

# Contents on to the Teacher's Wraparound Edition

Introduction to the Teacher's Wraparound Edition .....	v
Introduction: Our Catholic Faith .....	2
Part I: We Believe: The Apostles' Creed .....	13
1. Our Loving God: Father and Creator .....	16
2. Jesus Christ: Lord and Savior .....	40
3. The Holy Spirit and the Blessed Trinity .....	70
4. The Church: The Body of Christ .....	96
5. Communion of Saints, Forgiveness of Sins, Eternal Life .....	126
Part II: We Hope: Celebrating the Christian Mystery .....	155
6. The Sacraments of Initiation .....	160
7. The Sacraments of Healing and Ministry .....	184
Part III: We Love: Our Life in Christ .....	211
8. The Basics of Catholic Morality .....	214
9. Christian Moral Life: The Beatitudes and Ten Commandments .....	236
10. Prayer .....	264
Catholic Handbook for Faith .....	284
Resource Section .....	285
Handouts .....	
Chapter Tests .....	

For the high school religion teacher is fortunate. As Catholics, we can teach this to teenagers coming to this course with each of the varied backgrounds. Pope John Paul II explained how in the apostolic exhortation *Catechesi Tradendae*:

"Catechesis should help Christians to be, for their own part, the workers of all 'right' and 'well.' Unfortunately this demands that catechists should strengthen them in their identity and that it should continually separate them from the surrounding atmosphere of indifference, indifference and hostility." (20)

Thus, as religion teachers, we must help students to be light and salt by strengthening them in their identity. And what is this identity? Certainly, in the many faces of the human person, the society often at our elbow people, Jesus reveals the Christ Jesus that will proceed to a unique, irreplaceable creation of a living God with many gifts to develop and discern in service for others. This, in fact, prepares a student for an abundantly happy eternal life of holiness in union with our loving, Triune God. Our students also increasingly hear the story of truth about who they really are. They need to hear and experience God's unconditional love.

And where can they hear this message as we welcome them from an "atmosphere of indifference, uncertainty and hostility"—the natural state of our task? We believe they can hear this message in the Catholic Church where Christ and His Holy Spirit dwell. In the Church, all people can receive the Good News of salvation, truths that will set us free and keep us on the path to eternal life. The Church offers the holy sign and words that will unite us to Christ and enable us to live grace-filled lives, as well as a rich tradition of prayer that will help us in our spiritual journey to the Father.

The focus of our work, we are the main window to what the Church teaches and who the Church is. They must hear and experience "the love Jesus has for us" but as representatives of the Church, connected with Christ's faith, we also have the task of helping our students learn and live according to the foundational teachings of the Church. We hope they can do this with no confidence and enthusiasm because they are called to be holy others, disciples of the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and they are called that will follow the second with the love of Jesus Christ and help preserve it from the danger caused by temptation, often poverty, and the debilitating effects of sinning. God's beautiful responses to them to use rather than as people to be loved and cherished.

# 4 The Church: The Body of Christ

## Overview of the Chapter

With the scandals in the Catholic Church hitting the headlines and airwaves in an unprecedented way in recent years, religious educators and others who have given their lives to the Church often feel great sadness. But recall the image of St. Boniface who compared the Church to a great ship being pounded by incessant waves. The challenge is not to abandon ship, but to work all the harder to keep it on course. Catechists do their part to stay the course by inviting students to become a vital part of the Church and help steer it to the future. Our young people also belong to the Church. They are its future. The gifts that the Holy Spirit has showered on them will help the Church weather its current problems.

The chapter begins by asking students to reflect on their image of the Church. It then defines the Church as a worshipping community, a local gathering, and the worldwide gathering of believers—all of whom “belong to the Lord” and are “called out” by him. Following the lead of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (754–757), the chapter then examines the Church as a mystery of God’s love, which is, at the same time, a visible society and spiritual community, organized hierarchically and the mystical body of Christ, an earthly community with heavenly riches. Various images are presented as multifaceted ways to begin to understand this mystery: Bride of Christ, pilgrim, flock, and vineyard. But four images predominate in this section of the chapter: Church as Sacrament, Church as People of God, Church as Body of Christ, and Church as Temple of the Holy Spirit.

Chapter 4 then turns to membership in the Church (hierarchy, laity, those in consecrated life) and its various ministries that derive from sharing in Christ’s role as prophet, priest, and king. The prophetic role of the Magisterium and papacy are discussed in some detail in this section. Then, the ideal characteristics already present in the Church but not yet fully revealed are examined. These are the four traditional “marks” of the Church: one, holy, catholic, and apostolic (see *CCC*, 813–865).

The topic of ecumenism is a fitting way to conclude this chapter. In this section, the Church’s teaching about non-Christians and the Protestant and Orthodox Churches is presented, including the question of salvation outside of the Church. In many ways this section is the culmination of the question guiding the entire chapter: what makes the Catholic Church distinct from other communities, other denominations, and other religions?

## The Church: The Body of Christ



## Resources

### Audiovisual Materials

AD

Re-creates the turbulent years following the Death of Christ. Acclaimed TV mini-series depicts the years AD 30–69. Comes with a 52-page study guide for a twelve-week course (three tapes, 360 minutes, Ignatius Press).

#### *Entertaining Angels*

Tells the story of Dorothy Day’s life as an activist Marxist journalist who converted to Catholicism and devoted her life to serving the poor (111-minute video, Ignatius Press).

#### *Faith Unconquered*

Chronicles the roots of the early Church after Jesus’ Resurrection. Details the lives of four Christian martyrs who lived in Rome during these years, including that of St. Clement (52-minute video, Questar).

#### *Great Souls: Mother Teresa*

Shot on location and told from the viewpoint of those who knew Mother Teresa, this inspiring story shows how God can use one person to do good in the most troubling of circumstances (56-minute video, Ignatius Press).

#### *Great Souls: Pope John Paul II*

Traces the life and character of one of history’s greatest popes (56-minute video, Ignatius Press).

You are the salt of the earth. . . . You are the light of the world. . . . Your light must shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father.

—Matthew 5:13, 14, 16

#### CHAPTER 4 OUTLINE



**Where Christ Is, There Is the Church**  
The Church is the Body of Christ, the Church is the Church.



**What Is Church?**  
A church is a building, a church is a community, a church is a church.



**More Descriptions of the Church**  
The Church is the Body of Christ, the Church is the Church, the Church is the Church.



**Membership and Ministries in the Church**  
Church is a community, a church is a church, a church is a church.



**Marks of the Church**  
The Church is the Body of Christ, the Church is the Church, the Church is the Church.



**Ecumenism: The Church and Other Religions**  
The Church is the Body of Christ, the Church is the Church, the Church is the Church.

## Chapter Four

### Audiovisual Materials continued

#### *Inside the Vatican*

A beautifully scripted and filmed inside look of how the Vatican works on a day-to-day basis. Narrated by Martin Sheen. Students watch this excellent production rather attentively (90-minute DVD, National Geographic Film, Critics' Choice, Ignatius Press).

#### *Malcolm X*

A 1992 biographical film about African American activist Malcolm X (202-minute DVD, Amazon.com).

#### *Monasteries*

Features seven Christian monasteries around the United States, depicting the life of prayer of various orders of monks (45-minute video, Ignatius Press).

#### *Peter & Paul*

The acclaimed film that traces the adventures of these two towering figures. Study guide is available (195-minute DVD, Amazon.com).

#### *Remember the Titans*

A *Rudy*-like football film that shows how unity is achieved despite racial tensions and diversity. Could exemplify the Church's marks of oneness and catholicity (114-minute feature film, Ignatius Press, Critics' Choice, Amazon.com).

#### *The Twelve Apostles*

Who were these humble tradesmen Jesus chose? Depicts how the Twelve took the message of Jesus around the world after the Resurrection (100-minute video produced by the History Channel, Ignatius Press).

## Chapter Outline

- Where Christ Is, There Is the Church
- What Is Church?
- More Descriptions of Church
- Membership and Ministries in the Church
- Marks of the Church
- Ecumenism: The Church and Other Religions

## Advance Preparations

Assign the Ongoing Assignments early in the chapter to allow the students enough time to complete their work.

### Where Christ Is, There Is the Church (ST pages 96–98)

- A video clip on the persecution of the Church for the Video Presentation on page 99.

### What Is Church? (ST pages 98–100)

- Religious objects and a paper bag for a game of twenty questions for the Class Activity on page 100.
- Magazines to be used to create a collage for the Individual Activity on page 102.
- A video clip of the Pope on his travels around the world (e.g., *Great Souls: Pope Paul II* on page 96) for the Video Presentation on page 100.
- Arrange access to a computer lab for the *Researching Rural Issues* Background Information on page 101.

### More Descriptions of Church (ST pages 100–105)

- Arrange for a guest speaker from the school counseling department for the Guest Speaker activity on page 104.
- Copies of articles from the Catholic Relief Services website ([www.crs.org](http://www.crs.org)) for the Extending the Lesson Group Discussion on page 104.

### Membership and Ministries in the Church (ST pages 106–112)

- Arrange for a catechumen or recent neophyte to speak to the class for the Guest Speaker activity on page 109.
- A box for prayer intentions for the Prayer Experience on page 111.

### Marks of the Church (ST pages 112–116)

- Art materials, including markers, crayons, and magazines, for the Class Activity on page 116.
- A piece of music for the Prayer Experience on page 117.
- Arrange for a guest speaker from a diocesan office, a religious order, or a former lay missionary for the Guest Speaker activity on page 115.

### Ecumenism: The Church and Other Religions (ST pages 117–120)

- Copies of Chapter 4; Handout 1 "The Church as Sacrament Pop Quiz" (starting on page 285 and also online at [www.avemariapress.com](http://www.avemariapress.com)) for the Individual Assignment on page 119.

- Copies of phone books or other directories for churches for the Class Activity on page 119.
- A clip from the movie *Malcolm X* for the Video Presentation on page 121.

### Chapter 4 Test Lesson

- Copies of the Chapter 4 Test (starting on page 285 and also online at [www.avemariapress.com](http://www.avemariapress.com)).

## Where Christ Is, There Is the Church (pages 96–98)

### Objectives

In this lesson, the students will:

- create a class definition of the Church based on prior experience and understanding.
- reflect on the obstacles that stand in the way of sharing the Good News.



### Preview

This section is an introduction to the chapter on the Church. The chapter opener offers a thought-provoking analogy of “Basin Theology” that should springboard a discussion of the obstacles to evangelization. This section lays the groundwork for a more complete and theological understanding of the Church.



