

Moral Authority

Letter Two: Leave Your Opinions at the Door

Sources for Catholic Teaching

Scripture References

[Mark 13:31](#) Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

[2 Peter 1:20](#) First of all you must understand this, that no prophecy of scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation

[1 Cor 11:2](#) I commend you because you remember me in everything and maintain the traditions even as I have delivered them to you.

[Luke 10:16](#) "He who hears you hears me, and he who rejects you rejects me, and he who rejects me rejects him who sent me."

[1 Tim 3:15](#) if I am delayed, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and bulwark of the truth.

Catechism References

- **Catechism on Scripture**

[77](#) "In order that the full and living Gospel might always be preserved in the Church the apostles left bishops as their successors. They gave them their own position of teaching authority." Indeed, "the apostolic preaching, which is expressed in a special way in the inspired books, was to be preserved in a continuous line of succession until the end of time."

- **Catechism on Tradition**

[78](#) This living transmission, accomplished in the Holy Spirit, is called Tradition, since it is distinct from Sacred Scripture, though closely connected to it. Through Tradition, "the Church, in her doctrine, life and worship, perpetuates and transmits to every generation all that she herself is, all that she believes." "The sayings of the holy Fathers are a witness to the life-giving presence of this

Tradition, showing how its riches are poured out in the practice and life of the Church, in her belief and her prayer.”

[79](#) The Father’s self-communication made through his Word in the Holy Spirit, remains present and active in the Church: “God, who spoke in the past, continues to converse with the Spouse of his beloved Son. And the Holy Spirit, through whom the living voice of the Gospel rings out in the Church – and through her in the world – leads believers to the full truth, and makes the Word of Christ dwell in them in all its richness.”

- **Catechism on Scripture and Tradition**

[80](#) “Sacred Tradition and Sacred Scripture, then, are bound closely together, and communicate one with the other. For both of them, flowing out from the same divine well-spring, come together in some fashion to form one thing, and move towards the same goal.” Each of them makes present and fruitful in the Church the mystery of Christ, who promised to remain with his own “always, to the close of the age”.

[81](#) “Sacred Scripture is the speech of God as it is put down in writing under the breath of the Holy Spirit.” “And [Holy] Tradition transmits in its entirety the Word of God which has been entrusted to the apostles by Christ the Lord and the Holy Spirit. It transmits it to the successors of the apostles so that, enlightened by the Spirit of truth, they may faithfully preserve, expound and spread it abroad by their preaching.”

[82](#) As a result the Church, to whom the transmission and interpretation of Revelation is entrusted, “does not derive her certainty about all revealed truths from the holy Scriptures alone. Both Scripture and Tradition must be accepted and honored with equal sentiments of devotion and reverence.”

- **Catechism on Magisterium**

[85](#) “The task of giving an authentic interpretation of the Word of God, whether in its written form or in the form of Tradition, has been entrusted to the living teaching office of the Church alone. Its authority in this matter is exercised in the name of Jesus Christ.” This means that the task of interpretation has been entrusted to the bishops in communion with the successor of Peter, the Bishop of Rome.

[86](#) “Yet this Magisterium is not superior to the Word of God, but is its servant. It teaches only what has been handed on to it. At the divine command and with the help of the Holy Spirit, it listens to this devotedly, guards it with dedication and expounds it faithfully. All that it proposes for belief as being divinely revealed is drawn from this single deposit of faith.”

[88](#) The Church’s Magisterium exercises the authority it holds from Christ to the fullest extent when it defines dogmas, that is, when it proposes truths contained in divine Revelation or also when it proposes, in a definitive way, truths having a necessary connection with these.”

Vatican Documents

Francis, Pope. *Lumen Fidei: The Light of Faith*. Frederick, Maryland: The Word Among Us Press, 2013. Encyclical Letter.

This encyclical letter was written by Pope Francis to the Bishops, Priests and Deacons, Consecrated Persons, and the Lay Faithful. It is described as a profound and compelling reflection on humanity’s need for faith. “...the Holy Father says faith ‘sees things as Jesus himself sees them.’ Far from divorcing us from reality, our faith in Jesus, ‘enables us to grasp reality’s deepest meaning and to see how much God loves this world’”.