

Doctrinal Session

APPRENTICES IN FAITH: A Resource for the RCIA Handing on Divine Revelation

“Now I would remind you . . . of the good news that I proclaimed to you, which you in turn received, in which also you stand, through which also you are being saved . . . For I handed on to you as of first importance what I in turn had received . . .” (1 Corinthians 15:1–2a, 3a)

Insight

How do we learn? How are family members, group members, or citizens of a country formed and molded?

Every Sunday Tony’s immediate and extended family gathered at his grandmother’s house for a spaghetti dinner. After the meal, the family would often relax in the living room. Grandma would tell stories of Tony’s dad and of his aunts and uncles growing up and of her own immigration to this country from Italy when she was fourteen.

The stories, the gathering itself, what was said, and how everyone behaved passed on Tony’s family heritage and formed who Tony was, even though he didn’t realize that until he was much older. Grandma’s house on Sundays was a powerful place to be—and to become!

For Reflection . . .

The Good News of Jesus Christ is living and active, transmitted through the Apostles and their successors. The heritage of faith has been entrusted to the Church.

When you were growing up, who helped you learn about life and how to relate to others?

How would you describe the heritage passed on to you in your family (or through another vital group to which you belong)?

Additional Background

Catechism of the Catholic Church: 74–95

United States Catholic Catechism for Adults: pages 23–28

Compendium—Catechism of the Catholic Church: 11–24

Church Teaching

Sent and Empowered by Jesus to Teach

Jesus entrusted the Apostles with the mission to go and proclaim to the whole world the Good News of Salvation. In turn, the Apostles—the first leaders of the Church—entrusted this responsibility to their successors, the bishops.

Initially, the Gospel was transmitted orally by the Apostles—by their spoken words, their example, and the institutions they established. Later, the Gospel was transmitted in writing by the Apostles and others associated with them. These writings, inspired by the Holy Spirit, became codified as the New Testament.

A Living Gospel

The word *gospel* refers not only to the first four books of the New Testament. It also refers to the entire Good News of Salvation in Christ. This Gospel is living and active in the Church.

The Church herself is a vehicle through which God’s Divine Revelation is communicated to people. God’s self-communication comes to us through Sacred Tradition and Sacred Scripture. They comprise one single Deposit of Faith which transforms us and educates us in the Good News of Christ.

Authentic Interpretation

Authentic interpretation of this Deposit of Faith has been entrusted to the Church by Christ. The bishops, in communion with the Pope are the authentic interpreters of Revelation. They listen to the Word of God as its servants, guard it devotedly, and expound it faithfully.

Through the action of the Holy Spirit, the Church receives and takes this message to heart and passes it on to the next generation until Christ comes again in glory at the end of time.