

Link to Liturgy



34th Sunday of Ordinary Time Truth Itself Speaks Truly

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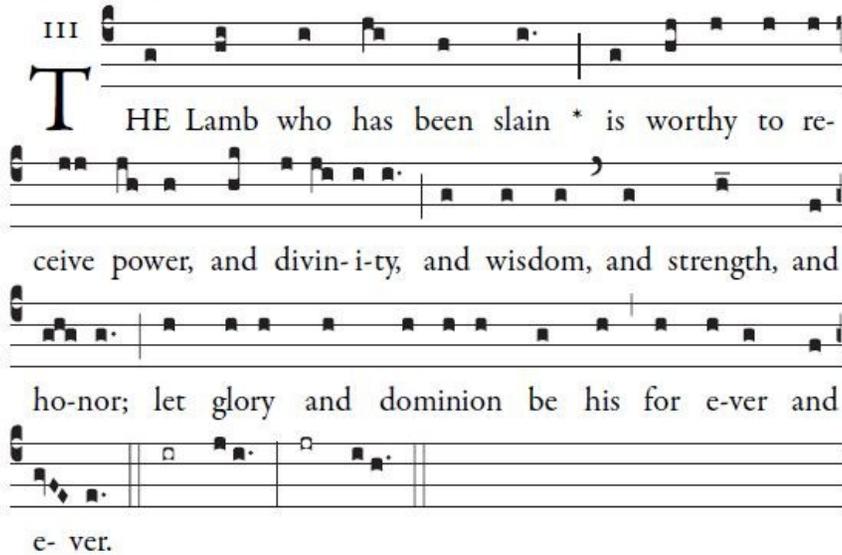
Introit Entrance Antiphon – Roman Missal

This should be chanted so that the time of prayer, study and discussion can be made sacred.

Dignus est Agnus

Rev 5: 12 and 1: 6

III



THE Lamb who has been slain * is worthy to re-
ceive power, and divin-i-ty, and wisdom, and strength, and
ho-nor; let glory and dominion be his for e-ver and
e- ver.

Alternate options:

Come, Thou Almighty King
O Worship the King
Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven
Soul of My Savior
The King of Love My Shepherd Is
To Jesus Christ Our Sovereign King
All in All
Prince of Peace (You are Holy)
Alive In You (Remnant)
Do you Know Him? (Remnant)

Collect – Roman Missal

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen

Almighty ever-living God, whose will is to restore all things
in your beloved Son, the King of the universe,

- [51] UR 24.2
- [52] Lumen Gentium 39; cf. Ephesians 5:25-26
- [53] CCC 824
- [54] CCC 826
- [55] St. Therese of Lisieux, *Autobiography of a Saint*, tr. Ronald Knox (London: Harvill, 1958) 235.
- [56] CCC 827
- [57] Paul VI, CPG 19.
- [58] Archbishop Fulton Sheen
- [59] CCC 828
- [60] Hardon, *Modern Catholic Dictionary* pg. 87
- [61] CCC 830
- [62] CCC 831
- [63] CCC 835
- [64] Cf. CCC 834
- [65] CCC 833
- [66] Fr. Hardon, *Modern Catholic Dictionary* pg. 88
- [67] CCC 857
- [68] CCC 858
- [69] CCC 861
- [70] CCC 863
- [71] CCC 864
- [72] CCC 865

grant, we pray, that the whole creation, set free from slavery, may render your majesty service and ceaselessly proclaim your praise. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

Gospel Reading – John 18:33-37– Roman Missal

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John
- Glory to you O Lord

Pilate said to Jesus, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus answered, "Do you say this on your own or have others told you about me?" Pilate answered, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests handed you over to me. What have you done?" Jesus answered, "My kingdom does not belong to this world. If my kingdom did belong to this world, my attendants would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not here." So Pilate said to him, "Then you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say I am a king. For this I was born and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice."

The Gospel of the Lord.
- Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ

Spiritual Reading – Office of Readings - 34th Sunday of Ordinary Time Cycle B

From a notebook On Prayer by Origen, priest
Your kingdom come

The kingdom of God, in the words of our Lord and Savior, does not come for all to see; nor shall they say: Behold, here it is, or behold, there it is; but the kingdom of God is within us, for the word of God is very near, in our mouth and in our heart. Thus it is clear that he who prays for the coming of God's kingdom prays rightly to have it within himself, that there it might grow and bear fruit and become perfect. For God reigns in each of his holy ones. Anyone who is holy obeys the spiritual laws of God, who

dwells in him as in a well-ordered city. The Father is present in the perfect soul, and with him Christ reigns, according to the words: *We shall come to him and make our home with him.*

Thus the kingdom of God within us, as we continue to make progress, will reach its highest point when the Apostle's words are fulfilled, and Christ, having subjected all his enemies to himself, will hand over his *kingdom to God the Father, that God may be all in all.* Therefore, let us pray unceasingly with that disposition of soul which the Word may make divine, saying to our Father who is in heaven: *Hallowed be your name; your kingdom come.*

Note this too about the kingdom of God. It is not a *sharing of justice with iniquity, nor a society of light with darkness, nor a meeting of Christ with Belial.* The kingdom of God cannot exist alongside the reign of sin.

Therefore, if we wish God to reign in us, in no way *should sin reign in our mortal body*; rather we should *mortify our members which are upon the earth* and bear fruit in the Spirit. There should be in us a kind of spiritual paradise where God may walk and be our sole ruler with his Christ. In us the Lord will sit at the right hand of that spiritual power which we wish to receive. And he will sit there until all his enemies who are within us become his footstool, and every principality, power and virtue in us is cast out.

All this can happen in each one of us, and the last enemy, death, can be destroyed; then Christ will say in us: *O death, where is your sting? O hell, where is your victory?* Ans so what is *corruptible* in us must be clothed with holiness and *incorruptibility*; and what is *mortal* must be clothed, now that death has been conquered, in the Father's *immortality*. Then God will reign in us, and we shall enjoy even now the blessings of rebirth and resurrection.

Responsory – Office of Readings

The kingdom of this world belongs to our Lord and his Christ,
– and he shall reign for ever and ever.

All the families of nations shall bow down before him, for the Lord is our king.

