

- Its authority features are the opinion of the church, tradition, the Scriptures, and the pontifical office.
- Its claim is descendance from the Apostles via Peter and the unbroken line of apostolic succession.
- Until Vatican II the Roman institution was very much the product of the Council of Trent and many of its most promoted doctrines were inculcated into its structure at that time.
- But with Vatican II there was a release of a number of these dogmas with the result that the Roman church of 1986 is mechanically different from the organization of 30 years ago. I do not think this has helped much but it has been a celebrated step in ecumenism.
- At present the Roman church sends delegates to many non-Roman conventions and permits her clergy to entertain some types of activity with non-Roman clergy. In this arena is the charismatic movement that has touched the church of Rome.
- But at present the Roman system is still a sacramental saving system which we think is not a saving system at all. As with many other bodies you may encounter people within it for whom you have no solid reason to doubt a conversion experience but this is in spite of the official dogma, not due to it.

b. Orthodox bodies

We do not say much about these in the Seminary as they have not been a great influence in western life. But it is a good idea to know something of them and we present only the briefest summary at this point. Basically the following may be noted:

- The Authority feature is that of tradition, church tradition (understanding) and the Scriptures. There is no single infallible political office or person.
- Its claim is apostolic succession through the creeds of the church councils.
- There are several divisions within Orthodoxy. The Oriental Orthodox constitute a body of several fashions with the old monophysite ideas.