

# POD 7 — THE TRINITY

*The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the Love of God  
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.  
(2 Cor. 13:14)*

This pod consists of four sessions focusing on the Trinity. They are:

Session A: The Most Holy Trinity

Session B: God, the Father

Session C: God, the Son

Session D: God, the Holy Spirit

## Vocabulary

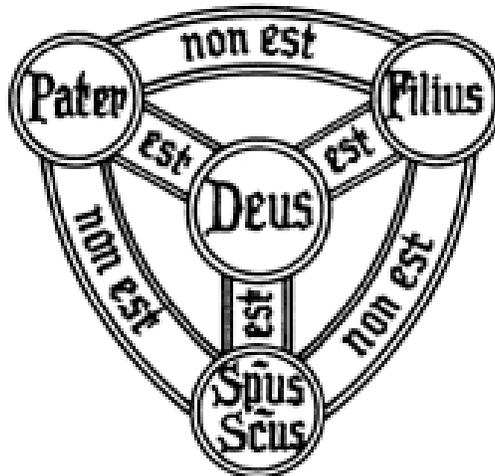
Consubstantial

Immanent

Incarnate

Mystery

Trinity



# Session 7A – The Most Holy Trinity

*God is the infinitely perfect being who is the most Holy Trinity.  
(Saint Turibius of Montenegro)*

## Objectives

1. The Trinity is the central mystery of our faith (CCC, 234; 253-255)
2. The Trinity is one God in three persons (CCC, 253)
  - a. Inseparable in what they are and what they do (CCC, 267)
  - b. Three distinct persons (CCC, 254)
  - c. The distinction of the persons resides solely in the relationship to one another (CCC, 255; 258)

**Note to Catechist:** In the Trinity all is one except the relations. Yes, we call the Holy Spirit “the Sanctifier”, Jesus “the Son” and “the Redeemer” and the Father “the Creator, but the persons of the Trinity are inseparable in what they do. For example, the work of redemption is the work of all three persons. The Father sends the Son to redeem, the Son redeems, and the Holy Spirit applies the fruits of redemption to those who are redeemed.

3. The mystery of the Trinity was revealed by Jesus Christ (CCC, 243)
  - a. God revealed himself to Israel as One (CCC, 201)
  - b. The Incarnation of Jesus revealed that there are two persons of God (CCC, 262; 468)
  - c. At Passover Jesus announced that he would send “the Advocate, the Holy Spirit...” revealing the third person of God (CCC, 243; Jn. 14:26)
4. Understandings of the Trinity
  - a. Immanent Trinity refers to the mystery of God’s inmost life within the Blessed Trinity (CCC, 236)
  - b. Economic Trinity refers to all the works by which God reveals himself and communicates his life. (CCC, 236).

**Note to Catechist:** This is a challenging topic by virtue of the fact that God as Trinity is an inexhaustible mystery (CCC, 237). By looking at the economic Trinity (the works of God), the immanent Trinity (God’s inmost life) is revealed to us and the revelation of God’s inmost life (immanent Trinity) enlightens our understanding of his works (economic Trinity).

# Session 7B – God, the Father

*I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth,  
of all things visible and invisible.  
(Nicene Creed)*

## Objectives

1. God the Father is the first person of the Blessed Trinity (CCC, 198)
  - a. God the Father is the creator of all things, visible and invisible (CCC, 325)
  - b. God is the Father of Jesus and Father of all (CCC, 240)
    - i. The Baptized
    - ii. The Unbaptized
2. Attributes of God the Father
  - a. Creator
  - b. Almighty
  - c. Merciful
  - d. Loving
  - e. Truth
  - f. Eternally Father to his Son
  - g. Good
  - h. Works for our salvation

**Note to Catechist:** As Trinity, each person of God has common attributes (eternal, omnipresent, etc.). They also have attributes that are proper to them based on the relation of the persons to one another.

## Session 7C – God, the Son

*In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God . . . and the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.*

*(Jn. 1:1,14)*

### Objectives

1. God the Son is the second person of the Blessed Trinity
  - a. True God, consubstantial with the Father, incarnate in time (CCC, 253; 461)
  - b. True Man, incarnate of the Virgin Mary (CCC, 456)
  - c. The Incarnation reveals the inner life of God to humanity (CCC, 458)

**Note to Catechist:** The second person of the Holy Trinity has always existed, without beginning and end. Becoming incarnate in time refers to the fact that Jesus the Son of God assumed a human nature at a specific point in time to bring about our salvation. (CCC, 461) It is important to use the word incarnate rather than “born” of the Virgin Mary, as this speaks to the truth that life begins at the moment of conception.

The youth will learn in more depth about the humanity and divinity of Jesus in Pod 9 on the Incarnation.

2. Attributes of the Second Person of the Trinity
  - a. Incarnate
  - b. Savior
  - c. Redeemer

# Session 7D – God, the Holy Spirit

*Come Holy Spirit fill the hearts of your faithful.  
And kindle in them the fire of your love.  
(Prayer of the Holy Spirit)*

## Objectives

1. God the Holy Spirit is the third person of the Blessed Trinity
  - a. Eternally proceeding from the Father and Son (CCC, 246)
  - b. Present from the time of creation (CCC, 686)
    - i. “The Lord God formed man out of the clay of the ground and blew into his nostrils the breath of life” (Gn. 2:7)
    - ii. Who has spoken through the prophets (CCC, 243; 687)
  - c. Fully revealed by Jesus Christ at Pentecost
    - i. In John’s Last Supper Discourse, Jesus promised the sending of the Holy Spirit (Jn. 14:16, 26)
    - ii. In the Pentecost story in Acts, the Holy Spirit comes to the apostles (Acts 2:1-4)
2. Attributes of the Third Person of the Trinity
  - a. Sanctifier; through the Gifts and Fruits of the Spirit
  - b. Giver of life; animates all creation and the Church

## Defending the Faith

### 1. Is God male?

This question is often asked as Jesus the Second Person of the Trinity came as a man. Through his resurrection and ascension his glorified body, that of a male, will remain for all eternity. In his divinity, God is pure, infinite Spirit and spirit can have no gender. There is no place for the difference between the sexes. In showing his love, God exhibits human characteristics of fatherhood and motherhood but he is neither male nor female. Scripture clearly shows us both aspects of God. For example, in 2 Corinthians 6:18, God says, "...I will be a father to you." And in Isaiah 66:13 the Lord says that "as a mother comforts her son, so will I comfort you." God transcends the human distinction between the sexes. He is neither man nor woman: He is God (CCC, 239; 370).

### 2. Three Persons or Three Gods?

St. Patrick used the analogy of a shamrock to explain the Holy Trinity. Just as in a shamrock there are three leaflets but one leaf, so in the Trinity there are Three Divine Persons but one God. St. John Damascus used the analogy of a tree with the root being God, the Father; the branch as God the Son; and the fruit as God, the Holy Spirit. All one tree with three distinct parts in relation to each other. All three Persons of the Trinity are distinct, eternal, and fully God. They are not three separate gods because "the only real distinction between them lies solely in the relationships which relate them to one another" (CCC, 255). Thus in God there is one divine substance (essence, nature), equally possessed by three distinct, divine Persons in relationship to each of the others.

### 3. Catholics believe Mary is the Mother of God so does that make her a goddess?

Mary is the mother of Jesus, the Second Person of the Trinity made man. Because Jesus is God and Mary is the mother of the second person who is God, she is the mother of God. That does not mean that she is the mother of the Father and Spirit. She is not the source of Jesus' divinity but she is the mother of Jesus both God and man. She cooperated with God's plan to humble himself and take on human form.

