



WINNOWING FAN

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

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FAITH AND THE FOUR VISIBLE SIGNS OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

It is important for us to know if we have Faith or not. Faith is the guarantee of our salvation. If we have Faith we shall surely merit heaven. How can we know if we have Faith? Because Faith is a supernatural virtue, it is impossible to know if we have it until we actually have it. Only those with the supernatural virtue of Faith can know that they have Faith. What is the other way of knowing if we have Faith or not. Through the four visible signs that is recited in the Nicene creed during Mass. We say: we believe in One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. These are four visible signs that everybody knows and which everybody can use to detect if we or somebody else is a Catholic or not.

Since Faith, like Hope and Charity are supernatural virtues a person cannot know if he has it or

not unless he, already, has them. If a person has Faith, he will surely know he has it. The very gift tells him that he has it. It is enough to have Faith to have Hope and Charity. Because Faith without Charity is dead. That is like having no Faith at all. So Charity is a better gauge that one has Faith than if one only has Faith.

Because the theological virtues are supernatural and spiritual realities only those who are spiritual can know them. And as we have mentioned, if we have Charity we surely have Faith, also.

But it is possible to have the beginnings of Faith; in which case Charity has to be develop yet. So it is possible to have Faith at its beginning but without Charity yet. The demarcation line is difficult to find. In which case if we wish to find out if we are Catholic or not then we

should attend to the 4 visible signs enumerated in the Nicene Creed; One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic. These are visible signs. We can know these signs and other people can know these signs. Even pagans can know these signs. In fact, this is the way every man can know which is the true Church that Christ established and, thus, be able to enter her. This is the obligation of all men; to find out which is the true religion and enter that true religion if he must be saved. So it was fair for God to see to it that the signs of which is the true church are visible to all men.

And so the easier way to find out if we are Catholic or not is simply to know the four visible signs of the Church. If we have them we are Catholic; if not we are not Catholic. It, also, applies to others. If others have them, they are Catholic. If not, then, they are not Catholic.

THE PROPER ORDER IN STUDYING THE FOUR SIGNS.

It is good to be logical in studying the four visible signs of the Catholic Church. To do so let us begin with the sign APOSTOLIC. This means that all the truths we believe must come from the teachings of the Apostles. Another way of saying it is that all the truths that we believe

must come from the Gospels and the Epistles. With St. John, all Divine Revelation stopped, i.e. after St. John, God did not reveal any more truths needed for the salvation of our souls. Everything the Church will learn now is "development from previous Doctrines" that are found in the Gospels and the Epistles. An example of this development is the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception.

The truth about the Immaculate Conception was in the truth that Mary was full of grace. But before, we did not describe her as Immaculate Conception but simply as "Full of grace." But our knowledge on grace developed and we came to the conclusion that if Mary was full of grace, she must have been immaculately conceived, thus the Immaculate Conception.

Now, if all Catholics believe in the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception we say that the Church is ONE.

See how important it is that all the truths Catholics believe must come from the teaching and preaching of the Apostle. When the truths come from the truths taught by the Apostles we say that the Church is APOSTOLIC. When all Catholics believe the same truths that come from the Apostles, we say that the Church is ONE.

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

St. Teresa of Avila

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CATHOLIC

The four visible signs of the true Church of Christ are; One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic. These four signs are found in the Nicene Creed that we recite every Sunday Mass. The only way to find out which is the true religion is by looking for these four signs. The only way to find out which is the true Church of Christ is by looking for these four visible signs.

The only way to know if we are going to heaven is to find out if we have these four signs. The only way we can find out if we are Catholics is to find out if we have these four signs.

Catholics all over the world believe in the same truths, all of which are taken from the teachings of the first Apostles. When all Catholics all over the world believe in the same Apostolic truths then we say that the Church is CATHOLIC.

Before, Masses said around the world were identical. So the CATHOLICITY of the Church was evident. Today the Masses around the world are different; said in different languages, done in several ways and in different styles so that this visible sign of the Church is disappearing. And with it the Church is disappearing.

We must exert efforts to maintain the four visible signs of the Church so we can remain being the true Church.

THESE FOUR VISIBLE SIGNS ARE FOUND IN SCRIPTURES.

These four visible signs by which all men can recognize the true Church are found in Scriptures. There are, in fact, many signs. Some saints mention two or three signs. Other saints mention four to five signs. St. Robert Bellarmine, Jesuit saint and Doctor of the Church mentions 15 visible signs and all of them are found in Scriptures.

If all these signs of the true Church are found in Scriptures how come other Christian sects cannot find it? These signs should settle once and for all which is the true Church of Christ.

Even Catholics do not know these signs. Many priests and bishops are so free in calling others non-Catholic when they themselves do not have the four signs of the true Church. If we call someone non-Catholic we should be able to prove that he does not have the four visible signs.

THOSE WITHOUT FAITH AND HERETICS DO NOT HAVE THE FOUR SIGNS.

Since the four visible signs are the signs that someone is inside the Catholic Church, those who are outside, like the heretics and those without Faith, do not have the four visible signs. In fact, these four signs are the signs that when we die we shall go to heaven. So it is incumbent that all Catholics make sure they have the four signs by knowing and mastering what these signs are.

Heretics, like unbelievers, do not have these signs because they do not believe certain truths that Christ had taught. The Popes had given us all the heresies that can prevent souls from entering the Catholic Church. We must try to learn what are those heresies so we can correct them.

A common error is Liberalism. This is an error that tells us we have the freedom to do and believe whatever we want. It is similar to the "original sin" Adam and Eve committed in Paradise. It is the spirit of the French revolution that was adapted and perfected in the U.S. That is why so many want to go to the U.S. because you can do

whatever you want there. But this is a heresy. We are only free to do what is good. We are not free to do evil.

So liberalism is a heresy that prevents us from having the four visible sign of the true Church.

HOLY

One of the visible signs of the true Church is HOLY, i.e. the teachings can make people holy and the authors of the doctrines are also holy. Now, holiness is a supernatural characteristic and cannot be easily discerned. So we have to be content to discern the natural characteristics of holiness like kindness, patience, generosity, cheerfulness etc. And this sign is the consequence of the three other signs.

Because the teachings of the true Church of Christ are holy they should make a person grow in holiness. And this growth in holiness must be continuous because, as St. Thomas of Aquinas wrote, he who does not progress regresses. So there must be a continuous growth in holiness and this must be perceptible; because HOLINESS is a sign of the true Church.

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