

SACRED TRADITION

November 8, 2020

32nd Sunday in Ordinary Time



Catholics adhere to the twin pillars of Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition as the foundation of our faith. While it's easy to identify the contents of Sacred Scripture (the 73 books of the Bible!), Sacred Tradition sometimes leaves people puzzled: What is it? And where is it written down?

After Jesus' Resurrection and Ascension, the Twelve Apostles preached his Gospel across the ancient world. This apostolic teaching inspired the writing of the Gospels and other New

Testament books but didn't end with them; the Apostles and their successors, the bishops, continued to teach in

Scripture, though closely connected to it." (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 78) It includes various teachings proclaimed by the Apostles, the Church Fathers, Ecumenical Councils, and the popes.

One example of a doctrine passed down through Sacred Tradition is the Assumption of Mary. The early Christians believed that, at the end of her life, Mary's

body was taken into heaven, as attested to in the writings of Ss. John of Damascus and Gregory of Tours. (This singular gift arises from Christ's Resurrection and anticipates our bodily resurrection on the last day.)

"THERE ARE ALSO MANY OTHER THINGS THAT JESUS DID, BUT IF THESE WERE TO BE DESCRIBED INDIVIDUALLY, I DO NOT THINK THE WHOLE WORLD WOULD CONTAIN THE BOOKS THAT WOULD BE WRITTEN."

:: John 21:25

Jesus' name, preserving the Catholic faith and passing it on as a living teaching through the centuries.

"This living transmission, accomplished in the Holy Spirit, is called Tradition, since it is distinct from Sacred



Watch the video:

youtu.be/IYreX4cTkws

“SACRED TRADITION AND SACRED SCRIPTURE, ARE BOUND CLOSELY TOGETHER AND COMMUNICATE ONE WITH THE OTHER. FOR BOTH OF THEM, FLOWING OUT FROM THE SAME DIVINE WELL-SPRING, COME TOGETHER... TO FORM ONE THING AND MOVE TOWARDS THE SAME GOAL.”

:: *Dei Verbum* (Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation), no. 9

Family Discussion Questions

1. In what ways have you experienced God’s revelation and presence? Through the Bible? In creation and nature? Through the Sacraments?
2. How would you explain Sacred Tradition to someone who believes the Bible is sufficient to know all of God’s truth?
3. When we profess the Creed at Mass we affirm our faith in the Holy Trinity and in the teachings of the Church. How has your faith helped you to make a difference in the world?

Family Challenge

Sit down as a family and look through old photos and/or photo albums. Discuss some of your favorite family memories, traditions, and stories and how they’ve shaped your life, such as how they influenced your family’s faith, habits, decisions, or way of thinking. Focus on the positive!

Additional Videos

- Why Catholics Use Scripture and Tradition: youtu.be/mTBud-9Vlzo

Other Resources

- Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation (*Dei Verbum*): bit.ly/V2DeiVerbum
- *Why We’re Catholic: Our Reasons for Faith, Hope, and Love* by Trent Horn (Catholic Answers Press, 2017)

While the Assumption of Mary is not directly mentioned in the Bible, it does not contradict it (since Scripture and Tradition arise from one faith and cannot contradict each other). However, we can see the Assumption reflected in passages such as Genesis 3:15 and Revelation 12:6.

The Church often takes centuries to reflect on a Tradition before making a dogmatic declaration on it. The Assumption, while part of Church teaching since the earliest centuries, was only dogmatically defined in 1950 by Pope Pius XII. This does not make it a “new” teaching — it simply means that the Church’s understanding of the teaching has matured over time.

We rely on both Tradition and Scripture to know the fullness of God’s revelation to us, and on the Magisterium (teaching authority) of the Church to help us understand these teachings. We are privileged, by the grace of our baptism, to have access to such great gifts and to be drawn into deeper knowledge and love of our heavenly Father!



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