

Inquiry Session: Community

APPRENTICES IN FAITH: A Resource for the OCIA

Reflect on Your Experience

Most people find it useful to join groups of one kind or another. Some general groups we may choose to belong to include the purchasing club where members can get discounted goods, the health club where members work out, and the insurance group that helps pay medical expenses.

For Reflection . . .

What groups do you belong to, or wish you belonged to, that make life easier, better, or more fulfilling?

Hear the Good News About Community

The Lord achieved our Salvation by his life, public ministry, suffering, Death, and Resurrection—all of which are realities mediated and facilitated in this present day through the Church, the Body of Christ on earth.

Established by Christ to continue his mission on Earth, the Church is the place where the Spirit flourishes. The members of this holy community are called out of routine life and made new and effective heralds of the Gospel, infused with the Gifts of the Spirit. The word *church* is derived from the Greek word *ecclesia*, which translates as “convocation” or “called together.”

Our joint vocation, or calling, from God is to be gathered as one in Christ. The gifts we are given in the Spirit are intensified and made more effective in the world, precisely because we make a difference together. A hand is made up of four fingers and a thumb. Each is separate, but when they work together, they can accomplish much.

Read the Word of God

1 Corinthians 12:12-27

(The image of the body applied to Church)

John 10:1-10

(The Good Shepherd leads his flock.)

Galatians 6:1-10

(The family of faith)

Respond Through Action

There is a tendency in each of us toward selfishness. Without a doubt, we are individuals. But there are also impulses planted within us by God that move us outward, to share and to build a common life together with others.

For Reflection . . .

Identify those needs in your life that (a) push you away from associating with others and (b) impel you to join together with others.

Witness to the Gospel

SAINT CATHERINE OF SIENA

1347–1380

Catherine was a woman who lived in the Middle Ages, a time when women did not usually speak out to challenge the status quo. But Catherine did. In 1377 Catherine successfully urged Pope Gregory XI to return to Rome and take up his proper place as the Bishop of Rome. One of his predecessors, Pope Clement V, had left Rome, moving the Roman Curia to Avignon, France, in 1309. Later, when an antipope was elected, she attempted to raise support for the rightful pope. She was canonized in 1461 and named a Doctor of the Church in 1970. Saint Catherine's feast day is celebrated on April 29.