### Bell Ringers

- **Writing Assignment:** Have students list the names of churches (Protestant and Catholic), synagogues, mosques, or temples if applicable that they pass in their everyday lives. What do they know about the beliefs and practices of these places of worship? In what ways are they similar to Catholicism? In what ways are they different? Do students have friends who worship in these places? Discuss their answers as a class.
- **Group Discussion:** Assign the “Share the Good News” feature (pages 97–98). First, read through the eight descriptions of Church with the students. Next, call on several students to share which two descriptions of Church best fit their idea of Church and explain why. Finally, have the students work in triads to write their definition of Church. Call on representatives to share definitions with the class. Record a sampling of the definitions, working toward a class definition of Church. Note its comparison with the definition of Church on page 96.
- **Class Discussion:** Compare the class definition of Church with the definition in the analogy of Church with a missing “u.” In what way does this analogy fit into the context of their definition?

### Where Christ Is, There Is the Church

A recent convert to Christianity was talking to his pastor. He said, “You know, the practice of our faith really comes down to Basin Theology.”

The pastor was confused and asked, “What do you mean by Basin Theology?”

“Well,” said the new Christian, “do you remember what Pilate did when he had the chance to set Jesus free, a man he knew was innocent? He asked for a basin and then washed his hands, symbolizing that he was denying any responsibility for the Death of Jesus. He did what was expedient and involved no risk to his position or his reputation. He knew what was right but was too cowardly to do it.”

“In contrast,” continued the convert, “recall what Jesus did. At the Last Supper, the night before he died, he also asked for a basin. But he used it to wash the feet of his disciples. He, the Son of God, showed what it means to serve. He set an example for all of us.”

This “Basin Theology” challenges followers of Jesus to choose what their role will be in the Church, the community that Jesus formed to continue his work. Will we be like Pilate, who washed his hands and disdained responsibility? Or will we be like Jesus and get down on our knees to serve others?

This is an important choice because every person has a role to play in Christ’s Church. Consider the word “CH.” CH, “Notice what is missing: U. B. C. You are!” The word Church that is used in the northern European languages is based on the Greek words *kyrie*

*nia*, which we translate “the family of the Lord.” This interesting word shows that one of the most important things to understand about the Church is that it is a family, a family that is meant to carry on the Gospel message and work of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Each person in this family is important and has a role to play.

The family of the Lord needs each of us because the work of the Church is never done. Each generation needs to hear and be invited to respond to the good news of Jesus Christ. Jesus gave this very command to the Church before ascending to Heaven:

Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age. (Mt 28:19–20)

The main way the Church fulfills Christ’s command is through evangelization. The Church is able to do the task of preaching the Gospel because it is a living body of believers who are grafted onto Jesus Christ as branches are to a vine. The Church is Christ’s presence in the world. He is with us to help us carry on his work. As St. Ignatius of Antioch wrote, “Where there is Christ Jesus, there is the Catholic Church.”

Consider again how appropriate the family image is when applied to the Church. Like our own family, the Church loves us, accepts us, and contributes to our development. The Church is also our Mother. Like a good mother, the Church nurtures and sustains us through life. Because of the human element in the Church, sometimes the members of the Church shift their responsibilities,

**evangelization**  
To bring the Good News of Jesus Christ to others.

**Church**  
The body of Christ, that is, the community of God’s people who profess faith in the risen Lord Jesus and love and serve others under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The Roman Catholic Church is guided by the Pope and his bishops.

### For Enrichment

**Writing Assignment:** Have the students create a list of people they depend on each day. Then point out that our lives are a network of relationships of people cooperating to achieve goals. Explain that the Church is like this, too, a network of people who help each other on the journey to God.

### Background Information

#### *The Church Was Foreshadowed from the World’s Beginning*

God created the world for the sake of communion with his divine life, a communion brought about by the “convocation” of men in Christ, and this “convocation” is the Church. (CCC, 760)

#### *The Church throughout the World*

The Vatican II document *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church* says “all the faithful scattered throughout the world are in communion with each other in the Holy Spirit so that ‘he who dwells in Rome knows those in most distant parts to be his members’” (Chapter II, #13).

just like Pilate did. Nevertheless, Jesus' presence in the Church by the power of the Holy Spirit guarantees her ultimate success. It is the Holy Spirit who encourages us to be a vibrant, loving, open, and welcoming Catholic community willing to serve Christ Jesus and other people. We must all ask ourselves these questions: Will we be missing in action or will we imitate our Lord? Which basin will we pick up—the one that shuns responsibility or the one that commits us to serving Christ and others?

This chapter will focus on several aspects of the Roman Catholic Church: a definition, its images (for

example, Mystery, Sacrament People of God, Body of Christ, Temple of the Holy Spirit), its requirements for membership, its ministries, its marks (one, holy, catholic, apostolic), and its reaching out to other Christians in its ecumenical efforts.

The Roman Catholic Church is home to many, including perhaps you. It is a place where we are treated the best and often grumbled the most. As in any family, we are accepted and loved without question. This is the Church.

#### For Reflection

- What would you say to Catholics who get so mad at human failings in the Church that they decide to leave the Church?
- How do you find the Church like a home?



#### Share the Good News

St. Paul, known as the Apostle to the Gentiles, encourages all followers of Jesus Christ to spread the Gospel far and wide. This task doesn't come without great challenges. Satan presents obstacles in our way. In the Letter to the Ephesians, St. Paul draws on imagery from the military to explain ways we can overcome these challenges:

Finally, draw your strength from the Lord and from his mighty power. Put on the armor of God so that you may be able to stand firm against the tactics of the devil... Therefore, put on the armor of God, that you may be able to resist on the evil day and, having done everything, to hold your ground. So stand fast with your loins girded in truth, clothed with righteousness as a breastplate, and your feet shod in readiness for the gospel of peace. In all circumstances, hold faith as a shield, to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. With all prayer and supplication, pray at every opportunity in the Spirit. To that end, be watchful with all perseverance and supplication for all the holy ones. (Eph 6:10–11, 13–18)

Examine how well you are preparing to defend the Good News of Jesus against the obstacles that stand in your way. Read each of the descriptions below. Choose and share examples of any two on the list that you are doing well. Then, comment on two you do not do as well. Reflect on and explain things you can do to improve in those areas.

1. Draw your strength from the Lord. I turn to Jesus in good times and in bad. I ask for his help.
2. Put on the armor of God. I go to Mass and receive Holy Communion every Sunday and every Holy Day of Obligation. I turn to the Sacrament of Penance for forgiveness.

## Teaching Approaches

- **Class Discussion:** Read or summarize the introductory text on pages 96–97. Ask one of the students to describe the meaning of “Basin Theology.” Discuss which group most teens fall into: Pilate, who washed his hands and dodged responsibility, or Jesus, who washed his disciples’ feet and served others?
- **Direct Instruction:** Relate the opening quotation from Matthew 5:13–14, 16 with the definition of evangelization on page 96. Ask the students how evangelization involves letting their “light shine” before others (page 102).
- **Journal Assignment:** Review the feature “Share the Good News” about St. Paul, the “Apostle to the Gentiles.” Have students read this section and then choose two ways of sharing the Good News that they are doing well and two that they could improve. Remind the students of the concept of “Basin Theology” and ask them to relate this concept to the activities described in this feature.

## Extending the Lesson

**Video Presentation:** Show a clip of a video on the persecution of the Church (see, for example, *Faith Unconquered*, on page 96). An understanding of the scope of persecution throughout history is helpful for students who are challenged to spread the Good News today. It also reveals the resiliency of the Church.



## Homework Assignment

1. Read the text section “What Is Church?” (pages 98–100).
2. Note all the Ongoing Assignments on pages 121–122. Plan to participate in Assignment 5 with classmates and complete any one of the other assignments individually.

## Background Information

### *The Unity of the Church*

The Church knows that she is joined in many ways to the baptized who are honored by the name of Christian, but do not profess the Catholic faith in its entirety or have not preserved unity or communion under the successor of Peter. Those “who believe in Christ and have been properly baptized are put in a certain, although imperfect, communion with the Catholic Church.” *With the Orthodox Churches* (ital. in CCC), this communion is so profound “that it lacks little to attain the fullness that would permit a common celebration of the Lord’s Eucharist.” (CCC, 838)

# What Is Church? (pages 98–100)

## Objectives

In this lesson, the students will:

- explain the ways in which the Church is a mystery.
- illustrate and describe the meaning of the images of the Church.
- evaluate definitions of the Church.

## Preview

This section introduces students to some of the definitions of Church. Because Church is a mystery, there is no one definition or image that can completely describe its meaning. This section provides a foundation for the more specific and theological discussion of Church to follow.

## Bell Ringers

- **Class Activity:** Play a game of twenty questions related to items associated with being Catholic or with a Catholic Tradition: for example, rosary beads, a holy card, a parish bulletin, a book about a saint, a religious medal. Hide the item in a paper bag. Divide the class into two sides of the room. Show the item to one team and allow them to field “yes or no” questions from the other side. Score points based on the amount of questions it takes to guess the item (e.g., twenty points if guessed after one question to one point if guessed after twenty questions).
- **Class Discussion:** After the activity, discuss with the students how some of these items reveal the richness of the Tradition of the Catholic Church. Note that many of these items are called “sacramentals” because they represent a deeper reality that is a part of the Church’s faith but not quite fully sacraments, which actually bring about what they represent.

## Teaching Approaches

- **Direct Instruction:** Review the opening paragraph descriptions of the word Church as “family of the Lord” or “belonging to the Lord.” Highlight the three ways Catholics use the word Church today on pages 98–99:
  - The Church is a community of Catholics who assemble to worship.
  - The Church is a local gathering of Catholics in a particular neighborhood.
  - The Church is a worldwide gathering of those who have faith in Jesus Christ.
- **Journal Assignment:** In many parts of the country, geographic parish boundaries are no longer observed as closely as in the past. Ask students to write in their journals about their family’s decision to belong to a parish, if their family participates in parish life. Why did their family choose that parish? What do they see as the strengths of their parish?

3. Stand fast in truth. I am unafraid of the consequences of being an honest person as Jesus was when he admitted to Pilate his true identity.
4. Clothed in righteousness. I am a dependable person. I keep my commitments. Others know me as reliable.
5. Feet shod in readiness for the Gospel of peace. I willingly share my belief in Jesus Christ with other people.
6. Faith is my shield. I believe in Jesus’ promise to be with me always.
7. Helmet of salvation and sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. I sincerely desire to know more about my faith.
8. Pray at every opportunity in the Spirit. I pray every day. I ask the Holy Spirit for his strength to live a Christian life.



### What Is Church? (CCC, 751–752, 777)

Recall that the word *church* is derived from the Greek words for the “family of the Lord.” Another way to translate this same word is “belonging to the Lord.” This is an apt description when we consider that Jesus Christ is the head of his Body, the Church, and we are its members. We “belong to the Lord” because we are attached to him the way an arm is to the body. As the head of the Church, Jesus gives his Body direction and vision. And it is the Holy Spirit who is the soul of the Church. The Spirit lives in the baptized and showers on them the gifts we need to be holy, alive, and Christlike. Indeed, without Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, there would be no Church.