## Faith in Action

- Make a poster illustrating the three persons of God
- Discuss some of the traditional symbols of the trinity, and each of the persons of the trinity. Why are they symbolic of the trinity? Make connections as to what aspects they are trying to convey
- Explore the presidential prayers on the Feast of the Holy Trinity

## POD 8 — SAINTS

*Not all saints have the same sort of holiness. There are those who could never have lived with other saints. Not all have the same path. But all arrive at God.*

*(St. John Vianney)*

This pod consists of four sessions focusing on the Saints. They are:

Session A: Holiness

Session B: Models of Holiness

Session C: The Communion of Saints

Session D: Canonization Process

### Vocabulary

Beatification

Canonization

Church in Glory (Church Glorified)

Church Suffering

Communion of Saints

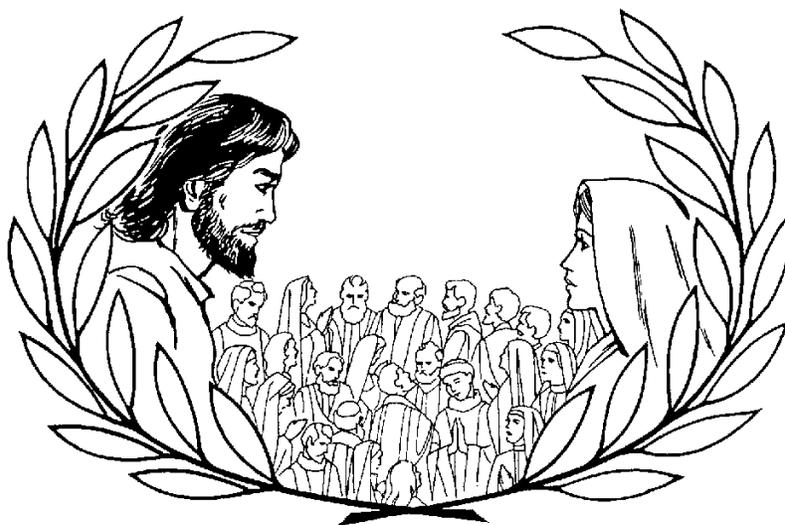
Congregation for the Causes of Saints

Doctors of the Church

Holiness

Patron Saints

Pilgrim Church



# Session 8A – Holiness

*For I, the Lord, am your God;  
and you shall make and keep yourselves holy, because I am holy.  
(Lev. 11:44)*

## Objectives

1. Holiness
  - a. Has its source in God (USCCA, 129)
  - b. Is the most essential attribute of God (YC, 83)
  - c. Grows when our will is one with God's will and brought about
    - i. When we live according to the Gospel and in union with Jesus Christ (CCC, 2014; 1709)
    - ii. Through prayer (CCC, 2015)
    - iii. In the perfection of charity (CCC, 1709; 2013)
2. We are made holy through Baptism (NMI, 31§2)
3. Call to Holiness
  - a. Flows from our Baptism and Confirmation
  - b. Each of us are called to holiness – “be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect” (CCC, 2013)
  - c. Ongoing and non-ending (CCC, 2015)
4. Personal and Communal holiness
  - a. Everyone is ordered to holiness by our creation and baptism (CCC, 2809; 2813)
  - b. The Church, though made up of sinners, is unfailingly holy (CCC, 823)

**Note to Catechist:** We become holy when our will is one with God's will: when we want only what God wants. There are many who misunderstand what holiness consists of. Some believe that doing excessive external penances or praying all day long will make them holy. These pious practices help us to grow in holiness but holiness itself consists in doing the will of God and the holier we are the more our will becomes God's will. In the modern Church there has been a gross misunderstanding that Blessed John Paul II beatified and canonized so many “normal” people such as doctors, married persons, housewives, children, etc. We become holy by living our vocation and state in life with heroism by the grace of God. The Call to Holiness is explored more deeply in Pod 15.

## Session 8B – Models of Holiness

*Thus the holiness of the People of God will grow in fruitful abundance, as is clearly shown in the history of the Church through the lives of so many saints.*

*(LG, 40§2)*

### Objectives

1. The Church's holiness shines in the saints (CCC, 867)
2. Saints as models and intercessors (LG, 40; 48-51)
  - a. Inspire us to grow in holiness
  - b. Are the face of Christ in the world
  - c. Are sources of renewal for the church in difficult times e.g. St. Athanasius (CCC, 828)
3. Patron Saints
  - a. Provide a model of charity (CCC, 2156)
  - b. Special protectors and intercessors (CCC, 828)
  - c. Baptismal name (CCC, 2156)
4. Mary
  - a. Honored above all saints (CCC, 967)
  - b. Perfectly holy (CCC, 2030)

## Session 8C – The Communion of Saints

*I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.*

*(The Apostles' Creed)*

### Objectives

1. Assembly of all the saints (CCC, 946)
  - a. The members of the Church through all time
    - i. Faithful on earth (Pilgrim Church)
    - ii. Souls in Purgatory (Church Suffering)
    - iii. Blessed in Heaven (Church in Glory)
  - b. The Holy People of God (CCC, 823)
2. Two meanings of Communion of Saints (CCC, 948)
  - a. Communion in holy things (sancta), especially the Holy Eucharist
  - b. Communion among holy persons (sancti), united in Christ

**Note to Catechist:** Some have used the term “Church Militant” for Pilgrim Church and “Church Triumphant” for Church in Glory.

## Session 8D – Canonization Process

*In all times, God chooses from these many who,  
following more closely the example of Christ, give outstanding testimony to the Kingdom of  
heaven by shedding their blood or by the heroic practice of virtues.  
(DPM, Blessed John Paul II)*

### Objectives

1. History of process
  - a. Early Church recognized and honored martyrs and those who lived exemplary lives
  - b. The Church soon began to venerate Popes, Doctors of the Church, missionaries and virgins
  - c. No formal process was in place until the 17<sup>th</sup> century
  - d. Current process established by Blessed John Paul II in 1983
2. Beatification and Canonization processes are the responsibility of
  - a. The Local Bishop
  - b. Congregation for the Causes of Saints in Rome

**Note to Catechist:** Please point out to your students that the process can change. See Appendix B on Canonization for a brief outline of the process.

## Defending the Faith

### 1. Why do Catholics pray to saints?

We honor saints for their holy lives. Just like you would ask a faith-filled friend to pray for you, we ask saints to pray on our behalf because of their closeness to God; they are alive with him in heaven. We ask saints to pray for us and to intercede for us to Jesus. The saints do not take the place of God; we can and should pray directly to God as well.

### 2. What is necessary for someone to be a canonized saint?

The Congregation for the Causes of Saints is an office of the Pope in Rome. It examines the lives of people who have practiced heroic virtues and have been proposed for sainthood. The canonization process may take years as the person's life, death, writings, and miracles attributed to them are analyzed. Beatification is one of the steps in canonization. The person is called blessed and may be honored publicly. It's important to remember, though, that all baptized Christians are called to sainthood and that anyone who is with God is, in fact, a saint. For more information, see the Appendix B on Canonization.

### 3. How do you grow in holiness?

The first step is to acknowledge our sinfulness. We grow in holiness through prayer and frequent reception of the sacraments, especially Holy Eucharist and Reconciliation. Surround yourself with good people, like your parish youth group, who will help you make good choices. Guard closely what you watch, read and listen to. Through these choices, we grow in holiness which will be reflected in our actions which mirror the inner change of our hearts.

Be faithful to your role as a young disciple of Jesus, and live your faith heroically!

