) The power to absolve or retain sins, passes the will of Christ by the Apostles to the priests legitimately deputies:

1) The power that Christ gave to the Apostles does not apply to them personally, but it's given to them as rulers of the Church and of souls: power, therefore, granted not for the benefit of the Apostles, but the faithful. It is therefore necessary that all those who succeed to the Apostles as pastors of souls, have the same power.

2) As the power to baptize, to preach, to renew the Eucharistic Supper given by Christ to the Apostles passed to their legitimate successors, and so for the

same reasons the power to absolve and retain sins must go to the rightful successors of the Apostles.

3) The Protestants argue that the power conferred by Christ to the Apostles, as long as the Apostles lived, was

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exercised only by them; dead the Apostles was exercised by all the faithful. How then explain these gentlemen the solemnity of Christ's words in giving only the apostles a power that would not have been a prerogative special, but it had to be transmitted to all the faithful?

How then explain historically the passage of that power to all the faithful if, according to them, it is impossible demonstrate the transition, much more of the same logical power from the Apostles to their successors? Christ would put the first Mass in the hardest condition compared to the Christians of today if he had obliged to confess their sins to the Apostles alone, while Christians of later times could forgive the sins to each other.

c) The confession of sins to a priest is always required to obtain forgiveness from God: Christ would unnecessarily established this sacrament, if the forgiveness of sins could be obtained in other ways more easy. St. Augustine says clearly: "If enough confession to God, Jesus Christ would have said in vain the Apostles: Everything you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. "(Sermon 392).

d) Utilities and need psychological and moral confession.

1) Man, after sin, repented and regretted it, he need proof reassuring of 'obtained forgiveness: This insurance can give you only the priest of God by sacramental absolution.

2) If also the sacramental confession and absolution do not make it immune to subsequent faults,

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are, however, a most effective means to eradicate the vices, moral treat illness, and to restore the Christian virtues.

3) Christ, in instituting the confession, enhanced one of the deepest human needs: consciousness of every man needs to download his guilt, like the sea on the beach throwing the corpses before he swallowed.

Thank Christ, then he left us this easy, humane and safe means of purification of the our personal faults.

2. Mortal and venial sins

The Protestants say that all sins have equal gravity: the distinction between mortal sins and light, that is, mortal and venial, is an invention of the The Catholic Church. They are appealing to the Bible. San Indeed, Paul says: "The wages of sin is death "(Romans 6:23). All sins therefore deserve death.

St. James also wrote: "Anyone who observe the whole law, but will also in one point become guilty of all (James 2:10)

The passages quoted by Protestants obviously affect all mortal sin.

By the Sacred Scripture, we know that not all sins are mortal and not all are equally serious. Jesus said, "whoever is angry with his brother shall be liable to judgment. Whoever says to brother, "stupid", will be sentenced in the Sanhedrin, and whoever says, "crazy" will be submitted to the fire Hell "(Matthew 5:22).

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Another time Jesus said, "blind guides that you are afraid to swallow a gnat while swallow a camel "(Matthew 23,24).

Here Jesus Christ reminds us of the distinction between different sins, one similar to a gnat, other comparable to a cammello .Altrove Jesus (Matthew 7.3 to 5) compares certain sins to a beam, and others to a straw in the eye. Do they think that the Protestants mortal sins are depicted in the straw? What great sins then you will want to remember the symbol of the beam?

Jesus replied to Pilate, "You would have no power over me if it were given thee from above. To who gave me this in your hands has a fault bigger than yours "(John 19:11).

There's more! The denial of the Protestants of sins mortal and venial is against the Bible. St. John explicitly writes: "If anyone sees his brother committing a sin not leading to death, pray and God will give him life; refers to those who committing a sin not leading to death: There is a sin that leads to death (1), for I say this not to pray. All unrighteousness is sin, but there is sin not leading to death (1 John 5: 16-17).

1) the sin that leads to death is a sin of particular gravity, such as apostasy, which is losing the grace and faith. A sinner of this kind is left to the judgment of God, who will vigorously and healthily recall it.

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Moreover, the same reason, which should not be a privilege of the Catholics, clearly tells us - And our consciousness is a proof constant - that different are the sins in their severity. It is sacrilege think that God wants to punish equally the child stealing a few sweets to the mother and the murderess that will stain the most horrifying crimes.

St. Augustine preached thus: "Let no one say I do penance secretly before God, and that's it that He who knows the penance must forgive I am doing at the bottom of my heart. If so, unnecessarily Jesus Christ would have said: "What you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven "; unnecessarily would have given the Church the keys of paradise. It is not enough to confess to God, we must confess to those who have received from him the power to bind and loose "(Sermon II, in Ps. C.).

"When people ask me: Why do you have converted the Church of Rome? The first response is essential, even if partially incomplete, is: to get rid from my sins "Chesterton (Autobiography, p. 331).

"The man and sin are like two distinct things: the man is the work of God, sin is the work of man. Destroy what you did because God may save what has He made "

(St. Augustine)

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CHAPTER XIII

MARY: MOTHER OF GOD, IMMACULATE, VIRGIN, ASSUMED IN THE SKY

PROTESTANT THOUGHT:

- a) can not be called Mary Mother of God: indeed, it has not generated the divinity of Christ.
- b) It was Immaculate.
- c) It was not always a virgin.

ALLEGED BIBLICAL BASIS:

- a) In Scripture Mary is called simply Mother of Christ.
- b) The Bible does not say that Mary was preserved from original sin; Mary herself even called God: "Your Saviour" (Luke 1: 47). Thus she was redeemed from sin as all other children of Adam.
- c) Some biblical passages prove that Mary was not Ever-Virgin:
 - 1) Christ is said in Scripture "Firstborn" of Mary (Luke 2, 7, Matthew 1: 25). Mary therefore took other children after Jesus.
 - 2) San Marco (6, 3) and Matthew (13:55) speak expressly "brothers of Jesus". Mary therefore not remained Virgin.
 - 3) Matthew 1:18: "Before Mary and Joseph were come to live together, we find for pregnant

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the Holy Spirit. "So they stayed after together.

- 4) Matthew 1.25: "Joseph knew her not till Mary gave birth to her firstborn son. "
So after the birth of Jesus, there were reports marital.

ANSWER :

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a) Every mother who gives birth to a son, while not having given to his son other than the body (the soul is created immediately by God because it is spiritual and indivisible), rightly recognized is true his mother, of his whole person.

Maria SS. is truly the Mother of the Person of Christ that has generated, this person is God, then Mary SS. is the Mother of God

b) A fortiori, more than all other men sinners, Maria SS. can call God "His Savior. "She instead of being released from guilt after having contracted, it was a divine privilege, preserved from falling into it, in view of the merits of Christ is Savior and Redeemer, therefore, also of you Immaculate.

c) We are liable to order to individual points:

1) in Hebrews 1,6 Christ is called "Firstborn of the Father": now, the Eternal Father had more children.

When God commanded the Jewish people to consecrate the firstborn (Exodus 13:2) it was intended that every woman had to consecrate to God the first child born, even if for any reason, that

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son was only. The word "firstborn" so does not mean that after there are other children. This is confirmed once again also by archeology. In fact on the tomb of a certain Arsinoe, enrollment mortuary records the words of this poor woman who died giving birth to her first child. The inscription reads:

"... The fate, in her pangs of my firstborn son, led me to the end of life ...".

This woman died thus leaving this one son, called in the inscription "firstborn."

The inscription is probably 25.0 year of Augustus (fifth BC).

2) It is true that St. Matthew and St. Mark speak of

brothers of Jesus, but it becomes clear that they intended to speaking of cousins, because ancient Hebrew is not an accurate word to indicate only cousin.

In fact, Lot is called in Genesis (13:27) brother of Abraham, while it is safe to say that he was his nephew (Genesis 11:27); elsewhere, always in Bible, Laban is called Jacob's brother, while was his uncle.

In our case, it is particularly evident that not these are real brothers, these states are never called "sons of Mary" as Jesus (Matthew 13:55; Mark 6:3). Among these so-called "brothers" of Jesus is also recalled James, now, elsewhere the same James said he was "son of Alphaeus" (called Cleopas) Luca 6.15. Alphaeus is never called "the husband of Mary." he instead was the husband of Mary of Cleophas (Alphaeus =) which was the sister of Mary, Mother of the Lord (John

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19:25). So his brothers James and Joseph, Judas and Simon, they were just cousins of Jesus Even today we say "my cousin brother" to simply indicate a cousin of ours!

An overwhelming evidence that shows us that in Gospel the word brother does not always mean "children of the same parents" "we give Jesus himself! appearing after his resurrection to Mary Magdalene Jesus says, "Go to my brethren ..." (John 20, 17). Maria Maddalena Abdo immediately to the disciples and told them to having seen the risen Jesus (John 20, 18). Brothers Jesus here are the Apostles!

St. Paul also tells us that the Risen Jesus "appeared to more than 500 brothers at once" (1 Cor 15, 6). It is also clear here that the word brethren does not indicate children of the same parents! Actually indicates the first disciples of Jesus The Letter to the Hebrews (2, 10-18) says: "Therefore Jesus had to make throughout like his brothers to become a high priest merciful. "It is clear that even here the word brother indicates all Christians.

The Apostles themselves in their letters use the word brothers to indicate the Christians. St. James scive: "Consider it pure joy, my brothers, when meet various trials" (James 1, 2), St. Paul writes: "I declare to you therefore, brothers, that the gospel from

announced me ... "(Gal. 1: 11)," Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of the Lord ... "(2 Thessalonians, 1). Even here it is evident that the word brothers indicates all Christians and not the children of the same parents. How much ignorance there is in those who say that Mary had other children after Jesus! Nor does he say that the Gospels written in Greek, had make use of the terms that their distinction in this language

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with such precision the degree of kinship. the authors of the Gospels are Jewish and follow the custom and Semitic mentality even when they use a language that is poor in words such as their language maternal. St. Luke was not Semitic, says in fact to make use of the documents prior written language Semitic (Luke 1: 14).

3) They lived in the same house, but without relationships double. These can not be inferred at all from the passage cited who simply wants to get noticed the virginal conception of Jesus The Gospel tells us that "Joseph knew her not" (that is, had no intercourse). Does not follow that the met after. the Gospel shows just what did not happen.

4) It does not follow at all that, after the birth of Jesus, Mary and Joseph have changed their relationships virginal. If a mother says to her children: "Be good until I return" does not mean that when she has returned the children have to behave bad!

The gospel also in this passage wants us to know only this: Mary conceived Jesus in a way all virginal.

1. Maria SS. Mother of God

Error also has its own logic tremendous and devastating. The Protestants, who according to their principles a democracy anarchist, attempted to undermine the foundations of the Church, denying the Primacy of Peter and his Successors, and also attempt to deny the primacy of the divine greatness of Mary: Maria SS. would

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a creature like all the others! This is the desolation remains where it passes the roller leveler of

Protestantism! The divine motherhood of the Virgin Mary is clearly highlighted by the Holy Bible.

- Jesus Christ, the true Son of Mary, is true God:
Thus Mary is the Mother of God In fact:

a) St. John, beginning his Gospel speaks to us the divine origin of Christ: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God "(1:1). "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth "(1:14).

b) St. Elizabeth, filled with the Holy Spirit, greeting the Virgin Mary exclaims: "Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. How is it that the Mother of my Lord should come to me? And blessed is she who she believed in the words of the Lord "(Luke 1,42-43.45).

c) Sao Paulo exposing the plans of God for the salvation men, says: "But when the fullness of time, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law "(Galatians 4:4-5).

d) In the Letter to the Romans, St. Paul giving vent his sorrow for the perversion of the chosen people, they claiming the nobility, saying, "To whom (Israel) belong the patriarchs, and from them came the Messiah according to the flesh, He who is over all, God blessed over the centuries "(Romans 9:5).

e) The apostle John in his first letter says: "We know that the Son of God has come and

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gave intelligence to know the true God And we are in the true God and in His Son Jesus Christ, and he is the true God and eternal life "(1 John 5:20).

From these clear testimonies of the Holy Scripture, and many others could be mentioned, with clear evidence that Christ is true God, was made true man in the womb of the Virgin Blessed: So Mary is truly the Mother of God

In fact, she gave them to her Son Jesus everything a mother gives the child she is carrying in her womb. It certainly did not give Christ's divinity, but gave all that was required because he born true God-man and it was his true Son.

You can tell a woman who is the mother of the Pope King, the Bishop? Certainly. Yet we all know that such a woman gave birth to neither the papacy nor royalty, nor the episcopate! Therefore, if one may say so of a woman who gave her life to a man who then became Pope, King, Bishop, more so you can call Mary the Mother of God who gave humanity to a man who was God when he was born by you

Neither can claim the Protestants that motherhood God is a truth ignored by the early Christian centuries. In fact, in a papyrus of the third century - in the opinion of other of the second century - emerged from the sands of Egypt, is reported the Coptic language the tender prayer that still today we turn to Our Lady: "Under your patronage we take refuge, O Holy Mother of God ..".

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1. Immaculate Conception of Mary.

God had placed man in the paradise of happiness, who attended to his downfall inflicting deserved punishments, promises to be the creature from eternity elected (Ie Mary), which must never be the domain of Satan, who will have to give the world its Saviour.

This can be seen clearly in both the Old Testament (Genesis), both in the New Testament (In the Gospel of Luke and the Epistle to the Romans).

A) Genesis 3:15, God cursed the serpent the poses in front of the woman who will be eternally victorious on him: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, between thy seed and her seed. "

The text announces a relentless and eternal enmity between the Devil, father and because of sin, and Donna. We ask: Who is this woman?

a) It can not be Eva: It indeed sinned before and caused Adam to sin. Eve can then call most aptly: mother of guilt. Neither Eva nor the his seed, that is, his unhappy offspring, they were enmity with the devil, but were so slaves to be called: seed or offspring of Devil. For God in Scripture calls men sinners "sons of the devil" (John 8:44).

b) This woman is not Eve, but MARIA.

In fact:

1) If the "seed" of the woman is Jesus, the Savior, the Women must be his holy Mother, Mary.

2) God's words contain a prophecy,

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about the future ("I will put enmity between thee and the Woman "), then one speaks of a woman who will be in following (and not Eve who is trembling there in front of God).

3) The solemn promise of a Woman that won the Snake and Mother of the Saviour can not refer to poor Eve, instead we hear from God those bitter words: "I will greatly multiply your pain, with suffering thou shalt bring forth children, and your husband shall rule over you " (Genesis 3:16).

4) It is impossible that the woman is Eve because the "Woman" mentioned God has a mission and the opposite entirely different from that of Eve. St. Jerome, in fact, says: "By Eva came death, by Mary came through life. " Throughout the Bible, Then, every time you speak of Eve, is always indicated as the cause of ruin and not of salvation. Among other things, these solemn words of God, said in the earthly paradise, we already announce the greatness Madonna because:

a) If the "seed" of the woman is Jesus, who is God, it say that the WOMAN is the Mother of God

b) That "seed" is also only seed of woman. These words reveal to us and we announce that Mary is Virgin and Mother.

c) The great and eternal enmity, between the Woman and the Snake in the strongest excludes any shadow of sin in this exceptional woman. In fact, every sin would be a victory of the Enemy of Lei This suggests that Mary has never been touched from the smallest sin, even the sin Original. And if Mary was not even touched by the

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original sin, it means that it is IMMACULATE! It is So it is fitting that the Angel Gabriel greeted her not calling her Mary, but saying, "Hail,

FULL OF GRACE. " And the Lady herself, to Lourdes, will say: "I AM THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION."

d) Finally, this woman, always and totally victorious the infernal enemy, he can not have his immaculate body subject to the corruption of the tomb, since the corruption of the body is a direct consequence Original sin.

Now, as Maria was born to privilege of God, without original sin (because destined to be the Mother of Jesus), it follows that his body is not could rot in the grave ... This means that you will located near to God with his soul, but also with her body! Mary, that is, it is the ASSUMPTION: it was reach into heaven body and soul.

Also, since Mary has shared the sorrows of Son and his fight against the evil to save mankind, You must also reign with the Son in the Kingdom of Heaven. What wouldst say that Mary is also REGINA.

B) In the New Testament the angel Gabriel greets Maria SS. with these solemn words: "Hail, Full of Grace, the Lord is with you. Blessed art thou among women "(Luke 1:28).

The angel could say: Hail, Mary! He preferred to say, because that was the order of God, Full of grace! That has replaced the name Maria, which was call this young woman, with a new name: Full of Grace (kecharitoméne).

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Why?

Why in the style of the biblical name indicates what is the person wearing it. Maria Full of calling Grace, the angel wanted to make it clear that in that human creature, and Maria Full of Grace coincided. Now Full of Grace means fully favored from God, and the fullness of God's favor can not coexist with any stain of sin. By mouth therefore, we know that a heavenly messenger Mary was without stain of sin, that is Immaculate, long before Christ was born and died for the salvation of mankind.

It is possible to reconcile the fullness of divine favor in Mary with the doctrine of St. Paul, according to which "They are all under sin" and only through the work of Christ are freed from sin? (Romans 5:12; 3,9 -

10; 5:19). Yes, it is possible because the gift is not is as the sin.

a - There escapes first of all, one thing very clear. When the Angel called Maria Full of Grace Christ had not yet shed his Blood to erase the sins of the world. This will happen about 34 years later. Yet the angel called Mary Full of Grace that is Immaculate! He maybe wrong the angel of God? Certainly not, as is recognized in every wise person.

We must therefore say that Mary was freed from inherited sin, prior to the sacrifice of Cross. And now notice, prior does not mean independently. Even Mary was free from sin by the blood of the one Mediator Jesus Christ. Only in the case of Maria virtue liberating of that Blood worked in antecedence.

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b - is Biblical this teaching?

Yes This was stated by St. Paul in his Letter to own Romans, of which the Protestants abuse in their error against the Immaculate. The Apostle says: "But as the difference between Adam's sin and what God gives us to through Christ! Adam alone with his sin, caused the death of all men. God, however, for Through one man, Jesus Christ, has given us abundance His gifts and His grace ... where he was abundant sin, yet it was the most abundant grace "(Romans 5: 15-20).

In other words, the destructive work of Adam not should be called the same as the construction of Christ. The saving work of Christ is incomparably superior effectiveness in the sin of Adam.

God could redeem and in fact has redeemed Maria with full formula in view of the merits of Christ because "Nothing is impossible with God" (Luke 1:37). Also, if Mary gave birth to Jesus, or it must be said that even Jesus was born with original sin (which is absurd because He is God) or it must be recognized His mother who is without sin Original.

3. Virginité of Mary

The Holy Scripture tells us that Maria SS. was Virgin before childbirth, during childbirth and after childbirth. Virgin you can call any woman who keeps intact the integrity of his body and his soul.

A) The Virginity of Mary. before childbirth: this (Good for them!) Protestants do not deny it. The Holy writing, the rest of the states very clearly.