Church also translates the Greek word *ekklesia*, meaning “those called out, convocation, or assembly.” Old Testament authors used this term for God’s Chosen People. Being chosen means having a special task or mission. Christians are chosen to worship and to proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord, to live a sacramental life of holiness, and to join in a life of fellowship and service for the sake of God’s Kingdom.

“I am going to church.” “My church is St. Patrick’s.” “We are the Church.” These three expressions reveal how Catholics use the word church today. Each of these expressions has a rightful place:

- The Church is the community of Catholics who assemble to worship. Catholics do this in a unique way when they come together to celebrate the Eucharist.

## Extending the Lesson

**Video Presentation:** Show a clip of a video of the Pope on his travels around the world (e.g., *Great Souls: Pope John Paul II* on page 96). Footage of a World Youth Day event can also be particularly powerful for students. Help the students reflect on the presence of the Church in the larger world, including people of almost every country on earth.

**Guest Speaker:** If you have a peer ministry program at your school, invite a peer minister to speak to your students. You might also invite a junior or senior who is active as a leader in his or her home parish. Ask them to include the idea of *ekklesia*, or being called out with a special mission, as part of the presentation. How did the young person decide to be a leader? How does he or she see this as a part of being a follower of Jesus, a member of the Church?

## For Enrichment

**Student Presentations:** Many parishes began as ethnic parishes, a haven where immigrants could find support and speak their own language. In many cities, Catholic churches were built close together, each parish serving a different immigrant group. This is why many parishes are forced to close or consolidate today. As immigrant groups moved to the suburbs, the inner-city ethnic parishes dwindled in numbers. Have students research more about their parish or church’s foundation and history and present their findings to the class.

Receiving Holy Communion, Catholics are united to the Lord so that they can become the Lord for others.

- The Church is the local gathering of Catholics in a particular neighborhood. For most of us, this means our parish.
- The Church is also the worldwide gathering of those who have faith in Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit unites people around the world into the People of God, under the leadership of the Pope and bishops.

#### The Church as a Mystery of God's Love (CCC, 758-760, 880)

In the previous chapter, the term *mystery* was used to describe the Blessed Trinity. Divine mysteries, like the Trinity, both reveal and conceal God's ways, which are not our ways, yet in these mysteries God has somehow blessed us with the truth of his divine plan. The Church is another mystery of our faith. She is both a means and a goal of the great mystery of God's love for us. Each Divine Person of the Blessed Trinity was involved in preparing for the Church and helping her come into existence.

God the Father created the world so that human beings could be united with the Blessed Trinity. Creation, therefore, foreshadowed the Church. The Father prepared for the Church in Old Testament times when he called Abraham and formed a people Israel was the sign of the Church that was to come.

In God's own time, he sent the Son to accomplish his plan of Salvation. As part of this plan, *Jesus Christ established the Church*—a direct result of preaching the coming of God's reign and his own Paschal Mystery of selfless love. The Church celebrates the Paschal Mystery of Salvation in its sacraments, especially the holy Eucharist. The Church, built by

Christ on Peter and the Twelve Apostles, "is the Reign of Christ already present in mystery" (*The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*, No. 3, quoted in CCC, 763).

Finally, the Holy

Spirit came on Pentecost to make the Church holy and to lead her in its mission of preaching the Good News of Salvation to all people. The Holy Spirit gives us—both the Magisterium and each Catholic—the gifts we need to do what Christ commanded, that is, to "[p]roclaim] and [e]stablish] among all peoples the Kingdom of Christ and of God" (*The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*, No. 5, quoted in CCC, 768). Thus, each Person of the Blessed Trinity had a role in the planning of the Church and in her coming into historical reality.

St. Augustine defined *mystery* as "a visible sign of an invisible grace." Pope Paul VI described the Church as a reality filled with God's hidden presence. Both of these definitions point to two essential ingredients in the Church: the human and the divine, the visible reality that we can see along with the spiritual reality that brings us God's life. With the eyes of faith, we proclaim that in the Church, Heaven and earth come together. The Church is at the same time:

- a visible society and a spiritual community,
- a society organized hierarchically and the mystical Body of Christ,
- and an earthly community blessed with heavenly riches.



*mystery*  
A reality filled with God's invisible presence. This term applies to the Blessed Trinity's plan of Salvation in Jesus Christ, the Church that is His Body, and the sacraments.

If student families are not involved in a parish, the same question can be asked about participation at the school.

- **Direct Instruction:** Continue with the text subsection "The Church as a Mystery of God's Love" (pages 99–100). Review the descriptions of mystery and Trinity from the previous chapter. Note roles of the each Person of the Holy Trinity in establishing the Church.
- **Class Discussion:** Direct students to the For Reflection questions on page 100. Possible points of discussion may include:
  - The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* says, "Grace is *favor*, the *free and undeserved help* that God gives us to respond to his call to become children of God, adoptive sons, partakers of the divine nature and of eternal life" (1996). The Church is one of the concrete ways in which God helps us respond to his call, encouraging and supporting us, pointing the way to a life lived with God.
  - The Church is made up of human beings, inspired by God and trying to follow God. Some concrete ways in which the human and divine meet are the sacraments, where God touches people, often at critical times in their lives; the teaching of the Church, where the Holy Spirit inspires, particularly through the infallible teachings of the Pope; the corporal and spiritual works of mercy; and work for social justice, bringing the reign of God into present-day life.

- **Class Discussion:** Review the image of Church as the *Bride of Christ*. Have students brainstorm the qualities of a good marriage. Invite students to tell stories about people they know who have strong marriages. Ask students to explain ways in which Jesus' relationship with the Church is similar to the relationship between spouses (love, care for one another's welfare, knowing the other person well, being willing to sacrifice for the good of the spouse, lifelong commitment, etc.).
- **Journal Assignment:** Review the image of Church as *pilgrim*. Explain the idea of pilgrim and pilgrimage to students. Ask them to list in the journals the ways in which we would live differently if we were conscious of being pilgrims. How would this awareness change our attitude toward material things? Success or failure in academics or careers? What makes it difficult for us to remember this image in our society?
- **Direct Instruction:** Review the image of Church as a *farm*. Brainstorm with students all the tasks that are involved in tending a garden in your area. If anyone in the class has experience with a farm, have them describe the work involved in growing



## Homework Assignment

1. Complete the For Review questions on page 100.
2. Read the text section "More Descriptions of Church" (pages 100–105).
3. Begin a log of the sufferings—big and small—that are endured daily. Keep the log for one week. See "The Teaching of the Documents" feature on page 102.

## Background Information

### Researching Rural Issues

Your county extension agency, or other Web-based resources, can be useful in providing information on farming and gardening in city schools where students have limited access to this information. If you have access to a computer lab, students could search for information on these topics as a class. Knowledge of rural issues is important for urban students in future work on caring for the environment and other aspects of Catholic social teaching.

and cultivating crops. What are the qualities a farmer or gardener needs to be successful (e.g., diligence; hard work; knowledge of plants, soil, and climate; love for the work; patience; etc.)? How are these similar to the qualities God shows in caring for the Church?

- **Class Discussion:** Review the image of Church as a *vineyard*. Those who tend vineyards and orchards also need to prune in order to bring about maximum yield. Pruning involves cutting away excess growth in order to open a plant or tree to light, to make better use of nutrients, and to produce larger, but perhaps fewer, fruits. Ask students for examples of times when God does similar work in our lives, perhaps taking away something in order to make room for something more important to grow.
- **Individual Activity:** Have students create a collage of the images of the Church on page 100 using pictures from magazines or the Internet. On the back of their collages, have them describe the meaning of each of the images. You might suggest that they begin each description with something like, "The Church is like a . . . because . . ." You might also suggest that students create an illustrated mind-map to describe the images of the Church.

## For Review Answers (page 100)

1. Students should include both the idea of the People of God and the specifically Catholic belief in a group led by the hierarchy. "Church" as a term used to designate a building or a worship service is spelled in lowercase letters.
2. The Church is a mystery because it is a reality—God's presence among us—that exceeds our ability to understand. While we can see the people and the actions of the Church, God's action in guiding and inspiring the Church is beyond our ability to grasp in its entirety.
3. Images may include:
  - *Family* – the Church is intimately connected as a family is connected.
  - *Marriage* – Christ will care for the Church forever, as a bridegroom cares for his bride.
  - *Pilgrim* – the Church is a community on its way to Heaven.
  - *Building and farm* – Christ planted his disciples and continues to cultivate the Church today.
  - *Flock* – the Church is led by Christ, the Good Shepherd.
  - *Vineyard* – Christ is the source of life for the branches (the Church).

Because the Church is a mystery where the human and divine meet, Scripture uses many vivid images to describe the Church; for example, *Bride of Christ*, *pilgrim*, *God's building and farm*, the *flock of Christ*, *Christ's vineyard*, *God's family*, and *our mother*. Each of these adds to our understanding and appreciation of the *mystery of the Church*. For example:

- In the imagery of St. Paul, the Church is in a *marriage union with Christ*. In this union, Christ Jesus is the bridegroom, the Church is the Bride of Christ. The purpose of this wedding between Christ and his Church is to bring us to God and thus make us holy. The Bridegroom loves his Bride

so much that he gave his life for her. He will care for her (the Church) forever.

- The Church as *pilgrim* teaches us that the Church is a community on its way to a final destination—heaven.
- The *building and farm* images remind us that Jesus Christ has planted his disciples and that he still cultivates the Church like a farmer tending his crops.
- The Church as *flock* calls to mind our sacrificing Good Shepherd. It is his voice we must listen to in order to remain safe from perils.
- The *vineyard* image etches that Christ alone gives life and fruitfulness to the branches.

## For Review

1. Explain two translations for the word Church.
2. Why is the Church called a mystery?
3. Name and explain any two images of the Church.

## For Reflection

- What does it mean to say that the Church is "a visible sign of invisible grace"?
- Describe concrete ways the human and divine elements of the Church meet.

## More Descriptions of the Church

In addition to the images of the Church related to mystery, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* highlights four other descriptions of the Church: *Sacrament*, *People of God*, *Body of Christ*, and *Temple of the Holy Spirit*. Following is a brief discussion of each of these descriptions. It is important to remember as you examine each of the descriptions that none of them defines the Church. The images we

use to describe the Church never completely answer the question of what the Church is, either individually or even taken together. Ultimately, the Church remains a mystery, never fully explained or defined.

## The Church Is a Sacrament

(CCC, 774–776, 789)  
Mystery and sacrament are intimately connected. The Greek word for mystery translates to the Latin term *sacramentum*. The term *sacramentum* refers to a

**sacrament**  
An outward (visible) sign of an invisible grace. An efficacious symbol that brings about the spiritual reality to which it points. This term applies to Christ Jesus, the great sign of God's love for us, to the Church, his continuing presence in our world, and to the seven Sacraments.

