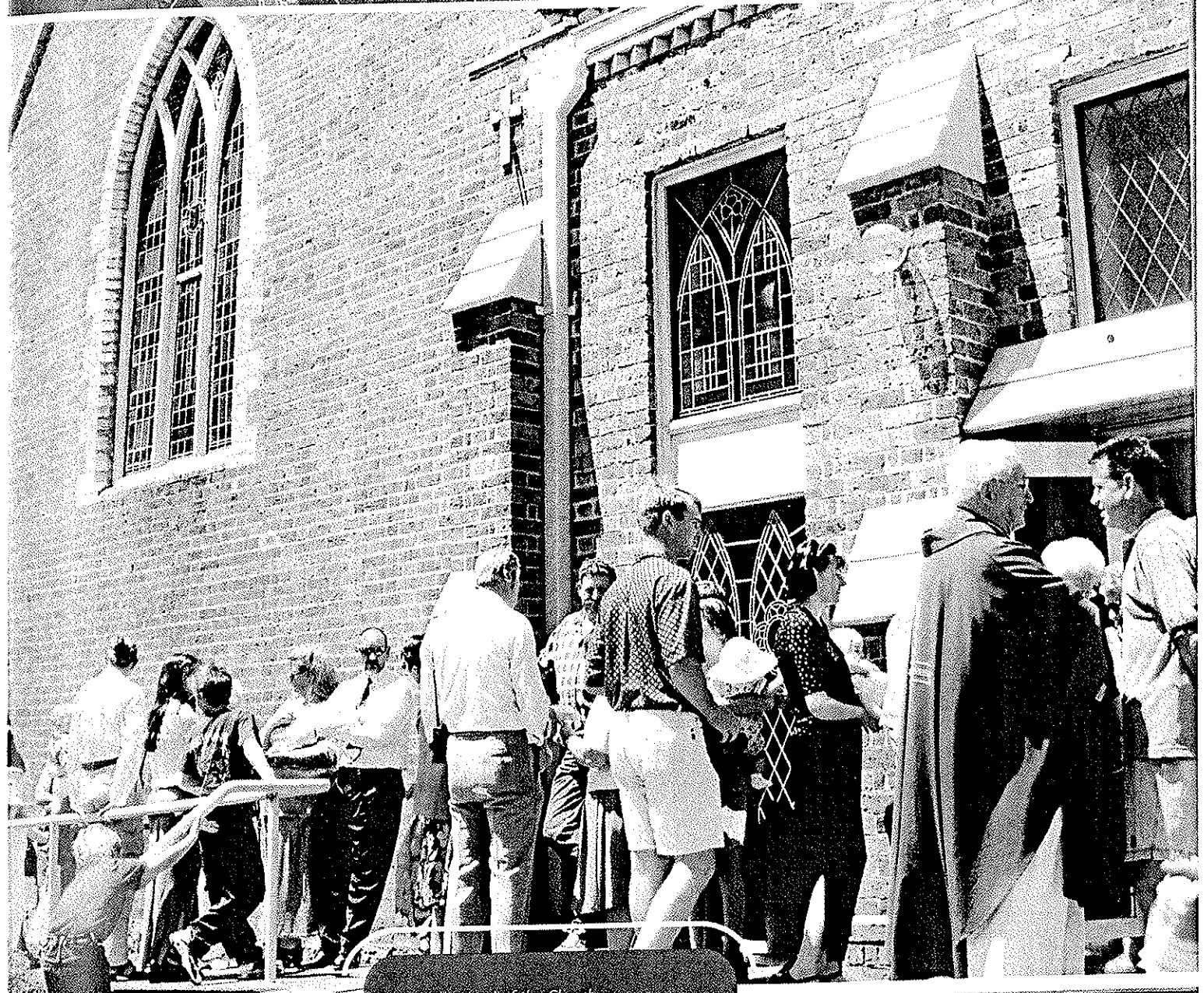


Chapter 2

People and Ministries in the Church



Christ is the Head of the Church.

The Church can be described as the Body of Christ.

All in the Church are called to holiness and service.

