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CHAPTER FOUR
THE TEACHING CHURCH

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Summary of Lesson Content

**Lesson 1**

Public revelation began with Adam and Eve and ended with Saint John the Evangelist.

The sacred deposit of the Word of God was inspired by God and entrusted to the Church. There is one deposit of the Word of God, and from it flow Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition.

**Lesson 2**

The Apostolic Fathers were instructed by the apostles.

Creeds are formulations of the Faith, written as summaries for the faithful transmission of the Faith.

Ecumenical councils (gatherings of all the bishops in union with the Pope) are called to clarify Church teaching.

**Lesson 3**

As Catholics, we are blessed with Fathers and Doctors of the Church. Church Fathers are holy teachers of the Faith from the first eight centuries AD. Church Doctors are saintly theologians and teachers of any century.

Popes have also written documents on the Faith. Some of these documents are decrees from among the Fathers and the teachings of Christ, called encyclicals.

The *sensus fidelium* is the testimony of what the faithful have believed over the centuries and what saints have thought, meditated upon, and believed.

**Lesson 4**

The deposit of Faith was completed with the death of Saint John; however, our understanding of the deposit of Faith has developed over the last two millennia. This growth in the Church’s understanding is called the development of doctrine, which is the gradual unfolding of the meaning of the truths Christ has revealed to us.
1. Read paragraphs 1–11.

2. Define revelation. Revelation literally means “to unveil” something. God revealed himself and his teaching to man because we could not have discovered these truths on our own (in time and without error). Just as a teacher explains things clearly to his students to help them learn and understand, God reveals himself so that we can understand. God revealed himself gradually through salvation history and perfectly in the Divine Person of Jesus Christ.

3. The first phase of revelation occurred in the Old Testament. It is called “Pre-Christian” revelation. During this time, God revealed his existence as the one true God. He also revealed his plan for salvation. This phase of revelation was fulfilled in God’s perfect revelation of himself in becoming man (Jesus Christ). Christ’s coming began what is known as “Christian” revelation. Christian revelation contains the truths revealed by Jesus Christ to his apostles. These truths include the most important mysteries of our Faith. Among them are the Trinity, the Incarnation, and the Eucharist.

4. The Word of God is inspired by God (and perfectly revealed in Christ, who is the Word made Flesh). It has been communicated to us in two ways:
   • Sacred Scripture: the Word of God put down in writing under the breath of the Holy Spirit
   • Sacred Tradition: the entirety of the Word of God entrusted to the apostles by Christ and the Holy Spirit

   These two sources of revelation are closely connected and must be kept together for proper understanding of the truths of God and their faithful transmission. The Word of God is entrusted to the Teaching Church, called the Magisterium (the Pope and the bishops in union with the Pope), to safeguard and faithfully transmit it to God’s people.

   The students will learn that public revelation began with Adam and Eve and ended with Saint John the Evangelist. They will learn that the sacred deposit of the Word of God was inspired by God and entrusted to the Church. There is one deposit of the Word of God and from it flow Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition.
Aims

The students will learn that the Apostolic Fathers were instructed by the apostles. They will learn that creeds are formulations of the Faith, written as summaries for the faithful transmission of the Faith. They will learn that ecumenical councils (gatherings of all the bishops in union with the Pope) are called to clarify Church teaching.

Materials

- **Optional:** 
  - "Glorious things of thee are spoken," Adoremus Hymnal, #563

Begin

The apostles were taught by Christ. They were witnesses to his life, deeds, miracles, teachings, death, Resurrection, and Ascension. They were Christ’s closest followers, who knew him and his revelation most intimately. They passed on what Christ taught to his disciples. Some recorded their knowledge in the Gospels to ensure its transmission. Note: Can we have Scripture without Tradition? No! Scripture comes from Tradition.

Develop

1. Read paragraphs 12–18.
2. The apostles trained disciples in all that they knew to be revealed by Christ (many of these disciples were bishops in the Early Church). The leaders of the Church were very faithful in transmitting the truths of Christ carefully and in their entirety. The immediate disciples of the apostles are called the Apostolic Fathers.
3. Review that Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition (the Word of God) were entrusted to the apostles (the leaders of the Church) and, therefore, were entrusted to the Church to safeguard, interpret, and faithfully transmit.
4. In the Early Church there was some confusion over various teachings and thus clarification was needed. Christians turned to the Teaching Church (which has the duty to safeguard, interpret, and faithfully transmit the truth). The Magisterium (Teaching Church) is the Pope and the bishops in union with him. They gathered together in what is called an ecumenical council. This has certain requirements:
   - Universal invitation (all bishops invited)
   - Sufficient representation (most bishops attended)
   - Papal authorization (Pope has the last word, and if the bishops are not in union with the Pope, they do not have authority)

   Some doctrines clarified in ecumenical councils are: the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Eucharist, and Mary as Mother of God.