## Extending the Lesson

## Background Information

### More on the Mystery of the Church

The Second Vatican Council document *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church* (Lumen Gentium) states that "all men are called to this union with Christ, who is the light of the world, from whom we go forth, through whom we live, and toward whom our whole life is directed" (Chapter 1, no. 3).

The mystery of the holy Church is manifest in its very foundation. The Lord Jesus set it on its course by preaching the Good News, that is, the coming of the Kingdom of God, which, for centuries, had been promised in the Scriptures: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand." In the word, in the works, and in the presence of Christ, this kingdom was clearly open to the view of men. The Word of the Lord is compared to a seed which is sown in a field; those who hear the Word with faith and become part of the little flock of Christ, have received the Kingdom itself. Then, by its own power the seed sprouts and grows until harvest time. The Miracles of Jesus also confirm that the Kingdom has already arrived on earth: "If I cast out devils by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you." Before all things, however, the Kingdom is clearly visible in the very Person of Christ, the Son of God and the Son of Man, who came "to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many." (Chapter 1, no. 5)

very special kind of sign or symbol. An ordinary symbol is something concrete (something we can perceive with our senses) that points to another reality. For example, a stop sign uses shape, color, and a word to point to the idea of stopping. However, the stop sign does not cause a driver to stop. Let's say your school mascot is a tiger to represent strength, speed, intelligence, and vitality. But your school mascot does not make the student body strong, fast, smart, or filled with school spirit.

A sacrament is also a symbol, but one different from those described above. A sacrament is an *efficacious* symbol, which means that it brings about what it points to and embodies the very reality that it represents. Hence, a sacrament is a concrete reality that, in some way, it *is* what it represents.

Thus it is accurate to say that Jesus is the *prime sacrament of God's love*. Jesus not only points to God; he is God. He not only symbolizes God's love; he is God's love. He is what he represents. He is the first and most important sacrament of all. "Whoever has seen me has seen the Father" (Jn 14:9). He makes concrete God's love for us. Jesus takes us to the Father by remaining with us in his Body, the Church, where he remains hidden but very active by the power of the Holy Spirit.

A sacrament, because it is a mystery, has both visible and invisible aspects to it. This is true of the Seven Sacraments: each sacrament is a visible or outward sign of God's grace. Sacraments both point to a spiritual reality and actually bring it about. For example, the Eucharist not only signifies communion with the Risen Lord and one another, it really accomplishes it. When we receive the consecrated bread and wine—the Body and Blood of Christ—we come into real union with the Lord and are united in him with one another.

This term *sacrament* also applies to the Church. Because of the presence of Jesus and his Holy Spirit in the Church, it too is a sacrament, a meeting place of Heaven and earth. It is a special sign that both contains and communicates the invisible, divine reality to which it points. The Church is a visible sign of Christ Jesus in our world. A famous quote from the Second Vatican Council says it this way: "The Church, in Christ, is like a sacrament—a sign and instrument, that is, of communion with God and of unity among all men" (*Dignitatis Humanae* on the Church, No. 1, quoted in CCC, 775).

Three important truths are revealed here by our understanding of Church as sacrament:

1. People from all over the world come together in the Church to be united to God. In the Holy Spirit, the Church is joined to Jesus, who takes us to the Father.
2. Because we come together in the Catholic Church, the Church is also a sign of the unity of all humankind. This fact encourages us to give up hate for love, war for peace. Love and sharing help promote unity. Our final goal in life is to be in union with God and each other. The Church is a sign that points to that final union.
3. God uses the Church as an instrument to bring about Salvation to the entire world. Mother Teresa of Calcutta once described herself as a peacemaker in God's hand. The Church is also an instrument God uses to bring about the unity, Salvation, and holiness he desires for all his people. Here it is where the seven individual sacraments come into play. They are the special signs that help bring God's saving love to us. They not only point to the spiritual reality of Salvation—healing, forgiveness, communion with God, and the like—but they also actually bring about these spiritual realities because they are efficacious signs.

People of God (CCC, 781–796; 802–804, 849–854)

People of God is another description of the Church from the Catechism. The People of God is marked by several distinct characteristics:

1. It is of God, not the property of any one people.
2. One becomes a member of this People not by physical birth, but by baptism "of water and spirit."
3. This Church has Jesus Christ as its head.
4. The People of God have dignity and freedom as children of God.
5. The Law the People of God are obliged to follow is the new law of love: "to love as Christ loved."
6. The mission of the People of God is to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world, a beacon of Salvation for all.
7. The destiny of the Church is God's Kingdom, which will be brought to perfection at the end of time.

The People of God are those who are baptized and acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord and Savior. This includes not only those who are ordained (the clergy) or

## More Descriptions of Church

(pages 100–105)

### Objectives

In this lesson, the students will:

- list and explain the images of Church as Sacrament, People of God, Body of Christ, and Temple of the Holy Spirit.
- recognize that mystery and sacrament are intimately connected.
- describe the tasks and challenges of the Church as People of God.
- explain the image of the Church as the Body of Christ.
- describe how the Church is the Temple of the Holy Spirit.



### Preview

This text section is likely to be challenging to students because the images used are quite abstract. For some students, they may also be unfamiliar. The section also provides an opportunity to review and reinforce some of the lessons on the Trinity and the Holy Spirit taught in the previous chapter.



### Bell Ringers

- **Direct Instruction:** Check the students' answers to the For Review questions on page 100. Collect and record as appropriate.
- **Class Activity:** Randomly assign each student the name of a classmate. Have them write a description of the person they have been assigned to, beginning with vague points ("He has brown hair.") and ending with more specific points ("She volunteers at the homeless shelter once per month."). Then, have a few students read their descriptions out loud. Ask the class whether that description completely describes the person. Point out that no matter how we try, we can never completely capture a person in words. In the same way, descriptions of the Church are an attempt to convey the reality of the Church, but they can never completely capture the complexity or beauty of the Church.
- **Writing Assignment:** Have students turn to the For Reflection feature on page 105. Read about the two images presented in the quotations from St. Boniface and the *Catechism*. Have the students create five other similes to describe the Church as they see it. Have the students share their similes in groups or as a class.



### Teaching Approaches

- **Writing Assignment:** Have the students develop an outline of the main points of the subsection "The Church Is a Sacrament" (pages 100–102). When

## Resources



**Internet Links** see [www.avemariapress.com](http://www.avemariapress.com)

## Resources



### Printed Materials

Burns, Robert A., O.P. *Roman Catholicism: Yesterday and Today*. Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1992.

Good analysis of some contemporary developments in the Church by looking at the history of the past four centuries. Balanced treatment.

Cunningham, Lawrence S. *The Catholic Faith: An Introduction*. New York: Paulist Press, 1987.

A college-level text that provides a sound introduction to the Catholic faith.

Dues, Greg. *Catholic Customs & Traditions: A Popular Guide*. Revised and expanded edition. Mystic, CT: Twenty-Third Publications, 1992.

Make sure your school library has a copy of this book. You may wish to assign short research projects out of it and similar books.

Dulles, Avery, S.J. *Models of the Church*. Expanded edition. Garden City, NY: Image Books, 1991.

A classic work on ecclesiology. If there is one book to read on this topic, this is it. *continued on page 109*

they have completed the assignment, allow them to get into pairs to compare their outlines and clarify any misunderstandings.

- **Direct Instruction:** Note the definition of sacrament on page 104 and the connection to *mystery*. Also point out how a sacrament is an efficacious symbol. Have the students share an example. Ask the students to explain how the term “sacrament” applies to both Jesus and the Church.
- **Class Discussion:** Have the students name the Seven Sacraments. For each, have them write the symbols used to celebrate the sacrament and the important reality each symbol represents. (See below for a basic chart.) Discuss with students the ways in which the sacraments bring about a new reality as well as showing the reality that exists. Ask the students to identify how the Church fits into this framework based on the text. They should identify a united people as the symbols of Heaven, salvation, and communion with God.
- **Direct Instruction:** Focus on the text section “The People of God” (pages 101–103). Introduce the characteristics of the People of God on page 101.
- **Group Discussion:** Form four groups for a jigsaw discussion. Give each group responsibility for detailing ways that teenagers can best handle the four tasks and challenges of being a People of God on pages 102–103: message, community, service, and worship. Encourage them to make their suggestions specific to their peer groups. When they finish, have one member from each group join members from each of the other groups to form a group of four. Have them share with their small group what was discussed in their larger group.
- **Direct Instruction:** The description of the Church as the “Body of Christ” may be more familiar to the students. Point out the various types of examples included in this section (e.g., vine, 1 Cor 12:12–13; Christ as the Bridegroom).
- **Writing Assignment:** Have the students examine St. Paul’s treatment of the Church in his letters. Refer to the Knowing Christ through Scripture feature on page 104. Have students read each passage and answer the questions on notebook paper. Collect and review their responses as a class.
- **Guest Speaker:** Arrange for a guest speaker from the school counseling department to speak to students about talents and challenges in the areas of academics and career. Ask the speaker to give students some concrete advice about recognizing and developing their interests and talents, such as thinking outside the box and listening to the feedback of others while still being true to their own desires.
- **Journal Assignment:** In response to the speaker or

## 102 Our Catholic Faith

### laity

All the members of the Church who have been initiated into the Church through Baptism and who are not ordained the clergy or consecrated by the laity participate in Jesus' prophetic, priestly, and kingly ministries.

are in consecrated life, but the laity as well. Therefore, each person in Christ's Church has fundamental dignity. Because we are joined to Christ, we share his priestly, prophetic, and royal office (see pages 107–111). This makes us missionaries, ones sent by Christ armed with the gifts of the Holy Spirit to proclaim the Gospel to the ends of the world: “As the Father has sent me, so I send you” (Jn 20:21). As Catholics, we are to be ambassadors of Christ's love, letting his light shine through. Just as salt flavors food, we are to live in such a way that we enhance the world with our Christian love. The tasks and challenges of the Church's mission as People of God include:

**Message.** We must preach the Gospel in word and deed. Even in today's world of mass communications, some people have not heard the Good News of God's love in Jesus Christ; others have heard it only in a garbled way. The Church must never cease to proclaim that Jesus is Lord, that the Kingdom is present in our midst, that we must repent, believe, and be baptized. This timeless message must always be a central focus of the Church.

**Community.** To be an effective sign of the Gospel, nonbelievers must see it

in action—a community that actually lives its faith, hope, and love. A living Church is like a magnet drawing others to the Good News of Jesus Christ. Love is not optional for disciples of Christ. Jesus commands, “Love one another. As I have loved you, so you also should love one another” (Jn 13:34).

