



## Understanding the Roman Catholic Church Script

1. Father Bob Hoffman:  
The most important thing is that we are brothers and sisters in Christ. ...we need to cultivate that relationship and not be fearful of one another, but to really come with open hearts and understanding.
2. Dick Lyles:  
Everybody thinks they know a lot about the Catholic Church. And it is amazing how little people do know about the Catholic Church. Even Catholics.
3. Jon Nilson:  
The Catholic Church is a big tent. There is no question.
4. Narrator:  
Of the world's six billion people, one billion are Roman Catholic. For many non-Christians, the Roman Catholic Church is the primary face of Christianity. Globally, the Roman Catholic Church is growing in places like Africa, Latin America and Asia.
5. Bishop Brian Farrell, Bishop Secretary of the Pontifical Council for Christian Unity, Rome:  
I was sitting in the parish church in a little town in the south of Ireland, the priest came in to say mass, and he was from Rwanda. The Irish who sent missionaries all over the world are now receiving them.
6. Narrator:  
After centuries of mistrust, indifference and even hostility, attitudes between Roman Catholics and other Christians are changing. Dialogue, cooperation and understanding is healing old wounds, locally and up to the highest organizational levels. Theological differences relating to the Pope, Mary, the mother of Jesus, and some sacraments are not as extensive as the long list of common beliefs. In the U.S. 65 million Roman Catholics are organized into 200 archdioceses and dioceses and more than 19,000 local Catholic parishes.  
  
Each year over one million infants and 70,000 adults are baptized in U.S. Roman Catholic churches. Yet for all its great size, influence and long history, many non-Roman Catholics understand very little about the largest Christian denomination. The purpose of this video is to help Protestant Christians and others develop a better understanding of the Roman Catholic Church, its history and basic beliefs by listening to Roman Catholics tell their own story. To begin, we went to the spiritual center of Roman Catholicism, St. Peter's Square in Rome, and asked Catholics why they are Roman Catholic.
7. Young woman:  
Why are you a Catholic? Because my mom has always been a Catholic. And that is the way I have been brought up. That is the way I know.

8. Slovenian Woman:  
We are Slovenian and Slovenia has been a Catholic country for a long time.
9. Sister:  
I am a Roman Catholic because it is a gift. I was given that gift of faith and I believe that it really helps me to have a great relationship with God and with all the people in the world.
10. Most Reverend Timothy A. McDonnell, Diocese of Springfield, Massachusetts  
I firmly believe that when Jesus said “Thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build my Church” he meant it. And this is the Rock of Peter that we are at here. The Catholic Church has its continuity all the way back to the time of Christ.
11. Claire Bachand:  
I am a Roman Catholic because I was born into the Roman Catholic Faith. But I continue to be Catholic because I believe in the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. And it has four signs. It is one, holy, catholic and apostolic. The four signs of the teachings of Jesus Christ.
12. Erin O’Malley:  
I have gone to Catholic Church and Catholic grade schools and high school and everything.
13. Most Reverend Patrick J. McGrath, Diocese of San Jose, California  
I am a Roman Catholic because I believe in Jesus and I believe that he founded the Church on Peter the Rock. And I believe that the Holy Father Pope Benedict XVI is the successor of Peter and the Vicar of Christ on earth.
14. Graphic: Historical Overview
15. Father Richard Costigan, Associate Professor of Theology, Loyola University, Chicago:  
We have a very strong sense of history and continuity in the Catholic Church. We have a very strong sense that it is the same community of faith now that it was in the beginning.
16. Narrator:  
The term “Catholic Church” is nearly as old as Christianity. The name first appeared in a letter written by St. Ignatius to the Church in Smyrna in 110. For three hundred years, Christianity spread across the Roman Empire. Great minds like Tertullian, Gregory the Great, Augustine, Jerome, and others helped flesh out the organizational details of Christianity and establish orthodoxy. It was an age of growth and persecution in which painful disagreements over the nature of God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit were ironed out.
17. Graphic: Constantine
18. Narrator:  
By the year 312, the Roman Empire was in decline. The Church had grown, but Christians were still being persecuted. A Roman civil war pit the army of Flavius Valerius Constantinius, or Constantine, against his rival Maxentius. The outcome changed Christian history. Constantine was a pagan, but his mother, Helena, was a Christian. After marching his army into Italy and up to the gates of Rome Constantine