V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

“The End” Notes

- [1] Divine Intimacy Vol. IV, pg. 388
- [2] St. Jose Maria Escriva, The Way 22:1
- [3] Jn. 18:34
- [4] cf. Navaree Commentary Gospel of John, 18:33-34, pg. 217
- [5] CCC 2105
- [6] J. Escriva, Christ is passing by, 180
- [7] John Paul II, “General Audience”, February 1979
- [8] John Paul II, General Audience, 21 February 1979
- [9] J. Escriva, Christ is passing by, 181-182
- [10] CCC 786
- [11] CCC 215
- [12] CCC 217
- [13] CCC 2500
- [14] CCC 216
- [15] CCC 2466
- [16] CCC 559
- [17] St. Thomas Aquinas, STh II-II, 109, 3 ad 1.
- [18] CCC 2467
- [19] CCC 2468
- [20] CCC 2469
- [21] CCC 2471
- [22] <http://www.alexnvv.axspace.com/religion/eastcath/>
- [23] Can. 28:1
- [24] http://www.ewtn.com/expert/answers/catholic_rites_and_churches.htm
- [25] CCC 837
- [26] CCC 836
- [27] CCC 838
- [28] CCC 846
- [29] Lumen Gentium 16; cf. DS 3866-3872
- [30] CCC 848
- [31] CCC 839
- [32] Cf. CCC 840
- [33] CCC 841
- [34] CCC 842
- [35] CCC 843
- [36] CCC 845
- [37] Fr. Hardon, Modern Catholic Dictionary, pg. 334
- [38] CCC 811
- [39] Jn. 2:5
- [40] CCC 812
- [41] CCC 866-870
- [42] CCC 813
- [43] Eph. 4:3
- [44] CCC 815
- [45] UR 3.5
- [46] Origen, Hom. In Ezech. 9, 1: PG 13, 732
- [47] CCC 818
- [48] CCC 820
- [49] Chesterton, What's Wrong With the World?
- [50] CCC 821

IV. ANTIPHON SALVE REGINA, SIMPLE TONE
From First Vespers of the Feast of the Blessed Trinity to None on Saturday
before the First Sunday of Advent.

Ant.
5.

Salve, Re-gi-na, * ma-ter mi-se-ri-córdi-æ : Vi-ta, dulcé-do, et spes nostra,
salve. Ad te clamá-mus, éx-su-les, fí-li-i He-væ Ad te suspi-rá-mus,
gemén-tes et flentes in hac lacrimá-rum valle. E-ia ergo, Advocá-ta
nostra, il-los tu-os mi-se-ri-córdes ócu-los ad nos convér-te. Et Je-sum,
bene-díctum fructum ventris tu-i, nobis post hoc exs-li-um osténde.
O clemens : O pi-a : O dulcis * Virgo Ma-rí-a.

V. Ora pro nobis, sancta Dei Genitrix.
R. Ut digni efficiamur promissionibus Christi

Let us pray. O almighty and everlasting God, who, by the cooperation of the Holy Ghost, didst prepare the body and soul of Mary, glorious Virgin and Mother, to become the worthy habitation of Thy Son: grant that we may be delivered from present evils, and from everlasting death, by her gracious intercession, in whose commemoration we rejoice. Through the same Christ our Lord, Thy Son, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God, world without end. Amen.

English Translation

Hail, holy Queen, Mother of mercy, our life, our sweetness, and our hope. To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve; to thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn, then, most gracious Advocate, thine eyes of mercy towards us; and after this our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of they womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.

- And he shall reign for ever and ever.

Christ's Kingship – Lesson and Discussion

"Then you are a king?"

Today is the feast of Christ the King. We take the final Sunday of Ordinary Time before entering into Advent and recall the supreme authority of Jesus Christ.

Why did the Church choose Jesus' trial and passion as the Gospel for this Sunday? The Gospel shows us Christ's kingship in relation to His passion. The gospel shows us exactly what kind of king Jesus is and reveals a glimpse of Jesus' kingdom. "While Jesus had always withdrawn from the crowds which in moments of enthusiasm had wanted to proclaim him king, now, when he is about to be condemned to death, he openly acknowledges that he is a king. When Pilate asks him: 'So you are a king?' he answers: 'You say that I am a king'. But he had already said previously: 'My kingship is not from the world'. Christ's kingly power is not in the domain of temporal or political power, but of a spiritual lordship, which consists in announcing the truth, in leading men to the supreme Truth, by setting them free of every shadow of error and sin...It is striking that in the Gospel of John, the theologian Evangelist, the theme of Christ's kingship is constantly linked to that of his passion. The cross, in reality, is Christ's royal throne; from the cross he extends his arms to draw all men to himself, and from the cross he rules them by his love. For him to reign over us, we must allow ourselves to be drawn to him and to be conquered by such love." [1]

"You are King forever, my God; your kingdom is not a borrowed one. When in the Creed the words, 'and his kingdom will have no end' are said, it is almost always a special delight from me. I praise you, Lord, and bless you for ever, in sum, your kingdom will last for ever." [2]

Why does Pilate ask Jesus if He is the King of the Jews? Pilate asks this question for many reasons. Since Pilate was a gentile, if Jesus was the King of the Jews, Jesus would be a subverter of the Empire. In comparison, for Jews, if Jesus was King, He would be viewed as the King-Messiah and a political-religious liberator who would overturn the occupation of Rome. However, we know Christ was neither of these. This is why Jesus answers Pilate with a question of His own: "Do you say this of your own accord, or did others say it to you about me?" [3] Jesus is not

trying to dodge the question, but rather tries to make Pilate understand His kingship and mission is a spiritual one.[4]

What is the Christ's Kingdom? There is a two-fold dimension in which we look at Christ's kingdom. First, we follow Christ's kingship within His Church. We, in fact, are called to "known the worship of the one true religion which subsists in the Catholic and apostolic Church. Christians are called to be the light of the world. Thus, the Church shows forth the kingship of Christ over all creation and in particular over human societies." [5]

The second dimension of Jesus' Kingdom is one that is not a physical one, because "in the Passion, he acknowledges before Pilate that he is truly a King, making it clear that his kingship is not an earthly one. Thus, 'those who expected the Messiah to have a visible temporal power were mistaken. 'The kingdom of God does not mean food and drink but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit'. Truth and justice, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. That is the kingdom of Christ: the divine activity which saves men and which will reach its culmination when history ends and the Lord comes from the heights of paradise finally to judge men" [6].

