

St. Mary's of the Lake, Watkins Glen, NY
St. Benedict's, Odessa, NY



Being Church in Today's World Part II

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Being Church in Today's World, Part II

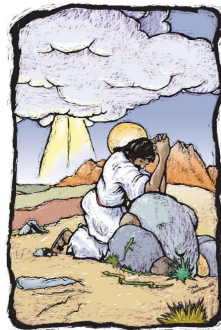
Webinar Tips

- All participants are muted to reduce background noise
- If slides are not fully visible, check at the top center of your screen for "fit to window" under arrow.
- If you would like to ask a question, at the bottom of your screen you should see a box with the letters "Q & A". Click it and you can type your question. It will show on my screen.
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Being Church in Today's World, Part II

Review from part I

- Why this Series?
- "What is the future of Christianity???"
- Will there be a "remnant" left?
- Hermeneutic of continuity
- Looking for Truth
- St. Francis of Assisi – Repair my church
- Part I available at
www.renewaloffaith.org/beingchurch2022

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Comments from Part I Evaluations

- “You mentioned we may be the remnant. Where do we go from here in order to evangelize?”
- “Ideally, how should this look in a parish in actual practice? In terms of building up our faith and being a Christian Community that knows each other? One that has fellowship within the parish and does outreach and evangelism in the local community?”
- To answer both of these questions, we need to understand what it means to be “a church.”

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What comes to mind when you hear the word “church”?



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The Origin of the Word “Church”

“The word *Church* is a translation of biblical words: the Hebrew word *qahal*, and the Greek word *ekklesia*, both of which mean “gathering of people or community” for worship” (*United States Catholic Catechism for Adults*, 113. Cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 751-752.).

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Do We Need the “Church”?

- Sola Fide and/or Sola Scriptura
- The Church as Institution
 - “The Church needs an institutional framework for its stability, continuity, and mission for serving the cause of the Gospel and opening people to God’s call to holiness. Problems with the institution are not arguments for its removal, but for its renewal” (*United States Catholic Catechism for Adults*, 121).

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The Hierarchy in the New Testament

- Pope - Matthew 16:18-19 – Jesus makes Peter the rock upon which He builds his church and gives him the keys.
- Bishops - 1 Timothy 3:1-7 - qualifications for a bishop
- Priests - "presbyters"
 - Acts 14:23 – appointed presbyters
 - Acts 15 – participants in the Council of Jerusalem
- Deacons - 1 Timothy 3:8-13 - qualifications for a deacon
- Laity – St. Augustine "What I am for you terrifies me; what I am with you consoles me. For you I am a bishop; but with you I am a Christian. The former is a duty; the latter a grace. The former is a danger; the latter, salvation" (Augustine's sermon "On the Anniversary of His Ordination" listed as Sermon 340).

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Models of the Church

Dulles, Avery, S.J. *Models of the Church (Expanded Edition)*. Image Books/Doubleday: New York. 2002.

- "I draw the conclusion that a balanced theology of the Church must find a way of incorporating the major affirmations of each basic ecclesiological type...we must work simultaneously with different models." (Dulles, 2)
- "Pursued alone, any single model will lead to distortions." (Dulles, 20).

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Models - Church as Institution

- "The Church of Christ could not perform its mission without some stable organizational features." (Dulles, 27)
- The three power/functions (Dulles, 29-30)
 - Teaching
 - Sanctifying
 - Governing
- The institutional model helps provide "a strong sense of corporate identity" (Dulles, 35)

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Models - More Than Church as Institution

"The Church of the twenty-first century cannot, however, invite men and women to faith on the basis of authority. It must deploy a bolder, more evangelical appeal. It must change the game." (Weigel, *Evangelical Catholicism*, 29).

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Models - Church as Servant

- "Thus in Article 3, after asserting that the Church should enter into conversation with all men, the Constitution teaches that just as Christ came into the world not to be served but to serve, so the Church, carrying on the mission of Christ, seeks to serve the world by fostering the brotherhood of all men" (Dulles, 84).
- "Just so, the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Matthew 20:28).

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Models - Church as Herald

- "The **goal** of the Church, in this style of theology, is simply to herald the message. This ecclesiology goes with a strong evangelistic missionary thrust." (Dulles, 76, my emphasis).
- "What I say to you in the darkness, speak in the light; what you hear whispered, proclaim on the housetops" (Matthew 10:27).