The Catholic Church is a family of ancient churches.

The parish is an important centre of activity.

Many people contribute to the life of a parish.

Churches contain features that help it function as a centre of worship.

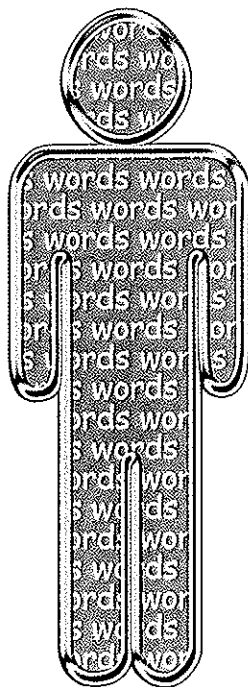
Key Ideas

2.1 The Church is the Body of Christ

The Church

The term developed from two sources:

- Greek *kuriakos* which means 'belonging to God'.
- Latin *ecclesia* which means 'assembly'. Buildings are called churches because they are places where the people of God gather together for worship.



Activity

- 1 Read 1 Cor: 12-31
- 2 Identify the key themes and ideas in the passage.
- 3 Use these themes to create a shape poem that expresses the ideas in the passage.
(For a shape poem, the words form the outline of a body.)

Ministry

The word ministry means service in the Church. A minister is one who serves others. Through our Baptism we become part of the Church, part of the Body of Christ, which carries on the ministry of Jesus in the world.

There are many ways of describing the Church. One of the most vivid ways is used by St Paul when he refers to the Church as the Body of Christ. All parts of the Church are united to each other, just as parts of the body are joined. All members of the Church have a role to play in making Jesus Christ real and alive in the world. Just as the body has a head, the head of the Church is Christ. He is the Supreme Teacher. Catholics believe that the Church was founded by God and that it is nurtured and guided by God.



It is important to understand that the Church is a place for all people, especially those who acknowledge their weaknesses and failings. Look at the individuals that Jesus attracted to him during his life on earth. Jesus reached out to the outcasts of his day, people who described themselves as sinners.

Take the tax collectors for example. Here was a wealthy group hated by the majority of Jews. This was because they cheated the Jewish people when they collected taxes for the Romans, who were ruling in Palestine at the time. Why did Jesus try to welcome people like this? He even made a tax collector, Matthew, one of his twelve Apostles. We have the answer in Matthew's gospel.



While he was at dinner in the house it happened that a number of tax collectors and sinners came to sit at the table with Jesus and his disciples. When the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, "Why does your master eat with tax collectors and sinners?" When he heard this he replied, "It is not the healthy who need the doctor, but the sick. Go and learn the meaning of the words: What I want is mercy, not sacrifice. And indeed I did not come to call the virtuous, but sinners." (Matthew 9:10-13)

17



Activity

1 Read the following stories about forgiveness from the Gospels: Matthew 9:2-6 and Luke 7:41-50. What do these stories tell us about Jesus and his attitude to people? Write a brief response in your workbook.

