



## Lesson 6

# “Why be Catholic?”

(Discovering the Church Jesus Founded)



### Opening Prayer

“I have manifested your name to the men whom you gave me out of the world; they were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. ... But now I am coming to you; and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves. ... I do not pray for these only, but also for those who believe in me through their word, that they may all be one; even as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory which you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.”

—John 17:6, 13, 20-23

# Dive In: A Time Machine

A time machine was recently put up for auction on eBay. It was (or will be, says the seller) built in the year 2239. He found it under his home while remodeling his bathroom. No need to run to the Internet, though. According to the ad, it's "in nonworking condition."

Too bad, huh? But think about it: How amazing would it be to *own* a time machine? When and where would you go to experience history firsthand? Would you go back in time or forward in time and then back to the present and then *back to the future*? You'd get to experience the most amazing people and events in history.

Maybe you would choose to travel back in time to witness a certain battle, attend an historic rock concert, or take a peek at the dinosaurs. Or maybe ... you'd witness the Resurrection or perhaps turn up with the shepherds to see the history-shaping event that transpired 2,000 years ago, when God was born. The maker of everything actually

walked this earth, taught us how to live, and showed us his love by dying and rising for us.

And he didn't stop there. Jesus *could have* just let us read about all that in the history books, but he didn't. He wanted us to *experience* his love.

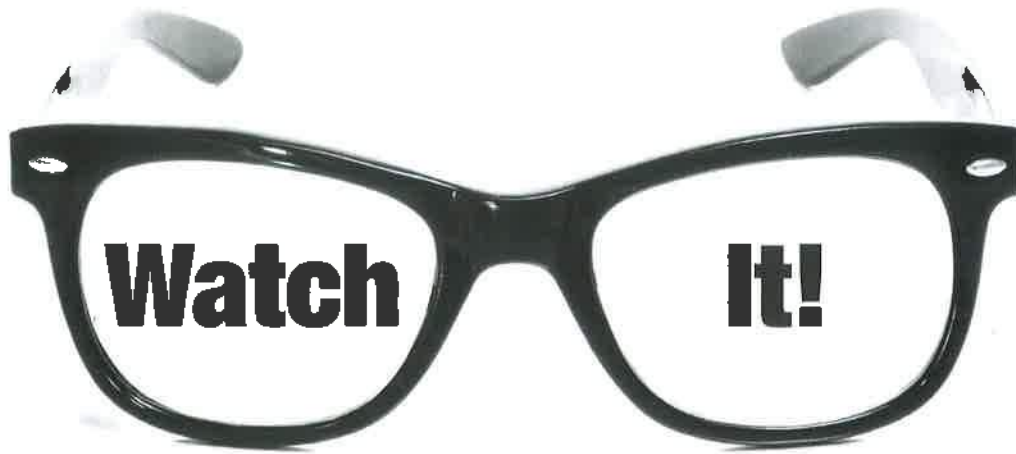
That's where the Catholic Church comes in. While the Church isn't a time machine, in a very real way, it helps us to experience the most significant part of history. We have direct access to the grace of the Last Supper, the cross, the empty tomb, **PENTECOST** Sunday, and more. ... And as part of the Church, we get to be part of bringing that grace to others, here and now.

Today, we're going to look at how being part of the Church gives us a front-row seat to God's saving works. And it's far more amazing than time travel ... and a whole lot more significant!



*"The Church's vocation is to bring joy to the world, a joy that is authentic and enduring, the joy proclaimed by the angels to the shepherds on the night Jesus was born."*

*—Pope Benedict XVI*



### Segment 1: The One True Church

- Which is **not** one of the four “marks” of the Catholic Church?  
A) One    B) Holy    C) Catholic    D) Roman    E) Apostolic
- Who was the “rock” to whom Jesus gave the “keys to the kingdom,” appointing him to lead the Church?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Which of the three Persons of the Blessed Trinity is considered the “guardian and protector” of the Church? \_\_\_\_\_

### Segment 2: Apostolic and Catholic

- The word “catholic” means \_\_\_\_\_.
- The teaching authority of the Church is called the \_\_\_\_\_.  
A) Magisterium    C) Divine Office  
B) Deposit of faith    D) Final Word
- The word infallible means without \_\_\_\_\_.  
A) error    B) malice    C) confusion    D) sin

### Segment 3: The Church Is Holy

- The Church has both a visible and \_\_\_\_\_ reality.
- The Church is often referred to as our \_\_\_\_\_, who is always there for us.  
A) brother    B) uncle    C) rock    D) mother



## TO THE HEART with

Have you ever felt out of place, like people wished you weren't there? Augustine Tolton knew that feeling well. When he was a child, Tolton, who was black, attended an all-white Catholic school where he was teased and insulted every day. The parents of some students were angry that a black student had been enrolled. One night, a rock was hurled through the pastor's window. Fearful for her son's safety, Augustine's mother withdrew him from the school after only a month.

