We live in times of confusion. The Catholic faith, which for centuries has been a firm light in the midst of darkness, is today shaken by contradictory currents, spiritual fashions, and ambiguous messages that seem to dilute the Gospel into human opinions. Faced with this panorama, an urgent question arises: how can we know what to believe, how can we remain faithful to Christ in a world that changes so quickly?

The answer is not new. It was given to us by **Sacred Tradition**, that living transmission of apostolic faith which reminds us what we must believe: **“quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus”** — *“what has always, everywhere, and by all been believed”*.

This formula, attributed to **St. Vincent of Lerins** (5th century), is a true “spiritual GPS.” It marks the sure criterion of orthodoxy in the face of deceptive novelties. And today, more than ever, we need to return to it.

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1. Origin of the Expression: St. Vincent of Lerins

St. Vincent, a monk from southern France, lived in a time of intense heresies. Arians, Nestorians, and Pelagians confused the faithful with erroneous interpretations of the faith. To offer a clear criterion, he wrote the **Commonitorium**, where he proposes this golden rule:

- **“Semper” (Always):** True faith does not change with fashions or centuries. What was true in the year 33 is still true in 2025.
- **“Ubique” (Everywhere):** The faith is universal, not the property of a closed group or an ideological current.
- **“Ab omnibus” (By all):** It does not depend on a particular enlightened figure, but on what the Church has received, safeguarded, and professed in communion.

Thus, St. Vincent established a criterion that is not rigid or archaeological, but profoundly **Catholic**, because it safeguards the living truth against distortions.

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2. Sacred Tradition: More Than Customs

When we speak of Tradition, we do not mean mere cultural practices or popular devotions — although these are valuable. We speak of the **living transmission of apostolic faith** under

the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

St. Paul makes this clear:

> *“So then, brothers, stand firm and hold to the traditions which you were taught by us, either by word of mouth or by letter.” (2 Thessalonians 2:15).*

Tradition is not a “museum” of old things. It is the very life of the Church which, generation after generation, hands down intact the teaching of Christ and the apostles. Scripture and Tradition are not opposed: they are two streams from the same source, which is Divine Revelation.

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3. Theological Relevance Today

Today, much is said about “adapting the faith to the times,” “reinterpreting the Gospel,” or “modernizing the Church.” But the question every Catholic must ask is: does this novelty correspond to what the Church has **always, everywhere, and by all** believed?

- If a teaching contradicts the deposit of faith, **it cannot be authentically Catholic**.
- If a liturgical practice erases the sense of the sacred and replaces it with banality, **it does not come from the living Tradition**.
- If a moral discourse relaxes what Christ clearly taught (such as the indissolubility of marriage or the value of life), **it is not fidelity but betrayal**.

Tradition is not the enemy of progress, but its true filter: it helps discern what is a legitimate deepening of faith and what is simply a passing novelty.

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4. Practical Applications in Daily Life

How can a Catholic today, amid noise and confusion, apply St. Vincent of Lerins’ principle?

Here I propose a **practical theological and pastoral guide**:

a) Solid Formation

- Read the **Catechism of the Catholic Church** and the **Roman Catechism (Tridentine)**: they are the sure synthesis of what the Church believes.
- Familiarize yourself with the **Fathers of the Church**: what they taught in the first centuries is a guarantee of orthodoxy.

b) Spiritual Discernment

- Ask yourself when faced with a new teaching:
  - Has this always been believed by the Church?
  - Is it something universal, or is it promoted only by a minority group?
  - Is it connected to the faith of all the saints, martyrs, and doctors, or does it break with them?

c) Sacramental Life

- The **traditional liturgy** (in Latin or faithfully translated vernacular languages) embodies in a privileged way the rule “quod semper.”
- Value the sacraments not as social acts but as encounters with Christ in the way the Church has always celebrated them.

d) Witness in the World

- In your work, family, and public life, do not adapt your faith to relativism. Be consistent, even if they call you “old-fashioned.” Truth does not expire.
- Remember: living according to Tradition is not being bound to the past, but walking hand in hand with the eternal Christ, who is “the same yesterday, today, and forever” (Hebrews 13:8).

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5. The Current Challenge: Keeping the Compass

Today, the greatest temptation is confusion. Many Catholics do not know what to believe because they hear discordant voices even within the Church. But here lies the strength of **quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus**:

- It frees us from doctrines of fashion.
- It gives us peace in the face of relativism.
- It reminds us that we are not alone, but united to all Christians who, from the Apostles to our days, have held the same faith.

Conclusion: A Living Tradition That Saves Us

Sacred Tradition is not a burden; it is an anchor and a lighthouse. In the midst of a stormy sea, it reminds us what to believe and how to live in order to be faithful to Christ.

St. Vincent of Lerins’ motto is not only for theologians: it is for you, for your family, for your daily spiritual life. It invites you to be a guardian of the faith, to transmit it intact, and not to let yourself be carried away by novelties that vanish like smoke.

In the end, the only thing that will save us is having persevered in the faith of always, the faith that has been believed everywhere and by all. Because that faith is the faith of the Church, and the Church is the faithful Bride of Christ.

Final Guide for the Reader:

1. Read Scripture with the eyes of Tradition.
2. Seek in the Fathers and Doctors of the Church the echo of the true faith.
3. Love the liturgy as a sacred inheritance.
4. Defend Christian morality with courage.
5. Hand on to your children and grandchildren the faith without diluting or watering it down.

Only in this way, when the time comes to give an account before God, will we be able to say with humility and confidence: *“I have kept the faith”* (2 Timothy 4:7).