

### 3. Contemplating the mystery as members of the Body of Christ



‘Catholic’ : ‘All-embracing’





‘Lifted up from the earth,  
I will draw everyone  
to myself’(John 12:32).

‘Woman behold your son.  
Son, behold your mother’  
(John 19:26-27).

The mother and the son  
represent  
the new community  
who are to live his life  
and carry on his mission.

Over them Jesus pours out  
his love, his Spirit.



‘Jesus said, “It is finished.”

Then he bowed his head and gave over (paradidomi) the spirit’(John 19:30).



**‘One of the soldiers pierced Jesus’ side with a lance,  
and blood and water came out’(John 19:34).**

‘Let anyone who is thirsty come to me, and let the one who believes in me drink. As the scripture has said: Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water. Now he said this about the Spirit, which believers in him were to receive; for as yet there was no Spirit, because Jesus was not yet glorified’(John 7:37-39).



In the evening Jesus came to his disciples  
and said to them:

“As the Father has sent me, so I am sending you.”

He breathed on them, saying:

“Receive the Holy Spirit.” (John 20:19-22).

Vatican II, G&S, §38

‘The Risen Christ is now  
at work in human hearts  
through the power  
of his Spirit,  
not only arousing in them  
a desire for the world to come,

but also animating, purifying  
and reinforcing the noble  
aspirations which drive the  
human family to make its life  
one that is more human and to  
direct the whole earth to this  
end.’



‘In the upstairs room where they were staying, the Twelve were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers’

(Acts 1:13-14).



‘When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together, when suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit’ (Acts 2:1-4).

The Promise : John 14:15-18, 23

‘If you love me, you will keep my commandments.

And I will ask the Father,  
and he will give you another Advocate,  
to be with you forever.

This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive,  
because it neither sees him nor knows him.

You know him, because he abides with you,  
and he will be in you.

I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you ...

If you love me you will keep my word,  
and my Father will love you, and we will come to you  
and make our home in you.’

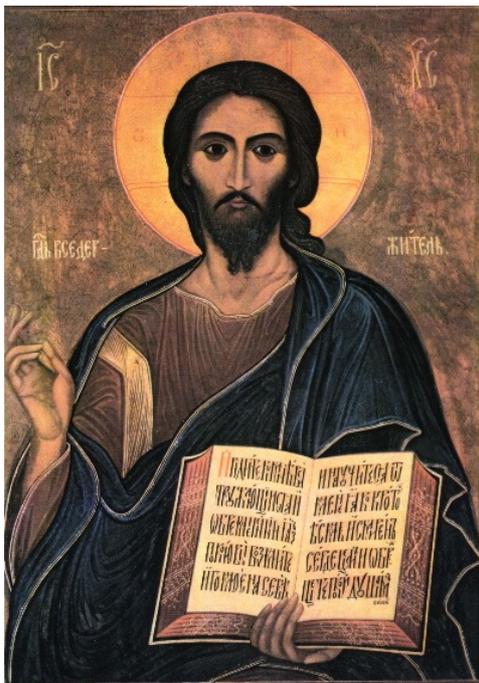
- The word 'church' like the German 'kirche', derives from the Greek 'kyriake' : 'belonging to the Lord (kyrios).
- The Church is the community of disciples of the 'Lord', the Risen Christ.

The Greek word for Church is 'ekklesia'

'ek'(out of) 'kaleo'(to call)

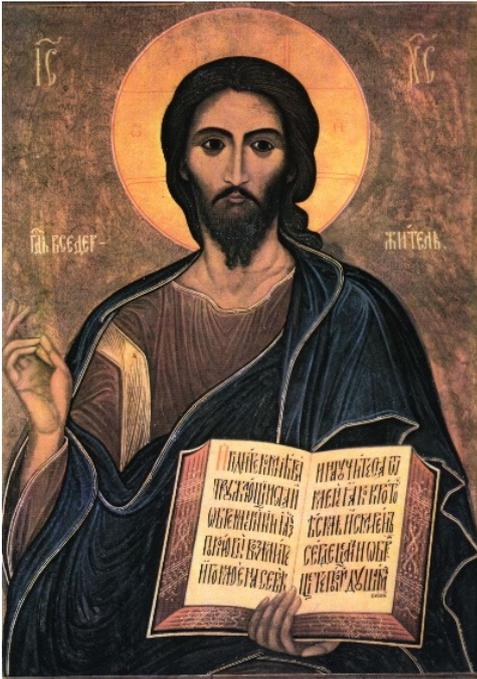
Through his Son, Jesus, God is 'calling' everyone  
'out of' darkness into light,  
drawing everyone to Christ and so into the church.

Jesus is  
THE **Sacrament**,  
THE **Mystery**  
THE **Symbol** of God



The Church is  
THE **Sacrament**  
THE **mystery**  
THE **symbol** of Jesus





‘God has made Christ the head over all things  
for the church, which is his body,  
the fullness of him who fills all in all’  
(Ephesians 1:22-23).