Eventually, Tolton was accepted at another school. Once again, he was the only black student, but the pastor, Fr. McGirr, worked hard to win over the hardened hearts of those who couldn't see past race. Fr. McGirr became a mentor and inspiration to Augustine, who began to consider becoming a priest himself.

The question was, how?! Fr. McGirr helped Augustine apply to the Franciscan Order, where he met with the first of many rejections. With Fr. McGirr's help, the young man was accepted to the Vatican seminary in Rome and was later ordained to the priesthood in 1886 at age thirty one.

As a young black priest in the nineteenth century, Fr. Tolton faced many challenges and fought against the racial prejudice that predominated in that day. He eventually moved to Chicago, where his awesome responsibilities and obligations to the Catholic community there took a toll on him. He died of heatstroke in 1897 at the age of forty-three.



His story is a powerful testimony of persevering faith, even in the face of animosity and prejudice. His cause for canonization was opened in 2011.

Fr. Tolton was a visionary who saw far beyond issues of race and politics and far beyond the human imperfections we sometimes encounter in the Church (just as we do with any group of people). He looked inward—into the heart of the Church itself, where he saw the crucified Christ who, even as he was condemned and mocked, poured himself out with perfect love. “It was the

priests of the Church who taught me to pray and to forgive my persecutors,” said Fr. Tolton. “It was through their direction that I beheld for the first time the glimmering light of truth and the majesty of the Church.”

The next time you feel out of place, unwanted, or attacked—or if you ever feel frustrated or angry with the Church—think of Fr. Tolton’s patient endurance, his powerful witness, and his love for Christ and for the Catholic Church.

## Deacon Harold Burke-Sivers

“He looked inward—into the heart of the Church itself ...”



### Find It!

Which of the original thirteen American colonies was established on land purchased from a native tribe as a safe haven for English Catholics?

# Hero of the Week



## Born:

October 12, 1891

## Died:

August 9, 1942

## Memorial:

August 9

## Patron Saint of:

- Europe
- martyrs
- loss of parents
- World Youth Day

# St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross (Edith Stein)

*“My longing for truth was a single prayer.” (Edith Stein)*

The youngest daughter of a devout Jewish family with eleven children, nothing about Edith’s earliest experiences suggested that she would one day die a Catholic martyr. Her father, a Jewish lumber merchant, died when Edith was a baby, and her devout Jewish mother labored tirelessly to feed and educate her family.

Edith soon distinguished herself at her schoolwork and became a top student at the Victoria School at Breslau. But at thirteen, she had a crisis of faith, left her Jewish roots, and declared herself an atheist. Yet, her interest in philosophy in college ultimately led her to convert to Catholicism as an adult. Having spent all night reading St. Teresa of Avila’s autobiography, she exclaimed that she had found the truth.

Edith disappointed her mother with this **CONVERSION**, though Edith saw herself as uniquely qualified to bridge the gap between the Jewish and Christian communities, especially through her work entitled “Life in a Jewish Home.” She didn’t see her conversion as a break with her Judaism, but rather, a completion of it. She also wrote and spoke passionately about the dignity of the woman, rooted in her capacity for receptivity and motherhood. St. John Paul II called this the “feminine genius.” Edith spoke of it as a unique power that could effect profound change in the world.

Edith remained proud of her Jewish roots and lived in Germany during the turbulent Nazi era. Eventually she was forced to quit teaching due to discriminatory laws against Jews—including those who converted to Christianity. She joined the Carmelite Sisters, taking the name Teresa Benedicta of the Cross. As Nazi persecution escalated, she fled to the Netherlands with her sister, Rosa, who had also converted. There, Teresa Benedicta wrote a letter to Pope Pius XI, asking him to denounce Nazism and put an end to “this abuse of Christ’s name.” Although there is no record of the pope responding to her plea, he issued an encyclical (“With Burning Anxiety”) that denounced anti-Semitism and Nazism.

Teresa Benedicta and Rosa were arrested, imprisoned in Auschwitz, and eventually executed. This remarkable Carmelite sister serves as a great inspiration for all on the dignity of the human person, but especially for those who are seeking answers. She found the truth in Christ and went to her death knowing she was sharing in the sufferings of his cross.

*St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, pray for us. Lead us to Christ, that we may receive the grace of God through the Holy Spirit.*

# Challenge of the Week

- Ask your parents or another adult to tell you a story about a time they experienced the presence of God in their lives. Maybe they had an answer to prayer or heard a Scripture passage that spoke to them during a difficult time. Write about it in the space below.
- The Catholic Church is so *organized* that it is unmatched worldwide in reaching out to the poor, the sick, and those in need of disaster relief. Express your Catholic pride by posting a link on social media to a Catholic charity that interests you. Write the name of the group you chose in the space below.
- We are all members of the Body of Christ, each made for a purpose and all of equal dignity. Ask the Holy Spirit to be with you as you read 1 Corinthians 12. Which part of the “Body of Christ” do you think you represent, and why? Write about it in the space below.

