

# RCIA

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults



The Church



Opening Prayer



So ....  
Are we The Church?

But, what is "The Church"?


What is "The Church"?

Is it the Buildings? 

Hierarchy? 

Or the People? 

The People



Birthday of the Church

- Pentecost (Acts 2:1-6)

"When the day of Pentecost came, they were all gathered together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them."



### The Church: Gathering of First Believers

(Acts 2:42-47)

"**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."**



### CHURCH: Body of Christ

- CHRIST : Head
- We : Different parts of the body
- (1Cor12:27)

"Now you are the body of CHRIST, and each one of you is a part of it."



### CHURCH: Body of Christ

1Cor 12: 12-14

- Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form ONE body, so it is with CHRIST.
- For we were all baptised by ONE Spirit so as to form ONE body- whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free- and we were all given the ONE Spirit to drink.
- Even so the Body is not made up of one part but of many.



### CHURCH: BODY of CHRIST

- The Church is not an organisation, it is an **Organism**.
- The Church is **Alive**

"If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it." (1Cor12:26)



### FAMILY: Domestic CHURCH

- "Where two or three are gathered in my name, I will be there in their midst."



### Pope Francis World Mission Day 2013

"**The Church** – I repeat once again – is not a relief organization, an enterprise or an NGO, but **a community of people**, animated by **the Holy Spirit**, who have lived and are living the wonder of the **encounter with Jesus Christ** and want to **share this experience** of deep joy, the message of salvation that the Lord gave us"



## 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".



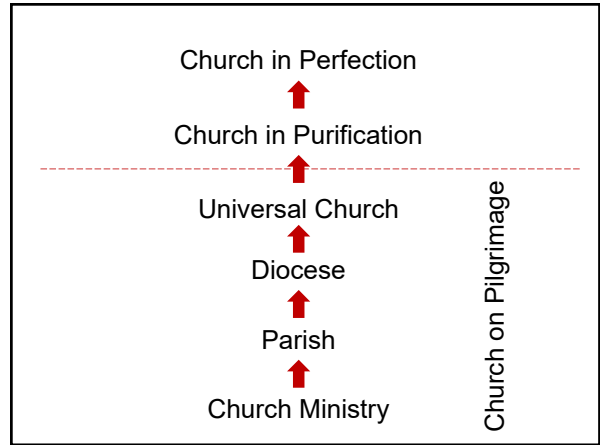
## Rome

- 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.



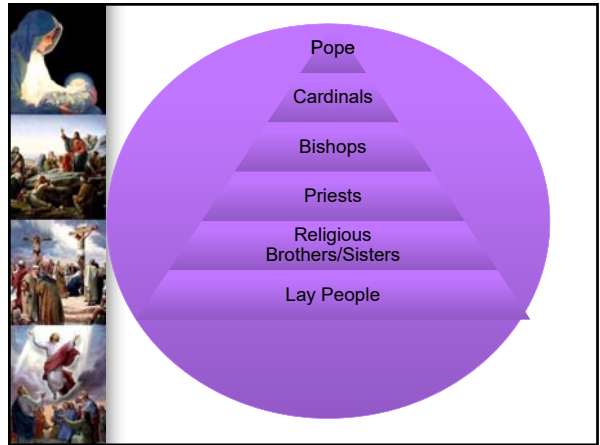
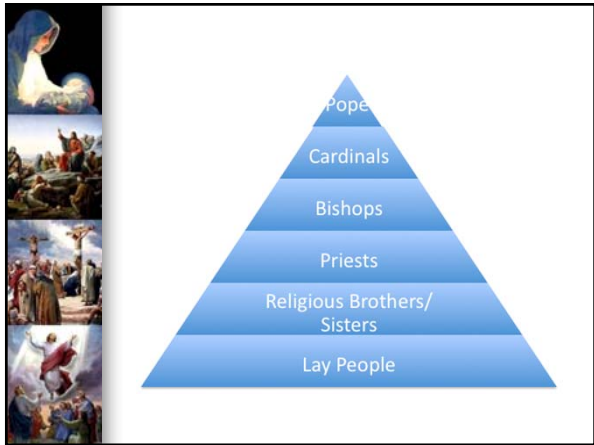
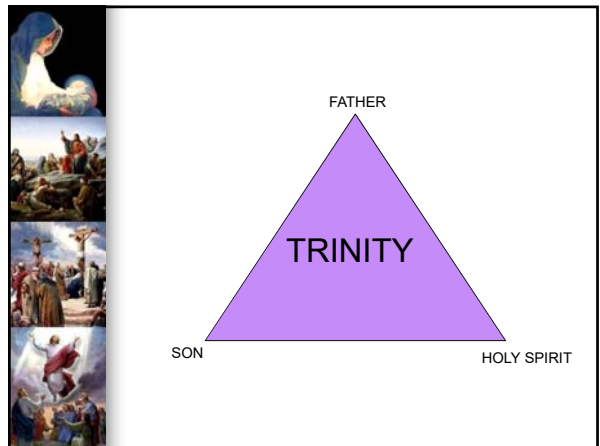
## The Sacrament of God