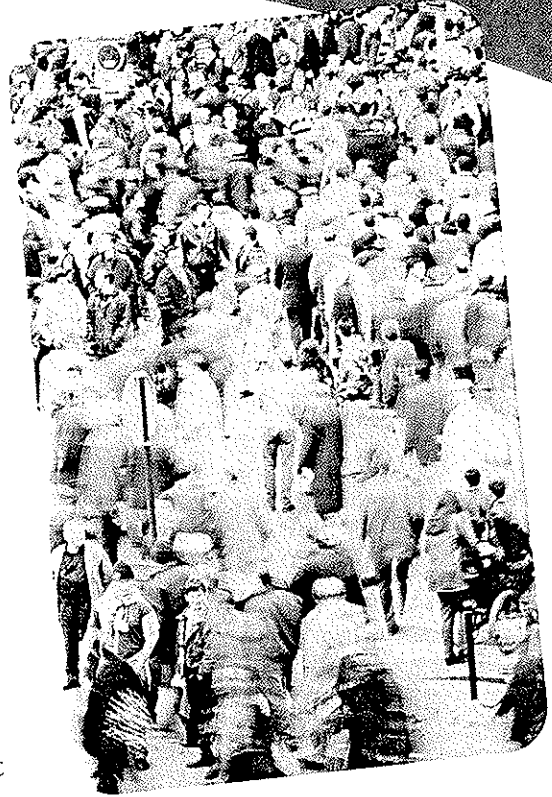


Jan Sanders van Hemessen, *Calling of St Matthew*, 1536, Alte Pinakothek, Munich. This painting shows the moment when Jesus called Matthew to be an Apostle. The painter represents this by showing Jesus interrupting Matthew's work at the tax office. Jesus gently captures Matthew's eye and calls him away with his hand.

2.2 Role of the Laity

Laity comes from the Greek word "laos" which means people.

When Catholics speak about the Church, they are not talking just about a building. The Church is made up of people and each individual has a role to play and a story to tell about his or her own faith journey. One of the most powerful ways of describing the Church is as "the People of God". This is a term that was used at the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965), a meeting of the Pope and all the bishops of the Catholic Church. As members of God's people, we each have a role to play in the Church and in the wider society. This also means that as part of God's family, we have responsibilities to ourselves, each other and to God. At the heart of these responsibilities is a call to holiness, that is, to become more like Christ in everything we do, so that we can serve others.



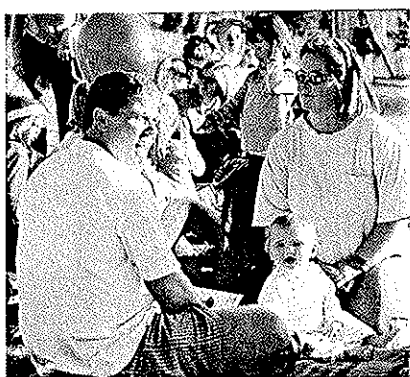
People and Ministries in the Church



Activity

- 1 An early description of the holiness of the people of God is given in 1 Peter 2:9–12. Read the passage.
- 2 List two ways in which the people of God are described.
- 3 What are God's people instructed to do?

Most Catholics are lay people or “the laity”. This means they have not been ordained as bishops, priests or deacons. The laity work in the world in such a wide variety of ways it is impossible to list them all. The role of the laity is closely linked to the family, which is the basic community where most lay people live.



20

The Family as Domestic Church

For many people, the family is their first and strongest experience of living as part of a Christian community. This is why the family is sometimes called the “Domestic Church” because it is where people begin to know and love Jesus Christ.

How do Catholics live their faith in Jesus?

Sandra, a teenager just starting secondary school, describes being a Catholic in terms of belonging:



For me, being a Catholic is like being part of a big family. I'm always really impressed that we have a lot of special ways of doing things. Like at Christmas time, when we all go to Midnight Mass, or when my brother, Anthony, was born, all the effort and planning that went into his baptism. This was a way of welcoming him into our family but, as Mum explained, it was also a way of welcoming him into the Church.



Paul, a retiree, describes being a Catholic as an essential part of his life.



Being a Catholic has always been such an important part of my life. It has had such strong and evocative memories for me. All the major events in my life have been associated with the Church. Marriage, the funerals of my parents, the baptism and education of my children, have all enriched my understanding of being a Catholic. Feeling close to God has also helped me during the difficult times in my life – and there have been plenty of those! It has also helped me try to live and work in a way that is consistent with what Jesus taught.

For Maria, being a Catholic is one way of expressing her culture.



Being a Catholic gives me a way to thank God for the blessings he has given me and my family. It's also a way of getting to know Jesus better. In my culture, being a Catholic is a lot more than just going to Mass on Sunday. It's a whole way of life.



Activity

- 1 Read what Sandra, Paul and Maria have to say about being part of the Catholic community.
- 2 List three words or phrases that reflect your own feelings. Add one further statement of your own. In a small group share your list with the others.



Lumen Gentium and the Church



Activity

The Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) produced a number of documents that extended our understanding of what it means to be a Catholic today. In one of the documents, called *Lumen Gentium*, the Church is compared with a vineyard.