## Faith in Action

- Research a religious order. Find out who their founder was and the charisms/spirituality of that order
- Talk to a lay person, married or single, about how they live out their vocation
- Learn about the patron saint of your parish
- Learn about the saint for whom you were named
- Make a personal plan to “grow in holiness” covering a specific time period, (e.g. Lent, Advent, a semester, etc.) These should include daily prayer, frequent celebration of Reconciliation and attending Sunday Mass, conscious media choices, etc.

- Research some of the changes to the canonization process. How do these changes help in declaring saints?

### **Other Resources**

- *Butler's Lives of the Saints*



# POD 9 — INCARNATION

*For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven . . .  
(Nicene Creed)*

This pod consists of four sessions focusing on the Incarnation. They are:

- Session A: The Divinity & Humanity of Jesus
- Session B: Mary & the Incarnation
- Session C: Responses to & Symbols of the Incarnation
- Session D: Heresies Regarding the Incarnation

## Vocabulary

Annunciation  
Christology  
Consubstantial  
Fiat  
Heresy  
Hypostatic Union  
Immaculate Conception  
Incarnation  
Magnificat  
Nicene-Constantinople Creed



## Session 9A – The Divinity & Humanity of Jesus

*The Son of God...worked with human hands; he thought with a human mind. He acted with a human will, and with a human heart he loved.*

(GS, 22)

### Objectives

1. Incarnation
  - a. The Son of God assumed a human nature in order to accomplish our salvation (CCC, 461)
  - b. Belief in the true incarnation of the Son of God is the distinctive sign of Christian Faith (CCC, 463)
2. Jesus is true God and true man (CCC, 464-469)
  - a. His human nature and divine nature are united in the Person of the Word (Compendium, 89)
  - b. In the humanity of Jesus all things-his miracles, his suffering, and his death-must be attributed to his divine person which acts by means of his assumed nature (CCC, 468)
  - c. The union of the divine and human nature in one divine person is known as hypostatic union (CCC, Glossary)
  - d. Composed of a rational soul and body, consubstantial with the Father as to his divinity and consubstantial with us as to his humanity (CCC, 467)

**Note to Catechist:** Remember to explain that consubstantial means “of the same substance”. This word is used throughout the *Catechism* in the section on the Trinity and Incarnation. With the change in translation of the Roman Missal, the Nicene Creed we pray most Sundays at Mass also uses this word.

3. Jesus as God
  - a. Reveals God, that is, the Trinity, to us (CCC, 238; 261)
  - b. The only mediator between God and men (CCC, 480)
4. Jesus as Man
  - a. Showed his humanity in every event of his life (CCC, 512-534)
  - b. Son of Mary (CCC, 509)

**Note to Catechist:** Jesus’ humanity is shown through his family life, friendships, experiences of joy and happiness, hunger and thirst in the desert, temptation by the devil, agony in the Garden, etc. Jesus also had a human soul that was created at the moment of his conception in the womb of the Virgin Mary.

## Session 9B – Mary & the Incarnation

*I am the handmaid of the Lord, let it be done to me according to your word.*  
(Lk. 1:38)

### Objectives

1. Mary was prepared from all eternity for this role, chosen by God (CCC, 488; 490)
  - a. Protected from original sin by the Immaculate Conception (CCC, 491)
  - b. Enriched by God with gifts appropriate for such a role (LG, 56)
  - c. Wholly born by God's grace (CCC, 490)
2. Mary was central to the incarnation
  - a. Jesus needed to be born of a human woman in order to be consubstantial with humanity (CCC, 467)
  - b. Mary conceived Jesus by the Holy Spirit (Lk. 1:34-35)
  - c. Responded with the obedience of faith (fiat) to Gabriel's annunciation (CCC, 494; LG, 56)

**Note the Catechist:** More teachings on Mary are in Pod 14.

# Session 9C – Responses to & Symbols of the Incarnation

*For today in the city of David a savior has been born for you who is Messiah and Lord.  
And this will be a sign for you: you will find an infant  
wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.  
(Lk. 2:11-12)*

## Objectives

1. The Shepherds (Lk. 2:15-20)
  - a. Did as instructed by God's angels to go and "see this thing the Lord has made known to us"
  - b. They were the first witnesses and made the message known about the child to others (CCC, 525)
  - c. They glorified and praised God
2. Wise Men (Mt. 2:1-11)
  - a. Were overjoyed at the star, the sign of a new ruler's birth
  - b. Recognized him as the newborn King of the Jews
  - c. Prostrated themselves and paid him homage
  - d. Offered him gifts
3. Mary (Lk.1:38; 46-55)
  - a. May it be done to me according to your word (fiat)
  - b. Joy and exultation to the Lord reciting of the Magnificat (Canticle of Mary)
4. Herod (Mt.2:3-18)
  - a. Greatly troubled that his power might be usurped with the birth of a Messiah
  - b. Irrate when the magi did not return and ordered the massacre of the Holy Innocents
5. Meaning of the
  - a. Shepherds-shows that God favors and blesses the lowly
  - b. Star-common belief that a new star appeared at the time of a ruler's birth (Num. 24:17)
  - c. Wise Men-represent Jesus is Lord and King of all
  - d. Three Gifts-refers to the three offices of Jesus (King, Priest, Savior)
    - i. gold-king
    - ii. frankincense-prayers going to God
    - iii. Myrrh-death

- e. Swaddling clothes-alludes to another offspring of David, Solomon, who was wrapped in swaddling clothes at birth (Ws. 7:4-6)

**Note to Catechist:** In Bibles, the footnotes at the bottom of the page, reading guides, and introductions to the biblical book contain information which helps us place the passages in their proper context so we can better understand what is being said.

# Session 9D – Heresies Regarding the Incarnation

*Begotten not made, consubstantial with the Father.  
(Nicene Creed)*

## Objectives

1. Heresy is the deliberate denial of any truth by a Catholic, that must be believed as part of divine revelation (CIC, 751)
2. Docetism
  - a. Denied Jesus' humanity
    - i. Taught that Jesus merely had the appearance of a physical body
    - ii. Professed that Jesus was an illusory human being
  - b. First refuted by letters of Ignatius of Antioch 110 A.D.
  - c. Strongest adversaries were Polycarp of Smyrna, Irenaeus, and Tertullian
3. Arianism
  - a. Denied Jesus' divinity
    - i. Taught that Jesus was a different substance from God
    - ii. Taught that Jesus was not eternal
  - b. Condemned at the Council of Nicaea 325 A.D.
  - c. Refuted by Athanasius
  - d. The Nicene Creed, formulated at the Council of Nicaea, affirmed and modified at the Council of Constantinople 381 A.D. was formulated to ensure unity in fundamental beliefs and end Arianism
4. Monophysitism
  - a. Taught that Jesus' divine nature completely absorbed his human nature
    - i. Condemned at the Council of Chalcedon 451 A.D. which clarified the Christology
    - ii. Strongest adversaries were Flavian of Constantinople and Pope Leo
5. Nestorianism
  - a. A human person joined to the divine person of God's son
    - i. Taught that there were two separate persons; one human, one divine
    - ii. Denied that Mary was the mother of God, professed that she was the mother of the human Jesus of Nazareth
    - iii. Condemned at Synod of Ephesus 431 A.D.
    - iv. Main opponent was Cyril of Alexandria

## Defending the Faith

### 1. Is Jesus God?

Yes. Jesus Christ is true God and true man. He became truly man while remaining truly God. Jesus is one person, the Second Person of the Trinity, with two natures, human and divine. He is the “Word made flesh.”

