



The Catholic Crisis

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The Roman Catholic Church is in crisis. The image of the Catholic Church has been irrevocably damaged worldwide in the wake of sexual abuse scandals surrounding many of their clergy.

The ABC in Australia reported: "Nearly 2,000 Catholic Church figures, including priests, religious brothers and sisters and employees were identified as alleged perpetrators in a report released by the Royal Commission.." (ABC.net.au 7th Feb 2017)

In Ireland, The Ryan Commission conducted an investigation into Child abuse within the Catholic Church. The 2009 Ryan Report concluded: "The rape and abuse of children within the care of the Catholic Church was endemic." (The Conversation.com, Nov 19.2012)

The Catholic church in New York is seeking to raise a loan of \$100 million in 2017 to pay sexual abuse victims and Geoffrey Robertson QC writes, "the plain facts that are now emerging show that sexual abuse of children by priests in the Catholic Church has been at a level considerably above that in any other organization" (*The Case Of The Pope*, Penguin Books 2010).

Sadly there are dedicated and innocent nuns, priests and religious brothers serving the Church who are scandalized by the evils of their peers.

Some Catholics are walking away from the Church that they loved. Others remain, disgusted and disillusioned with a Church that has even dared to protect the perpetrators of sexual crimes. The Priesthood and Papacy are justifiably under fire.

My Story

I entered a Catholic world the day that I was born. Nuns delivered me at St Margaret's Hospital, Sydney. My family had been dedicated to the Church for generations. My family line included priests and my aunt has been a dedicated nun for more than 60 years.

My schooling was in the Catholic Education system run by the Mercy Sisters and then by the De La Salle Brothers until I finally left school.

Growing up in the Catholic Church was a pleasant experience for me. I saw many good

works undertaken in the name of Christ by those committed to the Catholic Faith. Relatives were involved with St Vincent De Paul Society and other organizations. My mother taught Catholic Scripture in schools for 25 years. I enjoyed going to Mass regularly and in my late teens I was involved in Catholic Youth group activities; I even considered becoming a priest.



I am thankful that the Catholic Church taught the basic tenants of Christianity; that God was my Creator; that He was three persons, yet one God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. I learned that the Bible was God's Word and that Jesus was God who came to earth to die on a cross and rise from the grave.

I left school as a committed Catholic and decided to travel overseas. I visited important Roman Catholic places of pilgrimage including Rome. A highlight was to attend St Peter's Square and hear Pope John Paul II give his weekly address.

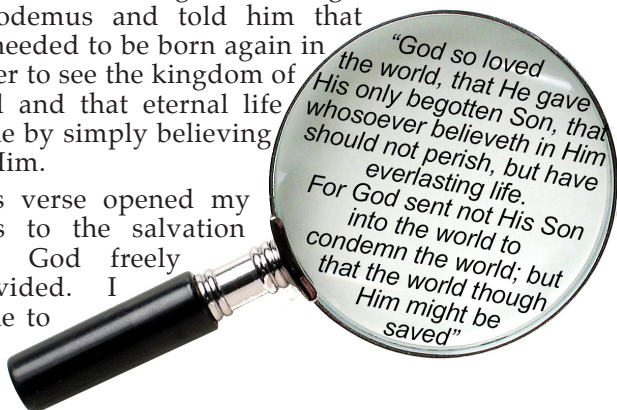
As I looked at the Pope standing at his window addressing the crowds I truly believed he was the Vicar of Christ and that he was Christ's one true representative on earth in Apostolic Succession from Peter. I counted it a privilege to visit the sacred headquarters of my faith.

As a Roman Catholic I had no idea that I was involved in a system that had strayed far from the original Church that Christ had established.

One night after returning from overseas my whole life began to change. I visited a church of another denomination where I was shown a verse from the Bible in John's Gospel ch.3 verses 16.

Jesus was talking to a religious Jew called Nicodemus and told him that he needed to be born again in order to see the kingdom of God and that eternal life came by simply believing in Him.

This verse opened my eyes to the salvation that God freely provided. I came to



"God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved"

understand that God offers eternal life to all who simply trust Christ's **one sacrifice** on the cross for their sins. My salvation did not depend on church sacraments or good works but on Christ alone.

Subsequently as I studied the Bible, I discovered that much of the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church contradicted the plain statements of the Holy Scriptures. I learned that Christ's sacrifice on the cross for the sins of the world was **a one-time event and could never be repeated** and that earthly priests could never take away the sins of their people. I read:

*"And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: But this man (Christ), after he had offered **one sacrifice for sins for ever**, sat down on the right hand of God"* (Heb 10:11-12).

It was a real shock to me that I had grown up in a false religious system that had a priesthood and a papacy that claimed it could repeat the sacrifice of Christ in every Mass. To my family's great disappointment I was convicted from the Scriptures that I needed to leave the Church that I had loved.

