

Where does Catholic teaching come from?

All Catholic teaching comes down to us from Jesus Himself who is the fullness of God's revelation. He is the Word of God in the Flesh and He is risen and alive in the one Church He founded on Peter, the Rock.

Guided by the Holy Spirit and discerned, guaranteed and interpreted by the Holy Magisterium of the successors of the apostles, Jesus alive among us brings us His one complete and unchanging deposit of faith by three main channels. These are; (1.) **The Bible**, (2.) **The Living Apostolic Tradition** and (3.) **Creation itself**.

**Holy Scripture:** The Bible is the primary written record of Catholic teaching. Nothing in Church teaching can be contrary to Holy Scripture. Scripture is a Church document and Church cannot contradict itself. While everything necessary for personal salvation may be found in the Bible, many helpful teachings of Jesus come only through Holy Tradition.

**Apostolic Tradition:** The, "Tradition," is always spelled with a capital "T" to distinguish it from ordinary traditions. This is the living memory of the Church preserved by our successive bishops from apostolic times down to the present. Tradition is the source from which the New Testament was written a few years after the beginnings of Christianity. Apostolic Tradition includes (1) the apostle's recollections of the words and instructions of Jesus, (2) understandings given to the apostles by the Holy Spirit after Pentecost, (3) new insights into the Old Testament, and (4) living Jewish Tradition as continued into Christianity, (for example, prayer for the dead). All new revelation ended with the death of the last apostle.

**Creation:** Because we have an intellect and a soul, mankind has the natural ability to know there is a God and know basic right from wrong. Jesus and the Holy Spirit alive in the Magisterium may point out such natural law through Catholic teaching.

**Practical Derived Documents of the Magisterium:** These all must have their source in the above. They include things like the official *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, *Creeds*, *Ecumenical Council Documents*, *Ex-Cathedra Proclamations of the Popes*, *Doctrines of the Ordinary Magisterium*, *Liturgy*, *Canon Law*, and *certain writings of Church Doctors and Early Church Fathers*. It is seriously sinful to knowingly and deliberately reject the teachings of Jesus alive in His Church.