



BENEDICT'S HAMMER  
MATTHEW 16:13-19

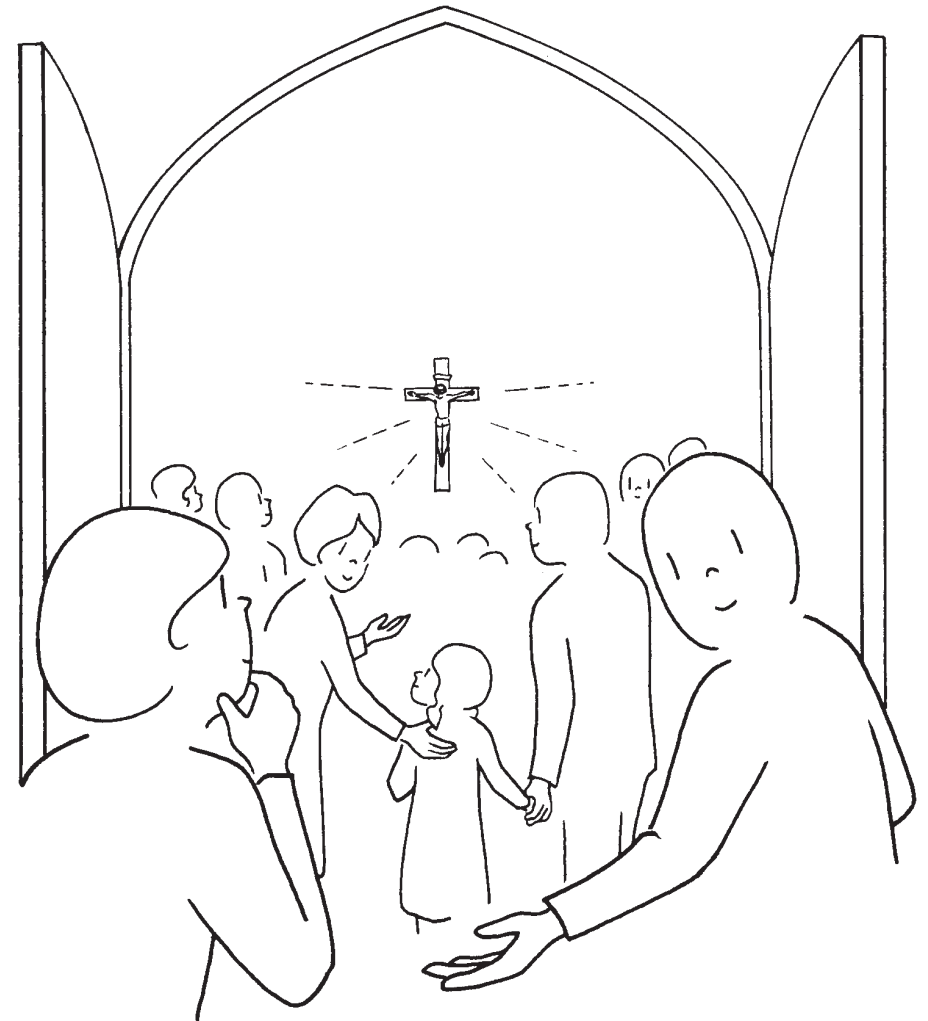


JER 23:29

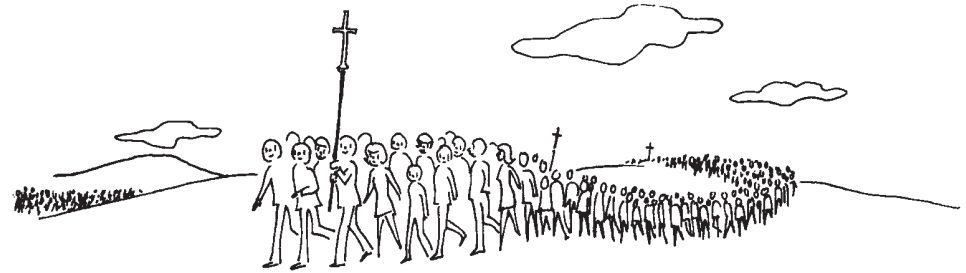
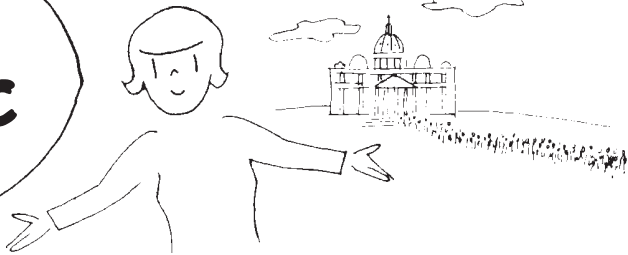
[www.benedictshammer.com](http://www.benedictshammer.com)  
[www.catholic.com](http://www.catholic.com)

Come to Jesus - Jesus Changes Lives  
PO Box 690102  
Quincy, MA 02269-0102

# ABOUT BEING A CATHOLIC CHRISTIAN



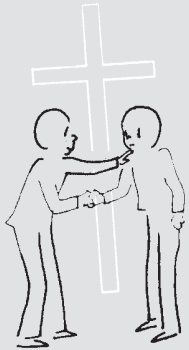
What is a  
**CATHOLIC**  
?



a Catholic is a member of the  
**ORIGINAL UNDIVIDED CHURCH**  
-- the "Body of Christ" (visible presence of Christ in the world)

-- a worldwide community of people God has called to share the life, light and love of Jesus Christ. Mt 5:14, Eph 4:4-6

A Catholic is a **CHRISTIAN** who believes that

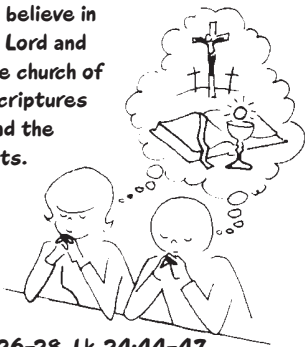


-- God, the creator of heaven and earth, is revealed to all people through Jesus Christ  
-- the purpose of life is to **KNOW, LOVE** and **SERVE GOD** through divine worship and service to others.

