

How many Masses, Communions,
Rosaries have you offered
thus far for the Poor Souls?

University of Notre Dame
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Ten days of November remain
for this great charity.
Make the most of them!

Catechism For Today

Query: What is meant by the "Mystical Body" ?

Reply: It means the Mystical Body of Christ; and that means the Catholic Church.

Query: How can a Church be anyone's body ?

Reply: When Christ was on earth He had a regular human body like any normal man. He died on the cross and on the third day He arose from the dead; and after 40 days more on earth He went to heaven. And that's where His physical body is now. It is His glorified body in Heaven; and it is also present invisibly in the Blessed Sacrament.

But He left on earth the people He had taught and who believed in Him. These people became His "mystical" body on earth -- and they also were the Church which He established. They are called His body because through supernatural bonds they are intimately united with Him, just as the members of the human body are joined to the head and regulated by it. The point is that, just as Christ had a regular physical body to work with while He was on earth for 33 years, now He has a mystical body to carry on His work here on earth.

Query: Is this a regular teaching of the Church ?

Reply: Yes it is. Christ Himself taught it to the people. He said: "I am the life." He also said: "I am the vine; you are the branches." He also said: "I shall be with you all days, even until the end of time." And St. Paul makes it very plain when he says: "Now you are the body of Christ, member for member ... For as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, many as they are, form one body, so also is it with Christ."

Using the illustration of a human body, we see that it is made up of millions of cells, each one living its own life, and yet living the life of the body. So, too, the Church is made up of millions of members incorporated into it by baptism, and retaining the unity of faith, worship, and government. The "life" which flows through the Mystical Body is the grace of Christ. In this sense He is the life.

Query: Why teach this doctrine ?

Reply: It is the job of the Church to teach what Christ taught. Just like everything else that Christ taught, the doctrine of the Mystical Body is very practical, and a big help to men who want to live good lives. A "good life" is one which follows the teaching and example of Christ. It's easy to see that a knowledge of the Mystical Body makes a man realize he does not have to go back 1900 years to meet Christ; for He is living right here and now in His Church. It also makes a man feel that he is accomplishing something important when he realizes the startling and tremendous fact that he is part of a living organism which is really the body of Christ - Who is God -- and that today the lips of Christ teaching His truths, and the hands of Christ doing good as they did 1900 years ago, are the lips and the hands of men and women who are part of His Mystical Body, now on earth. The principal prayer of the Mystical Body is the Mass.

PRAYERS - Deceased: mother of Bro. Eli, CSC; father of Bob Kinney, '47; wife of Bob Ruppe, '31; mother-in-law of Jerry Sechowski; mother-in-law of Joe Gartland, '27; mother of John Keefe, CSC, '55; father of Dave Meskill, '39; John F. Connell, '23.