

Living in the Kingdom

An Introduction to the Catholic Church

Lesson 1: The Church

Our Way back to Paradise



"The world was created for the sake of the Church." (CCC 760)

CCC 751

CCC 356

CCC 384

CCC 399-400

CCC 761-62

Ex 19:6

Ex 24:3

Lev 11:44

Ex 34:10

Ex 29:9

1 Sam 16:13

2 Sam 6

1. How does God speak to us? How does God save us? How is the Church relevant to us today?
2. What is the Church? An invisible union of all true believers in Christ, or a visible, hierarchical organization endowed with supernatural powers?
3. Church = "house of the Lord;" *ekklesia* = "called out of;" assembly.
4. In the beginning: God created Adam and Eve so that they could share in His **life** as his beloved children. They knew the **truth** and purpose for their life: to love God and each other. They knew the laws that had to be obeyed and the **way** that they had to live.
5. Creation was a temple, a meeting place of God and man and the Garden of Eden was a sanctuary. Adam was king and priest, called to exercise dominion over creation and to sanctify it.
6. By breaking God's law, Adam and Eve's friendship with God was broken. They lost God's supernatural **life**, the **truth** by which they were to live, and their **way** and direction, becoming inclined to sin.
7. With sin, suffering and death enter human history. Adam and Eve are cast out of the garden and out of God's presence. The gates of heaven are closed. How will mankind find its way back to paradise?
8. Beginning with **Abraham**, God begins to gather his people. He speaks to the patriarchs, but now a visible mediation of grace has now become necessary: oblations, tithes, circumcision.
9. God chooses **Moses** to deliver Israel out of Egyptian slavery and to be a prophet who will mediate between God and His people. God adopts Israel as his "first born Son," makes them a kingdom of priests and holy nation, and gives them the Torah.
10. God dwells in the Tabernacle, in the midst of His people. But they have no direct access to His presence in the Holy of Holies. Their communion with God is mediated through law, liturgy, and sacrifices.
 - a. Moses is a *prophet* who speaks to Israel on God's behalf & gives them the 10 Commandments (*moral precepts - truth*).
 - b. The Aaronic *priests* mediate between God and the people through the sacrificial liturgy (*ceremonial precepts - life*).
 - c. Moses and the elders *rule* the 12 tribes (*judicial precepts - way*).
11. Characteristics of the people of God:
 - a. They are **one**, united by their faith, worship, and by the Torah.
 - b. They are to be **holy**.
 - c. They are to be a witness to **all nations**.
 - d. The unity of their faith is preserved by the **genealogical lineage** of Aaron's descendants.
12. The **Davidic** Covenant: David is anointed **king** by the **prophet** Samuel. When he brings the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem, he

<p>1 Ki 1:32-38</p> <p>1 Ki 8:2</p> <p>1 Ki 8:10</p> <p>1 Ki 8:41-43</p> <p>1 Ki 8:25, Ezek 44:15</p> <p>Jer 31:31, Mt 4:17</p> <p>Mt 5:17-18, Mt 8:4, Mt 23:2-3</p> <p>CCC 858 Mt 4:19, Mt 10:5 Mt 18:18, Lk 10:16</p> <p>Lk 22:29-30 CCC 765</p> <p>CCC 766</p> <p>Jn 20:21 Mt 28:18-20</p> <p>Acts 2:38</p> <p>CCC 771-776, 804</p> <p>Acts 2:42</p> <p>1 Tim 3:15 Jn 16:13, Eph 3:9-10 CCC 890-91 CCC 2034-35</p>	<p>takes on a priestly role, putting on priestly garments and offering sacrifices.</p> <p>13. Solomon is anointed king by Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet. He is to rule in submission to the word of the <i>prophets</i> and to the <i>priestly</i> liturgy.</p> <p>14. The Davidic kingdom foreshadowed the four marks of the Church:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> One: All men of Israel gathered for the dedication the Temple. Holy: The cloud of the glory of the Lord filled the temple. "Catholic" (Universal): Foreigners (non-Israelites) came from all nations to pray in the Temple. "Apostolic": Royal succession of the sons of David; priestly succession of the sons of Zadok. <p>15. Judaism after the exile: guided by the prophetic word (the Scriptures), mediated by the priests (temple liturgy), and ruled by the Pharisees.</p> <p>16. Jesus Christ is the <i>Immanuel</i> (God is with us) who has brought the kingdom of heaven to us.</p> <p>17. Jesus and Judaism: Jesus endorses the Scriptures, the liturgical authority of the priesthood, and the ruling authority of the Pharisees.</p> <p>18. Jesus: priest, prophet and king; the way, the truth and the life:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> As prophet and eternal Word he has come to tell us the truth. As eternal high priest he has come to mediate God's life. As king of Israel he has come to show us the way. <p>19. Jesus chose twelve apostles to be with him. He gave them his own authority and sent the out to continue his mission of preaching the gospel, curing sicknesses and casting out demons.</p> <p>20. At the Last Supper, Jesus made a New Covenant with Israel. The twelve apostles represent the twelve tribes of Israel and are the foundation stone of the New Jerusalem.</p> <p>21. The origin and growth of the Church are symbolized by the blood and water which flowed from the open side of the crucified Jesus.</p> <p>22. The Great Commission: The three-fold mission of the apostles is to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Make disciples (prophetic - <i>truth</i>) Baptize them (priestly - <i>life</i>) Teach them to observe Jesus' commandments (kingly - <i>way</i>) <p>23. The Church of the New Covenant is born on the day of Pentecost.</p> <p>24. The Church is a visible organization through which Christ conveys truth and grace to all men, the mystery of men's union with God, the universal sacrament of salvation, and the visible plan of God's love for all of humanity.</p> <p>25. The structure of the early Church:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The Scriptures conveyed the prophetic word – the truth. The priests mediated God's life through the sacred liturgy. The apostles in their kingly role led the Church and taught the way to live to the faithful. <p>26. The Church is the pillar and foundation of truth and dispenser of God's mystery. The pope and the bishops are teachers endowed with Christ's authority to preach the faith to God's people. The charism of infallibility guarantees the truth of the Church's teaching regarding faith and morals.</p>
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Jn 6:54-56
Rom 12:4-5
CCC 790-95

