

**Saint Raymond Church**  
**Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults**  
**Jesus 404: Jesus Founds the Church**

1. Preparing for the Church: the life of God's Chosen People. The Church is born from the heart of God the Father – gradually! The Church will not be “complete” (perfect) until the end of time.

- Creation – God creates us to be united with himself and each other, this “gathering” is the first thought of the Church. Some have said that the world was created for the benefit of the Church!
- Abraham – revelation of ONE God who will have his own people (a great people)
- Moses – the formation of this people into Israel, a nation. Their ritual and life is the preparation for the Messiah. The prophets continue this with their promise of a new and eternal covenant.
- All of history before Jesus in a preparation for the Church.

2. The Church in the life of Jesus

- Jesus is born among the people – he knows our struggles, pains and joys. The Church must always be connected to reality to be truly the Church.
- The Church is formed by the preaching of the word of God: the Kingdom is at hand! Jesus makes it clear that he wants people to come together in a community (“it is not good for man to be alone”)
- Jesus establishes a structure when he chooses the apostles (the headship of Peter revealed through Scripture including at the empty tomb)
- The Church is formed especially through the gift of Christ on the Cross (just as Eve was born from the side of Adam, so the Church is born from the side of Christ)

3. Pentecost: the Birth of the Church

- The Church was given an external birth at Pentecost with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.
- The Holy Spirit continues to guide the Church through spiritual gifts (preaching, service, teaching, hospitality, healing, etc.) and hierarchical gifts (leadership, teaching, ordained ministry, etc.)

4. The Church throughout the Ages

- It is hard to summarize the history of the Church in just a few minutes
- Early Church: movement from a few Jewish believers, to more Jewish converts who met in synagogues and homes, to accepting Gentiles; movement away from the synagogue and a unique identity and with it the persecution begins; the Church remains persecuted until 313 AD

#### 5. Breathing with Both Lungs: East and West

- 1009 AM East and West split over the role of the Pope (Roman Empire was divided by the Emperor in 292 AD) (creation of Orthodox Church)
- In 1274 AD the Council of Lyons re-established union with the East – allowing them to keep their own liturgies and customs
- Many different “churches” – united to Rome (Byzantine Catholic Church, Greek Catholic Church, Armenian Catholic Church, Coptic Catholic Church, Malabar Catholic Church)

#### 6. The Marks of the Church: One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic

- ONE: in its founder (God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) and her mission – this does not discount diversity. Union is especially noted in profession of faith, sacraments, union with Pope, and charity
- HOLY: her founder, and her mission – it is all about holiness!
- CATHOLIC – her universal mission to all (discuss the Church’s “relationship” with other Christians, Jews & Muslims, and non-believers)
- APOSTOLIC – we must go out to others (we are founded by the apostles and continue their mission today)

#### 7. The Hierarchy of the Church

- Christ established an order to govern his Church (Scripture records this)
- The bishops are successors to the apostles
- The pope is the successor to Peter
- Priests and deacons serve the bishop
- The whole orientation must be service – not power