

## **Adult Catechism February 27, 2017**

*Christ Our Pascha: The Church as Holy, Apostolic and Catholic,  
Ukrainian Catholic church in Communion with Universal Church*

**Part 1: The Catholic Church: Catholicity and Apostolicity:** Why is the Church catholic or universal? --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.

"You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you shall be witnesses for me in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and even to the very ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

The very name of the Church is Catholic, that is, universal. Even its critics admit that it is catholic. It has existed in all ages since the time of Christ, and teaches all peoples of every nation the same faith. It was St. Ignatius (50-107 A.D.) appointed Bishop of Antioch by Saint Peter, who first used the Greek word *Katholicos*, meaning "universal," when referring to the Church founded by Christ; this he did in order to distinguish the True Church, already being preached throughout the world, from heretical churches that had arisen.

In the fourth century certain sectarians protested against the True Church, yet still called themselves Christians. And so Catholics began to call themselves "Catholic." In that same century St. Augustine said: "All heretics wish to call themselves Catholics; yet if you ask any of them to direct you to a Catholic church, he will not direct you to his own!"

Wherever we go, whether in Europe, America, Africa, Asia, or Australia, we shall find the Catholic Church established. Everywhere it teaches the same doctrines taught in the United States; everywhere it is ruled by the same Head recognized in the United States: the Pope. When we say the Church is Catholic or universal, we understand that wherever it exists it must have the mark of unity. Otherwise it would not be the same body, but many separate bodies. Some heretical churches have branches in different countries, but they are really different bodies, because they change doctrines under different conditions.

The Church everywhere teaches all the doctrines that Christ commanded His Apostles to teach.

In the Catholic Church is fulfilled the prophecy of Malachy: "From the rising of the sun to the going down, my name is great among the Gentiles, and in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered to my name a clean oblation; for my name is great among the Gentiles, saith the Lord of Hosts" (Mal. 1:11).

The True Church must be so organized that it can admit all men into its communion. This the Catholic Church does. Christ founded the Church for all men, not only for a selected few, He died for all men, and wishes the fruits of His death to do good to all men. At present only the Catholic Church is to be found all over the world, ministering to all races and peoples, to all classes of the population, poor or rich, wise or ignorant, saint or sinner. The Catholic Church is the only Church for Everyman.

Most denominations are national; all are localized. For example: in Germany the Kaiser used to be the head of the Lutheran Church; in Russia the Czar used to be head of the Russian Church. The Queen of England is head of the Anglican Church.

Why is the Catholic Church apostolic? --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.

Apostolicity is easily proved by the facts of history. If a church cannot trace back its history lawfully in an unbroken line step by step to the Apostles, it is not the True Church. Our present Pope, Francis, is the direct successor of St. Peter. He is the lawful successor of the Pope who preceded him; and thus each Pope lawfully succeeded the one before him, until we reach St. Peter, the first Pope, chosen by Christ Himself.

All the sees founded by the Apostles perished or were interrupted, except the See of Peter alone. Where Peter is, there is the True Church founded by Our Lord. Those denominations that broke away from the Church thus lost their connection with the Apostles. They were all begun by individuals who could never have had any authority from either Christ or the Apostles. Most of them came some 1500 years too late.

Non-Catholic denominations claim that they did not begin new churches, but merely "reformed" the old one. In answer we ask, Did the True Church exist at the time of the founding of these new churches, or not? If it did not, then Christ's promise to be with His Church always had failed; His Church had died, and no human reform could possibly have resurrected it. If it did exist, then those who invented new doctrines were not reforming it, but founding new churches. In the same way, the Church derives all its holy orders, doctrines, and mission from the Apostles. It is "built upon the foundation of the Apostles," of which Christ is the cornerstone (Eph. 2:20). It holds intact the doctrine and traditions of the Apostles, to whom Christ gave authority to teach.

St. Paul says: "Even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel to you other than that which we have preached to you, let him be anathema!" (Gal. 1:8). A church which at any time denies an apostolic doctrine, discards the sacrament of Holy Orders, or breaks away from obedience to the Pope, ceases to be apostolic. It becomes a dead branch broken off from the parent vine which is Christ Himself: "I am the vine: you are the branches" (John 15:5). Taken from <http://www.catholicbook.com/AgredaCD/MyCatholicFaith/mcfc053.htm>

**Part 2: The Eastern Catholic rites:** What is the Catholic Eastern Church? --It is that part of the Church in the East which, although using liturgies and rites differing from those of the Latin (or Western) Church centered at Rome, subscribe to the same doctrines, and recognize the same Sovereign Pontiff, thus belonging to the same Universal and True Church.