### 2. Is Jesus human the same way that I am human?

Jesus was a divine person with two natures—one human and one divine. Jesus was a real person who lived 2000 years ago in Nazareth. “The Son of God...worked with human hands; he thought with a human mind. He acted with a human will, and with a human heart he loved. Born of the Virgin Mary, he has truly been made one of us, like us in all things except sin.”(GS, 22§2)

### 3. Why did God become man?

Years and years of sacrifice by the Jewish people—including prayer, fasting, and Temple sacrifice of animals—were not enough to bring salvation. As the book of Hebrews pointed out “it is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats take away sins.” Hebrews continues by quoting Jesus praying the words of the Psalms:

*Sacrifice and offering you did not desire,  
but a body you prepared for me;  
holocausts and sin offerings you took no delight in (Heb 10:4-6).*

The Son of God became man to reconcile sinners to God. He became man in order to teach us the meaning of true love. He became man in order to be a model of holiness. He became man to make us sharers of his divine nature. By becoming fully human, God has united himself to us. Unlike the early heresies that supposed Jesus only “appeared” to be human, Jesus is truly human—in body, mind, and soul.

## Faith in Action

- Research how one of the strong adversaries of a heresy fought against it
- Read the Magnificat. (Lk. 1:46-55) Write your own prayer of praise and adoration to God
- For centuries faithful Catholics have struggled to understand the incarnation. As you struggle, develop a *Pious Invocation* such as “Lord, increase my faith” or a short prayer that may be repeated aloud or silently. For a list of these see the Catholic Household Blessings and Prayers



# POD 10 — MARKS OF THE CHURCH

*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.*

(CCC, 811)

This pod consists of four sessions focusing on the Marks of the Church. They are:

Session A: The Church is One

Session B: The Church is Holy

Session C: The Church is Catholic

Session D: The Church is Apostolic

## Vocabulary

Apostasy

Apostolate

Apostolic Succession

Charity

Creed

Doctrine

Dogma

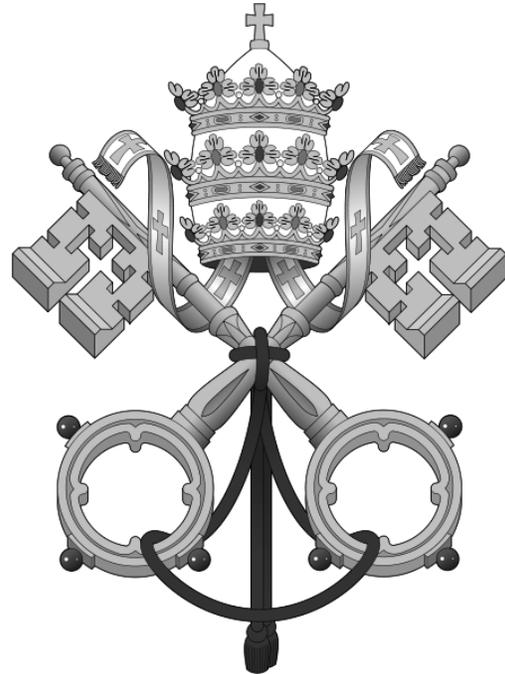
Heresy

Infallible

Magisterium

Schism

Universal



# Session 10A – The Church is One

*Paul also speaks of one body, one Spirit... one faith, one baptism;  
one God and Father of all...  
(Eph. 4:4-6)*

## Objectives

1. The Church is one because its source, the Most Holy Trinity is one, bound together by charity (CCC, 813; 815)
2. The Catholic Church is made one by several visible bonds (CCC, 815)
  - a. Profession of one creed
  - b. Common celebration of the sacraments
  - c. Apostolic succession

**Note to Catechist:** Apostolic Succession is the handing down of the uninterrupted preaching, teaching, sanctifying and governing authority of the apostles to their successors, the bishops. It is conferred through the laying on of hands at their episcopal ordination. (CCC, 888-892)

3. Wounds to unity (CCC, 817)
  - a. Heresy – denying essential truths of the faith
  - b. Schism – causing breaks to unity
  - c. Apostasy – abandoning the faith

**Note to Catechist:** Some of the heresies are covered in Session 9D.

# Session 10B – The Church is Holy

*United with Christ, the Church is sanctified by him;  
through him and with him she becomes sanctifying.  
(CCC, 824)*

## Objectives

1. The Church is holy
  - a. Because as the bride of Christ, Jesus gave himself up for her, so as to sanctify her (CCC, 823)
  - b. As she is endowed with the fullness of the means of salvation (CCC, 824)
2. Holiness of the church on earth is real, but imperfect (CCC, 825)
  - a. All human beings are called to live a life of holiness (CCC, 826)
  - b. The saints and Mary are models of holiness
  - c. Perfect holiness will be achieved in heaven
3. The Church gathers sinners, and through the grace of God brings us to holiness (CCC, 824)
  - a. The first step to holiness is to acknowledge our sinfulness (CCC, 827)
  - b. Continual repentance and conversion are steps to help us grow in holiness (CCC, 827)

**Note to Catechist:** The topic of Saints is covered more in-depth in Pod 8.

## Session 10C – The Church is Catholic

*It is called Catholic then because it extends over all the world . . . and because it teaches universally and completely one and all the doctrines which ought to come to men's knowledge.  
(St. Cyril of Jerusalem)*

### Objectives

1. The Church is catholic, or “universal” because: (CCC, 830-831; 868)
  - a. She proclaims the fullness of faith
  - b. She contains the totality of the means of salvation
  - c. She has been sent by Christ to the whole human race
  - d. She encompasses all times
2. The Church exists world-wide for all people, and salvation comes from the Church, even for non-members (CCC, 846; 868)
3. The Church as the universal sacrament of salvation is mandated to go make disciples of all nations. This mandate is grounded in the eternal love of the Most Holy Trinity (CCC, 849-850)

## Session 10D – The Church is Apostolic

*You are Peter and on this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell will not prevail against it. I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven.*

*(Mt.16:18-19)*

### Objectives

1. The Church is apostolic because she is founded by Christ on the twelve apostles, with the primacy of Peter sent on mission by Christ himself (CCC, 857)
2. This apostolic mission centers on teaching of Scripture and Tradition (CCC, 857)
3. The teaching is guided by successors of Peter and the twelve, i.e. the Pope and bishops in unity with him. This is called the Magisterium (CCC, 857)
4. All members of the Church share in the apostolic mission of spreading the Kingdom over all the earth, though in various ways (CCC, 863)

## Defending the Faith

### 1. **Can non-Catholics go to heaven?**

Yes, because Jesus came for the salvation of all (2 Cor. 5:14-15) and therefore all humans belong to the catholic unity of the people of God. Jesus himself “explicitly asserted the necessity of faith and Baptism” for salvation through the church he founded – the Catholic Church. While many good, God-loving people are baptized in another Christian tradition they . . . “do not enjoy full Catholic unity [and] are in a certain, although imperfect, communion with the Catholic Church”. (Compendium, 168) But this imperfect communion does not prohibit them from God’s salvation. Even those who never heard of Christ or the Church have not forfeited their chance for salvation. The people in greatest danger of not getting to heaven are those who know and understand that the Church is the Body of Christ yet reject it or do not live up to it.

### 2. **Why do I need to be Catholic?**

The fullness of truth resides in the Catholic Church which is the one true Church of Christ Jesus. The Sacraments offer graces which strengthen us to live a life of faith pleasing to God. This life and our loving of God and neighbor is the acceptance of salvation that Jesus offers us. The Catholic Church’s unity and uninterrupted apostolic succession assures faithful transmission of the teaching of Jesus. Through the history and tradition of the Church, saints have emerged who lived good and holy lives using their God-given gifts. These models of holiness known to us through the Church show us how to live holy lives pleasing to God using our gifts and talents.

