

## **Chapter 10 – The Four Marks of the Church**

### **The Church is One**

The mark of oneness reflects the unity of the Trinity. The Catholic Church has always been committed to the restoration of unity among all Christians.

### **The Church is Holy**

The Church has her origin in the Holy Trinity. The church is holy in her Founder, in her saints, and in her means of holiness.

### **The Church is Catholic**

The Church is catholic because of her relationship to all peoples. The Church has known how to accept what is true and good in all cultures and, at the same time, to infuse the truth and goodness of her tradition and life into them. The church is catholic because of her universal extension and her presence in local communities.

### **The Church is Apostolic**

The entire community of Christians received the Apostles' proclamation of the Gospel, and so the Church in her entirety is called "Apostolic." The Church as a whole remains and will always remain faithful to the teaching of the Apostles. When all the bishops throughout the world, together with the pope, in fulfillment of their teaching office, proclaim a doctrine that has been divinely revealed, it must be accepted with the obedience of faith by the whole People of God. The entire Church as a body is infallible because the Holy Spirit ensures that she will not err in matters of faith and morals.

### **Laity**

By Baptism, every member of the Church participates in Christ's role as priest, prophet, and king.

### **Consecrated Life**

From the beginning of the Church, there have been men and women who have been chosen to live in a radical witness to Christ by initiating Him as closely as possible through the vows of poverty, celibacy, and obedience. These include priests who belong to a religious order as well as religious Sisters and Brothers.

Reflection:

- What sources of strength do you receive from the Church's structures: parish, diocese, universal Church?
- Some people say that it doesn't make any difference which religion you belong to, just so you love God and are kind to people. How would you respond?