



UNDERSTANDING ROMAN CATHOLICISM

“A FUNNY THING HAPPENED IN 313AD”

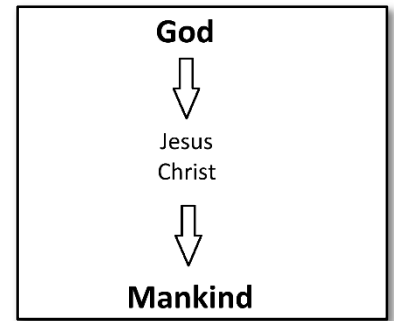
146BC – Battle of Carthage, Rome expands
 4BC – Jesus Christ born
 33AD – Crucifixion, Resurrection, Pentecost
 33-100 – Apostolic Age; New Testament is written
 70 – Roman General Titus destroys Jerusalem
 33-313 – Church grows rapidly during persecution

313 – Constantine becomes Emperor of Rome
*Church grows in wealth & power
 Becomes more “Roman”*
 325 – Council of Nicea
 380 – Edict of Thessalonica
 476 – Fall of Western Roman Empire (*East remained*)
 600 – Gregory I, Bishop of Rome (*birth of Catholicism?*)

629 – Muhammad captures Mecca
 732 – Battle of Tours, France (*slows Muslim conquest*)
 800 – Charlemagne crowned by Leo III
 1054 – Great Schism - Roman & Eastern Churches
 1517 – Protestant Reformation
 1545 – Council of Trent / Counter Reformation
 1962 – Vatican II

KEY DOCTRINES

- Authority – The Bible and Church Tradition
- The Church
- The Bible & the Apocrypha
- Apostolic Succession & the Priesthood
- Mediation between God and man.
Jesus, The Church, The “magisterium”, Saints esp. Mary, Sacraments...
- Salvation
 - *Original Sin & baptism*
 - *The church’s Treasury of Merit*
 - *Grace versus Graces – “the bucket”*
 - *Mortal versus Venial Sin*
 - *The Sacraments, especially confession & Eucharist*
 - *Hell, Purgatory and Heaven*
- The Sacraments: *“Instruments to confer grace throughout one’s life”*
 1) baptism 2) confirmation 3) Eucharist 4) penance 5) anointing of the sick 6) holy orders 7) marriage
- Baptism: *“Through Baptism we are freed from sin and reborn as sons of God; we become members of Christ”*
 - The Doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration.
- Communion: Eucharist, *“The source and summit of the Christian life”*.
 - The Doctrine of Transubstantiation.



ISSUES TO UNDERSTAND WHEN TALKING WITH CATHOLICS ABOUT THE GOSPEL

1. Simply share the Gospel
2. Assurance of Salvation
3. Personal relationship with God. Necessity of receiving Christ as Savior & Lord.
4. Conceptions about Protestants / Evangelicals

THE FIVE “SOLAS” OF THE REFORMATION

We are saved...

1. *By Grace alone (Sola Gratia)*
2. *Through Faith alone (Sola Fide)*
3. *In Christ alone (Solus Christus)*
4. *According to Scripture alone (Sola Scriptura)*
5. *For God’s Glory alone (Soli Deo Gloria)*

KEY VERSES FOR EXPLAINING THE GOSPEL

“For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus,⁶ who gave himself as a ransom for all men—the testimony given in its proper time.” – 1 Timothy 2:5-6

¹¹Day after day every priest stands and performs his religious duties; again and again he offers the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God.” – Hebrews 10:11-12

“In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence.” – Ephesians 3:12

⁸ For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast. ¹⁰ For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” – Eph 2:8-10