Gen 1:3, Jn 1:1-18

**LIKE OTHER CHRISTIANS,**

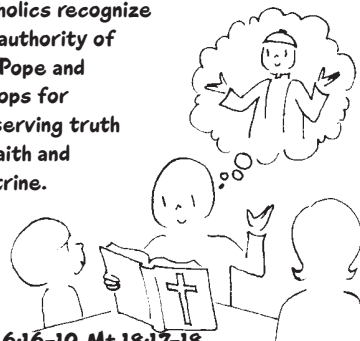
Catholics believe in Christ as Lord and Savior, the church of Sacred Scriptures (Bible), and the sacraments.





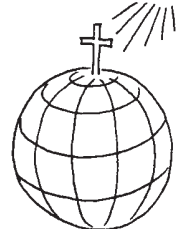

Mt 26:26-28, Lk 24:44-47  
Jn 8:28, Jn 12:32, 1Tim 2:5

**UNILKE OTHER CHRISTIANS**

Catholics recognize the authority of the Pope and bishops for preserving truth of faith and doctrine.



Mt 16:16-19, Mt 18:17-18  
Lk 10:16, Jn 10:35, 2Thess 2:15  
2Tim 2:2, 2Tim 3:16-17

|  |   |   |  |
|--|---|---|--|
| <p><b>ONE</b><br/>-- in doctrine authority and worship.</p>  | <p><b>HOLY</b><br/>-- truly believing in Christ's teachings and serving others through the sacraments.</p>  | <p><b>CATHOLIC</b><br/>-- embracing all people of all times, all places.</p>  | <p><b>APOSTOLIC</b><br/>-- as the Apostles did, it carries Christ's message through the centuries to all people</p>  |
|--|---|---|--|



