

Sixth Grade: Lesson 15

The Church and Following God's Law

Lesson Objective:

This lesson aims at increasing the youths' awareness of the personal love of God and His care and providence over their lives. In this lesson, it is important to create an environment where youth can encounter Christ directly. Meditation on Sacred Scripture will provide an opportunity for Jesus to speak into their hearts.

Learning Outcomes: Students will ...

- Recognition that God knows and loves us each personally and reflection upon the plans that God has for each of our lives (Ps 139; Isa 43:1-4; Jer 1:5).
- Describe salvation history as God's unfolding work of salvation in all of history.
- Recognize that Jesus wants to be in a relationship with him/her (John 15:9, John 15:16, 1 John 4:19).
- Encounter the Lord Jesus Christ through experiential activities such as guided meditations using Sacred Scripture and adoration of the Blessed Sacrament (Ps 32:8, John 6:35, John 14:26, Heb 4:12).
- Participation in recited prayers learned in previous grades, continuing to learn new recited prayers appropriate to age and becoming introduced to prayers that will be recited in later grades.

Materials Needed:

- Prayer space items, Bible, pencils
- Copies: Word Search (optional) Hierarchy of the Church Activity, Questions from the game to use as a trivia activity

As Students Enter Class:

- Consider having a word search available for students to work on as they wait for class to begin.
- [Following God's Plan Word Search](#)

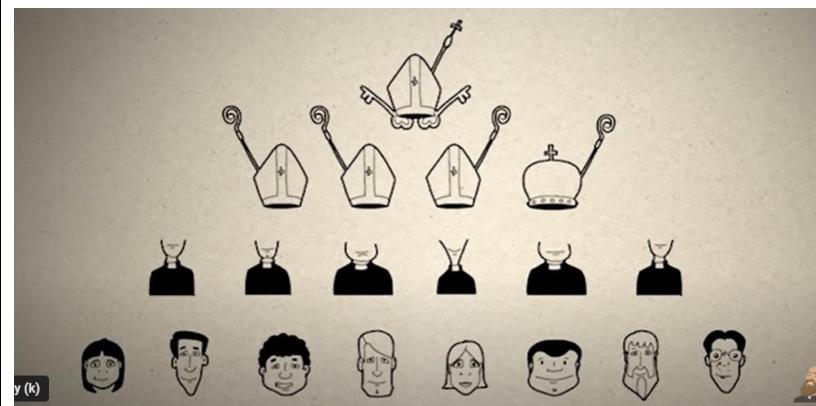
Beginning of Class:

- Gather around your prayer space and pray a traditional Catholic prayer, such as the Our Father.

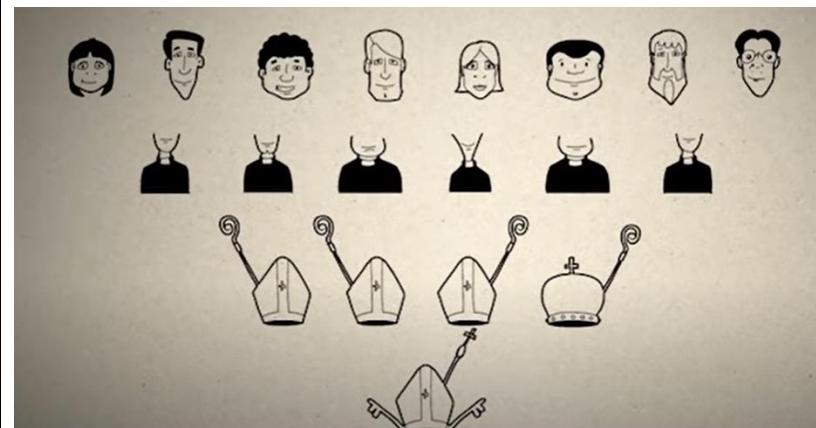
Lesson Order	Implementation Ideas
Lesson 15 Video	<p>This video is 1:21 in length.</p> <p>Highlights: In previous lessons, we have learned to rise above the current culture and focus on Christ. We do this by following his commands and by loving God and one another as we love ourselves. This means we learn to live in a humble and selfless way, which goes against our secular culture.</p> <p>We know God created the world and is the source of all authority. Through Sacred Scripture and the power of the Holy Spirit, the Church's Magisterium (the teaching office of the Church) guides us to know God's will for our lives.</p> <p>Some contemporary lifestyles do not follow God's will for the family and they undermine the value of life and the teaching of the Church.</p>
The Structure of the Church	<p>This sketchpad video is 3:21 in length.</p> <p>Highlights: The Church, founded by Jesus, has a hierarchical structure which is in the service of the whole mystical body of Christ. Jesus chose 12 Apostles, just as in the Old Covenant there were 12 tribes of Israel. In the New Covenant, there were to be 12 new tribes, a new people of God from all peoples and nations on the Earth.</p> <p>After Pentecost, the Apostles went out to preach God's word and the first Christian communities emerged. The Apostles then appointed men as leaders of these communities, known as Bishops. Bishops are successors of the Apostles, consecrated to their office through the laying on of hands.</p> <p>There is a special Bishop among Bishops today, which is the Bishop of Rome, the Pope. The Pope is the successor of St. Peter.</p>

The bishops today are exactly the same as they were in the beginning. However, they can't be everywhere and serve everyone at once. They have co-workers, called priests. Priests are consecrated by their Bishop to serve smaller communities within the large community. This is known as a parish and the priest in charge is the pastor. A second priest may be assigned to a parish, and he is called a vicar.