Why is Jesus thought of as a King? For the Jews, the expected their messiah to be a great king who would overthrow the Romans, establish their country again and be reign as king over them. This is why the Jews say Jesus is no king of theirs. For us today, 2,000 years after Jesus death and resurrection we have seen many different forms of governmental rulings. Those that live in western society and one that is of democracy tend to think we have ultimate power; We have the freedom to do whatever we want. This is true to an extent because we do have free will. However, we have to ask ourselves who gave us these rights of life and freedom? It is not the land, people, or government but of God. We owe everything to Him. This is why Jesus is a King. We have seen how kings can ruin countries, but we have also seen through history our kings can make a country and their people flourish. Imagine a perfect king whose kingdom is everlasting and can triumph over any and every foe. This is Jesus' kingdom.

MUSIC – "Hold Us Together" by Matt Maher – POP CULTURE CONNECTION – 3:28

http://youtu.be/mvnVjLX_hRE

The glorious company of apostles praise you.
The noble fellowship of prophets praise you.
The white-robed army of martyrs praise you.

Throughout the world the holy Church acclaim you:
Father, of majesty unbounded,
your true and only Son, worthy of all worship,
and the Holy Spirit, advocate and guide.

You, Christ, are the king of glory,
the eternal Son of the Father.
When you became man to set us free
you did not shun the Virgin's womb.

You overcame the sting of death,
and opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers.
You are seated at God's right hand in glory.
We believe that you will come, and be our judge.

Come then, Lord, and help your people,
bought with the price of your own blood,
and bring us with your saints
to glory everlasting.

V. Save your people, Lord, and bless your inheritance.
R. Govern and uphold them now and always.
V. Day by day we bless you.
R. We praise your name for ever.
V. Keep us today, Lord, from all sin.
R. Have mercy on us, Lord, have mercy.
V. Lord, show us your love and mercy;
R. for we put our trust in you.
V. In you, Lord, is our hope:
R. and we shall never hope in vain.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen

Marian Antiphon – Salve Regina – Simple Tone

assumes the most varied forms. But charity, drawn from the Eucharist above all, is always ‘as it were, the soul of the whole apostolate.’[71]

In conclusion, “The Church is ultimately one, holy, catholic, and apostolic in her deepest and ultimate identity, because it is in her that ‘the Kingdom of heaven,’ the ‘Reign of God,’ already exists and will be fulfilled at the end of time. The kingdom has come in the person of Christ and grows mysteriously in the hearts of those incorporated into him, until its full eschatological manifestation. Then all those he has redeemed and made ‘holy and blameless before him in love,’ will be gathered together as the one People of God, the ‘Bride of the Lamb,’ ‘the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God, having the glory of God.’ For ‘the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.’”[72]

Profession of Faith or Popular Devotion – Te Deum

Te Deum, also sometimes called the Ambrosian Hymn because of its association with Saint Ambrose, is a traditional hymn of joy and thanksgiving. First attributed to Saints Ambrose, Augustine, or Hilary, it is now accredited to Nicetas, Bishop of Remesiana; (4th century). It is used at the conclusion of the Office of the Readings for the Liturgy of the Hours on Sundays outside Lent, daily during the Octaves of Christmas and Easter, and on Solemnities and Feast Days. The petitions at the end were added at a later time and are optional. A partial Indulgence is granted to the faithful who recite it in thanksgiving and a plenary indulgence is granted if the hymn is recited publicly on the last day of the year. This 1600 hundred year old prayer follows the outline of the Apostles Creed.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen

You are God: we praise you;
You are the Lord: we acclaim you;
You are the eternal Father:
All creation worships you.

To you all angels, all the powers of heaven,
Cherubim and Seraphim, sing in endless praise:
Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.

The first verse speaks of all we need is God who is love. We need Him to rule in our lives because that will hold us all together. Not our jobs, money, land, or government.

What is Christ’s kingship? “This is what his kingship really is: his kingdom is ‘the kingdom of Truth and Life, the kingdom of Holiness and Grace, the kingdom of Justice, Love and Peace’ (Preface of the Mass of Christ the King). Christ reigns over those who accept and practice the truth revealed by him – his Father’s love for the world (Jn. 3:16; 1 Jn. 4:9). He became man to make this truth known and to enable men to accept it. And so, those who recognize Christ’s kingship and sovereignty accept his authority, and he thus reigns over them in an eternal and universal kingdom.”[7]

What is the Church’s role with Christ’s kingship? The Church’s role is to still carry on Jesus’ mission to liberate captives and break us free from our sin. For its part, “the Church, looking to Christ who bears witness to the truth, must always and everywhere ask herself, and in a certain sense also the contemporary ‘world’, how to make good emerge from man, how to liberate the dynamism of the good that is in man, in order that it may be stronger than evil, than any moral, social or other evil”[8]

How are we supposed to serve Christ as King? St. Jose Maria Escriva says, “If we [Christians] are trying to have Christ as our king we must be consistent. We must start by giving him our heart. Not to do that and still talk about the kingdom of Christ would be completely hollow. There would be no real Christian substance in our behavior. We would be making an outward show of a faith which simply did not exist. We would be misusing God’s name to human advantage...If we let Christ reign in our soul, we will not become authoritarian. Rather we will serve everyone. How I like that word: service! To serve my king and, through him, all those who have been redeemed by his blood. I really wish we Christians knew how to serve, for only by serving can we know and love Christ and make him known and loved.”[9]

How do we share in Christ’s Kingship? “Finally, the People of God shares in the royal office of Christ. He exercises his kingship by drawing all men to himself through his death and Resurrection. Christ, King and Lord of the universe, made himself the servant of all, for he came ‘not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.’ For the Christian, ‘to reign is

to serve him,' particularly when serving 'the poor and the suffering, in whom the Church recognizes the image of her poor and suffering founder.' The People of God fulfills its royal dignity by a life in keeping with its vocation to serve with Christ." [10]

Fullness of Truth [Part I] – Lesson and Discussion

"...to testify to the truth"

When Pilate questions Jesus, he is trying to seek truth. We, too are trying to seek truth, not only in small every day things, but also the fullness of truth in Jesus Christ. When seeking truth, we must first know two things: where truth comes from and what it is.

