



Diocese of Buffalo

Department of Lifelong Faith Formation

A member of the Division for Evangelization and Catechesis

The Mission Christ and the Church

Goal: Participants will understand all that God had done for us through Jesus Christ and that the Church was founded by Christ through the Apostles.

Objectives:

- To know that the Church is the living Body of Christ today.
- To grow in their understanding of the sacred nature of the Church.
- To identify the marks of the Church as professed in the Creed.
- To know the structure of the Church.



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III. The Mission of Christ and the Church (Page 1)

Outline	Activities	Critical Reflection
<p>I. The Coming of Christ as fulfillment of God’s Promise</p> <p>A. Creation of the World 1. Exploration of religious truth and use of symbolic language.</p> <p>B. Trinitarian God as Creator of all</p> <p>C. Humans as created in the image and likeness of God</p> <p>D. Original Sin & Its Consequences</p>	<p>Review the different types of literature contained in the Bible.</p> <p>Find the Old and New Testament in a bible. Which is larger? Speculate on why that might be.</p> <p>Compare the Creation stories. Identify the truth of the stories as different from the ‘facts’ that are described.</p> <p>Make a list of all that God has created: seen and unseen.</p> <p>Have a debate about why men and women are different/similar. What might be God’s reason for this?</p> <p>Review/Celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Is there anything that God will not forgive of us?</p>	<p>Is the bible important for Christians? Is it important for your age group? Why/why not?</p> <p>What is the difference between historical truth and religious truth? Which is more important from a faith perspective?</p> <p>Is there anything in the world today that appears to be outside of God’s plan? (Why/why not)</p> <p>Discuss the existence of angels and their role in as God’s messengers.</p> <p>Has there been a time when your actions produced negative consequences for others. How did you feel? What did you do to make amends (or can do)?</p>



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The Mission of Christ and the Church (Page 2)

Outline	Activities	Critical Reflection
<p>II. Promise of a Messiah</p> <p>A. Prophetic Voices in the Old Testament</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. God's promise of redemption after Adam & Eve's sin2. Covenants with God's people <p>B. Gospels reveal Jesus as Messiah</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Nativity Narratives<ul style="list-style-type: none">o Mary's "Yes"o Joseph's dream2. Word Became Flesh	<p>What popular song(s) expresses the messages of God's covenant? (visit www.cornerstonemedia.org)</p>	<p>Why is a basic understanding of the world of Jesus important to our understanding of Jesus and his message? Give an example to illustrate your point.</p>



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The Mission of Christ and the Church (Page 3)

Outline	Activities	Critical Reflection
<p>III. The Coming of Christ</p> <p>A. Jesus' life as a continual revelation of God</p> <p>B. Redemption unfolds in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Jesus' baptism○ First miracle○ Transfiguration○ First Eucharist	<p>Create a video, power-point, or essay about what Jesus' life was like before he began his public ministry.</p> <p>What does "do this in memory of me" mean today?</p>	<p>What is the Roman Catholic teaching of the <i>real presence</i> of Jesus and how does it pertain to the Last Supper?</p>



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The Mission of Christ and the Church (Page 4)

Outline	Activities	Critical Reflection
<p>IV. Redemption Through the Paschal Mystery</p> <p>A. Passion & Death of Jesus</p>	<p>Spend time using the Gospel accounts of the Passion and Death of Jesus in class. Have participants take on the various parts as read on Palm Sunday or Good Friday.</p> <p>Pray the Stations of the Cross using available online versions if internet is available or create a contemporary reflection to be used at your parish.</p> <p>Show a recent movie about the Passion, Death & Resurrection of Jesus and discuss what they saw, heard, and felt.</p> <p>Analyze the church song, "Were You There?" and have a discussion after trying to 'imagine' that we were there. How do we still find ourselves at the cross today?</p>	<p>Discuss the life-cycle of: life, death, resurrection as experienced today.</p> <p>Why is Jesus' free acceptance of his death central to all Christian theology?</p>



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Outline	Activities	Critical Reflection
<p>V. Christ Established the Church</p> <p>A. Manifestation of God's Promise to Abraham</p> <p>B. Understanding the Holy Spirit</p> <p>C. The Church at Pentecost</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Role of the Holy Spirit <p>D. The Apostles Mission</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ The Great Commission	<p>Use the DVD: <i>Cate-Quiz'em: The Holy Spirit</i>, from Out Of Da Box Productions to learn about the Holy Spirit.</p> <p>Choose 12 role-model apostles from today's world and make a poster listing their names and why you chose them.</p> <p>Did Jesus need Apostles? What were the benefits and challenges?</p> <p>Develop a plan to implement the "Great Commission" if it were given to YOU today.</p>	<p>Compare all the different people chosen as apostles. How do they differ from who you think should have been chosen?</p>