5. From some of the councils, in which Church teaching was clarified and our understanding of doctrine summarized, creeds were written to summarize our Faith and ensure that it is faithfully transmitted. Examples are the Apostles’ Creed, the Nicene Creed, and the Athanasian Creed.

Reinforce

1. Have the students work on Activity Book p. 14. (see Teacher’s Manual, p. 43)
2. Give the class time to work on the Memorization Questions and Words to Know from this chapter (see Teacher’s Manual, p. 43).
3. Have the students write summaries of the ecumenical councils and their primary teachings. Each student can research a different council and make a presentation for the other students. Be sure the students understand the importance and teachings of the first seven ecumenical councils.
4. The students may research different creeds and compare them.

Conclude

1. Lead the students in singing “Glorious things of thee are spoken,” Adoremus Hymnal, #563.
2. End class by leading the students in praying the Nicene Creed (see Teacher’s Manual, p. 343).

The students will learn that the Apostolic Fathers were instructed by the apostles. They will learn that creeds are formulations of the Faith, written as summaries for the faithful transmission of the Faith. They will learn that ecumenical councils (gatherings of all the bishops in union with the Pope) are called to clarify Church teaching.

### EARLY ECUMENICAL COUNCILS

- **First Nicaea, 325:** affirmed that Jesus is true God (same substance as the Father).
- **First Constantinople, 381:** affirmed the divinity of Holy Spirit.
- **Ephesus, 431:** proclaimed Mary Theotokos (God bearer) and affirmed the unity of Jesus as one Divine Person, even in the womb of Mary.
- **Chalcedon, 451:** affirmed that Jesus is one Divine Person with two natures: human and divine.
- **Second Constantinople, 553:** affirmed Church teaching on the Trinity and the Incarnation.

Cardinal Newman

John Henry Cardinal Newman was born in England in 1801. He was an Anglican scholar who founded the Oxford Movement in England in order to reform the Anglican Church. In many serious, learned, and holiest, Newman expressed the "Anglo-Catholic" position: One of his most important works was a book entitled "The Development of Christian Doctrine," in which he discussed how for Christ's understanding of her Faith deepened over time. His discussions of this question was the most complete treatment of it up until that time.

Eventually John Henry Newman was benedict the Pope of Christ's church through his studies and writings. Toward the end of his life he was made a Cardinal of the Church by Pope Pius IX.
Aims

The students will learn that the writings of the Fathers and Doctors of the Church are testimonies to the teachings of the Church. Church Fathers were recognized as special witnesses of the Faith. Church Doctors are saintly theologians of any century whose writings are outstanding in guiding the faithful at all times and who have been recognized officially by the Pope. Church Tradition is the testimony of what the faithful have believed over the centuries and what saints have thought, meditated on, and believed. They will learn that Popes have also written documents on the Faith. Some of these documents are decrees or expressions of the teachings of Christ, called encyclicals. The sensus fidelium is the testimony of what the faithful have believed over the centuries and what saints have thought, meditated on, and believed.

Materials

- Activity Book, p. 15
- "Glorious things of thee are spoken," A dorson Hymnal, #563

Activities

1. Read paragraphs 19–23 (up to Development of Doctrine).
2. Discuss the Church Fathers. They are saintly Christian writers of the early centuries of the Church, who are recognized as special witnesses of the Faith. They often wrote against heresies (false teachings) or helped people to better understand the Faith. Have the students read the list of the Fathers provided at right.
3. Discuss the Doctors of the Church. They are saintly theologians of any century whose writings are outstanding in guiding the faithful at all times and who have been recognized officially by the Pope. There are three women Doctors of the Church (Saint Thérèse of Lisieux was recently named as such). A list is provided on p.45 of this manual.
4. The Pope, by himself, can teach on matters of faith and morals. Often the Church is of one accord. However, there are times when new movements of thought that are contrary to the truths of Our Faith become popular. We must refer to the documents of the Church in order to understand the truths of Our Faith. For example, neo-gnosticism occasionally surfaces in an immoral culture, but referring to Church writings, we can be protected from error.