→ "Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life"

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Models - The Church as Mystical Communion

"All the external means of grace (sacraments, scripture, laws, etc.) are secondary and subordinate; their role is simply **to dispose men for an interior union** with God effected by grace." (Dulles, 44, my emphasis)

Caution – calling them secondary does not make them less important. The external are important but secondary to the interior.

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Where do we turn for strength?

The Sacraments



Eucharistic Revival

- The Eucharist "the source and summit of Christian Life" (*Lumen Gentium*, 11).
- Eucharist makes the Church vs. the Church makes Eucharist

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Models - The Church as Mystical Communion cont'd

"Communion in the sense of sociological group would be simply **horizontal**; it would be a matter of friendly relationships between man and man. What is distinctive to the Church, he maintains is the **vertical** dimension- the divine life disclosed in the incarnate Christ and communicated to men through his Spirit." (Dulles, 42, italics my emphasis)

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Models - The Church as Mystical Communion cont'd

"The idea of the Church as Body of Christ is found in Paul. In Rom. 12 and 1 Cor. 12 the main point is the mutual union, mutual concern, and mutual dependence of the members of the local community upon one another. No mention is made in these epistles of Christ as head, still less of the Holy spirit as soul. In Ephesians and Colossians, on the other hand, the accent is on the headship of Christ and on the subordination of the Total Church to him." (Dulles, 43).

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"I believe in
one,
holy,
catholic,
and apostolic Church."
(From the Nicene Creed)

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One

"The community of believers was of one heart and mind, and no one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they had everything in common. With great power the apostles bore witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great favor was accorded them all. There was no needy person among them, for those who owned property or houses would sell them, bring the proceeds of the sale, and put them at the feet of the apostles, and they were distributed to each according to need" (Acts 4:32-35).

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One cont'd

- As a sign of our unity, we have the same Mass (structure, readings, and prayers) as the early church (see *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1345)
- Our Eucharistic Prayers speak of becoming one body and one spirit
- John 17:20-21 – “I pray not only for them, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, so that they may all be one, as you, Father, are in me and I in you, that they also may be in us, that the world may believe that you sent me.”

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Holy

- Matthew 5:48 – “So be perfect, just as your heavenly Father is perfect.”
- 1 Peter 1:15-16 – “But, as he who called you is holy, be holy yourselves in every aspect of your conduct, for it is written, “Be holy because I am holy.”
- Leviticus 19:2b “Be holy, for I, the LORD, your God, am holy.” (Cf. Lev. 11:45)
- With the help of the Holy Spirit, “Christians grow in holiness by working to live in conformity to the Gospel of Jesus and thus to become more like him, especially in the totality of his love for others shown by his sacrifice of himself on the Cross” (*United States Catholic Catechism for Adults*, 129).

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catholic

- Capital “C” vs. lowercase “c”
- Unity in diversity
 - the Eastern Rites
- Protestant denominations

“At the same time, the Catholic Church recognizes that the Holy Spirit uses other churches and ecclesial communities “as means of salvation, whose power derives from the fullness of grace and truth that Christ has entrusted to the Catholic Church (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 819; LG, no. 8).” (*United States Catholic Catechism for Adults*, 128)

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Apostolic

- Bishops as successors to the Apostles (cf. *U.S. Catechism for Adults*, 132-133)
- The *United States Catholic Catechism for Adults* provides the following definition of Tradition, “The living transmission of the message of the Gospel in the Church, flowing from the oral preaching of the Apostles and the written message of salvation under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit (Scripture). Tradition is preserved and handed on as the Deposit of Faith under the guidance of the bishops, successors to the Apostles.” (530).

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Apostolic cont'd

- Deuteronomy 4:2 – “In your observance of the commandments of the LORD, your God, which I am commanding you, you shall not add to what I command you nor subtract from it.”

Remember hermeneutic of continuity → apostolic succession

- New circumstances arise and the Church interprets these new circumstances “looking into the signs of the times by the light of faith” (from the “Eucharistic Prayer for Use in Various Needs III)

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Apostolic Nature → Tradition

- 2 Thessalonians 2:15 “Therefore, brothers, stand firm and hold fast to the traditions that you were taught, either by an oral statement or by a letter of ours.”
- Luke 10:16 “Whoever listens to you listens to me.”
- Matthew 10:40 “Whoever receives you receives me, and whoever receives me receives the one who sent me.”