Mt 28:16-20, Lk 10:16, Lk 22:28-30, Jn 10:7-8, 14-16  
Jn 13:20, Jn 14:6, Jn 16:13-15, Jn 17:17-18, Acts 1:8,  
Acts 11:25-26, Eph 4:11-16, Eph 5:27, Col 1:18,  
1Tim 1:13-14, 1Tim 3:15, Rev 21:14

**TODAY,** the Catholic Church works and prays for the **REAL UNITY** of faith among **ALL PEOPLE** as Christ commanded.

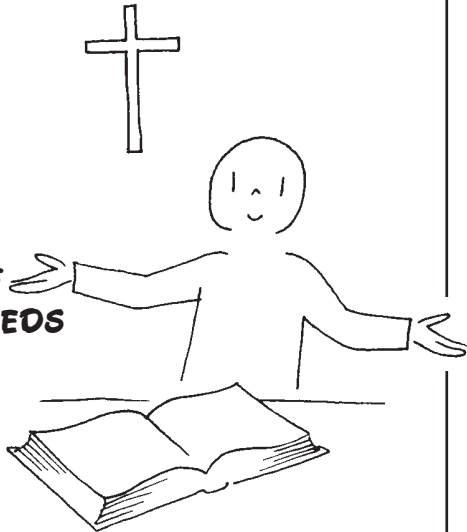
# CATHOLIC BELIEFS

are based on the teachings of Christ and the Apostles.

Basic beliefs, principal truths of faith are summarized in the **CREEDS**

- Apostles' Creed
- Nicene Creed
- Aphanasian Creed.

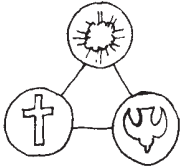
Lk: 24:44-47, 1Cor 15:3-8



## TRINITY

One God in three divine persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Mt 28:19, Jn 4:24



## INCARNATION

True God becoming truly human in the person of Christ.

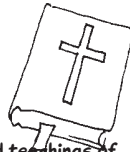
Lk 1:31-38  
Jn 1:14



## BIBLE

Collection of sacred writings inspired by God, Gospel recounts actions and teachings of Jesus and His followers.

Lk 24:44-45,  
2Tim 3:16-17



## GRACE

God's friendship given through Christ, communicated by the Holy Spirit, Grace is necessary for Salvation.

Jn 3:16-17  
Jn 6:44  
Eph 2:8-9, Eph 4:7



## SALVATION

Deliverance from sin and its punishment, by grace of Christ's sacrifice, and eternal life with God after earthly death.

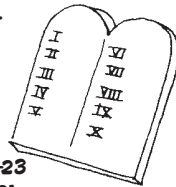
Jn 3:18-19  
Jn 3:35-36



## 10 COMMANDMENTS

Guidelines for living a moral and just life.

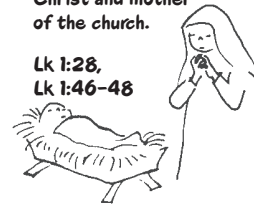
Ex 20:1-23  
Dt 5:6-21  
Mt 19:16-19, Mk 12:28-34,  
Jn 14:15, 1Cor 7:19, Jas 2:10



## MARY

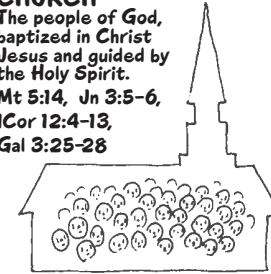
Conceived without original sin; virgin mother of Christ and mother of the church.

Lk 1:28,  
Lk 1:46-48



## CHURCH

The people of God, baptized in Christ Jesus and guided by the Holy Spirit.  
Mt 5:14, Jn 3:5-6,  
1Cor 12:4-13,  
Gal 3:25-28



## POPE

Visible head of the Church, and successor to St. Peter.

Mt 16:18-19,  
Jn 1:42,  
1Pet 5:1



## SAINTS

People of extraordinary holiness who have joined God - often asked to intercede in prayer for people on earth.

