



Sunday Q&A

Your Faith in Focus

BEING CATHOLIC MATTERS

Why Should I Be Catholic and Not Just Christian?

What's the main difference between the Catholic Church and Protestant denominations or non-Catholic churches?

Fr. Mike Schmitz
answers, "Authority."

He says, "Many of us don't like authority. We're like 'Yuck, authority! That doesn't sit right with me.' I would say this: The Church can teach us. The Church teaches authoritatively. The Church can teach us in the name of Jesus, in the power of the Holy Spirit, and in the glory of God the Father. Authority means that the Church can tell us, 'This is true, and this is not true.' The Church can establish doctrine."

Authority Is Visible

Fr. Mike goes on to say, "I'm not talking about some invisible kind of universal body of believers. I'm talking about the Church that Jesus himself founded in Matthew chapter 16.

"Jesus looks at Simon and says, 'Simon, your name is now Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell will not prevail against it.' Jesus goes on to say, 'I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven.'

"Now, here's the interesting thing that you may or may not know," Fr. Mike says.

"Jesus came to establish the kingdom, right? But it's not an invisible kingdom. Why?

"Because when he says to Peter, 'I give you the keys to the kingdom,' he's referencing the book of the prophet Isaiah. In Isaiah, there's the king obviously, but there's also the prime minister, the one who is the overseer.

When the king is gone, this person is in charge. This person has the authority of the king.

It says that in Isaiah chapter 22. And it's almost word for word what Jesus gives Peter, the keys to the kingdom of heaven. He gives the Church a visible structure and an actual hierarchy.

"Jesus says you can teach now. Teach in my name. The Holy Spirit will lead you to all truth. And this is exactly what happens."

"Jesus came to establish the kingdom, right? But it's not an invisible kingdom."

Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saints by Raffaello Sanzio



Ponder and Pray

- What do you love about your Catholic Faith?
- What do you find challenging about being Catholic?
- How do you relate to the authority of the Church as it comes from Christ?

Make It Your Own

Read Matthew 16:15–20 and reflect on who Jesus is, who the Church is, and who you are in that equation. Answer these questions here.

Dive Deeper

Scan this code to listen more:



Or go to: <https://media.ascensionpress.com/2024/04/26/why-be-catholic-and-not-just-christian-from-fr-mike-schmitz/>

Fr. Mike Schmitz serves as director of youth and young adult ministry for the Diocese of Duluth, is the host of the podcast *The Bible in a Year*[®], and contributes to Ascension Presents, from which this reflection was adapted.

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