The Catholic Eastern Church includes the following: Byzantines, Syrians, Copts, Ethiopians, Chaldeans, Armenians, Malabarese, and Maronites. At the beginning of the fourth century there was one Church, one in doctrine as well as in obedience to the Sovereign Pontiff, the Bishop of Rome. Even then, however, there was no uniformity in observances, ceremonies, rites.

Our Lord had sent the Apostles to different parts, and their followers had stuck to the doctrines, but had varied the observances and rites, in accordance with the particular inclinations of the people in the region. The languages used were naturally extremely varied; the Mass was the same Sacrifice instituted by Our Lord (in Aramaic), but it must have been said in quite a variety of languages.

Then political dissension within the Roman Empire led to its division into East and West. Religious organization, following political developments, led to the separation of first the Greek, then the Russian Orthodox Church. These schismatical churches denied the authority of the Pope, who lived in the West as Bishop of Rome. Otherwise they continued to practice the True Religion just as Christ and the Apostles had taught. They administered the sacraments, celebrated Mass, and followed other observances.

Within the Catholic Eastern Church, only the Maronite Church has never been in schism. With the passing of the centuries, those in schism divided and subdivided. Then, chiefly since the 16th and, 17th centuries, most of them returned to the unity of the True Church. The Catholic Eastern Church continues to use different rites and observances, some of which even antedated those of Rome, as having been there, long before the schisms. Thus today the groups in the Eastern Church have their own discipline and customs, the most notable of which is that with them Mass (called "Holy Liturgy") is said in the language peculiar to the church in which it is being said: whether Slavonic, Rumanian, Syriac, Arabic, Armenian, Greek, Coptic, Ethiopic, or Georgian.

Other differences of practice are: administration of the Holy Eucharist to the faithful in both forms of bread and wine, the use of leavened bread for Holy Mass, Baptism by immersion, bowing from the waist with a sweep of the arm instead of a genuflection before the Blessed Sacrament.

Groups in the Eastern Church are chiefly those under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchs of Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem, and Constantinople. In the fifth century there were five patriarchates: these four composing the Eastern Church, and the Patriarchate of Rome alone in the West. In those days there were clear-cut geographical divisions of patriarchates; an Eastern Catholic was born within the limits of his patriarchate. Today one belongs to his rite wherever he goes, and his children inherit his rite.

The Catholic Eastern Church is a living proof of the universality of the Catholic Church. The matter (including the doctrines, faith and morals) is unchanging; but the manner (including rubrics and rites, custom and practice, the externals) may change. The Church organization is malleable; but the fundamentals and essentials, the doctrines, are unchanging anywhere. In the Eastern Churches, the married clergy can be found as often as the celibate, because married men can be ordained and retain their wives. If the wife of a married priest dies, he cannot remarry; a bachelor who is ordained cannot marry later. Bishops are required to be either widowers or single.

Unity of religion does not mean uniformity of rite. Even in the Latin Church under the Patriarch of Rome, there are variations, all dating no later than the fourteenth century. As Pope Benedict

XIV said: "Eastern Christians should be Catholics; they do not need to become Latins." External may vary; but the core is one.

What is liturgy, and what is rite? --Liturgy comprises a public act intended for the worship of God; rite is the manner of observing the act. At present, however, the two terms are used indiscriminately and interchangeably. Strictly speaking, "liturgy" now refers to the rite of Holy Mass. The Roman Rite is for all practical purposes the universal rite used in the Western Church. During the period of persecutions, and on account of the difficulty of communication, variety in practices was the natural and common thing. When the Church became better organized, practices became more uniform. In the Latin Church rites practically became uniform in 1570 with the publication of the Roman Missal; even today a few variations remain. The Byzantine Rite, after the Roman, is the most widely-used in the Church, being found in Russia, Greece, the Balkans, and south Italy. Greek is the language principally employed, but Georgian, Slavonic, and Roumanian are likewise used. The Orthodox Eastern Church belongs to this rite. Originally, it was of Constantinople; it is based on the rite of St. James of Jerusalem, and was reformed by St. Basil and St. John Chrysostom. Modified for use in Russia, this Rite is termed Ruthenian. Other Asian Rites are: the Antiochean, Chaldean, and Armenian; in their entirety or modified, they are employed in the East.

The Antiochean Rite is the source of many derived rites; it traces its origin to St. James of Jerusalem. The Syrians, Chaldeans, Malabarese, and Maronites use derivations. The Chaldean Rite is used by the Chaldeans and Malabarese. Syriac is the principal language used in both these rites. The Armenian Rite is in use among Armenians, found in the Levant, Italy, and Austria. The Armenian tongue is used. It is the Greek Liturgy of St. Basil.

