

If anyone says that by these words: "Do this for a commemoration of me [Luke 22:19; 1 Cor. 11:24], Christ did not make the apostles priest, or did not ordain that they and other priests might offer His own body and blood: let him be anathema.

Mt 16:16; Jn 21:15 ff - Vatican I, July 18, 1870 "The Institution of Apostolic Primacy in Blessed Peter," chapter 1

[Against heretics and schismatics]. So we teach and declare that according to the testimonies of the Gospel and the primacy of jurisdiction over the entire Church of God was promised and was conferred immediately and directly upon the blessed Apostle Peter by Christ the Lord. For the one Simon, to whom He had before said: "Thou shalt be called Cephas [John 1:42]", after he had given forth his confession with those words: "Thou art Christ, Son of the living God [Matthew 16:16], the Lord spoke with these solemn words: "Blessed art thou, Simon bar Jonah; because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father who is in heaven. And I say to thee: That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it: and I shall give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven. And whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose upon earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven [Matthew 16:17ff]." [Against Richerius etc.] And upon Simon Peter alone Jesus after His resurrection conferred the jurisdiction of the

highest pastor and rector over his entire fold, saying: "Feed my lambs," Feed my sheep [John 21:15ff]." To this teaching of Sacred Scriptures, so manifest as it has been always understood by the Catholic Church, are opposed openly the vicious opinions of those who perversely deny that the form of government in His Church was established by Christ the Lord; that to Peter alone, before the other apostles, whether individually or all together; was confided the true and proper primacy of jurisdiction by Christ; or, of those who affirm that the same primacy was not immediately and directly bestowed upon the blessed Peter himself, but upon the Church, and through this Church upon him as the minister of the Church herself.

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The Church's Interpretation of Scripture

The Church has officially defined the interpretation for several passages of Scripture, but most people, Catholic or no, don't realize it. When they do know this is the case, even a well-informed Catholic cannot normally tell you which passages were authoritatively interpreted or what those interpretations were. What follows are all the authoritative interpretations of the Church has made of Scripture, taken from Heinrich Denzinger's Sources of Catholic Dogma, nos. 789, 858, 874, 913, 926, 949, 1822. Remember that the word "anathema" does not mean "condemned to hell," it means, "formally excommunicated," and is used in explicit statements of what the Church most emphatically does not believe. Remember also that the authoritative interpretations of these passages do not deny the possibility of additional, non-contradictory interpretations. It means only that the referenced passages certainly carry the defined meanings. Some also ask why the Church does not formally define the meaning and interpretation of every line of Scripture. The Church teaches what is necessary for understanding - what She says needs to be said, nor is any teaching more than is needful. Just as it will take an eternity to plumb the infinite depths of God, so would it take an eternity to plumb the depths of His Word. These passages were defined against pernicious heresies. Every heresy is traceable to a mis-understanding of some combination of these passages.

Rom 5:12 - Council of Trent, June 17, 1546, "Decree on Original Sin", section 2.

If anyone asserts that the transgression of Adam has harmed him alone and not his posterity, and that the sanctity and justice, received from God, which he lost, he has lost for himself alone and not for us also; or that he having been defiled by the sin of disobedience has transfused only death "and the punishments of the body into the whole human race, but not sin also, which is the death of the soul," let him be anathema, since he contradicts the Apostle who says: "By one man sin entered into the world, and by sin death, and so death passed upon all men, in whom all have sinned. [Rom 5:12]"

Jn 3:5 - Council of Trent, March 3, 1547, "Canons on the Sacrament of Baptism," canon 2.

If anyone shall say that real and natural water is not necessary for baptism, and on that account those words of our Lord Jesus Christ: "Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Spirit [John 3:5]" are distorted into some sort of metaphor: let him be anathema.

Mt 26:26 ff; Mk 14:22l; Lk 22:19 ff; 1 Cor 11:23 ff - Council of Trent, October 11, 1551, "The Real Presence of our Lord Jesus Christ in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist", chapter 1

First of all the holy Synod teaches and openly and simply professes that in the nourishing sacrament of the Holy Eucharist

after the consecration of the bread and wine our Lord Jesus Christ, true God and man, is truly, really, and substantially [canon 1] contained under the species of those sensible things. For these things are not mutually contradictory, that our Saviour Himself is always seated at the right hand of the Father in heaven according to the natural mode of existing, and yet that in many other places sacramentally He is present to us in His own substance by that manner of existence which, although we can scarcely express it in words, yet we can, however, by our understanding illuminated by faith, conceive to be possible to God, and which we ought most steadfastly to believe. For thus all our forefathers, as many as were in the true Church of Christ, who have discussed this most holy sacrament, have most openly professed that our Redeemer instituted this so wonderful a sacrament at the Last Supper, when after the blessing of the bread and wine He testified in clear and definite words that He gave them His own body and His own blood; and those words which are recorded [Matthew 26:26ff; Mark 14:22; Luke 22:19ff] by the holy Evangelists, and afterwards repeated by St. Paul [1 Cor 11:23 ff], since they contain within themselves that proper and very clear meaning in which they were understood by the Fathers, it is a most disgraceful thing for some contentious and wicked men to distort into fictitious and imaginary figures of speech, by which the real nature of the flesh and blood of Christ is denied, contrary to the universal sense of the Church, which, recognizing with an ever grateful and recollecting mind this most excellent benefit of Christ, as the pillar and

ground of truth [1 Tim 3:15], has detested these falsehoods, devised by impious men, as satanical.

Jn 20:22 ff - Council of Trent, October 25, 1551, "Canons on the Sacrament of Penance," canon 3

If anyone says that those words of the Lord Savior: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins ye shall retain, they are retained [John 20:22ff]", are not to be understood of the power of remitting and retaining sins in the sacrament of penance, as the Catholic Church has always understood from the beginning, but, contrary to the institution of this sacrament, distorts them to an authority for preaching the Gospel: let him be anathema.

James 5:14 - Council of Trent, October 25, 1551, "Canons on Anointing of the Sick," canon 1

If anyone says that anointing of the sick is not truly and properly a sacrament instituted by our Lord Jesus Christ [cf. Mark 6:13], and promulgated by blessed James the Apostle [James 5:14], but is only a rite accepted by the Fathers, or a human fiction: let him be anathema.

Lk 22:19, 1 Cor 11:24 - Council of Trent, September 17, 1562 "Canons on the Most Holy Sacrifice of the Mass," canon 2