



LESSON 7

The Church



Learning Objectives

In this lesson you will:

- Learn that the Holy Spirit is always with the Church, helping to guide her teachings.
- Identify the Pope and our Maronite Patriarch as teachers of right and wrong, based on the Gospels.
- Discover various ways the Church teaches us how to live good and holy lives.

Opening Prayer

O Lord, send forth the Holy Spirit to guide our Church and our leaders. Help us to be holy. Amen.



Opening Activity

Scan the QR code to access the online resources.

FaithOfTheMountain.org/grade4/lesson7

Introduction

To follow Jesus is to follow the Church and all of her teachings. In this lesson, we will look at the Church and how she continues Jesus' mission to spread the truth to the ends of the world.

Jesus is the head and founder of the Catholic Church. He is also her greatest teacher, for he taught people about God's Law of Love not by words alone, but by dying for all mankind. Before he ascended into heaven, he promised to send the Holy Spirit to the apostles to help them be good teachers. Today, through the ongoing help of the Holy Spirit, the Church continues the teaching work of the apostles. The Church helps us communicate with God and teaches us how to follow Jesus and live as good Maronites.

Reflection Questions

1. *Name two things you like about being a member of the Maronite Catholic Church?*
2. *How can you grow in your relationship with the Holy Spirit?*



Point **1**

The Holy Spirit Helps the Church

The Church teaches us how to talk with God, even though we cannot see him with our eyes or hear him with our ears. The word “**church**” means “assembly” or “gathering.” A church is a group of people who come together because they have the same faith. They want to follow Jesus in the same way.

When Jesus was forming his church, he called twelve men to be his **apostles**. Jesus taught them about God and the Law of Love. Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit to the apostles. The Holy Spirit is the third person of Holy Trinity. The Spirit is Lord and the giver of life. This Spirit would give them the grace to be transformed into good teachers and followers of Jesus. On **Pentecost** Sunday, fifty days after the glorious Resurrection of Jesus, while the apostles were praying together, the Holy Spirit came upon them in the form of tongues of fire. You can read the story in the Acts of the Apostles 2:1-13.



Point **2**

The Church's Teachers

Just as the Holy Spirit taught the apostles, the Holy Spirit is the Church's main teacher. During his life on earth, Jesus chose Saint Peter to be the head of the twelve apostles and lead the worldwide Church. Before Saint Peter and the apostles died, they chose other men to take their place. These men continued to teach the Good News about Jesus. Today we call these men **Bishops** because they act as shepherds, or spiritual teachers, of every Church member.

The Bishop of Rome takes the place of Saint Peter because Saint Peter was the first bishop of Rome and was buried there. He is head of the whole Church. We call him the **Pope**. One way the Pope teaches is by writing **encyclicals**, which are letters to the entire Church. Our Maronite Church is in full union with the Bishop of Rome (Roman Catholic Church). Our leader is the **Patriarch**. He, too, is a bishop. He works with the Pope to lead and teach the Good News of Jesus.

The patriarch and other bishops teach by writing **pastoral letters**, which are sent to the people in their area.

Point 3

Other Ways of Teaching

The Church teaches the Good News in other ways, too. Here are some examples:

The Prayer of Forgiveness. At the start of every Divine Liturgy, there is a beautiful prayer called the **Hoosoyo**, or prayer of forgiveness. It teaches us about the day's feast. It prepares us to hear the Scripture readings.

The homily. This talk is given by the **priest** or **deacon**. It explains the day's Scripture readings. Often, the homily also teaches us how to apply the readings to our everyday actions. The homily can also teach about a particular saint or a specific teaching of the Church.

Our actions. When we follow the message of Jesus and show others what the Good News means, we act as teachers and become better followers of Jesus.



Activity 1

Identify the Apostle

Directions: Scripture contains fascinating stories about the Twelve Apostles. Look up the verse below and identify which apostle or apostles appear in the icon.



John 20:26-29

Apostle: _____



Mark 1:19-20

Apostles: _____



Matthew 16:18

Apostle: _____

Activity 2

Word Search

F W I U A P R R N P L C D H Z D N R
 K F N O Z J A O H Z R C L P P K P L
 U V R H K U Q T V T X I U W E H H A
 W I T P C D T K R G H E E X S O W F
 O Z A P O S T L E I W D F S D O P P
 Z L P U I L E J D B A Q L L T S F W
 P O P E P V V J E I E R K W T O P Z
 H Y G D B G O P A S V H C G V Y V U
 G P J V J X L N C H B T G H N O Q I
 X X Q G B P Q J O O E Y I K E T Z E
 T C V V S L A J N P T M H X S N J H
 D G F S U M O F S K E V Y S G L Q L

Words

patriarch
 apostle
 hoosoyo
 bishop

deacon
 priest
 pope



Maronite Hymn



O Merciful Father of Truth

Refrain:

O Merciful Father of Truth, take from us this offering.
The offering of Your Son the Savior, sea of love
and forgiveness.

Verse:

O First-born of the Father, Jesus the beloved Savior.
You are alive O Son of God, You are alive O Crucified One.



Listen to the hymn.

