

1. **History is important** and understanding history means we have to understand *the story* – who are these people and how did their lives affect our lives. If we don't understand our past, then we don't have an identity with our past and if we don't understand our past then we cannot shape our future; the present will not make sense.
2. To fully understand our faith, we must understand our past and how it forms our identity of who we are as a church. We are going to *learn* more than just our *family history*, we are going to learn our family's *genealogy*.
3. Our *family* is the *Mystical Body of Christ*. To understand this *family*, we need to *know* something about all those members over the past 2000 years. It's like finding a family trunk that has documents that are hundreds of years old and learning about your ancestors. How did their decisions affect your life now?
4. Stories help us remember. While chapter and verse are good to know, the story holds the message and gives the entire picture. "*People recount their history through narratives.*" Pope John Paul II.
5. **Catholic Conscience of History**: As Catholics, we should have an *intimate knowledge* of the history of our Church, and also the history of Western Civilization. Sometimes we have been given legends and false history, but we will learn the *rest of the story*
- What is Church? History is linear. History progresses, there is a beginning to history; there is an end to history and there is a central event to history.** – St. Augustine
 - Beginning of History event: God creates
 - Central Event: *radiates both forward and backwards in history*; the Coming of God, Jesus Christ. **Christ is the center and foundation of history**
 - End of History event – God will come again, and the earth will pass away
 - He (God) has always been with The Church
 - He is now with The Church
 - He will always be with The Church
 - Christ founded The Church (Salvific Mission)**: He gave His power and His authority to His Apostles to continue to spread His mission to everyone in the whole world. The Church's mission IS Christ's mission.
 - The Church is a mystery.** There is both a visible and invisible element to The Church
 - Visible element: Church History – people called by God to be members of His Church and participate in His mission these last 2000 yrs.
 - Invisible element: The Church is made up of
 - The Church in Purgatory
 - The Church in Heaven (The *Communion of Saints*)
 - The Church on earth (The Church *Militant*)
 - The Church** is at the same time **holy**, yet she also **contains sinners**; The Church is **holy, animated and guided by the Holy Spirit**.
The Holy Spirit is active and present in The Church; without the Holy Spirit, The Church would have crumbled long ago.
The Church is in history, but at the same time she transcends it. It is only with the eyes of faith that one can see her in her visible reality and at the same time in her spiritual reality, as a bearer of divine life. (CCC 770)
- This Study: Going to focus on the *VISIBLE element* but always keep *INVISIBLE element* in mind (Holy Spirit guiding and animating The Church).
- The Church is not the end of Church history but the beginning of your continued studies to learn more about the *Central Event*
- Best way to understand history is to see it as a story, a narrative. Every story has a beginning. We will begin with the last book in the Bible: ACTS of the Apostles and the *main event* is **Pentecost**.

MUSTARD SEED: PENTECOST, 33 AD: 1st Time Period (33 – 99 AD): Apostles are *sent out* to continue Christ's *salvific mission* and 3000 converted first day.

The Church will face persecution throughout 2000 years and the first is stoning of Stephen.

PERSECUTION: 2nd Time Period: Roman persecutions focus but *theme of persecution* pervades every time period. *Attitude of Martyrs*: love of Christ so great, they could forgive those who harmed them. (Main characters: Emperor Claudius, Conversion of Saul/Paul, St. Stephen Martyr, Apostle: James the Greater¹). Apostles begin missionary journeys: throughout Europe, India, Persia.

Apostle Paul (45 – 58 AD): His journey had 3 *main effects*

1. He helped lay the seed for the growth of The Church throughout known Roman Empire
2. He built up Christian communities wherever he traveled and mentored to them
3. He wrote many letters to the communities he established (wrote 13 of 27 books of OT)

First Challenge of The Church Council of Jerusalem, 49 AD: (Direct result of Paul's Missionary work)

Should the Gentiles coming into The Church follow traditional Jewish dietary laws including circumcision? Two opinions:

St. Paul: No to circumcision; Yes, to some dietary laws –

St. James (Bishop of Jerusalem): Yes, must become Jewish, follow all dietary laws, and become circumcised

St. Peter's decision: No to circumcision; Follow these dietary laws: 1. Do not eat meat offered to false gods, 2. Do not eat the animal flesh of strangled animals, 3. Do not engage in Temple prostitution

1st Major Persecution of The Church: Rome is burned, Emperor Nero blames Christians so he made it illegal to be a Christian in Roman Empire for over 300 years. Christians were arrested and executed in horrific ways. (Suggested additional reading: *Quo Vadis*)

Destruction of Jerusalem (70 AD): Historian **Josephus** wrote an eye-witness account of battle to take Jerusalem by Roman General Vespasian and his son Titus. (**FYI**: The armies camped out on Mount of Olives and used wood from Gethsemane to build the weapons that took Jerusalem.) Over 1 Million Jews murdered, survivors sold into slavery and dispersed, the Temple was destroyed, sacred Menorah is taken to Rome. (**FYI**: No Christians died as Jesus had told them to look for the signs and leave).