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The Mission of Christ and the Church (Page 6)

Outline	Activities	Critical Reflection
<p>VI. Images of the Church</p> <p>A. Old Testament Images:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ God's Chosen People○ Covenant with Abraham <p>B. New Testament:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Body of Christ○ Temple of the Holy Spirit○ Vine and branches○ Family of God○ People of God○ Community of disciples○ A pilgrim people	<p>Assign one image of the Church to a small group, or individual participants for study. Ask each group to make a presentation about this image as a relevant image of the Church.</p> <p>Have students create their own image of the Church. Ask them to describe its symbolism.</p>	<p>Which image of the Church is most meaningful to you and why?</p>



The Mission of Christ and the Church (Page 7)

Outline	Activities	Critical Reflection
<p>VII. The Marks of the Church</p> <p>A. One</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Unity of the Church in Jesus Christ○ Unity in diversity○ Unity in conflict○ Ecumenism <p>B. Holy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Cooperation with God's grace○ Mary, Mother of the Church as a model of faith○ Canonized Saints	<p>Discuss past and current conflicts within the Church (eg. schisms, Council arguments, disagreements in the 21st century). Can the Church still claim its unity in midst of conflict?</p> <p>Explore some of the Marian devotional prayers. How do these enhance the Church's holiness?</p> <p>Have a "Banquet of Saints" with each participant role-playing a saint. Each person will give a 3-minute presentation about what it was like to live the life of a Christian.</p>	<p>Baptism is the beginning of our life in the Church. We participate in the mission of the Church to "Baptize all nations..." How are you participating in this mission?</p> <p>If Jesus came to earth today how would he spread his message? How would he connect with people?</p> <p>What does it mean for the Church to be 'holy'?</p>



The Mission of Christ and the Church (Page 8)

Outline	Activities	Critical Reflection
<p>C. Catholic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Christ’s mission was to the whole world ○ Church exists for all people ○ Salvation is through the Church, even for non-members <p>D. Apostolic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Founded by Christ through the 12 Apostles with Peter as the head ○ Guided by the successors of the 12: pope and bishops ○ All Church members are called to share the Gospel of Salvation 	<p>Research the life of the Apostles. How did most die? Compare their defense of the Church to the challenges faced by the bishops of the United States. Would you have wanted to be an Apostle in the early days of the Church?</p> <p>Discover who the bishop of this diocese is. What is his motto?</p>	<p>Discuss how salvation is possible for those who have never heard of Christ, or those who faithfully follow other religions?</p>



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The Mission of Christ and the Church (Page 9)

Outline	Activities	Critical Reflection
<p>VIII. The Church in the World</p> <p>A. Divine purpose and mission</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Church transcends history and is a part of history ○ The Church studies the ‘signs of the times’ in light of the Gospel <p>B. Mission of Evangelization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Define ○ The ‘new’ evangelization <p>C. Structure of the Church</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ College of Bishops -The Holy See -Individual dioceses -Parishes -Family: domestic Church ○ Teaching Office -Magisterium ○ Sanctifying Office ○ Governing Office 	<p>Working in a small group, create a symbol, poem, collage, or drawing that captures what you think God’s reign in its fullness will be like.</p> <p>Review the US Bishops’ document, <i>Go Make Disciples - A Pastoral Plan for Evangelization</i> (1992). In small groups, have participants identify how teenagers can support of each of the 3 goals.</p> <p>Take a tour of the Cathedral.</p> <p>Take a virtual tour of the Vatican (www.vatican.va)</p>	<p>In what areas of your life do you apply God’s words well? In what areas do you need improvement?</p>



The Mission of Christ and the Church (Page 10)

Outline	Activities	Critical Reflection
<p>D. Vocations in Life</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ordained ○ Religious ○ Laity <p>IX. The Commitment of the Believer</p> <p>A. Prayer Life</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sources of prayer ○ Forms of prayer ○ Purpose of prayer <p>B. Communal Life</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Liturgical year ○ Called to be ‘salt and light for the world’ ○ A Life of Christian witness 	<p>Lead a discussion about the essential elements of the Catholic way of life. If you were to be put on trial for being a Catholic, is there enough evidence to be convicted?</p> <p>What season in the liturgical year is it currently? Discuss the importance of ‘ordinary time’ as well as the special seasons.</p>	<p>Practice using different prayer forms. Which new ones did you try? Which did you like?</p> <p>How does one live the life of an authentic Christian?</p> <p>What does it meant to be “counter-cultural”? Are you counter-cultural?</p>



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