



CENTRE FOR MISSIONARY LEADERSHIP

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*A work of the Missionaries of God's Love*

# The Role of the Holy Spirit in the Church's Mission

Theological Foundations of Mission 12

Inspire us to give  
generously of  
ourselves, so that  
people may be drawn  
into the mystery of  
love, and experience  
the fullness of life.



# The Magnificence at the Heart of the Mess

- The Holy Sepulchre
- Not all magnificence, not all mess – but a mix
- Addressing a common dynamic – initial conversion, but then come down to earth with a rude shock through negative experience of the church
- Of course, some people only see the mess and never get to the magnificence
- Revisiting Acts 2:42-47 – one, holy, catholic, apostolic



# Why this topic?

- When we are committed to the renewal of the Church it is easy to become critical, especially of leaders.
  - Temptation to become jaded
- The opposite temptation: is to love the Church so much that we are blind to the failings
- Also want to understand the Church better: the impact of the Age of Authenticity upon our perception of the Church
  - Understanding “rad trad” phenomenon through the lens of Charles Taylor
  - Understanding the “Church on my terms” phenomenon through the lens of Charles Taylor
- So the goal of today: is to understand the Church a little better



# The Church

- “The Church has no other light than Christ’s; according to a favourite image of the Church Fathers, the Church is like the moon, all its light reflected from the sun” (CCC 748)
- *Ekklesia* – “called out of”. Assembly of the people – OT and NT
- Liturgical assembly, local community, and universal community of believers – “inseparable”
- One, holy, catholic, apostolic
- profiles



# One

- unity – from the Trinity (her founder, Jesus, and her soul, the Spirit)
- great diversity
- To be committed for unity



# Holy

- The Church is holy because Christ loves her as his Bride
- Is the Body of Christ
- The Church is sanctified by Christ and with him sanctifies her members
- The Church's sanctity is imperfect
- The Church is to "follow constantly the path of penance and renewal" (LG 8)
- Mary – "in her, the Church is already the "all-holy"



# catholic

- Catholic means “universal”, or “in keeping with the whole”
- Church is catholic because Christ is present and receives from him the fullness of the means of salvation
- Church is catholic because she has been “sent out by Christ on a mission to the whole of the human race” (CCC 830)
- Particular churches (dioceses) are catholic, united under their bishop and in communion with the Church of Rome



# Apostolic

- Founded upon the apostles
- Through the Spirit, the Church keeps and hands on the teaching of the Apostles
- The Church continues to be taught, sanctified and guided by the Apostles through their successors, the bishops in union with the successor of Peter (the pope)



