



Relationship is a central concept in Christianity.

The whole narrative of the Christian story is about relationship. Christianity is founded on the belief that the God who created human beings actually desires to have a genuine personal relationship with them. The whole story of the faith is about the initiatives that God has taken to remove the barriers that prevent that relationship from being established.

Jesus Christ is the means by which the problem of the alienation caused by sin and rebellion on the part of humans may be removed and the relationship that God desires re-established.

When people believe in Jesus Christ it is not simply that they give some mental assent to his existence but that they actually enter into a relationship with him and through him with the God who created them.

Furthermore, to come into relationship with God in Jesus Christ also brings believers into a new relationship with one another. For in the Christian story it is not just that God wants a relationship with individual humans but that he wants the community of humans to be both in relationship with him and with one another. In the Christian story it is as believers live and work together in community as God's people that they can represent God in the world in the manner that he always intended.

So, in the Christian story when you come into a relationship with God in Jesus Christ you also come into relationship with other believers in that community of faith that is called the Christian Church. This is the concept of church that is intended by the words "the holy catholic church" in the Apostles' Creed. Christian denominations and local churches are only our imperfect but necessary efforts to fulfill this community of relationship amongst believers in our own time and place.

Relationship is central to the Christian faith. Believers can never have a relationship with God without also acquiring a relationship with every other follower of Jesus Christ - present, past and future.

This often neglected aspect of Christianity is crucial to our being who we are called to be in Jesus Christ.