- camped at the Milvian Bridge, spanning the Tiber River, and prepared for battle.
19. Father Richard Costigan:  
He told people after the battle that he had a vision. He saw a cross in the sky. And he saw or heard the words, *In Hoc Signo Vincet*, “In this sign you will conquer.”
  20. Narrator:  
Before the battle, Constantine labeled equipment with the symbol Chi Rho, the first and last Greek letters of Jesus’ name.
  21. Costigan:  
He thought “the God of the Christians was inviting me to adopt the sign of the cross. And then I will win the battle tomorrow morning.” And sure enough the next morning he won a climactic battle against his rival Maxentius and thereby became the ruler of the whole western half of the Roman Empire. And he was evidently grateful to the God of the Christians. Three or four months later he issued what is called, The Edict of Milan or Milano, granting toleration to all peoples in the empire. Christianity had been a sub-legal, intermittently persecuted religion for close to 300 years. Now suddenly, with Constantine, Christianity became a legal religion. The end of the persecutions.
  22. Narrator:  
As the Roman Empire declined, the Church gained political and social influence. Public meeting places once dedicated to many gods, like the Pantheon in Rome, became large Christian Churches. Invaders from the north eventually became Christian themselves.
  23. Graphic: Religious Orders
  24. Narrator:  
As the Church developed, a form of religious piety known as monasticism began to influence Christianity.
  25. Susan Ross, Associate Professor of Religion, Loyola University, Chicago:  
Probably the first order was the Benedictines, founded by St. Benedict in the fourth century. They were a group of men and women who kind of wanted to live together in prayer... Benedict’s whole understanding of his rule was work and prayer, living in community.
  26. Narrator:  
The son of a Roman noble, Benedict left home at a young age, determined to “be poor and live by his own work.” Around the year 529 Benedict journeyed to the town of Casino, south of Rome. Destroying a pagan temple dedicated to the god Apollo, Benedict founded a monastery in its place. The Rule of St Benedict is a book of guidelines written for monks living in community. St. Benedict’s favorite saying, *ora et labora* summed up his life: Pray and work. Men and women from the order of St. Benedict spread across the globe, preaching, teaching and evangelizing.
  27. Narrator:  
The Franciscans are another important order of the Roman Catholic Church. St. Francis of Assisi was born in 1181, the son of a wealthy merchant. After a rebellious youth, he joined the army and was taken prisoner. After the war he renounced family status and

- devoted his life to Christ. Francis preached a message of personal piety, moderation and respect for nature. Franciscans became known as Friars. The word means “Brothers.”
28. Susan Ross:  
The Jesuits, they are the founders of this university and many other universities. They were founded by St. Ignatius during the time of the Catholic reformation. Ignatius was a Spaniard who felt that there was a need for the Church at that time to have a community of men, who were in a sense, at the disposal of the Pope, to do whatever the Pope needed to do. One interesting Catholic woman, Mary Ward, in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, she wanted to model a religious community after the Jesuits. She thought this would just be a great idea. And she wanted women to be able to kind of model their rule after the Jesuits who were kind of on call.
29. Narrator:  
Mary Ward went on to established convents and schools throughout Europe.
30. Graphic: The Great Schism
31. Narrator:  
By 1054, longstanding tensions between Church leaders in Rome Church and church leaders in Constantinople came to a head.
32. Costigan:  
The rulers of Constantinople, both the Patriarch and the emperor of Constantinople were insulted by the papal delegates. And so there was a mutual exchange of excommunication. That is the split between Eastern and Western Christians. The eastern Christians pretty much aligned themselves with Constantinople. And so it is appropriately called the great Schism or great Eastern Schism. And 900 and some years later it still has not been repaired. There is still a whole separate branch of Christianity.
33. Robert Hoffmann:  
The Schism of the split between the Eastern Church and the Western Church is not so much over theology as it is over government. The Patriarch and Rome and how that is all going to be worked out.
34. Graphic: The Reformation
35. Narrator:  
During the Middle Ages, the Roman Catholic Church played an important role in the political development of Europe. The line between Church and state continued to be blurred. In 1517, a German monk and theologian named Martin Luther, called for reform of the Roman Catholic Church.
36. Susan Ross:  
Luther’s whole argument with the Catholic Church was the way in which sin got quantified. “Ok, I did this many sins, so I will do this much penance....” It is the whole way in which you sort of turn sin and grace into marketable commodities. And Luther was absolutely right. He was absolutely right to be upset with that.