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Apostolic → Naming Successors

- 2 Timothy 2:1-2 “So you, my child, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And what you heard from me through many witnesses entrust to faithful people who will have the ability to teach others as well.”

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Since the Church is Apostolic...

We rely on the teaching office of the church for us to know what God asks of us as rooted in God's Word revealed in the Bible, and as taught in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, and other **official** documents of the Church....but we return to the question, “As Catholics, are we bound to follow everything the Pope says?”

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Magisterium

Catechism of the Catholic Church

"85. The task of giving an authentic interpretation of the Word of God, whether in its written form or in the form of Tradition, has been entrusted to the living, teaching office of the Church alone. Its authority in this matter is exercised in the name of Jesus Christ" (DV 10.2) This means that the task of interpretation has been entrusted to the bishops in communion with the successor of Peter, the Bishop of Rome."

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Magisterium

Catechism of the Catholic Church

"86. "Yet this Magisterium is not superior to the Word of God, **but its servant. It teaches only what has been handed on to it.** At the divine command and with the help of the Holy Spirit, it listens to this devotedly, guards it with dedication, and expounds it faithfully." (DV 10.2)" (my emphasis)

"87. Mindful of Christ's words to his apostles: **"He who hears you, hears me," the faithful receive with docility the teachings and directives that their pastors give them in different forms.**"

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Magisterium

Catechism of the Catholic Church

"95. "it is clear therefore that, in the supremely wise arrangement of God, sacred Tradition, Sacred Scripture, and the Magisterium of the Church **are so connected and associated that one of them cannot stand without the others.** Working together, each in its own way, under the action of the one Holy Spirit, they all contribute effectively to the salvation of souls." (DV 10.2)."

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The Teaching Office

Catechism of the Catholic Church

"It is this Magisterium's task to preserve God's people from deviations and defections and to guarantee them the objective possibility of professing the true faith without error...To fulfill this service, Christ endowed the Church's shepherds with the charism of infallibility in matters of faith and morals. The exercise of this charism takes several forms" (890)

- The Pope is infallible when "he proclaims by a definitive act a doctrine pertaining to faith or morals" (891)
- The College of bishops, especially ecumenical council, is infallible "When the Church through its supreme Magisterium proposes a doctrine "for belief as being divinely revealed," (DV 10.2) and as the teaching of Christ, the definitions "must be adhered to with the obedience of faith" (LG 25) (CCC 891).

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Infallibility and Obedience

"When we assent with obedience to the teachings of the Magisterium, we are guided by the Holy Spirit. His presence is uniquely experienced at Ecumenical Councils" (*United States Catholic Catechism for Adults*, 106, my emphasis).

Infallibility defined at the First Vatican Council (1869-1870). (*United States Catholic Catechism for Adults*, 133).

Pope/bishops sometimes speak

- as a private individual
- Ordinary magisterium
- Extraordinary magisterium

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What makes moral theology different from ethics?

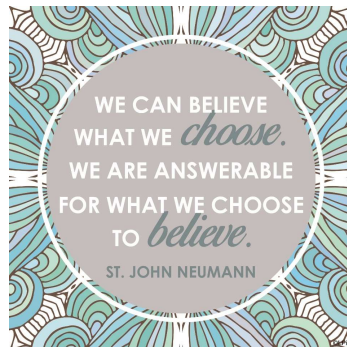
"Faith is first of all a personal adherence of man to God. At the same time, and inseparably, it is a **free assent to the whole truth that God has revealed**" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 150).



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Future Schedule

- *Being Church in Today's World* finishes on
 - November 17th – Conscience and Divisions/schisms
- When you exit this webinar a short evaluation questionnaire should come up to invite your feedback.
- The slides for this presentation will be available online at <http://www.renewaloffaith.org/beingchurch2022>

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Resources

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Chaput, Charles J. O.F.M. Cap. *Render Unto Caesar: Serving the Nation by Living Our Catholic Beliefs in Political Life.* Doubleday, New York. 2008.

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<http://www.renewaloffaith.org/god-s-commandments.html>

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