

DIPPING INTO THE CATECHISM

19

From the Compendium of the Catechism: paragraphs 189 – 196

How do the lay faithful participate in the *priestly* office of Christ?

Priests of the Old Testament offered up sacrifices on behalf of the people. The lay faithful participate in this office especially in the Eucharist by offering as a spiritual sacrifice “acceptable to God through Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 2:5) their own lives with all of their works, their prayers, their apostolic undertakings, their family life, their daily work and hardships born with patience and even their consolations of spirit and body. In this way, the laity, dedicated to Christ and consecrated by the Holy Spirit, offer to God the world itself.



How do the laity participate in the *prophetic* office?

Prophets listen for the Truth of God and proclaim it to others. The laity participate in it by welcoming more and more in faith the Word of Christ and proclaiming it to the world by the witness of their lives, their words, their evangelising action, and by catechesis. This evangelising action acquires a particular efficacy because it is accomplished in the ordinary circumstances of the world.

How do they participate in the *kingly* office?

Kings are leaders who act to defend and lead their people. The laity participate in the kingly function of Christ because they have received

from Him the power to overcome sin in themselves and in the world by self-denial and the holiness of their lives. They exercise various ministries at the service of the community and they imbue temporal activities and the institutions of society with moral values.

What is the consecrated life and what does it give to the mission of the church?

The consecrated life is a state of life recognised by the Church. It is a free response to a special call from Christ by which those consecrated give themselves completely to God and strive for the perfection of charity moved by the Holy Spirit. This consecration is characterised by the practice of the evangelical counsels. It participates in the mission of the Church by means of a complete dedication to Christ and to one’s brothers and sisters witnessing to the hope of the heavenly Kingdom.

What is the meaning of the “communion of saints”?

This expression indicates first the common sharing of all the members of the Church in holy things (sancta): the faith, the sacraments, especially the Eucharist, the charisms, and the other spiritual gifts. At the root of this communion is love which “does not seek its own interests” (1 Corinthians 13:5) but leads the faithful to “hold everything in common” (Acts 4:32), even to put one’s own material goods at the service of the most poor.

What else does “the communion of saints” mean?

This expression also refers to the communion between holy persons (sancti); that is, between those who by grace are united to the dead and risen Christ. Some are pilgrims on the earth; others, having passed from this life, are undergoing purification and are helped also by our prayers. Others already enjoy the glory of God and intercede for us. All of these together form in Christ one family, the Church, to the praise and glory of the Trinity.

In what sense is the Blessed virgin Mary the Mother of the Church?

The Blessed Virgin Mary is the Mother of the Church in the order of grace because she gave birth to Jesus, the Son of God, the Head of the body which is the Church. When He was dying on the cross, Jesus gave His mother to His disciple with the words, “Behold your mother” (John 19:27).



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It is essential that every Catholic has access to good Catechesis to be able to deepen their faith. The Diocese of Plymouth recommends the many Catechetical Workshops from 'Franciscan at Home,' for more information on access to these and online or real group sessions contact deborah.vankroonenburg@prcdtr.org.uk