**Service.** It is often said, “Service is the price we pay for the space we occupy.” To occupy a place at Christ's table means Catholics must help one another, especially the least in our midst. Catholics must imitate Christ, who washed his disciples' feet at the Last Supper and gave his life for all people on Calvary. Non-Catholics will find the Church believable especially when Catholics walk the road that Jesus walked—a way of obedience, simplicity, poverty, and self-sacrifice, even unto death.

**Worship.** Worship is a humble admission that God gives us everything: our very life and all the many gifts he has showered on us. He is worthy of our praise, adoration, and gratitude. When we celebrate liturgy, the official prayers and rituals of the Church, we are engaged in the most important work of the Church. (*Liturgy* in Greek means

### liturgy

The official public worship of the Church. The sacraments and the Divine Office constitute the Church's liturgy. The Mass is the most important liturgical celebration.



## The Teaching of the Documents

The Head of this Body is Christ. He is the image of the invisible God and in Him all things came into being. He is before all creatures and in Him all things hold together. . . . All the members ought to be molded in the likeness of Him, until Christ be formed in them.

—Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, No. 7

One way to model Christ is to accept and offer all suffering that comes your way to Christ and his cross. In a notebook or journal, keep a log of the sufferings big and small that you endure each day. Keep the log for one week. At the end of each day write a prayer offering these hardships to God.

Sacrament	Symbols	Reality Represented
Baptism	Water, salt, chrism	New life in grace
Penance	Confession, absolution	Forgiveness, reconciliation
Eucharist	Bread and wine	Nourishment, unity with Jesus
Confirmation	Imposition of hands	Full life in the Holy Spirit
Matrimony	Vows	Union in marriage
Holy Orders	Imposition of hands	Priesthood in the Church
Anointing of Sick	Anointing, oil	Healing of spirit and body

## Extending the Lesson

**Group Discussion:** Catholic Relief Services is the international aid organization for the Catholic Church. They have an excellent website ([www.crs.org](http://www.crs.org)), which is frequently updated. Catholic Relief Services is an impressive example of how the Church is a force for love and peace in the world today. Duplicate one or two articles from the site that illustrate the Church's presence in Asia, Africa, or South America and have students react to them in groups.

"work of the public." God's work of Salvation takes place in the liturgy, especially in the Eucharist, which both celebrates and creates the Church. Liturgy is the source of our union with the Lord and each other. It is the willingness of our love. It inspires us to be other Christs, "to become in deed what we proclaim in creed."

#### Body of Christ (CCC, 787-796, 805-808)

We have all experienced the rewards of a group coming together socially, to work for a common goal, or to support one another after a tragedy. Human solidarity is important. Common and shared efforts by a group of like-minded people can accomplish much; on the other hand, each individual has a role to play with his or her unique talents.

The Church is also a communion of people with God, a "mystical communion," the Body of Christ. At the Last Supper Jesus used this vivid image: "I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit, because without me you can do nothing" (Jn 15:5). The vine gives life to its branches as Christ gives life to his disciples. By the power of the Holy Spirit, Jesus is united closely with the Church. This unity is achieved in a special way in the holy Eucharist. Through the Eucharist, Christ lives in us and we in him. We receive the Body and Blood of Christ Jesus to take him into the world to others.

The Body of Christ imagery for the Church was also used by St. Paul. When Paul (who was also known as Saul before his conversion) was on his way to Damascus to persecute Christians, the risen Lord appeared to him and asked, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me... I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting" (Acts 9:4-5). By hunting down followers of Christ, he had been persecuting the Lord himself. Many years after his conversion, Paul wrote to the Christian converts in Corinth:

As a body is one though it has many parts, and all the parts of the body, though many, are one body, so also Christ. For in one Spirit we were all

baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, slaves or free persons, and we were all given to drink of one Spirit. (1 Cor 12:12-13)

Christ is the head of this body, the Church. We are



its members. Baptism incorporates us into the Body of Christ. The Holy Spirit unites us into a single body where each of us has an important role to play regardless of race, color, nationality, and sex. Being a part of Christ's Body, the Church, stresses the great dignity, value, and worth each of us has. St. Paul also wrote, "Now you are Christ's body, and individually parts of it" (1 Cor 12:27). Because of Christ, we are linked to one another, and in a special way to poor, persecuted, and suffering people. "Christ and his Church... together make up the whole Christ" (CCC, 795).

Each Catholic is important to the health of the Body of Christ. We each have our role to play as prophets, teachers, healers, assistants, administrators, and so forth. Jesus unites himself and his saving acts to our own actions. Though we are one with Jesus, he is still distinct from us. He is the Bridegroom; the Church is his bride.

as an assignment on its own, have students journal about what they envision their role to be within the Body of Christ. What do they have to offer the world on behalf of the Church? What special skills do they bring to spreading the Good News?

- **Class Discussion:** Check the students' progress on the log of sufferings they have experienced in the past few days (from the Homework Assignment on page 100). Point out that there are often lessons in suffering, which are missed if we simply push through it or try to ignore it. Acceptance of unavoidable suffering helps us to be at peace even in the midst of pain. Some students may reveal exceptionally difficult or risky situations in response to this assignment. Be prepared to respond and refer the student to professional resources if appropriate.
- **Direct Instruction:** Review with the students their notes on the Holy Spirit from Chapter 3. Then read or summarize the text subsection "Temple of the Holy Spirit" (page 105).

### Extending the Lesson

**Journal Assignment:** Have the students write in their journals about the gifts they see in themselves. Brainstorm first with students about "categories" of gifts: academic, leadership, physical, musical/artistic, moral, etc. Facilitate a discussion with the students about what they are doing to develop their gifts.

Work with students on the difference between a practical, logical approach to recognizing gifts and the spiritual process of discerning gifts. Discerning involves praying in an open manner, asking God to reveal something to us. Encourage students to take some time in prayer as a way of recognizing their own, perhaps hidden, gifts to the world. Affirm the validity of both the practical and the spiritual approaches; they are complementary, not mutually exclusive.

A truly Christian exercise of gifts involves consciously acknowledging that our gifts have been given to us by God the Father and relying on the inspiration of the Holy Spirit to develop and share them. Have students reread the assigned text concerning Jesus' commissioning for public ministry. Lead a prayer dedicating the classes' gifts to God and asking for strength. The prayer could be:

God,  
Thank you for the gifts and talents you have given me,  
Both recognized and yet unknown.  
Please give me the courage and generosity  
To develop my gifts and share them with those around me.  
Send me mentors and examples  
To show me how I can use them to serve you.  
I ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

### For Enrichment

**Student Presentation:** Have students attend Mass in a parish that serves an immigrant population or a community with a different ethnic background from their own. Have the students present to the class their observations about similarities and differences in their worship experience.

## Knowing Christ through Scripture

### Answers (page 104)

1 Corinthians 15:12–28

- Christ's Resurrection

Romans 5:6–11

- Christ died for us while we were still sinners.

Romans 8:14–17

- We can call God “Abba, Father!”

Philippians 2:5–11

- Humility

Romans 3:21–31

- Grace brings justification.

Colossians 3:5–17

- Christians should do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus.

1 Corinthians 12:12–30

- Although we are all different, each member of the Body of Christ serves a different but equally important role.

1 Corinthians 11:17–34

- There is division within the Corinthian church causing some to eat and get drunk during the Lord's Supper while others go hungry. Paul instructs them to eat before they celebrate the Eucharistic feast.

His love for his bride moves him to send his Holy Spirit to shower us with the gifts we need to be faithful to him, to be effective body-builders, and to be worthy preachers of the Gospel. Although we may be endowed with

different gifts according to the part we are to play, we all have been given the gift of love. It is the greatest gift of all and puts tremendous responsibility on us to do what Christ wants us to do.

### KNOWING CHRIST THROUGH SCRIPTURE

#### St. Paul's Message about Christ and His Church

St. Paul was the early Church's greatest missionary, taking the Gospel to the ends of the Roman Empire and preaching it to the Gentiles. His epistles contain deep and important theological insights into Jesus, Christ and the Church. Among Paul's recurring themes in his writings are the following:

- Jesus Christ is the Savior. He is the Lord of the universe. Our Salvation takes place through him.
- The heart of the Gospel is the Death, Resurrection, and Glorification of Jesus Christ.
- We will participate in the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.
- Salvation is a free gift of God that requires faith. We cannot earn it.
- Christians are bound together in one Body, the Church, of which Jesus is the head. We become sons and daughters to God through Baptism, which unites us with God's Son.
- The Holy Spirit is the life of the Church, who enables us to call God Abba, Father.
- As brothers and sisters of Jesus, we should treat each other with dignity. We must love.
- Following Jesus means that we must suffer for him gladly.

Read the following passages. Identify from the themes above which are being discussed in the particular passage. Then answer the questions.

1 Corinthians 15:12–28

- What is the basis of Christian faith?

Romans 5:6–11

- How did God prove his love?

Romans 8:14–17

- What does the Spirit enable us to do?

Philippians 2:5–11

- What virtue of Christ should Christians imitate?

Romans 3:21–31

- What brings about justification?

Colossians 3:5–17

- How should Christians live their lives?

1 Corinthians 12:12–30

- In what way is each Christian valuable?

1 Corinthians 11:17–34

- What problem was troubling the Corinthians? How did St. Paul solve it?

## Background Information

### More on the Sacramental Character of the Church

In *The Face of Christ in the Face of the Church* (available online at [www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/congregations/csaints/documents/rc\\_con\\_csaints\\_doc\\_20021210\\_martins-rosto-de-cristo\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/csaints/documents/rc_con_csaints_doc_20021210_martins-rosto-de-cristo_en.html)), the sacramentality of the Church and the role of the People of God are explained this way:

The Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen gentium* begins by affirming two basic teachings: “Christ is the light of all nations. Hence this most sacred Synod, which has been gathered in the Holy Spirit, eagerly desires to shed on all men that radiance of his which *brightens* the countenance of the Church. This it will do by proclaiming the Gospel to every creature” (*Lumen gentium*, n. 1). The Conciliar document emphasizes the sacramental character of the Church: she “in Christ, is a kind of *sacrament* or sign of intimate union with God, and of the unity of all mankind.” In speaking of the People of God, the text returns to this concept: “God . . . has established . . . the Church, that for each and all she may be the *visible sacrament* of this saving unity” (*ibid.*, n. 9). (2)

### Temple of the Holy Spirit (CCC, 747; 797–801; 809–810)

The Holy Spirit dwells in the Church, the Body of Christ, to give it life. He is present in the Risen Lord Jesus, the head of the Body of Christ, and in each individual member. The Holy Spirit is the soul of the Church. He builds it up, gives the Church life, and makes each of us holy by uniting us to Christ Jesus. Because of the Spirit's presence, we can call the Church the Temple of the Holy Spirit. This Temple—the Church—is “the sacrament of the Holy Trinity’s communion” with us (CCC, 747); that is, because the Holy Spirit dwells in the Church, the Church both symbolizes and brings

about God’s presence and his union with his people. The Church is the place in which God’s people are united to God and become “perfect, just as your heavenly Father is perfect” (Mt 5:48). The Church is “a people brought into unity from the unity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit” (CCC, 810).

