

RCIA

Rite of Catholic Initiation of Adults
The Church





Opening Prayer




So
We Are The Church

But, what is
“The Church”?



Brief History of the Church

- Early Church Communities
 - Acts 2:42-47 

Acts 2:42-47 (The Early Church Community)
 "42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. 43 Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. 44 All who believed were together and had all things in common; 45 they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. 46 Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, 47 praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved."

Acts 4:32-35 (The Early Church Community)
 ' 32 This Jesus God raised up, and of that all of us are witnesses. 33 Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you both see and hear. 34 For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he himself says, "The Lord said to my Lord, 'Sit at my right hand, 35 until I make your enemies your footstool.'" 36 Therefore let the entire house of Israel know with certainty that God has made him both Lord and Messiah, this Jesus whom you crucified.'

Matthew 25:14-30 (Building Our Church Community)

"14 'For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; 15 to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. 16 The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. 17 In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. 18 But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. 19 After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. 20 Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, "Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents." 21 His master said to him, "Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master."

Matthew 25:14-30 (Building Our Church Community)

22 And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, "Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents." 23 His master said to him, "Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master." 24 Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, "Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; 25 so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours." 26 But his master replied, "You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? 27 Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. 28 So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. 29 For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. 30 As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."



Why are we called the "Roman Catholic Church"?

- The term "catholic church" was first used by Bishop Ignatius of Antioch in 110AD.
 - "Katholikos" (καθολικός), meaning "total" or "universal"
- 2nd - 4th century
 - Various breakaway groups such as Montanists, Arians, Donatists.
 - The church no longer the "total" church, and then called the "Catholic Church".



The Church Under The Roman Empire

- 1st – 3rd Century: Persecution



The Church Under The Roman Empire



- ICHTHYS - The first letters of a Greek phrase, meaning "Jesus Christ, Son Of God, Saviour".
 - Spells the Greek word for "fish".
 - Used by believers to identify each other in times of persecution.



The Church Under The Roman Empire

- Emperor Constantine
 - First Christian Roman emperor
 - Converted to Christianity after Battle of Milvian Bridge in 312 AD.
 - Ceased persecution in 313 AD.
 - Became State Religion



Rome

- Both Peter and Paul gave their last teaching in Rome.
- Both were martyred in Rome.
 - The church in Rome was carrying on the traditions of these 2 greatest Christian martyrs.
- Rome was the most important city in the world during the time of the Roman Empire.
- As early Christians look to Rome to provide leadership, the bishop of Rome was recognised as the focal point of unity.



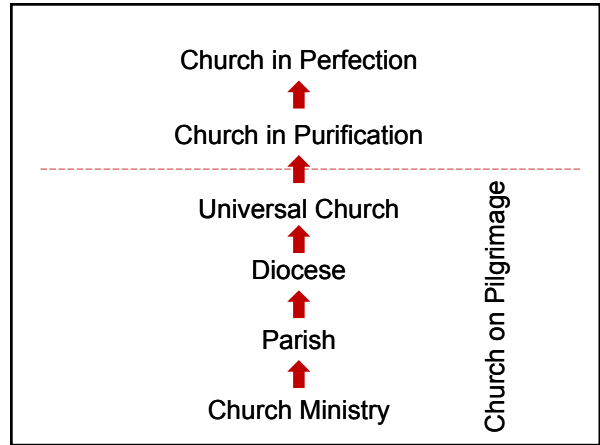
Why are we called the "Roman Catholic Church"?

- 1054 A.D.
 - The eastern church separated to become the Orthodox Church.
 - The western church then became the "Roman Catholic Church" because of its recognition of the bishop of Rome as its focal point of unity.