What is truth itself? "God is Truth itself, whose words cannot deceive. This is why one can abandon oneself in full trust to the truth and faithfulness of his word in all things. The beginning of sin and of man's fall was due to a lie of the tempter who induced doubt of God's word, kindness, and faithfulness." [11] "God is also truthful when he reveals himself—the teaching that comes from God is 'true instruction.' When he sends his Son into the world it will be 'to bear witness to the truth': 'We know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, to know him who is true.'" [12]

"Likewise, truth carries with it the joy and splendor of spiritual beauty. Truth is beautiful in itself. Truth in words, the rational expression of the knowledge of created and uncreated reality, is necessary to man, who is endowed with intellect. But truth can also find other complementary forms of human expression, above all when it is a matter of evoking what is beyond words: the depths of the human heart, the exaltations of the soul, the mystery of God. Even before revealing himself to man in words of truth, God reveals himself to him through the universal language of creation, the work of his Word, of his wisdom: the order and harmony of the cosmos – which both the child and the scientist discover – 'from the greatness and beauty of created things comes a corresponding perception of their Creator,' 'for the author of beauty created them.'" [13]

Who can have the truth of God? Everyone can receive God's truth; He can give this truth to whoever He wishes, in short or in full. We can never come up with our own "truth" because it is only revealed to us through God. We are accustomed to saying, "In my opinion" or "To me...I think..." in our conversations. If

You made them shepherds of the flock to share in the work of your Son..." [67]

What was the mission of the apostles? If the Church is apostolic, it is good to look first at what the first apostles were charged to do. "From the beginning of his [Jesus'] ministry, he 'called to him those whom he desired;...And he appointed twelve, whom also he named apostles, to be with him, and to be sent out to preach.' From then on, they would also be his 'emissaries'. In them, Christ continues his own mission: 'As the Father has sent me, even so I send you.' The Apostles' ministry is the continuation of his mission; Jesus said to the Twelve: 'he who receives you receives me.'" [68]

How is the Church still "apostolic" since the apostles are all dead? When the apostles were either martyred or died, the Church still continued Christ's mission. "In order that the mission entrusted to them might be continued after their death, [the apostles] consigned, by will and testament, as it were, to their immediate collaborators the duty of completing and consolidating the work they had begun, urging them to tend to the whole flock, in which the Holy Spirit had appointed them to shepherd the Church of God. They accordingly designated such men and then made the ruling that likewise on their death other proven men should take over their ministry." [69] By passing down the mission in the nature, the apostles set up what we now know as apostolic succession. Today the bishops are the successors of the apostles and carry out Christ's mission in the one true Church.

How else is the Church apostolic? "The whole Church is apostolic, in that she remains, through the successors of St. Peter and the other apostles, in communion of faith and life with her origin: and in that she is 'sent out' into the whole world. All members of the Church share in this mission, though in various ways. 'The Christian vocation is, of its nature, a vocation to the apostolate as well.' Indeed, we call an apostolate 'every activity of the Mystical Body' that aims 'to spread the Kingdom of Christ over all the earth.'" [70]

"Christ, sent by the Father, is the source of the Church's whole apostolate"; thus the fruitfulness of apostolate for ordained ministers as well as for lay people clearly depends on their vital union with Christ. In keeping with their vocations, the demands of the times and the various gifts of the Holy Spirit, the apostolate

ordained through the apostolic succession. There are thousands of dioceses around the world and all are fully catholic through the communion the Church of Rome.[64] “These particular Churches ‘are constituted after the model of the universal Church; it is in these and formed out of them that the one and unique Catholic Church exists.”[65]

What does “catholicity” mean? Catholicity is defined as the “Universality of the Church founded by Christ. In the Nicene Creed the Church is said to be ‘one, holy, catholic, and apostolic.’ The Church’s catholicity is first of all spatial, on account of her actual extension over the whole earth. This kind of catholicity may be actual, when the Church is actually extended everywhere; it is virtual in that Christ’s intention was to have the Church present among all peoples. Actual catholicity is said to be physical if it embodies all persons of the earth, even if not literally every individual. It is moral if it includes only the greater part of them. Although moral catholicity suffices for the Church’s universality, yet it is Christ’s will that the Church constantly endeavor to extend. The ideal toward which the Church strives is physical catholicity. A common position among apologists holds that moral catholicity demands that the Church extend over the whole earth simultaneously. Thus after a certain time of development, moral catholicity will be realized and from that time on is to be perpetuated.”[66]

The Four Marks of the Church “Apostolic” – Lesson and Discussion

How is the Church apostolic? “The Church is apostolic because she is founded on the apostles, in three ways:

- she was and remains built on ‘the foundation of the Apostles,’ the witnesses chosen and sent on mission by Christ himself;
- with the help of the Spirit dwelling in her, the Church keeps and hands on the teaching, the ‘good deposit,’ the salutary words she has heard from the apostles;
- she continues to be taught, sanctified, and guided by the apostles until Christ’s return, through their successors in pastoral office: the college of bishops, ‘assisted by priests, in union with the successor of Peter, the Church’s supreme pastor’: You are the eternal Shepherd who never leaves his flock untended. Through the apostles you watch over us and protect us always.

and when we speak the truth it is not our truth but rather God’s. Quite honestly it does not matter what we think, if we think not as God thinks. Saint Augustine was once asked what he thought a certain matter. Augustine replied, “I think as the Church thinks.” “God’s truth is his wisdom, which commands the whole created order and governs the world. God, who alone made heaven and earth, can alone impart true knowledge of every created thing in relation to himself.”[14] We are called to be bearers of the truth, for there is only one truth and we either bear it or we do not.

How did God make His truth visible in this world? God’s truth was made visible in and through the Incarnation, the Word of Truth taking on flesh in the form of Jesus Christ. Jesus, the second person of the Holy Trinity, God is now able to speak directly to all. “In Jesus Christ, the whole of God’s truth has been made manifest. ‘Full of grace and truth,’ he came as the ‘light of the world,’ he is the Truth.’ ‘Whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness.’ The disciple of Jesus continues in his word so as to know ‘the truth [that] will make you free; and that sanctifies. To follow Jesus is to live in ‘the Spirit of truth,’ whom the Father sends in his name and who leads ‘into all the truth. To his disciples Jesus teaches the unconditional love of truth: ‘Let what you say be simply “Yes or No.”’”[15]

Is the truth Jesus brings a violent one? No, His truth is not a violent one in a physical nature towards anyone. Think of when Jesus as King comes into Jerusalem and “conquers the Daughter of Zion, a figure of his Church, neither by ruse nor by violence, but by the humility that bears witness to the truth. And so the subjects of his kingdom on that day are children and God’s poor, who acclaim him as had the angels when they announced him to the shepherds.”[16] St. Thomas Aquinas said, “Men could not live with one another if there were not mutual confidence that they were being truthful to one another.”[17]

Are we compelled to seek truth? Yes. God has put with inside all of our nature the desire to seek out what is true, beautiful, and good; to know and understand right from wrong. “Man tends by nature toward the truth. He is obliged to honor and bear witness to it: “It is in accordance with their dignity that all men, because they are persons...are both impelled by their nature and bound by a moral obligation to seek the truth, especially religious truth. They are also bound to adhere to the truth

once they come to know it and direct their whole lives in accordance with the demands of truth.”[18]

Why is absolute truth necessary? Truth can never contradict truth. It is actually simple logic that there is an absolute truth. For instance, if you believe that there is *no* absolute truth, you have actually just made an absolute statement, which thereby negates your position. Others who say that multiple truths can exist are also living in a similar lie. If that were the case then we would have to say that, *a la* George Orwell’s *1984*, 2+2 does not always equal 4, or gravity only affects some of us, but not all of us. That is false. 2+2 is always 4, and gravity affects all of us.

