

ROMAN CATHOLIC THEOLOGY IN COMPARISON TO THE THEOLOGY OF THE REFORMERS

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	Roman Catholic	Luther	Calvin	Zwingli	Church of England
Pope & Role of the Church	Pope is the successor of St. Peter, Bishop of Rome. Church and state are separate, but the state must respect the Church and must be obedient to God's laws.	Luther became the head of the Church. Strong supporter of the state.	Calvin became the head of the Church. Advocated a theocracy governed by the presbytery.	Zwingli became the head of the Church. Advocated a theocracy.	King (or Queen) of England is the head of the Church.
Original Sin	Original sin weakened the human condition, weakening the will and darkening the intellect.	Original sin left mankind depraved; the individual lost free will and all works were sinful; only the predestined were saved.	Same as Luther. Also believed in radical predestination -- a person is predestined for heaven or hell before even being born.	Same as Luther. Advocated predestination.	A mixture of Catholic and Lutheran theology.
Sacraments	Christ instituted seven sacraments (Baptism, Holy Eucharist, Penance, Confirmation, Holy Orders, Matrimony, and Anointing of the Sick) which convey His grace.	Denied all sacraments except Baptism and the Lord's Supper. However, maintained other rituals, but did not consider them sacraments. Sacraments are external signs.	Denied all sacraments. Such rituals were simply symbols, but did not give grace.	Denied all sacraments.	Categorized the sacraments as two major (Baptism and Holy Eucharist) and five minor (all others).

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Bible	The Bible has 73 books (46 in the Old Testament and 27 in the New Testament).	Removed 7 books of the Old Testament (Wisdom, Sirach, I & II Maccabees, Judith, Baruch, and Tobit).	Followed Luther.	Followed Luther.	Followed Luther.
Tradition	Besides the Bible, Tradition serves as another source of revelation. Tradition is the handing on, the understanding, and the teaching of the faith since the time of the apostles. An example of a teaching of Tradition is the Nicene Creed.	Denied the use of Tradition. Advocated "sola scriptura" -- scripture alone.	Denied the use of Tradition. Advocated "sola scriptura" -- scripture alone.	Denied the use of Tradition. Advocated "sola scriptura" -- scripture alone.	Denied the use of Tradition, except the Creeds.
Purgatory	Rooted in the Old Testament understanding of the purification of the soul, anyone who dies fundamentally loving God and sorry for sin, will be first cleansed of sin before entering Heaven. Since we freely choose to sin, God holds us accountable for that sin; however, God mercifully forgives sin and cleanses our soul so that we may gain entry into Heaven.	Since free will was denied and predestination accepted, purgatory was denied.	Because of radical predestination, denied purgatory.	Denied purgatory.	Denied purgatory.

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Holy Eucharist	Through the power of the Holy Spirit and the priesthood of Christ entrusted to His priests, at Mass, bread and wine are transformed into the Body and Blood of Christ. This change is called transubstantiation. Christ is truly present in the Holy Eucharist. After Communion, the Holy Eucharist is reserved in the tabernacle.	Believed in consubstantiation -- the bread and wine are transformed into the Body and Blood of Christ while remaining bread and wine. After the Communion Service, the Eucharist returns to being just bread and wine.	Denied the Real Presence of Christ in the Holy Eucharist.	Denied the Real Presence of Christ in the Holy Eucharist.	Denied transubstantiation, but do believe in the real presence.
Mass	The Mass is a sacrifice which participates in the everlasting and everpresent reality of Christ's sacrifice and resurrection.	Denied the Mass as a sacrifice; believed in a "communion service" which was a memorial meal.	Denied the Mass as a sacrifice. Composed a service of Bible readings, a sermon, and the distribution of bread from a plain table as a memorial of the Last Supper. Had a communion service four times a year.	Denied the Mass as a sacrifice. Composed a service of Bible readings, a sermon, and the distribution of bread from a plain table as a memorial of the Last Supper.	Denied the Mass as a sacrifice; believed in a "communion service" which was a memorial meal.
Priesthood	Christ gave the Sacrament of Holy Orders to His apostles. This authority has been handed down through the ordination of bishops (apostolic succession), who in turn ordains priests. A priest offers the sacrifice of the Mass.	Denied sacrificial priesthood. Used the term pastor or minister.	Denied sacrificial priesthood. Used the term pastor or minister.	Denied sacrificial priesthood. Used the term pastor or minister.	Denied sacrificial priesthood. Used the term pastor or minister.

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Saints	Catholics venerate saints (including Mary, Mother of our Lord) but do not worship them. Catholics ask for the prayers of these saints in Heaven, which is no different than asking someone here on earth for prayers.	Abandoned the honoring of saints. However, maintained a respect for the Blessed Mother.	Condemned the honoring of saints.	Condemned the honoring of saints.	Forbade any notion of asking the saints for prayers, but maintained a respect for the example they provide.
Sacred Art	Allow religious images (crucifixes, statues, paintings, icons, etc.) to represent the Lord or saints. These images are not worshipped, but are visible reminders to help foster devotion.	Allowed some religious art work.	Forbade the use of any religious objects; considered such things as idolatrous.	Forbade the use of any religious objects; considered such things as idolatrous.	Allowed some religious art work.