It is important to note that this hierarchy is one of service, not of rule.



Therefore, the usual way of viewing hierarchy is turned upside down.



The Pope, then, is not the ruler, but the servant of all. The Pope, is the servant, of the servants of God.

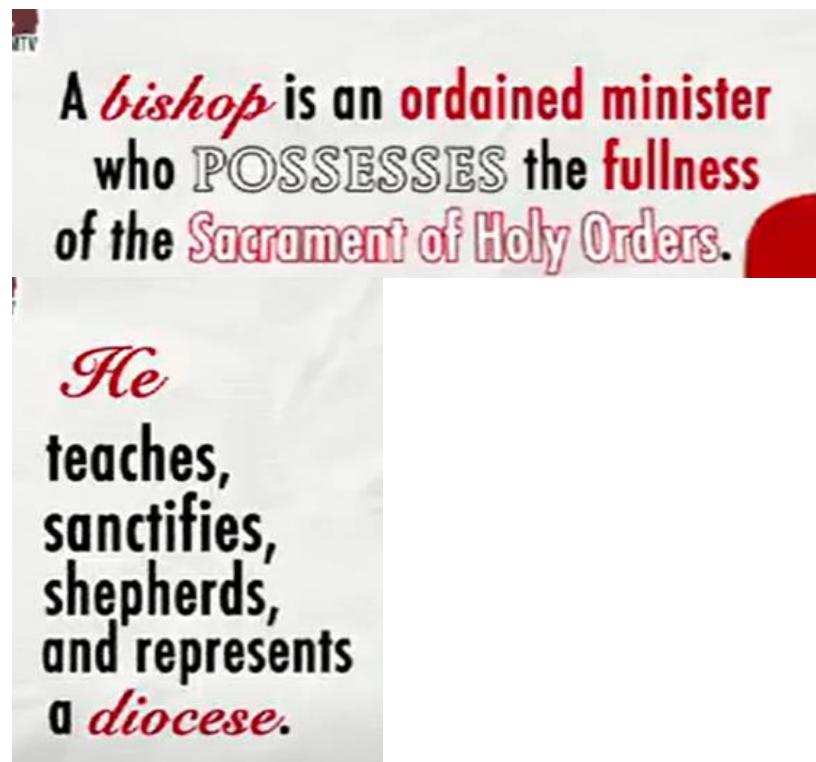
The Magisterium Explained

This video is 5:38 in length.

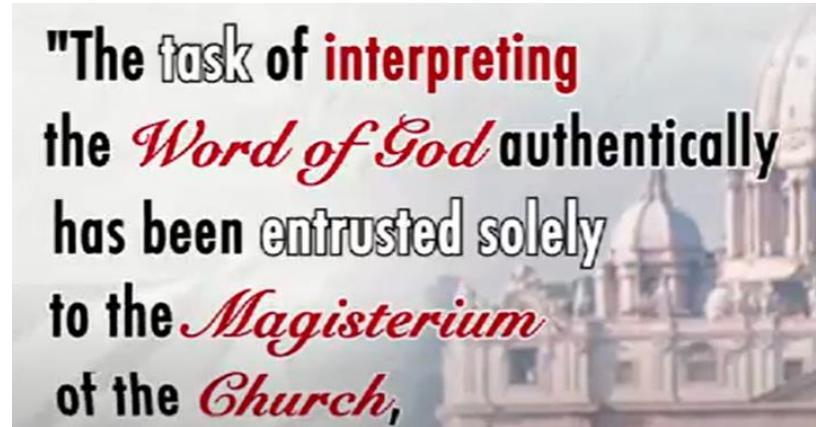
Highlights:

The information in this video may be challenging for your students to fully understand. What is important, however, is that they understand how our church is ordered and how doctrine is established and set forth for us as Catholics. It is also important that we pray for our Pope, Bishops, and Priests, since they are serving us, the faithful, and we are all working towards helping each other enter Heaven.

The Pope is the supreme pastor and teacher of the Church. He is the vicar of Christ on Earth. Therefore, his teaching authority is infallible when defining matters of faith and morals. The teaching office of the bishops is called the Magisterium.



They form the College of Bishops with the Pope as the head. The College of Bishops exercises magisterium, or teaching authority over the church.



The Church draws her teaching from:

- 1) Sacred Tradition
- 2) Sacred Scripture
- 3) Magisterium (formed by the guidance of the Holy Spirit)

The Magisterium teaches in different ways and levels.

- Extraordinary Magisterium is used in rare occasions. Examples of this are Vatican 1 and 2 Councils.
- Ordinary Universal Magisterium: This occurs when Bishops around the World...