- 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 Marks of the Church

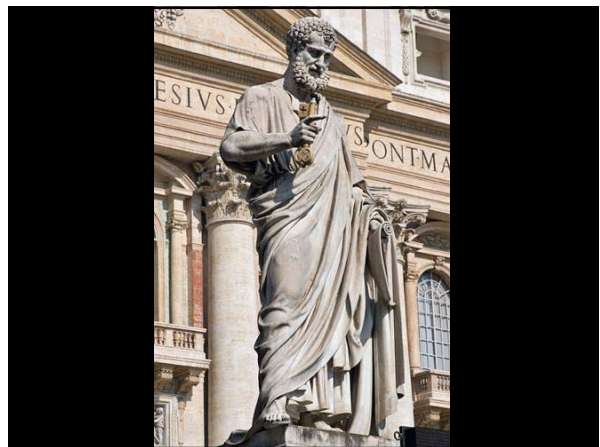
- "I believe in *One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church*"
- One
  - Members share one faith, united under one head.
- Holy
  - Members adhere to a holy doctrine.
- Catholic
  - Universal, irrespective of race or status.
- Apostolic
  - Tracing back to the Apostles.



### 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)


Vatican coat of arms

Pope Francis coat of arms





## Church Hierarchy

- Bishops are successors to the Apostles.
- The Pope is the successor to Peter.
- Unbroken chain of 266 Popes – from St Peter to Pope Francis
- 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.



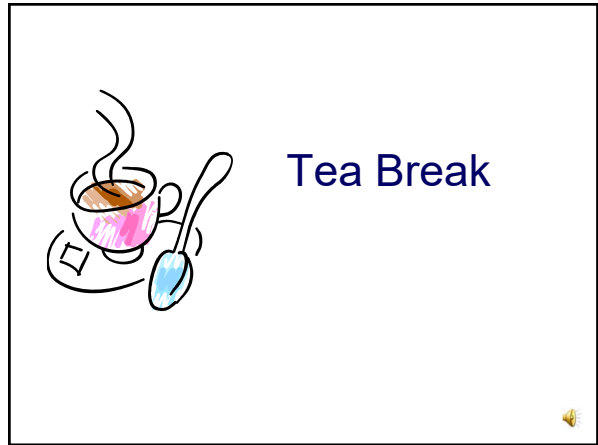
## 3-Tiered Church Leadership

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



## Infallibility

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




## 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

## 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
- *The Privilege of Being Catholic*  
(ISBN 978-0-89243-563-0)  
Chapter 3



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## Tour of the Church (the building)



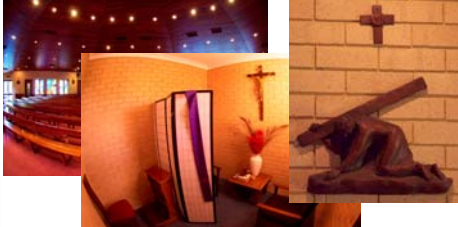
## Tour of the Church

- 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

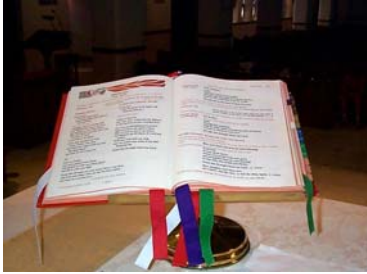



### Tour of the Church

- 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



SING A NEW SONG  
Dufner/Honore

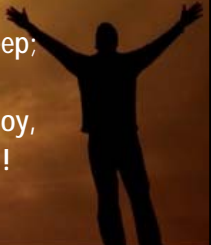
Sing a new song unto the Lord;  
Let your song be sung from mountains high  
Sing a new song unto the Lord,  
Singing alleluia.

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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