



WINNOWING FAN

The Spiritual Life according to the Fathers and Saints of the Catholic Church in preparation for Christ's Second Coming.

Vol. XXXIII No. 1 ENGLISH EDITION Jan. 2016

WHO IS A CATHOLIC?

From the beginning of the history of the Catholic Church, it was very clear who was a member of the true Church of Christ. Through the four visible signs mentioned in the Nicene Creed. I believe in One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church.

These are the four visible signs of a community that is Catholic. Of course, each member of the Church must also show these signs but the signs are not all present when we consider individuals instead of the whole community. These signs are signs of a community instead of an individual. But if we know the visible signs of an entire community, each individual must, also, show these visible signs but not all four of them. Maybe as individuals they may show one or two of the visible signs.

These four visible signs mentioned in the Nicene Creed are

the only visible signs by which the true Church of Christ can be recognized. These very signs, also shows the difference between the true Church of Christ and other sects or religions. There is no other way by which a Catholic can be known and differentiated from others.

While these signs were very clear from the beginning of the history of the Church up to the address of Pope John XXIII on November 13, 1960 at the Mass in the Byzantine-Slav Rite..... after that all the visible signs of the true Church became unclear including the explanation of the classical four visible signs enumerated in the Nicene Creed as quoted by the Encyclical 'Lumen Gentium.' Suddenly the description of the true Church of Christ became similar to the description of all Protestant churches. Suddenly there is no difference between the Catholic Church and other religions.

Today, it has become impossible to identify the true Church. All Churches, today, look like the true Church except the Catholic Church.

Fortunately the writings of a Doctor of the Church, St. Robert Bellarmine were still extant where he developed the explanation of the four visible signs of the true Church described in the Nicene Creed and these same four visible signs expanded into 15 Marks of the true Church were re-introduced into the Catholic Church to her great astonishment. In that most Catholics discovered that they were not Catholics. Suddenly it became very clear again which is the true Church of Christ and how that Church could easily be differentiated from other sects and religions.

ST. ROBERT BELLARMINE'S STYLE.

In explaining the four visible marks of the Catholic Church which is recited in the Creed, St. Robert meticulously explained the meaning of the specific signs described in Divine Revelation. But at the same time he would enumerate the false signs the Protestants claim to be, also, a visible sign of the Church. Bellarmine proved that the Protestants signs, though found in Scriptures, were not considered as

signs of the true Church by Scriptures, like having the Bible memorized.

So in effect, St. Bellarmine placed on one side the proofs of Scripture and the Fathers of the Church. And on the other side he placed what the Protestants claimed to be the sign of the Church. Then he proved why one is a legitimate sign of the Church while the other was not.

The big trouble today is that when Catholics claim that they are Catholics, they mention signs which are not the official signs of the true Church, like having a Baptismal certificate. The only sign by which a Catholic can prove that he is a Catholic are; one, holy, Catholic and apostolic.....the signs found in the Nicene Creed and expanded by St. Robert Bellarmine.

Though there are other ways of proving one is a Catholic, these other proofs are supernatural and are not available to all.

Our condition is most noble, being so beloved of the most high God that he was willing to die for our sake, which he would not have done if man had not been a most noble creature and of great worth.

Blessed Angela of Foligno

This publication is owned and copyrighted by **S of G Foundation, Inc.**

Not for sale

The *Winnowing Fan* hopes "...to do what little it could to solve the evils that beset the Church."

St. Teresa of Avila

Entered as Second Class Mail at the Makati Central Post Office on March 14, 1984
Permit # 2nd-07-15-NCR



ST. ROBERT BELLARMINES KNOWLEDGE.

St. Robert Bellarmine had the intellectual advantage of knowing both the Catholic truths and the heresies of the Protestants. He could use both side by side in proving which is the true Church and which is not.

We do not have that advantage. We do not have a perfect knowledge of our Catholic Doctrines and we do not have an inkling what are the Protestant teachings. And so we live in an era where Catholics cannot distinguish between Catholic and non-Catholic teachings.

THE GREAT CONTROVERSY

During the time of St. Robert Bellarmine, the controversy on which is the true Church was of the greatest importance. It is, also, very important for us today. Why?

When Gilbert Chesterton was asked why he became a Catholic, his answer was that; the forgiveness of sin is most convincing in the Catholic Church. In other religions what they do for the forgiveness of sins is not convincing.

When you repent according to the teachings of the Catholic Church you will be convincingly certain that your sins are, indeed, forgiven. When you try to have your sins forgiven any other way a bad taste is left in your mouth that those sins are not forgiven at all.

Peace of conscience can only be attained in the Catholic Church. So, in turn, eternal salvation can only be attained within the Catholic Church.

ALL ARE CLAIMING THAT THEIR CHURCH IS THE TRUE CHURCH.

If Catholics claim that theirs is the true Church and others claim that their respective churches are completely different churches then we shall have no problem.

The problem is that all Churches are claiming that their church is the true Church that the true God had established. Of course that is impossible. How can God establish contradicting churches? And so, the process of finding out which is the Church established by God becomes difficult if not impossible.

In finding out which is the true religion or the true Church most people do not even know where to

begin. Finding the effort difficult many are content just to remain in the church of their birth. Unfortunately, this is not a valid excuse in the eyes of the true God.

God had given His Church visible signs by which all men can recognize her. All men are obliged to exert effort to find her and enter her.....under pain of condemnation.

ALL CLAIM THAT EVERYBODY ELSE IS OUTSIDE THE CHURCH.

The cause of the confusion is that everybody claims that theirs is the true Church and that everybody else is outside the true Church. And everybody is confident in what they believe. And everybody sounds like they are right.

So, which is the true Church had become a 'great controversy,' and will always become a great controversy up to the end of the world. And it is important that we be on the right side of the controversy.

So we must know two things; what are the marks proposed by the heretics and refute them. And what are the marks according to the

teaching of the Church, then explain and defend them.

HOW THE HERETICS CHOOSE THE MARKS OF THE CHURCH.

Those outside the true Church may be divided into two; the pagans who do not believe in Jesus Christ. And the Protestants who quote Jesus Christ.

The pagans believe in God but quite a different god. While the Protestants believe both in God and Jesus Christ, though their concept of Faith is defective. Though most Catholics, too, have a defective concept of the Act of Faith.

When the pagans present the signs why their religion is the true religion, the signs usually violate sound philosophy and theology.

When Protestants present the signs showing their church is the true Church they usually quote from Scriptures. And their signs are, indeed, in Scriptures. Except that they are not signs meant by Christ to signify the true Church. As St. Robert Bellarmine wrote; the Protestant heretics are careful to quote signs that are not truly signs of the true Church because they are certain they will not have them.



For questions or inquiries, pls. write:
Caryana Lay Monastic Community
168 Monastery Road
Barrio San Isidro, Magalang
2011 PAMPANGA, Philippines

Or visit our website:
<http://www.winnowingfan.net/>