

Lesson Plan for Lesson 13

The Mission of the Catholic Church

Preparation and Supplies

- Study chapter 13, “The Mission of the Catholic Church,” in the handbook.
- For each group of three or four, gather Bibles, newsprint, and markers. Also gather a selection of newspapers and magazines.
- Make copies of the handout “I Have a Mission” (Document #: TX003385), and cut apart the sections along the dotted lines, so that each participant will have one section.

Pray It! (5 minutes)

Tell the participants that class will begin with a prayer that is known as the Church’s prayer, or more commonly the Lord’s Prayer or the Our Father. **Direct** them to turn to page 450 in the handbook. **Lead** the class in the Sign of the Cross, and **invite** the young people to pray the prayer together.

Study It! (35 to 45 minutes, depending on your class length)

A. Founded by Christ

1. **Direct** the young people to form groups of three or four. **Ask** the groups to write a definition for the word *Church* and then create a list of images that come to mind when they think of Church. **Invite** the groups to share their definitions and images with the rest of the class.
2. **Direct** the participants to read the chapter introduction and the sections “Founded by Christ” and “The Mission of the Church,” on pages 133–136 in the handbook. The content covers points 1 through 3 on the handout “Lesson 13 Summary.”
3. **(Optional) Obtain** a copy of your parish’s or diocesan mission statement. As a class, **analyze** and **reflect** on that statement. **Discuss** how the statement helps to further the Church’s mission and how it is lived out in the life of the parish.

B. Scriptural Images of the Church

1. **Direct** the young people to form groups of three or four, and give each group a selection of newspapers and magazines. **Ask** them to think about people they know who are taking action to strengthen the Body of Christ. **Invite** them to peruse the print materials and to identify people who are carrying out Christ’s mission in the world. **Ask** each group to prepare a brief presentation to share with the rest of the class, highlighting two or three of the most exemplary people they discovered.



2. **Direct** the participants to read the section “Scriptural Images of the Church,” on pages 136–139 in the handbook. The content covers points 4 through 7 on the handout “Lesson 13 Summary” (Document #: TX003384).
3. **(Optional) Invite** questions and observations on the content. You could also invite discussion on the Reflect questions on page 138.

C. Marks of the Church

Direct the young people to read the section “Marks of the Church,” on pages 139–144 in the handbook. The content covers points 8 through 12 on the handout “Lesson 13 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. **Direct** the participants to form groups of three or four, and **give** each group a Bible, a sheet of newsprint, and a marker. Assign each group one of the following images of the Church that contains Scripture passages that refer to the image:

- The Church as the People of God (2 Cor 6:16, 1 Pt 2:9–10)
- The Church as the Body of Christ (1 Cor 3:16–17; 12:12–13,20,26; Gal 3:27–28)
- The Church as the Temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 3:16–17, 2 Cor 6:16, Eph 2:19–22, 1 Pt 2:5)

Explain the task as follows:

- Designate someone in your group to read aloud the Scripture passages on the image of the Church that you have been assigned. Designate another person to be the group’s recorder.
 - The reader then reads the Scripture passages.
 - After the reading, the group is to identify the characteristics of its assigned scriptural image of Church and have the recorder list those characteristics on newsprint. (In other words, if the Church—meaning us—is the People of God [or Body of Christ, or Temple of the Holy Spirit], what kinds of things does it do?)
 - Each group is to then select one characteristic or action from its list and consider what it can do to be Church in the coming weeks.
2. **Ask** each group to make a brief report to the rest of the class.
 3. **Share** the following comments in your own words:
 - The mystery is that the Church is at once both visible and spiritual, human and divine.
 - Inspired by the Holy Spirit, the early Christians adopted some guiding images that help us to better understand how the Church carries out her mission.
 - The title People of God emphasizes the role of God the Father in calling a people to himself.
 - The title Body of Christ emphasizes Christ’s mission and his role as the mediator between God and humanity.
 - The title Temple of the Holy Spirit emphasizes the important role of the Holy Spirit in leading the Church to holiness.



Closing Prayer (5 minutes)

Following any announcements, **give** each participant a copy of the handout “I Have a Mission” (Document #: TX003385). Close by **leading** the class in praying together the prayer by Cardinal Newman.