The Holy Spirit works through the Church and its members to continue the work of Salvation. The Spirit uses the sacraments, holy Scripture, and various graces and virtues to help us do good works for others. The Spirit also gives *charisma* (special gifts) to individual Christians who are to use them under the direction of the Magisterium to build up the Body of Christ.

### For Review

1. Define sacrament. How is Christ a sacrament? How is the Church a sacrament?
2. Name four tasks that the Church as the People of God must perform to fulfill their Christ-given commission.
3. Explain the image of the Church as the Body of Christ. How does this image highlight the dignity of each Christian?
4. How is the Church the Temple of the Holy Spirit?



### For Reflection

Consider the following two questions:

The Church is like a great ship being pounded by the waves of life’s different stresses. Our duty is not to abandon ship, but to keep her on her course.

—St. Boniface (ca. 680–754)

The Church has no other light than Christ’s; according to a favorite image of the Church Fathers, the Church is like the moon, all its light reflected from the sun.

—Catechism of the Catholic Church, 748

Compose five other “the Church is like . . .” similes that describe the Church as you see it.



### Homework Assignment

1. Complete the journal log of experiences of large and small suffering.
2. Complete the For Review questions on page 105.
3. Read the text section “Membership and Ministries in the Church” (pages 106–112).
4. Continue working with classmates on Assignment 5 of the Ongoing Assignments (pages 121–122). Also, continue work on the individual Ongoing Assignments that you chose.

### For Review Answers (page 105)

1. A sacrament is an outward sign of an invisible grace. Both Christ and his Church are sacraments because they are visible and tangible, they point us and draw us toward a reality that is invisible, and because in themselves they hold that reality—God’s presence in the world.
2. The Church, as the People of God, must preach the Gospel message, be active in the community, serve others, and worship God.
3. The Church is the Body of Christ because of the close unity members share with Christ and with one another. The image of the body reminds us of the diversity among members, such as arms, legs, and eyes, while at the same time maintaining unity through our source, Christ. Our union with Christ gives us the guidance and strength to do many things we would be unable to accomplish on our own.
4. The Church is the Temple of the Holy Spirit because by the Spirit’s presence the Church is a source of grace to the world. The Holy Spirit works through the sacraments, Scripture, gifts, and graces to transform the members of the Church and to make the Kingdom of God present.

### Extending the Lesson

**Group Discussion:** Divide the class into small groups. Ask students to develop a list of qualities and behaviors that a school would have if it was truly functioning as a Christian community. Have them include all members of the community in their list: administrators, teachers, parents, and coaches, as well as students. What do they see as their school’s greatest strengths? What do they see as the areas where the school needs to grow? What can they do about the areas of growth? Invite students to make a commitment to take one step toward bringing about better community, by either affirming a strength that already exists or addressing a weakness. Have students report on their commitments at a future date.

# Membership and Ministries in the Church (pages 106–112)

## Objectives

In this lesson, the students will:

- compare and contrast teams or clubs and the Church.
- define the terms *hierarchy*, *laity* and *consecrated*, and *religious life*.
- explain the requirements for being a member of the Church.
- describe the roles of Church as priest, prophet, and king and apply them to the life of the Church today.
- identify misunderstandings about the teaching of papal infallibility.



## Preview

This section introduces students to the structure of the Church and members' participation in the life of the Church. Information on the role of the hierarchy, laity, and vowed religious forms a foundation for later work on vocation and answering God's call in one's own life. The section describing the roles of priest, prophet, and king merit particular care, since students may not be aware of their participation in those roles and need encouragement to see the practical implications for their lives.



## Membership and Ministries in the Church (CCC, 871–873; 897–900; 914–934; 944–945)

Who is a Catholic? What makes a person a member of the Church? And once a member, what privileges and responsibilities does a person have?

First, members of the Catholic Church are those baptized Christians

- who accept Jesus as their Lord and Savior,
- who accept the entire system and means of Salvation Christ left with the Church (including union with the Pope and bishops),
- and who devote themselves to continuing Christ's work of Salvation according to their situation in life.

Second, Catholics minister (serve) God in the Church in different ways. Each person is called to one of the three categories of membership in the Church: the hierarchy, the laity, or the consecrated life.

**Hierarchy**  
The official, sacred leadership in the Church made up of the Church's ordained ministers—bishops, priests, and deacons. The symbol of unity and authority in the Church is the Pope, the Bishop of Rome, who is the successor of St. Peter.

The hierarchy is the order of ministry established by Jesus Christ on the Apostles and their successors. It includes the Pope and bishops and their coworkers, priests. The hierarchy has three essential roles: to teach the faith truthfully and fully; to sanctify the members of the Church, especially through the celebration of the sacraments; and to govern the Church wisely as loving shepherds who serve humbly in imitation of Christ.

The laity includes any baptized Catholics who have not received Holy Orders and belong to a Church-approved religious state. The laity has the special call to be involved in the social, political, and economic affairs of the wider human community and to direct them according to God's will. Laymen and -women are to be light of the world and salt of the earth.

Those in *consecrated or religious life* can be members of the hierarchy or laypeople and include hermits, consecrated virgin, secular institutes, different apostolic societies, and men (brothers) and women (sisters) in religious orders like the Jesuits, Franciscans, Dominicans, Benedictines, and so forth. Those living

## Extending the Lesson

**Guest Speaker:** Invite a member of a religious order to speak to the class. Ask the speaker to talk about his or her discernment of religious vocation, the difference between men and women religious and diocesan priesthood (the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, community life) and the work they currently engage in.

## Background Information

### *Electing a New Pope*

When a pope dies there is a period of mourning. The cardinals from around the world gather in Rome and seclude themselves during the selection process. A secret vote is taken. If there are not enough votes to select a new pope, the ballots are mixed with straw and then burned; the gray smoke escapes through a special chimney. When a new pope has been selected, the ballots are burned alone, producing a white smoke for the crowd waiting outside. The new pope chooses a name and appears at a window, blessing the crowd. This event played out in April 2005 with the passing of Pope John Paul II and the election of Pope Benedict XVI.

in religious life serve as a special gift to their fellow Catholics. They are a unique witness to the Lord's union with his Church and thus are a sign to the world that God's Salvation is taking place in our midst. Other distinctive traits of those in consecrated life are their public profession of the evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity, and obedience; their commitment to liturgical celebration; and their living a shared life in common.

**Baptism** into the Church makes each Catholic a child of God with equal dignity. Furthermore, it conveys a share in Christ's roles as priest, prophet, and king. The priestly (sanctifying), prophetic (teaching), and kingly (governing) ministries are all essential for building up Christ's Body and extending his saving work to all people. Catholics participate in these three offices in several ways. By Baptism, you share in the priesthood of Christ. You offer yourself with him in his sacrifice to the Father. By the gift of faith, you share in the prophetic ministry by becoming witnesses of Christ's truth to the world. And in your service to those in need, you share in Christ's kingship. In suffering, you join with the royalty of his suffering on the cross.

Each of these ministries is examined in more detail in the sections that follow.

**Priest** (CCC 893-901-903, 941)  
The Church shares in Christ's priesthood, his work of sanctification. Jesus came to invite us into friendship with the Blessed Trinity, to give us a life of love and holiness. When he founded the Church, he formed a priestly people to bring Salvation to the ends of the earth. Our vocation as members of Christ's body is to help bring others to Christ.

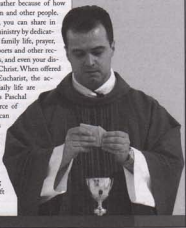
What is a priest? A priest is a mediator between God and people. A priest offers sacrifice to God. A priest helps people

on the path to holiness. These definitions apply perfectly to Jesus Christ, the High Priest. Jesus brought God to us and takes us to God. It is his sacrifice on the cross, his Death and Resurrection, his glorification that made us holy by power of the Holy Spirit. He is the perfect mediator between God and humankind. The letter to Hebrews says of Jesus, the Son of God:

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has similarly been tested in every way, yet without sin. So let us confidently approach the throne of grace to receive mercy and to find grace for timely help. (Heb 4:15-16)

Though some men have a Christ-given vocation (call) to Holy Orders, by virtue of our Baptism, each of us is called to holiness. We are great in God's eyes not because of the special gifts we have been given, but rather because of how much we love him and other people. While a student, you can share in Christ's priestly ministry by dedicating school work, family life, prayer, involvement in sports and other recreational activities, and even your disappointments to Christ. When offered to God in the Eucharist, the activities of your daily life are united to Christ's Paschal Mystery, the source of all holiness. You can also do so on a daily basis simply by making a morning prayer to God, offering all your activities of the coming day to him as a gift of love.

evangelical counsels  
Vows of personal poverty, chastity, understood as lifelong celibacy, and obedience to the demands of the community being joined, which are prescribed by those entering the consecrated life.



- **Direct Instruction:** Check the students' answers to the For Review questions on page 105. Pay particular attention to the students' understanding about the Church as Body of Christ.
- **Student Presentations:** Call on representatives from small groups working on Ongoing Assignment 5 (small service project, page 121) to report on their group's progress. Record on the board some of the experiences the students have had to this point.
- **Guest Speaker:** Invite a catechumen or recent neophyte to speak with the class on (1) why they chose to enter into full communion with the Catholic Church, (2) the qualifications for membership in the Church, and (3) the occasions when he or she first felt welcomed in the Catholic Church.

## Printed Materials continued from page 103

Haughton, Rosemary. *The Catholic Thing*. Springfield, IL: Templegate, 1997.

Rosemary Haughton is one of the most brilliant and insightful Catholic theologians on the scene today. This book will give you a sense of what it means to be a Catholic while preserving the notion of Church as mystery.

Higgins, Gregory C. *Twelve Theological Dilemmas*. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1991.

One of the issues Higgins addresses in this fine book is a chapter related to Christianity and world religions. Includes a great deal of background information to elicit views on both sides of twelve issues.

Koch, Carl. *A Popular History of the Catholic Church*. Winona, MN: St. Mary's Press, 1997.

Easy-to-read overview of Church history.

Kresta, Al. *Why Do Catholics Genuflect?* Ann Arbor, MI: Servant Books, 2001.

The Catholic radio broadcaster answers questions asked about Catholic beliefs, practices, and customs. Popular apologetics.

Madrid, Patrick. *Pope Fiction: Answers to 30 Myths and Misconceptions about the Papacy*. San Diego, CA: Basilica Press, 1999.