6 Signs of a Christian Community

- Kerygma - **Teaching** of God's Word
- Evangelia - Know, Love and Live the **Gospel**
- Eucharistia - **Praise** and **Thanksgiving**
- Koinonia - A community of **Fellowship**
- Leitourgia - A community of **Worship**
- Diakonia - A community of **Service**



The Sacrament of God

- A "sacrament" is a "visible sign".
- The Church is the sacrament of God
 - The Church made Jesus present in today's world
- The Holy Spirit *unites* us
 - The Holy Spirit forms us into Christ's body, the Church.
 - The Holy Spirit made God present on earth through the *community* of Jesus followers, the Church



4 Signs of a True Church


- "We believe in *One, Holy, Catholic* and *Apostolic* Church"
- **One**
 - Members share one faith, united under one head.
- **Holy**
 - Members adhere to a holy doctrine.
- **Catholic**
 - Universal, irrespective of race or status.
- **Apostolic**
 - Tracing back to the Apostles.

Revelation 21:9-10 (The Bride Of Christ)

9 Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and said to me, 'Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.' 10 And in the spirit he carried me away to a great, high mountain and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God.



The Body Of Christ

- "For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it." (1 Corinthians 12:12,27)
- Christ is the head, we are the body.
- We each has a role to play in God's Church
- 1 Corinthians 12:12-27 
- See also Ephesians 5:22-33

1 Corinthians 12:12-27 (The Body Of Christ)

12 For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. 13 For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. 14 Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. 15 If the foot were to say, 'Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body', that would not make it any less a part of the body. 16 And if the ear were to say, 'Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body', that would not make it any less a part of the body. 17 If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? 18 But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. 19 If all were a single member, where would the body be? 20 As it is, there are many members, yet one body. 21 The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I have no need of you', nor again the head to the feet, 'I have no need of you.' 22 On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, 23 and those members of the body that we think less honourable we clothe with greater honour, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect; 24 whereas our more respectable members do not need this. But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honour to the inferior member, 25 that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. 26 If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honoured, all rejoice together with it. 27 Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.



The People Of God

- The term "People of God" used to be reserved for Jews.
- Now, it refers all people who confess that Jesus is Lord.
- Vatican II recognised that Holy Spirit is at work in the non-Catholic churches as well.
 - Although the fullness of the means of salvation can only be found in the Catholic Church, non-Catholic churches can also contribute to our spiritual enrichment.

Matthew 28:19 (The People Of God)

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit"

1 Corinthians 12:13 (The People Of God)

"For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit."

Galatians 3:26-29 (The People Of God)

"26 For in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith. 27 As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. 28 There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise."



Royal Priesthood

- "But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people" (1 Peter 2:9)
- Implies the universality of God's salvation.
 - We are to serve as a mediating people, where the salvation of God flows to the rest of the world, just as a priest is a mediating person in conveying God's grace.
 - The "Common Priesthood", as distinct from "Ordained Priesthood".



3-Tiered Church Leadership

- Practised from the Second Century
- 3 Tiers
 - Central Council (Jerusalem/Rome)
 - Bishop to head local church
 - Assisted by presbyters (priest) and deacons



Church Hierarchy

- Early Church: Apostles in Antioch headed by Peter, local churches led by selected elders, assisted by presbyters and deacons
- Today: Holy Sees in Rome headed by the Pope, local diocese led by bishop, local parishes led by priest and deacons
 - Parish
 - Diocese
 - National Conference of Bishops
 - Universal Church



Church Hierarchy

- Bishops are successors to the Apostles.
- The Pope is the successor to Peter.
- Unbroken chain of 265 Popes – from St Peter to Pope Benedict XVI
- Traversing time and organisation structure, Jesus' authority is passed from the Apostles to the parish priest.
- Other titles
 - Cardinal: An honorary title given to a distinguished bishop. Cardinals elect the Pope.
 - Monsignor: An honorary title given to a distinguished priest.



The Teaching Authority Of The Church

- “And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.” (Matthew 16:18-19)



Hierarchy Of Truth

- Central to salvation:
 - Holy Trinity
 - Divinity of Jesus
 - Death & Resurrection of Jesus
 - Resurrection of the body
 - Forgiveness of sins
 - Promise of eternal life
 - etc.
- Less important to salvation:
 - Saints
 - Mary
 - Purgatory
 - etc.