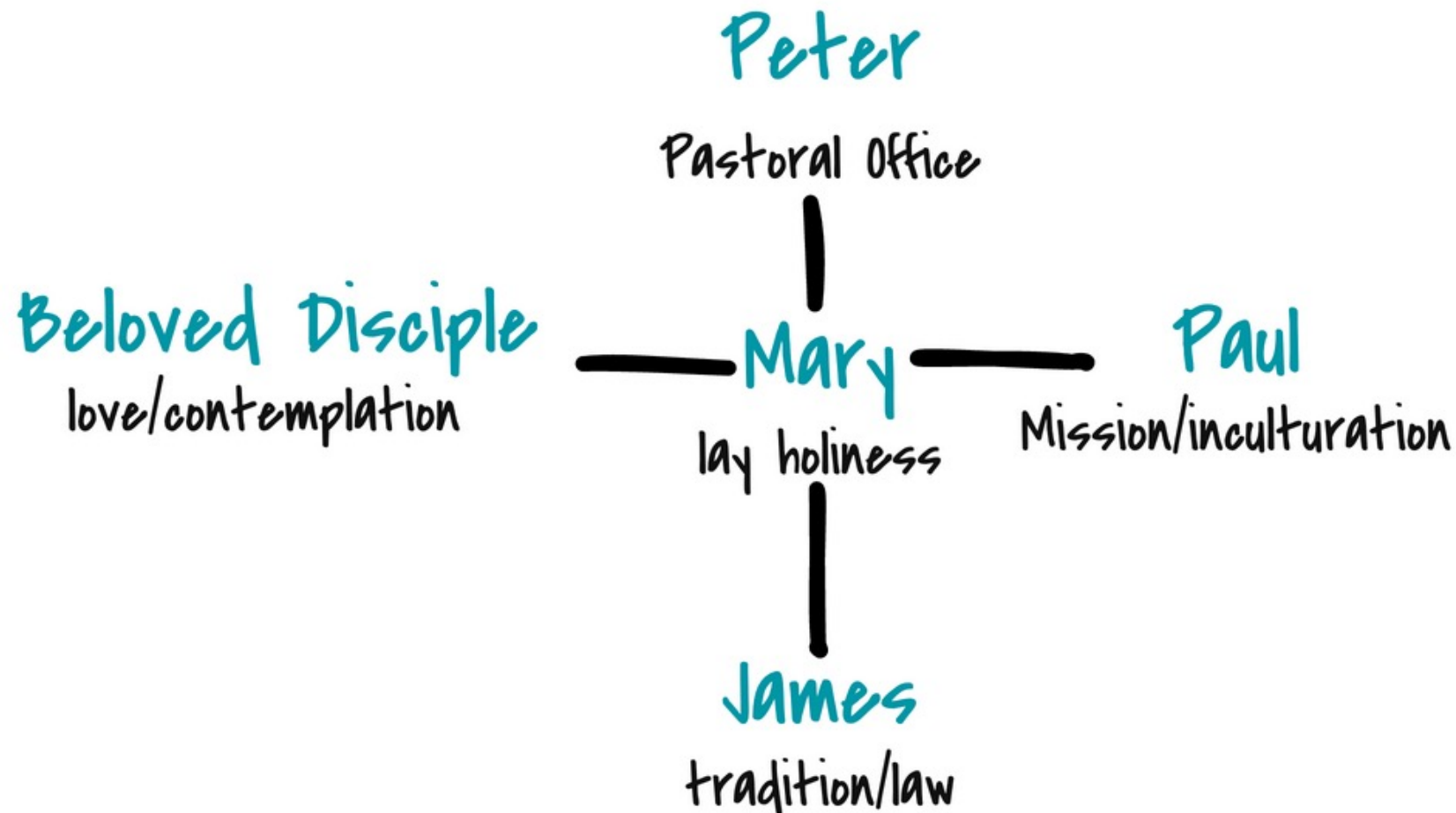
# Who (not what) is the Church?

- The Christological constellation (Hans Urs von Balthasar)
  - Incarnation (Jesus is the Spirit-filled Son of God)
  - Fully human, which means he is a social being – his relationships with others is important
  - Revelatory – his key relationships are actually significant for understanding the Church: a “constellation around” Jesus that constitutes the Church’s identity



# 5 Key Figures: Mary and the "Apostolic Foursome"

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# 5 key figures (Mary and the “Apostolic foursome”)

- Mary
  - The centre, the model of all being and acting in the Church
  - Centrality of her *fiat* – by which the Son of God becomes man
  - The image of holiness in the Church: “the whole countenance of the Church is a Marian transparency to Christ” (Leahy, Marian Profile, p66).
  - Lay, faithful, and holy
- Peter
  - The pastoral office, hierarchy, governance
- John
  - Contemplation, love, unity
- Paul
  - Universal mission, inculturation, adaptation, freedom, irruption of new charisms
- James
  - Tradition, Christ as fulfilment of OT



# The Apostolic Foursome's missions

- Mutual goal of all four missions: to serve holiness > eschatological fulfilment (which means all oriented towards Marian centre)
- Real tension between the missions of the foursome
- Necessary and important tension – the missions of the apostolic foursome can go wrong:
  - John: descend to universal benevolence, Gnosticism, super-spiritual
  - Paul: adaptation becomes accommodation
  - James: reactionary, traditionalism
  - Peter: control and power, organisation
- Indwelling: like the Trinity, the four indwell each other and find full expression in Mary



# The Marian Principal and Parish Renewal

“Perhaps it is particularly necessary for our times to look at Mary. To see her as she shows herself, not as we like to imagine her. To see her, above all, in order not to forget her essential role in the work of salvation and in the Church. She really shows herself and defines herself as the archetypal Church, upon whose form we should form ourselves. We: that means every single Christian and what it means, perhaps even more, our image of what the Church is. We are forever concerned with reshaping and improving the Church in accordance with the demands of the time, following the criticisms of our opponents and our own models. But do we not thereby lose sight of the one fulfilled standard, indeed the Model? Should we not constantly keep our eyes fixed on Mary in our reforms, not in any way to multiply the Marian feastdays, devotions or indeed definitions, but rather simply to know what Church, what ecclesial Spirit, and what ecclesial behaviour really is?”