Mt 16:18-19
Lk 22:31-32
Jn 21:15-17

CCC 813-16

CCC 823-29

CCC 830-38

CCC 857-65
Eph 2:20
Tit 1:5, 2 Tim 2:2

1 Tim 3:1,8, 5:17

[DV 10](#)

1 Pet 2:9

CCC 901 – 913

CCC 816

1 Pet 3:20-21,
CCC 845-847

CCC 763, 769

27. Receiving **God's life** in the Mystical Body of Christ: The Church is the body of Christ, intimately united with him, yet retaining the diversity of her members. Christ is the head of the Body who unites us with his Passover and feeds us through the liturgy and sacraments. Christ is the head; the Church is the Body; we are the cells in the Body.
28. Our Shepherd shows us the **Way**: Jesus chose Peter to lead the Church and to feed His sheep. The bishop of Rome, the pope, is the successor of St. Peter and chief shepherd of the Church.
29. The four marks of the Church:
- One**: Jesus established *one* Church (not many denominations) teaching *one* set of doctrines, and united by her source (the Trinity), her founder (Christ), her "soul" (the Holy Spirit) and her visible bonds of communion (one faith, common worship, bishops in union with the pope).
 - Holy**: By his grace Jesus makes the Church holy, as he is holy. The Church is the source of holiness esp. through the sacraments.
 - Catholic** (universal): The Church is to be spread throughout the whole world and to all ages.
 - Apostolic**: Christ built the Church on the foundation of Peter and the apostles. The Pope and the bishops are their successors. Apostolic succession infallibly guarantees the integrity of the deposit of faith and deposit of grace.
30. The hierarchy of the Church: Three degrees of apostolic ministry - Bishops, priests, deacons.
31. Priest, prophet and king in the Church today. The Holy Spirit is:
- The inspirator of Sacred Scripture (Prophetic - *truth*) giving us the inerrancy of the canon.
 - The animator of Sacred Tradition (Priestly - *life*) giving us the efficacy of the sacraments.
 - The guarantor of the magisterium (Kingly - *way*) giving us the infallibility of the magisterium in interpreting the Bible.
32. The Church is the Bride of Christ and Temple of the Holy Spirit, the soul of the Mystical Body.
33. All baptized Christians share:
- In Christ's **priestly** office by becoming spiritual sacrifices, offering worship by the holiness of their lives.
 - In Christ's **prophetic** office by being His witnesses in the world, leading others to faith.
 - In Christ's **royal** office by ruling over their body and passions, and impregnating the world with moral value.
34. The Church Christ founded and entrusted to Peter's pastoral care subsists in the Catholic Church, governed by the successor of Peter and by the bishops in communion with him. Only in the Catholic Church can the fullness of the means of salvation be obtained.
35. The Church is the Ark of God's salvation and so is necessary for salvation. Those who know that the Catholic Church was founded by Christ and refuse either to enter it or to remain in it cannot be saved - except for those who, through no fault of their own, do not know Christ and his Church but sincerely seek to do God's will.
36. The Pilgrim Church: The Church is the kingdom of God on earth - the reign of Christ already present in mystery. Yet it will receive its

CCC 954	<p>perfection only in the glory of heaven.</p> <p>37. The three states of the Church:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Church militant on earth; b. The Church triumphant in heaven; c. The Church suffering in purgatory.
CCC 972, Jn 19:27	<p>38. The Mother of Jesus, in the glory which she possesses in body and soul in heaven, is the image and beginning of the Church as it is to be perfected in the world to come.</p>

How do we live it?

- ☉ **Believe** the faith of the Church.
- ☉ **Celebrate** this faith in the liturgy.
- ☉ **Live** the moral life taught by the Church.
- ☉ **Pray** with and for the Church.
- ☉ **Grow** in community life.
- ☉ **Participate** in the Church's mission.

Questions for Discussion

1. What is the meaning of the word "church"?
2. What did Adam and Eve have in the Garden of Eden that they lost when they sinned?
3. How did God dwell with His people Israel during their years in the desert? What three authorities regulated their religious and social life? How did their life foreshadow the four marks of the Church?
4. How was the religious and social life of Israel in the Davidic kingdom similar to their life under the Mosaic covenant? (Temple, 3 sources of authority, 4 "marks")
5. How did the three sources of authority develop after the exile?
6. What was Jesus' attitude towards these authorities? How did he himself incarnate them? What is it that he restored to mankind that had been lost in Eden?
7. What authority did Jesus give to the apostles? What did he instruct them to do in the Great Commission?
8. How did the early Church adopt the same authority structure as the one Israel previously had?
9. How does the Church continue Christ's work in dispensing the way, the truth and the life?
10. Discuss the four marks of the Church in relation to their foreshadowing in the Old Testament. Why is the fourth mark, apostolicity, especially important?
11. How is the Holy Spirit related to the Church's role as priest, prophet and king? How do the entire people of God also participate in these three roles?
12. How do you understand the saying that "the Church is necessary for salvation"?
13. Where will the Church reach its perfection? How are all saints united in the Church?