The Apostle Paul also discovered that good works and religious traditions could not contribute anything to his salvation (Phil.3:1-14). He found that he had to trust Christ alone in order to have eternal life. Paul made a decision to depart from the faith of his fathers and trust in Christ. He said:

"What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ" (Phil.3:7).

Many God-fearing Catholic priests and nuns over the centuries have discovered that the Roman Catholic Church is not the same as the original Church that Christ established and have left the Church. The book, *Far from Rome near to God* has the story of 50 converted Catholic priests.

Jesus warned about deception and the book of Revelation speaks about a false religious system based in the city of Rome that will be judged in the last days. The Lord calls upon those within the system who truly believe in Christ to leave.

"Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues" (Rev.18:4).

As a former Catholic I have a great love for Catholic people and desire that they know the truth of God's Word; their eternal welfare is at stake. Catholics must be warned of the unbiblical false religious system that has developed over the centuries replacing God's Word with the traditions of men. The Bible warned us:

*"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after **the tradition of men**, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ"*(Col.2:8).

Historical Background

Even in the time of the Apostles false teachers had entered the Church and influenced many with heresies that denied the finished work of Christ (2 Peter 2:1).

In the fourth Century, paganism infiltrated the Church after Constantine issued the Edict of Milan (AD313) in which he granted toleration to the Christian religion. Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire by AD381 and was the foundation of the Roman Catholic Church.

A study of Church history will show that the Church which dominated the hearts of men with "works" theology for nearly 1000 years from AD600 to 1517 was the Roman Catholic Church.

Many priests have tried to reform the Church:

John Wycliff was born in 1320 and became a Priest in the Roman Catholic Church. He rejected Transubstantiation and other false doctrines. He initiated translation of the Bible into English. In 1428 Pope Martin V ordered his body be exhumed, his bones, burned and ashes cast into the River Swift.

Savonarola was born in Italy in 1452 and as a Catholic Priest made a huge impact on the city of Florence. He denounced the corruption of the clergy and immorality in the Church and was eventually imprisoned, suffered the torture of the rack; he was hung and burnt at the stake in 1492.

William Tyndale was born in England in 1492. He wanted the common man to have the Bible in his own language. Tyndale was imprisoned for over a year before being choked to death and burned.



1536 Tyndale Strangled and Burned

Martin Luther was born in 1483 and became an Augustinian Monk. One day, in his study of the book of Romans, he came across the truth that "*the just shall live by faith*"(Rom.1:17). He challenged the selling of indulgences when Tetzel was sent by the Pope offering forgiveness for sins on payment of money for the rebuilding of St Peters in Rome and became a leader of the Protestant Reformation in Europe in 1517.

The Catholic Church ruled Europe through the "Holy Roman Empire" for the thousand years from AD800 to 1806 and spilt the blood of multitudes who believed the Bible and rejected tradition.

It is a fact of history that the Catholic Church destroyed multitudes who stood against her heresies which she continues to promote today. Louis XIV (1685) claimed he reduced the French Huguenot population of 800,000 to 900,000 individuals to less than 1,500. The Waldensees in France and Switzerland were slaughtered by the Pope's armies.

Man's Traditions versus God's Truth

The Catholic Church has instituted *Seven Sacraments*. The Bible does not mentioned any sacraments yet the Catholic Church teaches that they:

"are necessary for salvation because they confer sacramental grace, forgiveness of sins, adoption as children of God, conformation to Christ the Lord and membership in the Church" (*Compendium 2005 - Summary of the Catholic Catechism* page 83).

The statement above is entirely false. The Bible teaches that salvation is by **personal faith in Christ alone**. Christ is the only one that can provide salvation. Salvation is never found in any sacrament of the church or any religious ceremony. Salvation is "*not of works*" but all of God's grace; it is a **free gift** for all who personally receive Christ as their Saviour (Eph.2:8-9).

Other churches besides Catholic, including some Orthodox and Protestant, teach that salvation is provided by church ordinances and sacraments. They too are in serious error. The Bible states:

"By grace (undeserved favour) are you saved

*through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: **Not of works**, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works" (Eph.2:8-10).*

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us" (Titus 3:5-7).

The Christian does good works **because he is saved** by God's grace and **not in order to get saved**. The Pharisees in Jesus day made the same mistake and Jesus warned:

*"This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for **doctrines the commandments of men**...And he said unto them, Full well **ye reject the commandment of God**, that ye may keep your own tradition" (Mark 7:6-9).*

Many traditions of the church have become doctrines that have been **added** to the Word of God centuries after the Bible was completed.