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a) that the angel announced to Mary motherhood God, she replied: "How can this be if I did not know a man? "(Luke 1:34). In biblical language "Do not know man" means not having with him no sexual intercourse. Virgin Mary and was therefore Angel manifests the will to remain virgin. Otherwise there would be nothing strange that Mary had a son later married.

b) St. Joseph, her most chaste spouse, noticing of her pregnancy, of which he was ignorant of the cause, plan to drive it as allowed by Moses, an angel however, warns him: "Joseph, do not be afraid ... For this to who was born in her is of the Holy Spirit "(Matthew 1, 20). Mary, that is, conceived virginal purity. The Gospel itself explicitly says: "His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found with child the Holy Spirit "(Matthew 1: 18).

c) The Evangelist St. Matthew also adds: "All this took place to fulfill what he had said the Lord through the prophet: Behold the VIRGIN conceive and bear a son who will be call his name Emmanuel, which means God with us " (Matthew 1: 22-23). The prophet quoted by St. Matthew is Isaiah (7, 14), who had predicted that the prodigy the evangelist describes true in Mary. Mary became the Mother of Jesus in a miraculous way, for one work of the Holy Spirit. Nothing is impossible to God (Luke 1:37). St. Ephrem says: "How come the grapes become pregnant of wine, without a father? They contain a species of child and are pregnant, but sealed, they are filled, but not torn. That this is confusing enough for unbelievers. "

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It is true that St. Joseph is told in the Gospel expressly father of Jesus, but it is said that according to the public, and also because St. Joseph was true spouse of Mary. Indeed Jesus Himself said, clearly that his father was God when found after three days in the Temple at the age of twelve, he said to

Mary and Joseph who sought him out in anguish:
"Why am I looking for? I do not know that I must
be about my Father's business "(Luke 2, 49).

B) The virginity of Mary. in childbirth. The Prophet
Isaiah had predicted that the One he calls the
VIRGIN, would not only conceived in a virginal way,
but would also have given birth without losing
its integrity! As Isaiah describes the event
of his prophecy as a prodigy ("The Lord Himself
give you a sign "), the meaning of the prophecy is this:
"Behold the Virgin gives birth to a child remaining
virgin ... ". No wonder there is in fact a virgin
who loses his virginity (or integrity) giving the
birth to a son. Instead - we Isaiah prophecies - the Virgin,
Mother of Emmanuel, will remain a virgin preserving
her virginity intact, even after giving birth to "the God
with us. " Then a miracle happened! This is the sign that God himself
give (Isaiah 7:14).

St. Luke tells us that Mary retained the integrity
the very act of virginal birth of Jesus
"Now while Mary and Joseph were in Bethlehem, they
came for her to be delivered. She gave birth to
her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him
in a manger, because there was no place for them
in the inn "(Luke 2: 6-7).

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Miriam has not been subject to any of
those weaknesses and those pains that are naturally
the price of motherhood. Is She herself, and not
others, which lends Jesus all the loving care that
were required by the conditions of its newborn.
The Evangelist Luke could not have spoken so
Maria if she had given birth to her first child
in the manner common to all women.

And then as a pure beam of light crosses the
crystal, not only without damaging it, but communicating
its splendor, so Jesus, the true light of the world,
comes from the bosom of his Mother, communicating new
splendor to his purity of the Virgin. Jesus came from
Mary miraculously, as miraculously came
behind closed doors by his Apostles in the Upper Room after the
resurrection (John 20:19).

C) The Virginity of Mary after the birth. Even this
it follows very well by St. Luke. The answer that
Mary gave to the angel shows us that She was
Ever-Virgin: "How can this be - she said - if
I know not man? (Luke 1:34). These words are
the expression of feelings that Mary had for the

virginity. You feel that you will have to become Mother and troubles, it impresses because she is determined to remain virgin. She shows that virginity is something for you sacred thing devoted to God, and does not see well, in good conscience, how it can pick up the vow. For this she cautiously question the angel, How? ...

So if the Virgin had these noble sentiments, how can you think that after the birth of Jesus she wanted to go down to the common level of the other women married? And if you think that St. Joseph was

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notified by the angel of this sublime mystery, it is logical think that he had the utmost respect for She who had become the Mother of God

Neither has his reasons of convenience because it was as well. In fact, since Jesus, according to the divine nature the Only Begotten of the Father, it was convenient that even according to human nature, was the only begotten of the Mother.

To say then that Mary had other children after Jesus is a insult to the holiness of the Mother of God, which, in this case, it would prove very ungrateful if he had not content to a Son so great. Christ is the only begotten son of Mary. For he is called in the Gospel (Mark 6:3) "the Son of Mary" with an article definite (with whom St. Mark tells us that Jesus was only son) that definite article 'm very sorry to Protestants who do not put it in Gospels published by them.

The same St. Paul tells us that Jesus has no other brothers if not by adoption (Romans 8: 29). And Jesus same, before dying on the cross, entrusted to the Apostle Giovanni Maria (John 19, 27), and this test that Mary had no other children. For deniers of perpetual virginity of Mary, St. Epiphanius could throw the challenge, "Who, and in what time, dared to pronounce Mary's name, without adding the name of the Virgin "(1).

1) Adv. Haereses, 78, PG. 42, 706.

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4. The Assumption of Mary.

What is the Assumption of Mary? The fact Assumption is this: was being Mary "assumed into heavenly glory, body and soul." In the doctrine of the Assumption Catholic Church states that Mary, the Mother of the Lord (Luke 1:43), it is now associated with Christ risen and glorious - in heaven - as expresses the Bible (Philippians 3: 20-21).

As Christ came, body and soul, in a state glorious, even Mary, by virtue of the redemptive the Son, got, soul and body, the same condition glorious. A You have already been granted in advance the glorification of that total will be given to all believers in Christ at the time of the resurrection from the dead (John 5: 28-29, Acts 24, 15, Daniel 12, 2).

The Catholic Church has always believed Assumption of Mary. She believed it because he understands more and more clear that this doctrine is contained in the Bible. Guided by the Holy Spirit, the Church Catholic advances over the centuries into all the truth Length (John 16:13).

It is therefore false to say that the doctrine (or dogma) Assumption of Mary is an addition to human Word of God, made by Pope Pius XII on November 1, , 1950. In 1950 Pope Pacelli made no Adding to the Word of God He only confirmed with its solemn Magisterium and infallible doctrine contained in the Bible.

A) The Assumption deduced from the Old Testament The Assumption is a supernatural fact, knowable only for divine revelation. It is therefore necessary to refer

to Holy Scripture. Sacred Scripture reveals some truth explicitly (that is, in a clear, direct, immediate way) and other implicitly (that is so indirect and inferred from what is explicit).

For example, "Christ is also a man": this is a explicit revelation. But as is well-known that man is composed of soul and body, is called implicitly in this revelation that Christ, as man every man, is composed of soul and body. The study dogmatic (ie the truths of faith) consists precisely in an effort to draw what is implied by what is explicit.

Now what shows up on the Assumption Holy Scripture of Mary into heaven in body and soul? Nothing explicitly, but does it understand implicitly contained in other truths that are revealed explicitly. This is sufficient to say that the Assumption is a revealed truth, founded on Sacred Scripture, highly consistent with other revealed truths.

Consider first the Old Testament. God says to the serpent: "I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring, it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel "(Genesis 3:15). With these words, is predicted total and eternal enmity between the serpent, the Woman and the seed of the woman, and even the victory of this family on the Snake. The Snake is the Devil, the Woman is Mary, the offspring of the woman is Jesus. The union between Mary and Jesus is very close and indissoluble, so much in the fight against the Devil and in victory on of him.

Jesus' victory over the Evil One, as the next revelation was threefold: the lust (Romans 8: 3), sin (Hebrews 9, 26-28) and on the

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death (1 Corinthians 15: 20-26). In fact, Jesus won the lust and sin radically excluding them from the His divine Person with which were incompatible in any way, and conquered death by rising and ascending to Heaven.

Even the victory of Mary, inextricably linked to Jesus - so much so that God cursed the serpent in the appointment before the woman, and then his descendants - must be was a victory over lust, sin, and death. Maria has won the lust and sin - otherwise the angel Gabriel could not call it "Full of grace" (Luke 1:28) - and overcame death, for precisely, for her Assumption into heaven in soul and body. And the victory of Jesus and Mary was complete: in fact, the Snake is crushed in the head.

since Mary has participated in a total way to fight and the victory of Christ over the Snake (victory demonstrated by his Resurrection from the dead), it follows that this special participation of Mary - willed by God Himself! - The victory of Christ, would not be complete without his glorification corporeal, that is her Assumption in body and soul into Heaven. So already in the words of God to the

Serpent (Genesis 3:15) - called "Proto" or first proclamation of salvation - is implicit in the Assumption.

B) The Assumption deduced from the New Testament

The angel Gabriel said Amariah: "Hail, Full of Grace." These words reveal to us without a shadow of doubt that in Mary there was no sin, not even the Original sin. In fact, if Mary had had sin Angelo could not have been the original call Full of Grace, because the fullness of grace can not coexist with the smallest shadow of sin.

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Being born without original sin (ie Immaculate) consequently Maria did not have the consequences that neither sin nor his soul in his body. And as a consequence of original sin is death (Genesis 2, 17, 3, 19), it follows that Mary was the Assumption body and soul into heaven.

As in Gabriel's greeting to Mary is the clear concept of the Immaculate Conception, so there is an implicit concept of Assumption. These two privileges are closely related to each other. Maria for a privilege entirely unique overcame sin with his Immaculate Conception: therefore was not subject to the the law of remaining in the corruption of the tomb, nor had wait for the redemption of his body until the end of world.

Under this aspect Mary is said to be united not so much to the first Adam, but at the last Adam, that Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 15:45). Mary brought the image the man of heaven, and thus has, like him, inherited the incorruptibility (1 Corinthians 15.49-50).

That the Virgin Mary was conceived and bore Emmanuel, which means God with us (Matthew 1: 23). Now motherhood in general (and especially the virginal motherhood) establishes close relations between Mother and Son and inseparable, both of a physical and moral. The Son dissociates from the Mother, even the surrounds of all gauges of filial love. And Jesus was certainly model filial love.

And since the Son is now alive forever and has power on death and the underworld (Revelation 1: 18), must said the logic of things that He has used to his mother his almighty filial love, associating to Him in heavenly glory without waiting for the end of time.

CHAPTER XIV

DEVOTION TO THE MOTHER OF GOD

PROTESTANT THOUGHT:

a) The cult of the Virgin Mary, the Angels and the Saints is offensive to God, superstitious and idolatrous.

ALLEGED BIBLICAL BASIS:

a) Timothy 2, 5: "As God is one, one also Mediator between God and men, Christ Jesus "(Acts 4: 12; Hebrews 7, 25, Col. 2, 18, 1 John 2, 1).

ANSWER:

1. The cult to the Virgin Mary and the Saints

Every people has and honors its great men and its heroes. also the Church, the People of God exalts its big are the Saints. Ghost in the broad sense is the one which is grace. In this sense, all Christians are called "Saints" in St. Paul (Ephesians 6:8).

Ghost in the strict sense is one who has paid in heroic degree the grace of God, to whom God has given special signs as witness to his heroic observance the law of God, and that the Church rightly proposed to the veneration and imitation of the faithful. The Protestants do not know how to distinguish between worship and adoration, they say that we Catholics worship the Virgin and the Saints, and so they accuse us of idolatry. As you can see, condemn the catholic doctrine

without first being concerned to study it and you know it.

The Catholic doctrine in fact clearly distinguishes worship from the worship (as does, for that matter any dictionary of the Italian language!). The Church with the worship honors only the Triune God, with reverence instead honors the Virgin and the Saints.

The worship is the worship due to God alone, with the which we recognize as our Creator and Lord, we acknowledge that we rely totally on Him and bestow the supreme honor. The expression

tall and full of this cult, there is sacrifice, which in every religion is reserved only to the Deity.

The worship is the worship that the Church reserves the Madonna and the Saints to honor them because they are very expensive to God and to get their powerful intercession.

Other acts of worship such as bows, genuflections, invocations, prayers, songs, praise and processions, can be both expressions of worship to God, both of veneration of the saints. Different, however, is its meaning. With these acts of worship to God we adore him as the Supreme Being, the beginning and end of all things; with the same acts towards the saints, we just want to honor them as dear friends of God

And that such worship is not at all forbidden makes him touch the Holy Scripture itself. In fact many times in the Bible it speaks of prostrations and bow down to simple creatures, without the Writing accused of idolatry such practices.

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For example Lot who prostrates himself with his face to the earth in front of two angels (Genesis 19:1) is not reprimanded for this gesture nor is accused of idolatry. Judith prostrated himself with his face to the earth even before the charged Holofernes (Judith 10,23) is not of course blamed for this act, nor is accused of idolatry. Likewise, Obadiah, a just man, worships with the face down to the ground the holy prophet Elijah (1 Kings 18.7).

The worship of the Catholic Church to reserve Madonna is called hyperdulia, that special veneration because the Virgin Mary is the creature closest to God which is the Mother, and consequently is the most powerful to intercede for us with God

The veneration of Mary is fully justified from the Bible:

a) Elizabeth "filled with the Holy Spirit" greets Mary with these words: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed the fruit of thy womb. And blessed is she who believed the promise of the Lord " (Luke 1: 42-45). The angel Gabriel salutaMaria saying: "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with You "(Luke 1: 28).

Now if Mary has been venerated by Elizabeth "stuffed the Holy Spirit "(Luke 1, 41), and even by the angel Gabriel, why can not we venerate us repeating the same words that we say in the Hail Mary? O

perhaps we should say that Elizabeth "Spirit-filled Holy "and the angel Gabriel was sent by God to Madonna, they go wrong?

b) Mary predicts that as Elizabeth, all generations will venerate: "From now on, all

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generations will call me blessed "(Luke 1: 48). "Mary has been acclaimed blessed with growing enthusiasm, in every age, in every place, in every way. The its singular prophecy has occurred so that a Protestant has come to say that it has been fulfilled "Too much". As if a prophecy could come true too! Up to this degree of blindness is could get the antipathy against some of the largest the creatures come from the hands of God "(G. Roschini, Life of Mary, p. 148).

They cite inappropriately Luke 11:27-28: "When Jesus spoke a woman said, Blessed is the womb that bore you and the breasts that you sucked! But he said: Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and put it into practice. " Explaining these bad words the Gospel says that Jesus showed that veneration Mary was wrong. The truth is that it is wrong the veneration of Mary (as we have seen in Elizabeth and in the Angel Gabriel), but rather it is completely wrong explanation which give the passage quoted by St. Luke.

Jesus took advantage of this occasion to put in emphasize the great faith of Mary. Correcting the mentality human that woman, Mary and Jesus exalts the called blessed even more because he believed unconditionally in Him (Luke 1:45).

It is clear that with what Jesus has in no way discredited His Mother, has by no means shown that the veneration towards Mary is wrong. indeed highlights the merits Mary and the real reason it must be said Blessed, that is worshiped.

In fact, worship is to recognize the Christian virtues of the listener and puts into practice the word of God

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Jesus himself recognizes Mary these virtues. He is the first to venerate it. The love of a child is added in

Jesus, a love and a great veneration towards its Mother.

He loves and venerates because Mary believed the His word and is committed to putting it into practice over any other disciple of Christ. We can and we must do the same!

2. Mary Mediatrix

In the history of Christianity has never lacked cases of poison aversion to the cult of Madonna. But the vast majority of believers in Christ - Catholics and others - have always loved and venerated Mary, the Mother of the Lord (Luke 1:43).

The Protestants doing a misuse - as always - Of some biblical texts denying the doctrine of His intercession or mediation, saying that we should not to address prayers to Mary (and the saints) as intercessor because Jesus is the only Mediator. As a proof cite John 14, 6:13, 1 Timothy 2, 1.5 Act 4, 12.

Give us Catholics doctrinal errors that never have thought and said. Catholics have always believed and professed that "there is one mediator between God and man, Jesus Christ "(1 Timothy 2: 5). About gives us a different doctrine shows a great ignorance.

This doctrine on the only mediation of Jesus Christ we Catholics profess several times a day.

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In fact all the official prayers of the Church addressed to Mary and the Saints always end with the words:

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who is God .. This means that whatever we ask to God, we will always ask in the name, that is for mediation of Jesus, who is the only Mediator.

3. The servant of the Lord

Faithful to the Bible, the Church Catholic believes what licit and good for the intercession of Mary, Mother of the Lord (Luke 1:43) and our Mother (John 19: 26-27). She is blessed among all women because he believed most of all human creatures (Luke 1: 42-45). She is therefore the Holy Virgin,

First, the faithful among the disciples of the Mediator, Jesus Christ. For this reason God will regard to his intercession more than any other.

He says the Catholic Church: "The maternal duty of Mary toward men in no way obscures or diminishes this unique mediation of Christ, but rather shows the effectiveness ... It is founded on his mediation, it absolutely dependent on and draws all its power; not hinder in any way the immediate union of believers with Christ, but rather facilitates it ... The function of Maria is a subordinate function. The Church does not hesitate to profess, continuously experiences and recommends to the faithful, because sustained by this maternal help they may more closely the Mediator and Redeemer "(1)

1) Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on Church, nn. 60-62

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It is according to the Bible recourse to the intercession of Maria? Certainly! She proves it in a categorical manner John's Gospel (2, 1-12), in the episode of the Wedding Feast at Cana: "Three days later, there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee, and was the mother of Jesus was invited to the marriage between Jesus and his disciples. Meanwhile the wine failed, the mother of Jesus said, "They have no wine." And Jesus answered: "What you want from me, woman? Has not yet come my time. " The mother says to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."

The words of Jesus indicate that perhaps disapproved the intervention of Mary, and so our worship toward you? On the contrary, they show that condescended immediately to his mother's request, giving clear signs of veneration of her.

In fact, after the words of Jesus, Mary, calm and confident said to the servants: "Do whatever he tells you." The words Jesus did not disturb it. She does not doubt at all that what you asked for will be achieved. Do not judge a rejection, much less a rebuke Jesus' response to his request. In fact, Jesus accepts the request of Mary, and how! Said to the servants, "Fill the water the jars. " And then he added: "Draw and serve." There was no water, but great wine! It seems clear, beyond any doubt, that the intervention Mary was positive in all respects. Jesus has not humiliated with a refusal, by no means shown that was not worthy of respect and veneration. Far from it! It is reasonable to think that the couple, their relatives and friends, just knew how it had

things, we have filled with admiration and veneration the Woman. Thank you, Jesus had removed from a boring mess with a great miracle.

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In light of these facts it is impossible to think that the title of Woman Christ uses to indicate his mother lack of respect, much less a rebuke.

That woman can be expressed in Italian with Mrs. word. In fact, even from the Cross Jesus called Maria with the same name: "Woman, behold your son!" (John 19:26). It is absurd to think that in that hour of the utmost sorrow for Mary, Jesus would have wanted to miss respect to his Mother and add pain to pain.

Even the words that follow: "What do you want from me?" considered in the same context, do not indicate a lack of respect. They are quite in harmony with the title Donna that Christ gives to his Mother. With such words Jesus wanted to make it clear that he was willing to do more than As Mary said. He wanted to say: "Madam, do not worry, do not worry. " So much so that Jesus immediately hearkened to his Mother.