Develop

2. Give the class time to work on the Memorization Questions and Words to Know from this chapter.
3. Have the students think of an example of the sensus fidelium and its importance in the Church. (marian doctrines are a good example.)
4. Each student should choose an encyclical and explain it to the class.

Reinforce

1. Lead the students in singing "Glorious things of thee are spoken," A dorson Hymnal, p.343.
2. End class by leading the students in praying the Nicene Creed (see Teacher’s Manual, p. 343).

Conclusion

1. The Doctors of the Church or the saints who have been recognized as extraordinary witnesses of Our Lord’s teachings are called Doctors of the Church.
2. The Church Fathers are the "principal body of faith" from which all subsequent generations have continued to draw nourishment (CIC, 817). They are recognized as the "pillars of the Faith" and their teachings have been written down and preserved for future generations.
3. The sensus fidelium is the testimony of what the faithful have believed over the centuries, and what saints have thought, meditated on, and believed.
4. The Church has called the first ecumenical council of the Church to make certain that the teachings of the Church are known to all believers. The Council of Trullo was called to define the doctrine of the trinity.
5. The Church Fathers were the first to define the doctrine of the Trinity and to define the role of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Church.
6. The Church Fathers also defined the doctrine of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Church.
7. The Church Fathers also taught the doctrine of the Trinity in the life of the Church.
8. The Church Fathers also taught the doctrine of the Trinity in the life of the Church.

Preview

In the next lesson, the students will learn about the development of doctrine.
The students will learn that the deposit of Faith was completed with the death of Saint John; however, our understanding of the deposit of Faith has developed over the last two millennia. This growth in the Church’s understanding is called the development of doctrine which is the gradual unfolding of the meaning of the truths Christ has revealed to us.

The development of doctrine relies upon the sources of revelation as interpreted by the Magisterium, upon the Apostolic Fathers, Fathers and Doctors of the Church, and the *sensus fidelium*.

Review the box on Cardinal Newman in the student text. The students should appreciate the importance of his work on the development of doctrine.

1. Have the students work on *Activity Book* p. 16 (see *Teacher’s Manual*, p. 47).
2. Give the class time to work on the Memorization Questions and Words to Know from this chapter to prepare for the quiz and unit test.
3. The students may study the Immaculate Conception as an example of the development of doctrine.

Review the deposit of the Word of God and its communication through Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition. This is entrusted to the teaching Church, the Magisterium.

Review the Apostolic Fathers, councils, and creeds that help us to clarify our beliefs and transmit them to the faithful.

1. Read paragraphs 24–25, as well as the inset box on Cardinal Newman (to the end of the chapter).
2. Explain that the deposit of Faith was completed with the death of Saint John; however, our understanding of the deposit of Faith has developed over the last two millennia. This is called the development of doctrine: the gradual unfolding of the meaning of the truths that Christ revealed to us. To demonstrate this, explain that we all know our mothers. However, we grow in our understanding of their love through the sacrifices they make and their displays of this love (e.g., affection, gifts, ongoing support, etc.). As we grow older, we also learn about our parents’ relationship (how they met, how they fell in love, etc.) and who they are individually (hobbies, dreams, etc.). Although our understanding of our parents is growing, they have not changed (and in some way we already knew these things). We simply learn to communicate or articulate what we already knew: this person we call mom is the same person who dreams of her child’s wedding and children, loves her spouse and children, etc. All of this is what we mean by “mom” or “dad.”

1. Lead the students in singing “Glorious things of thee are spoken,” *Adoremus Hymnal*, #563.
2. End class by leading the students in praying the Nicene Creed (see *Teacher’s Manual*, p. 343).

In the next lesson, the students’ understanding of the material covered in this chapter will be reviewed and assessed. There will be a quiz and unit test.

1. Have the students work on *Activity Book* p. 16 (see *Teacher’s Manual*, p. 47).
2. Give the class time to work on the Memorization Questions and Words to Know from this chapter to prepare for the quiz and unit test.
3. The students may study the Immaculate Conception as an example of the development of doctrine.

