

Study Guide: Church Membership and Structure

To study the topic of Catholic Church membership and structure, consult the paragraphs indicated in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC). **Note that the "In Brief" sections may help answer the questions below.**

1. Why does the Catholic Church regard itself as the only Church that Jesus founded? (CCC 816)
2. What can the Catholic Church do to promote unity among Christians? (CCC 820-821)
3. Why are particular churches (such as the different rites and dioceses) not the same as a "federation of churches"? (CCC 832-835)
4. What relationship do Christians from other backgrounds (not in communion with Rome) have with the Catholic Church? (CCC 836-838)
5. What relationship do persons from non-Christian religions have with the Catholic Church? (CCC 839-845)
6. What does the sentence "Outside the Church there is no salvation" mean? To which persons does the sentence refer? (CCC 846-848)
7. What is the purpose of having a structure in the Church? (CCC 773)
8. How are the members of the Church's hierarchy and its laity *equal*? (CCC 872)
9. How are they different? (CCC 873)

10. Outline the hierarchy, as the Catechism explains it in paragraphs 880-887. (Hint: You might also want to consult your chart on the “Genealogy of Rites”.)

11. What does the word “laity” mean?. (CCC 897)

12. What is the vocation of the laity? (CCC 898-900)

13. What does the Catholic Church believe about the “common priesthood of the faithful”? How do the laity exercise their priesthood—that is, what do they do that is of a priestly nature? (CCC 901-903)

14. How do the laity cooperate in Jesus’ ministry of prophecy? (CCC 904-907)

15. How do the laity cooperate in Jesus’ ministry of kingship? (CCC 908-913)

16. What is an ecumenical council? What authority does it have? Does it have any authority apart from the Pope? (CCC 884,891)