The Church

"Indeed, the power to witness to the risen life of Jesus is the true power of the Church. It is, as Pope Francis reminds us, how Christianity spread throughout the world – how a small band of fishermen and humble women and men converted one of the greatest empires in history without raising the sword. That is true power." ~ You Will Be My Witnesses, p39

The Church is God's Love in Action

Planned by the Father, created by the Son, sanctified and revealed by the Holy Spirit. The Church is not a human institution but one of God's works. At the same time, through the Holy Spirit, She is the body of believers united with Christ and each other.

As we recite in the Nicene Creed, the Church is:

- One (unified as Christ's Body; John 17:20-3)
- Holy (sanctified by the Holy Spirit and set apart for the mission of salvation)
- Catholic (for everyone, at all times, in all places)
- Apostolic (authority has been passed down by the apostles to our past, present, and future leaders)

"Bringing the Gospel is bringing God's power to pluck up and break down evil and violence, to destroy and overthrow the barriers of selfishness, intolerance and hatred."

Mission of the Church

The Church has been given the Great Commission: to go and make disciples of all nations, to baptize them, to teach them to observe Jesus' teachings and be obedient. This call, for the whole Church, "means bearing personal witness to the love of God, it is overcoming our selfishness, it is serving by bending down to wash the feet of our brethren, as Jesus did." In short, her mission is to:

- govern (lead through service)
- teach (commanded by Jesus; called the Magisterium)
- sanctify (through the Sacraments)

She does this all in Jesus' name. She calls us to repent. She is about healing and making saints.

Precepts of the Church

- Attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days
- Go to Confession at least once each year
- Receive the Eucharist at least once during the Easter season
- Observe the days of abstinence and fasting
- Help provide for the needs of the Church – pray, provide, participate