How are we supposed to live in truth? The Catechism of the Catholic Church gives us clear instructions: “Truth as uprightness in human action and speech is called truthfulness, sincerity, or candor. Truth or truthfulness is the virtue which consists in showing oneself true in deeds and truth in words, and in guarding against duplicity, dissimulation, and hypocrisy.”[19] “The virtue of truth gives another his just due. Truthfulness keeps to the just mean between what ought to be expressed and what ought to be kept secret: it entails honesty and discretion. In justice, ‘as a matter of honor, one man owes it to another to manifest the truth.’”[20]

Finally, “Before Pilate, Christ proclaims that he ‘has come into the world, to bear witness to the truth.’ The Christian is not to ‘be ashamed then of testifying to our Lord.’ In situations that require witness to the faith, the Christian must profess it without equivocation, after the example of St. Paul before his judges. We must keep ‘a clear conscience toward God and toward men.’”[21]

[See Link to Liturgy Lesson - Truth and Holiness]

Fullness of Truth [Part II] – Lesson and Discussion

“...to testify to the truth”

We learned in the previous lesson that there can only be one truth, God’s truth. Now we must turn our gaze from Heaven and discuss how that truth manifests itself in faith and religion on Earth. The one true Church, established by Christ to teach the one truth, is the Holy Catholic Church.

means of salvation’ which he has willed: correct and complete confession of faith, full sacramental life, and ordained ministry in apostolic succession. The Church was, in this fundamental sense, catholic on the day of Pentecost and will always be so until the day of the Parousia.”[61]

- “Secondly, the Church is catholic because she has been sent out by Christ on a mission to the whole of the human race: All men called to belong to the new People of God. This People, therefore, while remaining one and only one, is to be spread throughout the whole world and to all ages in order that the design of God’s will may be fulfilled: he made human nature one in the beginning and has decreed that all his children who were scattered should be finally gathered together as one...The character of universality which adorns the People of God is a gift from the Lord himself whereby the Catholic Church ceaselessly and efficaciously seeks for the return of all humanity and all its goods, under Christ the Head in the unity of his Spirit.”[62]

Catholic Churches throughout the world come in many sizes, shapes, and names. However, just because one person attends St. John Vianney Catholic Church and another attends Holy Trinity Catholic Church, they still belong united to the one universal Church. How can this be? “Let us be very careful not to conceive of the universal Church as the simple sum, or ... the more or less anomalous federation of essentially different particular churches. In the mind of the Lord the Church is universal by vocation and mission, but when she puts down her roots in a variety of cultural, social, and human terrains, she takes on different external expressions and appearances in each part of the world.’ The rich variety of ecclesiastical disciplines, liturgical rites, and theological and spiritual heritages proper to the local churches ‘unified in a common effort, shows all the more resplendently the catholicity of the undivided Church.’”[63] Think of it this way: if we were to go to a different country and celebrate Mass, it may be different language or there may be a different way of presenting the gifts. However, it is still united in Christ with the same sacrifice in both Liturgy of the Word and Liturgy of the Eucharist.

How is a diocese of the Catholic Church similar to the hierarchy of the Magisterium? The head of the church, the Bishop of Rome, along with all the other Bishops comprise the Magisterium. Similarly, we all belong to a particular church, which is in a diocese under the direction of an ordained bishop, who was

I forgive the shortcomings of men. The Faith is pure.

No - I don't believe that people ignorant of the Catholic Faith and the Church founded by Christ are lost, but I am certain I would be lost outside the Catholic Church because it would require me to deny the very body and blood of Christ.

No - I don't believe people hate the Catholic Church. I believe they hate what they mistakenly believe about the Church. There are so many misconceptions and so much misinformation spread for dubious purposes that the ill-informed often speak out against the Church.

How does the Church purify herself? While there are many ways the Church purifies herself, one of the greatest ways the Church is purified and grows in holiness is through the canonization of saints. When the Church solemnly proclaims that a person practiced heroic virtue and lived in fidelity to God's grace, "the Church recognizes the power of the Spirit of holiness within her and sustains the hope of believers by proposing the saints to them as models and intercessors. The saints have always been the source and origin of renewal in the most difficult moments in the Church's history.' Indeed, 'holiness is the hidden source and infallible measure of her apostolic activity and missionary zeal.'"[59]

The Four Marks of the Church "Catholic" – Lesson and Discussion

What does "catholic" mean? The word "catholic" means "universal" in pertaining to "according to the totality" or "in keeping with the whole." The one church which Christ founded and makes holy by His presence has now become the universal faith. Fr. Hardon explains "In general, today the term 'Catholic' refers to those Christians who profess a continued tradition of faith and worship and who hold to the Apostolic succession of bishops and priests since the time of Christ."[60]

The Catechism of the Catholic Church views the term "catholic" in two ways:

- "First, the Church is catholic because Christ is present in her. 'Where there is Christ Jesus, there is the Catholic Church.' In her subsists the fullness of Christ's body united with its head; this implies that she receives from him 'the fullness of the

Is there only one Church?[22] Yes. We can think of the Church as one big Church with a big "C" that contains 23 smaller churches with a small "c". Within the Catholic Church, there are 23 *sui juris* Churches. They are called "*sui juris*" because each Church is governed by its own set of laws. Each Church is in communion with Rome, and they all share the same beliefs, but each Church has its own unique liturgy, "rites", spirituality, hierarchy, and laws. According to the Code of Canon Law of the Eastern Churches, "A rite is the liturgical, theological, spiritual and disciplinary patrimony, distinct by the culture and circumstances of history of a people, by which its own manner of living the faith is manifested in each church *Sui Juris*"[23].