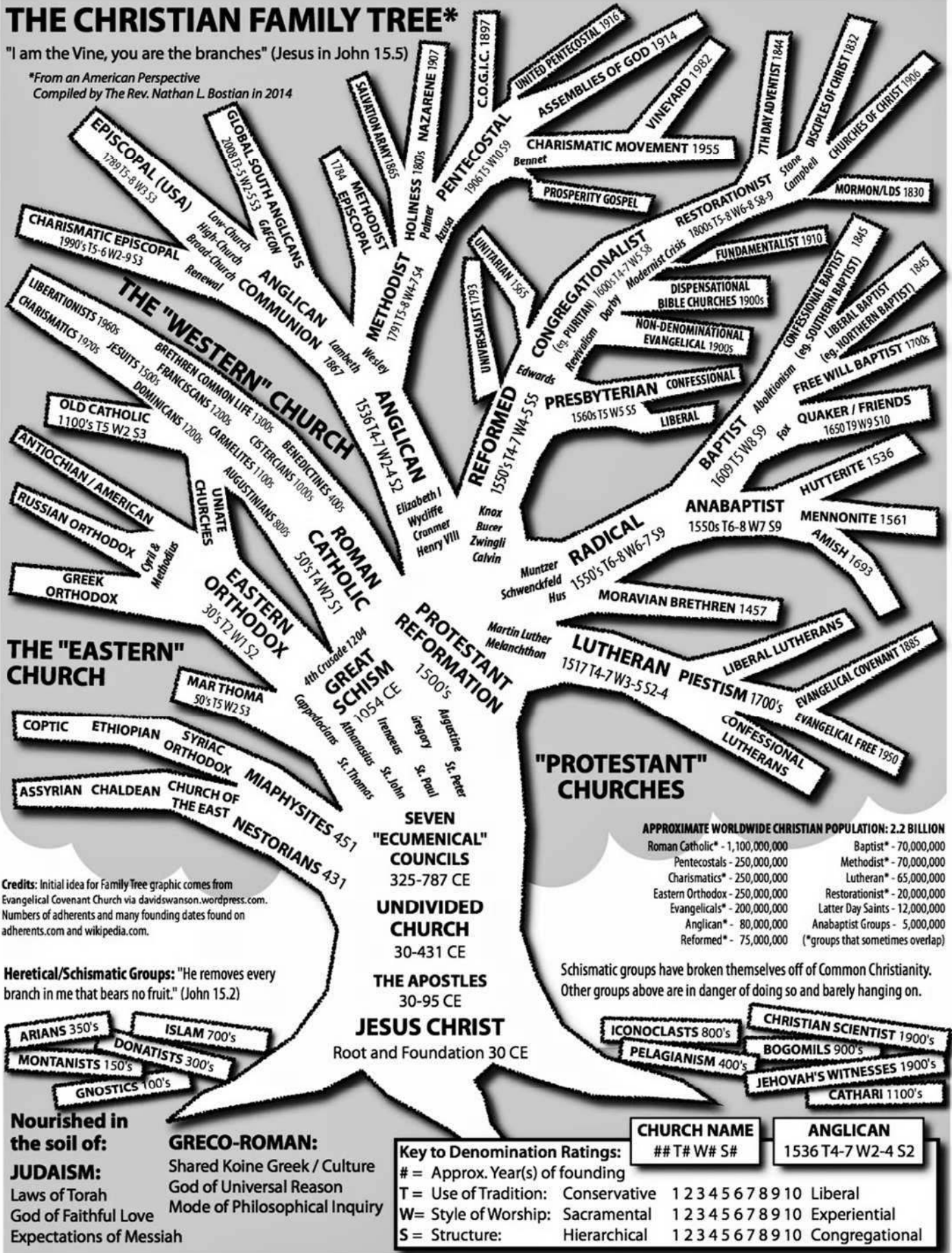
GUIDELINES FOR TALKING WITH CATHOLICS

- Don’t generalize. Ask questions about each person believes.
- Remember that salvation does not depend on church membership, but comes through faith in Jesus Christ (*Eph. 2:8-9*).
- Don’t assume that a Catholic is or is not saved. Ask diagnostic questions about their personal faith. Don’t expect them to use “Evangelical” vocabulary.
- Pray and trust in the Holy Spirit to use the gospel message to reach the hearts and minds of those who are lost.
- Share a testimony of your personal faith in Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior.
- Communicate that your assurance is derived from trusting Jesus and not from your good works or your ability to remain *faithful* (*1 John 5:13*).
- Avoid getting bogged down with secondary issues that are not central to salvation.
- Keep the conversation centered on Christ.

THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY TREE*

"I am the Vine, you are the branches" (Jesus in John 15.5)

*From an American Perspective
Compiled by The Rev. Nathan L. Bostian in 2014



Credits: Initial idea for Family Tree graphic comes from Evangelical Covenant Church via davidswanson.wordpress.com. Numbers of adherents and many founding dates found on adherents.com and wikipedia.com.

Heretical/Schismatic Groups: "He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit." (John 15.2)

- ARIANS 350's
- ISLAM 700's
- MONTANISTS 150's
- DONATISTS 300's
- GNOSTICS 100's

Nourished in the soil of:

JUDAISM:
Laws of Torah
God of Faithful Love
Expectations of Messiah

GRECO-ROMAN:
Shared Koine Greek / Culture
God of Universal Reason
Mode of Philosophical Inquiry

JESUS CHRIST
Root and Foundation 30 CE

SEVEN "ECUMENICAL" COUNCILS
325-787 CE

UNDIVIDED CHURCH
30-431 CE

THE APOSTLES
30-95 CE

"PROTESTANT" CHURCHES

APPROXIMATE WORLDWIDE CHRISTIAN POPULATION: 2.2 BILLION

Roman Catholic* - 1,100,000,000	Baptist* - 70,000,000
Pentecostals - 250,000,000	Methodist* - 70,000,000
Charismatics* - 250,000,000	Lutheran* - 65,000,000
Eastern Orthodox - 250,000,000	Restorationist* - 20,000,000
Evangelicals* - 200,000,000	Latter Day Saints - 12,000,000
Anglican* - 80,000,000	Anabaptist Groups - 5,000,000
Reformed* - 75,000,000	(*groups that sometimes overlap)

Schismatic groups have broken themselves off of Common Christianity. Other groups above are in danger of doing so and barely hanging on.

- ICONOCLASTS 800's
- CHRISTIAN SCIENTIST 1900's
- PELAGIANISM 400's
- BOGOMILS 900's
- JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES 1900's
- CATHARI 1100's

Key to Denomination Ratings:	CHURCH NAME	ANGLICAN
# = Approx. Year(s) of founding	## T# W# S#	1536 T4-7 W2-4 S2
T = Use of Tradition: Conservative	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	Liberal
W = Style of Worship: Sacramental	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	Experiential
S = Structure: Hierarchical	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	Congregational