In African Catholic churches, the principal rite used is the Alexandrian. This is called the "Liturgy of St. Mark"; but the original has been greatly modified. The Coptic and Ethiopian Churches use it. The Catholic Copts are under the Patriarch of Alexandria, living in Cairo. Old Coptic and Arabic are the languages used in their liturgy: The Ethiopian Church uses a version of the Liturgy of St. Mark; it is as a whole the same as that of the Copts. Taken from <http://www.catholicbook.com/AgredaCD/MyCatholicFaith/mcfc055.htm>

**Part 3: The Apostles: First Bishops of the Church:** To whom did Christ give the power to teach, to sanctify, and to rule the members of His Church? --Christ gave the power to teach, to sanctify, and to rule the members of His Church to the Apostles, the first bishops of the Church.

St. Peter was the first Head. After a miraculous escape from prison in Jerusalem, he founded his See in Antioch; here the followers of Christ were first called Christians. Peter made frequent missionary journeys through Judea, Samaria, Galilee, Asia Minor, and probably even Greece. He finally fixed his See at Rome. St. Peter presided at the Council of the Apostles in Jerusalem in the year 50 A. D. At the same time that St. Paul was beheaded, St. Peter was crucified head downwards, on Vatican Hill, Rome, 67 A. D.

St. John, the Beloved Disciple, lived at Ephesus and governed the Church in Asia Minor. In the time of Trajan he was thrown into a caldron of boiling oil, but was miraculously preserved. Later

he was banished to Patmos, where he had the revelations which we call the Apocalypse. He died at the age of about 100 years, the last of the Apostles, and the only one who did not die a martyr's death. He left his Gospel and Epistles.

St. James the Greater, St. John's brother, labored in Judea, and according to tradition, travelled as far as Spain. He was the first of the Apostles to be martyred being beheaded in Jerusalem in the year 44, by Herod Agrippa.

St. Matthew preached among the Ethiopians, Persians, and Parthians, and was martyred in Parthia. He wrote the first of the four Gospels. St. James the Less was Bishop of Jerusalem. He was cast down from the pinnacle of the Temple in 63 A. D. He left one Epistle. St. Andrew, St. Peter's brother, preached along the lower Danube, and was crucified in Greece. St. Thomas preached in Persia, Medea, and went as far as India. He was martyred in India, pierced with a lance at the command of the king. St. Philip preached in Phrygia and Scythia, and was crucified at Hieropolis. St. Bartholomew preached in India, Arabia, and Assyria. He was flayed and crucified in Armenia. St. Simon preached in North Africa, and was martyred in Persia. St. Jude preached in Syria, and was martyred in Persia. He wrote the "Catholic Epistle". St. Matthias, chosen to take the place of Judas, preached in Ethiopia, and was martyred in Sebastopolis.

St. Paul was converted miraculously (Acts 9) in the year 34. He of all the Apostles labored the most abundantly. He wrote many Epistles. He is called the Apostle of the Gentiles, because he carried the Gospel to the pagan world. He travelled extensively and successively to Seleucia, Cyprus, Asia Minor, Phrygia, Galatia, Macedonia, Thessalonica, Athens, Corinth, Miletus, and finally Rome. From Rome he went to Spain and the East, then returned to Rome, where he was martyred in 67 A. D.

Did Christ intend that this power should be exercised by the Apostles alone? --No, Christ intended that this power should be exercised also by their successors, the bishops of the Church. The Apostles first preached in Judea on the very first Christian Pentecost. Then they dispersed throughout the different countries of the then known world. Everywhere they preached, baptized, and ruled the Christian communities. They were the first bishops of the Church. "As the Father has sent me, I also send you" (John 20:21).

The Apostles chose men to assist them, imparting to them greater or less powers. Before leaving a place, they chose a successor with full powers (Acts 14:22). Those who received only a small part of the powers of the Apostles were called deacons. Those given greater power were the priests. Those appointed successors to rule in the place of the Apostles were the bishops. Christ had given the Apostles full powers to choose successors, when He gave them the powers His Father had given Him (John 20:21) It was His wish that the Apostles should have successors to continue the Church, which He said would last till the end of the world (Matt. 28:20). Without successors to the Apostles, the Church would have no rulers, and being unorganized would never have lasted. Taken from <http://www.catholicbook.com/AgredaCD/MyCatholicFaith/mcfc048.htm>

#### **Part 4: The Ukrainian Catholic Church: In Communion with Rome** : The

Ukrainian (Greek) Catholic Church has the following attributes: It is in full communion with the Holy See; It is an Eastern Catholic Church, following the traditions passed on from the Church in Constantinople; It has over 5 million members worldwide; It is the largest Eastern Catholic Church in communion with Rome; It has its own hierarchy (bishops, cardinal) that are subject to the leadership of the Holy Father in Rome.

