

The four marks of the catholic church religion essay



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One, holy, catholic, apostolic...the four marks of the Catholic Church; a deacon's ministry involves all four. I chose the fourth mark of the Church to identify my pastoral ministry because the Church was brought into being by the apostles on the basis of the Person, teaching and deeds of Jesus Christ. The apostolicity of the church stands on its consistency to the teachings of the apostles which are to be safeguarded by bishops in the apostolic succession. This same authority has been handed down through the Sacrament of Holy Orders from bishop to priests and deacons. No bishop, priest, or deacon in the Catholic Church is self-ordained or self-declared; he is called by the Church and ordained into the ministry given by Jesus to His Church.

There is a clear connection between deacons today and almost 2, 000 years ago as detailed in the Acts of the Apostles. The ministry of the Deacon is charity, word and sacrament. It is the Deacon who often brings Christ to the prisons, the hospitals, and nursing homes. The Deacon helps bridge the gap between the Church and community.

Another example of the apostolic Church is the deposit of faith in both Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition that has been preserved and handed on by the apostles. Jesus Christ founded the Church upon the apostles: " Did I not choose you, the twelve?"(John 6: 70) It is clear, that the Church was started by Christ himself. The issue is did the apostles have the power and authority to pass on what they had received from Christ? The New Testament is clear that they did in fact have that authority. Titus 1: 5-9 references overseers and holding firmly to the message. The ministry of Peter and the Apostles continues by the bishops under the Pope.

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By a mystical sense of faith, the People of God under the leadership of the bishops join themselves to the apostolic faith. The pastoral ministry of the bishops is to safeguard the People of God in the truth. The teachers are not above the word of God, they serve it.

This deposit is the doctrine and the teaching that Jesus assigned to his Apostles when he taught and directed them to take it out to all nations. (Mt. 28: 16-20) They, in turn handed it down to their Successors. (Mt 28: 20)

The deacons were instrumental in this taking it to the streets. Jesus did not hold a Saturday night revival. He went out to the people. He sent His disciples out to reach the masses. The Church began because the disciples were out doing everyday things in the community.

The source of the deposit of faith is Jesus. It began in his teaching of the Apostles, as he prepared them to teach to all nations.

The Apostles knew that the teaching they received from Jesus and that they handed on was the Word of God. It was the Word of God put into teachable form by Jesus and handed on by through apostolic teaching. Knowing this could not be more important for the self-identity of ordained ministers today. It is the primary duty of all the ordained, to hand on this Word of God to the faithful without straying from Church teaching. It is the Deposit of Faith.

The charge to see to this reliability in teaching the Deposit of Faith is contained in the rite of ordination of all men of Holy Orders.

In the Profession of Faith which all clergy take before ordination, and again whenever they take up an office in the Church, the same is affirmed: “ With <https://assignbuster.com/the-four-marks-of-the-catholic-church-religion-essay/>

firm faith, I also believe everything contained in the Word of God, whether written or handed down in Tradition, which the Church, either by a solemn judgment or by the ordinary and universal Magisterium, sets forth to be believed as divinely revealed.

I also firmly accept and hold each and everything definitively proposed by the Church regarding teaching on faith and morals.

Moreover, I adhere with religious submission of will and intellect to the teachings which either the Roman pontiff or the College of Bishops enunciate when they exercise their authentic Magisterium, even if they do not intend to proclaim these teachings by a definitive act.” Apostolic Letter *Motu Proprio AD TUENDAM FIDEM*

This is the all-encompassing life of the Church. It is the whole of Tradition. It includes the full trifacta of Word, Sacrament, and Charity. The implication of unity of communion with the bishops as successors of the Apostles, and with the Successor of Peter as head of that College is very important. Apart from that communion, there is no full and complete fulfillment of Christ’s command to preach, baptize, and make disciples of all men.

The Permanent Diaconate brings back to the church the full fold of active apostolic ministries. Deacons are ordained to function in word, charity and service in communion with the bishop and priests; in the communication of the Word; in the celebration of the sacraments and obligation to prayer; and to minister through action and service.

The Deacon's role in Sacred Liturgy is also important. The parish sees a part of the deacon's ministry from the altar; this part of his ministry flows out of a result of his other ministries of charity and service to the parish and community.

Deacons have always been called to serve; to be the presence of Jesus, to be in touch with the community. By the way he lives his life; the deacon puts service into action and makes Jesus Christ visible to the world all while teaching and protecting the faith handed down from apostles.