



What is the Catholic Church?

RCIA for Newman Center/St. Mary of the Visitation – Iowa City, Iowa

Tuesday 5 March 2019

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What is Church?



Models of the Catholic Church

- Institution
- Community
- Sacrament
- Herald
- Servant
- School of Discipleship

See Avery Dulles' Handout

Pillars of the Catholic Church

- Sacred Scripture
- Sacred Tradition
- Magisterium



From the Nicene Creed: "*I believe in one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church*"



Church as Institution

Church as Institution

- Mission is teaching, sanctifying, and governing/ruling
- Responsibility from clergy to laity (Before and After Second Vatican Council)
- Hierarchical governing (versus our representative democracy)

One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church

Church as Institution

Clerics

Hierarchical:

- Bishop (Cardinal is a Bishop)
- Priest (Monsignor is a Priest)
- Deacon (Transitional and Permanent)

“you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church”
– Matthew 16:18

Clergy receives the Sacrament of Ordination

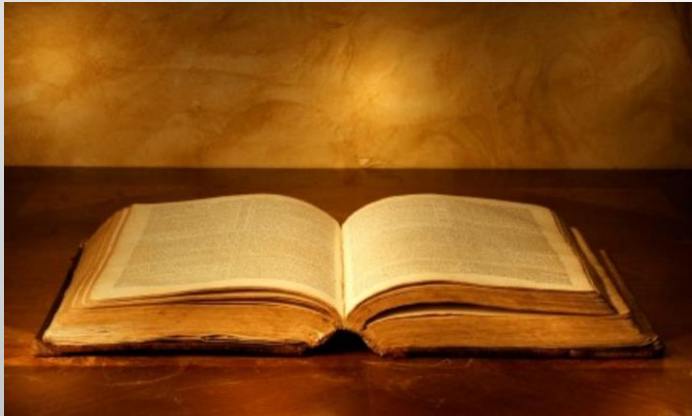
Laity

- Too many lay ministries to mention!
 - Evangelization/Outreach
 - Faith Formation
 - Family and Marriage
 - Fellowship
 - Liturgical
 - Peace and Social Justice
 - Property and Finance
 - Sacramental
 - Stewardship
- Religious Communities

Institution – Apostolic Church

Sacred Scripture

- Bible



Sacred Tradition

- Handed down through generations – “living transmission”



Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition = “Sacred Deposit” of the Faith is handed on
One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church

Institution -Magisterium of the Church

But the task of authentically interpreting the word of God, whether written or handed on, has been entrusted exclusively to the living teaching office of the Church, whose authority is exercised in the name of Jesus Christ. This teaching office is not above the word of God, but serves it, teaching only what has been handed on, listening to it devoutly, guarding it scrupulously and explaining it faithfully in accord with a divine commission and with the help of the Holy Spirit, it draws from this one deposit of faith everything which it presents for belief as divinely revealed.

Dei Verbum 10

Catechism of the Catholic Church 84 – 87




Church as Community

Church as Community

- Mission is Fellowship
- Relational – Personal and Interpersonal
 - Universal Church for All
- “House Church” of the first centuries of the Church
- The Body of Christ (Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12)
- People of God (1 Peter 2:9)
- This group is a Christian Community!

One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church



Church as Sacrament

The Sacraments and Christian Life

*Christ instituted the sacraments of the new law. There are seven: Baptism, Confirmation (or Chrismation), the Eucharist, Penance, the Anointing of the Sick, Holy Orders and Matrimony. **The seven sacraments touch all the stages and all the important moments of Christian life:** they give birth and increase, healing and mission to the Christian's life of faith. There is thus a certain **resemblance between the stages of natural life and the stages of the spiritual life.***

Catechism of the Catholic Church 1210



Church as Sacrament

- Mission is Holiness
- Visible manifestation of the grace of Christ within community
- Eucharist as the Source and Summit
 - Communal Prayer at the Table of the Lord (Liturgy)
- A Chosen Race (1 Peter 2:9)
- Christ and the Church (Ephesians 5:32)

*One, **Holy**, Catholic, and Apostolic Church*



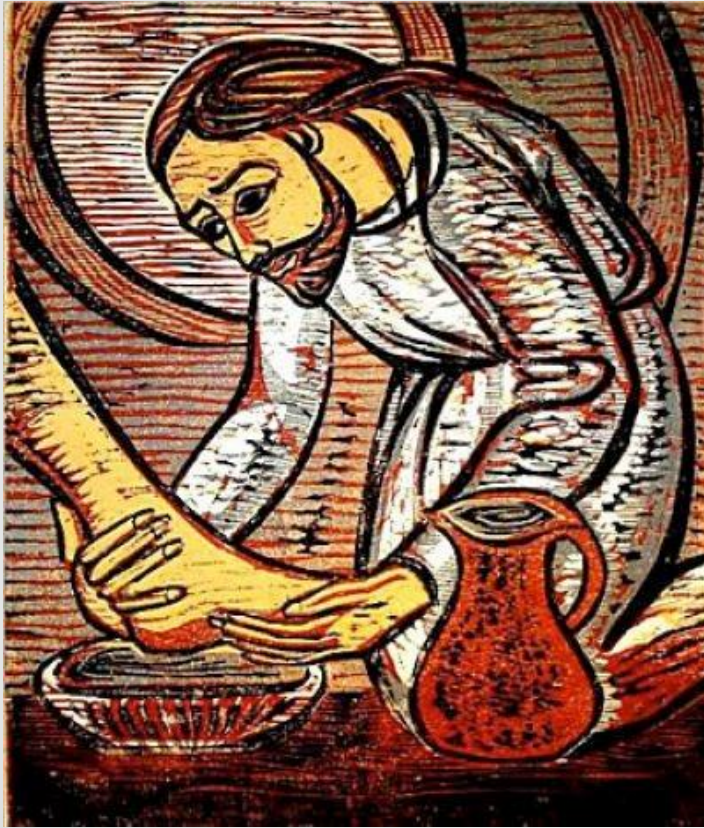
John the Baptist

Church as Herald

Church as Herald

- Mission is Evangelism
- Apostle means to be sent
 - Spread the Good News
 - Prophets – Baptism
- Commissioning of the Disciples (Matthew 28: 16 – 20)
- Fullness of Revelation is Sacred Scripture and Tradition

One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church



Church as Servant

Church as Servant

- Mission is Service
 - Diakonia = service
- Washing of the Disciples' Feet (John 13: 1 – 20)
- Love (John 13:34 – 35)
- Charity – last week's session
 - Loving service to others

One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church



Road to Emmaus

Church as School of Discipleship

Church as School of Discipleship

- The Job Description of the Church
- Disciple means learner
- Encompasses all the other models – organized, communal, holy, evangelical, and serving – because we are all learning from the Master
- Jesus Christ spent much of His public ministry teaching disciples
- RCIA Model – Pre-Catechumen, Catechumen, Candidate, Initiation, Mystagogia, Ongoing Conversion

One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church



Questions?