Why are there different *sui-juris* Churches or rites? "When the apostles brought the Gospel to the major cultural centers of their day the essential elements of religious practice were acculturated into those cultures. This means that the essential elements were clothed in the symbols and trappings of the particular people, so that the rituals conveyed the desired spiritual meaning to that culture. In this way the Church becomes *all things to all men that some might be saved* (1 Cor. 9:22). There are three major groupings of Rites based on this initial transmission of the faith, the **Roman**, the **Antiochian** (Syria) and the **Alexandrian** (Egypt). Later on the **Byzantine** derived as a major Rite from the Antiochian, under the influence of St. Basil and St. John Chrysostom. From these four derive the over 20 liturgical Rites present in the Church today."[24]

All of these rites are fully incorporated in one Church and all give the Bishop of Rome, the Holy Father primacy. "Fully incorporated into the society of the Church are those who, possessing the Spirit of Christ, accept all the means of salvation given to the Church together with her entire organization, and who – by the bonds constituted by the profession of faith, the sacraments, ecclesiastical government, and communion – are joined in the visible structure of the Church of Christ, who rules her through the Supreme Pontiff and the bishops. Even though incorporated into the Church, one who does not however persevere in charity is not saved. He remains indeed in the bosom of the Church, but 'in body' not 'in heart.'"[25]

What about other "churches" (i.e. the Lutheran church, the Baptist church, Methodist church, etc.)? These "churches" should not be called churches, for they are not fully incorporated into the society of the Church. The correct name for these

groups would be a “community of believers” for this most accurately describes the group. The First Baptist Church is not a “church” because they are not joined in the visible structure of the Church of Christ, who rules her through the Supreme Pontiff and the bishops. First Baptist is a community of believers in Christ and although they may share many things in common with the Church, they do not share the same profession of faith, the sacraments, ecclesiastical government, and communion. Although we are connected to these believes because we are all brothers and sisters in Christ, our fraternity is wounded because we do not yet have the same mother. Although they recognize God as their Father, they do not recognize Holy Mother Church.

Who belongs within the Catholic Church? Everyone is called into the one true Church. “All men are called to this catholic unity of the People of God...And to it, in different ways, belong or are ordered: the Catholic faithful, others who believe in Christ, and finally all mankind, called by God’s grace to salvation.”[26] The phrase “belong or are ordered” is important. The Catholic faithful belong to the Church. Others who believe in Christ and all mankind are “ordered” to the Church, in other words their proper order is to be in the Church and we pray for this end.

How is the Church joined to those that are not Roman Catholic? “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. In the orthodox Churches, this communion is so profound that it lacks little to attain the fullness that would permit a common celebration of the Lord’s Eucharist.”[27]

Doesn’t the Church say “Outside the Church there is no salvation”? Yes, the Church does teach this. **How are we supposed to understand this statement?** “[I]t means that all salvation comes from Christ the Head through the Church which is his Body: Basing itself on Scripture and Tradition, the Council teaches that the Church, a pilgrim now on earth, is necessary for salvation: the one Christ is the mediator and the way of salvation; he is present to us in his body which is the Church. He himself explicitly asserted the necessity of faith and Baptism, and thereby affirmed at the same time the necessity of the

ful. “Christ, ‘holy innocent, and undefiled,’ knew nothing of sin, but came only to expiate the sins of the people. The Church, however, clasping sinners to her bosom, at once holy and always in need of purification, follows constantly the path of penance and renewal.’ All members of the Church, including her ministers, must acknowledge that they are sinners. In everyone, the weeds of sin will still be mixed with the good wheat of the Gospel until the end of time.”[56] Pope Paul VI speaking on this topic said, “The Church is therefore holy, though having sinners in her midst, because she herself has no other life but the life of grace. If they live her life, her members are sanctified; if they move away from her life, they fall into sins and disorders that prevent the radiation of her sanctity. This is why she suffers and does penance for those offenses, of which she has the power to free her children through the blood of Christ and the gift of the Holy Spirit.”[57]

We can look at other institutions, for example the MLB. There are many players in the MLB that we know who have taken steroids and other performance enhancing drugs. If a few MLB players do illegal things, does this mean the MLB has done an illegal thing? It is true that the players have given the MLB a bad name and hurt its reputation but the MLB itself as an institution cannot be charged with the crime because the institution did not commit the crime. Although many Catholics might give the Church a bad name or reputation, the Church remains what it is, one, holy, Catholic, and apostolic. Most people in the world are not rejecting the Church but rather they are rejecting the bad example of the members of the Church who sin in word, deed, or omission. “There are not over a hundred people in the United States who hate the Catholic Church. There are millions, however, who hate what they wrongly believe to be the Catholic Church—which is, of course, quite a different thing.”[58]

Share you response, thoughts regarding the following quotes by Archbishop Fulton Sheen

No - I'm not comfortable with everything about the Catholic Faith. But absolute truth will cause discomfort to any honest person. It means I must accept just how truly short I am of the glory of God and acknowledge how much I depend on the mercy of Christ.

No - I don't like a lot of things that go on in the Catholic Church, but I know it was started by Jesus and he will forgive me just as

or disconnects to the Church, but realize that it is only through the power of God that this is possible. For this reason, we place our prayers and hopes “in the prayer of Christ for the Church, in the love of the Father for us, and in the power of the Holy Spirit.”[51]

The Four Marks of the Church “Holy” – Lesson and Discussion

Why is the Church considered “holy”? The Church is holy “because Christ, the Son of God, who with the Father and the Spirit is hailed as ‘alone holy,’ loves the Church as his Bride, giving himself up for her so as to sanctify her; he joined her to himself as his body and endowed her with the gift of the Holy Spirit for the glory of God.”[52] The Church is holy because God established the Church and works through her.

“United with Christ, the Church is sanctified by him; through him and with him she becomes sanctifying. All the activities of the Church are directed, as toward their end, to the sanctification of men in Christ and the glorification of God. It is in the Church that the fullness of the means of salvation has been deposited. It is in her that by the grace of God we acquire holiness.”[53]

What is the soul of holiness? “Charity is the soul of the holiness to which all are called: it ‘governs, shapes, and perfects all the means of sanctification.’”[54] St. Therese of Lisieux in her autobiography explains, “If the Church was a body composed of different members, it couldn’t lack the noblest of all; it must have a Heart, and a Heart BURNING WITH LOVE. And I realized that this love alone was the true motive force which enabled the other members of the Church to act; if it ceased to function, the Apostles would forget to preach the gospel, the Martyrs would refuse to shed their blood. LOVE, IN FACT, IS THE VOCATION WHICH INCLUDES ALL OTHERS; IT’S A UNIVERSE OF ITS OWN COMPRISING ALL TIME AND SPACE – IT’S ETERNAL!”[55]

If the Church is holy, why have there been bad things done in the name of the Church (i.e. inquisition, crusades, etc.)?