This step shows that not only is according to the Gospel recourse to the intercession of Mary (contrary they say the Protestants), but it tells us yet that Mary's prayer is so powerful on Son's heart that makes him even before the scheduled time perform miracles. In fact, Jesus says, "It is not yet My hour has come "(John 2:4), but soon after hears his Mother, just to prove that to you can not deny anything and that out of respect for you anticipates even the hour of God!

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CHAPTER XV

STATUES AND PICTURES

PROTESTANT THOUGHT:

a) The worship of images is expressly prohibited from God

ALLEGED BIBLICAL BASIS:

a) Exodus 20.4: "You shall not make nor sculpture image no ... "(Acts 17, 29, Leviticus 26, 1).

ANSWER::

1. Statues and images

That image is one of the favorite themes of the anti-Catholic propaganda of Protestants (and witnesses Jehovah's which are a separate sect of Protestants Adventists). One of the first things that impose the victims of this propaganda is the destruction of all sacred images. Would idols, diabolical. As proof cite Exodus 20, 2-5, Leviticus 19, 4, Numbers 33, 51-52, Deuteronomy 4, 15-19 and 27, 14 - 45. Among the prophets cite Isaiah 44, 12-17 and 46, 5-9 and also Jeremiah 10, 2-6. Mentioning of Psalms Psalm 97 1. Psalm 115, 3-4 and Psalm 135, 13-18. These are the biblical texts, second the Protestants, prohibit the images and statues. Now for the explanation, following the advice of St. Paul that

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said: "Test everything and keep what is good "(1 Thessalonians 5:21).

As any honest reader of the Bible knows, for a straight explanation and understanding of the Word of God, you should always read and explain the individual texts in context. You have to consider everything that is what the author sacred writing before and after the quoted text, the circumstances in which the writer, the words he uses.

Almost always, the correct understanding of biblical texts is dependent upon knowledge and analysis of the context. Ignore or disregard it, that tear individual texts from their context and explain them in a way arbitrary and capricious, is tantamount to betraying the word This God are often the enemies of the Catholic Church.

In the case we are analyzing, the context assures us that the constant and strict prohibition of images and statues, which occurs in the biblical texts above mentioned, has as its object the idolatry that is the worship of Pagan gods or idols instead of the one God of Bible.

The images and statues are forbidden in the Bible representations of pagan gods. Indeed few times the ancient pagans believed that the picture or statue

was just one god to worship. Of all this the Bible gives us valuable information. Sometimes those images and those statues had human form, meaning that they were "figure of what is in the earth beneath" (Exodus 20:4), were representations of males and females never existed. The Bible speaks often of Astarte and Baal, which is worshiped statues (1 Samuel 7, 3-4 and 12, 10).

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Very often the idols were in the shape of animals land like the bull (Psalm 106: 19-20) or blue as the hawk or reptiles such as snake or water as fish and crocodile. From here the prohibitions in Deuteronomy 4: 17-18: "Sin no making image of any land animal of all, bird flying in the sky, of any reptile that creeps on the ground, of any fish that is in the water. "

There was then a type of idolatry astral, that is they were object of worship and adoration of celestial bodies such as the sun, moon, stars, all the host of heaven (Deuteronomy 4, 19). Their statues and images you found in pagan temples. Finally, there was the worship or adoration of men who were ascribed divine honors. These emperors Babylon (Daniel 3:12), the pharaohs of Egypt and, later, the Roman emperors.

From this brief analysis shows clearly that the Bible condemns only and always the representation and the worship of images and idols of that pagan gods, in contrast to the worship of the God

2. Saints, do not idols

What does the Bible say about the images and the statues worshiped by the pagans, it has nothing to do with the Catholic practice of venerating images and statues. Only a great ignorance or propaganda poisonous against the Catholic Church can say similar to things.

A brief analysis of how things will demonstrate how absurd and against the same Bible

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accusations made by the enemies of the Catholic Church against the pious practice of using and worship images and statues of the Saints.

In the first place it must be said that the images and statues venerated by Catholics are not idols are not gods pagan. The biblical texts cited previously condemned only worship and the worship of pagan gods, that is, idolatry, not the use of painting or sculpture to in order to know and worship the one God This simple observation is sufficient to qualify as slanderous and wrong application of biblical texts mentioned above at the Catholic veneration of images and statues.

We ask all honest: have you ever seen worshiped in some Catholic church or in some family of true Catholics the statue or image of goddess Asherah or of Baal, Jupiter or Venus, or the sun or the stars, the bull or crocodile, or some Babylonian or Roman emperor or some Pharaoh of Egypt? Have you ever seen a Catholic bow down to these statues as if they were gods and put them in place of the one God, in which he believes? It falls into ridicule at the mere thought ...

It is true that images and statues of pagan gods and Emperors are to be found in large numbers in museums, public gardens and villas ... but as a Catholic has never had the strange idea of worshiping or even venerate with offerings of flowers, candles, incense? About never stop to pray in front of them to ask their intercession in obtaining from God's graces and favors?

Secondly, it must be said that the images and statues venerated by Catholics are those who,

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along the course of history, have made known the true God, and led by their words and their good example to his true worship and our salvation. The images and statues are means or instruments to remember these noble people and still today, through their memory and their example, lead to the knowledge and worship of the true Their image or statutory God is their living word, more effective than written, which impels us to love the one God, and his love to love our neighbor.

All civilizations have always valued the use the images to educate the knowledge of beauty, the right of the voucher. How can we deny or groped as of

destroy so much wealth human and civil? Only people backward or with blinders can work in this direction!

Using the image or statue of the Catholic Church
This makes us first Jesus Christ, the Man-God, Emmanuel, or God-with-us (Matthew 1: 23).
He is the image of the invisible God (Colossians 1: 15).
Anyone who has seen Him has seen the Father (John 14, 19).

Through his image he, who is the Word or Word of God, makes its voice to the men of good will of all time. To hear this voice you can turn to the Gospel. But the image of the Crucifix or the transfigured Christ (Raphael) can say much more than a written page of the Gospel.

Using the image or statue of the Catholic Church makes us hear the voice of the noblest human beings, who collaborated with the Son of God for our salvation. These are Maria SS., St. Joseph, the

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Apostles, the Christian martyrs, so many of our brothers and sisters in faith who have distinguished themselves for their heroic love for God and the next: St. Francis of Assisi, St. Anthony from Padua, St. Rita and many others, of which the Bible says, "Though dead, that is passed to a better life, still speak "(Heb. 11: 4); also speak through their images and statues. The decorative art makes us still hear their voice.

3. Statues and images in the Bible

The use of images and statues in the Church Catholic is only an aid to put us in contact with the our brothers in faith existing in a state of glory. In other words, images and statues have the purpose of making somehow present and visible the invisible realities. It conforms to Scripture this pious practice?
Yes, of course.

The Bible teaches that even painting and sculpture - That the artists - they can offer their services to religious purpose to attract the minds and hearts towards God and the invisible realities.

In the book of Exodus is said that Moses called "all men of genius because adorn with images with invisible realities are staying or Ark of the Covenant (Chest of precious wood, covered with gold, which contained the tablets of the Law).
One of the artists "made two cherubim (angels) of gold on the two ends of the cover. I Cherubini had

the two wings stretched out on high, covering with wings cover, and they were facing each other "(Exodus 37, 7-9). So in fact, the Lord had commanded: "You will two Cherubini gold on the two ends of the cover " (Exodus 25, 18).

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If this was the order of God, is a clear sign that the use of images could not be a violation the command given by God himself when he said: "Thou shalt not make graven images ..." (Exodus 20, 4). Otherwise, we should conclude that God is contradictory! Centuries later the King Solomon adorn Jew Cherubini at the bottom of the cell to the Temple of Jerusalem where he kept the Ark of the Covenant. The Bible describes well the sculptures of the temple built by Solomon, the one God (1 Kings 6, 19 - 32; Chronicles 3, 8-13). Maybe that's why Solomon violated God's command? Perhaps the Jews have accused of idolatry?

It's still the same God who commanded Moses to make a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole (Numbers 21, 8). Moses is certainly not accused of idolatry! Otherwise we say that God is self-contradictory since it first says he does not make any image of reptile (Deuteronomy 4: 17-18) and then commanded Moses to make a snake ...

The Bible, therefore, if we read it well and everyone says precisely the opposite of what they say to it Protestants and Jehovah's Witnesses!

Therefore removed the danger of idolatry, the Bible is not not at all opposed to the use of images and statues or sculptures. On the contrary, it is in harmony with the Bible the visual arts such as sculpture and painting, contribute to make these invisible realities for the purpose of worship, that is, having the sole purpose of knowledge and the worship of the one God

Christians, therefore, do not adore, but venerate images of Jesus, the Virgin Mary and the saints, that is, we

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have respect for them, and delicate attention which moreover we have for the photographs and images of our loved ones. This thing has begun to and in the same time of the catacombs catacombs are, in fact, full of sacred images.

In the New Testament there is no prohibition

regarding the images. This prohibition, on the other hand, it would be absurd since the essence the Gospel message is that the Son of God has made man, was made flesh, that is has become image, body, face, hair, heart, eyes, hands ... And then he wanted to be seen, touched, kissed, spit, crucified, buried ... fixed in the memory, imagination, on the canvas, in marble ... And this to be better known and loved in the mystery of the Incarnation!

The Christians who knew the Bible and all, for almost fifty years (726-755 d. C.) faced terrible persecutions by the emperors Byzantine to affirm the right, proclaimed in Bible, to venerate the sacred images.

In fact, the Second Council of Nicea in 787 that says: "... we define with precision and care that the holy images ... are to be exhibited in the holy churches of God .. in homes and in the streets, be they images the Lord God and Saviour Jesus Christ, or the Mother of God, the holy angels, of all saints. It is not, of course, of true worship, restricted only by our faith in God .. The honor given the image, in fact, belongs to the one who is represented and whoever venerates an image venerates the reality of who in it is played. "

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CHAPTER XVI

SAINTS

The Bible, then, if read correctly and all whole, it is against the destruction of images, statues, crucifixes, etc.. On the contrary, the Word of God is in favor of for the arts help to elevate the mind and the heart to the invisible realities and to the worship of the true God In the Catholic Church the use of images and statues is connected largely with the pious practice of veneration of the saints. We see, therefore, some truth concerning the saints and their veneration, having always the Holy Book as a guide.

1. Who are the Saints?

In the Bible the word recurs innumerable saints and holy times. The term has the meaning of holy separated.

God-Yahweh, the Holy One par excellence, the three-time Holy (Isaiah 6, 3), the Holy One of Israel (Isaiah 1, 4, 5, 19), the totally separate not only because it is above all creation, but also because it is separated from all that is profane, unjust, immoral.

In the New Testament Jesus is called the Holy One of God (Mark 1: 24, Luke 1, 35, John 6, 69). This title given to Jesus is a clear profession of his gods because it indicates that Jesus, as Yahweh, is of above all that is profane, imperfect, immoral, indeed above all creatures. So he has a name above every name (Philippians 2:9). This

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means that God is by nature (name = kind) of above any earthly angelic nature is created (Ephesians 1:21, Hebrews 1:4; 1 Peter 3:22). He lives in all the fullness of the Godhead bodily " (Colossians 2:9).

God has willed that even those who believe in Him, the members of his people, were called saints. In ancient Testament, Israel, the People of God, said he was "a holy nation "(Exodus 19:6) because by virtue of the election God (who chose Israel among all nations) and thanks to the Alliance (on Mount Sinai, where God gave his Read), was separated from the pagan world and consecrated And in the service of the true God is the will of Yahweh that all should strive to be holy in imitation of God: "Be holy because I am Yahweh, your God, am Holy "(Leviticus 19, 2, 11, 44). Note that all the members of the Jewish community are urged to be holy. The vocation and dignity of the saints are common to all, never reserved for only a few, excluding others (Daniel 7.25 to 26).

Identical language, equal meaning in the New Testament: all those who have made the choice Christian all members of the community of Christ, called saints. By means of cleansing from sin with water vivified by the Spirit (John 3:5, Matthew 3:11), that is through baptism that remits sins (Acts 2:38), the humans, with no limit on the number, already on this earth are regarded as saints. Why Christ sanctifies all believers in Him, that is, all members of the Church: "Christ loved the Church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing of water "(Ephesians 5.25 - 26).

St. Paul teaches this when he calls all the saints Christians of Jerusalem (2 Corinthians 8:4), all Christians Rome (Romans 1:7), of Corinth (1 and 2 Corinthians 1.1), Ephesus (Ephesians 1:1). This teaches St Peter when he says that all the faithful, in which he writes, form a holy nation (1 Peter 2: 9).

Saints are Christians not because they are all an exceptional virtue, but because God, calling them to faith, separated them from other men, freed them from sin by baptism and made them partakers of His divine life with the requirement of a new life.

Saints, then, are all believers in God, we have preceded into the glory of the Kingdom of God already in Daniel is told that "the saints of the Most High will receive and possess the kingdom for centuries " (Daniel 7.8). After the suffering, persecution and death caused by the enemies of God, "the kingdom, the power and the greatness of all the kingdoms will be given to the people of saints of the Most High "(Daniel 7: 27).

Obviously this is all Israel, that is, all members of the People of God, remained faithful in times of trial. For they are promised joy and the glory of an earthly paradise on this planet, but of "a better country that is a heavenly one" (Hebrews 11:16).

This is even more clear in the words of Christ, Teacher of truth, which ensures that where he will, there will also be those who serve him (John 12, 26). Therefore St Paul would rather be away from the body, from this mortal body and at home with the Lord (Philippians 21, 2 Corinthians 5: 4-10).

He wrote to Timothy, saying: "This is a faithful word: if we have died with Christ, we shall also live with Him, with Him if we endure, we shall also reign with him " (2 Timothy 2: 11-12).

It is clear that the Apostle assures the glory and joy of the reign with Christ for all those who want to lose their lives to Christ (Luke 9:24), that is to die to sin to live and reign with Him

In the book of Revelation, John called saints all the martyrs of Christ (Revelation 16, 6, 17, 6) are hundreds of thousands. So in the Bible the title of saints is given to all members of the People of God, both before and after Jesus Christ. And it is also biblical doctrine

that all the disciples of Christ form one community without substantial differences, one familiar, one flock, where only Christ is the Head (1 Timothy 3:15, Hebrews 3:6; John 10:16, 1 Corinthians 11.3).

2. Who makes the Saints?

Now we restrict the discussion to the Saints, who have already reached the state of glory with Christ, that is, those servants of the Lord who are already with Him (John 12, 26, 17, 24). Some of them still on the disciples of Christ land preserve a special memory because of their virtues. They are the saints whom we venerate. Who makes these saints? The answer is not difficult. It makes them God with their collaboration almost always heroic. God sows the seed of love in them. They cultivate this seed with a particular care, total, joyful and painful to bear fruits of holiness.

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So it is not the Church that makes the Saints, and this they say the ignorant. The Church or community of disciples Verification of Christ on earth God's work in these champions of the faith and charity, and allows a special veneration. But how did things go? And how they go now?

The saints that we are Christians who worship in Over the centuries, in every era of history have distinguished by the practice of the Christian virtues in a heroic degree. Therefore, their brothers in the faith still on earth they have not forgotten their memory and their example.

Since the earliest days of the Church martyrdom was regarded as the ultimate expression of faith and the love of God and neighbor, that of holiness. The martyr was considered a hero, a saint in the way of very special. Not only the family but the entire community surrounded veneration of the body and the grave. Of Stephen, the first martyr, the Bible says: "People Devout men buried Stephen and made great lamentation over him " (Acts 8:2).

The martyr remembered the anniversary of the death and begged for his help in favor of the living as a worthy representative of the brothers with God again struggle on earth (Revelation 6, 9-11).

The first historically documented example of commemoration of the anniversary of a martyr is the one of S. Polycarp, who was martyred in Smyrna in today's Turkey, on February 23 of the year 155. Him we read: "The centurion did burn his body according to the pagan custom. So we, only later,

we were able to collect his bones, more valuable than gems and gold and place in a convenient.

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nothing. Here we will gather together with joy and gladness for celebrate the birthday of his martyrdom, to commemorate the memory of those who fought before us, and to keep those who exercised and ready will face the struggle "(1).

From this ancient document is clear that Christians worshiped their most famous brothers in faith, that the martyrs.

A few centuries later, another group of Christians passed to glory with Christ, began to attract a special attention on the part of the Christian community. These are the confessors of the faith, that those Christians who during their life had distinguished themselves for their great faith, for the love of God and neighbor, even if they had not suffered martyrdom. After his death a confessor began to be worshiped as a martyr.

However, the initiative of the public veneration not was left to individuals, that is, the individual believer. Those responsible for of the local churches, that is, the bishops, had always care that they were controlled and avoided easy enthusiasm abuse. In each diocese the veneration public had to be authorized by the Bishop after careful examination of occurred martyrdom for their faith, or heroic Christian way of life of the deceased. It thus had the first trials at the diocesan level (for declare a holy individual), called process canonization.

Today, in the Catholic Church the veneration of new saints will arrive after a long, detailed and

1) From the Martyrdom of St. Polycarp, DC. 17 and 18. Cf Guido Bosio, Introduction to the Fathers, SEI, Turin, 1969, Vol. I, pp. 92-93.

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severe scrutiny. This consists of a careful search of all the evidence proving martyrdom for the faith or the heroic virtues.

The decisive factor is the proof of miracles for confessors. After the trial at the diocesan level, there is more severe at the central level, namely in Rome. Only the Pope, after that, may declare the lawful worship of new saints. It is clear that if God does not grant the intercession confessor of miracles (as assessed scientifically inexplicable), the Pope can not declare saint. So holy is God who makes the granting, for his prayers, miracles to people. The Pope

limited only to confirm the fact. Who says, therefore, that Saints makes them the Pope shows only the immensity of its ignorance!

The Bible teaches that God grants the gift the miracles (1 Corinthians 12:28). For Protestants, the miracles Saints in the Catholic Church are the work of devil! For them the life and works of Padre Pio would a set of mischief. The same is true, according to them, of what happens in Lourdes, Fatima, etc.. The Virgin Mary, St. Anthony of Padua, Santa Rita, and the other saints would all be agents of Satan. It may be more blind than that? But they never bed, and 1 Corinthians 12:28, the words of Jesus: " Truly I say to you, whoever believes in me will do the works I do, and will do greater ones than "(John 14: 12).

3. The veneration of the saints.

Veneration means "feeling of great reverence, respect, esteem. " Thus understood the veneration of

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Saint is fully justified by the Bible. In fact, more than once in the Bible we are exhorted to remember with respect and esteem those who have gone before us in faith (and are now in the house of the Father), we exhorted to praise their virtues, to imitate following the example of their heroic life.

In the Letter to the Hebrews, the sacred author celebrates her faith the ancestors to comfort and encourage his readers (Hebrews 11: 32-35 and 12: 1-2).

Centuries earlier, another sacred writer had said: "Let us praise famous men, our ancestors for generations. These were good men, Its merits are not to be forgotten "(Sirach 44.1 and 10). This book, however, is not found in Protestant Bibles!

So I remember, praise, imitation, that is what the Bible solicited by us in respect of those who have preceded us in faith and have distinguished themselves in practice of Christian virtues.

This is precisely the veneration of the saints. And we are in perfect harmony with the Word of God when remember the Saints, we do praise and imitate them in their great love for Jesus Christ and humanity.