Revelation 1:12-16

‘I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me,  
and on turning I saw seven golden lamp stands,  
and in the midst of the lamp stands I saw one like the  
Son of Man, clothed with a long robe  
and with a golden sash across his chest;  
his head and his hair were white as white wool, white as snow;  
his eyes were like a flame of fire,  
his feet were like brass, refined as in a furnace,  
and his voice was like the sound of many waters  
In his right hand he held seven stars, and  
from his mouth came a sharp, two-edged sword  
and his face was like the sun shining with full splendour.’

2Corinthians 4:6 - ‘the glory of God on the face of Christ.’

Revelation 21:2-3

‘I saw the holy city the new Jerusalem,  
coming down out of heaven from God,  
prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.  
and I heard a loud voice from the throne saying,  
‘See, the tent of God is with mankind.  
He will pitch his tent with them as their God;  
they will be his peoples, and he will be their God.’

Revelation 22:1

‘The angel showed me the river of the water of life,  
bright as crystal, issuing from the throne of God  
and of the Lamb **in the middle of the city square.**’

Revelation 22:17

‘The Spirit and the bride say, ‘Come’ [assembly repeats].  
And let everyone who hears say, ‘Come’ [assembly repeats].  
And let everyone who is thirsty come,  
let anyone who wishes take the water of life as a gift.’

Psalm 84:1

‘What a delight your dwelling place is, YHWH of hosts.’

The Church is the new Temple.

Hebrews 12:22-23

‘You have come to Mount Zion  
and to the city of the living God,  
the heavenly Jerusalem,  
and to innumerable angels in festal gathering,  
and to the assembly of the first born.’

Catechism n. 776

‘The Church is the visible plan of God’s love for humanity,  
because God desires that the whole human race  
may become one **People of God**,  
form one **Body of Christ**,  
and be built into one **Temple of the Holy Spirit.**’

Bernard Lonergan SJ *Philosophy of God and Theology* 1973

The person does not come first.  
What comes first is the community.

It is within community  
through the way persons relate  
that the individual person emerges.

Persons are the products of community.

- Jesus likened himself to a bridegroom (see Luke 5:34-35).
- John the Baptist uses the same image when he declares that he is happy to see his disciples going to Jesus, for 'He who has the bride is the bridegroom'. Jesus is the bridegroom, John is the bridegroom's friend (John 3:29-30).
- This is picked up in the Book of Revelation:
  - 'Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready (19:7).

John 15:4

‘Make your home in me as I make mine in you’(plural)

Ignatius of Antioch, Letter to the Ephesians IV,1-2

‘Let every one of you become a chorus of song,  
so that in the harmony of your concord,  
adopting the melody of God in unity,  
you will sing for the Father in one voice,  
in Christ Jesus.’

Irenaeus

"God put the human race together in many ways  
to effect a symphony of salvation'(AH, IV,14,2).

Catechism n.1073

‘The liturgy is a participation in Christ’s own prayer  
addressed to the Father in the Holy Spirit.  
In the liturgy all Christian prayer finds its source and goal.  
Through the liturgy our inner self is rooted and grounded  
in the great love with which the Father loves us  
in his Beloved Son.’

Catechism n.1075

‘Liturgical catechesis aims to initiate people  
into the mystery of Christ  
by proceeding from the visible to the invisible,  
from the sign to what it is that is signified,  
from the “sacraments” to the “mysteries”.’

God alone is holy

The Church is holy

because God has chosen the Church as his Temple:

‘God’s temple is holy, and you are that temple’(1Corinthians 3:17).

Vatican II, LG 39

‘The holiness of the Church is constantly shown forth  
in the fruits of grace which the Spirit produces in the faithful.

And so it must be.

It is expressed in many ways by those who,  
each in his or her own state of life,  
tend to the perfection of love.’

The holiness of the Church is the holiness of love.  
It is the Spirit of communion between Jesus and God  
that is the soul and the heart of the Church.  
The holiness of the Church has its source in this Spirit.

‘It is no longer I who live. It is Christ who lives in me.  
I live now by the faith of the Son of God,  
loving me and giving himself for me’(Galatians 2:20).

## Imperfect belonging in the Body of Christ

- We are all imperfect in Faith, Hope and Love

We all belong to a community that does not fully acknowledge all parts of the Catholic Tradition

We are all called to constant repentance, to open our hearts to let Christ live more and more in us.

We are all called to draw nearer to Jesus, and so to each other, and so to mutual enrichment

There are sinners in the Church because the Church clasps sinners to her bosom (see Luke 15:1-2).

God does the pruning and purifying.

John 13:34-35

‘I give you a new commandment, that you love one another.  
Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another.  
By this everyone will know that you are my disciples,  
if you have love for one another.’

Ezekiel 36:26-27

‘A new heart I will give you,  
and a new spirit I will put within you;  
and I will remove from your body the heart of stone  
and give you a heart of flesh.  
I will put my spirit within you,  
and make you follow my way.’

Catechism n.1088

‘Christ is present in the sacraments so that when anybody baptises it is really Christ himself who baptises.

He is present in his word since it is he himself who speaks when the holy Scriptures are read in the Church.