As we spoke earlier, the Church is not like an institution or a political power. She is the spotless bride of Christ. While yes, people within the Church have done horrible things, this does not mean the Church Herself is sinful. To say the erroneously declare that Church is sinful would be to say that Christ is sin-

Church which men enter through Baptism as through a door. Hence they could not be saved who, knowing that the Catholic Church was founded as necessary by God through Christ, would refuse either to enter it or to remain in it.”[28]

How can someone achieve salvation if they are not of the Church? The Second Vatican Council spoke of this matter and the Church teaches that “Those who, through no fault of their own, do not know the Gospel of Christ or his Church, but who nevertheless seek God with a sincere heart, and, moved by grace, try in their actions to do his will as they know it through the dictates of their conscience - those too may achieve eternal salvation.”[29]

“Although in ways known to himself God can lead those who through no fault of their own, are ignorant of the Gospel, to that faith without which it is impossible to please him, the Church still has the obligation and also the sacred right to evangelize all men.”[30] What the Church is saying if someone is a Jewish person, or a Muslim, or even an atheist, and had not heard the Gospel, the Good News of Jesus Christ, but they lived a moral, upstanding life, then it is possible that they too can be saved.

What if any person, regardless of their faith or lack of faith avoids or rejects the Truth? If any person is given the truth or comes to understand that there is a greater truth than what they thought to be true, they are obligated to embrace the truth. We are also obligated to seek the truth. If a person does not seek the truth or embrace the truth their salvation is in jeopardy.

How does the Church see other major religions? How do other faiths share in some of the truth? What about those who are not Christians? The Church speaks on four major faith groups other than the fullness of truth, the Catholic Church: Judaism, Islam, Protestant Christians, and non-Christians. In regards to the Protestant Christians, we have already spoken about how they share in some of the truth above.

Relationship to Judaism: “When she delves into her own mystery, the Church, the People of God in the New Covenant, discovers her link with the Jewish People, ‘the first to hear the Word of God.’ The Jewish faith, unlike other non-Christian religions, is already a response to God’s revelation in the Old Covenant. To the Jews ‘belong the sonship, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises; to them belong the

patriarchs, and of their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ; , for the gifts and the call of God are irrevocable.”[31] Jews are waiting for their Messiah as we await the return of Him.[32]

Relationship to Muslims: “The plan of salvation also includes those who acknowledge the Creator, in the first place amongst whom are the Muslims; these profess to hold the faith of Abraham, and together with us they adore the one, merciful God, mankind’s judge on the last day’.”[33]

Relationship to all other non-Christian religions: “All nations form but one community. This is so because all stem from the one stock which God created to people the entire earth, and also because all share a common destiny, namely God. His providence, evident goodness, and saving designs extend to all against the day when the elect are gathered together in the holy city...”[34]

“The Catholic Church recognizes in other religions that search, among shadows and images, for the God who is unknown yet near since he gives life and breath and all things and wants all men to be saved. Thus, the Church considers all goodness and truth found in these religions as ‘a preparation for the Gospel and given by him who enlightens all men that they may at length have life.’[35]

Activity – Fullness of Truth Circle/Mountain Chart

You will need a chalkboard/chalk or whiteboard/marker. Draw one circle in the middle of the board and write the word “truth” in the middle. Tell the group that everything inside the circle is the truth and nothing is missing. Now, the Catholic Church claims it is the fullness of truth.

Then ask this question: If you were to draw a circle for Protestants how much of the truth would they have? Let them discuss. Ultimately, we know that Protestants and Catholics have quite a few things in common, but in some ways, like the Eucharist, Protestants have left truth behind or invented false doctrine, like that of *sola scriptura*.

Repeat this with any other religion or belief, for example, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, atheism, etc. Some circles may be close to the fullness of Truth but all will have part of their circle outside the main circle. When it comes to atheist, the majority of the cir-

the unity of all Christians is a gift of Christ and a call of the Holy Spirit.”[48]

MOVIE – Remember the Titans - POP CULTURE CONNECTION – 3:09

http://youtu.be/uiqdA1B3_Nc

In this clip the coach takes his football team who is divided by race on a run into the battlefield of Gettysburg. He instructs them to learn from the past and to become one team. G.K. Chesterton wrote, “it ought to be the oldest things that are taught to the youngest people”[49] When we strive to bring unity we must remember our past and learn from it so we do not make the same mistakes as our ancestors have. We should always strive to be one.

What things should we do to help bring unity in the one

Church? By our Baptism and Confirmation, Catholics are called to work to bring the flock back to one fold by ways including:

- “A permanent renewal of the Church in greater fidelity to her vocation; such renewal is the driving-force of the movement toward unity;

- A conversion of heart as the faithful ‘try to live holier lives according to the Gospel’; for it is the unfaithfulness of the members to Christ’s gift which causes divisions;

- Prayer in common, because ‘change of heart and holiness of life, along with public and private prayer for the unity of Christians, should be regarded as the soul of the whole ecumenical movement, and merits the name ‘spiritual ecumenism;’

- Fraternal knowledge of each other;

- Ecumenical formation of the faithful and especially of priests;

- Dialogue among theologians and meetings among Christians of the different churches and communities;

- Collaboration among Christians in various areas of service to mankind. ‘Human service’ is the idiomatic phrase.”[50]

Why do we pray for the Church to be one? We recognize that without the Church, we cannot receive Christ, and without Her, we cannot be saved. We should all strive to resolve any ruptures

fect harmony.’ The unity of the pilgrim Church is also assured by visible bonds of communion:

- profession of one faith received from the Apostles;
- common celebration of divine worship, especially of the sacraments;
- apostolic succession through the sacrament of Holy Orders, maintaining the fraternal concord of God’s family.”[44]

The Church is also “one” through the one supreme pontiff, first Peter and then his successors. The Second Vatican Council explains: “For it is through Christ’s Catholic Church alone, which is the universal help toward salvation, that the fullness of the means of salvation can be obtained. It was to the apostolic college alone, of which Peter is the head, that we believe that our Lord entrusted all the blessings of the New Covenant, in order to establish on earth the one Body of Christ into which all those should be fully incorporated who belong in anyway to the People of God.”[45]

Has there been disunity within the Church of God? Yes.

