

Because of the Apostles

Every Sunday we say: "We believe in one, holy, catholic, and **apostolic** Church." That we are the only Christian church or denomination started by Christ Himself by the sending of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost to the Apostles. "The Church, 'the pillar and bulwark of the truth,' faithfully guards 'the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.' She guards the memory of Christ's words; it is she who from generation to generation hands on the apostles' confession of faith." (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 171)

Every other denomination is of merely human origin. Started by a human being in imitation of the one, true Church Jesus Christ started on Calvary when "blood and water flowed out" from his side. (Jn 19:34) Every other denomination was started by someone other than Christ for reasons that were more human than divine and more personal than willed by God.

That doesn't make them all bad, simply not containing everything handed on by Christ and the Apostles and thus incomplete and missing key elements. That also does not mean we forget all the human messiness that has been part of the Catholic journey over the last 2,000 years. We are a divine institution guided by the Holy Spirit through humans who have not always listened and not always followed God's plan. Christ has still preserved and protected His Church and remains in it. The fact we have survived is strong proof that God is still with us.

It is sad that so many have "jumped ship" and that sometimes we have been a causal factor when they have jumped. Still at the end, we are the **only** Church Christ established.

St. Peter and St. Paul had major arguments during their day. Neither left the church. Neither started their own church. They stayed and ministered and worked within the Church.

Martin Luther was a Catholic monk and priest who eventually left and started his own denomination—not only for theological reasons, but for political, cultural, and economic reasons as well. King Henry VIII started his own denomination over some theological issues, but mostly over political issues and issues of authority. Part of that was that he wanted to divorce his wife and marry his mistress. Those denominations still exist today, but change their doctrine according to human thought and public opinion. The Episcopal/Anglican Communion is much divided over core beliefs that have recently been changed by U.S. leaders.

"The Church is apostolic. She is built on a lasting foundation: 'the twelve apostles of the Lamb' (Rev. 21:14). She is indestructible (cf. Mt 16:18). She is upheld infallibly in the truth: Christ governs her through Peter and the other apostles, who are present in their successors, the Pope and the college of bishops." (869)