



The word Doctrine means teaching. So, in order to understand Doctrine, we must learn about the teaching authority of the Church. The Catechism states, "The task of interpreting the Word of God authentically has been entrusted to the Magisterium of the Church, that is, to the pope and to the bishops" (CCC 100). In other words, the Magisterium is the Teachings of the Church and the interpretation of what has been revealed to us by God, either through Scriptures or Tradition. The Church uses the word "Doctrine" to refer to all Teachings that concern matters of *Faith and Morals*. The pope is infallible concerning his teachings of Faith and Morals. Therefore these teachings, or Doctrines, must be adhered to with the obedience of faith by all Catholics (CCC 891). Doctrine is unchangeable.

DOCTRINE

VS

DOGMA

Dogmas are Truths that are revealed by God, whereas Doctrines are Teachings interpreted by the Magisterium. In summary, all Dogmas are Doctrine, but not all Doctrine is Dogma. The Catechism states, "In Catholic doctrine, there exists an order or hierarchy of truths since they vary in their relation to the foundation of the Christian faith" (CCC 52). In this "hierarchy of truths", Dogmas exist at the highest level. For this reason, the Catholic faithful are expected to believe these Truths, and not doing so would result in heresy. Dogmas can be defined in two ways, the pope can define Dogma, or it can be defined by an ecumenical council. If the pope is the one defining the Dogma, it is an ex-cathedra promulgation. Ex-cathedra translates to "from the chair" and it refers to the pope making a decision with the full authority of his office.

examples of DOCTRINE

- The Resurrection
- The Holy Trinity
- The male-only Priesthood
- The Beatitudes
- The 10 Commandments
- The Sacraments
- The Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy
- The Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit

examples of DOGMAS

- Papal Infallibility
- The Divinity of Christ
- The Immaculate Conception
- The Assumption of Mary
- The real Presence of the Eucharist
- The existence of original sin
- The immortality of the human soul