

Church

Tour of
Deacon: Meditation

Gospel Reading

Teacher:

As Jesus Used Models in his teachings, the tiny seed, yeast, and a pearl of great price, so we as Christians use many models to explain Church. As a child I would say: Here is the Church, Here is the Steeple, Open the Gates and here is the people.
Church is a body of people who work together to bring about the reign of God.

In the book , Path thru Catholicism, lists the 6 Models of Church.

- 1.Disciples
- 2.Body
- 3.Basic Sacrament
- 4.People of God
- 5.Institution
- 6.Servant

Let us discuss two of these models, Disciples and Basic Sacrament. Do you remember last week when we talked about the Holy Spirit coming to the community of disciples at Pentecost. Disciples means learners, learners of God's word.

These disciples were heart broken and afraid, they had locked the doors and would not go out. The Holy Spirit changed all of that and gave them the courage to carry on Jesus mission in the world. This event was life-changing for the Church because all of the disciples went out to

evangelize and the Church started to grow. They were not afraid any more and boldly proclaimed the Gospel.

Jesus made the apostle Peter the head of the Church, or Pope as we call them now. Paul was busy persecuting the Christians, but because of his dramatic conversion he also wanted to bring the Good News to everyone, especially the Gentiles. Peter and Paul worked together to preach and bring the Good News of Jesus to the world. Many of the disciples went to different areas in the Eastern World to proclaim the Gospel. This was the start of the Christian Church.

Now if we look at the Church in a kind of a time frame
First, We see God sending Jesus to teach us how to live and love.
Then Jesus chooses the disciples and apostles to help him to carry on the mission of bringing the Good News. He taught them to live as God wanted them to live. After Pentecost the apostles and disciples were on fire and went out to preach and serve.

The apostles and disciples then passed on the teachings and scripture writings to the followers of Jesus down thru the ages until today.

As The Church began to spread and they had to choose leaders to help leading the Church in the direction that Jesus had shown. Many times areas of dissent began to grow and they had to get together as Church to help discern these problems.

Every time there was a heresy or a question that was becoming a problem and against the teachings of Jesus, a Council was called. So we see Councils being called to address problems. Pat is going to talk about the hierarchical church which will explain the role that the leaders play today in the Church. She will also hand out the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

Our Church in Elko today has many families and it takes many people to help to serve and minister to these people.

Look at the story of Guatemala and how the people have been able to keep the Church alive by working as disciples to bring the Good News to the people of Guatemala. It reminds me of the early church communities where we all took care of each other, helping to feed the hungry, take care of the elderly, breaking bread together as the family of God.

I want you to take a moment and think about this, say we here were a Christian community and we had to take care of each other. What gift do you think you could bring. Are you a cook, do you read scripture, can you teach, can you garden, can you minister to the sick. Everyone has a gift we just have to ask God to help us discern our own special gifts. It is the same with our Church today everyone needs to be involved in bringing the face of God to the people around us. We are all called to be disciples. Read the Parish Mission Statement.

The Second model is called Basic Sacrament In the book they define this as Sacrament being applied to Jesus because **He is the sign and source of our intimate union with God.** Jesus said “Whoever has seen me has seen the Father”.

The word sacrament means an outward sign. In our catechism it says it is an outward sign instituted by Christ to bring grace. In the dictionary it says something that is regarded as sacred, any rites ordained by Jesus. The Church is a sacramental community, every action we do should be directed to God. Jesus is present and active in our world today thru the Mass, sacraments, and every Church celebration.

Every time we have a special celebration we must remember that these encounters must bring us closer to God, otherwise they are empty celebrations. I want you to think of the last time you went to Church to celebrate. Did God enter into this celebration? We must as believers always bring in God into our lives and into our prayers, and into our celebrations. Jesus said when two or three are gathered in my name, I am there with you.

All of you are preparing to receive some of the sacraments that the Church offers to help us grow in the love of God. Jesus gave to His apostles and followers many teachings which includes these seven sacraments.

Baptism,
Confirmation,
Eucharist,
Reconciliation
Marriage
Healing
Ordination

These sacraments bring us closer to God by certain rituals, and symbols. If you think back to any of the sacramental celebrations you went to, they had lots of symbols to remind us the God is in charge.

We also have many celebrations, and rituals that bring God closer when we celebrate them

1. Healing and blessing after Mass
2. Blessing of the Throats
3. Blessing of the Pets
4. Lady of Guadalupe celebration.

As a community of disciples, or learners here at RCIA, the sacramental Church extends their hands and hearts to help us grow in the love of God by helping us to encounter Jesus in the rituals and sacraments of the

Church. We must each look into our hearts and souls and listen with the ears of love. Our discipleship and sacramental actions must all stem from our firm belief that this will help us to attain our ultimate goal to be with God in heaven.

Took a tour of the Church and also saw the vestaments and vessals used at church.

We also showed them Liturgical colors of the vestaments.