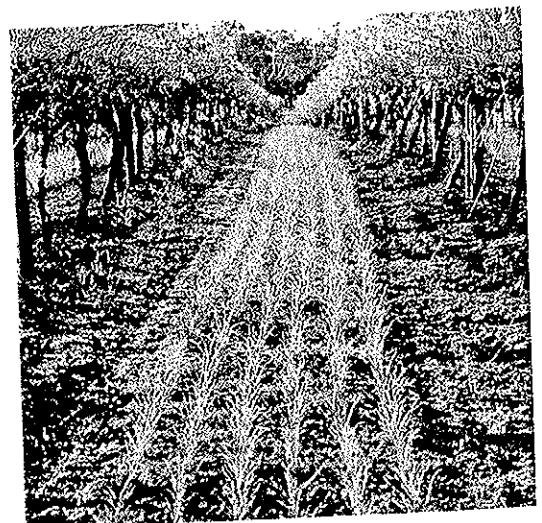
- 1 Look at the picture of the field.

As a class, conduct a brainstorming session describing what you see in the picture. Include ideas on what has been planted, how it was planted, who has planted it, and how the plants survive.

- 2 Read the following extract from *Lumen Gentium*. Evaluate how it is a useful image for the Church.



"The Church is a cultivated field, the tillage of God... that land, like a choice vineyard, has been planted by the heavenly cultivator. Yet the true vine is Christ who gives life and fruitfulness to the branches, that is, to us, who through the Church remain in Christ without whom we can do nothing."

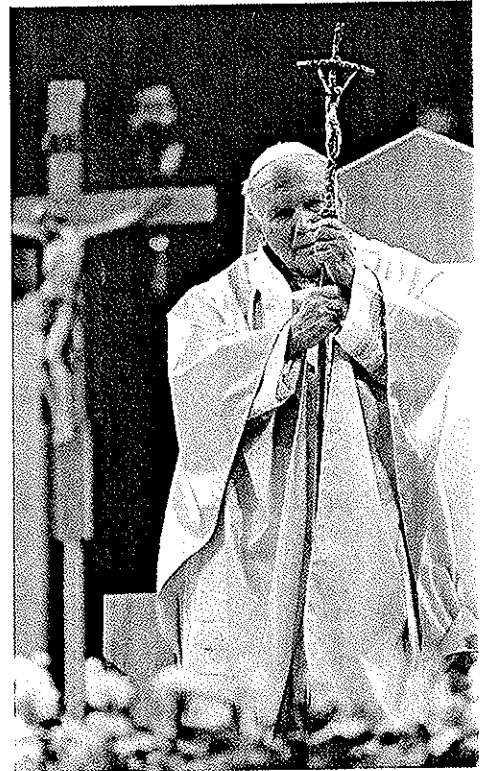


Ecumenical Council

A general Council of the Church is a meeting convened by the Pope to deal with issues of importance to the church and of society as a whole. Representatives include cardinals, archbishops, and bishops assisted by clergy and lay people who are experts in their field. They work to decide on the church's response to current problems and questions. The first Church Council was held in Jerusalem to sort out disagreements between Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians.

2.3 The Pope and the Bishops

The most prominent figure in the Catholic Church is the Pope. He is the Bishop of Rome and the successor of St Peter, the first leader of the Christian community. The Pope is the head of the Church on earth, but can best be described as the centre of unity for Catholics. If a dispute arises about exactly what the Church teaches on a particular topic, the Pope can make a final decision about what is in keeping with Catholic tradition. At those moments when the Pope speaks with the authority of Christ, he is guided by the Holy Spirit and protected from error. Without a centre of unity, disputes could arise and never be settled, leading to division and breaking up of the Church.



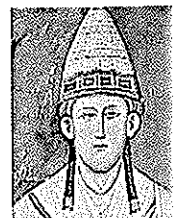
Pope John Paul II greets the crowd in St Peter's Square, after his election in 1978.

