

The Church being the custodian of the teachings of Jesus Christ, has under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, whom Jesus promised to send for this very purpose, the Advocate who will teach and guide that we will be told only the Truth.

The Church claims infallibility in Faith and Morals. In the administrative functions, which are the domain of humans, there could be errors of judgement, but God gives the chance to remedy them, and also allows to show, that the ultimate control of the whole Community of Believers, is in the hand of God. To prove this, he has sent so many trials and tribulations and victories over these. One has only to open the annals of history to understand this.

Here below are some of the subjects of interest which you may come across.

[Divorce \(in Moral Theology\)](#)

[Doctors of the Church](#)

[Dogma](#)

Among the early Fathers the usage was prevalent of designating as dogmas the doctrines and moral [precepts](#) taught or [promulgated](#) by the Saviour or by the [Apostles](#); and a distinction was sometimes made between Divine, Apostolical, and

[ecclesiastical](#)

dogmas, according as a

[doctrine](#)

was conceived as having been taught by Christ, by the

[Apostles](#)

, or as having been delivered to the

[faithful](#)

by the

[Church](#)

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[Virtue](#)

According to its etymology the word *virtue* (Latin *virtus*) signifies manliness or [courage](#).

"Appellata est enim a viro virtus: viri autem propria maxime est fortitudo" ("The term virtue is from the word that signifies man; a man's chief quality is

[fortitude](#)

"; Cicero, "Tuscul.", I, xi, 18). Taken in its widest sense virtue means the excellence of perfection of a thing, just as vice, its contrary, denotes a defect or absence of perfection due to a thing. In its strictest meaning, however, as used by moral

[philosophers](#)

and

[theologians](#)

, it signifies a habit superadded to a faculty of the

[soul](#)

, disposing it to elicit with readiness acts conformable to our rational nature. "Virtue", says Augustine, "is a good habit consonant with our nature." From Saint Thomas's entire Question on the essence of virtue may be gathered his brief but complete definition of virtue: "habitus operativus bonus", an operative habit essentially good, as distinguished from vice, an operative habit essentially

[evil](#)

. Now a habit is a quality in itself difficult of change, disposing well or ill the subject in which it resides, either directly in itself or in relation to its operation. An operative habit is a quality residing in a power or faculty in itself indifferent to this or that line of action, but determined by the habit to this rather than to that kind of acts. (See

[HABIT](#)

.) Virtue then has this in common with vice, that it disposes a potency to a certain determined activity; but it differs specifically from it in that it disposes it to good acts, i.e. acts in consonance with right

[reason](#)

. Thus, temperance inclines the sensuous

[appetite](#)

to acts of moderation conformably to right

[reason](#)

just as intemperance impels the same

[appetite](#)

to acts of excess contrary to the dictates of our rational nature.

[Morality](#)

The relation of morality to religion has been a subject of keen debate during the past century. In much recent [ethical](#) philosophy it is strenuously maintained that right moral action is altogether independent of religion. Such is the teaching alike of the Evolutionary, Positivist, and Idealist [schools](#). And an active propaganda is being carried on

with a view to the general substitution of this independent morality for morality based on the

[beliefs](#)

of Theism. On the other hand, the

[Church](#)

has ever affirmed that the two are essentially connected, and that apart from religion the observance of the moral law is impossible. This, indeed, follows as a [necessary](#) consequence from the [Church's](#) teaching as to the nature of morality. She admits that the moral law is knowable to reason: for the due regulation of our free actions, in which morality consists, is simply their right ordering with a view to the perfecting of our rational nature. But she insists that the [law](#) has its ultimate [obligation](#) in the will of the Creator by whom our nature was fashioned, and who imposes on us its right ordering as a [duty](#); and that its ultimate sanction is the loss of [God](#) which its violation must entail. Further, among the [duties](#) which the moral law prescribes are some which are directly concerned with [God](#) Himself, and as such are of supreme importance. Where morality is [divorced](#) from religion, reason will, it is [true](#), enable a man to recognize to a large extent the ideal to which his nature points. But much will be wanting. He will disregard some of his most essential [duties](#). He will, further, be destitute of the strong motives for obedience to the [law](#) afforded by the sense of [obligation](#) to [God](#) and the [knowledge](#) of the tremendous sanction attached to its neglect — motives which experience has proved to be [necessary](#) as a safeguard against the influence of the passions. And, finally, his actions even if in accordance with the moral law, will be based not on the [obligation](#) imposed by the Divine will, but on considerations of human dignity and on the good of human [society](#). Such motives, however, cannot present themselves as, strictly speaking, [obligatory](#)

. But where the motive of [obligation](#) is wanting, acting lacks an element essential to [true](#) morality. Moreover, in this connection the [Church](#) insists upon the [doctrine](#) of [original sin](#)

. She teaches that in our present state there is a certain obscurity in reason's vision of the moral law, together with a morbid craving for independence impelling us to transgress it, and a lack of complete control over the passions; and that by reason of this inherited taint, man, unless supported by Divine aid, is unable to observe the moral law for any length of time.

[Newman](#) has admirably described from the [psychological](#) point of view this weakness in our grasp of the moral law:

[Utilitarianism](#)

Utilitarianism is a modern form of the [Hedonistic ethical theory](#) which teaches that the end of human conduct is [happiness](#), and that consequently the discriminating norm which distinguishes conduct into right and wrong is pleasure and pain. In the words of one of its most distinguished advocates, John Stuart Mill,

The direct effect of this thought is the mess the world is in today. Pornography is "good", because it gives "pleasure". Smashing complete cities with depleted uranium bombs is "good" because "our national security" demands it. Running "sweat shops" is "good" because it gives me the "pleasure" of a good life. That is why it is also called Relativism. What is good for you, is bad for me. What gives pleasure to you, gives pain to me. Thus this system can not be good, because it is not **JUST**. That is why we had a French and Russian Revolution. The rise of Fidel Castro. Rise of Capitalism and Communism. Finally, the downfall of Wall Street and world economy !

