

The Organization of the Catholic Church

Core Activity

Church Structure and Leadership



1. Divide your class into five groups. Distribute the handout “Church Structure and Leadership” (Document #: TX003188) to each student. Assign each group one of the five roles in the Catholic Church that are listed on the handout. Explain that the groups are to review the section from pages 150–156 of *The Catholic Faith Handbook for Youth, Third Edition (CFH)* that corresponds to their assigned role, and come up with ten to twelve words that they feel describe that role. Give them about 5 minutes to complete that task.

2. Gather the students together as a class and invite a representative from each group to present the words the group came up with. Ask the students to write on their handouts, in or near the circle for each role, the words associated with that role as they are presented. After each group presentation, you may choose to review with the class the material from the *CFH* concerning that role.

3. Once all the groups have presented, cover with your class each role’s connection to the ministry of Christ.

(This activity is adapted from the *TC: Creed* manual.)

Core Activity Extension

Journal Activity

As homework or class work, ask the students to review the roles in the Catholic Church on the handout and the words the class associated with those roles. Instruct them to select one of the roles and write a journal entry on the following questions:

- What is unique about this role?
- What are common aspects among the roles?
- How is this role connected to Christ’s ministry?

- What is one thing that could be offered up in prayer to help people in this role?

(This activity is adapted from the *TC: Creed* manual.)

Additional Activities

Three Great Religions

Direct the students to research and list the core beliefs that unite Christianity, Judaism, and Islam, and the beliefs that are unique to each religion. You might want to invite a local rabbi or imam to share her or his traditions with the young people, or arrange for the students to visit a local temple or mosque. Give students an opportunity for questions and answers about the beliefs and practices of the various traditions. (This activity is adapted from the *TC: Creed* manual.)

A Universal Prayer



Distribute the handout “A Universal Prayer” (Document #: TX003189). Begin playing quiet instrumental music and invite the students to silently read each line of the prayer on the handout—thinking about what it means for them. After several minutes direct the students to read the prayer aloud. You might have a different person read each stanza, or divide the class in half and alternate stanzas between the halves. (This activity is adapted from the *TC: Creed* manual.)

Our Diocese, Our Parish

Instruct the young people to create a chart that outlines leadership in their local dioceses and in their parishes. Ask the students to list how the two kinds of leadership are similar and how they are different. Invite your diocese’s director of parish life, director of youth ministry, director of religious education, or chancellor to give a presentation on the relationship between the diocese and the parish. (This activity is adapted from the *TC: Creed* manual.)

Think Globally, Act Locally

Contact your local council of churches and ask for materials on ecumenism that can be shared with young people. Contact the director of your diocese’s office of ecumenism to identify ways you can work toward ecumenism locally. (This activity is adapted from the *TC: Creed* manual.)

Internet Search

Instruct the students to visit the Web sites of the Vatican (www.vatican.va) and of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (www.usccb.org) to identify the various offices and departments that exist to serve the Church. Ask them to choose one of the offices or departments and explore the services it offers. Have them report back to the class either in writing or in an oral report. (This activity is adapted from the *TC: Creed* manual.)

(The material labeled *TC: Creed* is adapted from *Total Catechesis: Catechetical Sessions on the Creed*, by Maura Thompson Hagarty, Michael J. Hagarty, Marilyn Kielbasa, and Barbara Murray, in the Total Catechesis series [Winona, MN: Saint Mary's Press, 2004]. Copyright © 2004 by Saint Mary's Press. All rights reserved.)