Popes

There have been 264 Popes in the history of the Church. Not many people know the name of the second Pope (St Linus). Only three have been designated "Great" by the Church: Leo (440–461), Nicholas (858–867), and Gregory (590–604). Brothers have been Pope: Stephen II (752–757) was succeeded by his younger brother St Paul I (757–767). Prior to the election of Pope John Paul II, who was a Polish cardinal, the last Pope not from the Italian Peninsula was Adrian VI (1522–1523). He was born in Utrecht, which is in the present day Netherlands.



*Ritratto di Adriano VI
Portrait of Adrian VI –
detail, Galleria degli
Uffizi (Collezione
Giovanna) Firenze.*



Pope Innocent III,
13th century,
San Benedetto
Monastery (Sacro
Speco), Subiaco, Italy.

Election of a Pope

How a College of Cardinals elects the Pope was decreed at the Second Council of Lyons (1274). Cardinals are usually bishops and meet together in a "conclave" in the Vatican after the death of a Pope. Secret ballots are conducted until one candidate has sufficient support and is formally asked by the presiding cardinal if he agrees to be Pope.

Pope and Saint – St Gregory the Great

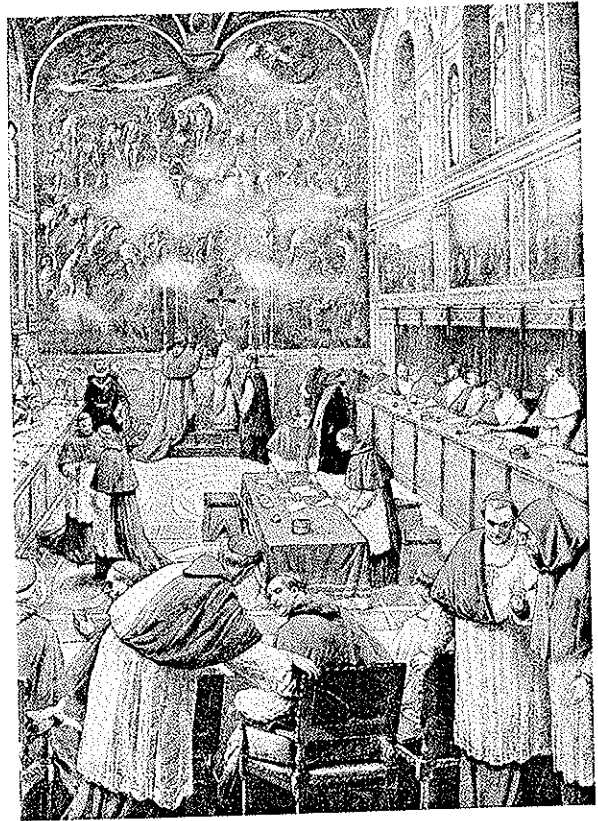
St Gregory was born in Rome about AD 540. He came from a powerful Christian family and was chief magistrate of Rome. He was a monk before being elected Pope in AD 590. Gregory was a great leader and theologian. He sent missionaries to England and reformed the liturgy, promoting a style of singing later known as the Gregorian chant.

Just as the Pope is the successor of St Peter, the bishops are the successors of the Apostles. The bishop is in charge of a diocese and there are thousands of dioceses throughout the world. An important historical area or major city is called an archdiocese, and so the bishop there is called an Archbishop.



The primary role of a bishop is to ensure that the local Church is well governed and doing all it can to bring Jesus to the world. A good way of understanding the role of a bishop is the image of a shepherd, which is represented symbolically by the crozier or pastoral staff that bishops use on ceremonial occasions.

The crozier is derived from the long stick with a curved top that shepherds have used for centuries in their daily work. In John 10:1–18, Christ is the "Good Shepherd". Bishops try to display this love and concern of Jesus for the people they are called to lead and serve.



French School, (20th century), *The Conclave*, illustration from 'Le Petit Journal', 9th August 1903 (colour engraving).



Antique Antiphony and Hymnal, c 1500, Collection: The Daniel Mannix Library, Catholic Theological College, East Melbourne, Victoria.