McBrien, Richard. *The Church: The Evolution of Catholicism*. San Francisco: HarperOne, 2009.

Fr. McBrien offers a thorough examination of the study of ecclesiology with a special treatment on the Second Vatican Council.

O'Collins, Gerald, S.J., and Mary Venturini. *Believing: Understanding the Creed*. New York/Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1991.

Theological and personal reflections on the Apostles' Creed. Engaging style where the authors react to each other's insights. Fr. O'Collins is a noted theologian; Mary Venturini is a journalist and mother.

Perko, Michael, S.J. *Catholic & American: A Popular History*. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor, Inc., 1989.

Relies heavily on Hennessey and Dolan, but also contains many interesting and novel insights. Fr. Perko, a professor of educational history, sketches some wonderful portraits of leading American Catholics, notably, Junipero Serra, Charles Carroll, John Carroll, Sister Blandina Segale, John Ryan, and Dorothy Day.

Pichler, Tony, and Chris Broslavick. *Service Projects for Teens: 20 Plans that Work*. Dayton, OH: Hi-Time/Pflaum, 2001.

Rasmussen, Martha. *The First 2000 Years: A Popular Survey and Study Guide to Church History*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2003.

continued on page 118



## Teaching Approaches

- **Class Discussion:** Facilitate a discussion about what it means to belong to a specific community. For example, when people belong to a team, they show up for practices together, share the goal of winning and improving as players, follow the coach's instructions, and try to do their best to contribute to the team. Some players are more committed than others, but they are all members of the team. Have the students compare Church membership with membership on a team or in a club. What are the similarities? What are the differences? Refer the students to the privileges and responsibilities of Church membership on pages 106–107 of the text. Point out that:

- Similarities include friendship, common goals and activities, the opportunity to be coached and to improve skills and abilities, potential for disciplinary action, etc.
- Differences include the lack of divinely inspired leadership and the goals of competing and winning.
- **Individual Assignment:** Quiz the students on the roles in the Church: hierarchy, laity, and consecrated life. Have students number a sheet of paper 1–10. Have the students identify which of the three groups each of the following falls into (answers are on page 111 of this text):

1. Pope
2. Fr. [insert name of a priest they know]
3. married couples
4. deacons
5. monks
6. young children
7. nuns
8. Bishop [insert name of the local bishop]
9. hermits
10. you, the teacher

## 108 Our Catholic Faith

If you should marry, the love you have for your spouse will be united to Jesus in the Sacrament of Matrimony. Your marriage can be a great source of holiness. Your mutual love, which is open to the sharing of the great gift of life, will result in the *domestic Church*, the unit called the family. Your family will become a miniature Church, in which moms and dads have a unique ministry to lead their children on the path of holiness.

Laymen and -women can also serve God's people in certain ministries. For example, they can read the Holy Scripture at Mass or serve as special ministers of the holy Eucharist.

To assist him in leading others to holiness, Jesus established the ministerial or hierarchical priesthood. The ministerial or hierarchical priesthood is received by bishops and priests through the Sacrament of Holy Orders. The ministerial priesthood serves the common priesthood and is directed at unfolding the baptismal grace of all Christians. It is the means by which Christ builds up and leads his Church.

The Church's ruling office shows the way to serve Christ with humility and love. However, it is the role of the bishops and their crowder priests to respond to Jesus' command to baptize, celebrate the Eucharist, pray, help the poor and outcast, and forgive sins in his name.

### Prophet

(CCC, 874-882; 888-892; 936-939; 904-906; 935; 942)

Because Baptism gives us a share in Christ's teaching (prophets) ministry, each member of the Church is called to be a prophet, that is, one who proclaims the Gospel in both word and deed. They fulfill this prophetic call in many ways. For example, an opportunity may present itself when a peer wonders why you do not do drugs or engage in premarital sex. Your good example speaks volumes. Living a Christian life is often the best form of Gospel preaching. St. Francis of Assisi is credited with saying, "Preach the Gospel always. Use words if necessary."

In the future you might serve the Church in a special way by training to be a candidate or religion teacher. If you become a parent, you will have the responsibility to pass on the Good News of Jesus to your children. Jesus told his disciples to preach the Gospel to the ends of the earth (see Mt. 28:19-20). This makes us all missionaries. The history of Christianity has given us many models of how to preach Christ effectively to others.



For example, in the twentieth century, Mother Teresa of Calcutta taught others to see Christ in the poor and suffering. Another example is the lay missionary Jean Domercq, who left a comfortable life to serve the poor in El Salvador. For her prophetic witness, she and three religious sisters were martyred.

The Pope, bishops, and priests have been given a special prophetic role. Their role is deeply connected with Church Tradition. Jesus gave the Church the duty to teach authentically and proclaim truthfully the Gospel as it appears in both Scripture and Tradition. The word *tradition* means "handing on." When he established the Church on Peter, Jesus himself promised to be with his Church in a special way until the end of time. As the founder, Jesus is the source of ministry in the Church. He is the one who gives the Church its authority, mission, orientation, and goal.

At the same time, Christ established a hierarchy of leadership to guarantee that the essential jobs of teaching, governing, and sanctification would take place in his Church. The hierarchy is a sacred leadership that receives its ministry of service from the Lord himself! The Pope, bishops, priests, and deacons do not act on their own authority. They continue the service of Peter and the Apostles whom Jesus appointed to carry on his work of Salvation. Their role is to preserve authentic tradition and spread the true Gospel as taught by Jesus Christ.

The Pope has a unique role in the Church because he is the successor of Peter. He is a symbol of unity and has primacy over the whole Church. The Holy Father is the Vicar of Christ. We base this belief on Christ's own teaching, given after Peter proclaimed that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of the Living God:

## For Enrichment

**Individual Assignment:** Assign students to research one religious order. Some possibilities are:

- Jesuits
- Franciscans
- Dominicans
- Benedictines
- Crosiers
- Christian Brothers
- Resurrection
- Sisters of St. Joseph

Students should research the founder, the particular charism of the order, their current work, and their projected future. This can also be an opportunity for students to learn about the challenge of supporting elderly members of religious orders as numbers of religious decrease across the country.

Blessed are you, Simon son of Joseph. For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my heavenly Father. And so I say to you, you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of the underworld shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven. Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. (Mt 16:17-19)

The Pope and bishops exercise their prophetic (teaching) role in the following ways, through:

1. **Magisterial teaching.** The Pope and bishops usually teach through the ordinary Magisterium of the Church. Recall that *Magisterium* refers to the teaching office of the Church. The task of the Magisterium is to proclaim the Gospel, build up Christian love and service, and see to the proper administration of the sacraments and other spiritual and temporal benefits offered by the Church. The Church's magisterial teaching can be found in encyclicals, pastoral letters, sermons, and the like. Because Christ gave the hierarchy the right to teach, Catholics give religious assent to magisterial teaching through proper listening and obedience.

2. **Ecumenical councils.** The Pope and bishops together form the College of Bishops. The bishops must truthfully preach the Gospel in union with the Pope and each other. The bishops' authority comes from Christ and can only be exercised in union with the Pope since he is Peter's successor and the head of the College of Bishops. Ecumenical (worldwide) councils bring the Pope and bishops together to offer unified teachings. The Pope has a special role as the sign of unity when the bishops speak as one.

3. **Infallibility.** Christ promised that he would remain with the Church until the end of time. Therefore, when it comes to essential matters of faith and morals, the Church is infallible. Infallibility means that a certain doctrine (teaching) is free from error.

Guided by the Holy Spirit, the College of Bishops, in union with the Pope, can exercise the gift of infallibility when teaching about or protecting Christ's revelation on matters of belief or morality. They do this in a special way when they gather together and teach with the

**infallibility**  
A gift of the Spirit whereby the Pope and bishops are preserved from error when proclaiming a doctrine related to Christian faith or morals.



### Symbol of the Church: Keys of the Kingdom

The key is a symbol of the authority to forgive sin in the name of Jesus. Two keys signify the authority to open Heaven for sinners who repent or lock out sinners who refuse to turn to the Lord. Research and report on the history of this symbol.



- **Direct Instruction:** Continue with the text subsection "Priest" on pages 107–108. Make sure to explain the differences between the Christ-given vocation (call) to Holy Orders and the vocation of all the baptized to holiness. Explain to students some of the functions that currently belong to:

- **ordained priests:** celebrating the sacraments of Eucharist and Penance; being pastor of a parish.
- **ordained priests and deacons:** preaching at Sunday liturgies; witnessing the Sacrament of Matrimony; administering the Sacrament of the Sick.
- **bishops:** administering the sacraments of Holy Orders and Confirmation; being the pastor of a diocese.
- **lay people:** under special circumstances, administering the Sacrament of Baptism; participating in the Sacrament of Matrimony.

Point out that bishops, for example, can perform all the functions of lay people (except to receive the Sacrament of Matrimony) but that lay people cannot perform the functions reserved for priests or bishops.

- **Writing Assignment:** Review the concept of the family as the domestic Church. Ask students to list ways in which parents can help their children to develop a strong faith in God. Ask them also to describe strategies that they think are not helpful in encouraging faith or that were appropriate when they were younger but are not as effective today. How would they try to pass their faith on to their own children?

### Roles in the Church Answers (page 110 of the TWE)

1. hierarchy
2. hierarchy
3. laity
4. hierarchy
5. consecrated life
6. laity
7. consecrated life
8. hierarchy
9. consecrated life
10. varies

### Extending the Lesson

**Prayer Experience:** One role of a priest is to be a mediator between God and people. An important way in which all people can perform this function is by praying for one another. Place a box for prayer intentions in the classroom. Invite students to place prayer intentions in the box. Some students may place confidential intentions in the box that they would not mention aloud in class. Include prayer for the intentions in the box into class prayer. If the school has a chapel, the intentions could be transferred to a place in the chapel on a regular basis. Periodically invite students to share answers to prayer, to encourage and affirm the serious role of interceding for one another.

- **Direct Instruction:** Continue with the text subsection "Prophet" (pages 108–110). Explain the three ways listed in the text that the pope and bishops exercise their prophetic teaching:
  - Magisterial teaching
  - Ecumenical councils
  - Infallibility

Question the students on each of these areas and have them explain more about their meanings.

- **Direct Instruction:** Point out the illustration of the "keys of the kingdom" on page 109. Explain to students that the references to the keys and to binding and loosing refer to the Sacrament of Penance. Through this sacrament, God has given clergy the grace to forgive sins through the power of the Holy Spirit.
- **Class Discussion:** Have students summarize the text, clarifying their understanding of papal infallibility. Question the students as to their understanding of which teachings of the Magisterium would be candidates for infallibility. For example, "Jesus is fully human and fully divine" is a matter of faith; the Pope's position on a specific war being fought in the world would not be.

canon law  
The official body of rules (can-  
ons) that provides for good  
order in the Catholic Church.