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## ✠ Closing Prayer

*“You are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone ...”*

*—Ephesians 2:19-20*

Oh, Blessed Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—we are called to live in a community of love, as you do. Bless us with your love and protection, and help us to see the best in ourselves and in each other. Thank you for guiding and nourishing us here in class, and especially through the sacramental life, teaching, and mission we share in the one, holy, catholic, and **APOSTOLIC** Church. Amen.

# Taking It Home

For next week's "Review Game," be sure to read over the following ...

1. **Watch It!** questions (page 47)
2. **Wrap-Up**
3. **"What's That Word?"**
4. **Memory Verse**

Don't forget to do your **Challenge of the Week** (page 51)

## Wrap-Up

Two thousand years ago, Jesus Christ founded a Church with a mission—to bring his presence and message to all generations until the end of time. That's quite a task! But, for a mission to be successful, it needs an organization behind it.

Structure is important in order for any group to stay unified and to get things done. Bill Gates would never have said, "I have a great idea, let's make programs for computers ... OK ... GO!" Instead, he structured an organization with sound business principles.

The Founding Fathers of the United States didn't just write the Constitution and tell everyone to go home and interpret it for themselves. They set up a structured government to represent the people and to interpret the Constitution.

Jesus is at least as smart as Bill Gates and the Founding Fathers! That's why he didn't just leave us a mission, but a structured Church to ensure that we, his people, would believe and work as one—the theme of his "high priestly prayer" on the night before his crucifixion.<sup>2</sup>

Right from the first days of Christianity, the Church has been organized. Jesus set aside twelve men as apostles to lead the Church.<sup>3</sup> Those apostles

appointed other men to lead the Church in the same capacity as the Church grew. We call these successors "bishops."<sup>4</sup> Our bishops today trace their authority back to the twelve apostles. This is called **APOSTOLIC SUCCESSION**.

Adding further structure to his Church, Jesus established the papacy by making one of the apostles the head of the others. He gave Peter the "keys of the kingdom."<sup>5</sup> In biblical terms, "keys" = authority.<sup>6</sup> Peter was the bishop of Rome. Peter's God-given authority to govern the Church was passed down to our present-day bishop of Rome, the pope.

Why is this important? Why can't we simply read the Bible and interpret it for ourselves? Well, let's go back to the example of the government of the United States. Just as the Supreme Court is the final "voice of authority" on the Constitution, lest we fall into anarchy or civil war after every disagreement, the Magisterium guides the Church, but with more than man-made authority—with the authority of God.

That authority is necessary for us to remain one, as Jesus prayed we would. He gave us a mission, and we need to be united in carrying it out!



# “What’s That Word?”

## APOSTOLIC

**APOSTOLIC** means “founded on the apostles.” The apostles were the men that Jesus chose to lead his people and continue his work. The Church is “apostolic” because Jesus founded it on the apostles, because it keeps and follows the teachings that Jesus gave to the apostles, and because it is taught, sanctified, and guided by their successors, our bishops.<sup>7</sup>

## CATHOLIC

The *Chosen* program is designed to prepare you to be confirmed in the Catholic Church. *Catholic* is not only the name of the Church but is one of its “marks,” or characteristics (see **CHURCH**). One of the first bishops of the Church, St. Ignatius of Antioch, first referred to the Church as *catholic* and the name stuck.

The word *catholic* means “universal.” The Church is catholic because God wants everyone to be members of the Church Jesus founded, to follow Jesus, and to be members of the kingdom of God. Christ is always and everywhere present in the world through the life and sacraments of the Church.<sup>8</sup>

## CHURCH

The *Church* is made up of all the people who have responded to Jesus’ call to follow him. Jesus started the Church and chose the apostles to lead it. Their successors, our bishops, continue to lead the Church today. Because God adopts us as his children in Baptism, the Church is often referred to as the “family of God.”

The Catholic Church alone has the fullness of the means of salvation. The Church of Christ subsists in the Catholic Church, which means that every essential element that Christ intended his Church to have remains in the Catholic Church in a way that can never be lost.<sup>9</sup> The Church does not reject what is true and holy in other Christian communities and other faiths. There is a real, though imperfect, communion between the Catholic Church and other Christian communities. People of other faiths are also related in various ways to the Church.

We profess in the Creed that the Church is “one, holy, catholic, and apostolic.” These characteristics, known as the four **MARKS OF THE CHURCH**, are the essential features of the Church that Jesus Christ established. The Church is *one* because of its source, soul, and founder—Jesus. The Church is *holy* because of the presence of Christ and the Holy Spirit in it. The Church is *catholic* (meaning “universal”) because it possesses the fullness of the means of salvation. The Church is *apostolic* because it was built on the foundation of the apostles and continues to be governed by their successors, the bishops in union with the pope.



### Memory Verse:

“So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.”

—Galatians 6:10