There has been disunity since the beginning of the Church with the Apostles and that has continued through today. “Where there are sins, there are also divisions, schisms, heresies, and disputes. Where there is virtue, however, there also is harmony and unity, from which arise the one heart and one soul of all believers.”[46]

How are we supposed to treat Christians that are not in unity or one with the Church?

We are supposed to treat them with dignity and respect because, like us, they are created in the image and likeness of God. “All who have been justified by faith in Baptism are incorporated into Christ; they therefore have a right to be called Christians, and with good reason are accepted as brothers in the Lord by the children of the Catholic Church.”[47]

How do we work towards unity? “Christ always gives his Church the gift of unity, but the Church must always pray and work to maintain, reinforce, and perfect the unity that Christ wills for her. This is why Jesus himself prayed at the hour of his Passion, and does not cease praying to his Father, for the unity of his disciples: ‘That they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be one in us,...so that the world may know that you have sent me.’ The desire to recover

cle will be outside the main circle, but they will have a small piece within the fullness of truth because they follow moral and natural law and laws of the land, as do we.

The goal of this activity is to show that everyone person, regardless of faith tradition or lack of faith, share in part of the fullness of truth. This can help to explain the Church’s teaching on salvation. While there is no salvation outside the fullness of truth, the Catholic Church, everyone shares at least a part of this truth, and therefore has a chance of salvation. The source of all truth flows from the Fullness of Truth, the Catholic Church.

An alternative way to execute this activity: Give each person a piece of paper, and have them do the activity on their own. Then, for each group, call one person up to draw one religion’s circle of faith and see how much/little they put in the fullness of truth circle. Ask them how they came up with their answer and see if the group agrees with their statement. Lastly, compare their answer to what is actually true about that religion. Repeat for all other religions. The Mountain Chart is the same concept but with the analogy of a mountain. The chart can be downloaded from the “Document” section of the main page. The pdf. file can be explained and handed out.

The Four Marks of the Church (Introduction) – Lesson and Discussion

Christ as King of Heaven and Earth means that He is present still in this world. We know this is true because He makes Himself visible through His Bride, the Church. “To reunite all his children, scattered and led astray by sin, the Father willed to call the whole of humanity together into his Son’s Church. The Church is the place where humanity must rediscover its unity and salvation.”[36]

What are the Four Marks of the Church? The marks of the church are that it is one, holy, catholic, and apostolic. “The four essential notes that characterize the Church of Christ, first fully enumerated in the Nicene-Constantinople Creed; one, holy, Catholic, and apostolic. Since the Eastern Schism and the Protestant Reformation they have become means of identifying the true Church among the rival claimants in Christianity. Some writers add other notes besides the traditional four, e.g., St. Robert Bellamine with a total of fifteen, including the mark of persecution.”[37]

Why does the Church profess these four marks? “These four characteristics, inseparably linked with each other, indicate essential features of the Church and her mission. The Church does not possess them of herself; it is Christ who, through the Holy Spirit, makes his Church one, holy, catholic, and apostolic, and it is he who calls her to realize each of these qualities.”[38] To speak of the Church is to speak of Christ. The Church is our mother. Like Mary, when asking to speak of herself she only direct to Christ “do whatever he tells you”[39] When we ask for the Church to speak of herself, she has little to say and everything to say of Jesus. We must keep this in mind when we ask the Church why she professes anything like the four marks. It is because she is professing what Christ has given us. We have to remember that if the Church is one, holy, catholic, apostolic then Jesus Christ is one, holy, catholic, and apostolic. God the Father sent His begotten Son into this world for a mission to save souls.

How does the Church claim to be one, holy, catholic, and apostolic? “Only faith can recognize that the Church possesses these properties from her divine source. But their historical manifestations are signs that also speak clearly to human reason. As the First Vatican Council noted, the ‘Church herself, with her marvelous propagation, eminent holiness, and inexhaustible fruitfulness in everything good, her catholic unity and invincible stability, is a great and perpetual motive of credibility and an irrefutable witness of her divine mission.”[40]

Each of the marks is expounded upon in greater detail in subsequent lessons, but here is a great summary from the Catechism:

- **“The Church is one:** she acknowledges one Lord, confesses one faith, is born of one Baptism, forms only one Body, is given life by the one Spirit, for the sake of one hope, at whose fulfillment all divisions will be overcome.

- **The Church is holy:** the Most Holy God is her author; Christ, her bridegroom, gave himself up to make her holy; the Spirit of holiness gives her life. Since she still includes sinners, she is ‘the sinless one made up of sinners.’ Her holiness shines in the saints; in Mary she is already all-holy.

- **The Church is catholic:** she proclaims the fullness of the faith. She bears in herself and administers the totality of the

means of salvation. She is sent out to all peoples. She speaks to all men. She encompasses all times. She is ‘missionary of her very nature’.

- **The Church is apostolic.** She is built on a lasting foundation: ‘the twelve apostles of the Lam’. She is indestructible. She is upheld infallibly in the truth: Christ governs her through Peter and the other apostles, who are present in their successors, the Pope and the college of bishops.

‘The sole Church of Christ which in the Creed we profess to be one, holy, catholic, and apostolic,...subsists in the Catholic Church, which is governed by the successor of Peter and by the bishops in communion with him. Nevertheless, many elements of sanctification and of truth are found outside its visible confines.’[41]

The Four Marks of the Church “One” – Lesson and Discussion

How is the Church “one”? “The Church is one because of her source: ‘the highest exemplar and source of this mystery is the unity, in the Trinity of Persons, of one God, the Father and the Son in the Holy Spirit.’ The Church is one because of her found: for ‘the Word made flesh, the prince of peace, reconciled all men to God by the cross,...restoring the unity of all in one people and one body.’ The Church is one because of her ‘soul’: ‘It is the Holy Spirit, dwelling in those who believe and pervading and ruling over the entire Church, who brings about that wonderful communion of the faithful and joins them together so intimately in Christ that he is the principle of the Church’s unity.’ Unity is of the essence of the Church: ‘What an astonishing mystery! There is one Father of the universe, one Logos of the universe, and also one Holy Spirit, everywhere one and the same; there is also one virgin become mother, and I should like to call her ‘Church.’”[42]

What are these bonds of unity? While the church is “one” in nature, because of Her worldwide expanse, much diversity exists as well. The Church has always welcomed diversity within her peoples, cultures, gifts, offices, and ways of life, while maintaining unity. However, sin and its consequences threaten the gift of unity. This is why Saint Paul writes to the Ephesians exhorting them to “maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”[43] “Above all, charity ‘binds everything together in per-