Pope is an ecumenical council. Individual bishops can also proclaim Christ's teaching infallibly when they teach collectively around the world, always united to the Holy Father.

Papal infallibility refers to the special gift given to the Pope as the supreme teacher and pastor of the universal Church. He exercises this gift when he teaches *ex cathedra* ("from the chair" of St. Peter), that is, using his Christ-given authority as the successor of St. Peter. The Holy Father teaches infallibly when he teaches as pastor of all the faithful, is proclaiming a definitive doctrine pertaining to faith or morals, and does so intending to use his full authority in an unchangeable decision.

While the teaching of the Pope is the teaching of the apostolic faith and without error, infallible judgments are rare. The most recent occurrence is Pope Pius XII's 1950 declaration of the dogma of our Blessed Mother's Assumption into Heaven. Because Christ promised to remain with his Church through the

denial or doubt by a baptized Catholic of some divine or Catholic truth is heretical.

Infallibility does not mean that the Pope is free from sin or mistakes. He is not infallible on matters not pertaining to faith, for example, if he were to propose a solution to a particular political debate or conflict between two nations. The Pope's personal opinions, like anyone else's, can be wrong. Infallibility refers solely to the Pope's gift as successor of Peter to teach correctly Christ's revelation. This is especially true when some core belief is under attack, thus causing confusion among believers. The purpose of the gift of infallibility is not to induce a particular person's self-image. Its purpose is to build up the body of Christ and to give the Church certitude about Christ's revelation.

King (CCC, 894–896; 908–913; 943)

Jesus is called Christ, the King, reminding us that he is the source of all authority (Mt 28:18). The definition of a king is one who is a ruler, regent, and person with authority. Christ shares his teaching and ruling authority with the hierarchy to guarantee that the Church is able to accomplish its mission of bringing Christ's Salvation to the ends of the earth.

The sole purpose for the Church's ruling office is to help people grow in faith and holiness. Canon law is another term for the Church's precepts and rules that help Catholics live as loving members of Christ's Body. Catholics give respectful obedience to these Church laws, as well as to the legitimate commands of the Pope and bishops.

Jesus, the Good Shepherd, is the model of the kindly rule taken on by Church leaders: "I am the good shepherd. A good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep" (Jn 10:11). At the Last



Holy Spirit and not lead it astray, Catholics owe the obedience of faith to infallible statements. Recall that an obstinate

## Background Information

### *The Relationship between the Laity and the Ordained*

The *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church* (Lumen Gentium) addresses the connectedness between the laity and the ordained:

Though they differ from one another in essence and not only in degree, the common priesthood of the faithful and the ministerial or hierarchical priesthood are nonetheless interrelated: each of them in its own special way is a participation in the one priesthood of Christ. The ministerial priest, by the sacred power he enjoys, teaches and rules the priestly people; acting in the person of Christ, he makes present the Eucharistic sacrifice, and offers it to God in the name of all the people. But the faithful, in virtue of their royal priesthood, join in the offering of the Eucharist. They likewise exercise that priesthood in receiving the sacraments, in prayer and thanksgiving, in the witness of a holy life, and by self-denial and active charity. (Chapter II, no. 10)

Supper he told his Apostles, "If I, therefore, the master and teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash one another's feet" (Jn 13:14). Humble service, even unto death, is the ideal for those exercising authority in the Church.

Laypeople also share in Christ's kingly ministry. Catholics are to engage in works of self-denial (for

example, fasting) to help become masters of sin in ourselves and in the world around us. Laypeople are also to engage in works of justice to help extend God's Kingdom on earth. When invited by bishops or priests, they can serve on various councils, parish finance committees, advisory boards, and the like so the organizational Church can function more smoothly.



## Explaining Your Faith

Can non-Catholics get to Heaven? (CCC, 846–848)

Jesus Christ is present in his Body, the Church. Jesus alone is the one mediator between God and humans. He alone is the Savior and the way to the heavenly Father. The Acts of the Apostles puts it this way: "There is no Salvation through anyone else, nor is there any other name under heaven given to the human race by which we are to be saved" (4:12).

Where do we meet the Savior today? We meet him in an explicit way only through his Body, the Church. As people search for Salvation, Christ will draw them to his Body, the Church, because it is the living sign and sacrament of God's love. It witnesses to the way God has shown his love and achieved the Salvation of humans through his beloved Son, Jesus Christ. The Church's Christ-given mission is to show people the way to the Lord.

Jesus himself taught that people need faith and Baptism (Jn 3:5). Because of Jesus' own instruction, the Church teaches that anyone who knows "that the Catholic Church was made necessary by God through Jesus Christ, [and] would refuse to enter her or to remain in her could not be saved" (Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, No. 14).

But what about people who have never had the Gospel preached to them? Or what about those who have a distorted picture of our Savior because of false teachings they have heard? Can such people be saved?

The Church teaches that honest seekers after God, who through no fault of their own have never heard of Christ or his Church, can attain Heaven if they respond to the graces God gives them and live according to the dictates of their consciences. Even atheists, who, "without blame on their part, have not reached an explicit knowledge of God, but who strive to live a good life, thanks to his grace," can attain Salvation because of God's goodness and love (Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, No. 16).

The Holy Spirit can mysteriously draw people into God's Kingdom. God's love and grace embrace all people who must seek God's Kingdom as they know it. Everyone must live with as much love as they possibly can because God, simply, is love. "God is love, and whoever remains in love remains in God and God in him" (1 Jn 4:16).

However, a person must be sincere. If someone truly knows the truth of the Gospel that has been given to him or her as a gift, then this person should recognize and accept the necessity of the Church for Salvation. It would be a serious sin for someone who has received the gift of faith to reject the Body of Christ, the Church, because this person would be rejecting Christ himself. Jesus himself taught, "Whoever listens to you listens to me. Whoever rejects you rejects me. And whoever rejects me rejects the one who sent me" (Lk 10:16).

- Class Activity:** Distribute copies of the following quotation or post it on the board. Suggest that this statement is a response to the question "Is the Pope infallible?" on an online questions forum like Yahoo! Answers. *"Yes, the Catholic Church teaches that only the Pope is infallible. He is divinely inspired so that everything he teaches is God's truth. This is a manmade fallacy since the Pope is a sinner like everyone else in the world. Everything that the Catholic Church teaches is wrong since it comes from a man."* Make sure the students can point out the following misunderstandings:
  - The Pope is not the only one who can teach infallibly. The College of Bishops, in union with the Pope, can also exercise the gift of infallibility.
  - Everything the Pope teaches is not infallible. He exercises the gift of infallibility when teaching *ex cathedra*, as the pastor of the faithful, on matters of faith and morals, and when he intends to use his full authority in an unchangeable decision.
  - Yes, the Pope is not free from sin, but this does not affect his ability to teach infallibly.
  - Infallible definitions are rare, so to reject the entire Catholic Church's Tradition based on the infallibility of the Pope is going too far.
- Class Discussion:** Beginning the text subsection on "King" (pages 110–111) and the Church's authority, have the students consider the value of authority in their lives, in their local communities (including their families and schools), and in the world at large. Ask the students to suggest examples in each of these areas of the positive value of authority.



## Homework Assignment

- Complete the For Review questions on page 112.
- Read the text section "Marks of the Church" (pages 112–116).

## Extending the Lesson

**Class Activity:** Have students enact a simulation of a Church council. Select a topic of current Church concern for the council to consider, or select an issue that is under discussion at your school. Divide the class into groups ("dioceses") and select a "bishop" to come as a representative of each group. Each small group will have a discussion, and then the "bishop" will prepare to join the council. Remind the students that councils are a distinct form of democracy in that the bishops today are not elected. Bishops may invite groups to advise them on an issue, but they are not bound by the advice of these groups. Select a person to act as "Pope" and preside over the council. Seat the "bishops" in the center of the room, and have them briefly discuss the topic at hand. Conclude with a general discussion about how the process is similar to how Church councils function.

## For Review Answers (page 112)

1. People can be members of the Church as hierarchy, lay people, or vowed religious. The hierarchy includes priests, bishops, cardinals, and the Pope. Vowed religious have made solemn promises of poverty, chastity, and obedience, and live as members of religious communities. Lay people are all married and single members of the Church.
2. Priestly ministry refers to the work of bringing people to holiness, prophetic ministry involves teaching, and kingly ministry refers to governance within the Body of Christ. The members of the hierarchy have special responsibility for these roles, but lay people share in these privileges and responsibilities as well.
3. In Matthew 16:17–19 Jesus tells Peter “upon this rock I will build my Church . . . I will give you the keys to the kingdom of Heaven.”
4. Infallibility is the principle that when the Pope speaks on essential matters of faith and morals, with the full authority of his role, the Holy Spirit will protect him from error in that teaching.

## Marks of the Church (pages 112–116)

### Objectives

In this lesson, the students will:

- identify and explain the four marks of the Church.
- recognize that the Blessed Trinity is the source of unity in the Church.
- explain that Christ and the saints are the model for the Church's holiness.
- recall the four ways that the Church is catholic or universal.
- describe three ways the Church remains apostolic.



### Preview

This text section explains the essential marks of the Church as one, holy, catholic, and apostolic. The introduction reminds us of the “already but not yet” nature of the Kingdom; the Church is called to embody these four qualities, but in reality is yet imperfect.

### For Review

1. List the three categories of membership in the Church. Briefly describe each.
2. How do Catholics share in Christ's priestly, prophetic, and kingly ministries?
3. Identify the Gospel passage that shows that Jesus Christ intended a sacred leadership in his Church.
4. Define infallibility. Under what conditions does the Church teach infallibly?

### For Reflection

As one who shares in Christ's kingly role of service, share three concrete ways you have shown your care for others.



marks of the Church  
Four essential signs or characteristics of Christ's Church that mark her as his true Church. The Church is one, holy, catholic, and apostolic.

### Marks of the Church (CCC, 811–812; 853)

The Church has four characteristics or marks to help us understand more about what the Church is, who she includes, and what her mission is. These marks—one, holy, catholic, and apostolic—build up the faith of Catholics. They can also help attract nonbelievers to the Church.

The marks of the Church are present in the Church, but at the same time they also challenge the Church to live up to her true identity. They point to Christ and the Holy Spirit working in the Church. But because the members of the Church are sinners, the marks are not always visible to the waiting world. For example, the Church is holy because of the Lord, but she is the home of sinners who sometimes betray him. The Church is one because of the Blessed Trinity living

### Extending the Lesson

**Class Activity:** Explain to students that before the Second Vatican Council, Mass was celebrated in Latin everywhere on earth. A Catholic could go to Mass anywhere and experience essentially the same liturgy as in his or her home country. The unity of expression was powerful; the disadvantage was that few people understood Latin. If available, play a recording of liturgical music recorded in another language.