37. Narrator:  
What began as a call for reform soon turned into a second great division - the Protestant Reformation. The Reformation spread across northern Europe. In response, the Roman Catholic Church called for a rare Ecumenical Council.  
An Ecumenical Council is a formal, global gathering of church leaders and experts. They meet to discuss and regulate church teachings and discipline.
38. Narrator:  
On December 13, 1545, the nineteenth Ecumenical Council opened at the Cathedral, here in the city of Trent. The council answered Protestant doctrines and took up reform of their own. Known as the "Catholic reformation" the council removed abuses and affirmed existing teachings.
39. Costigan:  
It is fashionable in Catholic circles in recent years to make disparaging comments about the Council of Trent. Because it created... the liberals say, an excessively rigid Church. Rigid definitions on the sacraments. These seven, no more, no less. And, a lot of stress on uniform doctrines. The papacy became more prominent, in the Catholic Church. The Papacy had been part of the problem, constantly postponing reform and side stepping reform in the Church.
40. Narrator:  
In the centuries after Trent, the Roman Catholic Church faced challenges brought on by new ideas of humanism and rationalism. It was also an age of discovery. As European powers expanded into Central and Southern America, so did the Church.
41. Graphic: Vatican I
42. Narrator:  
Three hundred years after the Council of Trent, more than 700 Roman Catholic leaders assembled, in St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. The First Vatican Council, condemned humanistic philosophies and affirmed the idea that the Bible is inspired by God. The Council also talked about infallibility. When the Pope speaks "ex cathedra" or (from the official chair of his office) on a matter of faith and morals, he speaks without error. Papal infallibility has been used only twice; once relating to the Immaculate Conception and once relating to the Assumption of Mary.
43. Graphic: Vatican II
44. Narrator:  
The next council also occurred in Rome nearly a century later. It came to be known as Vatican II.
45. Costigan:  
Pope John who convoked the council within a few months of becoming Pope used that Italian word *Aggiornamento*. A bringing up to date.
46. Bishop Brian Farrell, Bishop Secretary of the Pontifical Council for Christian Unity, Rome:  
It was the first council after four hundred years which really looked at the way Catholics

- are living in the world. The way Catholics are projecting their faith into the society in which they live.
47. Costigan:  
The main event of Vatican II was really that a number of Western and Central European bishops took the lead in reformulating beliefs. The idea was not to cook up new doctrines, but to try and express traditional doctrines in more up to date language.
48. Susan Ross:  
At the time of the second Vatican Council every religious community in the world had to look at its rules, its constitution and kind of see, "Do we need to make some changes?"
49. Narrator:  
In one significant change, the mass was translated from Latin into local languages that congregations could understand. Vatican II also paved the way for greater involvement on the part of laity.
50. Susan Ross:  
The Catholic Church has historically been hierarchical. Now, since Vatican II there are parish councils. There are diocesan councils, there have been various synods in Rome where there is various representations.
51. Bob Hoffmann:  
At the forefront is the increased desire to make the Church the people of God and to have lay participation at a far, far greater experience than it ever was before. While we have a decline, for example, in priests and sisters and brothers, we have such an increase in lay participation. Of people highly committed, invested, on a volunteer base. It is the awakening of their baptismal commitment to not be just baptized and then get into the pew and vegetate, but to take that awareness of being baptized and privileged in the call of Christ and to live that and to be more involved in it than perhaps lay Catholics of the past.
52. Farrell:  
The second Vatican Council by treating some of the major questions of the human family today, kept the Church from... saved it from the temptation of being enclosed in itself. From being in a kind of ghetto. ...in a world that would have gone its way and would have left us behind.
53. Costigan:  
Most of us still think today that Vatican II initiated and inspired a lot of new thinking and new action in the Catholic Church. Now, forty years later, we think in terms of more partial successes. A kind of a new realism. Great renewal will be a long process. A never ending process, probably.
54. Graphic: What Catholics Believe
55. Narrator:  
Roman Catholic and Protestant beliefs are similar. We believe in one God. Jesus Christ is both fully divine and fully human. He was crucified, died and rose again. One day, he will return. Most Christians believe in Baptism, Holy Communion, confession,

repentance, heaven and hell. The Catechism of the Catholic Church is the best way to find out what Roman Catholics believe. Published in 1997, the Catechism is organized and easy to read. There are important Roman Catholic beliefs that Protestants may find interesting or different. For example, many Protestants recognize only two sacraments, while Roman Catholics recognize seven.

56. Graphic: The Sacraments

57. Susan Ross:

All Christians believe in Baptism and the Lord's Supper, the Eucharist, as sacraments because they are clearly instances where Jesus said, "Do this. I want you to do this." And that the other five sacraments that the Roman Catholic tradition has held on to since 1215 are also moments that the Church has thought are ways in which we mark a particular point in one's life.