Infallibility

- The Holy Spirit protects the Church from error.
- 3 levels
 - The Pope
 - Ecumenical Councils
 - The Church



Infallibility – The Pope

- Vatican I set the following conditions for the Pope's infallibility:
 - The Pope must be speaking *ex cathedra* i.e. from the chair of St Peter
 - The Pope must clearly define the doctrine as a truth of faith.
 - Excludes the Pope's other teachings such as encyclicals, speeches and off-hand comments.
 - Catholics should nevertheless respect and obey these teachings.
 - The subject matter concerns faith or moral.



Infallibility – The Pope

- In New Testament times
 - Peter declared that Jesus was the Messiah, the Christ (Matthew 8:29)
 - Peter declared that Gentiles can become Christians without being circumcised (Acts 15:28).
- In recent times, only 2 teachings of the Pope is considered infallible:
 - The Immaculate Conception of Mary (1854)
 - Mary's Assumption (1950).



Infallibility – Ecumenical Councils

- Any official statement of an ecumenical (i.e. worldwide) council of bishops on a doctrine of Christian faith.
- When bishops of the whole world meet and solemnly decide on a matter of faith or moral, they are guided by the Holy Spirit and are protected from errors.



Infallibility – Ecumenical Councils

- Modelled after Council of Jerusalem in the early church (see Acts 15:1-31, where the apostolic council ruled on whether gentile needs to be circumcised).
 - "you abstain from what has been sacrificed to idols and from blood and from what is strangled" and from fornication" (Acts 15:29)
- Not all statements are infallible or permanently binding (e.g. the aforementioned requirements on Gentile Christians). Only statements on official doctrines are infallible.




Infallibility – Ecumenical Councils

- 21 Ecumenical Councils since the dawn of Christianity:
 - First Council of Nicaea (325) : Nicene Creed
 - First Council of Constantinople (381): Divinity of the Holy Spirit, Holy Trinity
 - Council of Ephesus (431): Jesus is fully God and fully Man
 - Council of Trent (1545–1563): Doctrines on the sacraments, the Biblical canon, standardizing the Mass (Tridentine Mass), purgatory, etc.
 - Vatican Council I (1869-1870): Papal Infallibility
 - Vatican Council II (1962-1965): Ecumenism, New Order of the Mass






Infallibility – The Church

- Any belief that
 - Develops from reflection on Christian revelation
 - Won acceptance from God's people over a long period of time
 - Does not contradict the Bible or any genuine tradition handed down from the Apostles




Tea Break


Discussion

- Do you feel you are a part of
 - The RCIA Ministry?
 - The parish of St John & Paul?
 - The universal Church?
 (It's OK to say No.)
- Revise and discuss the following qualities of our Church: one, holy, catholic, apostolic.
- Why do you think Christ vested his teaching authority on Peter, the first head of our Church?






Recap

- History of the Church
- 4 signs of a True Church: one, holy, catholic, apostolic
- Church hierarchy
- Teaching authority



Q&A

Tour Of The Church



Tour of the Church


- Entrance (Vestibule)
 - Holy water font reminds us of our baptism
 - Church notices








Tour of the Church

- The Main Hall (Nave)
 - Pews, confessionals, Stations of the Cross



Tour of the Church

- The Sacristy
 - Where the priests, deacons, and altar servers prepare for Holy Mass






Tour of the Church

- Sanctuary
 - Means "a holy place"
 - Most sacred place of the Church
 - Main Altar, (usually) Tabernacle


Tour of the Church

- Crucifix
 



Tour of the Church

- Sacramentary
 - Contains all the Mass prayers




Tour of the Church

- Paschal Candle
 - The light of Christ
 - A symbol of Jesus' resurrection from the dead on Easter Sunday


Tour of the Church

- **Tabernacle**
 - Contains Blessed Sacrament left over from Mass
 - Held in a Ciborium
 - Sanctuary lamp



Tour of the Church

- **Boat**
- **Thurible**




Tour of the Church

- **Processional Cross**
 - Leads the Liturgical Procession




Tour of the Church

- **Lectern**
 - Where the Lector proclaims and reads the readings



Tour of the Church

- **Lectionary**
 - The book containing the readings



Tour of the Church


- **Baptismal Font**
 - Where the Sacrament of Baptism is administered






Tour of the Church

- Blessed Mother Chapel
 - Votive Candles
 - Kneeler (Prie Dieu)


