

Our Catholic Identity in Christ

The Easter season is centered on the Resurrection of Jesus Christ – so it is an appropriate time for a fresh restart and personal spiritual renewal. For Catholics, a good place to start is by recalling our Catholic identity – knowing our Catholic identity gives us a clear direction on what we, individually, need to do to renew our spirits and to restart our faith journey. According to the Catechism, the deepest and ultimate identity of Catholics is that we are the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church; for it is in the Catholic Church that the kingdom of heaven already exists and will be fulfilled at the end of time (CCC 865).

The Church is One because we acknowledge one Lord, we confess one faith, we are born of one Baptism, we form only one Body, we are given life by one Spirit, for the sake of one hope (CCC 866). The Catholic Church is Holy because the Most Holy God is her Author, Christ is her Bridegroom, who gave Himself up to make her holy, and the Spirit of holiness gives her life (CCC 867). The Church is Catholic because she proclaims the fullness of



the faith, and she bears in herself and administers the totality of the means of salvation; she is sent to all peoples, speaks to

all men and encompasses all times (CCC 868). The Church is Apostolic because she is built on the lasting foundation of the 12 Apostles of the Lamb. Christ governs her through Peter and the other apostles, who are present in their successors – the Pope and the college of bishops (CCC 869).

What are the hallmarks of our Catholic identity? (1) our Baptism, which washes away original sin and makes a person a child of God, a new creation and a member of the Church. (2) our Sacramental life, in which we experience God's grace through sacramental signs in the seven sacraments. (3) our Unity in faith that is guarded by the Magisterium, which as the teaching office of the Church, ensures the Church's fidelity to the teachings of Christ which had been handed down through the Apostles. (4) our centrality in the Eucharist, which is the source and summit of Christian life, because it is the real presence of Jesus Christ. (5) our universal call to holiness, such that regardless of rank, state of life (married, single, ordained), or vocation—each one of us is called to the fullness of the Christian life, perfection of charity and sainthood.

What can we do as action items? (1) Learn more about our Catholic faith – the doctrines, the traditions, the scriptural interpretations and the history of the saints, (2) Respect and appreciate deeply the Church's sacraments, not taking them for granted but engaging in them fully in spirit.

At the same time, we need to grasp the fact that we are both justified and enduringly sinful, forgiven yet flawed, utterly secure yet left with much work to do, as we press on to that for which Christ Jesus has taken hold of us (cf. Philippians 3:12). We also need to keep seeking what is above, to think of what is above, not of what is on earth (cf. Colossians 3:1-2). What that means is to, with great intention, align our thoughts, desires and priorities with the heavenly, eternal, and godly, rather than the fleeting, sinful and worldly culture. This involves shifting our priorities from selfish, temporary pursuits to eternal

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realities, such as eternal life in heaven. This involves “putting to death” our sinful habits and to practice virtues like purity, kindness, patience, humility, and forgiveness.

Are we still carrying the burden of past hurts, anger and guilt? Now is the time to let it go completely, so that we can move forward without the excess baggage. Alleluia!

PARISH ANNOUNCEMENTS

Happy Easter! The Easter Egg Hunt for our parish children begins right after the 10:30 am Mass on Easter Sunday, followed by our community potluck. This will be our potluck for the month of April. Please bring your favorite dish to share. If you are celebrating your birthday in the month of April, we have ordered a birthday cake for you. We will also be drawing winners for our Easter potluck fundraising raffle. Please buy your tickets from Ticheng and Tian Shih.

Fr. Bill will administer the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick in the Sanctuary after the 10:30am Mass today.

Did you know that you can make donations to the church directly from your retirement account? Each time you make a distribution from your retirement account, it is counted as taxable income. However, if you make a donation (up to \$108,000), to qualified charities through QCD (Qualified Charitable Distributions), these donations, although not tax-deductible, are excluded from taxable income. Many older retired donors use this strategy to lower their taxable income, but it also satisfies Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs) without increasing their adjusted gross income (AGI). Consult your financial advisor or contact your retirement account specialist.

Prayer List: Tan Haiquan, Bian Meiyi, Chen Shupeng, Ni Yufang, Lydia Chen, David Wang, Chen Jianxin, Liang Chenjing and Xu Taicheng.

Mass Schedule	Confessions	Bible Study
Sundays 10:30 AM (Chinese)	By Appointment	Wednesdays 10:00 AM (Chinese)
Sundays 2:00 PM (English)		
	Anointing of the Sick	Eucharistic Adoration
Mondays 12:00 PM (English)	First Sundays after 10:30 AM Mass	Sundays 9:00 to 10:00 AM
Tuesdays 12:00 PM (English)	First Fridays after 7:00 PM Mass	
Wednesdays 12:00 PM (Chinese)		
Fridays 12:00 PM (English)		
First Friday 7:00 PM (English)		