

My Soul Longs For You, O God

The Church *Chapters 10, 11*



St. John Parish
Little Chute

*As the deer pants for streams of water,
so my soul pants for you, O God.
My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.
When can I go and meet with God?*



Through Darkness Into Light

Radiant Lord,

We rejoice with hearts filled with gratitude
that you are not a hidden God for you reveal Yourself
daily through the mystery of light.

Your majesty and glory
shine out from within all of creation,
as well as from sun, moon and stars.

We walk by their light
as it is transformed daily into our food.



Down through time,
holy men and women have become children
of Your Light
by warming with love all that was around
them,
and became symbols of Your Light.

We are grateful for these persons of light:

for Moses, Isaiah, Ruth, and Rebekah,
for Francis of Assisi and St. Bridget
for Joan of Arc and Teresa of Avila
as well as for holy Mary,
the Mother of our Lord.



Most of all, we are grateful for your Son, Jesus,

who continuously calls us to be light
to each other and to the world.

He, who challenged the darkness of death upon a
cross and was victorious in the sunrise of His

Resurrection, calls us today,

to follow His journey of light . For these persons

and for all those, who by their lives,

have led us from darkness to the light, we give Thee
thanks.

Amen

Tonight we will explore:



The Church



“For too long as a Church, I think we have been tired and unimaginative in responding to the reality that is happening around us....We can ignite the faith if we stop fighting one another and put our energy into listening and responding to God’s people, who are as hungry as ever for the gospel.”

Bishop Gerald F. Kicanas

Forward to *American Catholics Today*

Generational Profile of U.S. Catholics

- 20% Pre-Vatican II Generation
(born in or before 1940)
- 30% Vatican II Generation
(born between 1941-1960)
- 50% Post-Vatican II Generation-
Generation X (1961-79)
Millennial (1979+)
(born since 1961)

Pew Forum Study 2007

- Catholics represent 25% of the U.S. population which has remained steady in recent decades due to immigration. Latinos represent 45% of all Catholics 18 – 29 years of age. One in three adult Catholics is Latino.
- The church has retained 70% of native-born American Catholics. 10% of Americans are former Catholics. About half of those who have left the Church describe themselves as “unaffiliated”.
- 44% of U.S. adults have switched religious affiliations. 2.6% of Catholics are converts. Fluidity of religious affiliation is striking.



A Snapshot of US Catholics

- The typical Catholic donated about 17% less money to their Church, was 38% less likely than the average American to read the Bible, 67% less likely to attend a Sunday school class, 20% less likely to share their belief in Christ with someone of a different faith and 24% less likely to say that belief in Christ had greatly transformed their life.
- However, Catholics were 16% more likely to have attended a Church service and 8% more likely to have prayed to God the prior week.

GENERATIONS ALIVE TODAY:

	<u>GENERATION</u>	<u>DATE BORN</u>	<u>AGE</u>
Civic	GI	1901-1924	80-103yrs
Adaptive	Silent	1925 - 1942	62-79yrs
Idealists	Baby Boomers	1943 - 1961	43-61yrs
Reactive	Gen X	1962 - 1981	22-42yrs
Civic	Millennial	1982 - Today	21yrs & younger

PreConciliar

Conciliar

Post Conciliar

Images of the Church

The Church is such a rich reality that images are used to illumine this treasure of grace.

Three images in particular:

People of God,

Body of Christ,

Temple of the Spirit.

The Church as Trinity

The Church is the work of the Trinity.

The Father called the Church into existence.

The Son founded the Church.

The Spirit manifested and sustains the Church

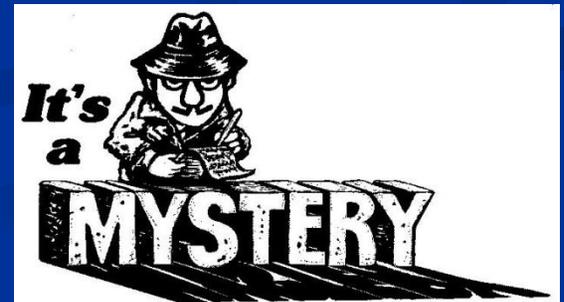


■ The word church comes from the Hebrew qahal. It means a “called community.” Hence, the Church is not created by the self-determination of the members but rather by the call of God. The Greek translation is kyriake, which became the German kirche and the English word church.

The word church refers to a parish, diocese, universal church, liturgical gathering, or witnessing community as well as the church building.

