The existence of the devil is a topic that has sparked debates both inside and outside the Church. In a secularized world, speaking about Satan may seem outdated or even superstitious. However, Catholic doctrine is clear: the devil is not a metaphor for evil or a mere symbol of sin but a real and personal being, a fallen angel who rebelled against God and whose mission is to lead people away from salvation.

In this article, we will explore what the Church teaches about the existence of the devil, his role in salvation history, and, most importantly, how we can combat his influence in our daily lives.

1. What Does the Catechism Teach About the Devil?

The **Catechism of the Catholic Church** (CCC) provides clear teaching on the existence of the devil. In **paragraph 391**, it states:

"Satan was at first a good angel, made by God: 'The devil and the other demons were indeed created naturally good by God, but they became evil by their own doing' (Fourth Lateran Council, 1215)."

The Church teaches that Satan and the other demons were created as angels, endowed with intelligence and free will. However, due to their pride, they rejected God and fell into eternal condemnation. Their sin was pride: they wanted to be like God, but without God.

The Catechism continues in **paragraphs 392-393**, explaining that their fall is irreversible:

"It is the irrevocable character of their choice, and not a defect in the infinite divine mercy, that makes their sin unforgivable."

In other words, the devil and his followers cannot repent because their choice was free and definitive.

2. What Does the Bible Say About the Devil?

The Holy Scriptures are filled with references to the devil and his actions in the world. From **Genesis**, where we read about the seduction of Eve by the serpent (Gen 3:1-7), to **Revelation**, where his final destiny is described in the lake of fire (Rev 20:10), the figure of Satan is present throughout the Bible.

a) The Devil in the Old Testament

In the book of Job, Satan appears as the "accuser," seeking permission from God to test Job's faithfulness (Job 1:6-12). This shows that the devil is not all-powerful but can act only to the extent that God allows.

The prophet Isaiah poetically describes the fall of Lucifer:

"How you have fallen from the heavens, O morning star, son of the dawn! How you have been cast down to the earth, you who once laid low the nations!" (Isaiah 14:12).

b) The Devil in the New Testament

The New Testament confirms and deepens the teaching about the devil. Jesus Himself speaks about Satan on numerous occasions, calling him "the prince of this world" (John 12:31) and confronting him directly in the **desert**, rejecting his temptations (Matt 4:1-11).

He also warns Peter:

"Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded to sift all of you like wheat, but I have prayed that your own faith may not fail" (Luke 22:31-32).

Saint Paul urges us to be on guard against the devil's schemes:

"Put on the armor of God so that you may be able to stand firm against the tactics of the devil" (Eph 6:11).

3. How Does the Devil Act in the World?

The devil does not have absolute power over humans, but he can influence them in different ways. His actions manifest mainly in three ways:

a) Temptation

This is the most common way he attacks. The devil seeks to distance us from God through subtle or obvious temptations. Often, he makes us doubt God's goodness, just as he did with Eve:

"Did God really say…?" (Gen 3:1).

The key to overcoming temptation is prayer and the use of the sacraments, especially the **Eucharist and Confession**.

b) Oppression and Obsession

These are more intense attacks, where the devil can influence a person's mind and body with anxieties, fears, or persecutions. Although not possession, it can cause great spiritual suffering.

c) Diabolical Possession

This is the most extreme case, where the devil takes control of a person's body. The Church has recognized the reality of true possessions and offers **exorcism** as a means of liberation.

4. How Can We Defend Ourselves Against the Devil?

The Church gives us concrete tools to resist the evil one:

1. **Constant Prayer:** Jesus taught us in the **Our Father** to pray: *"deliver us from evil."*
2. **Sacramental Life:** Confession cleanses us from sin, and the Eucharist strengthens us.
3. **Use of Sacramentals:** Holy water, the St. Benedict medal, and the rosary are powerful spiritual weapons.
4. **Avoiding Occasions of Sin:** Do not "open the door" to the devil through occult practices, superstitions, or habitual sin.
5. **Trusting in God:** Always remember Christ's promise: *"Do not be afraid; I have conquered the world."* (John 16:33).

5. What Is the Devil's Final Destiny?

The devil was defeated by Christ on the **Cross**, but his final condemnation will come at the end of time when he is cast into the lake of fire, as described in **Revelation**:

"The devil who had led them astray was thrown into the pool of fire and sulfur" (Rev 20:10).

The victory is already assured, but in the meantime, we must engage in spiritual battle.

Conclusion

The devil **truly exists**—he is not a myth or a symbolic figure. The Church teaches that his influence is real, but it also gives us the means to resist him. **We have nothing to fear from the devil if we live in God's grace.** Jesus has already won the victory, and with Him, we can overcome as well.

Let our daily prayer be:

"Saint Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle, be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil..."

With faith, prayer, and trust in God, we will always prevail. **Christ is Lord!**