Mt 22:32, Lk 9:30,  
1Cor 11:1, 1Tim 2:1-2,  
Heb 12:1



## SIN

Thought, word, deed or omission, contrary to God's law; 2 kinds:

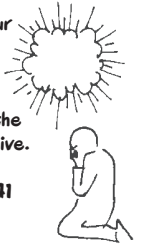
**ORIGINAL:** inherited sin of the human race  
**ACTUAL:** deliberate violation of God's law  
-- mortal sin, venial sin

Mt 5:29-30, Mk 3:29, Lk 17:1-2,  
Jn 3:6, 1Cor 15:21-22, Jas 2:10,  
1Jn 5:16-17

## JUDGEMENT

Jesus Christ's evaluation of our openness to Him and our decision about Him, based on the kind of life we live.

Mt 25:31-32, 41  
Mt 22:13-14,  
Jn 5:22-27



## HEAVEN

One's life in God after death - a state of supreme happiness in which one enjoys God face to face

Mt 5:8,  
Mt 6:19-21,  
Rev 21:1-7,  
Rev 22:1-5



## HELL

The result of our refusing God's friendship; permanent exile from God.

Mt 10:28,  
Lk 16:22-24,  
Rev 20:13-15



## PURGATORY

A state of purification for souls that did not make up for falling short of God's commands during their life-time on earth.

Mt. 5:25-26  
1Cor 3:10-15,  
Rev 21:27



## FAITH

Belief in God's words, works and goodness; believing and obeying, knowing that full understanding is given only when we finally enter heaven.

Mt 10:39, Mk 6:34,  
Lk 17:5-6,  
Jn 8:24,  
Jn 10:37-38



## HOPE - RESURRECTION

Seeing good in spite of evil; expecting eternal life even in the face of death. God will salvation and gives us the means to attain it.

Jn 20:19-31,  
1Cor 13:13,  
1Cor 15:51-57



## LOVE - CHARITY

Love of God and of our neighbor, because everyone belongs to God.

Mt 25:33-40,  
Jn 15:12,  
Rom 13:8-10,  
Gal 5:6, 14



The **HOLY SACRAMENTS** are vital in Catholic life...

# THE SEVEN HOLY SCARAMENTS

Living signs of Christ's presence in the world



Acts of Christ through the living Church which deepen our relationship with God, give guidance and strength on the path to salvation.

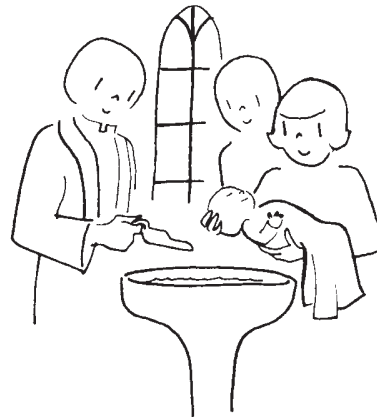


## BAPTISM The First Sacrament

Initiation into the Christian community, the Body of Christ.

Baptism cleanses the soul of the effects of original sin and any sins committed up to that time. The Holy Spirit enters the soul and makes it one with Christ. Poured water and spoken words signify "NEW BIRTH," the beginning of life with God and membership among the people of God.

Mt 28:18-20, Mk 16:15-16, Jn 3:5-6, Acts 2:37-38, Rom 5:5, Eph 5:26, Gal 4:6, Tit 3:5-7, 1Pet 3:20-21



## EUCHARIST Scarificial Banquet

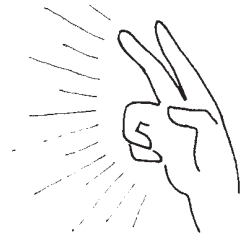
- **AS SACRIFICE**

The Mass is the central act of Catholic worship; it is a prayer of thanksgiving by which Calvary is renewed. "The very presence of Christ" comes into the lives of the community; unites them with Christ, strengthens their faith in God and commitment to work for salvation.

