

#### ***4. It produces the best artists and inspires the best art.***

One cannot look at the great Medieval cathedrals of Europe, their stained glass or Renaissance masterpieces depicting the life of Christ or lives of the Saints without being moved by their overwhelming, awe-inspiring, beauty.

It is the Catholic Church who inspired, commissioned and produced these artists or works.

This fact has often been used against the Church with claims that it hoards these wonderful treasures. However, the Church is actually the steward of these works of art. Many cathedrals contain pieces worthy of the finest museums and galleries, yet no church charges admission to enjoy these treasures.

- Some examples of the many great artists who identified with the Church include:

**Michelangelo**, painter of the *Sistine Chapel* and sculptor of *David* and *Moses*.

**Blessed Fra Angelico**, Dominican friar who is a patron Saint of Catholic artists.

*The Catholic Church has also helped produce other works of art. For example:*

**Caryll Houselander**, profound English spiritual and devotional writer.

**G.K. Chesterton**, prolific journalist, essayist and mystery writer

**J.R.R. Tolkien**, author of world renowned fantasy novel, *The Hobbit*, and *Lord of the Rings* series

**Flannery O’Conner**, one of the foremost writers of Southern American Literature.

- *Did you know?*

There is a Catholic Artists Society, which was established in 2009.

#### ***5. It is truly “catholic”.***

Though the titles “Roman Catholic” or “Catholic” were used more after the Protestant Reformation, the adjective “catholic,” which means universal, has been used to describe the Church since its inception. We see this in the letter of **St. Ignatius of Antioch** to the Ephesians, written all the way back in **107 AD**. He said. “wheresoever Christ is, there is the Catholic Church.”

As Jesus ascended to heaven, He told His Apostles to “make disciples of **all** nations” (*Mat. 28:19*). St. Paul writes in *Gal. 3:28* that “**all** are one in Christ Jesus”. This means that to be a Christian is not to be simply part of a nationalistic or common interest group, but to be one of many parts in “one body” (*1 Cor. 12:12*).

**Only** in the Catholic Church is this idea of “catholicity” realized.

**Only** in the Catholic Church are there members from six continents, all worshipping the same God and believing the same thing.

**Only** in the Catholic Church can bishops from Algeria, China, Canada, France, India, Mexico and the United States meet and discuss, and then agree, on matters of faith generation *after* generation.

Finally, consider the fact that the past four Popes, *elected* leaders of the Church, have come from four different countries (John Paul I, Italy; John Paul II, Poland; Benedict XVI, Germany; Francis, Argentina).

# 5

## ***(more) Good Reasons to stay in, or join, the Catholic Church***



*A continuation of the original  
“5 Good Reasons...” pamphlet*

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## 1. It is unified.

In one of the last prayers Jesus said before His arrest and crucifixion, He asked that the Church “be **one**” like He and His Father (*John 17:21*).

The Roman Catholic Church is actually the **longest surviving unified faith**, even Judaism was split into three groups by the time of Jesus (the Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes).

When Jesus gave Peter the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven, **He founded His “church”** on the rock, not “churches” (*Matthew 16:18*).

A common image for the Church in the Bible is the **Bride of Christ** (*2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:23*). Jesus told us God’s intention for marriage is **one** man and **one** woman (*Gen. 2:24; Mat 19:5*).

Why would God’s principle not apply when it came to His Son’s own Bride?

The idea of multiple, scattered churches is not only unbiblical, but completely impractical.

Today, there are approximately **20,000** different Protestant denominations, different “churches,” and this number continues to grow.

## 2. It has upheld its moral standards.

Even if one disagrees with the morality of the Catholic Church, one cannot deny that the Church has upheld its beliefs on morality since its inception.

**For example:**

**Male Priesthood:** Always part of Christianity, this was upheld by Popes John Paul II, Benedict XVI and Francis, and is a “closed matter”.

**Homosexual activity:** Unquestionably denounced in the Bible, the Catechism describes them as “acts of grave depravity”

**Slavery:** It was Catholic Franciscan monks and priests who stood against the mistreatment of indigenous peoples in America.

**Contraception:** Early Christians spoke against contraception. This was reaffirmed by Pope Paul VI in *Humane Vitae* (1968).

**Abortion:** The Old & New Testaments have always believed that life begins before birth.

This is not meant to *prove* that the Church is correct, but only to show that the Church’s morality is consistent across time and culture. If something is wrong, it’s wrong 10,000 years ago, wrong today and will be wrong 10,000 years from now.

**Did you know?**

*A number of Catholic bishops, priests and other religious spoke out against the Nazi regime and were killed for it, including:*

- *Sts. Maximilian Kolbe & Edith Stein*
- *Bld. Titus Brandsma*

*Also, Pope Pius XII, in spite of enormous pressure from the fascist Italian government, protected and saved thousands of Jewish people from the Nazis.*

## 3. It turns sinners into Saints

**St. Peter** went from being the model for anger (he attacked the servant of Caiaphas) and cowardice (he denied even knowing Jesus) to powerfully preaching and dying for the Gospel in the face of the hostile Roman Empire.

**St. Paul** went from “breathing murderous threats” against Christians to being the foremost missionary of the early Church and writing much of the New Testament.

**St. Monica** struggled with alcohol in her youth and her son, **St. Augustine**, struggled with lust, fathering a baby out of wedlock.

**St. Mary of Egypt** lived a life of prostitution until a conversion led her to a life of asceticism.

**St. John of God** became addicted to alcohol in his life as a soldier. After a dramatic conversion, he worked to improve healthcare for the poor and mentally ill in 16th Cent. Spain.

**St. Mark Ji Tianxiang** developed an addiction to opium. He also stayed faithful to the point of martyrdom in the “Boxer Rebellion.”

**Ven. Matt Talbot** helped battle his alcoholism with prayer and daily Mass, also becoming a Third Order Franciscan.