The cult of the saints is as old as the Church is ancient. Obviously worship in the sense of veneration and honor, special remembrance and respect.

Worship is reserved only for the Triune God: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

The same Apostles during his lifetime were particularly revered. A St. Peter were matched patients

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"To make sure that at least touch them with the shadow of his body and all of them were healed "(Acts 5: 15-16). St. Paul is proposed as a model to imitate. Writes In fact, "Be imitators of me, as I also am of Christ "(1 Corinthians 11, 11). The tombs of the Apostles was a place of pilgrimage: particularly revered in Rome were those of Peter and Paul.

Then it was the turn of the martyrs remembered and revered in the day of their martyrdom as models of fidelity to Christ.

Later they were also revered those who, while not having suffered martyrdom, they were known for their heroic practice of the Gospel, that the confessors as we have already said.

Jesus says: "Whoever wants to serve me follow me, and where I am, there shall also my servant. If anyone serves me, the My Father will honor him "(John 12, 26). Now, if the Father honors those who serve her Son Jesus, because we can not honor them we here on earth?

If Jesus uses the shadow of Peter to operate wonders, why can not it do the same with other Saints? If St. Paul can be posed as a model of its Christians, why did the Church should not propose other saints as models to be imitated and venerated?

4.The intercession of the Saints.

To intercede means "to intervene on behalf of someone." A biblical example is well known enough that of Mary, the Mother of Jesus, who at the wedding of

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Cana intervened with his Son in favor of the bride and groom running out of wine. The intercession of Mary obtained its effect and Jesus made his first miracle, changing water into wine (John 2: 1-11).

In Christian and with reference to the Saints, intercede means that the Saints, driven by the prayers of their brethren in the faith who are still on

earth, intervene in their favor with God to get from God the graces desired.

Seen in its true nature, the intercession nothing is that the exercise of love and mutual aid, which must reign between the limbs of the same body for: "The members are mutually concerned for the common good "(1 Corinthians 12:25).

The body, of which he speaks S. Paul to the Corinthians, it is precisely the community of believers, the Church.

In it, each one must practice love toward the others, especially asking God through prayer, what each is useful and necessary for the his salvation (1 Cor 12,12-27).

Jesus said: "If anyone serves me, my Father will honor him "(John 12:26).

So if God honors and loves the Saints, we honor them we, and indeed we are God's instruments for the glorification of his saints. E 'for this God gives many thanks for their intercession.

How often in this world to get a favor from an important person have recourse to his

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friend, so to obtain grace from the Lord we turn to his friends, the saints, and especially to its S. Mother: Our Lady. We could say the Lord: "You do not deserve the thanks I ask because you are a sinner and you are unworthy. " However, this is not the Lord can say to the Saints, much less to His Mother!

The facts bear this out! How many graces, often sensational, we get by the Saints! Not enough entire rooms contain the ex-voto and certificates of graces received. And how many miracles the Virgin Mary obtains for us from Jesus to Lourdes, Fatima and in many of his shrines! ...

At the base there is the doctrine of intercession The communion of saints. With this expression the Catholic Church teaches what it teaches St. Paul cited in the Letter to the Corinthians. There the Apostle likens the Church, that is the set of all the baptized or saints, to the human body because they all form a community or communion where it is natural that among the various members will is an exchange of individual assets for the benefit of all limbs.

In the Bible we have numerous examples of intercession.

Moses with his prayer assures Israel victory over enemies (Exodus 17: 9-13), he obtains pardon of sins (Exodus 32. 11-14). God accepts the prayer of Abraham if in Sodom and Gomorrah will ten righteous (Genesis 18: 16-33). The prayer of Abraham receives the healing to Abimelech, in wife and her servants (Genesis 20, 1-18). In the New Testament St. Paul often asks the prayers, that through the intercession of Christians, that God set him free from the dangers that threaten him in his apostolic work (Ephesians 6, 18-19, Romans 15, 30 -

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31). Other times it is St. Paul who offers his prayers to God, that is, through his intercession, spiritual benefit of the faithful (Colossians 1: 9-10).

St. James wrote: "The prayer of the righteous man availeth much. Elijah was a man of our own nature: he prayed earnestly that it might not rain and it rained not on the earth for three years and six months. And he prayed again and the heaven gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit "(James 5: 16-17).

There are two things to note in the teaching of St. James. The first is that the prayer of the righteous addressed to God as intercession is always effective. The second is that the right one can obtain from God for others also favors the temporal order.

5. The images of the Saints

The Protestants say that the worship of images is contrary to what John 4, 24: "God is Spirit and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth. "

Our answer is to insist that the veneration of images it is "worship" is equivalent to using a language deliberately wrong and libelous (As well as ignorant, because "veneration" and "Worship" are two completely different things, as we have already seen).

Catholics worship only One and Triune God, not images and saints, even those God-man, that is, Jesus Christ, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity. The use of images and statues can help (and that helps) worship "in spirit and truth." Every intelligent person and we understand that normal

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do not worship the paper or marble images or of the statues, but the Saints depicted in the images and in the statues. Let's take an example. When you kissed photos of a loved one - Will Your Child alive or dead, your mom, etc.. - Think perhaps of kiss the photo paper? Maybe your affection stops at the paper? Only fools think so. Subject affectionate kiss your loved one is far away or dead, but yield somewhat close, and this as alive through the pictures.

6. The relics of the Saints

The cult of the Saints joined the cult of relics. The relics are the remains of the body that belonged to the saint, or objects used by him. It is clear that the honor should not be to the material element that make up the relic, but goes to the person of the Holy Martyr or to which it belongs. How fondly greedily retain the objects belonging to our deceased loved ones, all the more reason we keep and venerate objects belonged to the Saints, and of which God often uses to perform miracles to show that he approves this worship to glorify his faithful servants.

We have an explicit confirmation, both in the Old That in the New Testament. While some wore in a dead man, having seen the robbers, they threw the corpse near the tomb of the prophet Elisha. "The man who came in contact with the bones of Elisha, he rose again and rose to his feet "(2 Kings 13: 20-21).

It's not the bones and objects that they distribute

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graces and miracles, as we naively accuse Protestants, but God, who is pleased to manifest His power and goodness by means of the Saints, worshiped with faith in their relics.

The Gospel confirms clearly. A sick woman thought of Jesus: "If I can only touch his garment I shall be whole. Jesus said: Take courage, daughter, your faith has healed you " (Matthew 9, 20-22). Jesus approves, then, the behavior of women, not only, but also other passages in the Gospel (Matthew 14: 36, Mark 16, 15) let us know that this behavior was normal and all those who touched the hem of the coat of Jesus healed.

The Acts of the Apostles testify: "God worked miracles by the hands of Paul, to the point that they put on the sick handkerchiefs or aprons who had been in contact with him and diseases disappeared and the evil spirits went "(Acts 19: 11-12).

The same shadow of St. Peter was regarded as miraculous relic: "They brought the sick into the squares because when Peter came by, at the His amber fall on some of them ... and all were healed "(Acts 5. 15-16). Why, then, wonder for the behavior of Catholics and for many thanks and miraculous healings that the faithful get, praying with faith before the bodies or relics of the saints or even in the various shrines?

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CHAPTER XVII

IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL IN THE BIBLE

1. We look for the resurrection of the dead
Of course, the Bible speaks of the future resurrection of the dead and true Christians, always faithful to the teachings of the Bible, profess this truth, this feed hope for centuries, even millennia, even before that appeared on earth, Jehovah's Witnesses (1).

In the Creed we recite and that the JWs have denied, it is said, look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come.

We read in the Catechism of St. Pius X:

Question: What awaits us at the end of the world?
Answer: At the end of the world awaits the resurrection the flesh and the universal judgment.

The resurrection is certain. God clearly teaches in Scripture. By means of Daniel tells us that "Many of those who sleep in the earth shall awake; some to everlasting life and some to shame and eternal infamy "(Daniel 12, 2).

The Bible, however, is not only about future resurrection, it also teaches unequivocally that man survives death. Our end

1) In this chapter we talk about Jehovah's Witnesses (JWs =) and because they are a separate sect of Protestants Adventists, both because their error is shared by other Protestant sects.

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earth is not like that of the animals. This I can think and say the Jews, not true Christians. Between humans and animals there is an unbridgeable gulf. The God Bible made man a little lower than Angels (Psalm 8, 6).

Pets cease to breathe and exist: die forever. Not so the man. For him to cease to breathe does not mean ceasing to exist. After earthly life, conditioned by these biological laws, the man continues to live in a new state of life, followed in due course by the resurrection of the body. In the Bible, therefore, both the Old and the New Testament, there are countless proofs of certainty of true Christians on human survival immediately after death.

2. The faith of the ancient Hebrews

The ancient Israelites - the people of the Bible - believed in the survival of man, or that their the dead continue to live after death.

This belief was their own from the beginning. Not had taken neither by the Egyptians nor the Babylonians, nor by the Greeks. We believed even before they knew these peoples.

a) In the books of the Bible, in which are recorded the most ancient beliefs of the Israelites, you will often find expressions like these: "The dead go in peace their fathers "(Genesis 15, 15)," rejoined their ancestors "(Genesis 25, 8-9: 35, 29, 49, 33).

These modes of expression did not amount to say simply that one died, as erroneously

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explain the Jews. No! To die and be reunited with their ancestors showed two different things. Abraham is said: "He died and died in a good old age, old and full of days, and was gathered to his fathers "(Genesis 25: 8-9). It is other two statements: one for the inspired writer What was dying, and another to meet their fathers.

And even those expressions meant that the deceased was buried in the family tomb. Abraham died, and was buried in Palestine in the cave of Machpelah (Genesis 25: 9) and remained there, His ancestors were buried far away, in Mesopotamia, in hundreds of miles away, in another grave. Yet the Bible says of him that he was gathered to his fathers. The meeting did not occur, therefore, in the same tomb. The sacred author had in mind something else.

Similarly, David is said that "after having served the designs of God, died and joined his fathers, and went into corruption "(Acts 13, 46). How can join the their fathers, if everything ends in the corruption of body? "David joined (terms of use: Genesis 25, 17; 35, 29 etc..) Is not in the tomb that could be another, but in the common abode of the dead or 'likely' (2, 27). "

b) The Bible, therefore, distinguish very well between grave or tomb of the family, where he laid the body subject to corruption, and a region where it was believed that you gather together all the living "house where they appointed for all living "(Job 30, 23): Sheol.

Sheol the humans continued to live as shadows of what they had been in life. These shadows were called Rephaim (Job 26: 5).

The life of the giants in Sheol was conceived as an unconscious state, a wander in darkness, like a

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forced inactivity, without desires or passions. But all this just in sharp contrast with what happens on the earth (Ecclesiastes 9: 5-10).

It was not, however, a destruction, a return in nothing, a complete loss of vital energy.

c) The ancient Israelites believed that the dead continue to live and could also communicate with alive. The Mosaic Law forbade not only to consult the spirits, but also to raise the dead: "With you do not find (...) a consulter with familiar spirits, or who interrogate the dead "(Deuteronomy 18, 10-11). The command divine spirits that covers both ways. If there are the spirits, they must have a life too departed.

Isaiah reproves the Israelites consulted because the dead rather than God (Isaiah 8: 19). King Saul was punished "Because he evoked the spirit of a deceased person (= the prophet Samuel) to consult "(1 Chronicles 10, 13; 1 Samuel 28, 7-5) instead of consulting Yahweh (2).

3. At the school of the Master

The Bible, therefore, in its first part or Old Testament contains numerous testimonies attesting

2) But geovisti will say: "In Ecclesiastes 9, 5 is said," in As for the dead, they are conscious of nothing ", so they can say anything to the living. Yes answers: Those who are not conscious of nothing are not in a state of non-existence, but continue

to exist in some way, that is to live, and can be awakened and questioned, even if this gesture is an offense against God is so true that the same book Ecclesiastes (Or Preacher) 12, 1-7 says, "Remember your Creator before the dust of your body returns to the earth and the spirit returns to God who gave it. "

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many human survival after death. Nothing forbids us to say that the Old Testament contains the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, meaning for "soul" that human reality which escapes corruption of the tomb.

However the ancient Israelites did not know God in its fullness the doctrine of man's destiny immediately after death. Jesus brought to fulfillment this first revelation (see Matthew 5: 17; Hebrews 1, 1), and put us aware of "what God has prepared for those who love him "(1 Corinthians 2 9).

Among the things that the Son of God made known to us better is the destiny of man immediately after the death. Jesus confirmed it by his divine authority that the end of man is not like that of the dog, but as the entrance of the faithful servant joyful in the House the Father (Matthew 25, 21) or, for those who voluntarily it is separate from Love, such as refusal to be admitted into the joy of the Kingdom. But let's see, in particular, some evidence of Jesus on the life beyond the grave.

4. Moses and Elijah appeared

Jesus himself gave a proof that the the dead are living realities, not mere memories in the memory of God Just remember the story of the Transfiguration (Matthew 17: 1-9, Luke 9, 28-36; Mark 9: 2-8, 2 Peter 1: 16-18).

Jesus shows some of his disciples two large characters of antiquity. One of them, Moses, had lived and died about 1300 years before Jesus Christ.

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The other, Elijah, lived and died in the ninth century ever before Crist. .

In the Transfiguration of the Lord, Moses and Elijah speak with Jesus The three disciples present at the scene, hear their voices, they understand what they are saying (Luke 9, 30-31). The two figures appeared alive and real as Jesus with whom they conversed. And Peter wanted

stay there forever, "Master, it is good for us to be here! Let us make three tents, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah "(Luke 9: 33).

Argue the geovisti: It was a dream.

In fact, Peter and his companions had been overcome by sleep (Luke 9: 32).

You answer:

a) Truly the Gospel of Luke says: "Peter and the his companions were very sleepy, but fully awake, they saw his glory and the two men who were with him "(Luke 9: 32). Some decades later, Peter remembered this vision and wrote: "We were eyewitnesses of his majesty. He (Jesus) received honor and glory from God the Father when it was conveyed to him by the Majestic Glory this voice, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I are well pleased. " We ourselves heard this voice down from heaven when we were with him on the mountain holy "(1 Peter 2: 16-18).

b) If it had been a dream or a hallucination, do not understand why "(Jesus), as they descended from the mountain, he charged them to tell no one what they had seen, until after the Son Man had risen from the dead "(Mark 9, 9; Matthew 17: 9). The Master could not deceive his

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disciples by making them realize that they had seen, while they dreamed of. One must ask: if these people is ignorant, studies before the Bible. If instead they know these things and hide the people, means that they are servants of the error and are therefore not from God!

5. The rich man and poor Lazarus

After the death of the body human life does not end like that of the beasts. The beasts after death are judged. The men, yes. In fact: "It is appointed for men to die once, and after that there the judgment "(Hebrews 9: 27). And the judgment involves a reward or punishment, a heaven or a hell.

In the parable of the rich and the poor, Jesus pointed out the fate that awaits the men immediately after death.

"There was a rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen, and every day was splendid banquets. A beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, covered with sores, desiring to be fed with what

fell from the rich man's table. Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. When the poor man died and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom. Also died rich and was buried. 'In his torments.

looked up and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus next to him. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for this flame tortures me. But Abraham said, Son, remember that you received your good things in life and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. Moreover, between us and you is a great gulf fixed: so that those who are here

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you may not want to move from, or where you are you can go through until you get from us. And those said, 'Then, father Abraham, please send Lazarus to my father's house, for I have five brothers. Unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. But Abraham said, They have Moses and the prophets, will listen to them. And he said, No, father Abraham, but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent. Abraham said: If they do not listen to Moses and the prophets they will not believe even a dead risen "(Luke 16, 19-31).

The real explanation.

a) Let us first of all that the parable is a story imaginary and symbolic. However, it serves to teach real truth in a simple form and clear because they are more easily understood by the students. Which truth Jesus wanted to teach the parable of the bad rich man and Lazarus?

To understand this, we must take into account the context, which do not make the Jews. In Chapter. 16 of St. Luke, where is inserted this parable, Jesus intends to teach a lesson use, good or bad, of riches, and the consequences according to the eternal judgment of God, who knows hearts.

b) In this context, Jesus teaches:

- What earthly goods used selfishly attract the punishment
Material possessions belong to God and not to all
are a privilege of the more clever (3).

3) "Hear this, you who trample the needy, even to the poor of the country (...). I will change your feasts into mourning and all your songs into lamentation "(Amos 8, 4-10, cf. James 2: 1-11). "Blessed are you poor, for yours is the kingdom of God "(Luke 6: 20).

- That the suffering, the sick, the marginalized are the beloved of God
- What a great reward and without end, they will immediately after death to those who have suffered with faith and love
- What atrocious and eternal punishment awaits immediately after the death of those who in this life have selfishly closed the heart of social justice and to goodness.

Note well. Jesus raises Lazarus in the bosom of Abraham, that is gathered to the fathers in the joy of God, and the rich among the torments of hell now, at present, immediately after death (Luke 16, 23).

The explanation of sectarian JW's.
They write: "Consider, is reasonable or scriptural believe that a man is in torment simply because he is rich? "

He replied: In the parable of the rich man is condemned not simply because he was rich, but because he had selfishly closed his heart to the needs, that is, the rights of others. His sentence is scriptural. In Luke 6, 24-25 Jesus said, "Woe to you who are rich, woe to you who are sated, for ye shall hunger. "

Wrote further: "It is scriptural to believe that one is blessed with heavenly life just because beggar? "

You answer: Di Lazarus has been said that the dogs were to lick the wounds and let them do. But he did not even the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table was allowed to eat. He was poor and good. Of these poor Jesus says: "Blessed are you poor, for yours is the kingdom of God "(Luke 6: 20).

6. The case of the good thief

The truth: Luke, the evangelist of mercy divine, has preserved for us the words that Jesus dying he said to the good thief. These had given Jesus a prayer: "Remember me when you come into your kingdom. " He replied, 'Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise "(Luke 23. 42-43). With this his Jesus assures that clear answer that prayer was dealt with: the same day, immediately after death, would be together in a new way of be in a happy state of life in paradise. So, that same day, the body of the thief would have ended up who knows where. Yet he, his ego spirimale

and immortal, would have escaped the death of body and would continue to live with Christ.

The error: This undoubted declaration of Jesus immortality of the soul creates a serious obstacle to JWs. To overcome it, move arbitrarily punctuation, that is, the comma, and they say to Jesus:

"Truly I tell you today, You will be with me in Paradise. "

This explanation is wrong and to be rejected:

a) It should be noted at the outset that in the original text of St. Luke (critical text), scrupulously recovered and scientifically by the best scholars of the Bible, comma is placed before and after "today." The JWs say that the translation of the Bible is a version faithful of the critical text, both of which recognize the authenticity that the overall integrity. There would be only occasional displacements. In the case of Luke 23, 42-43 have introduced a substantial departure to the critical text and gave their followers a faithless translation. Say one thing, but do another. How much hypocrisy!

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b) Secondly, it is known that the expressions I tell you, I tell you solemnly, and the like, no targets of time (like today) are formulas of biblical style comparable to other said the LORD of Oracle Yahweh etc.. Using them, the sacred authors want to put emphasize the authority of the speaker.