**DOCTORS OF THE CHURCH**

(all are saints)

Albert the Great
Alphonso Ligorio
Ambrose of Milan
Anselm of Canterbury
Anthony of Padua
Augustine of Hippo
Basil the Great
Bernard of Clairvaux
Bonaventure
Catherine of Siena
Cyril of Alexandria
Cyril of Jerusalem
Francis de Sales
Gregory the Great
Hilary of Poitiers
Isidore of Seville
Jerome
John Chrysostom
John Damascene
John of the Cross
Lawrence of Brindisi
Peter Canisius
Peter Damian
Robert Bellarmine
Teresa of Avila
Thérèse of Lisieux
Thomas Aquinas

*Conclude*

1. Lead the students in singing “Glorious things of thee are spoken,” *Adoremus Hymnal*, #563.
2. End class by leading the students in praying the Nicene Creed (see *Teacher’s Manual*, p. 343).

**Q. 11**

What are the chief mysteries of Faith that we profess in the Creed?

The chief mysteries of Faith that we profess in the Creed are the Holy Trinity and the Incarnation, Passion, death, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ (pp. 185-190).

**Q. 12**

What is the deposit of Faith?

The deposit of Faith is that which is contained in Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition, handed on in the Church from the time of the Apostles, and from which the Magisterium derived all that it presents as having been revealed by God through Jesus Christ (CCC 44-81).

**Q. 13**

What is the development of doctrine?

The development of doctrine is the growth in understanding of God’s revelation through the study and prayer of believers and the teaching of the Magisterium (CCC 79-99).

**Q. 14**

What is the sensus fidelium?

The sensus fidelium is a supernatural appreciation of the Faith shown by universal consent in matters of Faith and morals, as expressed by the whole body of the faithful under the guidance of the Magisterium (CCC 43, 81).

**Q. 15**

What is the infallibility of the Church?

Infallibility means that the Church cannot err in matters of Faith and morals, as expressed by the whole body of the faithful under the guidance of the Magisterium (CCC 81).

**Q. 16**

What is the sensus fidelium as general council?

As an assembly or general council is a gathering of all the bishops of the world in the context of the Holy Spirit, because their eccl.

**Q. 17**

What is the sensus fidelium as general council?

As an assembly or general council is a gathering of all the bishops of the world in the context of the Holy Spirit, because their eccl.

**Q. 18**

What is the sensus fidelium as general council?

As an assembly or general council is a gathering of all the bishops of the world in the context of the Holy Spirit, because their eccl.

**Q. 19**

What is the sensus fidelium as general council?

As an assembly or general council is a gathering of all the bishops of the world in the context of the Holy Spirit, because their eccl.

**Q. 20**

What is the sensus fidelium as general council?

As an assembly or general council is a gathering of all the bishops of the world in the context of the Holy Spirit, because their eccl.
Aims

The students' understanding of the material covered in this chapter will be reviewed and assessed.

Materials

- Quiz 4, Appendix, p. A-4
- Optional: “Glorious things of thee are spoken,” Adoremus Hymnal, #563

Review and Enrichment

1. The students should understand God’s revelation. They must know the definition of revelation, the periods of revelation, the sources of revelation, and to whom revelation has been entrusted.

2. The students should be able to identify the Apostolic Fathers, the Church Fathers, and the Doctors of the Church.

3. The students should be able to write out one of the Church’s creeds from memory.

4. The students should know the number of councils. They should know from memory the names, dates, and doctrinal taught in the first seven councils.

5. The students should be able to give a biography of either a Father or Doctor of the Church.

6. The students should be able to explain encyclicals, the sensus fidelium, and the development of doctrine.

Name:

The Teaching Church Quiz 4

Part I: Matching.

1. What is a creed?
   a. revelation
   b. tradition
   c. Snyder
   d. c. Tradition
   e. Apostles’ Creed
   f. Doctors of the Church
   g. encyclical
   h. development of doctrine
   i. creed

   1. Is the Nicene Creed?
   2. What is the Apostles’ Creed?
   3. In what two ways is the Word of God passed on to us?
   4. What is the Apostles’ Creed?
   5. What is a Doctor of the Church?
   6. What is Sacred Scripture?
   7. What is Sacred Scripture?
   8. What is Sacred Tradition?
   9. What is Sacred Tradition?

   a. c. Apostolic Fathers
   b. a. Christ the Church
   c. Apostolic Fathers
   d. a. Christ the Church
   e. a. Christ the Church
   f. a. Christ the Church
   g. a. Christ the Church
   h. a. Christ the Church

   a. c. Apostolic Fathers
   b. a. Christ the Church
   c. Apostolic Fathers
   d. a. Christ the Church
   e. a. Christ the Church
   f. a. Christ the Church
   g. a. Christ the Church
   h. a. Christ the Church

Assess

1. Distribute the quizzes and read through them with the students to be sure they understand the questions.

2. Administer the quiz. As they hand in their work, you may orally quiz the students on the Memorization Questions from this chapter (see Teacher’s Manual, p. 45).