Although Christianity was officially recognized as the "state religion" in Ukraine in 988 AD, St. Andrew, the first apostle of Christ, preached in the hills presently known as Kiev around 50 AD. St. Olga accepted Christianity in 945 and was baptized by the Patriarch of Constantinople. Her grandson, St. Vladimir the Great, Prince of Kievan Rus, accepted Christianity from Constantinople in 988 and proclaimed it the "state religion". Thus, religion in Ukraine was rooted in Eastern theology and liturgical traditions. Also, St. Cyril and St. Methodius, Apostles of the Slavs, were responsible for introducing the Cyrillic alphabet.

It is interesting to note that Ukraine, through the efforts of Prince Yaroslav the Wise during the 11th century, became the first European nation to be consecrated to the protection of the Mother of God - Pokrov.

During the "Great Schism" of 1054, Pope Leo XI of Rome and Patriarch Michael of Constantinople excommunicated each other. The Ukrainian Church thus, over time, became separated from the Holy See in Rome. However, the Union of Brest, in 1596, brought the Ukrainian Catholics back in full union with Rome. The Ukrainian Church was allowed to keep its customs and was given full autonomy as a "Particular" Church within the Byzantine rite.

When you visit a Ukrainian Catholic Church, you may notice some differences between this "Eastern Church" and the "Western Church" (i.e. Roman Catholic Church). In an "Ukrainian Catholic Church", you may experience: A more expressive Liturgy (icons, incense, repeated gestures, ceremonial singing); Very colorful priest's vestments; Little or no statues in church; Icons are numerous; Evidence of Byzantium's art, architecture, music and theological writings; Liturgies said in English or Ukrainian (or a combination of both); Parishioners following either the Gregorian or Julian calendars. The best way to describe the Eastern Catholic Churches is to paraphrase our Saint John Paul II. He eloquently stated that the Eastern Churches are like the "left lung" and the Western (Roman) Church is like the "right lung". Both lungs are needed to fully function. Taken from <http://byzcath.org/ImmaculateConception/ukrainian.htm>

What is a Byzantine Catholic Church? The Catholic Church is made up of 23 Particular Churches that are in communion with each other. All of the Catholic Churches have the same Christian faith, share in the same sacraments, and are united together by the leadership of the Pope of Rome, yet we express our faith according to our own rites. Each rite of the Catholic Church has its own faith tradition that has been shaped by its geographical culture, language(s), and history. All of the rites express their faith in different ways, yet they hold the same faith. The Ukrainian Catholic church worships according to the Byzantine Rite, which stems from the early church in Greece and Asia Minor. Our Church has an extremely rich spiritual, theological and scriptural tradition. As Byzantine Catholics we proudly maintain our orthodox liturgical, spiritual

and theological way of life, yet we also recognize, work and pray with our Catholic brothers and sisters. In essence we are “Orthodox in communion with Rome”.

There are 14 Particular Catholic Churches that worship according to the Byzantine Rite. Each of these Churches share a common heritage of faith from the Greeks, yet each has developed further in a particular culture. Our Particular Church: the Ukrainian Catholic Church (also known as the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church – UGCC) This Church has been shaped by its unique history, slavic culture, deep monastic tradition, and more recently extreme persecution at the hands of the Communists. The Ukrainian Catholic Church happens to be the second largest Catholic Church preceded in size only by the Roman Catholic Church which worships according to the Latin Rite.

Do you have to be Ukrainian to be part of this Church? Absolutely not. The Ukrainian Catholic Church has many of its roots in what is today called Ukraine (thus the name), but we are made up of people from all cultures. (As they say: You don't have to be Ukrainian to be part of the Ukrainian Catholic Church, any more than you have to be Italian to be part of the Roman Catholic Church.) Taken from <http://hspl.ca/hspl.ca/?p=8>

An old legend tells that St. Andrew the Apostle blessed the hills of Kiev and foretold the victory of Christianity in the Ukraine. It is known with certainty that St. Clement, the third successor of St. Peter, was exiled by the Emperor Trajan to the Crimea, died there as a martyr and left an indelible influence on the Church in the Ukraine. Five hundred years later another exiled pope, Martin I, died a martyr's death on the Ukrainian coast for the unity of the Church. Martyrdom for the unity of Christians has remained the glorious mark of the Ukrainian Church. After the eastern schism she was the first Church to renew her union with Rome at Brest-Litovsk, and she has again and again sealed her loyalty to the Apostolic See with rivers of blood and mountains of corpses. This martyrdom reached its climax after the Second World War when, through the activity of Stalin and the Patriarch of Moscow, Ukrainians who were faithful to Rome were forcibly incorporated with the Orthodox Church. Countless laity, hundreds of priests and nearly all the bishops perished as a result of this unecumenical use of force, which those in authority in the Patriarchate of Moscow still look upon as a glorious page in the history of orthodoxy.