



In a world that changes at a dizzying pace, where certainties seem to fade and absolute truths are questioned, the Catholic Church stands as a beacon of light guiding the faithful toward the revealed Truth. At the heart of this Truth are the dogmas, immutable pillars of faith that have been passed down from the time of the apostles to the present day. But what exactly are dogmas? Why are they so important for the spiritual life of every Catholic? In this article, we will explore the origin, history, and current meaning of dogmas, with the aim of educating, inspiring, and serving as a spiritual guide on our journey toward God.

What is a Dogma?

A dogma is a truth revealed by God, proposed by the Church as such, and which every Catholic is obliged to believe with divine and Catholic faith. These truths are not human inventions but divine gifts given to us for our salvation. Dogmas are like the roots of a tree: though we cannot see them, they support the entire structure of our faith. Without them, our understanding of God, salvation, and eternal life would falter.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church reminds us that “faith is man’s response to God, who reveals himself and gives himself to man, at the same time bringing man a superabundant light as he searches for the ultimate meaning of his life” (CCC 26). Dogmas are an essential part of this light, as they allow us to know God as He has revealed Himself.

The Origin of Dogmas: Tradition and Scripture

Dogmas have their origin in divine Revelation, which has been transmitted to us through two main sources: Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition. Scripture is the written Word of God, inspired by the Holy Spirit and contained in the Bible. Tradition, on the other hand, is the living transmission of the Word of God, safeguarded and taught by the Church throughout the centuries.

Jesus Himself promised His disciples: “The Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you” (John 14:26). This promise is fulfilled in the Church, which, guided by the Holy Spirit, has deepened its understanding of the revealed truths and defined dogmas at key moments in history.

The History of Dogmas: Defining the Faith

The history of dogmas is the history of the Church in its struggle to preserve the purity of the faith in the face of errors and heresies. From the early centuries of Christianity, ecumenical



councils have been key instruments for defining and proclaiming dogmas. These councils, gatherings of bishops from around the world under the authority of the Pope, have been convened in times of doctrinal crisis to clarify what the Church believes and teaches.

One of the first and most important councils was the Council of Nicaea (325 AD), where the dogma of the divinity of Christ was defined in response to the Arian heresy, which denied that Jesus was truly God. The Fathers of the Council proclaimed: "We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God" (Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed).

Another crucial moment was the Council of Trent (1545-1563), in response to the Protestant Reformation, where dogmas such as the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist and justification by grace through faith and works were reaffirmed. More recently, the First Vatican Council (1869-1870) defined the dogma of papal infallibility, that is, that the Pope, when speaking *ex cathedra* (from the chair of Peter) on matters of faith and morals, is preserved from error by the Holy Spirit.

The Current Meaning of Dogmas: Guidance in a Confused World

In a world where moral relativism and religious indifference seem to dominate, dogmas are more relevant than ever. They offer us a sure compass amid confusion, reminding us that there are eternal truths that do not change with time or trends.

Dogmas help us remain steadfast in the faith, especially when we face challenges and doubts. For example, the dogma of the Holy Trinity reminds us that God is a communion of love, a mystery that surpasses our understanding but illuminates our lives. The dogma of the Immaculate Conception shows us the purity and beauty of Mary, the model of Christian life. And the dogma of the Resurrection of Christ gives us hope that death does not have the final word, but that in Jesus we are called to eternal life.

An Inspiring Anecdote: St. Augustine and the Mystery of the Trinity

There is a story that St. Augustine, one of the greatest theologians of the Church, was walking along the beach meditating on the mystery of the Holy Trinity. As he tried to understand how three Persons could be one God, he saw a child digging a hole in the sand and carrying water from the sea with a shell to fill it. Augustine asked him what he was doing, and the child replied, "I am trying to pour the entire sea into this hole." Augustine smiled and told him it was impossible, to which the child responded, "It is easier to pour the entire sea into this hole than for you to understand the mystery of the Trinity." At that moment,



Augustine understood that some mysteries of faith are beyond human comprehension and that we must accept them with humility and faith.

Conclusion: Dogmas as a Path to Holiness

Dogmas are not mere abstract formulas but living truths that invite us into a deeper relationship with God. They call us to delve into the mystery of faith, to grow in virtue, and to live in communion with the Church. As St. Paul tells us, “Faith is the assurance of what we hope for and the certainty of what we do not see” (Hebrews 11:1).

In a world searching for answers, dogmas offer us the certainty of revealed Truth. They invite us to trust in God, who has spoken to us through His Son Jesus Christ, and to walk with hope toward eternal life. May Mary, the Mother of the Church, guide us on this path of faith, so that, illuminated by the dogmas, we may attain the fullness of God’s love.

Therefore, dear brother or sister in faith, I invite you to deepen your study of the dogmas, to meditate on them, and to let yourself be transformed by their light. For, as St. John Paul II said, “Faith and reason are like two wings on which the human spirit rises to the contemplation of truth.” May the dogmas be for you those wings that lift you to the heights, to the encounter with the God who loves you and awaits you.