

Five Models of the Church

Model	Meaning	Strength	Limitation
1. <i>Institution</i>	The organizational structure that includes doctrinal teachings	Its order and commitment to unity	Could be viewed as authoritarian
2. <i>Communion</i>	The fellowship that unites believers	Its emphasis on shared practices and the diversity of experience	Could be removed from the ultimate goal of the Church
3. <i>Sacrament</i>	The symbol of grace for the community	It bridges the outer and inner dimensions of the Church	Could become isolated from the world
4. <i>Herald</i>	The call to members for renewal and reformation	It spreads the gospel message of peace and justice	Could emphasize witness over action
5. <i>Servant</i>	The call to stewardship and social responsibility	It serves others and not just the interests of the Church	Could limit the distinct features of Christianity

Answer these questions based on the chart above (please use the back of this sheet for additional writing space):

1. Which model of the Church is most intriguing to you? Why?
2. Which model of the Church is best represented by the work of caring for the poor?
3. Which model of the Church is best represented by Catholic school teachers?
4. Which model of the Church may be best represented by the Pope, bishops, and priests of the Church?
5. Which model of the Church is best represented by the celebration of the Eucharist?
6. What model of the Church is best represented by a group pilgrimage to the Holy Land?
7. Why are all five models needed for the diverse membership of the Church to live healthy and whole as the Body of Christ?

(The models of the Church are based on the book *Models of the Church*, expanded edition, by Avery Dulles [Garden City, NY: Image Books, 1987]. Copyright © 1974, 1987 by Avery Dulles.)

