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Catechism Focus

The Catechism of the Catholic Church is the official teaching of the Catholic Church. It is a summary of the faith and morals of the Catholic Church, and it is the basis for the Catechism of the Catholic Church. The Catechism of the Catholic Church is the official teaching of the Catholic Church. It is a summary of the faith and morals of the Catholic Church, and it is the basis for the Catechism of the Catholic Church. The Catechism of the Catholic Church is the official teaching of the Catholic Church. It is a summary of the faith and morals of the Catholic Church, and it is the basis for the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

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A Holy People, a Holy Place

Goals

This chapter explores the Church as both a community of believers and the place where the community assembles for worship. The various parts of a church that have special meaning for our Catholic worship, and the various roles and ways that members of the Church can participate in liturgical worship are also explained. This will help the students better understand the true nature of the Church as a believing and worshipping community.

Objectives

Your students will:

1. Define the terms *altar*, *ambo*, *ambry*, *baptistry*, *Blessed Sacrament*, *cathedra*, *holy oils*, *liturgy*, and *tabernacle*.
2. Describe Saint Francis of Assisi's unique role and call from God to "rebuild" the Church.
3. Identify various ways they could build up the Church of today at home, at school, and in their communities and neighborhoods.
4. Explain the word *liturgy* and the various ways that people participate in the liturgy.
5. Identify the main parts of a church and explain their purpose.

Catechism Focus



The presentation on the Church and the liturgy in this chapter elaborates on and applies these teachings of the Catholic Church found in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* to the life of the youth:

- "Where Is the Liturgy Celebrated?" (1179–1186)
- "Celebrating the Church's Liturgy—Who Celebrates?" (1136)
- "The Celebrants of the Sacramental Liturgy" (1140–1144)
- "Singing and Music" (1156–1158)

Overview

This chapter explores the meaning of the mystery of the Church. The Church is the new people of God. The church is also the building, the place where the People of God gather.

Liturgy is the "work of the people." The Church joins to celebrate with Jesus Christ as its Head. Each of us is called to participate in the liturgy fully, actively, and consciously.

There are numerous roles that the members of the worshiping assembly have: Presider, Lector, Cantor, and extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion, and altar servers, or acolytes.

The presider, or celebrant, leads the assembly in worship. The Lector proclaims the Scriptures, the word of God, to the community. The cantor adds to the prayer of the community through leading the assembly in song and music. The extraordinary minister of Holy Communion assists the priest in the distribution of the Eucharist.

The physical environment of a Catholic church includes many key elements and symbols. The altar is the central part of the church, where the community gathers to celebrate the Eucharist. The ambo is the place where the Word of God is proclaimed. The presider's chair is the symbol of the priest's office of leading the assembly in worship.

There are also other elements in a church that have special significance. The baptistry is the place where new church members are baptized. The tabernacle is where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved. The sacred oils are kept in the ambry, which is usually located near the baptistry. The place where people go to celebrate God's loving forgiveness in the sacrament of Penance is called the chapel of Reconciliation, Reconciliation room, or confessional.

Lesson One: The Story of Saint Francis of Assisi

Opening Prayer Reflection

Read 1 Peter 2:4-6 slowly and prayerfully. After reading this Scripture passage spend some time in prayer. Invite the youth to meditate on their role in the Church today.

Activity "What Do You Think" (page 19)

Allow students time to complete this activity. Have students share some of their images of the church. Students will probably come from a wide variety of parishes, so this could be a very interesting discussion.

Read "Opening Story" (page 19)

Have students read the story. Give them a brief history of Saint Francis of Assisi: He lived in the Middle Ages between 1182-1226. He belonged to a fairly wealthy family before abandoning it all to start one of the mendicant communities. Add other details about the life of Saint Francis from biographical or historical sources.

Discuss

Have students answer the question at the bottom of page 19. Then discuss the various ways they could build up the Church today in their parish, at school, at home, and in the neighborhood. Write their ideas on the board. Compare their ideas with the ideas given in the student workbook that show how Francis built up the Church of his day. Recall the opening Scripture reading from 1 Peter 2:4-6, which refers to us as living stones in the Church. Ask the students: Is the church a building or is it the people in the building? Emphasize with the students that if we are living stones, then we are the Church, which is a "living Church."

