

A prime example of this source is the Roman Catholic Church's dogma concerning Tradition, as detailed in the *Baltimore Catechism No. 3*, Confraternity Edition of 1949.

Q. 23. Can we know God in any other way than by our natural reason?

Besides knowing God by our natural reason, we can also know Him from supernatural revelation, that is, from the truths found in Sacred Scripture and in Tradition, which God Himself has revealed to us.

Tradition is the unwritten word of God -- that body of truths revealed by God to the apostles, and not committed by them to writing but handed down by word of mouth. These truths, which were later committed to writing, particularly by the Fathers of the Church, have been preserved and handed down to the present day.

Q. 23a. What do we mean when we say that God has revealed these truths to us?

When we say that God has revealed these truths to us we mean that He has made them known to certain persons, to be announced to their fellow men as the word of God.

Q. 23b. What is the Bible?

The Bible is the written word of God, committed to His Church for the instruction and sanctification of mankind.

Since the Catholic Church wishes Catholics to read only correct translations of the Bible, it forbids them to read translations that are not approved by Church authorities. The Church also commends that footnotes be put in approved editions, so that the readers may understand the true meaning of difficult passages.

Q. 23f. How can we know the true meaning of the Bible?

We can know the true meaning of the Bible from the teaching authority of the Catholic Church, which has received from Jesus Christ the right and the duty to teach and to explain all that God has revealed.

(a) Since the Bible contains many difficult passages, it must be interpreted by some authority appointed by God if its truth is to be known with certainty. When men interpret it on their own authority, they arrive at many different views, as is evident from the many opposing doctrines that non-Catholics, using private interpretation, draw from the same passages of the Bible.

(b) The teaching authority which Christ gave the apostles and their successors, the bishops of the Catholic Church, includes the right and the duty to interpret the true sense of the Bible. The Church exercises this authority through letters and instructions from the Holy See and through the ordinary teaching of the bishops, subject to the Pope.