- **AS SACRAMENT**

The priest consecrates bread and wine; Jesus becomes present, whole and entire in these elements, to nourish His community.

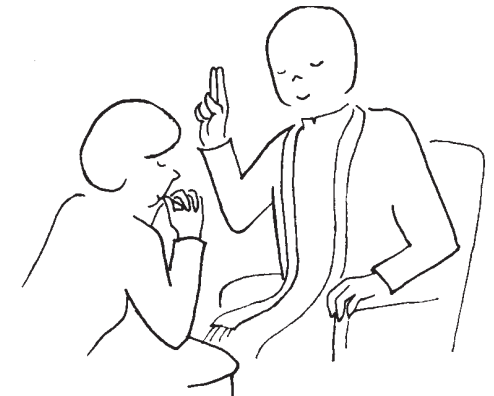
Lk 22:14-21, Jn 6:52-58, Jn 19:30, 34, Rom 6:3-4, Heb 8:1-2, Heb 9:24-27



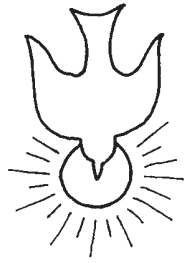
## SCARAMENTS OF RECONCILIATION Penance

This sacrament involves sincere sorrow for violating one's friendship with God, and desire to be reconciled with God and the faith community. **CONFESSION OF SINS** is made to an ordained priest, who grants **ABSOLUTION** (assurance of God's forgiveness). Then the priest assigns a **GOOD WORK**, symbolizing wholeness in a life with GOD.

Mk 1:15, Lk 13:1-5, Jn 20:22-23, 2Cor 5:18-20, 1Jn 1:9



## The Seven Holy Sacraments (Cont'd)



### CONFIRMATION Gift of the Holy Spirit

Usually conferred by a bishop, confirmation strengthens the commitment to Christ made at Baptism, so that a person can maturely face challenges and problems in daily life as a Christian. It gives courage and strength to witness Christ in the world to witness Christ in the world and to selflessly serve our fellow human beings.

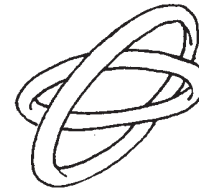
Isa 11:2, Mt 9:35, Mt 10:1, Lk 3:2, Lk 24:49, Jn 3:34, Acts 1:5, Acts 8:14-17, Acts 19:1-7



### ANOINTING OF THE SICK

Anointing with blessed oil and prayers by a priest give comforting grace, bring Christ to the seriously ill or dying. Sometimes physical healing occurs. But emphasis is on spiritual healing - strengthening the soul - through forgiveness of sin.

Mt 10:1-8, Mk 6:13, Mk 7:32-35, Lk 10:1-12, Acts 10:38, Jas 5:13-15



### MARRIAGE

A man and a woman selflessly share life, love and Christian faith with each other and with God. The sacrament is administered by the two partners themselves, with the priest acting as Church's witness. The Holy Spirit breathes God's own love into the couple's love, so that each becomes a grace for the other; helps them grow together in a life of God and so fulfill their lives.

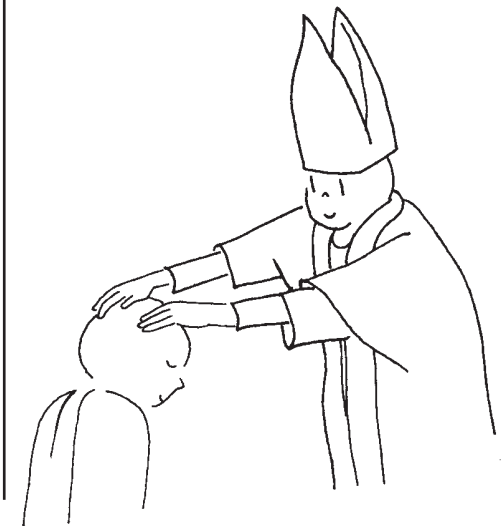
Mt 5:31-32, Mk 10:2-12, Lk 16:18, 1Cor 7:39, Eph 5:22-32, Heb 13:4



### HOLY ORDERS Priesthood

This sacrament consecrates Christians in service to God. Spiritual power and grace are given to help them put aside daily concerns and devote their work to the good of the community - teaching, administering sacraments, governing the Church. Principal ministries are those of bishop, priest and deacon.