Video



Understanding the Catechism: Liturgy and Sacraments, Video segment 2: "Church: Living Our Faith." Watch this segment of the video with your students. Distribute copies of the video discussion guide, which is found on page 26 of this guide, and lead the group in a discussion of this segment.

Assign

Assign the reading of this chapter to the students. You may wish to divide the reading into sections, depending on your specific circumstances.

Closing Prayer Reflection

To conclude this lesson, prayerfully read the "Prayer of Saint Francis" found on page 28 of the student workbook.

Lesson Two: The Worshipping Assembly (pages 20–23)

Catechism Focus



This lesson will focus on paragraph 1136 of the *Catechism*, which describes and defines liturgy. Paragraphs 1140–1144 explain the ministers of the sacramental liturgy and their various roles in the liturgy.

Opening Prayer Reflection

Ask all the students to form one large circle. Then have one of the students read Matthew 18:20. Silently stand and meditate on the presence of God.

Discuss

Begin by asking students to list on the board the various roles that people take in the celebration of the liturgy. Ask: Who do you know that performs any of these roles? Which of these are you presently or have you ever performed during the liturgy?

Present

Have the students read the quotation from the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* found on page 20 of the student workbook. Make sure that they understand the meaning of liturgy, which is found in paragraph 1136 of the *Catechism*.

Again ask one student to read the description of the early Church in Ephesians 5:18–20 found on page 20 of the student workbook. Ask: What does this call us to do in our parish churches? How does this compare to what is done in your parish church?

End this presentation by reading Saint Augustine's description of the liturgy found on page 20 of the student workbook. Compare what each of these quotes tells us about the celebration of the liturgy.

Activity "What the Documents Say" (page 21)

Ask the students to read and respond to the questions found in this section. Discuss the responses as a group. Two interesting questions to focus on are: How important is knowledge about what is going on to participating fully, actively, consciously in the liturgy? How has reading the descriptions of early church liturgies changed your ideas about the liturgy?

Present

Refer to the list on the board of the various roles that people have in the liturgy, which was compiled at the beginning of the class. Ask students to describe and explain specifically what that role entails. Be sure that the following roles are explained: Presider, Lector, cantor, altar server (or acolyte), extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion. Refer to the student workbook, pages 21–24, to help you explain these roles.

Activity "Reflection" (page 23)

Explain why various forms of Christian piety exist in the Church. Then allow students to respond to the questions. Invite students to share their answers.

Closing Prayer Reflection

As was done at the beginning of class, have students form one large circle. Prayerfully read Isaiah 56:7-8. Spend some time in quiet prayer.

Lesson Three: The Place of Worship and Prayer (page 24-27)

Catechism Focus



This lesson will focus on paragraphs 1179-1186 in the *Catechism*, "Where Is the Liturgy Celebrated?" Each of the major objects of the church is described.

Opening Prayer Reflection

Remind the students that Baptism incorporates us in the Church, the Body of Christ. We are a holy people, a living Church made of living stones (see 1 Peter 2:5).

Almighty and eternal God,
in Christ your Son
you have shown your glory to the world.
Guide the work of your Church:
help it to proclaim your name,
to persevere in faith
and to bring your salvation to people everywhere.
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

*The Liturgy of the Hours: Additional Prayer 4,
Weekdays in Ordinary Time.*

Recall and Review

Recall the story of Saint Francis of Assisi from lesson one and what his special mission was at a time when the Church was in need of reform and conversion. He was called not only to rebuild a physical church, but also to build up the entire Body of Christ.

Present

Have the students refer back to the list of images that they found in their parish church and listed in the activity on page 19. Compile a list on the board of the images that students listed. Make sure that these terms are

included on the list: *altar, ambo, presider's chair, baptistry, tabernacle, tabernacle light, holy oils, and chapel of reconciliation*. Ask students to explain these terms, using the information on pages 24–27 in the student workbook.

