

Catechumenate Session

APPRENTICES IN FAITH: A Resource for the RCIA
Thirty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time • Year B • November 8, 2015

Catechist Preparation

Scripture

FIRST READING—1 Kings 17:10–16

In the male-dominated society of biblical times, widows were very disadvantaged. Without a husband or a male protector, widows were frequently exploited. Hebrew Scripture attempts to provide some protection for widows, to make them less vulnerable to wicked elements in society (see Exodus 22:2–23, Deuteronomy 16:11 and 24:17).

SECOND READING—Hebrews 9:24–28

This reading continues last week's comparison between Jesus and the Temple priesthood. More reasons are given for his superiority as a priest. Christ has entered the heavenly sanctuary, not just the earthly Temple. His unrepeatable sacrifice is definitive. Christ offers his own blood.

GOSPEL—Mark 12:38–44

In today's Gospel the hypocrisy of the scribes acts as a stark contrast to the genuine sacrifice of the poor widow.

Church Teaching

Catholic Social Teaching on stewardship derives from Scripture. Stewardship is a Gospel way of seeing ourselves and how we relate to the world around us.

The image of the steward is taken from the parables of Jesus (see Matthew 25:14–30, Luke 12:42–48) and is amplified in the Epistles (see 1 Corinthians 4:1–2, 12:26; 2 Timothy 4:7–8; 1 Peter 4:10).

An *oikonomos* (Greek for “steward” or “household manager”) was given responsibility for caring for the goods and property of an owner who was frequently

an absentee landlord. The expectation was that the steward would manage the household affairs so the owner's resources yielded as much profit as possible.

The Gospel image directly applies to us. God is the owner. We are expected to respectfully and lovingly make a good return on all we have been given.

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 following questions and invite participants to reflect on them quietly:

What do today's Scripture readings say to us about giving?

Who would be comforted by today's Scripture readings? Why?

Who would be challenged by today's Scripture readings? Why?

What is the message given in today's readings?

2. Invite volunteers to share their responses with the large group.

Pray

Use the Responsorial Psalm (Psalm 146:7–10) from today's liturgy: “Praise the Lord, my soul!”

Additional Background

Catechism of the Catholic Church: 2442–2463

United States Catholic Catechism for Adults: pages 447–457

Compendium—Catechism of the Catholic Church: 519–520

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Extended Catechesis Session

(Approximately 45 to 60 minutes)

Readings

1 Kings 17:10–16

Psalms 146:7–10

Hebrews 9:24–28

Mark 12:38–44

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 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:
 - Each widow demonstrates trust in God.
 - God is the source of all gifts.
 - What motivates us to give, attend Church, and do acts of kindness?
 - We will be judged by our motivation, not the amount we give.
2. Invite the group to read the **Catholic Doctrine** section of the participant resource. Then highlight the following points:
 - Everything we have is a gift from God. We are called to be stewards of all gifts.
 - Stewardship is the way of life of a disciple of Jesus.

3. Relate the parables found in Matthew 25:14–30 and Luke 12:42–48. Then discuss the image of the steward found in the parables.
4. Highlight the **Key Terms, Voices of Faith, and Further Reading** sections.

Apply

1. Invite a parishioner to come and speak about their experience of stewardship of time, talent, and treasure. Encourage the catechumens, candidates, and their sponsors to discuss ministry opportunities that they might like to explore in the parish.
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

Use the following prayer, which is found on the participant handout: *Creator God, you provide for us a world rich in many resources, peopled by diverse races and cultures. You invite us to share what we have and who we are with others to the glory of your kingdom being built among all the faithful. Amen.*