In this case, Luke intends to highlight Although apparently the majesty of Jesus defeated. He speaks from the sovereign who distributes favors and allocates seats to those who addresses him. Jesus therefore used the usual biblical formula: I'm telling you! I assure you! without added He said: "I tell you: today you will be with me in paradise "(Luke 23, 43).

c) argue the geovisti: That day Jesus did not go in heaven. So he could not promise the good thief to be with Him in heaven.

The answer: the day Jesus "descended into hell"

That is to say went with his spirit in Hades or the realm of the dead (Cf. Acts 2, 31) to proclaim liberty to the dead antiquity: "Christ died once and for all to sins (...) to bring us to God (..), in spirit went and preached to the spirits who were waiting in prison "(1 Peter 3: 18-19). The Good Thief was with him.

Moreover, it is also this passage from the letter of St. Peter clearly prove that the soul (or spirit) survives after death. "Jesus in the spirit went to preach to the spirits in prison. "

7. I am the resurrection and the life (John 11: 25)

The Jews like to take the Old Testament, ignoring or misrepresenting the teachings of Jesus

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Yet Jesus came to give us the fullness of truth. An example of this greater light made by Jesus on the fate of man after death occurs in the dialogue between him and Martha, the sister of Lazarus, whom Jesus raised from the dead (John 11, 1-44).

Just met the woman who was mourning the brother's death, Jesus said, "Your brother will rise again" (John 11, 23). And as Martha, good Jewish, was used to the idea of the future resurrection, responds promptly to Jesus: "I know my brother rise again at the last day" (John 11, 24).

But Jesus corrected that idea, that hope full and says to Martha: "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die will live, and indeed, those who live and believes in me will never die" (John 11, 26).

Yes, Jesus is Life, now, at present, I am the Life. He gives his life now, to present to those who bind to him with faith: "Whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" (John 11, 26).

What does Jesus ask the woman?

An act of faith in the future resurrection in which Martha already believed, but to accept a new idea, which that woman can not understand. However, it is safe The Master tells the truth: "Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God to come in this world" (John 11, 27).

What is this new idea?

, Whose brother Lazarus, who believed in the Son of God is not dead. Calling from beyond the grave, Jesus gives proof that his words are truth and life.

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a) It is true that some translations of the Bible also Catholic render the phrase *eis tòn Aiona*, in the words "Forever", but many other Catholic Bibles, translated "Will never die" (*jamais*, never). Honesty demands you say that too. Therefore, "will never die" equivalent to "will never die", which does not suggest to a complete death, but to a total absence of

death, and survival after the death of body.

b) This is fully consistent with the Gospel of John. How to know and say all biblical scholars worthy of the name, in the fourth Gospel, Jesus repeatedly states that, for those who believe, eternal life is not begins in the distant future, but have now those who have become part of the community Christ by faith.

In John 3: 15 Jesus says, "that whoever believes in He has the (Greek Eke, in the present) eternal life. " And in John 5: 24 we read, "whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me, has eternal life (...), Has passed from death to life "(1 John 3: 14). Similarly in John 8 51 Jesus says: "Verily, verily I say unto you, if anyone keeps my word, he shall never see death "

c) It should be remembered also that in Revelation 20, 4-5, John speaks of the first resurrection for "many had not worshiped the beast and his image, and so on. ". Resurrection means "passage was done by death to life. " This is clearly a resurrection spiritual, distinct from that of the body that will occur at the end of time. All of them have already eternal life and continue to have it even after the death. For them the second death has no more power, that is being separated from God after the final judgment.

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Objected Jehovaist a particularly ignorant:

How is it possible that the earth may contain a lot of people who do not die? (4)

The answer: the JWs measure the Kingdom of God and life eternal in meters and square kilometers, in logistics services and provisioning. They forget that the spirit and also the spiritual body is not conditioned by space (John 4, 21-24, 20, 19) and that the Kingdom of God does not consist in eating and drinking (cf. Romans 14, 17). They teach that "man's body is adapted to life on earth, to life in the invisible heavens. "

But ignore the scripture that says the great antiquity:

"But now they desire a (home) better, that is heavenly "(Hebrews 11, 16, Philippians 3: 20-21). The Jehovaist is grossly materialistic mentality.

Another difficulty: Lazarus, observe, not he said nothing about the afterlife, so there is life beyond the grave.

You answer:

a) The Gospels we have retained all the facts on life and works of Jesus if they were written one by

one, the world itself could not contain the books that would be written (cf. John 21, 24-25).

b) Not even the Gospels were written to meet the curiosity of men quirky, but "that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in his name "(Jn 20, 31). Jesus raised Lazarus because he is not a man like everyone else, take the place of Jesus in revealing life beyond the grave, but because the witnesses of the miracle, present and future "may believe that thou hast sent "(John 11, 42).

4) No Tornese: Dead or alive? pag. 30.

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The dead live says Jesus and He offers us the test:

- a) speaks to the dead;
- b) the dead man hears the voice of Jesus:
- c) carry out the order received and restored to life.

So death is not a return to nothing, and the dead they live. In fact:

- The son of the widow of Nain, Jesus says: "Young man, I charge thee, arise!" (Luke 7, 11 - 17);
- The daughter of Jairus, Jesus says: "Little girl, I will bring him command, arise! "(Matthew 9: 2-26);
- To his friend Lazarus, Jesus said, "Lazarus, come out "(John 11.1 to 57).

8. Anime Under the altar

We read in Revelation, chapter 6, verses 9 and 11, "When the Lamb opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the Word ... Were given unto every one of them white robe and told to rest a little while until the number of their fellow servants and their brethren who were to be killed like them. "

The real explanation: to understand this vision of John must be remembered that just before he (Revelation 6, 1-8) had described the painful reality of human life here on earth.

As a counterpart of what happens on earth is

revealed to John what happens in heaven. In sanctuary

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heavenly sanctuary he sees the souls (psychai) of the faithful who have already suffered martyrdom for Christ's sake. These souls have not been wiped out of existence. They are currently and actually at the throne of God (Revelation 7, 8-17).

Wrong explanation: the JWs are of the opinion that John meant that "men had killed their human bodies but they could not kill their souls, that is their right or title to the heavenly life in the kingdom of God. "

We answer:

a) St. John saw souls (psychai), not titles of future glory. In no greek vocabulary is said that the word means psychè title. It means life in its concreteness. In this case, human life transferred in heaven, that souls or beings in the state of glory.

b) The inspired writer speaks of heavenly life already reached, not of the right to life in the future. Those souls are with Christ (Revelation 7, 17), which is actually in heaven, that is in a state of glory. The white dress, of which the martyrs are covered, it is a sign of victory and already achieved the joy.

c) Nor is the loophole Jehovaist in saying that the anime, referred in Apocalisse 6, 9, are to be situated at the end of time. No! Because "he was told to be patient still a little season, until the number of their fellow servants and their brethren who were be killed as they "(Revelation 6:11).

If we're at the end time, what is the point that must be still wait until it was complete the number

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etc..? Maybe after the end there will still be persecuted and martyrs? How many contradictions in the explanation arbitrary that the JWs against the Word of God!

9. To die is gain

The biblical doctrine of human survival immediately after death, with evidence that crystalline

located in the Gospels, especially in St. John, is shared fully by the Apostle Paul.

There was a time in his life when he looked to death with nostalgia. The Apostle saw in the death a gain, not a being wiped out of existence. He wrote to the Philippians:

"For to me to live is Christ and to die is gain ... I am caught in this alternative: I have the desire of leave to be with Christ, which is what the far better, but remain in the flesh is more need about you "(Philippians 1, 21-24).

The Apostle's thought is clear: he is sure that immediately after death will achieve a way of life better: it will be with Christ! In his view, the die is a gain, not a fall back into nothingness, nor in an unconscious life, inert and gloomy. Being with Christ, who is the desire of Paul, certainly remembers Jesus' words to the good thief: - I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise "(Luke 23, 43).

Even with the Corinthian Christians had held the same language: "Instead we get out of this body to go into the country, with the Lord (Corinthians 5, 8).

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The souls of the righteous (in this case that of Paul), immediately after death, without waiting for the resurrection bodies will be admitted to the presence of God and to his vision.

It is true that Mary did not have to fight against temptations like us, because she was born without sin Original? That is, yes it is found in a privileged position compared to us because he could not sin?

This is not true because the fact of be born without original sin does not mean that he could not sin. In fact, even Eve was created without original sin, yet sinned when he was tempted.

PURGATORY

PROTESTANT THOUGHT

:

- a) Purgatory is an invention of the priests.
- b) The cult of Catholics because they are venal pay the S. Mass and acts of worship.

ALLEGED BIBLICAL BASIS:

- a) Jesus says to the good thief, "Today you will be with me in Paradise "(Luke 23, 43). Elsewhere it is written that the blood of Christ cleanses completely those who have faith in Him (1 John 1: 7: Romans 8, 1, John 5, 24).
- b) 1 Letter of Peter: "Not at the price of things corruptible, such as silver or gold that you were redeemed ... But with the precious blood of Christ. " The Catholic priests they charge the acts of worship are so doomed from God

WE ANSWER

1. The judgment immediately after death

The Holy Scripture tells us: "It is established that the men to die once, and after that comes the judgment "(Hebrews 9: 27). The man responsible for all his actions, must report to the tribunal of God, righteous judge, who will reward each according to his works (Romans 2, 6).

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Immediately after the death of every man there will be judgment There God said it clearly even Jesus in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus: "The poor man died and was carried by angels to the bosom of Abraham (ie in Paradise), the rich man also died and was buried. Being in torments in Hell ... (Luke 16, 22). Jesus assured the good thief, dying like Him on the cross, that would take him with Him in Paradise that very day (Luke 23, 43).

In addition to the judgment immediately after death, the Holy Scripture teaches the existence of Purgatory indirectly, allowing the possibility of a purification in the afterlife.

2. Purgatory in the Old Testament

In fact, according to the biblical book of 2 Maccabees 12, 38 - 46 Jews prayed for their dead, on whose body were found objects consecrated to idols, because the Lord forgive their sin, and then sent to Jerusalem two thousand silver coins because it was offered an atoning sacrifice.

They were so convinced that we can liberate departed from their sins through prayers and sacrifices. The Holy Scripture supports this behavior. Says In fact: "He (Judas Maccabeus) performed an action very good and noble ... and his account was holy and devout. So did offer a sin offering for the dead because they might be delivered from their sin "(2 Maccabees 12, 42-46).

There is no doubt that we are dealing with individuals who died with feelings of piety and friendship of God As a result were to be found not in Hell and

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even - because of sin - in Heaven, but in a place of atonement, that is, in Purgatory, otherwise could not "be freed from their sins. "

From this passage of the Bible is that the Jews and priests of Jerusalem who had to perform these sacrifices, believed in purgatory and chance to help the souls in Purgatory: it is well God approves of faith and pious practice of the Jews, because the Bible qualification that action as "action very good and noble "(1).

3. Purgatory in the New Testament

Jesus himself, although he did not use the word "purgatory" (Which means the place or state of purification), told us about it. He once said: "The blasphemy against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven him, neither in this world nor in the future "(Matthew 12, 32). These Jesus' words make it clear that there is the possibility of forgiveness of certain sins even after death. Obviously can not be forgiven mortal sins in the next life they deserve the condemnation eternal. It is therefore of venial sins, not yet forgiven and the penalty has not yet granted due to mortal sins forgiven.

1) Since the Bible book of the Maccabees clearly teaches

the existence of Purgatory and the possibility that we to help the souls in purgatory with sacrifices and prayers, Protestants reject it as a book inspired by God In fact, in their Bibles there. Yet the book of Maccabees is mentioned (and therefore recognized as inspired by God) from Hebrews 11, 35 and even the Gospel of John (John 10, 22).

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This can not happen in Hell, where there is no forgiveness can not take place in Heaven, where there is no can enter with sin, then takes place in Purgatory.

Again, Jesus said: "In the day of judgment men will give account of an idle word " (Matthew 12, 36). Of course God can not send Hell a man for an idle word; send him in Purgatory. St. Paul himself, while not using the word "Purgatory", indicates very clearly the concept that the word you mean. In fact talking about those who work for vanity says: "His work catch fire, will suffer damage, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire "(1 Corinthians 3: 15).

Moreover our own reason requires the existence Purgatory because it is obvious to everyone that the majority of men is not so bad as to deserve Hell, nor good enough to deserve Paradise. So there must be purgatory where the souls purified before being admitted to eternal happiness.

The existence of Purgatory can also be deduced from the holiness and justice of God's holiness God demands who are admitted to Paradise only souls totally as well ("Nothing impure will enter into Heaven," he says, In fact, Revelation 21, 27). The justice of God demands they are expiated the sins that have not been expiated on land by those souls who do not deserve Hell.

We must therefore admit an intermediate state between Heaven and Hell (Purgatory, in fact) that by the end of the final purification of souls and is, therefore, temporary, not eternal as Heaven and Hell.

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Protestants believe that to be eligible enough to adhere to Paradise through faith in Christ, because to cater for the sins of the whole world provided with redundancy Christ through the sacrifice of the Cross.

The Catholic Church knows that the Blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin (1 John 1: 7). But he also knows that the infinite merits of Jesus, so be fruitful for the individual, must be accepted and facts with their faith and good works. Jesus replies the rich young man: "If you want to have eternal life, keep the commandments "(Matthew 19, 16-19) is not said, "Have faith, and this will be enough" (see chap. VIII, the Justification).

That is, it is determined that we, together with Christ we need to work out our salvation. In this way, St. Paul is very clear: "I fulfill what is lacking in me (To bear fruit) to the Passion of Christ " (Colossians 1: 24). And what is lacking in the Passion of Christ? Certainly not satisfy the effectiveness of being it of infinite value, but lacks the application to the Christian single, something that can not be realized without his free consent and without his collaboration, even according to the saying of St. Augustine: "He who created you without you, you do not saved without you. "

Therefore, if someone - even found worthy to death of Paradise - did not fully atoned for their sins, will have to make this atonement in Purgatory and this despite having Jesus abundantly satisfied for the sins of mankind.

This place of atonement not only the svalora sacrifice of the Cross, but it is a trial evident

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of the power of the precious Blood of Jesus, so In this way God's mercy gives souls are not fully purified, the possibility of purify, after atoning death for the sins that have had time or opportunity to atone completely during their lives.

4. Protestant objections against the Purgatory

The fact that the good thief went directly in Paradise (Luke 23, 43) immediately after death, nothing Test against Purgatory, because to him it was enough as purification of his sins, his heartfelt prayer Jesus, the suffering of the crucifixion and the splitting of the legs. Also what is good for her particular case, it is true as a general law.

Likewise, the pace of John 14, 3: "When I am go and prepare a place for you I will come again, and you I'll take with me, because you may be where I am " no evidence to the contrary.

Between the Ascension of the Risen Christ to heaven, and his return at the end of the world, in fact, what prevents the purification of souls after death? John teaches us (1 John 1: 7-9) that it is God who cleanses from all sin, but does not tell us the way how he does it, so can also be through the atonement after death, as indeed try other passages of Holy Scripture.

How to Psalm 49, 6-9 it is obvious that no one can buy your own salvation with money. But it is also true that alms - made in the manner sought by Jesus in the gospel (Matthew 6: 1-4), that is animated by charity that covers a multitude of sins (1 Peter 4: 8) -

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cleanses us from all sin, as it is guaranteed by the Sacred Scripture: "The alms delivers from death and purifies from all sin "(Tobit 2, 9).

The fact of the "Madonna of the visit to the souls Purgatory on Saturday "Protestants based on the a private revelation to St. Simon Stock and therefore not There is no obligation to believe it. As you know, in fact, after the last of the revealed books (Revelation), Revelation is closed and there can be but the revelations private (Lourdes, Fatima, etc..), which, although regarded by the Church as certain and well-founded, it is not is obliged to believe.

Against the belief, however, no evidence of the quote Luke (16, 26) because in this passage of the Gospel is not the Purgatory is spoken, but hell, separated from the Paradise by an abyss, symbol of the impossibility of change state, both for the elect as for the damned.

And is it not true that Christ "in spirit went to proclaim salvation to the spirits who were waiting in prison "(1 Peter 3:19)? This prison is not was Heaven nor Hell. What was it then?

5. Relationships between living and dead

The Protestants denying the existence of Purgatory, deny the possibility that the living can pray for the dead and vice versa. We have already seen how the Sacred Scripture, on the contrary, speaks of Purgatory several times.

To make us understand that the living have a duty to come to the aid of the dead, the Scripture says that "a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead that they are absolved from their sins "

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(2 Maccabees 12, 43). Therefore, it is according to the Bible the custom of the Catholics to help the souls of the Purgatory with prayers, Masses, donations and other good works to hasten their entrance into Paradise.

He says St. Ephrem, "If the men of Judah Maccabeus with the offerings of those expiated sins who were killed in the war in a state of guilt, as most priests of the Son with the holy sacrifices and prayers can atone for the sins of the dead. "

In addition to talk of the intercession of the living for the dead (2 Maccabees 12, 38-45), Sacred Scripture also speaks clearly of the intercession of the dead for the living in 2 Maccabees 15, 12-16: Judas Maccabaeus sees in vision the prophet Jeremiah, who was dead already very time, praying to God for all Jews: "This is my friend of his brothers, who prays much for the people and to the holy city of Jerusalem. "

Even in Revelation 6, 9-11 souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and the testimony which they held (ie the martyrs) pray God in favor of Christians on earth and God assures that will fulfill them.

6. The testimony of the early Christians

The early Christians, based on the teaching of the apostles bore witness to their faith in the Purgatory with many prayers written in the catacombs. One of these prayers says: "O God, the glorious merits of Thy saints free us from the punishment, the souls of the faithful departed who enjoy the bliss help us, those who are in need of comfort acquitted by the suffrages of the Church "(Marucchi, Manual of Christian Archaeology, p. IV c. III, p. 235).

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One of the most touching stories that have been passed down in this regard is from the pen of St. Augustine. He says that his mother, St. Monica, arrived an hour death, she made this last prayer: "Bury my body wherever you want, do not worry about

it. But I beseech thee only, wherever you are, to remember me at the altar of the Lord "(Confessions, IX, 11).

Here we find documented the use of the early Church pray for the dead who are in Purgatory. What Catholic Church has done and will do forever.

7. Offers for S. Mass and acts of worship

To those Protestants who are scandalized the Priests Catholics who accept offers for the celebration of Holy Mass, we respond with the words of the same S. Paul the who teaches in the First Letter to the Corinthians: "If we we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it too much thing if we reap your carnal things? If others have this power over you, are not we will have more? Do not know that those who celebrate the cult derive nourishment to worship, and those who are employed at the altar have part of the offerings made at the altar? So also the Lord has commanded that those who preach the Gospel should live by Gospel "(1 Corinthians 9, 11-14).

Jesus himself accepted offers of goods for himself and the Apostles, since it was continually engaged in preaching of the Gospel. The same Gospel tells us In fact, "Mary, called Magdalene, out of whom went seven demons, Joanna, Susanna, and many others who provided them out of their own possessions "(Luke 8: 1-3).

Even the Twelve had a common fund where were collected the offers made them and where the cashier was Judas (John 12, 6). This is not for nothing condemned by Christ.