- In 1854, Pope Pius IX established as dogma the immaculate conception of Mary.
- At the Council of Ephesus AD431 Mary, the mother of Jesus, was given the title, "Mother of God".
- The doctrine of Purgatory was first established by Gregory the Great in AD593 and proclaimed as dogma at the Council of Florence 1439.
- The Rosary was introduced by Peter the Hermit, in the year 1090. Copied from Hindus and Mohammedans.
- The sale of Indulgences, ie. a purchase of forgiveness for sins which began in 1190.
- In the year 1870 Pope Pius IX proclaimed the dogma of Papal Infallibility.
- In the year 1950 Pope Pius XII, proclaimed the doctrine of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary.

Furthermore some doctrines such as eating fish on Fridays, the use of Latin, and the doctrine of Limbo have been changed by subsequent Popes. These and many more are man-made traditions that cannot be found in God's Word.

Baptism of infants

Church history records that it was not until the third century that the practice of baptising infants

began yet Pope Francis teaches that baptism in the Catholic Church makes a person a child of God. Pope Francis writes in regard to baptism:



“It makes us members of the Body of Christ and of the people of God... baptism passes faith to our children.” (*The Sacraments of Grace*, Catholic Truth Society 2014).

This doctrine is not in the Bible and is contrary to it. It is sad to see that the Pope, who is the “Spiritual Father” of 1.2 billion followers, is ignorant of Biblical baptism and salvation. No one is in heaven because of their baptism. The teaching of Baptismal-regeneration gives false hope and robs people of the truth of the Gospel and salvation in Christ alone.

Not one baby was baptized in the Bible. Infant baptism wasn’t practiced until the third century. If the Pope is relying on his own baptism for eternal life then he along with many of his followers have not understood God’s way of salvation.

Scriptural baptism is by immersion, not sprinkling, and is always **after** the Gospel is preached and believed. Jesus told his followers to make disciples, baptizing them as a testimony to conversion. It is the disciples of Christ that are to be baptized; babies do not have the capacity to be discipled nor to understand the meaning of immersion. (Matt.28:19; Acts 8:12, 36-39; 10:47-48, Rom.6:1-5).

The Roman Catholic Church once taught that unbaptized babies could end up in Limbo. Limbo was said to be a place where infants were **excluded from heaven**. The false doctrine of Limbo has caused great grief to multitudes of mothers who have never had their babies baptized prior to their infant’s death.

Limbo doesn’t exist according to the former Pope Benedict. Benedict has come out against the teachings of his own church in regards to Limbo. In 2007 Benedict authorized the publication of a 41 page document called, “*The Hope of Salvation for Infants Who die without Being Baptized*”. The very fact that Catholic doctrine can change to

suit the mood of the day is a sure indicator that the traditions of the Catholic Church are not the Truth of God's Word. God's Word never changes.

The Tragedy of the Mass

As a Catholic I was taught that every priest had the power to turn the bread and wine at the Mass into the literal body and blood of Christ (transubstantiation).

The Catechism of the Catholic Church says:

"The Eucharist is the very sacrifice of the body and blood of the Lord Jesus... He is present in a true, real and substantial way, with his body and his blood, with his soul and his divinity". (See *Compendium of the Catechism*, St Paul's Publications, 2005, pages 95 and 97).

Participating in the Mass was essential to my faith and to miss Mass on a Sunday was a mortal sin which they said could send me to hell.

Church history shows that the Mass was unknown in the early Church and for centuries after. Neither Peter, Paul, John, Timothy, nor any other disciple ever became a priest that celebrated the Mass. The priestly system in the church was added long after Christ.

When Paul writes about the Lord's Supper in his First Epistle to the Corinthians he never refers to it as a sacrifice of the Mass. (See 1 Cor.11:23-26). Biblical Communion was always a **memorial** of what Jesus Christ has done in shedding his blood for our sins. It reminds us of His once-for-all sacrifice until He returns.

According to Catholic teaching the Communion Host in the Mass is to be worshipped as God. This is a grave error. The sincere Roman Catholic is turned by their priests, who claim to represent God, to idolatry. They are turned from the true sacrifice of Christ to a false sacrifice that can never, ever remove their sins.

When I became a Christian the Scriptures revealed to me that it was impossible for my sins to be taken away through any sacrifice apart from Christ's. His one sacrifice atoned for my sin.

"For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: Nor yet that he should offer himself

often...but now ONCE in the end of the age hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself (Heb.9:24-26).

Idolatry

*"Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt **not make unto thee any graven image**, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. **Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them**" (Exodus 20:3-5).*

Wherever the Catholic Church establishes a church, school, monastery, convent or mission work she introduces idolatry. The Church sanctions the use of statues of Mary, Joseph and Jesus as well as statues of many "saints". It is common to see parishioners kneeling before statues and praying. Apart from the statues, the Mass itself is an act of idolatry as worshippers bow before the host in an act of worship. Bowing before an image is idolatry in God's eyes and it is expressly forbidden in the Scriptures.

