

## The Roman Catholic Church

### 1. Who Are They?

The Church which follows the Latin tradition underneath the Pope of Rome as well as the particular theology developed primarily in Europe since schism with the East

### 2. Where are they?

The traditional center of the Church has been in Rome with jurisdiction over Western Europe, Latin America, and large portions of Africa and Asia.

### 3. Do we share in Communion?

No, we have had a schism with the Roman Catholics since Chalcedon as with the Byzantines

### 4. What is the difference between “Catholic” and “Catholicism?”

The adjective “Catholic” means universal, meaning the Church may be anywhere and everywhere. “Catholicism” is particularly in reference to the Roman Church, whose Pope claims universal jurisdiction.

### 5. Fall of Rome/Barbarian Invasions (300-700 A.D.)-

The most powerful Christian center in the West and its empire fell to invasions and migrations of outside “Barbarian” peoples thereby destroying the cultural and governing infrastructure of Rome.

### 6. Holy Roman Empire-

Central European collection of Germanic states whose ruler was entrusted to defend the Catholic Faith. The first of whom was Charlemagne who coronated by Pope Leo III on Christmas Day, 800.

### 7. Medieval Scholasticism-

Philosophical method which sought to reconcile reason, particularly Aristotelian thought with Christian theology. Attempted to explain Sacramental mystery with logical methodology.

### 8. Augustine of Hippo-

Early Church Father typically named as most influential thinker in Roman Catholicism. His thoughts on Original Sin and Human nature and free will had lasting effects on the Latin Church though not as much in the Christian East (*Confessions, City of God*).

### 9. Thomas Aquinas-

Medieval philosopher who was one of the foremost thinkers of the Scholastic Tradition. He used Aristotelian thinking, that is the dialectical method to expound Christian Theology (*Summa Theologica*).

### 10. Liturgical Traditions-

Originally Sacraments in the West were performed in Latin exclusively until the 1970s (Second Vatican Council). Eucharist was practiced in the Latin rite in the presence of both statues and images.

### 11. Papacy/Structure-

The Pope in Rome is acknowledged as the universal head of the Church and the “Vicar of Christ.” Popes are elected by the College of Cardinals who represent large regional jurisdictions, themselves with lesser bishops. All clergy from Deacon to Pope are required to be celibate in most cases.

## 12. Doctrines

- a) **Filioque Clause**- Clause in the Nicene Creed which states the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father AND the Son
- b) **Purgatory**- "Place," which in Catholicism is where souls go to atone for their sins in order to attain to Heaven
- c) **Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary**- The belief that St. Mary was born without original sin
- d) **Papal Infallibility**- The belief that the Pope speaks the Faith of the Catholic Church when speaking from his Papal authority
- e) **Concept of "Original Sin"**- Humanity inherits not only the consequences of Adam's sin but also "original guilt." For this reason, it was incumbent, in Roman Catholic thinking that Mary be immaculately conceived so as to be free of said original guilt.

**13. Protestantism/Reformation**- As a "protest" against the growing corruption in the Roman Church as evidenced by indulgences and unclear doctrines, Martin Luther amongst others sought to reform the Church. However, the movement itself ended up creating many smaller separate Churches of various theological persuasions.