Mk 3:14-19, Jn 13:4-11, Jn 20:22-23, Acts 6:5-6, 1Tim 4:14, 2Tim 1:6, Heb 7:11-12, 24



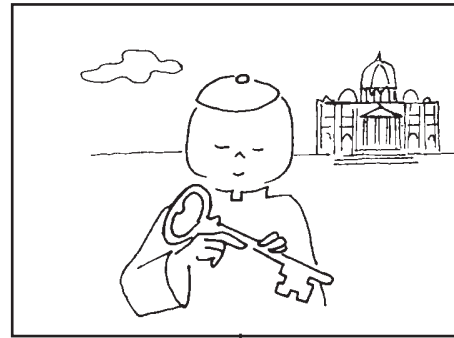
Catholics belong to a

# STRUCTURED SOCIETY

Catholics all over the world are united in the body of Christ in common belief, morality and worship.

Heart of this unity is Christ, with a visible **GOVERNMENT of BISHOPS** and the **POPE**.

Acts 15:1-35



## POPE

"Bishop of Rome," visible head of the church. Administers church affairs. Universal teacher of religious truth

Mt 16:16-19, Lk 22:32, Jn 21:15-17, 1Pet 5:1

All verses apply from Cardinals to Bishops

## CARDINALS

Chosen by Pope.

Serves as his advisors and help in administering church affairs.

Mt 18:18, Mt 28:16-20



## ARCHBISHOPS

Chief bishops overseeing affairs of the chief diocese in an area (diocese - administrative until containing many parish churches)

Mt 19:12, 1Cor 4:15-17, 1Thess 5:12  
1Tim 3:1-7, 1Tim 5:17, 1Tim 5:22



## BISHOPS

Successors to apostolic powers. Appointed by Pope; with him share major responsibility for preserving truth and unity of belief in the Church. Administer affairs of a diocese.

Acts 20:28, Rom 15:15-16, Gal 2:9, Tit 1:1, 7, 1Pet 5:5



## PARISH PRIESTS

Ministers ordained to celebrate Mass, administer sacraments, preach and teach the word of God. Responsible to the bishop and their parish communities.

1Cor 7:32, 1Tim 4:14, 1Tim 5:22, 2Tim 1:6, 2Tim 4:1-5, 1Tim 5:22



## DEACONS

Responsible to the bishop; ordained to a "ministry of service," especially to preach and to baptize.

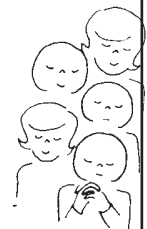
Acts 6:5-6, 1Tim 3:8-13



## LAY PEOPLE

Take part in scripture reading, helping to distribute Eucharist, etc. Advise priest through Parish Council. Participate in the teaching mission of the Church.

Acts 11:25-26, Gal 6:10, 1Pet 2:5, 9-10



## Within this structure, many RELIGIOUS GROUPS:

### NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS

Ecclesiastical organization in which U.S. bishops work together.

### US CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

Civil corporation in which bishops and other church members act on a large scale.

### STATE CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

Special diocesan needs presented to government, public and private groups.

### RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES

Women religious (sisters, nuns) and religious brothers follow vows of poverty, chastity and obedience; serve God through prayer, work in schools, hospitals and missions, etc.

Mt 19:12, 1Tim 3:11

### SECULAR INSTITUTIONS

Laypeople and clerics dedicated to God by vow and who give witness to Christ in secular life.

### SOCIAL SERVICES

Supervised by Catholic Charities; aid people in need.