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CHAPTER XIX

HELL

When to St. Jerome was asked why he had retired to a cave to live as a hermit penitent, he said, "I am condemned to this prison because I fear Hell. " A giant of the doctrine as St. Jerome fear Hell. We, however, without doctrine and without holiness we show all our unconsciousness not thinking about it ever.

St. Paul, rapt to the third heaven and full of merit fears of being able to condemn: "I discipline my body and bring it into subjection lest that after I have preached to others, I myself should be condemned "(1 Corinthians 9, 27).

We, however, with a superficiality that is frightening, we believe we avoid Hell without any merit or fear. In fact you get to recommend not to talk ever Hell, this terrifying reality, because "Impress", not even taking care of the fact that In the Gospel Jesus spoke of Hell is not some time, but eighteen times!

To many today only like speeches cheerful and sweetish, lull themselves into a Christianity easy and facile, in Based fatuous hosannas and hallelujah. It is certain, indeed is faith that:

- Hell exists and is eternal,
- Is the fate of those who die in mortal sin,
- Immediately following the death,
- Is a terrible suffering, especially for the deprivation of God

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The existence of hell is based on the Sacred Scripture and the Tradition of the Church and the reason theological.

1. Hell in the Old Testament

In the Old Testament the Hell is the finding more terrible in the figure of Gehenna or "Valley of the groan, "mail out of the holy city. (!) This place, where the focus was always on, was left to the Jews an object of horror because some idolatrous kings had done before the burning alive of children statue of the god Moloch.

"Coming out, they will see the dead bodies of the men who have rebelled against Me: for their worm shall not die the their fire be quenched, and they will be loathsome to all, "says the prophet Isaiah (66, 24) with words that are shooting by Jesus himself to indicate the damnation real (Mark 9: 43-48).

The Bible book of Wisdom in two integers chapters (4th and 5th) clearly opposes the terrible fate of sinners to the righteous that happy after the their death. Evidenced, inter alia, that the wicked will "In shame, among the dead, forever will be ... in sorrow, and their memory shall perish " (Wisdom 4, 19). Finally, the prophet Daniel says: "Those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake; some to everlasting life, and some to shame and eternal condemnation "(Daniel 12, 2).

2. New Testament: The teaching of Jesus

There is perhaps no subject on which Jesus Christ returns with greater frequency than that

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Hell. He announces that there will be at the end of world a judgment that will separate the good from the evil, that they will be cursed by God and will go into everlasting fire:

"When the Son of Man comes in his glory and with all his Angels ... will be gathered before him and all nations shall separate them one from the other as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. It will put the sheep to his right and the goats on the left. Then he will say to those on his right, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world ...' Then he will say to those places to his left, 'Depart from me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the Devil and his angels ...' And they will go away to eternal punishment but the righteous into eternal life "(Matthew 25: 31-46).

To better hit the minds of his hearers, the Son of God often compares to a Hell where the damned rush and urges its disciples to face any sacrifice to avoid that place of eternal torment:

"If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed than with two hands to go into hell, into the unquenchable fire. If your foot causes you to sin, cut it off: it is better for you to enter life lame than to be thrown with two feet in the fire of Hell. And if your eye causes you leads to sin, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into kingdom of God with one eye than to be cast with two eyes in hell, where their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched "(Mark 9: 43-48).

The same, terrible warning is presented by Jesus also in the form of a parable. We cite for example:

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a) the parable of the weeds in good wheat, which symbolizes the fate of sinners forever excluded from the kingdom of God: "Take the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn "(Matthew 13, 30) so the Lord will say to the end.

b) The parable of the network: the fisherman who makes the choice fish, collect the good and throw away the bad is an image of the separation of the righteous and sinners, at the end of the world: "So it will be at the end of world. The angels will come and separate the wicked from good and throw them into the fiery furnace, where it will be weeping and gnashing of teeth "(Matthew 13: 49-50).

c) The parable of the wedding gifts in which the king is throwing the invitee entered into the outer darkness without the dress nuptial "Then the king said to the servants, Bind hands and feet, and cast him into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth "(Matthew 22. 13).

d) The parable of the wise and the foolish virgins who arrived too late to the reception of the groom; "The foolish virgins began to say, 'Lord, Lord, open to us! But he answered, Verily I say unto you I know you "(Matthew 25: 1-18).

e) The parable of the talents in which the Lord rejects those who have left fruitless talents: "And cast the worthless servant into outer darkness: there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth "(Matthew 25: 14-30).

3.The teaching the Apostles and the Tradition

Faithful to the doctrine of their Master, the Apostles continue to teach the eternal damnation of the wicked. St. Peter writes: "As God punished the Angels

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rebels and reserved their judgment after the tortures of hell, so reserve to punish the wicked in the day of judgment "(2 Peter 2: 4-9).

St. Paul in his letters speaks frequently the future life: the righteous predicts joy to his persecutors, and idolaters, the wicked show Hell forever (2 Thessalonians 1, 5, Galatians 5, 19-21: Ephesians 5, 5). In the Apocalypse of St. John speaks of the pond will be thrown into the fire where murderers and immoral persons, and sorcerers, and idolaters, etc.. (Revelation 21: 68).

In the early centuries of Christianity, the Fathers of the Church are unanimous in preaching eternity Hell. According to St. Ignatius of Antioch example, the one who "will corrupt with perverse teaching the faith of God, for which Jesus Christ was crucified, will go into the unquenchable fire, and together I will also go with him those who listen "(Ephesians 16, 2).

The discussion begins only with Origen, whose errors were condemned by the Council of Constantinople (Year 553) and the Fourth Lateran Council (1215 year) as discussed below. In addition, the time of persecution, Christian martyrs met the tyrants who threatened them with death, which they preferred to endure the temporal punishments instead of going "into the fire forever. "

They remembered well, in fact, the warning of Jesus: "Do not be afraid of those who kill the body, but do not have the power to kill the soul: fear rather him who is able to destroy both soul, both the body in the fire of hell "(Matthew 10, 28).

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4. The theological reason

God, the Supreme Judge, to give every man according to his works: If the right is entitled to the prize, the guilty deserve to be punished.

Now it is clear that on this earth, most of the times, evil triumphs over good, that the good are afflicted and wicked shall enjoy the goods of this life. It is consequently that God will restore the balance in the other life, giving out happiness to one and the punishment to others.

The philosopher E. Kant has rightly pointed out that the immortality of the soul (and the reward or punishment in the Hereafter) is a postulate of the moral law. Divine Justice would be at fault if that is not reserved in another life the necessary compensation and the remuneration of each on its own merits.

Here we are in the deepest of ourselves. Not we can admit, in fact, that between the bandit and his victim, between the criminal and the martyr is abolished every difference in death.

This would be, in the world lowest of our being, the most monstrous mess, when from the atom to Farthest Star, all testify to order and harmony ...

Therefore there must be another world where God will give every man according to his works, and where there will be a triumph definitive of justice.

A wise enrollment at the entrance of a cemetery said: "**HERE ENDS THE JUSTICE OF MEN AND BEGINS THE JUSTICE OF GOD. "**

5. Eternity, of hell in the Holy Writing

In the written Word of God we find first negative absolute formulas, which emphasize the definitive exclusion from eternal life: "Why, I tell you, no one of those who were invited shall taste of my dinner "(Luke 14, 24):" The unrighteous shall not come into possession of the kingdom of God "(1 Corinthians 6, 9, Galatians 5, 21, Ephesians 5, 5); "Their worm does not die and fire is not quenched "(Mark 9, 44.46.48).

The Holy Book also sets very often "eternal" the pains of Hell (Matthew 18, 8, 25, 41.46, 2 1 Thessalonians, 9). Furthermore, the close parallelism established by Jesus between the "eternal life "(which will be given to good) and the "eternal punishment" (reserved for the wicked) in final judgment (Matthew 25, 46) leaves no room for doubt or both are eternal, or it is no of the two.

Leaves no room for doubt as to the clear teaching, out of the mouth of the Son of God in parable of the selfish rich man and poor Lazarus (Luke 16, 19-31). Abraham, who was in eternal bliss, thus responds to a rich man who was in hell: "Between us and you is a great gulf fixed! prevent those who they want to pass you can not - nor where you are you can cross to reach us "(Luke 16, 26). Words that emphasize the eternity Hell so indisputable.

However, there is an expression in Sacred Scripture applied to the pains of Hell, which symbolizes eternity in the strict sense, without any shadow of a doubt: it is the expression "forever and ever"

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(Revelation 14, 11, 20, 10) that is never used in other cases to indicate a finite time. According to all students of the Bible there is a more to emphasize the strong sense of the eternity of this word. So much so that the term "for ever and centuries "- to emphasize the eternity - is always applied to the glory of God or Christ which is precisely eternal.

6. Eternity of hell in Tradition This biblical teaching (which is worth

Hell is eternal) has also been reaffirmed by the Church As the centuries sticking heretics who denied it.

The Synod of Constantinople in 543 condemned without uncertain terms Origen and "origenisti" who denied eternity of the pains of hell and claimed that the devils and the damned, after purification, will be saved and glorified. Proponents of this heresy (called of 'apocatastasis final reinstatement or universal), Universalists are called, because they claim (Against all logic and against the Holy Scripture itself!) that the end of time you will make a universal reconciliation between God with demons and the damned.

9 The canon of the Synod of Constantinople, however, says quote: "If anyone says or thinks that the punishment of demons and the damned is temporary, and that one day will end, and that there will be rehabilitation and restoration of the devils and the damned, let him be anathema. " And the Fourth Lateran Council (year 1215) states: "The Damned receive a sentence together with the devil that lasts forever. "

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The Second Vatican Council testifies that " wicked and slothful servants will go to eternal fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth "(Lumen Gentium, 49). These truths are always also reasserted in the liturgy. In the heart of St. Mass every priest implores the Lord "to save us from eternal damnation and welcome us into the fold of the elect "(Roman Canon) and that communion with his Body and his Blood does not become for us "condemnation" but according to his mercy "is no remedy and defense of the soul and the body. " And in the Litany of the Saints, the Church has always prayed: "from eternal death O Lord, deliver us ... Why tear from eternal damnation our souls, our brothers, relatives and benefactors, we pray. "

Even the "Letter on Certain Questions Concerning eschatology "document of the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (1979) reiterated: "The Church believes that an eternal punishment for the sinner, who will be deprived of the vision of God, as believe the impact of the death penalty in all its to be. "

7. For what sins he deserves hell?

Already the Old Testament teaches expressly that everyone who performs grave sins and die in them

deserves eternal punishment (Ezekiel 18: 21-28). But it is useful to point out that there is damned not only for sins satanic, that took on purpose to offend the Lord, but also for other sins because the contempt of God is implied by any fault of grave matter, as long as committed with full knowledge and free consent.

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In fact, in Matthew 25, 41-46 the reaction of the Damned excluded that they sin in order to express outrage the Lord, yet they are sentenced to death eternal. The same can be said of the foolish virgins who are strayed from Christ the Bridegroom forever (Matthew 25, 1-13).

Sacred Scripture also presents the "lists" of sins - not generally committed to Satanism - but deserve Hell: "But the fearful and unbelieving, and the abominable, and immoral persons and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, their part in the lake that burns with fire. This is the second death "(Revelation 21: 8);
- "For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loved and made a lie (Revelation 22, 15);

- "Do not be deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor robbers will inherit the kingdom of God "(1 Corinthians 5: 9-10);

- "Now the works of the flesh are plain: fornication, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, dissension, factions, envy, drunkenness, carousing, and things like: about these things I warn you, as I have already said, that those who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God "(Galatians 5: 19-21).

Nor is damned only for sins of "commission", but for sins of "omission":

- Matthew 22, 11-14: "The king came in to see the guests and saw a man who was not wearing a dress wedding, she told him, 'Friend, how did you get here without a wedding garment? And he was speechless. Then the king

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ordered to the servants, Bind him hand and foot and cast him in darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Why many are called but few are chosen ";

- Matthew 25: 41-46: "Then the King will say to those on His left, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the fire everlasting, prepared for the Devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat; I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, I was stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you did not clothe me, ill and in prison and you did not visit me. Then they also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison and did not help you? He will answer them, Truly I say to you that you did this to one of these my brethren smaller, you have not done it to me. And he will go away to eternal punishment, and the right to eternal life. "

- John 3: 18-21 and 36: "Whoever believes in him (Christ) is not condemned, but whoever does not believe has already been condemned, because he has not believed in the name of son of God And this is the judgment: the light (Jesus) has come into the world, but men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were and evil. For everyone who does evil hates the light and neither cometh to the light, that it might not be exposed its works. But whoever lives the truth comes to the light, so may be clearly seen that his deeds have been wrought in God ";

"Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, and those who do not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God hanging over him. "

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The Holy Scripture testifies that there is damned only for a multitude of sins sensational, but for any mortal sin when one perseveres until his death, even if only (James 2:10: "For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one point, he is guilty of all "), was also a shame inside (Matthew 5: 28 - 29): "But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your eye causes you to sin leads, and cast away from you better that you lose one of your members, rather than thy whole body should be cast Hell. "

Jesus himself states: "The blasphemy against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven him, neither in this world nor in the future "(Matthew 12: 31-32). Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit consists in the works of God to Satan. Is the classic example of the Jews, unable to deny the divine power of Jesus

driving out demons from the possessed, they said that the Son of God cast out demons by the Belzebul, the prince of demons. They attributed a work that only God can do to Satan. Jesus tells them in the face that Satan drives out Satan, and adds: "If I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, it is certain come upon you the kingdom of God "(Matthew 12, 22-32).

8. Eternity of hell before the reason

All enemies of the Catholic religion, and in particular the rationalists, railed against the dogma (= revealed truth) Hell and they say to the contrary reason. Yet already the Gentiles, without the light of faith and reason alone, have not had no

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hard to admit an eternal punishment for wicked.

In Greek mythology, for example, the River Styx once past that you do not ever cross again, the Tantalus wretch condemned to a hunger and a eternal thirst for having offended the gods, King Sisyphus to his cruelty is eternally rolling a stone on top of a mountain, without ever succeeding, the Danaids that, having killed their husbands, are condemned to fill the bottomless barrels, are so many myths that affirm the belief of the pagans in an eternal punishment established by the gods as just punishment of crimes of this land.

How did the Greeks, so full of logical acumen, as well rational to be the fathers of philosophy, have not had no difficulty in affirming eternal punishment, while the rationalists of today deny it definitely? Hell is a terrible reality, mysterious and frightening; it is very convenient to deny it and believe that it does not exist. And what is convenient - you know - you believe gladly ... Here is revealed the reason! For a man who told him that did not believe in Hell Padre Pio replied: "Do not worry, Believe WHEN WILL go. " A those stigmatized today the friar from Pietrelcina could say the same words ...

Another objection against the existence of the rationalists Hell is this: according to their way of thinking, eternity of punishment is a punishment disproportionate with guilt and therefore incompatible with the goodness of God

The eternal hell is not contrary to reason

(We have already seen) and nothing is opposed to a penalty eternal, either by the sinner or by God

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The Atonement - it is said - must be proportionate to guilt. Now is a principle admitted by all that the severity of an injury is measured by both the dignity of the injured both from the lowness of the offender in other words, the greater the distance between the offender and the offended, the more severe the injury. It is evident that, considered In this respect, the guilt of mortal sin is infinite (because it offends the infinite goodness of God) and the pains of hell are not infinite in intensity, but only in the duration.

The rationalists claim that eternity of punishment is against the goodness of God evidently presume to be wiser than Jesus Christ who spoke many Hell times and just wanted to die on the Cross to save us from it! They forget - or want to forget - that if God is infinitely good, it is also infinitely just, because God is infinite in all His perfections, not only in goodness.

And it is God's justice demands that the application of a sentence commensurate with the gravity of the guilt and also seeking an effective sanction.

We have already seen that the punishment proportionate to the Mortal sin is eternal punishment (given that offends God, the Infinite Being), although it takes no time to commit a mortal sin. Now it is natural and accepted by all that the duration of the atonement is proportionate the severity of the fault, so they practice also in the laws of men. A murder or a massacre, that is, you can commit at a time, yet human laws affecting these crimes with the death penalty (or life imprisonment), ie with a penalty which in some respects is eternal. Why, then, did God

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can not do the same to those who, with full awareness and deliberate consent, offends his infinite Majesty?

Furthermore, it is easy to see that only one eternal punishment can be an effective sanction. In fact if hell is not eternal, the sinner will have the same fate of the righteous, evil will have the same value of the asset. Therefore, in

After all, the criminal and the criminal will multiply their crimes with impunity, because, before or later, they will receive the same reward of the virtuous man. Then there is no longer any reason to the care of God toward sinners, you no longer see the reason for many sacrifices to the good, if one day God will welcome good and bad in the same love and same happiness.

This absurd idea, indeed, if accepted, renders it useless the coming of the Son of God on earth and destroys the all his awesome sacrifice on the cross for our salvation!

With this in mind we can say that this idea, so appealing, is one of the most dangerous traps eternal Enemy of mankind. Indeed with such an absurd and free idea, the Evil pushes to minimize (if not just to encourage) any evil or crime! ... The Prince of Darkness, in fact, know very well that, immediately after death there is judgment (Luke 16, 19-31) and that the Lord, who is good, but also infinitely just, will give to everyone according to his works (Matthew 16, 27). So take every effort to remove from the mind of this decisive reality!

This is why Jesus has opened our eyes saying: "If your hand causes you to sin door, cut it off: it is better for you to enter life maimed than with two to go

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hands into the unquenchable fire. If your foot takes you to sin. cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life lame with two feet to be cast into Hell. If your eye causes you to sin leads, pluck it out: it is better for you enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than with two eyes to be cast into hell, where their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched "(Mark 9, 43-48).

And the Son of God has shown how much they are true his words with tremendous price paid
Cross to save us! ...

9. But why hell?

The eternity of Hell puts particular in light the immense scope of our freedom, the incalculable seriousness of sin and the high respect for God to the man (as well as the immense value of your redemption and painful love, which alone can save us from such a dreadful catastrophe!).

In the eternity of hell is all the authenticity of our freedom, all the tragedy of our responsibility. The eternal decision (for or against God for eternity) is up to us, that God does not save us against our will, or human freedom would be phony.

The eternity of hell also highlights the supreme respect to God for the freedom of man, and then responsible for its self-determination. God considers and treats man as a person responsible for themselves and the world, not like a car or a child immature. Anyone wishing to reproach God for the gift of freedom granted to man, and it is better that man exists no freedom (and therefore no risk

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and danger), has a concept of man lower than not God ..

After all, the free choice of man to heaven and happiness of God, it was good so splendid, that it was also the risk of a human rebellion. All the more so, to mitigate this risk, God made everything I do not say it was humanly but divinely possible: sent his Son!

But because God does not refrain from creating at least those who, in His omniscience, he knows that you danneranno? We believe we have reached the heart of the mystery. The answer is certainly wiser than this: we do not know. We only know that he is the sum Freedom, but also infinite Love, and this is enough to calm in Him.

We add but a few comments. If God He created more people who know that they will be saved, then the salvation of man would be needed. But in If so it would go through the same freedom, at least in the sense that man would no longer be free to choose finally his fate between God and his I.