He is present when the Church prays and sings, for he has promised “where two or three are gathered together in my name there am I in their midst.” ’

Catechism n.1095

‘The Church re-reads and re-lives the great events of salvation history in the “today” of her liturgy.’

- In the liturgy Jesus’ self-giving (culminating on Calvary) and God’s taking him into the risen life are re-presented (made present again) for us and for our salvation.
- In the liturgy we gather as God’s People to open our hearts to welcome the blessings that God is pouring out upon us.

Catechism n.1101

‘The Holy Spirit gives a spiritual understanding of the Word of God to those who read or hear it, according to the disposition of their hearts. By means of the words, actions, and symbols that form the structure of the celebration, the Spirit puts the faithful and the ministers into a living relationship with Christ, the Word and Image of the Father, so that they can live out the meaning of what they hear, contemplate and do in the celebration.’

Catechism n.III2

‘The mission of the Holy Spirit in the liturgy of the Church is to prepare the assembly to encounter Christ;

to recall and manifest Christ to the faith of the assembly;

to make the saving work of Christ present and active  
by his transforming power; and

to make the gift of communion bear fruit in the Church.’

## Sacraments of Initiation I. Baptism



Perugino

A voice came from heaven,  
“You are my Son, the Beloved;  
with you I am well pleased.”

Through baptism we share in Jesus' life

'You belong to Christ to bear fruit for God  
in the new life of the Spirit'(Romans 7:4-6).

'We are the aroma of Christ to God'(2Corinthians 2:15).

Anointed with Chrism

- Living the life of Jesus the **priest**: mediators of grace (Love)
- Living the life of Jesus the **prophet**: revealing God's word (Love)
- Living the life of Jesus the **king**: contributing to the reign of God (Love)

## Sacraments of Initiation 2. Confirmation



Closely linked with Baptism is the Sacrament of Confirmation, which completes and confirms the grace received at Baptism.

The focus of baptism is on our dying and rising with Jesus.

The focus of Confirmation is on Jesus giving us his Spirit, the Spirit who is the love binding Jesus to God.



Isaiah 61:1-2; Luke 4:18-19

‘The spirit of the Lord God is upon me,  
because the Lord has anointed me;  
he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed,  
to bind up the brokenhearted,  
to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners;  
to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour.’



‘From the heart of Jesus pierced on Calvary,  
I see a new world coming forth:  
a great and life-giving world,  
inspired by love and mercy;  
a world which the Church must perpetuate  
on the whole earth’(Jules Chevalier, 1900).

### Sacraments of Initiation 3. The Eucharist



Tintoretto

1Corinthians 10:16-17

‘The cup of blessing that we bless,  
is it not a communion in the blood of Christ?  
The bread that we break,  
is it not a communion in the body of Christ?  
Because there is one bread,  
**we who are many are one body,**  
for we all partake of the one bread.’

Augustine Sermon 272

‘If you are the body and members of Christ,  
then it is your sacrament  
that is placed on the table of the Lord;  
it is your sacrament that you receive.

To that which you are you respond “Amen”(“Yes, it is true”)  
and by responding to it you assent to it.  
For you hear the words “the Body of Christ”  
and you respond “Amen”.

**Be then a member of the Body of Christ  
that your Amen may be true.’**

Nourished by Jesus, those partaking in the Eucharist receive the grace to carry out their priestly mission as sacraments of Christ the **priest**, the one mediator between God and mankind.

and so they are graced to carry out their prophetic ministry, as sacraments of Christ the **prophet**, whereby they speak God's Word to others, in word and deed.

In this way, sharing in the mission of Christ the **king**, they bring about the reign of God's love in the world, drawing everyone to a redemption that is eternal and to full communion with the living God.

‘Do this in remembrance of me’

‘I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done.’

(John 13:14-15).

- ‘love one another as I have loved you’(John 15:12).

To ‘eat this bread’

- to unite oneself with the ‘flesh given for the life of the world’(John 6:51).

to hunger for ‘every word that comes from the mouth of God’

(Matthew 4:4).

- to welcome God’s gift of our ‘super-substantial bread’(Matthew 6:11).

‘Do this in remembrance of me’

To ‘drink this wine’

- to drink the wine of Jesus, the bridegroom (Cana - John 2).
- to drink the wine of Jesus’ love ‘poured into our hearts”(Romans 5:5).
- to commit oneself to say ‘Yes’ to Jesus:

‘Can you drink the cup that I must drink,  
or be baptised with the baptism with which I am to be baptised?’  
(Mark 10:38)

As regards what we present in our communities, the 1994 Catechism of the Catholic Church quotes (n.25) with approval a statement from the Preface to the Roman Catechism published in 1566, just after the Council of Trent:

‘The whole concern of doctrine and its teaching  
must be directed to the love that never ends.  
Whether something is proposed for belief,  
for hope or for action,  
the love of our Lord must always be made accessible,  
so that anyone can see that all the works  
of perfect Christian virtue spring from love  
and have no other objective than to arrive at love.’



Woman of the Sacred Heart