The Bible warns against idolatry, Deut.4:16-18; 7:25-26, Isaiah 31:7; 44:6-20; 45:20; 46:6-7; Jer.10.2-5, 51.17-18, Dan.5:23; Hab.2.18-19; Psa.115:4-8; Rom.1:22-23; Col.3:5; 1 John 5:21; Rev.9:20-21.



Every Easter a Monstrance is placed on the altar in Catholic Churches for people to adore. A Monstrance is a vessel shaped like the sun and within its center is placed a communion host for Roman Catholics to venerate. Catholics kneel before this golden sun believing that in the center of the sun, is the body of Jesus in the communion host. Satan has corrupted the truth of the Gospel and even has an idolatrous sun image for

Catholics to venerate at the time they celebrate the death and resurrection of Christ.

The Christian faith from its very beginnings was in opposition to idolatry. In Acts 19 we read that Paul preached in Ephesus over a period of two years and his preaching had an effect on the whole of Asia. Many turned from lifeless idols to

the living God. The Thessalonian Christians
“turned to God from idols to serve the living and
true God” (1Thess.1:9).

When I trusted Christ for salvation I could no
longer kneel before the idolatrous host held up
by the Priest nor could I bow before other images.

Mary and the Saints

*“And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord,
And my spirit hath rejoiced in **God my Saviour**”
(Luke 1:46-47).*

The Catholic Church has distorted the truth
about Mary for centuries and continues to do so
today. Australian Catholic Archbishop, Anthony
Fisher says

“Christians have been praying to her for 2,000
years...Mary loves you with a mother’s heart
and is always ready to listen to you and help
you” (*The Catholic Weekly*, 4 June 2017).

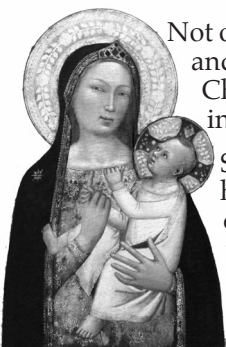
Unfortunately the whole Catholic system
promotes a misplaced devotion to and adoration
of Mary and the Saints. Catholics are encouraged
to pray to Mary and the Saints, but it is abundantly
clear from the Scriptures that only God can
answer prayers. **Communicating with the dead
is necromancy** which is listed with witchcraft
and strictly forbidden (Deut.18:11). Prayers can
only be offered to God through Christ

*“For there is one God, and ONE MEDIATOR
between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who
gave himself a ransom for all” (1Tim.2:5).*

Mary, never had any miraculous powers on
earth, neither does she use them from Heaven
now. False teachings promoted by Rome have
led multitudes to worship Mary. People bow
before her statue throughout the world.

Not one scripture exalts Mary to the status
and honor given to her by the Catholic
Church, in fact Mary is never heard of
in the Bible after Acts 1:14.

Supposed apparitions of Mary
have occurred in parts of the world
causing people to flock to shrines
where she is worshipped. Wherever
she has “appeared” you will find
people praying to her and given
over to idolatry.



Mary is called, *The Queen of Heaven*, in Catholic Church doctrine yet the New Testament never refers to her as such. The only reference to *The Queen of Heaven* in the Bible is found in the book of Jeremiah where "*the Queen of Heaven*" is a heathen goddess (Jer.7:18; 44:16-17).

Soon after becoming a Christian I discovered that my devotion and prayers to Mary were sinful. The Roman Catholic Mary in whom I had trusted was not just the humble "*handmaid of the Lord*".

The Church Can't Save So How Can I be Saved?

God wants to save us and that's why He sent Christ to bear our sins on the cross.

My salvation is a personal relationship between me and God. I don't need a priest. If I realise I am a sinner in need of salvation I must come to God and receive **the free gift** of eternal life that He offers me. One man in the Bible prayed, "*God be merciful to me, a sinner*" and Jesus said he went away justified before God (Luke 18:13).

Just leaving the Catholic Church will not save you. Once you realise you have been deceived you need to take positive steps **to know Christ personally as your Saviour and Lord**. He promises:

"Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Rom.10:13).

*"As many as **received him**, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name"* (John 1:12).

*"He that believeth on him is **not condemned**: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God"* (John 3:17).

Salvation is a **free gift** from God but you must receive it by faith and then you can live for Christ daily; read your Bible and pray about all your needs; seek God's guidance about your future and find a company of Bible-believing Christians with whom you can fellowship.

You may contact Vince Wall for a free copy of the 98-page book, *Tradition or Truth* which has helped a number of Catholics to understand the truth of the Gospel and assurance of salvation. Vince Wall PO Box 4216 Marayong NSW 2148