### 3. **How does the Catholic Church sustain its members when they live out their faith in different ways?**

The Pope provides a visible bond of unity for the Church on earth. Members of the Church come from all races, nations, cultures, and ages. This diversity influences the way they give glory to God and live out their faith, but unity with the universal church is sustained through the common celebration of worship and the Sacraments. No matter what Roman/Latin Rite Catholic Church you attend throughout the world, you will recognize clearly the parts of the Mass or the Sacrament being celebrated.

### 4. **Can’t I come to know God on my own, do I need the Church?**

The one true church, the Catholic Church, was founded by Jesus. When Jesus left the earth he entrusted his apostles to “go make disciples”. The uninterrupted apostolic succession from the apostles to the Pope and the bishops assures

faithful transmission of the teachings of Jesus which have been sustained and upheld in the church. We can come to know about Jesus through our own study, but it would be mixed with error due to our human weakness. For a full, correct understanding we need a teacher who can lead and guide us. That teacher is the Church.

## **Faith in Action**

- Examining a map or globe of the world point to any spot on land. Go to the internet and using a search engine, locate the nearest Catholic Church. Make a presentation to your class about any interesting facts you discover. This can be repeated for every continent
- Make an artistic expression of each of the marks to be hung in your room, locker, classroom, etc.
- Using the model of the “four marks” (characteristics of the Church) develop four marks that describe your family or other group of which you are a part
- Attend Mass at a different parish. Try to attend one that is distinctly different from your home parish. Notice the difference in worship style
- Select one of the bishops of our diocese. Research who was the principal consecrator (the person who ordained them bishop). This person is the first step in connecting your selected bishop to the apostles. A good resource for this is <http://www.catholic-hierarchy.org/diocese/dmarq.html>.



# POD 11 — SACRAMENTS I

*The whole liturgical life of the Church revolves around the Eucharistic Sacrifice  
and the Sacraments.*

*(SC, 6)*

This pod consists of four sessions focusing on the sacramental nature of the Church and the Sacraments of Initiation: Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist. They are:

Session A: Sacramental Nature of the Church 1

Session B: Sacramental Nature of the Church 2

Session C: Baptism & Confirmation

Session D: Eucharist

## Vocabulary

Actual grace

Blessed Sacrament

Charisms

Church

Communion

Form

Grace

Holy Communion

Indelible Spiritual Mark

Matter

Mystery

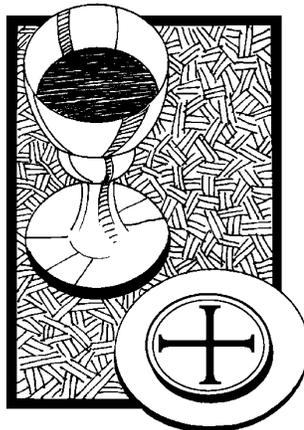
Original sin

Sacramental

Sacramental grace

Sanctifying grace

Sin



# Session 11A – Sacramental Nature of the Church 1

*“...the Church ... is the sacrament of the Holy Trinity’s communion with men.” To understand “sacrament,” one must understand, among other things, that the Church itself is a sacrament (CCC, 747)*

## Objectives

1. The meaning of “sacrament”
  - a. Sacramentum emphasizes the “visible sign of the hidden reality of salvation.” (CCC, 774)
  - b. Mysterium is the mystery (hidden reality) of the true presence of God encountered in and through the sacramentum (CCC, 774)

**Note to Catechist:** The Sacramentum is the outward expression of the sacrament, that is, the way they are administered and received. This includes the essential elements necessary for the validity of the Sacrament. (See Sessions 11C-12D for these elements). The Mysterium is the invisible reality of God’s grace that is dispensed through the celebration of the Sacrament. The mysterium is present when one comes to the sacrament worthily (in a state of grace).

2. “The [seven] sacraments are efficacious signs of grace, instituted by Christ and entrusted to the Church, by which divine life is dispensed to us” (CCC, 1131)

**Note to Catechist:** Some of your students may recite the traditional definition of a sacrament, i.e, an outward sign instituted by Christ to give grace. While this definition is good, a deeper understanding can be conveyed to your students using the definition found in the *Catechism*. Ask your students to compare the two definitions to help them see how the current definition is a fuller expression of the Church’s teaching.

3. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, “the visible rites by which the sacraments are celebrated signify and make present the graces proper to each sacrament” (CCC, 1131)
4. The Church as the sacrament of salvation
  - a. “...both contains and communicates the invisible grace she signifies” (CCC, 774)
  - b. “...[is] the sign and the instrument of the communion of God and men” (CCC, 780)
  - c. is Christ’s instrument (CCC, 776)

5. The Seven Sacraments

- a. Sacraments of Initiation—lay the foundations of every Christian life (CCC, 1212)
    - i. Baptism-gateway to all other sacraments (CCC, 1213)
    - ii. Confirmation-completion of baptismal graces (CCC, 1285)
    - iii. Eucharist-source and summit of the Christian life (CCC, 1324)
  - b. Sacraments of Healing—continue Christ’s work of healing and salvation among those who are “initiated,” as Christians too are subject to suffering, illness, and death (CCC, 1421; 1420)
    - i. Penance and Reconciliation-sacrament of conversion (CCC, 1423)
    - ii. Anointing of the Sick-shows [Christ’s] preferential love for the sick and is the source of tireless efforts to comfort them (CCC, 1503)
  - c. Sacraments at the Service of Communion—are directed towards the salvation of others (CCC, 1534)
    - i. Holy Orders-the sacrament of apostolic ministry (CCC, 1536)
    - ii. Matrimony-signifies the union of Christ and the Church (CCC, 1661)
6. Sacramentals “are sacred signs which bear resemblance to the sacraments” (CCC, 1667)
- a. Sacramentals do not confer the grace of the Holy Spirit (CCC, 1670)
  - b. Sacramentals confer actual grace in that they prepare us to receive grace in order to grow in faith and holiness (CCC, 1670)
7. Examples of sacramentals are:
- a. Blessings (CCC, 1671-1672)
    - i. Come first in importance among sacramentals
    - ii. Dedicate persons and objects to God

**Note to Catechist:** The Book of Blessings and the liturgical ritual books of the Church contain the words for specific blessings such as Consecration of Virgins and blessing of children by their parents. When the Church invokes a blessing it always invokes the name of Jesus while usually making the Sign of the Cross.

- b. Actions such as processions (USCCA, 295)
- c. Prayers such as the Rosary (USCCA, 295)
- d. Blessed Objects such as holy water, palms, medals, scapulars, ashes, candles, and rosary beads (USCCA, 295)

## Session 11B – Sacramental Nature of the Church 2

*“Grace is first and foremost the gift of the Spirit who justifies and sanctifies us.”*  
(CCC, 2003)

### Objectives

1. The meaning of grace (CCC, 1996-2005)
  - a. Grace is the help that God gives us, a free and undeserved favor from God that enables us to respond to his call (CCC, 1996)
  - b. Grace is a participation in the life of God (CCC, 1997)
  - c. Grace is God’s giving of himself to us. Through a sacrament, God shares his own life with us (CCC, 1129; 1999; 2003)
  - d. Grace is a gift from the Holy Spirit (CCC, 1999; 2003)
  - e. Grace belongs to the supernatural order; therefore “grace escapes our experience and cannot be known except by faith” (CCC, 2005)
  - f. Grace cannot be “earned.” It depends entirely on God (CCC, 2005)
2. Types of grace (CCC, 1129; 1999-2000; 2003)
  - a. Sanctifying grace is:
    - i. Received at Baptism (CCC, 1999)
    - ii. A habitual, supernatural gift (permanent) (CCC, 2001)
    - iii. Gift of God’s friendship that heals our fallen human nature (CCC, 2000)
    - iv. Gives us a share in the divine life of the Blessed Trinity (CCC, 1997)
    - v. Makes us perfect, holy and Christ-like (CCC, 2000)
  - b. Actual grace gives us help to conform our lives to God’s will through his intervention (CCC, Glossary)
  - c. Sacramental graces are those proper to the different sacraments (CCC, 1127; 2003)
  - d. Special graces (Charisms) are gifts given to individuals meant for the common good of the Church (CCC, 799; 951; 2003)

