

4. “Tradition” supports the Church AND the Bible...

“Tradition” acts as one leg of the “*three legged stool*” of Church authority, with the other two being the Bible and the Church Magisterium.

These three legs all support each other when various challenges are made to any one.

When one or two of these legs are removed, the stool topples and no claim to authority can be made and spiritual **anarchy**, or **dictatorship**, ensues. This leads to a loss of religion altogether.

Consider: If you were walking in the woods or about to receive surgery, you would listen to the authority of an expert (a guide or a doctor).

The Church is your **spiritual guide and doctor**, as it leads you to the right thing to do and heals you when you do the wrong thing.

5. “Tradition” is rich

“Tradition” of the Catholic Church enriches the world’s beauty.

It is “Tradition” that has helped produce cultural and spiritual treasures such as:

Gregorian Chant: Viewed as the basis of all western music, this was developed by Pope Gregory I as a means of worship in Mass.

The Pieta (*see picture on front page*): This famous sculpture by Michelangelo depicts Mary holding her Son after He has been taken down from the cross, a scene nowhere described in the Bible.

The painting *The Assumption of Mary*: Considered a masterpiece of Renaissance art, this painting wouldn’t have happened without this “Tradition”.

These masterpieces of culture **would not exist** without the “Tradition” of the Catholic Church.



“Hold fast to the traditions that you were taught...”
—2 Thess. 2:15

5 Things to
know about
the Tradition
of the
Catholic Church

1. There is “tradition” and “Tradition”...

An unfortunate misunderstanding is that Catholic “Tradition” is the same thing as “traditions” that are done by many Catholic Churches or families. This is not the case and to identify one with the other causes many to have a false understanding about Catholics and the Church. Both “Tradition” and “tradition” are **good things**, but not the **same thing**.

Tradition: Beliefs about Jesus of the Catholic Church based on the Scriptures, interpreted and preached by the Apostles.

examples: The Holy Trinity, The Immaculate Conception of Mary, the Assumption of Mary, All Saints Day, guardian angels, etc.

tradition: General acts of devotion or celebration associated with the Catholic faith, but not necessary to identify as Catholic.

examples: putting out shoes on St. Nicholas Day, Advent calendars, Mardi Gras, etc.

From your friends at the Church of the Crucifixion
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2. “Tradition” is biblical...

While some might say that the Bible condemns “tradition” in **Mark 7:8**, this is a clear misunderstanding of the meaning of the passage (this is an unfortunate consequence when one rejects the importance of “Tradition”).

This verse only condemned traditions that tried to undermine God’s law, which the Church’s “Tradition” seeks to uphold.

It is actually the very same Bible that emphasizes the need for Tradition in Christianity. For example:

John 21:25: This Gospel describes how there were teaching of Jesus that were not include in the Bible.

2 Thess. 2:15: Christians are told to “hold fast” to the traditions they were taught by speaking and writing.

2 Tim. 4: St. Paul tells his follower to preach the Gospel, yet the Bible had not yet been written.

- In fact, it is because of the work of the Church, the author of “Tradition,” that the world even has a Bible. See below:

100 AD: The last Apostle (John) dies. Revelation is closed.

325: Church council of Nicaea officially lists beliefs of Christianity before official Bible was put together.

397: Church council of Carthage is the first to present an official list of books in the Bible.

3. “Tradition” is the living voice of the Church...

As discussed in item 1, “Tradition” is not a list of strange practices we just do or believe for no reason. It is a way for the Church to **better understand the present**, using expert voices of the past.

The term “living voice” doesn’t mean that the Church constantly changes its beliefs, but that it can maintain its beliefs in the face of constantly changing times. It is this consistency that allows for one to hope in Christ and His Church at all.

Tradition is a way the Church can stay true to its **Apostolic roots** while still applying to later and later generations.

It is the way the Church can be **universal**, or “*all things to all people*” as it says in *1 Cor. 9:22*.

Often times when “new” beliefs are introduced about Jesus, they are really just repackaged unorthodox beliefs from 500+ years ago.

Tradition is how the Church determines how to best respond to the modern challenges.