

Take-Home 1 | Until the End of the Age

Was This Only for the Apostles?

A mission beyond the first generation

Keep this sheet for prayer, review, and practice this week.

What We Found

Jesus commissioned the Eleven for a task larger than their lifetimes: all nations, Baptism, everything he taught, with his presence "to the close of the age." He prayed for those who would believe through their word, which includes us. Ephesians 2 gave us the picture for the whole study: a foundation laid once by the Apostles, and a household still being built on it. What was meant to continue, and how, is the question we will follow for seven more weeks. (Matthew 28:16-20; John 17:20-23; Ephesians 2:19-22.)

Voices of the Church

St. Clement of Rome

Summary: Christ was sent by God, the Apostles were sent by Christ, and the Apostles, preaching through the countryside and cities, appointed their first converts as bishops and deacons for future believers. The Church's ministry begins as a mission received, not an authority invented.

First Letter to the Corinthians, 42

Second Vatican Council

Summary: The mission entrusted by Christ to the Apostles will last until the end of the world, and for that reason the Apostles took care to appoint successors. The Council reads Matthew 28:20 as the reason the office had to continue.

Lumen Gentium, 20

Catechism of the Catholic Church

Summary: The risen Christ, by giving the Holy Spirit to the Apostles, entrusts to them his power of sanctifying, so that they become sacramental signs of Christ. By the power of the same Spirit they entrust this power to their successors.

CCC 1087

Ready Response

If someone says: "The Great Commission is for every believer. It has nothing to do with bishops."

You can say: You are right that every Christian shares the mission, and the Catholic Church teaches that (CCC 863). The question our study asks is different: whether the Apostles also handed on responsibilities that not everyone holds. Read Acts 1 and 2 Timothy 2 with me and see what you think.

Live It This Week

Pray. Read John 17:20-23 on three different days this week. Thank Jesus for praying for you before you were born.

Remember. Thank one person who handed the faith to you, in person or by message.

My Guess. Fill in the sealed box on Take-Home 1, seal it, and bring it to Session 2. You will not have to defend it.

Scripture Memory

“Teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age.”

Matthew 28:20 (RSV2CE)

MY GUESS | keep sealed

What would need to be handed on for Christians a century after the Apostles to receive what Christ gave them?

Write a provisional answer below. Seal this sheet, or a copy, in an envelope and bring it to Session 2. We will open the guesses together in Session 4. No one will grade it.

Before Next Session

Read: 2 Timothy 2:1-2; 2 Timothy 1:6, 13-14; Titus 1:5-9. Read them slowly and notice every verb of handing on.

Catechism: CCC 77, 861-862.

In the Catechism this week: 857-860; 1087.