Bishops, Priests and Deacons

In the Catholic tradition all Christians share in the priesthood of Christ through their baptism, but in different ways. Through the Sacrament of Orders, some of the baptised are called to three levels of ordained ministry:

Bishop (Greek "episkopos" which means "overseer")

This is the highest order of ordained ministry. A bishop can administer all the sacraments, including ordaining priests and deacons. The role of the bishop is to teach, to make holy and to govern.

Priest (Greek "presbyter" meaning "elder")

Priests cooperate with bishops in exercising their ministry. The role of the priest is to preach the gospel, to shepherd the faithful, as well as to celebrate divine worship. At the Eucharistic celebration, priests exercise the supreme or highest degree of their ministry because they act in the person of Christ the Priest.

Deacons (Greek "diakonos" meaning "a servant")

There are two classes of deacon. Transitional deacons will ultimately become priests. There are also permanent deacons. These can be married men. They may proclaim the Gospel, preach the homily, assist at Mass, baptise and preside at funeral services.



Activity

- 1 Use the resources of your diocese to research something about its history, including the Bishops who have served it.
- 2 A good starting point is to try your Cathedral records by paying a visit or using a website such as <http://www.catholic.org.au/>

Anonymous, The Good Shepherd, 1892, Christ Church (Anglican) Echuca, Victoria, Australia.

2.4 What Makes a Parish?



Activity

- 1 List first three words or concepts you identify with "parish".
- 2 Examine the words and images on the bulletin board. From this bulletin board, list three ideas or messages that you get about this parish.
- 3 Compare your two lists and determine how they are similar.

I'm not invited in any of the groups at St. Johns, but when I do get along I'm always made to feel welcome. The Parish has a really good feel to it.



INVITATION
To The Parish Celebration For The Golden Wedding Anniversary of Sue and Graham Marsh. All parishioners are warmly invited To celebrate This special occasion at The 10.30 Mass on Sunday August 12. Morning Tea will be served in The courtyard following Mass.



I'm Tim and I've been part of the Parish music group for 6 months. We play at the Saturday night Mass. If you can play an instrument or enjoy singing please come along and join us. Everyone is welcome.

Why not give yourself a morning out and join us at the Parish playgroup? We meet each Tuesday morning at 10.00 in the hall. The kids have a great time and it is a good way to get to know other parishioners. Leave your details at the office and we will give you a call. Lia and Jenny, Playgroup Co-ordinators.



I'm Father Denton. I was ordained a year ago and am Assistant Parish Priest at Sacred Heart Parish, Croydon.

If you would like to join any of the existing parish groups or if you have ideas you would like to share please get in touch with the Parish Office. Your time and talents can make a difference to our community!

If you have a few spare hours once a week or once a month you could make a difference in the lives of people in need in our local community. Leave your details in the SDVP box at the rear of the church or contact the Parish Office. Remember: Christ has no hands but YOURS!



Hi! I'm Liz Hughes. I co-ordinate the Children's Liturgy Program for the 10.30 Mass. Extra hands are always welcome!



We are Glad and Jim Davidson. When we retired Fr Smith suggested we become Catechists at the local State School. It has been one of the most rewarding experiences we have ever shared. New Catechists are needed. Please come along to the information evening on Tuesday August 14 to have all your questions answered. It keeps you young!



If you drive through any town or suburb, you can find the Catholic Church without too much effort. Usually close by is a school and a community centre of some sort. If you look more closely you may be able to identify the presbytery, which is the home of the priests who serve the parish. There are hundreds of parishes all over the country and these are centres of activity that draw people together. But it is important to realise that the parish is not simply a collection of buildings. The most important ingredient in the parish is its people! The parish provides Catholics with a way to come together to worship, to serve and to give support. Let us look at some of the people who contribute to parish life.