58. Susan Ross:

Penance or what we now call reconciliation is the sacrament of the forgiveness of sin. When you confess your sins to a priest and the priest represents in a sense, both the forgiveness of God and the Church as well. Confirmation. The sacrament of the sick. Which used to be called Extreme Unction. Which you can actually receive more than once. Which is given to someone when they are ill and in need of prayers and healing. And then ordination, the sacrament of orders. Traditional Catholic theology sees this, like confirmation and baptism, confers character. And then the very last sacrament, to be accepted as a sacrament is marriage. Although biblically, some of the Popes, particularly John Paul II saw marriage as the very first sacrament because it was the one established by God in the Garden of Eden.

59. Graphic: The Papacy

60. Jon Nilson, Associate Professor of Theology, Loyola, University, Chicago

Well in the most basic sense, you could say the papacy. I think that every other element of the Church that you could name, you are naming an element that Roman Catholicism shares with Christian brothers and sisters. However, the office of the Pope, that is unique.

61. Narrator:

Roman Catholics and all Christians believe that the Church was founded by Jesus Christ in the early part of the first century. In St. Matthew's Gospel, Jesus said to Peter, "...you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven."

62. John Nilson:

The Pope, as bishop of Rome is the successor to the Apostle Peter who exercised a leading role within the community of apostles. The Roman Catholic Church holds that the body of Bishops are in fact the successors to the apostles. And that the role of Peter within the college of Bishops and apostles continues. There are other Christian bodies that have a person they call "Pope", but the office in those churches doesn't function the same way as it does in the Roman Catholic Church.

63. Graphic: The Rosary

64. Narrator:  
The Rosary is a prayer tool that focuses on key scripture passages about the life of Jesus.
65. Susan Ross:  
It is a string of beads, literally, which is an aid to prayer. So, the Rosary historically was developed by St. Dominic who is the founder of the Dominicans.
66. Graphic: Immaculate Conception
67. Jon Nilson:  
Well, the Immaculate Conception, once again, is a technical term. And it refers to that conviction of Catholic faith, that in virtue of the salvation, accomplished in Christ, Mary, the mother of Jesus unlike us, is preserved from the devastation of original sin, from the very first moment of her existence. It is as if the salvation that we all hope for, the liberation that we all hope for and look toward, has already been accomplished for Mary in virtue of her vocation, to be the mother of Jesus.
68. Graphic: Celibacy
69. Susan Ross:  
Celibacy is a discipline. And in fact, the Apostles themselves were married. As far as we know, Peter's mother in law is talked about. It wasn't until the middle ages that clerical celibacy became the rule.
70. Father Don Brick, Discalced Carmelite Friars  
It is not anything where we are deprived of anything in our life. It is actually a giving of our life to Christ.
71. Sister Kathleen Ann Skrocki, Sisters of the Resurrection  
I wanted to be a sister since I was in first grade. And it was just because I loved God so much. My mother told me it meant you were married to God. And I thought, "Oh, I love God so much I want to marry him."
72. Graphic: The Roman Catholic Church Today
73. Narrator:  
Current media reports give the impression that clergy sexual abuse is the only issue in the Roman Catholic Church today. What doesn't show up on the evening news is a phenomenon known as Catholic Renewal.
74. Costigan:  
We certainly think of Vatican II as having initiated a period of renewal that is a reawakening to the faith, to the need for energetic devotion, to the faith and to good causes.
75. Narrator:  
St. John Neumann Catholic Church in St. Charles, Illinois is a thriving parish of 12,000.
76. Father Bob Hoffman, St. John Neumann Catholic Church, St. Charles, Illinois  
Well, this parish was founded in 1977 and it is approaching its 30<sup>th</sup> year anniversary. And

it has had only two pastors. There has been a lot of continuity. We are a Catholic community. A people in partnership, celebrating the experience of Jesus Christ. And so our staff and our parishioners and myself, we try to have that team approach and to be invested and celebrate our Catholicism in the context of God's people. A people of faith. It wouldn't happen if it just depended on myself or the staff. So we have a high involvement of lay Catholics who really make it happen. I just kind of orchestrate, bring it about, support it, but the people do a lot to really make it happen.

77. Brian Tully, Member, St. John Neumann, St. Charles:

St. John Neumann is kind of a unique parish. Especially in St. Charles. We have looked around. I am a cradle Catholic. Born in the Catholic Church. Baptized, confirmation. It is a great community. It is a large parish. But once you get involved in activities you find that the parish becomes a lot smaller. And there are really some great people here. And great leadership. It is a great place to bring your family. And really a great place to worship as well.

78. Bob Hoffman:

Here at St. John Neumann we have six liturgies. One on Saturday evening and then five the next day. So we have the contemporary. We have the early morning quiet mass. We have the children's mass.

