

Lesson Plan for Lesson 14

The Organization of the Catholic Church

Preparation and Supplies

- Study chapter 14, “The Organization of the Catholic Church,” in the handbook.
- Gather a Bible; blindfolds, one for each participant; and a 30- to 40-foot length of rope.

Pray It! (5 minutes)

Tell the participants that class will begin with a Prayer for Christian Unity. **Ask** them to turn to the Pray It! “Prayer for Christian Unity,” on page 150 in the handbook, and say the prayer together.

Study It! (45 to 50 minutes, depending on your class length)

A. The Catholic Church and Other Religions

1. **Direct** the young people to form groups of three or four. **Ask** them to discuss the question, What makes Christianity different from other religions? **Tell** them to write down their answers. **Invite** the groups to share their answers with the rest of the class.
2. **Direct** the participants to read the chapter introduction and the sections “The Catholic Church and Other Religions” and “The Catholic Church and Other Christian Churches,” on pages 146–150 in the handbook. The content covers points 1 through 3 on handout “Lesson 14 Summary” (Document #: TX003386).
3. **(Optional) Invite** questions and observations on the content. You might also invite discussion on the Reflect questions on page 150 in the handbook.

B. Roles in the Catholic Church

1. **Invite** a volunteer to read 1 Corinthians 12:12–27. **Share** the following comment:
 - How appropriate the image of a body is for our image of the Church—that is, we each have a vital function that no one else can execute in the same way, and that only by doing our part do we make a complete body.

Ask the young people to prayerfully consider what gifts they bring to the Body of Christ as you read this first section of the chapter.

2. **Direct** the participants to read the chapter introduction and the section “Roles in the Catholic Church,” on pages 150–156 in the handbook. The content covers points 4 through 11 on the handout “Lesson 14 Summary.”
3. **Write** the words *Priestly*, *Prophetic*, and *Kingly* on the board. Remind the young people that as laity they share in these three “offices,” or ministries of Christ. **Invite** them to share a gift they bring to the Church and how it can be used in one of these offices. For example, “I bring the gift of music that I can use in Christ’s priestly ministry.”



C. Mary, Mother of the Church

Direct the participants to read the section “Mary, Mother of the Church,” on pages 156–157 in the handbook. The content covers points 12 through 13 on the handout “Lesson 14 Summary.”

Note: If you are running short on time, you may wish to just briefly summarize this section of the handbook.

Live It! (10 to 15 minutes)

1. **Invite** the participants to stand in a circle around the rope you have laid on the floor in the form of a circle. **Ask** one young person to stand outside the circle and act as an observer, noting actions and interactions of the rest of the participants. **Give** each person in the circle a blindfold to put on.

When everyone is blindfolded, **explain** the task as follows:

- Each person is to pick up the rope and work together to form a square with it.
 - When you think you have succeeded, you are to ask the observer for feedback as to whether your attempt was successful or not.
 - If your attempt was successful, everyone can remove their blindfolds. If you have not succeeded, you are to keep trying until you succeed.
2. When the participants have succeeded in making a square, **lead** a discussion on the following questions:
 - What, if any, frustrations did you experience during this activity?
 - What enabled you to succeed?
 - What did the observer notice?

Ask the participants to return to their seats. **Connect** the activity to the topic of Church by asking the following questions:

- Why do you think this activity is included in a session on the Church? (*Brief answer: Because the Church is a community of people working on a common mission.*)
 - Do you see any parallels between the Church and your experience of trying to form a square? (*Answers will vary.*)
 - In what ways does the activity fail to reflect the Church? (*Possible answers: There was no clear leader; the Church does not work on its mission blindly.*)
3. **Share** the following connections, using your own words:
 - One of the significant ways the Catholic Church differs from other churches is in its structure, which is a well-defined organizational and leadership structure.
 - God calls different people to take different roles within the Church. Each role is important and necessary for the Church to function properly.

Direct the participants to the diagram on page 151 in the handbook and refer to points 6 through 11 on the handout “Lesson 14 Summary” to explain the roles in the Church that correspond to the circles.

Optional Activity: Arrange for a tour and presentation of another denomination in your community. **Give** each participant a copy of the handout “We’d Like to Know: Possible Questions While Visiting Other Churches” (Document #: TX003387) to encourage good questions to ask the presenter during the tour. Be sure to follow your diocese’s policies for field trips.



Closing Prayer (5 minutes)

Close by **leading** the following prayer:

Leader: Our God and Father,
your will is that all should be saved
and come to the knowledge of your great truth.
Send workers into the great harvest,
so that the Gospel may be preached to every creature,
and your people, gathered together by the word of life
and strengthened by the power of the sacraments,
may advance in the way of salvation and love.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

(Book of Blessings, 459)

All: Amen.

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