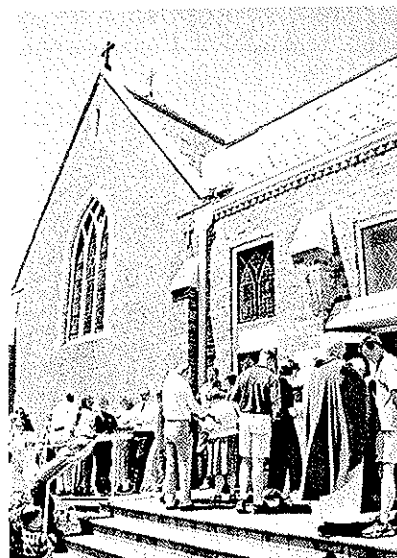
Activity

The Holy Spirit has been given to the Church and provides us with all we need to live as a Christian community. St Paul writes about the Gifts of the Spirit in his letter to the Romans.

1 Read Romans Chapter 12: 3-8 and use the following table to match the gift with the definition:

Gift	Definition
Prophecy	Giving instruction
Administration	Giving money and goods to the poor
Teaching	Leading
Preaching	Proclaiming God's word
Almsgiving	Communicating God's message
Officials	Helping those in need
Doers of works of mercy	Organising

2 Think about the gifts. Highlight the ones you recognise in your life. Recount one experience where you have put this gift into practice.



2.5 The Priest

The most easily recognisable person in a parish is the priest, and some parishes are fortunate to have more than one. The priest leads the community in celebrating the Mass, and presides at other aspects of the sacramental life of the parish such as Baptism, Reconciliation and Anointing the Sick. He also has overall responsibility for the pastoral care of the parish. The priest is a busy person. The table on the opposite page lists some of the activities in which the parish priest may be involved.



Activity

Using the table on the next page as a guide, try and design a timetable for a typical day in the life of a parish priest.

2.6 The Pastoral Associate

Many parishes have pastoral associates who play an important role in parish life. They are involved in a variety of tasks such as managing outreach programs and co-ordinating the efforts of all the other people who are involved in the parish.

One pastoral associate describes her work like this:



My main work is with the elderly, sick and housebound of the parish and I also train many of the parishioners. I also spend much time helping prepare the parish music for the liturgy, as well as working with readers, commentators and special ministers. I feel very fulfilled, and I thank God for being called to such a worthwhile mission.

89

Some Duties of a Parish Priest

(Changes reflect feedback from some priests)

Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Three or four times a year	On-going
<p>Mass</p> <p>On Sunday, three or four Masses including Vigil on Saturday evening</p> <p>Prayer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Divine Office or breviary (30 minutes) • Meditation or mental prayer (30 minutes) • Rosary <p>Parish Administration</p> <p>(Even with the assistance of a Parish Secretary this can be quite demanding)</p> <p>Being present and available</p> <p>Appointments</p> <p>Pastoral Activity</p> <p>Exercise</p>	<p>Administering Sacraments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Penance • Baptism (includes visiting parents of each candidate) • Holy Communion for the sick (Assisted by lay people) • Anointing the sick in hospitals, nursing homes and other institutions <p>Visiting primary school to keep up contact with teachers and students</p> <p>Meeting with Principal of the primary school</p> <p>Preparing material for parish bulletin</p> <p>Preparing sermons for the week</p> <p>Instruction for new Catholics</p>	<p>Meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liturgy Committee • Finance Committee • Works Committee • Parish Council • Parish Groups • School parents association <p>Funerals</p> <p>(two-four per month; includes visiting the family before and after the funeral)</p> <p>Marriages</p> <p>(Approximately twelve – twenty per year, includes preparation and rehearsals)</p>	<p>Meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deanery • School committees or boards • Senate of priests • Meeting with parents prior to sacramental programs <p>Sacramental Programs</p> <p>Special parish devotions such as the Lenten program</p> <p>Fundraising events</p> <p>Parish/School social events</p>	<p>Parish building and maintenance</p> <p>Mass and Penance for school students</p> <p>Parish visitation (visiting parishioners in their homes)</p> <p>Hospital visits</p> <p>Visiting/giving Religious Education Classes at primary and secondary schools</p> <p>Dealing with parishioners on a personal basis, following up problems and helping in times of crisis</p> <p>Assisting with sacraments at other parishes</p> <p>Providing written references</p>

2.7 Parish Council

The parish council is of vital importance. The council is a group of parishioners, which provides leadership, direction and advice. They work closely with the parish priest. The council plans for the future and ensures that the parish is run efficiently.