It is precisely this freedom ("the greatest gift that God to its width / did creating "Dante, Paradise 5, 19), which inevitably involves a real risk of damnation.

10. How can God-Love to condemn eternal punishment?

This question, which many are asking, is as much to

effect as radically false. God does not condemn
no eternal punishment, indeed it has done and is doing everything to-

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because no one harm. So much so that he agreed to
see the death of his beloved Son on the Cross for the
salvation of the whole human race.

But the salvation wrought by Jesus once and for all
on the Cross, does not automatically: it requires the
collaboration of man. It's a salvation free
offer, but does not set!

Despite having allowed the Eternal Father that Jesus
would pay for all, He does not save those who do not want to be
saved. Respecting the freedom given to the highest degree
man, the Lord accepts even see it lost
forever, for the effect of a free human choice,
but does not touch the freedom he has given to his creatures.

In this regard the Holy Scripture tells us: "The Lord
from the beginning created man and left him at the mercy of his
their will. Therefore, son of man, if thou wilt
you keep the Commandments, and only depends on your
will remain loyal to them. The Lord has placed
in front of the good and the bad: where are you stretch out your
hand. Before man is life and death, each
will have what he chooses "(Sirach 15: 14-17).

Therefore it is not God who condemns to eternal punishment.
God can not will evil because it is infinitely
good, but it is the man who, by rejecting God, condemns
by itself. It is the man who, in his freedom, it ruins with
his own hands saying "no" to God and His Law
of love. It's the damn reason that "forces" God told him:
"Go away from Me." And the Lord, that respects
freedom of all, does nothing but confirm the free
choice of the damned (or demons) who have chosen to
and refuse to hate him for all eternity ...

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It is the Lord who rejects his creatures (whether
them the damned or demons), but they are refusing
stubbornly God is the terrible drama of freedom
Human ... **It is not God who wanted the eternity of Hell,
but it is the damn thing that makes it eternal with his stubborn**
"No" to God, His law and His love.

The Mother of God, in simple language and mother, explained everything to Medjugorje. A the visionaries, Miriam, asked: "Heavenly Mother, can not the Lord, who is infinitely good, forgive the damned? ". And Our Lady, smiling, replied, "Yes, that could forgive them. But they are the damned they do not want. "

11. Are there the damned?

From the above, it follows that God, having chosen to make us free, let us also completely free of choose eternal damnation, while the absolute fullness of His righteousness, goodness, mercy, and of that tender love he feels towards his creatures.

It is absolutely certain, indeed of faith that Hell is the punishment of those who die in mortal sin. To this is helpful and generous pray for all men to be saved: this is also the desire of the Lord (1 Timothy 2, 4, 2 Peter 3, 9), borne out by the "miracles" Incarnation of the Son of God and his tremendous Passion, operated precisely for the salvation of all (Colossians 1: 15-20, 1 John 2, 1): although it is a influenced by the desire to free collaboration of men.

However, those who say that no one is damned against Sacred Scripture, which presents the damnation as

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a real and concrete. Witness the analogy with Angels of which many were rebels and became demons (Luke 10, 28, 2 Peter 2: 4; Jude 6) and also test the realistic form (future indicative) and not merely hypothetical, with which Christ has the condemnation of the wicked at the final judgment (Matthew 25, 32-46: "... separate and put "v. 41: "tell": cf. 44; "Respond ... respond "v. 6 "and they will go them to eternal punishment "). John 5: 29: "... I come forth, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of condemnation. "

The realistic language (and not hypothetical) and the close parallelism used by Jesus show that as surely there will be blessed in eternal life, so surely there will be in torment the damned forever. So the convenient perspective that few, if any you damage ("Hell exists, but is empty") is completely unfounded and is even against the Holy Scripture!

In addition, both in relation to Hell as a place, whether one considers as a state, we know with certainty that it is not empty: there are demons! If there are

demons is the place or the status reserved for those who, like them, said "no" to God

A terrifying confirmation of what has occurred with the apparitions at Fatima in 1917. The approval of the Church in these apparitions is no guarantee of truth and the seriousness of the same. Lucia, one of the three seers, has left this testimony: "When the Our Lady said: Sacrifice yourselves for sinners, opened the hands. The beam of light that arose seemed to penetrate and we saw the land as a great sea of fire and surrounded by demons and souls in human form it,

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resembling embers transparent, drag the top from the flames, falling down on every side like sparks of a large fire. Our Lady said to us sadness: You have seen hell where the souls of sinners. To save them God wishes to establish in the the world devotion to my Immaculate Heart ... ".

Not by chance was asked one day to Jesus directly: "Master, are there few that be saved? Jesus replied: Enter through the narrow gate, for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter through it "(Matthew 7 13).

Nor should we underestimate the of the more severe in the Holy Book whose function is to make us ever vigilant: "God is not mocked" (Galatians 6, 7). "Therefore, dear ... strive for your salvation with fear and trembling "(Philemon 2, 12), of course not separated from the trust and love.

In addition, the Second Vatican Council explicitly said that "this pilgrim Church is necessary for salvation, according to the teaching of Christ himself, and therefore can not save those men who, though knowing that the Catholic Church was from God, through Jesus Christ, founded as necessary, will not want to enter it or to remain in it " (LG 14), but also stated, on the one hand, that "not is saved, even though incorporated into the Church, who, does not persevere in charity, remains indeed in the bosom of Church 'the body' 'but' 'the heart' (ibid.), and, on the other, that "those who ignore the no-fault Gospel of Christ and his Church, and yet look-

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for God sincerely, and with the help of grace, try their actions to do his will as He, known through the dictates of conscience, may obtain eternal salvation. Nor does divine providence deny the helps necessary for salvation to those who without fault have not yet arrived at an explicit knowledge and recognition of God, and strive, not without divine grace, to achieve the good life. Since all that is good and true in their is considered by the Church as a preparation for receive the Gospel, and given by him who enlightens all men that they may at length have life " (LG 16).

While we live, the thought of Hell going to shock us: is a thorn in our hearts that makes us tremble with front of the judgments of God, makes us beg that they may be forced our rebellious wills, because none of the men resist the amorous attentions of that goodness infinite of which the Apostle writes that it is folly to take lightly (Galatians 6, 7).

12. I am damned!

The fact that we expose (1) has an exceptional importance, the Vicariate of Rome gave permission to publish the script. The imprimatur is a guarantee of seriousness the tremendous episode. These pages are terrible and tell a standard of living they live in many of today's people society. The mercy of God allowing

1) It is adapted from the book by G. Tomaselli: Hell no! The Editorial graphics, Messina. We report here the excerpts more significant relative to the subject. the fact narrated here, lifting the veil of the most frightening

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mystery that awaits us at the end of life.

Clara was praying for her friend, far away from God and She died in a car accident. After midnight took place the vision ...

"Clara, do not pray for me! I am damned! If towel communicate not believe that this is done by way of friendship. We here do not love any more. I do it because forced ... The believer who contemplates Christ cross will end up loving him. But the one to whom God approaches as punishing right, because one day it was from he repudiated, as happened to us, that he can not hate him with all the impetuosity of his evil will, eternally, because of the free acceptance of being

separated from God: resolution with which, dying, we exhaled our soul and that even now retreat and we will never have the desire to withdraw. Understand now why the hell is everlasting? Because our obstinacy never will melt from us.

Compelled to add that God is merciful even towards us. He was merciful to us with do not let drain on earth our evil will, as we would have been ready to do. This would have increased our sins and our sorrows. He made us die prematurely, like me, or did intervene other mitigating circumstances.

Now He shows himself merciful to us with not to force us to approach him more than it we are in this remote hellish place, and this decreases our torment. Every step you take me more close to God that I would cause a greater punishment of what would bring you one step closer to a fire burning ...

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You admonished me once: "Anna if you do not pray, go to perdition! I prayed very little and also this, only halfheartedly. Then you had unfortunately reason. All those who burn in hell did not prayed or did not pray enough.

Prayer is the first step towards God remains the decisive step. Especially prayer to her who was the Mother of Christ, the name of which we do not we name ever. The devotion to you, to tears Devil countless souls that sin would deliver the infallibly in the hands.

Prayer is the easiest thing that man can do on earth. And to this very easy thing God has bound salvation of everyone. To those who pray with perseverance He gradually gives much light, strengthens him in such a way, that at the end also the sinner more bogged down you can definitely raise, was well engulfed in mud up to his neck.

In the last years of my life, I've prayed more as I had and so I thank the private, without which no one can escape. Here in the hell not receive no more grace. Indeed if received them, would reject the cynical. By you on earth man can rise from the state of sin to the state by the Grace of Grace and fall into sin, often for weakness, sometimes out of malice. With the death this rise and fall ends because it has its root in the imperfection

earthling man. By now we
reached the final state ...

The influence of the devil I never believed. And
now testify that he has a profound influence on people
who are in the condition in which I was standing

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then. Only many prayers, of others and of myself,
joint with sacrifices and sufferings, I would
could wrest from him ...

I also hate the devil. Yet he like,
because it tries to spoil you guys, he and the fallen spirits
like him at the beginning of time. They can be counted in
million. Roam the earth, dense like a swarm
of flies, and you even notice it.
Actually, this makes it even more their torment
every time they drag down here in Hell
a human soul. But what does not ever hate? ...

Meanwhile, I had accommodated myself in a religion
in my way. I argued the opinion, which we have in
office was common, that the soul is reincarnated after death
in another being. In this way continue to
pilgrimage without end. With this, the anguished question
afterlife was put in place and made me harmless.
Why do not you reminded me of the parable of the rich
Dives and Lazarus (Luke 16, 19-31), in which
after death, one goes to Hell and the other in
Heaven? ... After all, what would you get? Nothing
more than with your other speeches of bigotry!

Gradually me I created myself a God afar
enough that I do not have to maintain any
relationship with Him; vague enough to let me second
the need; resembled a pantheistic God of the
world, or to let poetizzare as a God
solitaire.

This God did not give me no paradise
and no hell to inflict. I let him in
peace. In what was to my adoration for Him A
what pleases you believe gladly! Over the years
I kept quite convinced of my religion. In

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This way you could live. One thing only
would break my stubbornness: a long and
deep pain. But this pain was not!

Do you now understand what it means, "God disciplines those he loves? "...

When you called me back, I always answered:
"The good Lord has a mentality so small as your sins! Now I must confess that even though God His infinite goodness, weighs things more accuracy of all priests put together ... Our greater torment is to know with certainty that we will never see God ..

This morning he was born in me, so inexplicable this thought: You could once again go to Mass. It sounded like a plea. Clear and resolute, my "no" cut the thread of thoughts. "With these things have to end it once and for all. I him all the consequences. " Now I bring ...

What happened after my death you will know already ... I myself woke up suddenly from the darkness in the instant of my death. I saw myself as flooded a dazzling light.

It was in the same place where the Lord lay my corpse. It happened like in a theater, when in the room all of a sudden the lights go out, the curtain divides and presents an unexpected scene, horribly lit: the scene of my life.

As in a mirror my soul showed me same. The graces trampled by the youth to last "no" in front of God I felt like a murderess which during the process, is brought before his victim lifeless.

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Repent? Never!
Ashamed? Never!

But I could not even stand up under the eyes of God, which I rejected. I remained only one thing: escape. As Cain fled from the corpse of Abel, so my soul was pushed away by the sight of horror. This was the particular judgment: the invisible Judge said, "Get away from me."

Then my soul, like a shadow yellow sulfur, rushed into the place of eternal torment ...

CHAPTER XX

THE TRUE CHURCH

PROTESTANT THOUGHT

Many Protestants claim that the Church founded by Christ is a spiritual and invisible. They say so because they know that they lack the notes characteristics that Jesus gave to His Church (ie: one, holy, catholic and apostolic), so that people eager to save his own could always distinguish with safety as a beacon of light through the centuries.

ALLEGED BIBLICAL BASIS:

- a) Luke 17, 20-21: "The kingdom of God is not in so as to attract attention, and no one will say: Here or there he is. Why the Kingdom of God is in the midst of You. "

YOU ANSWER:

:

a) The Kingdom of Christ came into this world without the noise with which the Jews were waiting for him. It was already in the midst of Jewish society and they had not yet known, for this is exactly what Jesus condemns them like blind men (Matthew 15, 14, John 9, 41).

1. Visibility of the Church founded by Jesus

Despite the different opinion of the Protestants, Jesus wanted the company founded by him shone as

a city of light on a high mountain, to guide all to salvation, as it was the Jews led by a pillar of fire in the night running through the desert (Exodus 13, 21).

Foretold by the prophet Isaiah: "The mountain of the house of the Lord shall be exalted above the hills; stream to it all nations "(Isaiah 2, 2). Jesus said to his Apostles: "You are the light of the world can not remain hidden a city set on a hill or light a lamp and put it under a bushel, but you put it on its stand and it gives light to everyone in the house "(Matthew 5: 14-15).

If the Church is the society of true Christians, that is, baptized who profess the faith and doctrine of Jesus Christ, participating in its sacraments and obey Pastors (the Pope and the Bishops) established by Him, as do you say that it is invisible?

The Church was born at Pentecost, when the Spirit Ghost descended upon the Apostles and Mary (Acts 2: 1-4). Then you has spread throughout the world. Jesus foretold this: "The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard, once grown, it becomes a tree, so that the birds come and make nests in its branches " (Matthew 13: 31-32). After this clear comparison of Jesus how do you say that the Church is invisible?

Furthermore, Jesus, after speaking of the correction fraternal towards the erring brother, commands: "If he does not listen, tell it to the church" (Matthew 18, 17). In that way you could make use of an invisible Church? (1).

1) Church, from the Greek EKKLESIA: Shareholders.

2. Unity of the Church

Christ on a single foundation, built the his one Church, as the only means of salvation. In fact, he said to Peter: "You are Peter and on this rock I will build my Church "(Matthew 16: 17-18).

Jesus did not say "my Church", but "my Church ": thus the true Church of Christ is one. And with clear images, the Son of God illustrates the unity of the His Church. He calls it: Kingdom: "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation "(Matthew 12, 25), the called the city (and family): "no city or house divided against itself can stand "(Matthew 12, 25), the

called fold: "There will be one fold and one shepherd" (John 10, 16) calls it the body (Ephesians 1: 23): "The Church, which is his body" called the bride (Revelation 21: 2:09): Christ is one, one for his bride; the Church. Now if Jesus calls his Church the kingdom, city (or family), fold, body, bride as can be invisible, as claimed by the Protestants?

If the true Church is one, it must have units faith and unity of government.

a) Unit of faith: the true Church must have a single faith. St. Paul says to the Ephesians (4, 3-5): "One body and one Spirit, just as one hope is the goal which you were called, one Lord, one faith, one baptism. "

One is faith, because one is the Gospel that Jesus commanded the apostles to preach. St. Paul tells the Galatians (1, 7-8): "There is no other Gospel only there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the Gospel of Christ. Well, even if we, or an

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Angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we have preached to you, let him be accursed. "

The Protestants, however, preach many different gospels; as many as are their sects, as each sect interprets the gospel in his own way. They are therefore condemned from the Bible itself!

The Catholic Church is the only one which has preserved from always the same truths of faith, defending them in Ecumenical councils against the heretics who denied it or the questioned.

b) Unit of Government: Jesus, only to Peter and the Gave the Apostles the power to govern his Church (Matthew 16, 18, 18, 18, 23, 18-20, John 21, 16 - 18). So the true Church of Christ is one in which govern the legitimate successors of the Apostles and Peter (the Pope and the Bishops), that is the Catholic Church.

The Protestants however, not only are off The Catholic Church, but does not give any real authority derived from Christ. They have hence units government: every sect decides for itself.

Only in the Catholic Church have been preserved unchanged through the centuries all the means of perfection and grace that Jesus has entrusted to it. The Protestant sects, instead, they are deeply divided between them for the

variety of the doctrine, the number of the sacraments, the diversity of laws.

So only the Catholic church has this property of which Christ wished marked his Church: unity of faith and government.

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3. Catholicity of the Church

The catholicity (that is the universality) is that property so the only true Church of Christ should be spread worldwide. The Church of Rome is Catholic, that is, universal, because it is set up for all men and spread over all the earth.

Christ on a mission by sending his apostles, he says: "Go into all the drench, preach the Gospel to every creature "(Mark 16: 15). Jesus predicted that this th Apostles grand universal mission and their successors would have done: "This Gospel of the Kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as witness unto all nations "(Matthew 24, 14).

The prophet Malachi (1, 11) had prophesied that the new sacrifice (ie the Holy Mass) would be offered in every place, from one end of the earth. Only the Catholic Church has poured out his missionaries across the earth. It alone offers it to God, in all places of earth, the pure sacrifice foretold by Malachi.

The various Protestant sects, by the very fact that are divided and broken, do not have that catholicity or universality that Jesus wanted as a feature of his one true Church.

As Protestantism send missionaries all countries, which may have value if its catholicity has not in itself the unit and if it is taught same doctrine?

4. Apostolicity of the Church

The Apostolicity is that the true Church

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of Christ for its origin is linked to the Apostles; who has always adhered to the doctrine received by the

Apostles that her pastors (the Pope and the Bishops) are derived by the Apostles to their successors in the direct ministry.

Jesus founded his Church on the Apostles, giving them the threefold power to teach, govern and sanctifying, and establishing Peter as pastor and Supreme Master (see Chapter VIII)

Only the Catholic Church comes the Apostles for its origin, its doctrine and its pastors, successors direct the Apostles.

Protestantism was born with Luther, with Calvin, with Henry VIII in 1500: its origin is not derived by the Apostles, but by these three men. So much so that no one had before Luther Lutheran or Calvinist before Calvin, nor Anglican before Henry VIII: how come they would have received from Apostles their doctrine?

In conclusion: the Church of Rome is apostolic because is founded on the apostles and their preaching, and governed by their lawful successors, the Pope and the Bishops, who, without interruption and without alteration, continue to transmit the doctrine and power.

5. Holiness of the Church

Holiness means union with God Now the Church is holy source because the founder (and invisible head) is Christ, and the Holy Spirit is its soul (1 Corinthians 12, 12), it is holy to the end which is proposed, that is the sanctification of man is holy for the means by which

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reaches its end, and they are: the doctrine of Christ, the commandments, the sacraments, prayer, charisms Holy Spirit, etc., is holy because it generates in each time countless martyrs, virgins and saints.

PROOF. Jesus compares the Church to yeast (Matthew 13, 33) because its proper task is to transform and sanctify men. In the same way designates his disciples as "the salt of the earth" (Matthew 5:13) and as "light of the world" (Matthew 5 14).

Paul calls "holy" Christians: "For the sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints" (1 Corinthians 1, 2). In fact: "Christ loved the Church and gave himself up for her to sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water

(Baptism), so that the Church presented splendor, without spot "(Ephesians 5: 25-27).

Jesus in the parable of the sower (Matthew 13, 23) says that the seed of the word of God will produce in some thirty, sixty, and the other in still others, the percent by one: thus indicating the different degrees of perfection and correspondence to his grace and his word divine.

