

Homily Summary – 6th Sunday of Easter (Year C)

Overview

The beauty and universality of the Church come through in the readings of the day. The Church is not merely a human invention, but a divine institution founded by Jesus Christ. Through Scripture, history, and the witness of saints and believers, we see that the Church continues to be led by the Holy Spirit. In a world full of scandal and skepticism, the Church still stands as a source of unity, truth, and peace.

Key Points

1. **Pilgrimage Experience:** Highlights of the Italy pilgrimage, including Masses, sacred sites, encounters with the pope, and prayer at the tombs of saints. The parishioners were prayed for throughout the journey.
2. **The Church is Founded by Christ:** Jesus instituted the Church on the rock of Peter and promised that the gates of hell would not prevail against it. The Church is not man-made but divinely established and divinely protected.
3. **Jesus Has Not Abandoned the Church:** Despite scandals and failures, the Lord remains with His Church through the Holy Spirit, especially in the sacraments and teaching authority. He is faithful even when we are not.
4. **Fruitfulness of the Church:** The global outreach of the Church in education, healthcare, charity, and evangelization is unparalleled and points to divine guidance.
5. **Unity and Diversity:** The Church is visibly one, holy, catholic (universal), and apostolic. The pilgrimage revealed the beautiful diversity of peoples drawn to Christ through His Church.
6. **Biblical and Historical Foundation:** Scripture supports the visible structure of the Church, including the roles of bishops, priests, Sacraments, and public worship.
7. **Invitation to Trust:** Parishioners are encouraged to trust in Christ's promises, bring honest questions, and rediscover peace through the Church.
8. **Mary as Our Companion:** In the month of May, we turn to Mary, asking her to lead us more deeply into communion with Jesus and the Church.

Scripture Verses

- **Matthew 16:18** – “You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it.”
- **John 14:26** – “The Advocate, the Holy Spirit, ... will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you.”
- **1 Timothy 3:15** – “The Church of the living God, the pillar and bulwark of the truth.”
- **John 14:27** – “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives.”
- **Psalms 67:3** – “Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you.”

Catechism References

- **CCC 748–770** – The mystery of the Church as the Body of Christ and temple of the Holy Spirit.
- **CCC 811–870** – Marks of the Church: One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic.
- **CCC 857** – The apostolic nature of the Church built on the foundation of the apostles.
- **CCC 882–896** – The role of the Pope and bishops in governing the Church.
- **CCC 830–856** – The universality and mission of the Church.

Reflection Questions

1. Do I view the Church as something divine or merely human?
2. How have I experienced the peace of Christ through the Church?
3. What doubts or questions do I carry about the Church, and have I brought them honestly to Jesus?
4. How can I live more deeply in communion with the universal Church?
5. In what ways am I called to help renew and strengthen the Church with Christ today?

Rhyme Summary

I'm back from Rome with stories bright, of saints and Churches bathed in Christ's light.
The Pope, Saints' tombs, and art so grand—but Christ's true Church is also close at hand.
Built on Peter, Christ's Church still stands, in every tribe and every distant land.
The peace Christ gives, our world can't steal— for His Church, His love, and His peace are real.

Reasons to come to Mass each weekend

Hebrews 10:24-25 - "And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching."

Exodus 20:8 - "Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy."

Luke 22:19 - "Then he took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, 'This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.'"

Acts 2:42 - "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers."

John 6:53-54 - "So Jesus said to them, 'Very truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day.'"

Psalms 122:1 - "I was glad when they said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the Lord!'"

Matthew 18:20 - "For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them."

Colossians 3:16 - "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God."

Additional resources to learn more about God and the Catholic faith

- Check out the resource list available on www.frmerkley.com
- Catholic Answers: <https://www.catholic.com/>
- Word on Fire: <https://www.wordonfire.org/>
- Formed: <https://formed.org/>
- The Coming Home Network: <https://chnetwork.org/>
- Catholic Exchange: <https://catholicexchange.com/>
- Dynamic Catholic: <https://dynamiccatholic.com/>
- The Augustine Institute: <https://augustineinstitute.org/>
- Ascension Press: <https://ascensionpress.com/>
- EWTN: <https://www.ewtn.com/>
- The Catholic Company: <https://www.catholiccompany.com/>
- Busted Halo: <https://bustedhalo.com/>
- CatholicCulture.org: <https://www.catholicculture.org/>
- The Thomistic Institute: <https://thomisticinstitute.org/>
- Ignatius Press: <https://www.ignatius.com/>
- Catholic Education Resource Center (CERC): <https://www.catholiceducation.org/>