

In-Depth Track – Just Teach Sheet

September Week 2

Theme: Faith & Belonging to the Church

Audience: In-depth learners (serious Catholics, catechists, apologists, clergy candidates, or anyone seeking a thorough foundation)

Focus: To study and defend why the Catholic Church — and only she — is the Church Christ founded, marked as One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic.

Weekly Goal

To gain a firm theological and apologetic grounding in the four marks of the Church, understanding their Scriptural and historical foundations, and how to articulate them in dialogue with non-Catholics.

What You' ll Need

This sheet

Bible

Catechism of the Catholic Church

Notebook for study notes and apologetic outlines

Opening Prayer (Daily)

O Christ, Head of the Church,
 You willed that we belong to You through Your Bride, the Catholic Church.
 Teach me to understand Her mysteries,
 defend Her truth, and love Her as You do.
 Amen.



Day 1 – The Necessity of the Church

Teaching:

Christ did not found “an invisible church of all believers.” He founded a visible, hierarchical Church with Peter and the apostles. The Church is necessary for salvation because she is Christ’s mystical Body.



Matthew 16:18–19 – The Rock and the Keys.



1 Timothy 3:15 – “The Church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth.”

Catechism: CCC 816 – “The one Church of Christ... subsists in the Catholic Church.”


Apologetic Note: Protestants often say, “I just follow the Bible.” Yet Scripture itself says the **Church**, not the Bible, is the “pillar and foundation of truth.” The Bible comes from the Church, not the other way round.

Reflection/Journal: How does recognising the Church as necessary change the way I view Sunday obligation, sacraments, or authority?

Day 2 – The Church is One

Teaching:

Christ prayed for unity (John 17:21). This unity is visible, not just “spiritual.” Division contradicts His will. Only the Catholic Church has preserved visible unity of doctrine, worship, and governance.

 **Ephesians 4:4–6** – “One body, one Spirit, one faith, one baptism.”

Catechism: CCC 813–815 – Unity flows from the Trinity, the Creed, the sacraments, and apostolic succession.

Apologetic Note: Protestant divisions (40,000+ denominations) prove “Bible alone” cannot secure unity. Only the Catholic Church remains visibly one under the successor of Peter.

Reflection: Do I see unity as proof of divine origin, or do I take it for granted?

Day 3 – The Church is Holy

Teaching:

The holiness of the Church is not because all members are holy, but because Christ is her Head, the Spirit her soul, and the sacraments her means of sanctification.

 **Ephesians 5:25–27** – Christ “gave Himself for the Church... that she might be holy.”

Catechism: CCC 823–829 – The Church is holy despite sinners; the saints are proof of her holiness.


Apologetic Note: The “sin of members” objection misunderstands holiness. A hospital for the sick does not cease to be a hospital because patients are unwell. The Church is holy because she heals sinners and produces saints.


Reflection: How can I explain to critics that scandals reveal the need for the Church’s holiness, not its absence?

Day 4 – The Church is Catholic (Universal)

Teaching:

Catholic = universal. The Church has spread to all nations, teaches the fullness of truth, and possesses all means of salvation.

 **Matthew 28:19–20** – “Go, make disciples of all nations.”

 **Acts 1:8** – “You will be my witnesses... to the ends of the earth.”

Catechism: CCC 830–831 – The Church is Catholic in two senses: Christ is present in her, and she has been sent to all peoples.

Apologetic Note: Many churches are local or national (Lutheran in Germany, Anglican in England, etc.). Only the Catholic Church has transcended race, culture, and nation for 2,000 years.


Reflection: How does universality strengthen the case for the Catholic Church’s divine origin?



Day 5 – The Church is Apostolic

Teaching:

The apostles received authority directly from Christ (John 20:21–23). This authority is handed down by apostolic succession through bishops in communion with the Pope.

 **2 Thessalonians 2:15** – “Stand firm and hold to the traditions... whether by word or letter.”

Catechism: CCC 857–860 – The Church is apostolic in three ways: founded on the apostles, preserves apostolic teaching, and is led by successors of the apostles.

Apologetic Note: Protestantism broke with apostolic succession, leaving only Scripture. Without succession, there is no guarantee of right teaching or sacramental validity.

Reflection: How do I explain the role of apostolic succession to someone who believes in “Bible alone”?

Weekend Wrap-Up – Defending the Four Marks

One: Unity proves divine origin.

Holy: Despite sinners, the Church’s sacraments and saints show her holiness.

Catholic: Universality shows Christ’s promise fulfilled.

Apostolic: Apostolic succession secures truth and sacramental validity.

The four marks are not optional — they are the fingerprints of Christ’s true Church.

Journal / Study Prompts

“If Christ founded one Church, why do so many deny it?”

“The mark that most convinces me of the Catholic Church is...”

“How would I defend apostolic succession to a Protestant friend?”

Apologetics Quick Answers

“All churches are the same.” → Only one is apostolic, universal, visibly united.

“The Church is corrupt.” → The holiness of the Church comes from Christ, not from the sins of members.

“We only need the Bible.” → The Bible itself says the Church is the pillar and foundation of truth (1 Tim 3:15).

“The early Church wasn’t Catholic.” → Read the Fathers: Ignatius of Antioch (AD 107) calls the Church “Catholic.”

Catechism Deep Dive

CCC 811–870 – The Four Marks of the Church.

CCC 830–856 – The Church is Catholic, mission of evangelisation.

CCC 857–865 – Apostolic succession.

Recommended Fathers / Apologists:

St. Ignatius of Antioch (*Letter to the Smyrnaeans* – first mention of “Catholic Church”)

St. Irenaeus (*Against Heresies* III.3.2 – on apostolic succession in Rome)

St. Cyprian (*On the Unity of the Church*)