**Archbishop Harry J. Flynn Catechetical Institute**

**Module 1 Lesson 9 CCC 748-810**

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**Born in the Father’s Heart:** The Church

What is the connection in belief in the holy sprit and belief in the church?

* We respond to the baptismal formula questions of the creed, as works of the Holy Spirit.

**Credo Ecclesia = I believe the church**

We believe that the church is a work of the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit chooses to propose to us the faith through the church, in which we believe.

Henri de Lubac – Splendor of the Church

* We believe within the church.
* We believe about the church.

Thomas Aquinas – Summa Theologiae, Prima Pars, q.36, aa.1-4

* We believe in the Holy Spirit unifying the church.

The church is not incidental to God’s plan; rather it is God’s plan itself.

**What does it mean to be a Christian?**

The church helps us to understand what it means to be a Christian.

Lumen Gentium (Light of the Nations), 8

* “This is the one church of Christ, in the creed is professed as one, holy, Catholic, and apostolic, which our savoir, after his resurrection, commissioned Peter to Shepherd, and him, and the other apostles to extend and direct with authority, which he erected for all ages as the pillar and mainstay of the truth. This Church, constituted and organized in the world as a society, subsists in the Catholic church, which is governed by the successors of Peter and the bishops in communion with him, although many elements of sanctification are found outside of it’s visible structure. For there are many who honor sacred scripture, taking it as a norm of believe and a pattern of life, and who show a sincere zeal, they lovingly believe in God the Father Almighty and in Christ, the Son of God, and savior, they are consecrated in baptism in which they are united with Christ, they also recognize and accept other sacraments within their own churches or ecclesial communities. Many of them rejoice in the episcopate, celebrate the holy Eucharist and cultivate devotion toward the virgin mother of God. They also share with us in Prayer and other spiritual benefits, likewise we can say that in some real way they are joined with us in the Holy Spirit, for to them too he gives his gifts and graces, where he is operative among them with his sanctifying power. Some, indeed, he has strengthened to the extent of the shedding of their blood.”
* There is no division of the spirit. All of the elect are, in some sense, members of the one church of Christ.

**The Church We Believe** CCC748

Christ is the light of the world and the church is the reflection of that light, like the moon reflects the light of the sun.

The Church is Trinitarian in nature.

**Ekklesia: to be called out of** CCC751

* A people was called out of Egypt
* A people was called out of slavery
* A people was called out of sin

In Jesus Christ, we have been called out and called to assemble (ecclesia).

* Genesis 49:28, Exodus 19

Church, in English, comes from the Greek: Kyriake, which means “what belongs to the Lord”.

**Symbols of the Church** CCC 753-757

An analogy, or a symbol that reflects reality, not just an attractive image.

* The people, of which Christ is the King
* The body, of which Christ is the Head
* The sheep fold, of which Christ is the shepherd
* The building, of which Christ is the corner stone
* The temple, of which Christ is the sacrifice
* For us, the church is a mother

**The Church in All of the Ages of Salvation History**

**1. The Age of the Father** CCC 760

* Everything that exists has a cause. And the world was created for the sake of the Church.

Pope Benedict XVI – Credo for Today, 32-48

* Man is able to look beyond and ask “why am I here?”

God repeatedly tries to enter into a familial relationship with his creation. We see this throughout the course of the covenants made in the Old Testament.

**2. Age of the Son** CCC 763

* “It was the Son’s task to accomplish the Father’s plan of salvation… The Church is the final reign of Christ already present in Mystery. “

Jeremiah 31:31-34 and Isaiah 59

* Prophesizing about a new covenant that would transcend all of those that came before it
* Extend beyond the boundaries of Israel
* Genesis 22:18

Matthew 3:2 & Mark 1:15

* Jesus’s first words: “Repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand”.
* Jesus not only is a representation of the Kingdom of God on earth, he represents the Kingdom properly.

CCC 765

* “The Lord Jesus endowed his community with a structure that will remain until the Kingdom is fully achieved… By all his actions, Christ prepares and builds his Church”

Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger – Called to Communion

* There is an unbreakable connection between Church, Eucharist, and Bishop.
* Unity in the succession of peter and the apostles

Eve was born from the rib, the side, of Adam opened by God, and so was the Church born from the side of Jesus, opened on the cross.

The family from the first covenant 🡪 the family of the new covenant.

**3. The Age of the Spirit** CCC768

Age beginning at Pentecost.

* Reverses the effects of the Tower of Babble: unites those speaking different languages to bring us up to him.

CCC 770

* The church is in history, yet at the same time she transcends it.
* The church is a visible and a spiritual reality
* Earthly, human, temporal reality
* Divine, heavenly, eternal reality

CCC 775

* The church is the sacrament of the union between God and Man

CCC 778

* The church is both the means and the goal of God’s plan

St. Bernard of Clairvaux (CCC 771)

* “O humility! O sublimity! Both tabernacle of cedar and sanctuary of God; earthly dwelling and celestial palace; house of clay and royal hall; body of death and temple of light; and at last both object of scorn to the proud and bride of Christ! She is black but beautiful, O daughters of Jerusalem, for even if the labor and pain of her long exile may have discolored her, yet heaven's beauty has adorned her.”
* There are troubles within the human nature of the church, but it was still divine.

CCC 773

* Marian demotion precedes the Petrine
* The cause is greater than the effect

**The Trinitarian Mystery**

God in his transcendence calls us to be a people.

CCC 783

Through our baptism, we share in the offices of Christ

* Priest: we participate in offering sacrifice in Mass
* Prophet: adhering to the faith and proclaiming it through out lives, works, and words
* King: called to love our neighbor and to give of ourselves

CCC 795

**1. The Church as the body of Christ**

* The sacraments truly incorporate us
* The church gives us the Eucharist, which is the body of Christ, which we consume to become the body of Christ.

St. Augustine

* “Let us rejoice then and give thanks that we have become not only Christians, but Christ himself. Do you understand and grasp, brethren, God's grace toward us? Marvel and rejoice: we have become Christ. For if he is the head, we are the members; he and we together are the whole man. . . . The fullness of Christ then is the head and the members. But what does "head and members" mean? Christ and the Church.”

St. Gregory the Great

* “Our redeemer has shown himself to be one person with the holy Church whom he has taken to himself.”

St. Thomas Aquinas

* “Head and members form as it were one and the same mystical person”

St. Joan of Arc

* A reply of St. Joan of Arc to her judges sums up the faith of the holy doctors and the good sense of the believer: "About Jesus Christ and the Church, I simply know they're just one thing, and we shouldn't complicate the matter.”

CCC 796

**2. The Church as the bride of Christ**

* “The Apostle speaks of the whole Church and of each of the faithful, members of his Body, as a bride "betrothed" to Christ the Lord so as to become but one spirit with him. The Church is the spotless bride of the spotless Lamb. "Christ loved the Church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her." He has joined her with himself in an everlasting covenant and never stops caring for her as for his own body.”
* Christ and the church are the perfect example of Marriage

CCC 797

**3. The Church as the Temple of the Holy Spirit**

* There is one soul for the one body, that is the church
* The Holy Spirit works to build up the Church through sacraments, virtues, and grace

CCC 810

* Hence the universal Church is seen to be 'a people brought into unity from the unity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit