

Catechumenate Session

APPRENTICES IN FAITH: A Resource for the RCIA
Twenty-ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time • Year B • October 18, 2015

Catechist Preparation

Scripture

FIRST READING—Isaiah 53:10–11

Today's First Reading is taken from the beginning of the fourth of the songs of the Suffering Servant. The first three are found in Isaiah 42:1–4, 49:1–6, and 50:4–9. These passages speak of a figure that will redeem God's people through his sufferings.

SECOND READING—Hebrews 4:14–16

In this passage, the author reflects on the solidarity that exists between Jesus, the Son of God, and the rest of humanity. This solidarity prompts the author to exhort, "let us hold fast to our confession" (Hebrews 4:14). Fidelity to professing Christ is an imperative that flows from the fact of our having been saved through his sufferings.

GOSPEL—Mark 10:35–45

In Mark's Gospel, death is not something thrust upon a surprised Jesus. Jesus freely and knowingly journeys to Jerusalem where death awaits him, all the while trying to bring his disciples to see that only in death will his glory as the Redeemer of the people be fully revealed.

Church Teaching

Left on our own, we cannot get out of the deathly impasse created by sin—both Original Sin in which the world is mired and our own personal sin. Only God can free us. Only God can save us. He does so by becoming human, taking on the burden of this world's sin, paying the price for our ransom from death and freeing us for a never-ending, blessed union with the Holy Trinity.

Additional Background

Catechism of the Catholic Church: 599–623

United States Catholic Catechism for Adults: pages 89–100

Compendium—Catechism of the Catholic Church: 112–124

Dismissal Session

(Approximately 20 minutes)

Set a table with a green cloth and a candle. Place a Bible (or Lectionary) open to today's Gospel passage.

Discover

1. Ask the following questions, and invite the group to reflect on them quietly before sharing their responses with one or two other people:

What did you see or hear in the Liturgy of the Word?

What word, phrase, or image from the readings stays with you?

2. Invite several volunteers to share their reflections with the large group.

Deepen

1. Ask the group to share what they think when they hear the phrase "Are you able to drink the cup that I drink . . . ?" (Mark 10:38).
2. Ask the following questions, and invite the group to reflect on them quietly before sharing their responses with one or two other people:

If you had been one of the other disciples, how would you have responded to the request of Jesus made by James and John?

In what way does the request of James and John reflect our own behavior?

What is the message found in Jesus' answer to James and John as well as in his answer to the other disciples?

How does Jesus' understanding of what it means to be a leader relate to our society's understanding of being a leader?

In what ways might you be a better servant to others?

Pray

Use the prayer on the participant handout as the closing prayer.

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Extended Catechesis Session

(Approximately 45 to 60 minutes)

Readings

Isaiah 53:10–11

Psalms 33:4–5, 18–20, 22

Hebrews 4:14–16

Mark 10:35–45

Welcome

Begin by welcoming everyone who is present, including sponsors, team members, and spouses who are joining the group.

Engage

Begin by rephrasing one or two questions from the Dismissal Session, and invite the group to share their responses in small groups. Then ask several volunteers to share their reflections with the large group.

Explore

1. Summarize or invite the group to read the **Sunday Word** section of the participant resource. Then discuss the following:
 - Suffering can be redemptive.
 - The phrase “to hold fast to our confession” (Hebrews 4:14) calls us to remain steadfast in our faith.
 - Servant leadership is the leadership Jesus lived and the leadership all Christians are called to practice.
2. Invite the group to read the **Catholic Doctrine** section of the participant resource. Then highlight the following points:
 - Through the Paschal Mystery, Jesus ransoms all humanity.
 - Jesus, the Incarnate Son of God, became like us in all things but sin.

- When Jesus was lifted up on the Cross, he drew all people into this redemptive sacrifice, making possible our eternal communion with God into which all people are invited.
- Sin is real. Only God’s grace can heal us of the effects of sin.
- Grace is real. God showers abundant grace on us.
- Jesus freely and knowingly chose death so that we might know how much God loves us.

3. Highlight the **Key Terms, Voices of Faith,** and **Further Reading** sections.

Apply

1. Invite the catechumens and candidates to spend some time this week looking at a crucifix and thanking God for the gift of Salvation achieved through Jesus’ suffering, Death, and Resurrection. If they do not have a crucifix in their home, tell them where they can purchase one.
2. Encourage the catechumens and candidates to complete these statements:

From the prayer, discussion, and study for this Sunday, I understand the Church’s teaching to be . . .

I am challenged to live the message of this Sunday by . . .

Pray

Pass around a crucifix and invite each participant to spend a few moments in contemplation while you play the hymn “Lift High the Cross” or another similar hymn.