

# **RCIA Church History**

## **Origin of the Church**

- **Apostles and the Last Supper**
- **God's people – the Church; Jesus refers to forming a church in Matthew; Saint Paul – the Body of Christ (Ephesians);**
- **Four marks of Church: One, Catholic, Holy, Apostolic**

## **Hierarchy of the Church**

- **Pope – Cardinal – Arch Bishop – Bishop – Priest – Deacon – Religious – Laity**
- **Vatican – College of Cardinals – USCCB – Arch Diocese – Diocese – Parish – Religious institutions**

## **Process / Teachings of the Church**

- **Election of a Pope (266) - antipope**
- **Canon Law, Catechism, Vatican II Documents, Bible, Ten Commandments**
- **Ecumenical Councils**
- **Encyclicals, Papal Bulls, Dogma & doctrine, Precepts (Five)**
  - **Attend mass Sundays & Holy Days; Confession once a year; Eucharist once a year during Easter; Observe days of fasting & abstinence; Attend to needs of the Church**
- **Magisterium**
- **Theologians and Doctors of the Church**
- **Saints**
- **Mary (messenger of God to the Church) & Jesus**

## **History of the Church**

- **Church of Apostles and Fathers (AD 50 – 600)**
  - **33-100:** Initial growth especially among the lower classes
  - **100-200:** Grew in numbers and influence despite sporadic persecution. Bishops of the Church confronted distortions of Christian teaching. Formation of the canon of Scripture.
  - **200-300:** Catechetical schools; persecution of Decius; Church was not just for the perfect but also for repentant sinners.
  - **300-400:** Constantine legalized Christianity. 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Ecumenical councils (Nicea, Constantinople); birth of monastic movement.
  - **400-500:** Development of dogmas – attacks from barbarians
  - **500-600:** Saint Benedict develops missionary work – expansion to Ireland and Scotland
- **Church of the Middle Ages (AD 600 – 1300)**
  - **600-700:** Conversion of England; Pope Gregory missionary work; rise of Islam
  - **700-800:** Germany & France converted – birth of 'Christendom'
  - **800-900:** Decline of church – rise of Islam; break in relations between east and west – Dark Ages

- **900-1000:** Monastery of Cluny leads revival of church; secular rulers appoint popes – Gregory VII works to end corruption and separate from government
- **1000-1100:** Split of East and West in 1054; First Crusade in 1095 to free Holy Land
- **1100-1200:** Crusades continue; university's founded and change approach to theology – scholastic theology which applies philosophy and reason to illuminate faith; Gothic churches show new way to worship
- **1200-1300:** Height of Church in Middle ages – crusades continue; Inquisition to root out heresy; several reform councils
- **Late Middle Ages and Reformation (AD 1300 – 1650)**
  - **1300-1500:** Popes in France for 70 years; Great Schism for 40 years; mysticism flourished; Simony (selling of spiritual goods and church offices) was rampant
  - **1500-1650:** Protestant Reformation (1517 with Luther); Catholic Church pursues reformation in response – Society of Jesus (Jesuits) lead the charge; Council of Trent 1545-1563 – ran for five popes – defined and clarified Catholic doctrine; seminary system established
- **Church in the Modern World (AD 1650 – 1900)**
  - **1650-1800:** Age of Enlightenment; Science and technology – struggle of faith vs reason and science; Jesuits suppressed; French Revolution abolishes Christianity
  - **1800-1900:** Reaction by west to correct excesses of French Revolution; Pope Pius IX writes Syllabus of Errors (1864) – has first Vatican Council (1869-70) – affirms primacy of faith over reason – teaching infallibility of the pope in certain instances - Immaculate Conception 1854; Pope Leo XIII 1<sup>st</sup> Catholic letter on economic & social order (1891)
- **Church in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century (AD 1900 – 1963)**
  - **WWI and WWII** – struggle of secularism, Communism, Nazism and Christianity; Canon law in 1917; election of Pope John XXIII (76 year old 'interim pope')
- **Second Vatican Council and Beyond (AD 1963 – Present)**
  - **2<sup>nd</sup> Vatican Council 1962-1965** – prayer for “a new Pentecost”
  - Pope Paul VI creates gradual implementation
  - 1978 – Pope John Paul II – first non-Italian – longest term; first to travel
  - Pope Benedict – great theologian
  - Pope Francis – first Jesuit and non-European