# Session 11C – Baptism & Confirmation

*The faithful are born anew by Baptism, strengthened by the Sacrament of Confirmation...”*  
(CCC, 1212)

## Objectives

1. Baptism
  - a. Is the basis of the whole Christian life (CCC, 1213)
    - i. The gateway to life in the Spirit
    - ii. Necessary for the other sacraments
  - b. Frees us from sin (CCC, 1213)
  - c. Makes us adopted sons and daughters of Christ (CCC, 1213)
2. The scriptural basis for Baptism (Mt. 3:1-17; Mt. 28:19; Mk. 1:9-11; Lk. 3:21-22; Jn. 1:22-34; Jn. 3:1-15; Acts 2:37-41)
3. Celebration of Baptism
  - a. Baptism of Adults (CCC, 1247-1249)
    - i. According to Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (CCC, 1232)
    - ii. Includes uncatechized children over age of reason (CIC, 97§2)
  - b. Baptism of Infants (CCC, 1250-1252)
    - i. Practiced since apostolic times (CCC, 1252)
    - ii. Parents, godparents, and the community commit themselves to the child's ongoing formation (Rite of Baptism, 5; 39-40; 69)
4. The three essential elements of Baptism are:
  - a. Minister of the Sacrament: Priest or Deacon (CCC, 1256)
  - b. Form: Words of the Trinitarian Formula “ I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit” (CCC, 1240; 1256; 1278)
  - c. Matter: Water (CCC, 1239; 1278)

**Note to Catechist:** The priest or deacon is the ordinary minister of this sacrament. In cases of extreme urgency, (e.g. imminent death) any person with the required intention can validly baptize as long as water and the Trinitarian formula is used.

5. The spiritual effects of Baptism
  - a. Die and rise with Christ (CCC, 1227)
  - b. Purification from all sins, including original sin (CCC, 1262-1263)
  - c. Become an adopted child of God (CCC, 1265)
  - d. Makes us members (incorporates us into) the Church (CCC, 1267)

- e. Imprints an indelible spiritual mark on the Christian's soul and therefore cannot be repeated (CCC, 1272-1274)
  - f. Birth in the Holy Spirit (CCC, 1262)
  - g. Receive the Gifts of the Holy Spirit (CCC, 1266)
6. Confirmation (CCC, 1285)
    - a. Is the completion of baptismal grace
    - b. Binds the baptized more perfectly to the Church
    - c. Confirms and strengthens the gifts of the Holy Spirit received at Baptism
  7. The scriptural basis for the Sacrament of Confirmation (Acts 2:1-12; Acts 8:14-17; Is. 11:2)
  8. Celebration of Confirmation
    - a. Usually celebrated at Mass
    - b. Renewal of Baptismal vows (CCC, 1298)
    - c. Profession of faith (CCC, 1298)
    - d. Confirmation of Adults baptized as infants
      - i. According to Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults
      - ii. Usually done at Easter Vigil

**Note to Catechist:** In the Eastern rites, Confirmation is celebrated at Baptism. In the Latin rite, the two sacraments are separated. To clearly connect them, the Rite of Confirmation begins with a renewal of baptismal vows and the profession of faith. Canon law 891 states that Confirmation is to be conferred at about the age of discretion (7) unless the conference of bishops has determined another age. In the United States, the Bishops have received a complementary norm recognized by the Holy See that allows for the confirmation of children/youth baptized as infants anywhere between the age of discretion and sixteen. The norm in our diocese is that youth will be confirmed in their eleventh grade year.

9. The three essential elements of Confirmation are
  - a. Minister of the Sacrament: Bishop; however he can delegate a priest (CCC, 1312)
  - b. Form: Words of the sacramental formula "Be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit" (CCC, 1300)
  - c. Matter: Anointing with Chrism on the forehead and the laying on of hands (CCC, 1300)
10. Spiritual effects of Sacrament of Confirmation (CCC, 1303)
  - a. Completes and perfects baptismal grace (CCC, 1285; 1303; 1304)
  - b. Roots us more deeply in God's love (CCC, 1303)
  - c. Unites us more firmly with Christ (CCC, 1303)

- d. Strengthened by the Holy Spirit to spread and defend the faith by word and deed (CCC, 1285; 1303)
- e. Imprints an indelible spiritual mark on the Christian's soul and therefore cannot be repeated (CCC, 1304)
- f. Increases the Gifts of the Holy Spirit—wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety (reverence), and fear of the Lord (wonder and awe in God's presence) (CCC 1831; USCCA, 205)

## Session 11D – Eucharist

*“What material food produces in our bodily life, Holy Communion wonderfully achieves in our spiritual life. Communion...preserves, increases, and renews the life of grace received at Baptism. This growth in Christian life needs the nourishment of Eucharistic communion.”*  
(CCC, 1392)

### Objectives

1. Eucharist
  - a. Completes Christian Initiation (CCC, 1322)
  - b. Is the “source and summit of the Christian Life” (LG, 11; CCC, 1324)
2. The scriptural basis for the Sacrament of Eucharist (Mt. 14:13-21; Mt. 26:26-29; Mk. 6:34-44; Mk. 14:22-25; Lk. 9:10-17; Lk. 22:14-20; Jn. 2:1-12; Jn. 6:22-59; 1Cor. 11:22-ff)
3. Celebration of Eucharist
  - a. Holy Sacrifice of the Mass (CCC, 1408)
  - b. Role of Priests and Deacons (CCC, 1566; 1570)
  - c. Role of Faith Community (CCC, 1140; 1348)
4. The essential elements of Eucharist
  - a. Minister: Priest (CCC, 1410-1411; 1566)
  - b. Form: Words of Consecration, “This is my body...” (CCC, 1375; 1412)
  - c. Matter: Unleavened wheat bread and grape wine (CCC, 1412)
5. Spiritual effects of Eucharist
  - a. Union with Jesus and the Church (CCC, 1391)
  - b. Nourishes our spiritual life (CCC, 1392)
  - c. Forgiveness of venial sins (CCC, 1394)
  - d. Protection from mortal sins (CCC, 1395)
  - e. Commits us to the poor (CCC, 1397)

## Defending the Faith

### 1. **Can unbaptized babies be saved? What happens to children who died without Baptism?**

Traditionally, the Church has taught that there are three types of baptism: of water (the Sacrament of Baptism); of blood (the death of martyrs who die before being baptized); and of desire. Baptism of desire refers to those who desire baptism but die before receiving the sacrament.

While divine revelation does not specifically address babies and children who die without baptism, it has long been thought that limbo was the place where these children go. However, limbo has never been defined as church dogma and is not mentioned in the current *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. The Church entrusts these children to God's infinite mercy and recalls Jesus' words, "Let the children come to me" (Mk. 20:14) as a sign of hope that children who have died without baptism will be saved.

Pope Benedict XVI taught that there are "serious" grounds to hope that children who died without being baptized can go to heaven. Still, the Church recognizes the urgency to welcome children to Christ through Baptism.