Tour of the Church

- Stations of the Cross
 - Tells the story of how Jesus suffered and died





Tour of the Church

- Monstrance and the Blessed Sacrament





Further Readings

- *At Home With God's People*
(ISBN 0-947282-13-0)
Chapter 4
- *Path Through Catholicism*
(ISBN 0-7829-0971-X)
Chapter 8
- *Catholic and Christian*
(ISBN 0-89283-181-2)
Chapter 3



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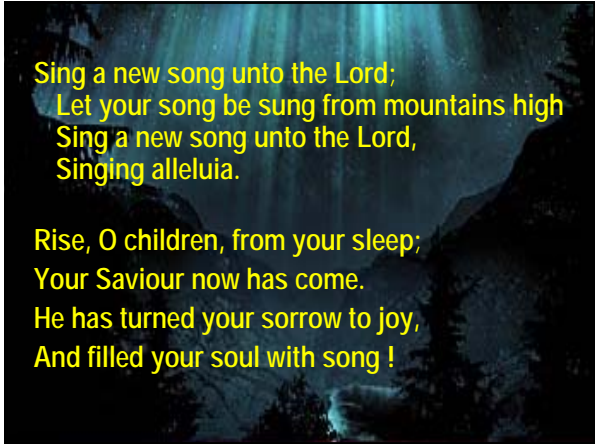
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SING A NEW SONG

Dufner/Honore

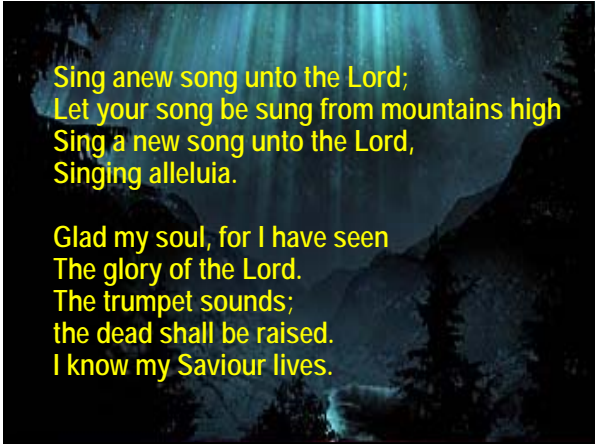
Sing a new song unto the Lord;
Let your song be sung from mountains high
Sing a new song unto the Lord,
Singing alleluia.

The Lord's people dance for joy.
O come before the Lord,
And play for Him, on glad tambourines
And let your trumpet sound.



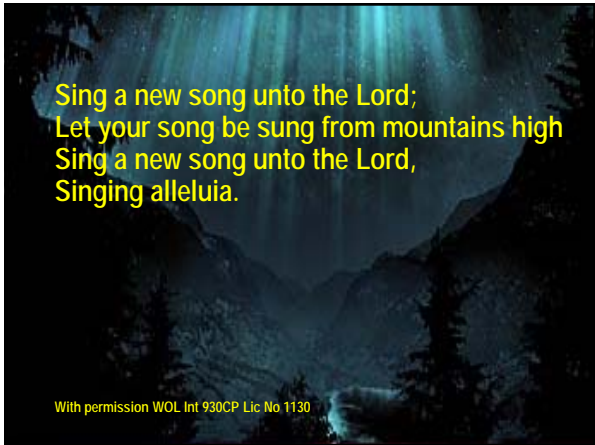
Sing a new song unto the Lord;
Let your song be sung from mountains high
Sing a new song unto the Lord,
Singing alleluia.

Rise, O children, from your sleep;
Your Saviour now has come.
He has turned your sorrow to joy,
And filled your soul with song !



Sing anew song unto the Lord;
Let your song be sung from mountains high
Sing a new song unto the Lord,
Singing alleluia.

Glad my soul, for I have seen
The glory of the Lord.
The trumpet sounds;
the dead shall be raised.
I know my Saviour lives.



Sing a new song unto the Lord;
Let your song be sung from mountains high
Sing a new song unto the Lord,
Singing alleluia.

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