DIDACHE, 80 AD: Teaching of 12 Apostles. Early manual of Christian living and worship and begins:

There are two ways, one in life and one of death and great is the difference between the two ways.

Pope John Paul II stated these early Christians already understood the importance of human life and imitating Jesus; the importance of the dignity and worth of every human life. How do we live this way of life?

1. 10 Commandments: Live a life in accordance with the 10 commandments
2. Imitate Jesus: Be Christ in the world

St. John the Baptist ***He must increase, and I must decrease.*** Christ is the one whom we are called to present. **When people see us, they should see Christ, not ourselves.** Our whole life as Christians, the whole call to holiness should be based on growing closer to Him; having an **intimate relationship** with Him through the reading of the scriptures, through participation in the life of The Church, in the sacraments so filled with His grace. This way we can then be Him to others so that others can enter into that great relationship with Him, and all can be members of *The Church*.

Didache says if you are doing these things, you are on a path of death

- Commit murder
- Commit adultery
- Steal
- Break the 10 commandments
- Use contraception
- Participate in abortion

DIDACHE: Further instructions.

- Rite of Baptism – similar to what we do today
- Prayer – at least 3x daily (Our Father)
- Eucharist – Reserved only for those who are baptized Christians, welcomed into the Faith and taught the Faith so that we can maintain unity and fully participate in this great and wonderful **HOLY SACRAMENT** of the Lord's body and blood.

Why can't protestants receive the Eucharist? There were no Protestants until the 1500's, so this was **APOSTOLIC TRADITION** was continued only in the Catholic Church, so only baptized Catholics can receive Holy Communion)

- Appointing bishops and deacons: Must be *worthy men who live moral and upright lives.*

Reasons why The Church Spread

- Empire at Peace during this time period
- Cultural Unity: Greek was common language. Latin was official language of Empire
- Empire Imperial people very religious; believed in many gods including Emperor at times
- **PERSECUTION #2: Emperor Domitian** (81-96 AD): Named himself a *god*; killed his own family; **St John the Apostle** martyred during this time.
- Pope St Clement: One of the first popes; taught by Sts. Peter and Paul. Wrote a letter to The Church in Corinthia when uprising threatened the authority of the priest and deacons. He wrote
 - *Disgraceful, beloved, indeed, exceedingly disgraceful and worthy of your training in Christ is the report that the well-established and ancient Church of Corinthians is thanks to one or two individuals and revolt against the presbyteries and this report is reached not only us but also people that differ from us in religion. So, St. Clement says, You're in revolt against your presbyteries.*

Three main points to his letter:

1. The clergy derive their authority from God, not from the people
2. Apostolic succession
3. Universal primacy of the Bishop of Rome

¹**St James, the Greater:** Nothing is known of St. James the Greater's early life, though it has been established that he is the son of Zebedee and Salome and brother of John the disciple. The title "the Greater" was added to St. James' name to help distinguish him from the Apostle James "the Less," who is believed to have been shorter than James "the Greater." Saint James the Greater was one of Jesus' first disciples. James was fishing with his father and John the Apostle when Jesus came to the shores of the Sea of Galilee and called for the fisherman, who were unable to catch any fish that day, to dip their nets in the water once again. When the fishermen followed Jesus' instructions, they found their nets full, and after emptying the fish on board, the boats nearly sank from their weight. Later, James was one of only three called by Jesus to witness his Transfiguration, and when he and his brother wanted to call fire upon a Samaritan town, both were rebuked by Jesus. Following Christ's Ascension, James spread the Gospel across Israel and the Roman kingdom as well. He traveled and spread the Word for nearly forty years in Spain. It is said that one day, as he prayed, The Blessed Virgin Mary appeared to him and asked him to build her a church, which he did. Later, James returned to Jerusalem but was martyred for his faith by King Herod, who decapitated him. Saint James the Greater is known as the first apostle to die. As he was not allowed to be buried following his martyrdom, his remains were taken to Compostela, Spain, by some of his followers, who buried him. In the ninth century his remains were discovered and moved to a tomb in Santiago de Compostela. Today, his remains can still be found in the Cathedral of Santiago. Because Santiago de Compostela is the most frequently visited place pilgrims migrate to following Rome and Jerusalem, Pope Leo declared it a shrine.