The Church as Mystery

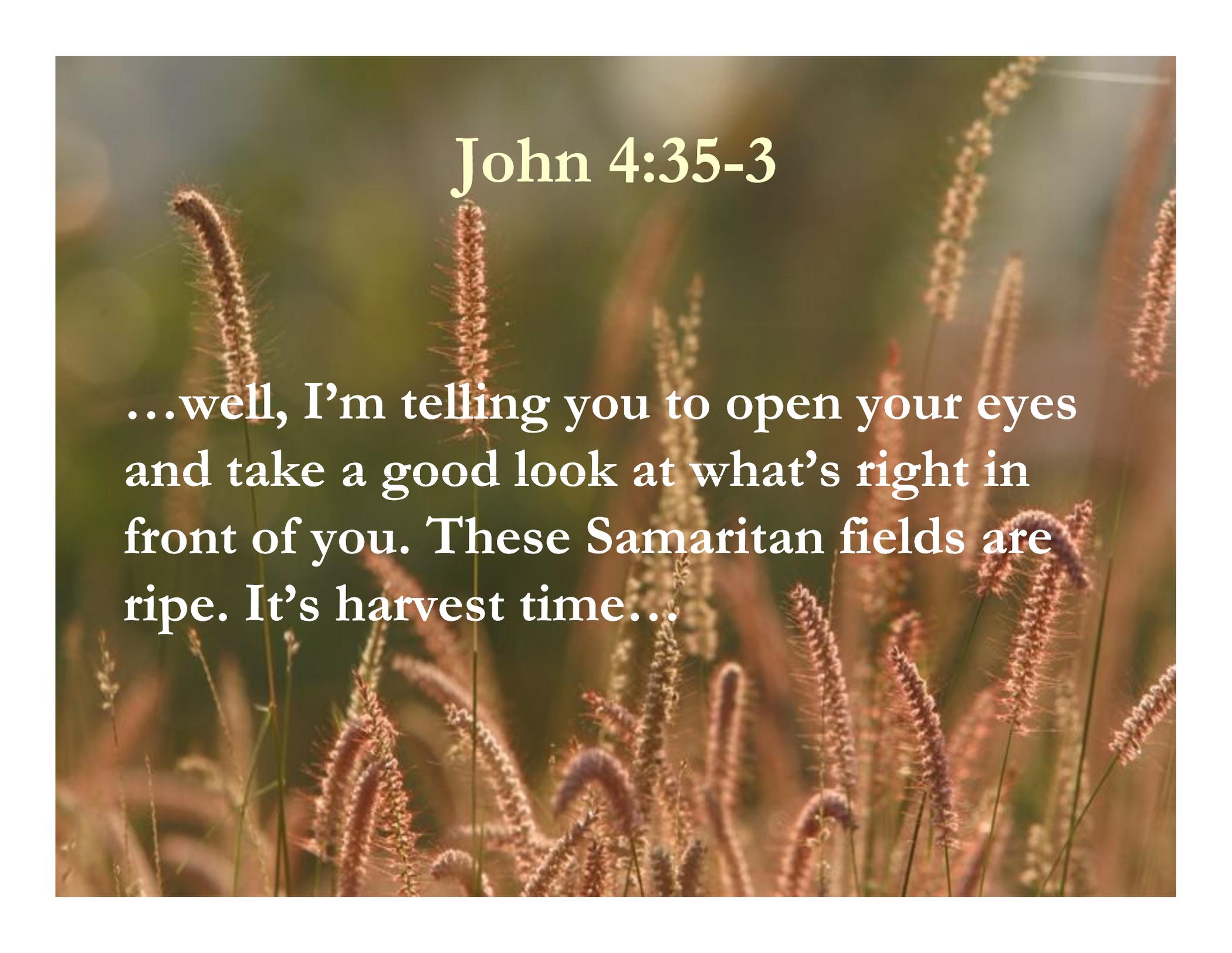
- The Church is a mystery of faith. It is planned, founded, and sustained by God. It is the universal sacrament of salvation. A sacrament is a sign that does three things: (1) Points to a divine reality; (2) contains that reality; and (3) produces that reality in us. When we speak of the Church as the sacrament of salvation we mean that it points to salvation and the kingdom of heaven, and contains and produces that reality in us when we open our hearts to the Church and her sacraments in faith.



The People of God



- (1) We are called by God's Word, not by self-choice.
- (2) We require a spiritual birth in faith, conversion, and Baptism.
- (3) We have for their head Jesus and the pope as his vicar.
- (4) All members have dignity as sons and daughters of God in whom the Spirit dwells.
- (5) Our [the Church's] Law: To love as Jesus did.
- (6) Our Mission: To be the salt and light of unity, hope, and salvation for everyone on earth.
- (7) Our Destiny: The kingdom of God, begun on earth, perfected in heaven.

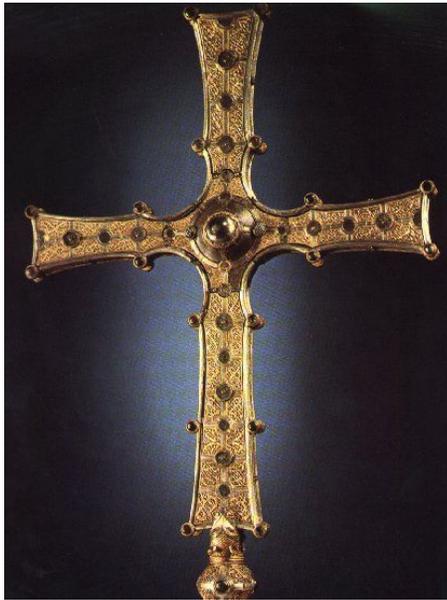


John 4:35-3

...well, I'm telling you to open your eyes and take a good look at what's right in front of you. These Samaritan fields are ripe. It's harvest time...

A Celtic Evening Prayer

The evening creeps in.
The shadows fall.



Now falls away the hours of toil.
Now falls away the hectic pace.
Now falls away the day's dissent.
Now falls away the discontent.

The evening envelops.

The darkness falls,
This days is past, let go regrets.

This night is now, enter in.

The hearth is lit, it casts a flow.
Kindle the heart from sparks below.

Amen.