### 2. **As Catholics are we "born again"?**

Many people in Protestant Churches talk about being "born again". Catholics too are born again. "Baptism is birth into the new life in Christ." (CCC, 1277) "The two principle effects [of Baptism] are purification from sins, and new birth in the Holy Spirit." (CCC, 1262)

### 3. **Why can't I receive Communion in another Christian Church? Why can't my friend who is Christian, but not Catholic, receive Communion at my church?**

The very word communion has to do with unity, both in our beliefs about Jesus Christ and with one another. It would not be honest for a person to receive communion if he or she does not hold the same beliefs as Catholics do about Jesus; that he is really present-body, blood, soul and divinity-in the bread and wine. For the same reason a Catholic cannot receive communion at a Protestant Church because Protestants believe in a symbolic representation of Christ.

### 4. **Aren't the sacraments just celebrations to mark significant moments in our lives?**

Certainly such an impression may be cast today. Sometimes people seem to use sacraments like Baptism, First Communion, and Marriage as occasions to get together with family and to celebrate a key stage of life. While the sacraments are

celebrated at significant moments in life, they are much more than just celebrations of those moments. They are personal encounters with Christ who acts through the Sacraments to help us. Each sacrament gives a special grace.

**5. Why do Catholics believe that Jesus is really present in the consecrated species of bread and wine and that they are not just symbolic of his presence?**

Jesus said, "Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life. . . For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him" (Jn. 6:54-56). This is the scriptural basis for our Catholic belief that at the time of the consecration (when the priest repeats Jesus' words from the Last Supper, "This is my body" and "This is my blood) the substance of the bread and wine change into the reality of Jesus.

## **Faith in Action**

- In one month, record all the times you hear a "blessing" whether it is at Mass, at your faith formation classes, or in your home. Note whether they are associated with actions, prayers, or involve the blessing of an object
- Your date of baptism is as much a birthday to be celebrated in subsequent years as is the date on which you were born. Celebrate with your family and/or your friends the anniversary of their baptisms
- Have a conversation with your parents and godparent(s) about your baptism. Ask how they believe they have lived out the promises they made at your baptism
- Have a conversation with your confirmation sponsor regarding their support of you in living a life in Christ
- Renew your baptismal vows
- Construct a mobile or some artistic impression of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Place this in your room or somewhere you go frequently as a reminder to use the gifts with which God has blessed you
- Have the students create books for children preparing for First Communion. It could be a recounting of a teen's experience of Eucharist or a remembrance of their First Communion. Have them share it with one of the first communicants of the parish

## **Other Resources**

- *Rite of Baptism*
- *Rite of Confirmation*

# POD 12 — SACRAMENTS II

*The Lord Jesus Christ, physician of our souls and bodies...has willed that his Church continue, in the power of the Holy Spirit, his work of healing and salvation.*

*(CCC, 1421)*

This pod consists of four sessions focusing on the Sacraments of Healing and the Sacraments at the Service of Communion. They are:

Session A: Reconciliation

Session B: Anointing of the Sick

Session C: Holy Orders

Session D: Matrimony

## Vocabulary

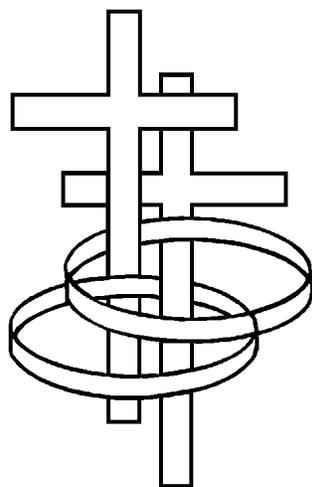
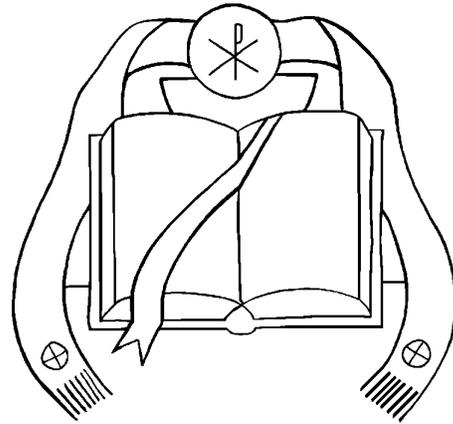
Absolution

Diaconate

Episcopate

Presbyterate

Viaticum



# Session 12A – Reconciliation

*Whoever confesses his sins...is already working with God.  
(St. Augustine; CCC, 1459)*

## Objectives

1. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is
  - a. A sign of God's unlimited love and his merciful forgiveness to individual sinners
  - b. A sacrament of conversion because
    - i. It makes present sacramentally Jesus' call to conversion directed toward holiness
    - ii. Eternal life to which the Lord never ceases to call us. (CCC, 1423; 1426)
2. The scriptural basis for the Sacrament (Jn. 20:22-23)
3. The Sacrament can be celebrated in three different manners:
  - a. Individual Confession—The only ordinary way for the faithful to reconcile themselves with God and the Church (CCC, 1484)
  - b. Communal Penance services with Individual Confessions and Absolution (CCC, 1482)
    - i. Shows the ecclesial nature of the sacrament
    - ii. A communal examination of conscience takes place
    - iii. Several priests are present to hear individual confessions
  - c. General Confession and Absolution—can only be used when (CCC, 1483)
    - i. Danger of death is imminent with no time for a priest(s) to hear confessions of individual penitents (CIC, 960-961)
    - ii. A serious need is present and individual confessions cannot be heard within a reasonable time
    - iii. Unless there is good reason to prevent it, those who receive general absolution for serious sins are to go to individual confession as soon as possible and within one year (CIC, 961)

**Note to Catechist:** General Confession and Absolution cannot be used when the need is a result of the number of confessors being insufficient due to a great festival or pilgrimage such as World Youth Day. Judgment of the validity of the need for general absolution rests with the diocesan bishop.

4. The three essential elements are
  - a. The minister of the Sacrament: bishop or priest (CCC, 1461)

- b. Form: The words of absolution spoken by the priest “I absolve you...” (CCC, 1449)
- c. Matter: The contrition, confession, and satisfaction of the penitent (CCC, 1451-1460)

**Note to Catechist:** Reconciliation is the only sacrament where the matter consists of three non-material elements.

- 5. Spiritual effects of the Sacrament
  - a. Forgiveness of sin (CCC, 1442; 1496)
  - b. Reconciliation with God, by which grace is received, and with the Church (CCC, 1443-1445; 1468-1469; 1496)
  - c. Remission of eternal punishment for mortal sins (CCC, 1470; 1496)
  - d. Remission, at least in part, of temporal punishments for venial sins (CCC, 1496)
  - e. Peace and serenity (CCC, 1496)
  - f. Strength to resist temptation (CCC, 1496)

## Session 12B – Anointing of the Sick

*“By the sacred anointing of the sick and the prayer of the priests the whole Church commends those who are ill to the suffering and glorified Lord, that he may raise them up and save them.”*  
(LG, 11)

### Objectives

1. The Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick is
  - a. Intended to strengthen those who are ill, preparing for surgery, and infirm with age (CCC, 1511; 1514; 1515)
  - b. Not only intended for those who are at the point of death (CCC, 1514)
2. The scriptural basis for the Sacrament (Mk. 6:12-13; Jas. 5:14-15; CCC, 1510)
3. The Sacrament can be celebrated for those experiencing difficulties due to grave illness or old age by (CCC, 1514)
  - a. Individual celebration of the Sacrament—can be done outside of or within Mass (CCC, 1517)
  - b. Communal celebration—can be done outside of or within Mass (CCC, 1517)
  - c. Viaticum—the last sacrament of the Christian
    - i. Eucharist for those who are about to leave this life—“food for the journey” (CCC, 1524)
    - ii. The Eucharist as viaticum with Penance, and Anointing of the Sick at the end of one’s life make up “the sacraments that prepare for our heavenly homeland” or the sacraments that complete the earthly pilgrimage (CCC, 1525)
4. The three essential elements are
  - a. The minister of the Sacrament: priest (CCC, 1516)
  - b. Form: Words of Anointing “Through this holy anointing...”
  - c. Matter: Anointing of the forehead and hands of the sick with the Oil of the Sick (Pastoral Care of the Sick, 124)
5. Spiritual effects of the Sacrament
  - a. Uniting the suffering of the sick person to the passion of Christ (CCC, 1521)
  - b. Strengthening, peace, and courage to endure the difficulties and trials of serious illness or old age (CCC, 1520)
  - c. The forgiveness of sin (CCC, 1520)
  - d. The restoration of health if such is God’s will (CCC, 1520)
  - e. Preparation for a person’s earthly death (CCC, 1523)