None of the many Protestant sects or churches has the holiness that Jesus wanted as a property characteristic of his true Church, the Protestants have denied the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, have reduced at will the number of the Sacraments, deny the need for good works, they have emptied the preaching denying the fundamental truths of Christ.

Protestants show us one of their saints! The founders themselves, from Luther to the most recent ones, some have had an exemplary life ... We show the

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Protestant one of those miracles (scientifically proven) that Jesus foretold as a sign of holiness of his faith: "he who believes in me will do the miracles that I do, and will do greater ones than " (John 14, 12). Luther or some other Protestant has done some miracle? How many miracles, in life and even after their death, they made the Saints of the Catholic Church as St. Anthony, St. Rita, Padre Pio and many more!

Not having the miracles on their side the Protestants declared closed the era of miracles, contradicting the clear word of Christ assures us that continually miracles in His Church (John 14 12). I do not think they put limits to the omnipotence of God!

There's more about the miracles of the Holy Scripture is against of them (see chap. XXI). Nor for that Lourdes, Fatima and many other shrines cease to dispense miracles to the faithful who go there on pilgrimage from all parts of the world ...

To get rid of any nuisance, Protestants have denied the need for good works, especially those of penance, as Jesus said: "Enter by the way narrow, wide and because the gate and broad the way that leads to destruction, and many there be which go for it "(Matthew 7: 13) and even more explicitly

Jesus said: "If you do not repent will perish all likewise "(Luke 13: 1-5).

Only the Catholic Church has preserved Doctrine, the Sacraments, the Holy Sacrifice. It only can count on thousands of his saints and its martyrs in every period of history, it alone can count the miracles

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that God works in it (always ascertained as scientifically inexplicable as it happens in Lourdes, otherwise, the Church does not recognize them as miracles).

We can repeat the Protestants of today, what St. Augustine said to his contemporaries who denied the miracles in the Catholic Church: "If they do not believe that they were made of miracles, we simply this unique and great miracle: that the Church could be spread all over the earth without miracles! " (The City of God: 22, 5, R. 1783).

6. DI saints belong to the Church Christ and sinners.

Another pretext, to which cling some Protestants, is to say that all Catholics, all priests, all the bishops and all the popes were and are bad. Evidently they never read, inter alia, in Gospel the clear words of Jesus: "Do not judge for not be judged: because with what judgment judge others you will be judged, and the measure with which measured the others will be measured to you. Why look at the speck in your brother's, while no attention to the plank in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, Let me pull the straw out of your eye, while in his eye there is the beam? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out your brother "(Matthew 7: 1-5).

The fact that the Church is holy does not mean that cease to belong to the perpetrators of grave sins. In the parable of the weeds among the wheat (Matthew 13: 24-30), the network that collects fish

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good and bad fish (Matthew 13, 47-50) and in the wise virgins and the foolish virgins (Matthew 25, 1-13), Jesus teaches that the Church live together

good and bad, the separation of which will come only at end of the world at the time of judgment.

He also gives precise instructions to correct the brothers that have gone wrong. Only if they are remained unsuccessful all attempts to improve should be excluded from the Church (Matthew 18, 15-17).

Did not Jesus himself accepted among the Twelve Judas the traitor? It has not agreed to be denied three times by the same S. Peter, as he himself prophesied? (Luke 22, 34). And his apostles themselves maybe they have not all abandoned during his Passion? (Matthew 26, 56). Why wonder then if they are not all saints in the Church? And is it not true that often the greatest sinners have become the most great saints?

Moreover, already in the writings of St. Paul shows that even in the early Church were occurring serious sins (1 Corinthians 2, 18, 2 Corinthians 12, 20).

So before you judge the Catholic Church, would do well to meditate on the parable of the Pharisee and the publican (Luke 18, 10-14) in which Jesus says, "the publican who recognized sinner returned home forgiven, unlike the proud Pharisee, for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted. "

CHAPTER XXI

WARRANTIES OF TRUE CHURCH

1. Miracles

If Jesus founded a Church must guarantee it, otherwise anyone can show up in his name and found another Church, and you get to the impossibility of know what is his.

Not true, says Jesus, the testimony that one gives to himself. (John 5: 11). And he himself gave the collateral, to see his divinity. Such a guarantee were the signs which he was operating. For this had this to say: "If you do not believe me, believe to my works "(John 10, 38).

Another time, when he forgave the sins of the paralytic and the Pharisees murmured, saying that the sins of them only God could forgive, to show that he had such power because he was God, he said to the paralytic, "To show you that I have the power to forgive sins, I say to you, rise, pick up your mat, and go home" (Matthew 9, 6).

But what guarantee do they give the Protestant Churches, the JW's and the followers of Moon? No other testimony than that they give themselves: their witness therefore does not apply.

To prove that they are of God do not carry more than their interpretation of a biblical passage. If you ask them as God guarantees that their interpretation is right, you will immediately bring another biblical passage. If

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repeat the question will bring another biblical passage: and so on ad infinitum: "It is so because I say so, and this step does this mean, because I say so. " The assurance that God gives is the miracle.

At this point the Protestants, and fellow JW's will say that miracles end up with the apostles. This is fake. In fact, Jesus says, "Truly, truly, I say to you: Whoever believes in me, I will make him even the works that I do, he will do greater works, because I go to the Father" (John 14, 12).

And before ascending to heaven, he said to the Apostles: "And here are the miracles that will accompany those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; speak with new tongues; take up the snakes, if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them damage; lay hands on the sick and they shall recover " (Mark 16: 17-18).

E S. Paul adds: "Now there are varieties of gifts, but it is the Spirit, and there are varieties of ministries, but the same Lord, and there are varieties of operations, but the same God, who works all in all. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good: for one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom ... to another gifts of healing by that do Spirit, for one, the power of miracles, to another the gift of prophecy, and another, the discerning of spirits, to another kind of languages, and another the interpretation of tongues" (1 Corinthians 12: 4-10).

So we say to the Protestant's Witnesses

Jehovah and all the others. "Where are your miracles?". They beg the question by saying that the miracles of Catholic Church are the work of Satan.

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Meanwhile, it is manifest that God is not with them and that they are not true disciples of Jesus because they do not have miracles.

When they were to say that we have them, may bring the precise documentation. We will make them formal request. If you do not carry documentation is sign that they have not.

As for their joke that the miracles of Catholic Church are the work of Satan reply that this already the Jews had said to Jesus (Mark 3, 22), we say again that miracles are converted, become good and religious and do convert many others, so we repeat the words of Jesus: If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom can not stand. If a house is divided against itself, that house can not exist. " And if Satan rises against himself and divides, there can be, but is about to end. " (Mark 3, 24-26).

Moreover, Jesus warned, "enough for the disciple be like the teacher, and the servant like his master. If have called the head of the house Beelzebub, how much more his family "(Matthew 10, 25).

We have already said that what we mean by a miracle that only God can do, that is a creation or a annihilation, because these things require a power endless. When Protestants say that miracles are the work of Satan blaspheme, and attributing to Satan infinite power of Satan make another God why they sin against the Holy Spirit, that is, against the truth, and should remember the admonition given by Jesus to the Jews who attributed his miracles to Satan, "Anyone who speaks a word against the Son

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Man will be forgiven, but the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this life or in the future "(Matthew 12, 32).

Those who have an interest in knowing the truth and to have a scientific documentation may find it at the Bureau de Médical constatation Lourdes, or at the Vatican Congregation of Rites,

that collects at least two miracles for each Santo before he is canonized, or, for it at hand, they can read the book God reveals yet? and the most recent and most comprehensive Certainties of Jesus (1).

Find honestly guarantees of God will find that the one Church willed by God is Roman Catholic.

- 1) Require Community Publishing, 95031 Adrano (Ct)
Tel 095/7692315.

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APPENDIX

CHRISTMAS: PAGAN FEAST?

1. The question of the date

The JW's ignore the biblical richness and beauty, of which builds on the Catholic Church. They prefer to quibble on marginal issues of secondary or no importance in order to eradicate the faith from the heart of true Christians, obscuring the truth of God

Judging by the fact we can say that the effort Jehovaist is useless. At Christmas, all our Churches are full of the faithful, and a great and authentic joy spreads to all families, who gather around the cradle of their Savior.

Among the quirks geovisti against Christmas occupies the first place to date. They say: Since there know whether Christ was born on December 25, you must believe that Christmas is a pagan holiday.

Where is the truth?

We have already said and I repeat: the Bible says

that Christ was born (Matthew 1: 25, Luke 2, 7-11; John 1:14, Galatians 4: 4). This is essential. This is the joyful proclamation of the angels to all those whom God loves (Luke 2: 13).

The do not know the exact date of that birth does not change much less destroys the comforting reality of the birth of the Savior of the world.

To be able to read the Bible, it is clear that even for the evangelists personal data had an interest very relative. They have dwelt at length on

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other details that accompanied the birth of Christ, but did not bother to tell us which day the birth occurred. They cared the salvific event realized in that birth, not the day that took place. So they always read and read the Bible true Christians.

a - A track followed by the ancients to know that date was astronomical. According to the ideas the time they believed that the creation of the world had taken place at the spring equinox, assigned then to March 25, not 21. Reasoning according to those ideas thought they could assert that even second creation, which is the conception of Christ in the Mary's womb was to be held on 25 March dl This resulted in the birth of the Savior was assigned December 25, nine months after its conception.

b - Another consideration, also of astronomical nature, confirmed the ancients in this their reasoning. It is well known how to December 25th (today more precisely December 21) the sun resumes its rise after the winter solstice. This was a particular which induced the ancients to log on the rise the Sun of justice, which is Christ the Lord.

In fact, the ancients saw implemented in the birth Malachi's prophecy of Christ, which compares the Messiah to the rising Sun (Malachi 3: 20). All the more that a clear reference to Malachi is located in the gospel Luca (1, 78, 2, 32) and in John 8:12 Jesus calls himself "the light of the world."

c - Putting together the two considerations, that Astronomy and the Bible, toward the middle of the fourth century A.D. began to converge the feast of the

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Christmas on December 25th. Until then, in fact, was celebrated on different days of the year from the point of views of different local churches.

The new approach seems to have had in Rome the center of propulsion, because the church of Rome was now considered the headquarters of Christianity (1). So that the date of December 25 slowly prevailed throughout the West and in the East.

We can not exclude, however, that the date of 25 January, in addition to the considerations mentioned above, can also be connected with the civil calendar Roman. A pagan Rome was dedicated Dec. 25 the feast of the "sun god", as well as elsewhere in the ancient pagan world. When, after Constantine, Christians had greater freedom of action, it is likely that have solicited to replace the worship and celebration of the "Sun god" with the celebration of the birth of Christ, Sun and true Light of the world.

It was a legitimate change and commendable. The Christians have continued to celebrate a pagan holiday, but replaced it with a Christian celebration. They eliminated introduced idolatry and the worship and adoration of the true God The Church has never said: "Do celebration and honor the sun god." It has always said and say: "Destroy the idols, but rejoice at the memory of birth of the Son of God. " The darkness receded and advancing the light (Luke 1: 79).

1) S. Irenaeus, Against Heresies, 3, 3, 2. He wrote to the end of the second century.

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HOW TO PRAY?

1. The mistake

More than once, some Catholic, was told by a Protestant or a Jehovah's Witness:

- You Catholics do not know the Bible!
- Why?
- Why do you make long prayers, repeating insistently the same things, but in the Bible is said to do not waste words, like the Gentiles (Matthew 6, 7).

Scriptures in hand, are the ones who do not know the Bible. Species Jehovah's Witnesses know

only mechanically repeat certain verses learned in memory. They want to do more and to be teachers, but they know only a few verses of the Bible and explain them in one-way and wrong.

2. The truth

We Catholics are accustomed to going deep into knowledge of the Bible. We always want to make sure of his genuine teaching in full fidelity to the Board St. Paul says: "Make sure of all things. Hold fast what is righteous "(1 Thessalonians 5: 20). Neither we like the Pharisee who despised the Gospel prayer of others, exalting himself. He earned the rebuke of the Lord (Luke 18: 9-14).

Also on the way to pray we query the Bible to make sure of what it actually says against distortions of the JWs. Therefore express three questions.

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THE FIRST: It is true that the Bible condemns the insistence of prayer?

THE ANSWER: No! It is not true.

In fact, in the holy gospels Jesus calls more than once his disciples to persist in prayer.

1 - We read in St. Luke:

"Then Jesus added: If one of you has a friend and goes to him at midnight and said to him, Friend, lend me three loaves; because a friend has come to me from a journey and not I have nothing to set before him: Then the one inside responds: Do not bother me, the door is closed and my children are with me in bed, I can not get up and give you anything I say to you that even if you do not rise and give him, for friendship, will stand up to give him whatever he it takes at least because of his persistence "(Luke 11: 5 - 8).

We can legitimately assume that the friend of inside had understood what it meant' friend out, and there was no need to insist that these to make him understand. However, the friend insists outside.

Jesus does not retry this insistence, indeed, the proposed to his disciples as an example to be imitated in their prayers to God because He continues: "But I tell you: Ask and you shall receive, seek and find, knock and it shall be opened. For everyone who asks receives, he who seeks

finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened "(Luke 11: 9-10, Matthew 7, 7-11).

2 - Another parable about prayer also

There has been preserved pretty well by St. Luke:

"Jesus told them another parable about the need to

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pray always without becoming weary. There was in a city a judge who neither feared God nor had respect for anyone. In that city there was a widow who came to him and said: Give me justice against my opponent. For some time he refused. But then he said to himself: Although I fear not God, I do not have respect for anyone, because this widow molest, I will avenge her, because it is not continuously to annoy me. And the Lord added you Hear what the unjust judge says? And will not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night to Him? He will long to wait? "(Luke 18: 1-7).

Notice how, not unlike the preceding parable, the Lord not only condemns the insistence in prayer, but also ensures that God will fulfill those which cry day and night to Him Jesus has words of blame for the widow, but presents as a model of persistent and humble prayer, that the end get what he wants.

3 - In addition to the parables in the Gospels, there are examples of real life, where Jesus approves and hears the prayer made with trusting insistence. Let us recall a few:

a - The Canaanite woman (Matthew 15: 21-28).

Apparently ignored by the Lord, the good woman does not disarm: Jesus reiterates its request until the grants and, most importantly, has words of praise for her: "O woman, great is your faith! Let it be done as you wish "(Matthew 15, 28).

b - The two blind men of Jericho (Matthew 20, 29-34). "The crowd rebuked them because they be quiet, but they shouted louder, Lord, Son of David, have mercy

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of us. " And as in the case of the Canaanite, their insistent and trusting prayer reaches the heart of the Lord, which is the miracle of their healing.

SECONDOMANDA: It must be said to be contrary to the Bible prayer, in which you repeat the same words?

To this question the answer must be negative. In fact:

a - Reflecting on the biblical texts analyzed so far we can reasonably assume that it is the friend who the widow of the two parables repeated several times same thing: "Give me three loaves of bread." E: "I want justice account my opponent. " Likewise, the Canaanite woman and the two blind men of Jericho had to repeat incessantly the same request.

In none of these cases Jesus qualifies as a pagan the man or woman who prays saying the same words. To Instead, he praises their behavior and answers the their request.

b-But there is more. Jesus, model of all perfection Christian, to be imitated by his disciples (1 Corinthians 11: 1), in Gethsemane, "prayed saying the same words "(Mark 14, 39, Matthew 26, 44, Luke 22, 44).

He was charged way of praying to Jesus?

c - St. Paul also, the most faithful imitator of Christ tells us that "Three times I pleaded with the Lord, "always asking the same thing. And the Lord answered him not scolding him as pay, but to comfort him: "My grace is sufficient for you" (2 Corinthians 12: 8-9). After all, St. Paul "prayed always" (2 Thessalonians 1: 11; Philippians 1, 4, Romans 1,

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10 etc.). "Without ceasing" (Colossians 1, 3), and recommended strongly urge Christians to do the same:

"Pray without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5: 17). And

Ephesians: "Give thanks always for all

What in God the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ "(Ephesians 5: 20).

THIRD QUESTION: What about the prayers

long? They are condemned by the Bible?

Given that this third question a right use of

Bible imposes a negative response. In this regard, we two observations:

The first. Jesus prayed long, passing whole

nights in prayer. We read in Luke: "In those days Jesus went out into the mountain alone to pray and continued all night in prayer to God "(Luke 6, 1). And St Matthew informs us that Jesus, "dismissed the crowds, he went on only mountain to pray. When evening came, he was still there "(Matthew 14, 23). It was not an isolated case. The Gospels is no doubt that the linger long in the habit of prayer was Master (Mark 1: 35, John 6, 14-17 etc..).

The second. Significant is also the behavior of the Apostles. A measure that increased the number of believers and with this also the work, the Twelve were seen placed before a choice: to devote part of their time to charitable organizations, or giving other assistance, devote himself to prayer and preaching. The Twelve preferred to dedicate more time to prayer (Acts 6: 1-4).

Also from the book of Acts we learn that, while Peter was kept in prison "a prayer

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ferently to God for him by the Church "
(Acts 12: 5).

This brief survey on biblical prayer shows unequivocally how unscriptural attitude of those who condemn the way haughtily of Catholics to pray. Also shows how superficial and limited their knowledge of the Word of God Yet they always pretend to doctors in Sacred Scripture!

Unless your righteousness ... (Matthew 5: 20)

In light of the above it is possible to make the true meaning of Matthew 6, 5-9, that are abused the JWs.

1 - The text:

"When you pray, do not be like the hypocrites who love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the street corners to be seen by men. In I say to you, they have received their reward. But you, when you pray, go into your room and, shut the door and pray to your Father in secret: and Your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

Pray, do not babble like the pagans, they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Not be like them, for your Father knows what things ye have need of, before ye ask him " (Manco 6, 5-9).

2 - The explanation:

a - How little had warned earlier in the same Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5: 20), Jesus wants to teach them to pray that the justice of the His disciples must exceed that of the Pharisees and that the

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their spiritual and moral behavior must be different from that of the Gentiles (Matthew 5, 47).

With regard to the Pharisees, Jesus did not condemn them because repeating the same prayer, but for the their lack of justice in relationships with God, not cared so much honor to God, but their honor: they prayed to be seen by men. Sinned of formalism and vainglory. They were inwardly empty.

b - The pagans then, in their prayers, mistakenly believing to put pressure on the divinity, that is, to bend divine will to his will, by virtue of formulas repeated forever. They gave to their prayers a magic value. Lacked confidence and abandonment to God (see 1 Kings 18, 27). In them Jesus condemns the lack of submission to the divine will, not by the insistence in prayer or repeat the same question.

c - Not so must pray to the true disciples of Christ. The Master wants his true followers "worship God in spirit and truth "(John 4: 24), asking in prayer in the first place the sanctification of the name of God (1) and the advent of his Kingdom.

A difference then the pagans the true disciples of Christ always accompany their prayers, whether long or short, with the humble and courageous acceptance the will of God (Matthew 6: 10) and with the abandonment confident in his fatherly goodness.

1) To sanctify the name of God does not mean that we must repeat, much less that Yahweh Jehovah is holy. Sanctify

means separate, and name the same as nature. True disciples of Christ must ask that God is separate from the gods false and lying and is recognized and worshiped as unique and true God

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from the Evil One

(va messo sul disegno)



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