Inventions by the Catholic Church
and the dates of their adoption over a period of 1650 years

Because often times terms are used that may be unclear, explanations have been provided in the footnotes.

1. Prayers for the dead 300 A.D.
2. Making the sign of the cross 300
3. Wax candles, about 320
4. Veneration of angels and dead saints, and use of images 375
5. The Mass, as a daily celebration 394
6. Beginning of the exaltation of Mary, the term “Mother of God” first applied to her by the Council of Ephesus 431
7. Priests began to dress differently from laymen 500
8. Extreme Unction
9. The doctrine of Purgatory, established by Gregory I 593
10. Latin Language, used in prayer and worship, imposed by Gregory I 600
11. Prayers directed to Mary, dead saints and angels, about 600
12. Title of pope, or universal bishop, given to Boniface III, by emperor Phocas 607
13. Kissing of the pope’s foot, began with pope Constantine 709
14. Temporal power of the popes, conferred by Pipin, king of the Franks 750
15. Worship of the cross, images, and relics, authorized 786
16. Holy water mixed with a pinch of salt and blessed by a priest 850
17. Worship of St. Joseph 890
18. College of cardinals established 927
20. Canonization of dead saints, first by pope John XV 995
21. Fasting on Fridays and during lent 998
22. The Mass, developed gradually as a sacrifice, attendance made obligatory in the 11th century 1079
23. Celibacy of the priesthood, decreed by pope Gregory VII 1090
24. The Rosary, mechanical praying with beads, invented by Peter the Hermit 1090
25. The Inquisition, instituted by the Council of Verona 1184
26. Sale of Indulgences (see definition below) 1190
27. Transubstantiation, proclaimed by pope Innocent III 1215
28. Auricular (out loud) Confession of sins to a priest instead of to God, instituted by pope Innocent III, in Lateran council 1215
29. Adoration of the wafer (Host), decreed by pope Honorius III 1220

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1 Extreme Unction “the sacrament of anointing the sick in the Rom. Cath. Ch.” (Webster’s Dictionary, p. 463)
2 Temporal “pertaining to the present life, worldly.” (Webster's Dictionary, p. 1325)
3 Canonization to declare (a dead person) officially as a saint. (Webster's Dictionary, p. 193)
4 Inquisition “a formal special tribunal, engaged chiefly in combating and punishing heresy” (Webster's, p. 675)
5 Indulgences “a partial remission (by the Roman Church) of the temporal punishment that is still due for sin after absolution. (Webster's Dictionary, p. 666)
6 Transubstantiation “the changing of one substance into another. 2. (in the Eucharist) the conversion of the whole substance of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, only the appearance of bread and wine remaining. (Webster’s Dictionary, p. 1368)
7 Adoration “the act of paying honor, as to a divine being; worship” (Webster's Dictionary, p. 18)
30. **Bible forbidden to laymen**, placed on the Index of Forbidden books by the council of Toulouse 1229
31. **The Scapular**, invented by Simon Stock, an English monk 1251
32. **Cup forbidden to the people** at communion by Council of Constance 1414
33. **Purgatory** proclaimed as a dogma by the Council of Florence 1439
34. **The doctrine of Seven Sacraments** affirmed 1439
35. **The Ave Maria (Hail Mary)** (part of last half finished 50 years later) 1508
36. **Jesuit order** founded by Loyola 1534
37. **Tradition declared as equal authority with the Bible** /Council of Trent 1545
38. **Apocryphal books** added to the Bible by the Council of Trent 1546
39. **Creed of pope Pius IV** imposed as the official creed 1560
40. **Immaculate Conception** of the Virgin Mary, proclaimed by pope Pius IX 1854
41. **Syllabus of Errors**, proclaimed by pope Pius IX, and ratified by the Vatican Council, condemned freedom of religion, conscience, speech, press, and scientific discoveries which are disapproved by the Roman Church, asserted the popes temporal authority over all civil rulers. 1864
42. **Infallibility of the pope** in matters of faith and morals, proclaimed by the Vatican Council 1870
43. **Public Schools condemned** by pope Pius XI 1930
44. **Assumption** of the Virgin Mary (bodily ascension into heaven shortly after her death), proclaimed by pope Pius XII 1950
45. Mary proclaimed **Mother of the Church**, by pope Paul VI 1965

This list of Catholic Inventions compiled by:

Definitions/ Explanations in footnotes provided by:


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8 The Scapular “either of two small cloth pieces joined by strings passing over the shoulders, worn under clothing as a badge of affiliation with a religious order or as an act of religious devotion.” (Webster’s Dictionary, p. 1156)
9 Purgatory “(esp. in Roman Catholic belief) a place or state following death in which penitent souls are purified of venial sins or undergo the temporal punishment still remaining for forgiven mortal sins and thereby are made ready for heaven. 2. Any condition or place of temporary punishment, suffering, or expiation. (Webster’s, p. 1058)
10 Apocryphal books “1. A group of books not found in Jewish or Protestant versions of the Old Testament but included in the Septuagint and Roman Catholic editions of the Bible; 2. various religious writings of uncertain origin; 3. Writings or statements of doubtful authenticity.” (Webster’s Dictionary, 62)
11 Immaculate Conception “(Mary) was redeemed (given salvation) from the moment of her conception.” (Catholic Catechism, article 491)
12 Infallibility “immune from fallacy, or error in expounding matters of faith and morals.” (Webster’s Dictionary)
13 Assumption “Finally, the Immaculate Virgin, preserved free from all stain of original sin, when the course of her earthly life was finished, was taken up body and soul into heavenly glory…” (Catholic Catechism, article 491)
14 "(Mary) committed no sin of any kind during her whole earthly life" (Catholic Catechism, article 411)