Role of the parish council

Here is how one parish council describes its role:

Discerning the needs of parish and community

Endeavouring to involve the whole of the parish in the work of the Church in response to the present and future needs

Being a means of fostering a sense of community in the parish

Being a vehicle for communication between the parishioners and the parish priest

Taking a lead in establishing parish projects.

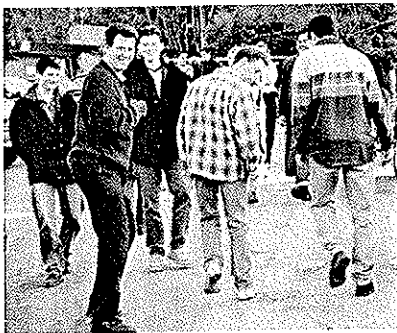


2.8 The Place of Young People

Many parishes run special groups and programs for young people. One of the most popular groups is the Antioch Movement.

Antioch

According to the New Testament, Antioch was the first place in which the followers of Christ were called Christians. The Antioch Youth Movement began at an American University and was brought to Australia about 20 years ago. It is now active in many parishes throughout the country. Members are aged between 16 and 22 years. Many groups have a weekday Mass and all groups have a Sunday night meeting. At this meeting, members give talks that they have prepared with the assistance of parent couples or the chaplain. There are also opportunities for discussion, music and prayer. Membership is by invitation and people join the group at the annual long weekend which serves as an introduction to Antioch.



Seminars.

Many parishes or groups of parishes known as deaneries have a youth worker who has the specific task of working with young people. Here is how one youth worker describes his role:

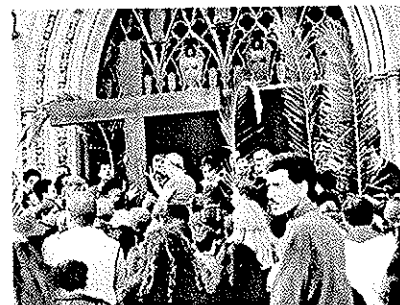


Being a youth worker, I have seen many lives of young people change through participation in parish youth groups and events. I have seen young people find a real place to belong, develop leadership skills and long-term friendships. I am continually amazed at the way Christ touches the hearts of young people by giving hope and meaning to their lives. It's great to be serving young people in the Catholic Church.

Many dioceses also have organisations that coordinate youth activities and provide support for parishes in the area.

2.9 The Parish as Educator

One of the most prominent roles of the parish is providing education. The biggest commitment to education is through the parish primary school. Many other educative functions are provided by the parish, ranging from study groups to specialist programs. One of the most important education services is the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA), which welcomes new people into the Catholic Church.



Palm Sunday Procession.



Social gatherings.



2.10 Other Workers

There are many other people who are involved in the life of the parish. Below are some of the ministries undertaken in the parish:

Liturgy, Youth Ministry, Family Welfare, Pastoral Care, Prayer and Spirituality, Catholic Education, Social Activities and Administration.



Activity

List two activities that are carried out in each of these ministries.

Some groups that may be active in a parish include:

Fete Committee
Mary Immaculate Prayer Groups
Italian Prayer Group
St Vincent de Paul Society
Helping Hand Group
Legion of Mary
Knights of the Southern Cross
Bingo Fund Raising Group
Italian-Australian Committee
Ladies Auxiliary for the Aged Persons Hostel
Liturgical Committee
Eucharistic Adoration Group
Men's Parish Auxiliary Group
Parish Ball Committee
Parish Education Board
Parish Pastoral Council
RCIA Coordinators Group
Catholic Women's League
Parish Golf Club
Parish Netball Club
All Night Vigil for Life Group
Parish School Parents and Friends Association
Solo Parents Group
Christian Meditation Group
Young Mothers Group
Gardening Club
Tennis Club
Marian Prayer Group
Grief Support Group
Finance Committee