Mt 25:34-40

### LAY ORGANIZATIONS

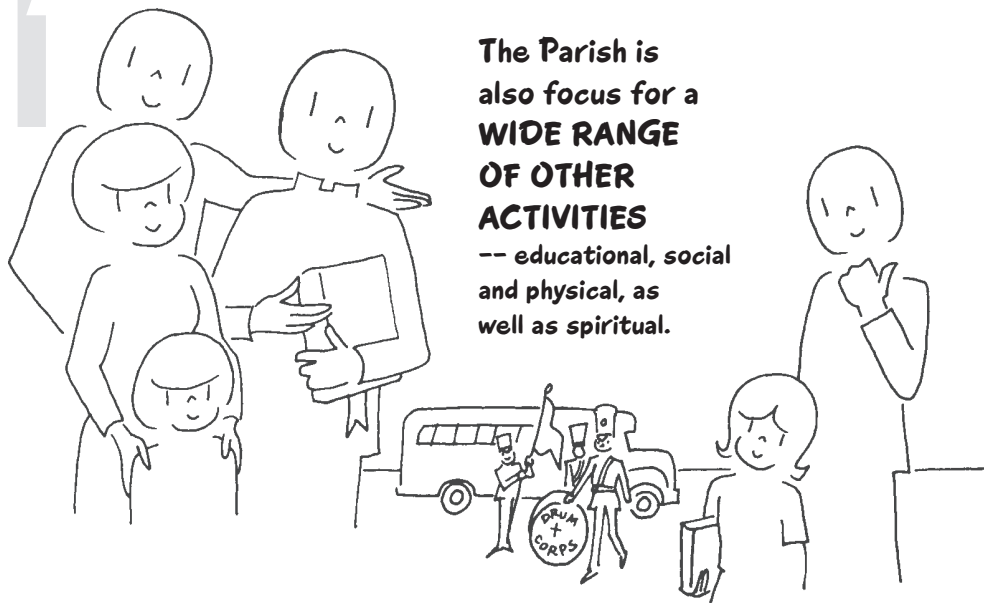
- such as Knights of Columbus, CCD, and Catholic Youth organization. They devote time and energy to serving God and neighbor.

# You relate to the whole church through your **PARISH** -- your local church community

- all those people living within a certain area of a diocese --
- headed by a priest
- nurtured by the Mass and the sacraments celebrated in the parish church (a sign of Christ to the whole community)
- witnessing to Christ together

## The Parish is also focus for a **WIDE RANGE OF OTHER ACTIVITIES**

-- educational, social and physical, as well as spiritual.



# A PARISH is a **LIFE CENTER**

## RELIGIOUS STUDY, INSTRUCTION

Youth and adult classes and discussion groups study church doctrine and how it relates to the problems of daily life.



## CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Church-sponsored schools offer education, kindergarten through grade 12. There are also excellent Catholic universities



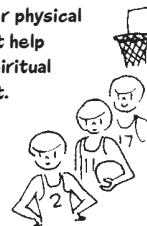
## YOUTH ACTIVITIES

Teen clubs, scouts, etc., provide well-rounded programs for younger church members.



## ATHELETICS

Programs for physical development help round out spiritual development.



## CATHOLIC HOSPITALS

Church-sponsored hospitals provide care for ill and injured, regardless of their religious denomination.



## PARISH SOCIETIES

Spiritual, social and charitable organizations help people in need.



## CHOIR

Members prepare music for regular church services, and for holiday and seasonal services.



## PRAYER GROUP

Special organizations devote time to the improvement of the prayer life of the community.



## CONVENTS

Parish-connected convents house communities of sisters and nuns whose work and prayers serve others



**PARTICIPATING** in your parish can help you live your beliefs in daily life...make your church membership **MORE EFFECTIVE...**

Getting involved in your parish  
**HELPS YOU GROW**  
 as a Christian witness  
 and a person

**PARTICIPATING IN CHURCH SERVICES**

- acting as a member of the congregation rather than as an individual
- volunteering to read Scripture, lead song during services.
- praying and working for worldwide Christian unity

**PARTICIPATING IN COMMUNITY WORK**

- performing acts of charity (helping in social work, visiting the sick, etc.).
- seeing that youth and adult religious education is available.
- spreading the Good Word to people outside the Catholic community.