3. After all the quizzes have been handed in, review the correct answers with the class.

Conclude

1. Lead the students in singing “Glorious things of thee are spoken,” Adoremus Hymnal, #563.

2. End class by leading the students in praying the Nicene Creed (see Teacher’s Manual, p. 343).

Name:

Our Heritage of Faith

Write descriptions of the Fathers and Doctors of the Church below:

Fathers of the Church:

Answers will vary.

Doctors of the Church:

Answers will vary.

Name:

Revelation

Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

1. What is the living voice of the Church?
   a. Jesus Christ
   b. Sacred Tradition
   c. Holy Scripture
   d. Holy Church
   e. Holy Scripture
   f. Holy Church
   g. Holy Scripture
   h. Holy Church

   a. Jesus Christ
   b. Sacred Tradition
   c. Holy Scripture
   d. Holy Church
   e. Holy Scripture
   f. Holy Church
   g. Holy Scripture
   h. Holy Church

   a. Jesus Christ
   b. Sacred Tradition
   c. Holy Scripture
   d. Holy Church
   e. Holy Scripture
   f. Holy Church
   g. Holy Scripture
   h. Holy Church

Name:

Credos and Counsils

Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

1. What is a creed?
   a. A creed is a statement of belief.
   b. A creed is a creed.
   c. A creed is a creed.
   d. A creed is a creed.
   e. A creed is a creed.
   f. A creed is a creed.
   g. A creed is a creed.
   h. A creed is a creed.

   a. A creed is a statement of belief.
   b. A creed is a creed.
   c. A creed is a creed.
   d. A creed is a creed.
   e. A creed is a creed.
   f. A creed is a creed.
   g. A creed is a creed.
   h. A creed is a creed.

   a. A creed is a statement of belief.
   b. A creed is a creed.
   c. A creed is a creed.
   d. A creed is a creed.
   e. A creed is a creed.
   f. A creed is a creed.
   g. A creed is a creed.
   h. A creed is a creed.

Name:

Development of Doctrine

Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

1. What is the Nicene Creed?
   a. The Nicene Creed is the earliest summary of the Church’s beliefs.
   b. The Nicene Creed is the earliest summary of the Church’s beliefs.
   c. The Nicene Creed is the earliest summary of the Church’s beliefs.
   d. The Nicene Creed is the earliest summary of the Church’s beliefs.
   e. The Nicene Creed is the earliest summary of the Church’s beliefs.
   f. The Nicene Creed is the earliest summary of the Church’s beliefs.
   g. The Nicene Creed is the earliest summary of the Church’s beliefs.
   h. The Nicene Creed is the earliest summary of the Church’s beliefs.

   a. The Nicene Creed is the earliest summary of the Church’s beliefs.
   b. The Nicene Creed is the earliest summary of the Church’s beliefs.
   c. The Nicene Creed is the earliest summary of the Church’s beliefs.
   d. The Nicene Creed is the earliest summary of the Church’s beliefs.
   e. The Nicene Creed is the earliest summary of the Church’s beliefs.
   f. The Nicene Creed is the earliest summary of the Church’s beliefs.
   g. The Nicene Creed is the earliest summary of the Church’s beliefs.
   h. The Nicene Creed is the earliest summary of the Church’s beliefs.

   a. The Nicene Creed is the earliest summary of the Church’s beliefs.
   b. The Nicene Creed is the earliest summary of the Church’s beliefs.
   c. The Nicene Creed is the earliest summary of the Church’s beliefs.
   d. The Nicene Creed is the earliest summary of the Church’s beliefs.
   e. The Nicene Creed is the earliest summary of the Church’s beliefs.
   f. The Nicene Creed is the earliest summary of the Church’s beliefs.
   g. The Nicene Creed is the earliest summary of the Church’s beliefs.
   h. The Nicene Creed is the earliest summary of the Church’s beliefs.
TEACHER’S NOTES