**proclaim *infallibly*
when they agree
that a particular **teaching**,
concerning matters
of *faith* and *morals*,
is to be held **definitively**
and **absolutely**.**

- Ordinary Magisterium: A teaching from a Bishop or Pope that is not considered to be a direct expression of what the universal Church has always held as definitive. Examples are:

- Homilies*
- Pastoral Letters*
- Addresses*

DISCUSSION/REFLECTION: Provide a few minutes for students to share their thoughts, or something new they learned. If students are not

	<p>engaged in discussion, please reinforce the information contained in the side note.</p>
<p>How do they Choose the Pope?</p> <p>FYI: Cardinals are selected by the Pope. Their job is to elect the pope, act as his principal counselors, and aide in the government of the Roman Catholic Church throughout the world.</p>	<p>This video is 3:59 in length.</p> <p>Highlights: Popes are chosen for life. The Pope is the earthly father of the Catholic Church. The Pope is chosen by the College of Cardinals. Cardinals are members of the hierarchy of the Church who wear bright red. Their main function is to elect the Pope. All Cardinals under the age of 80 come to Vatican City in Rome to participate and vote in what is known as the Papal Conclave. This is done 15-20 days after the Pope has either died or resigned. The Cardinals are locked in a room, the Sistine Chapel, until they come to a decision. 2/3 majority of votes is required for the new Pope to be elected.</p> <p>On the first day, one vote is taken. If a 2/3 consensus doesn't happen, those votes are burned and black smoke emanates from the top of the Sistine Chapel, indicating no Pope has been chosen.</p> <p>If no one receives 2/3 vote for several days, the process changes. After a day of rest, prayer, and dialogue, only the two Cardinals with the most votes from the previous ballot are eligible to be voted on. Once a 2/3 majority is established, the ballots are burned one last time but white smoke comes from the chimney to indicate a new Pope has been selected. Bells are rung. The new Pope selects a new name to begin this new stage of his life.</p> <p>PROVIDE TIME FOR REFLECTION AND QUESTIONS.</p>
<p>Who Gave the Bishops Authority?</p>	<p>This video is 3:33 in length.</p> <p>Highlights: We live in a country that is 200 years old; yet we belong to a Church that is 2000 years old. How can the bishops tell me what to do?</p>

	<p>As Catholics we believe Jesus handed over His power to proclaim forgiveness, the truth of His Gospel, the message of salvation, to His Apostles. Apostolic Succession is the lineage of Bishops that can be traced back to Jesus, who ordained Simon Peter.</p> <p>The hierarchy of the Church is one of service, not of rule. Just as the roots of a tree are deep in the soil, the hierarchy is buried in Christ, rooted in Christ, to help the rest of the body flourish. The Church is here to help us, the laity, with our role of proclaiming the gospel.</p> <p>QUESTIONS: Thinking about what we have learned so far, we see an emphasis that although the Church is Hierarchical, it is rooted in service. How does this make you feel? How can you, a sixth grader, serve the Catholic Church in its mission?</p>						
<p>What are Ecumenical Counsels?</p>	<p>This video is 2:40 in length.</p> <p>It is different because the narrator voice is more robotic. If students are not engaged, consider skipping this video and explain the meaning of Ecumenical Counsels on your own.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There have been 21 Councils over a period of 1900 years. • It is an assembly of Cardinals and Bishops nominated by the Pope. • Purpose: To define doctrine, reaffirm truths of the faith and extirpate heresy. <table border="1" data-bbox="616 1579 1421 1776"> <tr> <td data-bbox="616 1579 948 1664">Doctrine</td><td data-bbox="948 1579 1421 1664">A belief or set of beliefs held by the Church</td></tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="616 1664 948 1712">Extirpate</td><td data-bbox="948 1664 1421 1712">Remove</td></tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="616 1712 948 1776">Heresy</td><td data-bbox="948 1712 1421 1776">Beliefs and opinions contrary to Christian beliefs</td></tr> </table>	Doctrine	A belief or set of beliefs held by the Church	Extirpate	Remove	Heresy	Beliefs and opinions contrary to Christian beliefs
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Lesson 15, Part 2	This video is 1:38 in length.						

	<p>Highlights: As we understand that Jesus has gifted us with the Magisterium as a teacher and guide in growing in our Catholic Faith, we start to realize that we need to make good choices in our daily lives that will affect our relationship with God. Anything we do can be described as a moral or immoral act.</p> <p>To make good moral acts means that our object, intention, and circumstances need to serve God.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OBJECT: The matter of the act • INTENTION: The essential element of our will to choose good. • CIRCUMSTANCES: What surrounds the action and consequences. <p>When we choose to live for God in our Catholic Faith, we also choose to respect and follow the doctrines of our Church.</p>
Hierarchy of the Church Activity	Working as a whole group, complete the activity together. Consider writing the answers that students share on the board, so students can copy them down on their paper.
Electing a Pope Game	While you most likely will not have time to play the game, you can ask some of the questions and make it fun, like a trivia game.
Closing Prayer	Gather around your prayer space and call upon a student to select a traditional Catholic Prayer.