# The Marian Principle and Parish Renewal (2)

“Without Mariology, Christianity threatens to become inhuman. The Church becomes functionalistic, soulless, a hectic enterprise without any point of rest, made unfamiliar by the planners. And because, in this manly-masculine world, all that we have is one ideology replacing another, everything becomes polemical, critical, bitter, humourless, and ultimately boring, and people in their masses run away from such a Church” von Balthasar, *Elucidations*, 112).



# The Holy Spirit and the Church

- Acts 2 (again)
- The Spirit at work in our lives (anthropology)
- The Spirit at work in the Church (ecclesiology)
- These are actually inseparable
- The Spirit co-constitutes the Church with Christ



# The Holy Spirit and Mission

- The Church is the place where the Spirit flourishes (*Apostolic Tradition*, 35)
- The Spirit is the “principal agent” of mission (RM 21)
- “Spirit-filled evangelisers” (EG 259)



# The Spirit and the Process of Evangelisation

- Witness, dialogue, presence in charity
- The proclamation of the Gospel and the call to faith and conversion
- The catechumenate
- Initiation (and mystagogy)
- Forming a Christian community/Missionary discipleship



# Intercession

- "This dogma [I believe in the Holy Spirit] means that the life and activity of the Church can be seen totally as an epiclesis" - Yves Congar
- EG 280 Yet there is no greater freedom than that of allowing oneself to be guided by the Holy Spirit, renouncing the attempt to plan and control everything to the last detail, and instead letting him enlighten, guide and direct us, leading us wherever he wills. The Holy Spirit knows well what is needed in every time and place. This is what it means to be mysteriously fruitful!
- How?



# The Holy Spirit's Gifts

1. Sanctifying grace – wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, fear of the Lord
  - Gratuitous, Rom 12:3-8 graces of service – charisms
2. Charisms – 1 Cor 12:11, 30 – charisms given to individuals as the Spirit wishes
  - 1 Cor 12-14; Ephesians 4:7-16, 1 Pet 4:10-11, Rom 12:3-8



# Charisms

[G]race also includes the gifts that the Spirit grants us to associate us with his work, to enable us to collaborate in the salvation of others and in the growth of the Body of Christ, the Church... There are furthermore special graces, also called charisms after the Greek term used by St. Paul and meaning “favor,” “gratuitous gift,” “benefit.” Whatever their character ... charisms are oriented toward sanctifying grace and are intended for the common good of the Church. They are at the service of charity which builds up the Church.

(CCC 2003)



# Vatican II – *Lumen Gentium* 12

It is not only through the sacraments and the ministries of the Church that the Holy Spirit sanctifies and leads the people of God and enriches it with virtues, but, “allotting his gifts to everyone according as He wills, He distributes special graces among the faithful of every rank.

By these gifts He makes them fit and ready to undertake the various tasks and offices which contribute toward the renewal and building up of the Church, according to the words of the Apostle: “The manifestation of the Spirit is given to everyone for profit”. These charisms, whether they be the more outstanding or the more simple and widely diffused, are to be received with thanksgiving and consolation for they are perfectly suited to and useful for the needs of the Church.

Extraordinary gifts are not to be sought after, nor are the fruits of apostolic labor to be presumptuously expected from their use; but judgment as to their genuinity and proper use belongs to those who are appointed leaders in the Church, to whose special competence it belongs, not indeed to extinguish the Spirit, but to test all things and hold fast to that which is good.



# Charisms and the Church

- Charisms are for the Church's mission
- Charism v hierarchy/Institution?
  - Charism and institution co-constitute the Church
- Group Charisms and individual charisms
- The Charisms create a “matrix of Conversion” (Gelpi)



# *Velis et Remis* – With Sails and Oars

