

How Many Churches Are There?

“The question is certainly raised among us: where is the Church? Whether among us or among them? At any rate, it is one, which our elders called Catholic, as they will show from the name itself, since it is for the whole.”

(St. Augustine of Hippo, *De Unitate Ecclesiae*)

In Scripture

“I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them whom thou hast given me: because they are thine: And all my things are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them. And now I am not in the world, and these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep them in thy name whom thou hast given me; that they may be one, as we also are.” (St. John 17: 9-11)

“And not for them only do I pray, but for them also who through their world shall believe in me; That they all may be one, as thou, Father, in me, and I in thee; that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou hast given me, I have given to them; that they may be one, as we also are one: I in them, and thou in me; that they may be made perfect in one: and the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast also loved me.” (St. John 17:20-23)

“That there might be no schism in the body; but the members might be mutually

careful one for another.” (1 Corinthians
12:25)

What is the Church?

Lesson 12 from the Baltimore Catechism: **The Marks and Attributes of the Church**

Q152. Which is the one true Church established by Christ?

A. The one true Church established by Christ is the Catholic Church

And other sheep I have that are not of this fold. Them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd.

Q153. How do we know that the Catholic Church is the one true Church established by Christ?

A. We know that the Catholic Church is the one true Church established by Christ because it alone has the marks of the true Church.

Q154. What do we mean by the marks of the Church?

A. By the marks of the Church we mean certain clear signs by which all men can recognize it as the true Church founded by Jesus Christ.

Q155. What are the chief marks of the Church?

A. The chief marks of the Church are four: It is one, holy, catholic or universal, and apostolic.

Q156. Why is the Catholic Church one?

A. The Catholic Church is one because all of its members, according to the will of Christ, profess the same faith, have the same sacrifice and sacraments, and are united under one and the same visible head, the Pope.

Because the bread is one, we though many, are one body, all of us who partake of the one bread.

Q157. Why is the Catholic Church holy?

A. The Catholic Church is holy because it was founded by Jesus Christ, who is all-holy, and because it teaches, according to the will of Christ, holy doctrines, and provides the means of leading a holy life, thereby giving holy members to every age.

Q158. Why is the Catholic Church catholic or universal?

A. The Catholic Church is catholic or universal because, destined to last for all time, it never fails to fulfill the divine commandment to teach all nations all the truths revealed by God.

And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world, for a witness to all nations.

Q159. Why is the Catholic Church apostolic?

A. The Catholic Church is apostolic because it was founded by Christ on the apostles and, according to His divine will, has always been governed by their lawful successors.

Q160. How do we know that no other church but the Catholic Church is the true Church of Christ?

We know that no other church but the Catholic Church is the true Church of Christ because no other church has these four marks.