Through **GIVING OURSELVES** we can...

**STRENGTHEN**  
 ourselves, our beliefs  
 by helping others

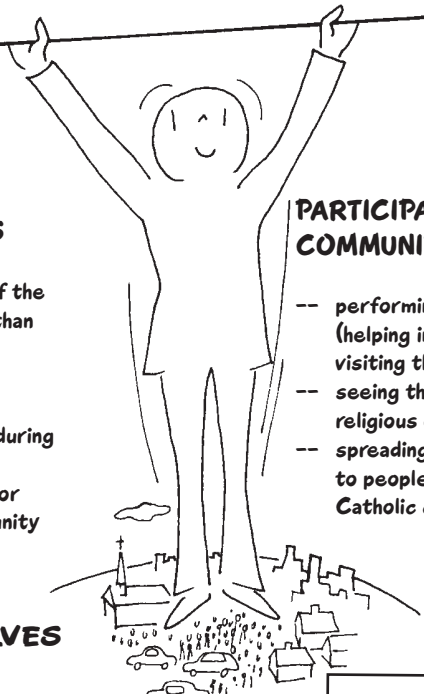
**LEARN**  
 more about the  
 mystery of God, and  
 how God shares  
 love with us.

**FULFILL**  
 spiritual needs

**ANSWER**  
 some of life's  
 questions, in  
 responding to the  
 needs of others

**BRING A SIGN OF SALVATION**  
 to people outside  
 the community

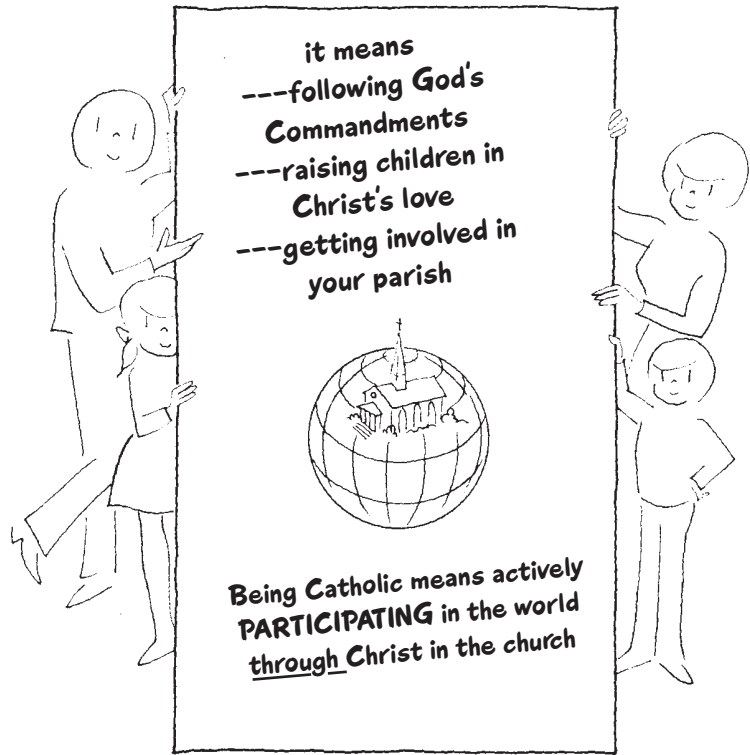
**BETTER UNDERSTAND**  
 How to keep our daily  
 life in tune with our  
 search for salvation



**Soo--**

Being a Catholic means  
**STRIVING TO FULFILL**  
**CHRIST'S MISSION**  
 of Redemption

...witnessing to Christ by selflessly **SERVING**  
 God and neighbor



it means  
 ---following God's  
 Commandments  
 ---raising children in  
 Christ's love  
 ---getting involved in  
 your parish

Being Catholic means actively  
**PARTICIPATING** in the world  
 through Christ in the church