## Session 12C – Holy Orders

*Holy Orders is the sacrament through which the mission entrusted by Christ to his apostles continues to be exercised in the Church until the end of time: thus it is the sacrament of apostolic ministry. It includes three degrees: episcopate, presbyterate, and diaconate.*  
(CCC, 1536)

### Objectives

1. The Sacrament of Holy Orders is
  - a. The sacrament of apostolic ministry (CCC, 1536)
  - b. A setting apart and an investiture by Christ himself for his Church (CCC, 1538)
2. The scriptural basis for the Sacrament (Mt. 16:18ff; Mt. 28:19-20; Lk. 6:12-16; Mk. 3:14-19; Acts 6:1-7; Acts 13:1-3; CCC, 1577)
3. The three essential elements are
  - a. The minister of the Sacrament: bishop (CCC, 1576)
  - b. Form: Prayer of Consecration (CCC, 1573)
  - c. Matter: The imposition of the bishops' hands on the man to be ordained (CCC, 1573)
4. There are three orders of the sacrament each with their own unique ritual (CCC, 1554)
  - a. Episcopate—Ordination of a bishop (CCC, 1555-1561)
  - b. Presbyterate—Ordination of a priest (CCC, 1562-1568)
  - c. Diaconate—Ordination of a deacon (CCC, 1569-1571)
5. The spiritual effects of the sacrament
  - a. Imprints an indelible spiritual mark on the man which can never be removed, therefore it cannot be repeated (CCC, 1581-1584)

**Note to Catechist:** The indelible spiritual mark is conferred at the diaconate ordination. Any subsequent ordinations more fully develop the configuration to Christ.

- b. Confers the grace of the Holy Spirit proper to each of the degrees: (USCCA, 271)
  - i. Episcopate
    1. Teach in the name of Christ
    2. Preach the Gospel in word and action
    3. Sanctify the people of God entrusted to his care

- ii. Presbyterate
  - 1. To proclaim the Gospel and preach
  - 2. Celebrate the sacraments
  - 3. Shepherd the people entrusted to him
- iii. Diaconate
  - 1. To proclaim the Gospel and preach
  - 2. Baptize and assist at other sacramental celebrations
  - 3. Serve the community

## Session 12D – Matrimony

*“It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a suitable partner for him....The two of them become one body.”*  
(Gn. 2:18,24)

### Objectives

1. The Sacrament of Matrimony is
  - a. A covenant between a man and a woman (CCC, 1601)
  - b. A partnership of the whole of life (CCC, 1601)
2. The scriptural basis for the Sacrament (Mt. 5:31-32; Mt. 19:1-15; Mk. 10:6-9; Jn. 2:1-11; CCC, 1614-1615)
3. The three essential elements are
  - a. Minister of the sacrament: bride and groom (CCC, 1623)
  - b. Form: public exchange of vows (freely given) (CCC, 1626; 1628)
  - c. Matter: man and woman (CCC, 1625)

**Note to Catechist:** Unlike the other sacraments, the spouses themselves are the ministers of the Sacrament of Matrimony. They mutually confer upon each other the graces of the Sacrament. The consent must be given the presence of a priest or deacon and in the presence of two witnesses.

4. Effects of the Sacrament (CCC, 1638-1642)
  - a. Grace to love each other unselfishly and strengthen their indissoluble unity (CCC, 1641)
  - b. Grace to live the responsibilities of married life (CCC, 1639)
  - c. Welcoming children and educating them in the faith (CCC, 1641)
  - d. Grace that strengthens them to perfect their holiness on their journey to eternal life (CCC, 1642)

## Defending the Faith

### 1. **Why do you have to confess your sins to a priest in the Sacrament of Penance?**

Jesus instituted this sacrament for the forgiveness of sins after Baptism. He entrusted to his Apostles the ministry of reconciliation (John 20:21-23). Bishops, who are their successors, continue to exercise this ministry with the help of their priests. (CCC, 1461)

The priest is both the representative of Christ and the Church. Confessing to a priest in the Sacrament of Penance is a way to experience first-hand the forgiving touch and saving love of Jesus. Reconciling with the Church is important so we can reclaim our roles within the body of Christ since it is necessary for forgiveness of grave sins and encouraged for forgiveness of venial sins. It is important to remember that even though forgiveness is expressed through the Church and this Sacrament, God alone forgives sins.

### 2. **Why celebrate Anointing of the Sick if it does not always result in physical healing?**

The celebration of this Sacrament gives tangible evidence of Christ's compassion toward the sick. The primary effect of this sacrament is the spiritual healing of the sick while strengthening them in their suffering and pain. Physical healing does occur if that is God's will and necessary for the salvation of the soul of the person. When a person who is dying celebrates this sacrament, it fortifies them as they make their final preparations for the struggles before entering the Father's house.

### 3. **Why can't women be ordained priests?**

While both men and women share in the priestly life of the People of God by virtue of their baptism, ordaining only certain baptized men follows the teaching and Tradition of the Church. Jesus chose only men for his twelve Apostles even though he associated with faithful and holy women such as the Blessed Mother and Mary Magdalene. The Apostles followed Jesus' example and they too chose only males to succeed them in ordained ministry and so for this reason the ordination of women is not possible. (For a fuller explanation see the USCCA, pages 267-269)

### 4. **Why can't priests marry?**

Celibacy has been highly esteemed in a special way by the Church as a feature of priestly life. (PO, 16) In its wisdom the Church requires all men who are to be ordained to take a vow of celibacy, that is, they pledge to remain unmarried "for

the sake of the kingdom of heaven in order to give themselves entirely to God and to the service of his people.” Without the demands of married life, a priest is free to serve the Church with an “undivided heart.” In certain rare instances, some married men who were previously ministers in non-Catholic churches are allowed to become priests. This is an exception for the sake of charity.

#### **5. What is the difference between an annulment and a divorce?**

A divorce is a civil judgment that the legal arrangement of a marriage is ended. An annulment is a decree from the church made after a careful investigation. This investigation determines that the bond of marriage, the sacramental bond in heaven, never took place due to an impediment or obstacle. An impediment put simply, means that one of the three essential elements was missing at the time of the marriage.

An annulment says nothing about the legal, civil realities of the marriage. Children of an annulled marriage are legitimate because the marriage was real, the sacramental bond was not.

### **Faith in Action**

- Ask your pastor to share one of his experiences of a visible moment of conversion or a grace-filled moment he witnessed in celebrating one of the sacraments
- Regularly celebrate individual reconciliation
- Attend a communal penance service
- Do daily examinations of conscience
- Attend a celebration of Anointing of the Sick
- Attend an ordination
- Speak with your pastor about discerning God’s call for your life
- Attend a Catholic wedding
- Read and pray on scripture passages that are the scriptural foundations for the sacraments

### **Other Resources**

- *The Rites of the Catholic Church*, Liturgical Press, Collegeville MN, 1990
- *Presbyterorum Ordinis*, Document of the Second Vatican Council