Optional Scripture Study

Have the students look up the following references to altars in the Scriptures: Judges 6:25, Joel 2:17, and Psalm 26:6. Ask: What do these readings tell you about the importance of altars for the Jews? What does the altar symbolize for you?

Optional

Assign the students to visit a church and write detailed descriptions of the various objects covered in this lesson. If students are artistic, they can draw some of the objects or symbols they find. Or they can draw the layout of the church and describe the location of the various objects. If any students are interested in photography, they might do a photo project. Some students might choose just one object, like the altar, and visit several churches to compare details.

Activity "The Way of Jesus" (page 25)

Discuss the various symbols that are found in church and have the students bring in pictures that exemplify some of these symbols. Discuss and compare the benefits of each style of symbol. Discuss the cultural differences in the symbols.

Activity "Reading the Bible" (page 27)

Read the four Gospel accounts of Jesus cleansing the Temple of the money changers. Compare and contrast the events in each story. Give students time to answer the questions in their student workbook. Discuss with them what they think is the meaning of the actions of Jesus in this event.

Closing Prayer Reflection

Begin this reflection by reading from Saint John Damascene: "The beauty of the images moves me to contemplation, as a meadow delights the eyes and subtly infuses the soul with the glory of God." Invite the youth to spend some time in prayer, and then write in their journals how the environment of their parish church reflects the glory of God.

Important Terms to Know

As a final review of the chapter, invite the students to use the terms in "Important Terms to Know" on page 28 of the student workbook to illustrate their understanding of their identity as Catholics.

Chapter Summary

Use the "Chapter Summary" to reinforce the major points of the chapter and to elicit and respond to any unanswered questions the students might have.

Exploring Our Catholic Faith

Use these exercises throughout the presentation of the chapter. They are designed to help the students reinforce, apply, and extend the concepts developed in the chapter.

Quiz

The quiz for chapter 2 is found on pages 27-28 of this guide.

Answers:

I. Matching—1. ambo, 2. liturgy, 3. holy oils, 4. liturgy, 5. Blessed Sacrament, 6. cathedral, 7. tabernacle, 8. ambry, 9. baptistry, 10. altar.

II. Short Answer—

1. Students might mention joining in the prayers and songs, serving as a Lector, extraordinary minister of Holy Communion, or altar server, or acolyte.
2. Students might mention a hospitality ministry, greeting the person next to you, and participating in the Sign of Peace.
3. Students might mention square and rectangular shapes for the altar, and symbols of wheat, grapes, lambs, and the cross.
4. Students will answer in their own words; but they should stress the fact that the Church is the new People of God.

Name _____

Discussion Guide

1. What will it take for our Church to be a strong welcoming community in the twenty-first century?

2. What will it take to be a strong worshipping community?

3. What is your greatest hope for the Church in the modern world?

Name _____

I. Matching

Choose the correct word from the word bank and write it in the space before the appropriate definition. Some words are used more than once.

altar	baptistry	holy oils
ambo	Blessed sacrament	liturgy
ambry	cathedral	tabernacle

- _____ 1. place where the word of God is proclaimed.
- _____ 2. a Greek word that means "work of the people."
- _____ 3. Oil of the Sick, Oil of Catechumens, Sacred Chrism.
- _____ 4. gathering of the Christian community for prayer.
- _____ 5. consecrated Bread and Wine.
- _____ 6. the chair in which the bishop sits when he presides at liturgy.
- _____ 7. the place where the consecrated eucharistic Bread is reserved.
- _____ 8. the place where the holy oils are kept.
- _____ 9. the place where infants and adults are baptized.
- _____ 10. table around which the liturgy of the Eucharist is celebrated.

II. Short Answer

Write several sentences to answer each of these questions.

1. What are some ways individuals can actively participate in the liturgy?

2. What are some ways to make people feel welcome in Church?

altar	body oils
ambo	holy oils
anointing	holy oils
anointing	holy oils

3. What is the altar a symbol of? Describe two symbols that are used to decorate altars. Why are they used?

4. When you hear the word *Church*, what do you think of—a building or people? How is the Church both a building and people?