

# Review of: "Catholicity in thirteen words"

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Review of "Catholicity in Thirteen Words."

Author: Pablo Blanco

Reviewer: Susana Gómez Gutiérrez

Dear Pablo,

Overall, in my view, your article is a helpful and well-thought introduction to fundamental Christian beliefs, particularly Catholicism. The refreshing way you present each of these beliefs is very engaging, especially for young people. In what follows, I will only give you a few impressions that could help to improve your paper.

1. As the reviewer Camilo Peralta points out, I wonder why thirteen beliefs. Is there some reason to emphasize that number? Why not twelve or fifteen? If there is some justification, you should present it to the readers.
2. If I understand it well, your intention in writing this paper is not only to summarize the Catholic faith but also to be provocative. I consider that the best way to be provocative would be to problematize the beliefs that you expose. In the following paragraphs, I will give a few examples of questions that could be raised to achieve that objective.
  - a. Creation: In this paragraph, you say that the theory of Creation and the theory of the Big Bang are compatible. How can a totally physical event be compatible with a totally intentional one characterized by love and sense?
  - b. In the last sentences of that paragraph, you say that evil comes from the devil and human free will. My question is about the first part of your idea: that evil comes from the Devil. Does that mean that there are two kinds of forces in the world, one good that comes from God and another bad that comes from the Devil, and that God does not have the power to control the force of the Devil? Wouldn't that mean that God is not omnipotent?
  - c. The Bible: You say that we know that God inspires the Bible because of the coherence between the different writings. But what the Gospels show is a series of inconsistencies. One example is the narrations of the resurrection. If we follow your terms, isn't it proof that the Bible is not inspired by God? How could a believer make compatible those apparent inconsistencies? I have written something about this in my paper: "Contradictions and Rationality: An Analysis of Two Biblical Cases." *Beyond Faith and Rationality, Essays on Logic, Religion and Philosophy*, Springer, 2020.
  - d. The Incarnation: The doctrine of the Incarnation says that God became a man in Jesus Christ. Does that mean Jesus has two natures, one divine and one human? And if that, does that mean we can apply contradictory predicates to Him,

like being immortal and mortal? Does that mean that Jesus is a contradictory being? I have written something about this in my paper “Contradictions and Rationality in the Context of the Doctrine of the Incarnation.” Forthcoming in Springer. You can find a not post-accepted version of this paper in my Academia.

- e. Person: In this paragraph, you suggest that if we do not accept the Trinity, we would be monotheists, just like the Jews or the Muslims. Does that mean that Catholics are polytheists? I consider that if it is not your intention to affirm that, this sentence should be reformulated. On the other hand, one of the questions that the Trinity raises is how to make the oneness of God compatible with the multiplicity of Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit. Do you have some suggestions regarding that?
- f. The Church: According to the Fathers of the Church, “Christ is the sun, but the Church is the moon that reflects the light of the sun.” How can we affirm this, considering that, as we can see, the Church is an imperfect institution? Does that mean that Christ is imperfect too?
- g. Grace: What do you refer to when discussing “Grace”? This question could lead to interesting discussions as well as the relationship between grace and works, which has been so relevant in the divisions between Protestants and Catholics.
- h. Truth: “Truth” is a characteristic commonly applied to sentences, propositions, etc. What does Jesus mean when he says that He, a person, is “the Truth”?
- i. Love: At some point in this paragraph, you seem to establish a relationship between love, human dignity, and eternal destiny. What kind of relationship would that be? What ethical consequences do you have in mind that could be drawn from this relationship?