79. Farrell:

There are all kinds of new forms of commitment. People may not be going into a convent or into a monastery, but in their lives, in their families, in their professions, there is a very deep and committed and even communitary kind of existence together. They come together in groups or associations.

80. Narrator:

Relevant Radio, a Catholic broadcasting network, is another new phenomenon fueled by renewal.

81. Dick Lyles, CEO Relevant Radio:

Relevant Radio was founded in December of 2000. So it is really relatively new. It was founded by Mark Follett, who is our chairman of the board and several other devout Catholics in Green Bay, Wisconsin who were committed to bringing the Catholic message and Catholic teaching to the public at large. Catholics like many Christian denominations had a lot of confidence in their faith thirty, forty, fifty years ago in the mid 1900's. And because of that confidence didn't think it was necessary to take advantage of modern media to get their message out.

In the first five years of our operation we managed to get 31 stations on the air in thirteen states reaching a potential 26 million listeners. And so what we want people to do is to have a better understanding of the Catholic faith, a better understanding of our teachings. To be able to discuss it and talk about it in a safe forum where they don't need to worry about somebody who is not Catholic misinterpreting things or getting the wrong message out.

82. Amberly Krogh, Assistant Producer, Morning Air:

There has been a shift. That there really is really is more of a focus on the new evangelization, especially in the past probably, fifteen or twenty years where people have

- really started to focus on that as a result of Vatican II.
83. Rob Kaczmark:  
All right, this is Rob Kaczmark, your host of Spirit Juice right here on Relevant Radio. We are going to bring you a song right now, it is called, Cheer up Charlie.
84. Bernie Czwiniski, Producer, Spirit Juice, Relevant Radio.]  
Spirit Juice is a program for young Catholic kids. It is the word of God. It is the word of Jesus Christ through rock and roll, hip hop, music that they are familiar with. It is their musical genre.
85. Dick Lyles:  
I think Relevant Radio is definitely riding the wave of Catholic renewal. Particularly since 2000. There was a turning point in 2000 when there is a real rebirth if you will, of spirituality in this country. A large portion of that is Christian and specifically Catholic in nature. We are just having a spiritual reawakening. And I think Relevant Radio is definitely a part of that. What we are seeing now is a generation of people that are really hungry to learn about their faith and to get reacquainted with their faith, reunited with it, get in touch with it, and live it in a very vibrant way.
86. Narrator:  
Another way to illustrate Catholic Renewal is the work of the Knights of Columbus. The Knights of Columbus is an American Catholic men's fraternal benefit society. Founded in 1882 by Father Michael J. McGivney, the Knights offer financial aid to the sick, widows, orphans and the disabled.
87. Jim Bednar, Illinois State Council Knights of Columbus:  
We are not just Church, but we are community. And community is those who need us the most. Here in Illinois the Knights of Columbus are supporters of the Special Olympics program. We support the winter games and the summer games. Winter games in Galena and the summer games in Bloomington. We also support the park in Normal, Illinois for the special Olympians.
- Narrator:  
The Knights of Columbus has grown from several members in one council to more than 12,000 councils and 1.7 million members throughout the world.
88. Graphic: Christian Unity
89. Narrator:  
Jesus prayed for Christian unity. For that prayer to become a reality, individual Christians must learn to listen to, understand and love one another.
90. Most Reverend Patrick J. McGrath, Diocese of San Jose, Californian:  
Well I think we need to be in conversation with one another. We have the same savior, the same Christ. And I think that the more that we are in conversation and dialogue with each other, the more will understand each other. And in the end, bring about the unity that I think all of us hope to achieve.

91. Most Reverend Timothy A. McDonnell, Diocese of Springfield, Massachusetts:  
The Church is made up of human and divine. And human beings can make mistakes. So, individuals have made mistakes throughout the ages. And because of that, both Catholics and protestants are coming to an understanding of what the mistakes of the past were and how we can go forward for the future.
92. Jon Nilson:  
The current state of our divisions and our separations is profoundly misleading. The churches are currently living a lie in so far as their separated state does not convey the unity which they share in terms of their fundamental commitments and convictions. I want to say that we are on the road toward eventual reunion. And I think that our differences, yea, we have got to deal with those. But maybe we need to be thinking much more about our likenesses.
93. Farrell:  
I have great hope that with the development and growth of the mutual approach to the search for Christian Unity, that many of the barriers and perceptions with which we continue to live can be broken down. And then we can see how deeply united we are to one another in our common baptism. The things that divide us, yes they divide and have their negative effect on us. But they are minimal compared with the enormous grace of God that brings us together and unites us.