FaithOfTheMountain.org/grade4/lesson7/hymn



My Role Model

Saint Ephrem the Syrian

Saint Ephrem was famous for being a great teacher. As a deacon, he gave homilies. He also wrote religious poetry and songs. He taught religious education classes. He always found time to do good works. He always answered people's questions about how they should act as Christians. Ephrem lived in Nisibis (modern-day Turkey) in the fourth century. Even though that time was very different from today, Ephrem wrote with lasting wisdom. What he wrote is still an important part of our prayers today. Saint Ephrem is sometimes called the "Pillar of the Church" and the "Harp of the Holy Spirit." He is the only Father of the Syriac Tradition that the Church honors with the title "Doctor of the Church." The Church honors Saint Ephrem on January 28.

Saint Ephrem, pray for us.

Recall



Underline the correct word to complete each sentence.

1. A (**Church** | **Pentecost**) is a group of people who have the same faith.
2. Jesus chose twelve men to be his (**deacons** | **apostles**).
3. The Holy Spirit came to the apostles on (**Easter** | **Pentecost**).
4. The leader of the Catholic Church is the (**pope** | **patriarch**).
5. An (**pastoral letter** | **encyclical**) is a letter written by the pope to the whole Church.
6. Another name for the Prayer of Forgiveness in the Divine Liturgy is (**Hoosoyo** | **homily**).
7. The main teacher of the Church is the (**Holy Spirit** | **patriarch**).

Weekly Journal



This Sunday pay attention to the *Hoosoyo* and think about how well you followed Jesus' message throughout the week.

Write: Describe one way you have followed Jesus this past week and one way you plan to follow him this coming week.

Concluding Prayer



O Holy Spirit, you make us holy and you teach the simple. You came upon the apostles and granted the power of being your witnesses. Grant that we may walk according to your gifts, in order to bear your name and announce the Good News of Jesus. Through our example, may the whole world believe in you and find life, now and for ever. Amen.

Climbing the Mountain

Bonus Materials for Students & Teachers



Acts 2:1-6

Coming of the Holy Spirit

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.

Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each.

Reflection

On Pentecost, the apostles began to teach people about Jesus and his Law of Love. By the power of the Holy Spirit, they became very good teachers. That first day, over three thousand people became followers of Jesus. Strengthened by the Holy Spirit, the apostles now had the power to proclaim the Good News courageously to all nations. In order to share our Maronite Catholic Faith, we must first receive the Holy Spirit, for we cannot give what we do not have. The Holy Spirit also unites us to all of the apostles, their descendants, and each other.

Saintly Quote

“The Church, though dispersed throughout the whole world, even to the ends of the earth, has received from the apostles and their disciples this faith” — *Saint Irenaeus*

Questions

1. How does what happened on Pentecost affect your life?
2. Why is it special that the Church traces its roots back to Jesus and the first apostles?

Reaching the Summit

For Teachers & Parents



“The mission of Christ and the Holy Spirit is brought to completion in the Church, which is the Body of Christ and the Temple of the Holy Spirit. This joint mission henceforth brings Christ’s faithful to share in his communion with the Father in the Holy Spirit. The Spirit prepares men and goes out to them with his grace, in order to draw them to Christ. The Spirit manifests the risen Lord to them, recalls his word to them, and opens their minds to the understanding of his Death and Resurrection. He makes present the mystery of Christ, supremely in the Eucharist, in order to reconcile them, to bring into communion with God, that they may ‘bear much fruit.’” — CCC 737

Spreading the Faith

The Holy Spirit is always with us, teaching and guiding us. With the Spirit’s help, there is always something new to learn about Jesus. There is always something more we can do to grow in holiness. But holiness is not just about us. It is about bringing others to Christ and ultimately to heaven. Yes, it is the Holy Spirit who brings us into communion with Christ and his Church.

In the Gospel according to Matthew, Christ gave his disciples the Great Commission. These were his last recorded words in the Gospel:

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age” (28:19-20).

There are many ways to spread our Maronite Catholic Faith. The Church has relied on print materials, such as eparchial magazines and bulletins. These materials inform us about Church teachings. They help us develop our conscience and make good decisions. In addition, we have the writings of the saints and Church Fathers to help us.

Also, religious education classes explain the Church’s faith. Certain classes prepare people to take part in the Holy Mysteries. Some classes are for children; other classes are for teenagers or adults.

With technological advances, our Maronite Catholic Faith can be learned and shared through Catholic websites and even over social media.

Discussion Questions

1. How can you foster a greater love for the Pope, the Patriarch, and our religious leaders in your children?
2. What are some practical things you can do to spread the Catholic Faith and teach your children to do likewise?

Words to Know



Q. What is a **patriarch**?

A. The father or head of a family. The leader of the Maronite Church is called the Patriarch of Antioch and All the East. The first patriarch of the Maronite Church was Saint John Maron.

Q. What is **Pentecost**?

A. A feast that takes place fifty days after Easter. On Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came upon the apostles and filled them with new life and courage.

Q. What is a **pope**?

A. The Bishop of Rome and leader of the worldwide Catholic Church. Saint Peter was the first pope.



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more information.**

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