

# Catechumenate Session

APPRENTICES IN FAITH: A Resource for the RCIA  
Thirty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time • Year B • November 15, 2015

## Catechist Preparation

### Scripture

**FIRST READING**—Daniel 12:1–3

This section from Daniel belongs to the scriptural genre of apocalyptic writing. It is not to be interpreted in a word-for-word manner. Most likely composed during the revolt against Antiochus Epiphanes, mid second century B.C., who sought to downplay Israel's faith, it weaves real events with end-time images to assure people of God's triumph.

**SECOND READING**—Hebrews 10:11–14, 18

The freely offered self-sacrifice of Christ is so effective—for all time—that it flows both backward to the beginning and forward beyond the present to the end times.

**GOSPEL**—Mark 13:24–32

These verses are part of a larger section in Mark (chapter 13) referred to as the “Little Apocalypse” due to similarities with the Book of Revelation.

### Church Teaching

We are not created to be aimless or to decide our lives on the basis of personal taste or through a merely individual calculus. We are responsible to live up to the Covenant established with us by God in Christ.

Together we are meant to help weave a tapestry through individual and corporate actions so that a history in line with God might be presented for final renewal. The ultimate meaning of this history will be rendered or refined by God who alone is Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier.

### Additional Background

**Catechism of the Catholic Church:** 668–682

**United States Catholic Catechism for Adults:** pages 151–162

**Compendium—Catechism of the Catholic Church:** 133–135

## 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.

### 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 the group to reflect on them quietly before sharing their responses with one or two other people:

*What are your thoughts and ideas about the coming of the end of the world?*

*What do you fear, if anything?*

*What do non-believers think about the coming of the end of the world?*

*What do you think is the message given in today's readings?*

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

### Pray

Use the following prayer which is found on the participant handout: *God of the universe, you spoke and creation sprang into being. Though the sun may be darkened and the moon fail to give light, you will continue to speak through your Son, your eternal, living Word who sustains us in good times and in bad. Amen.*

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## Extended Catechesis Session

(Approximately 45 to 60 minutes)

### Readings

Daniel 12:1–3

Psalms 16:5, 8–11

Hebrews 10:11–14, 18

Mark 13:24–32

### 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:
  - Today's readings speak of the Final Judgment, which is also referred to as the Second Coming of Christ.
  - All things happen in God's time which is the "right" time. The time of the Final Judgment is unknowable to us.
2. Invite the group to read the **Catholic Doctrine** section of the participant resource. Then highlight the following points:
  - In the Apostles' Creed we pray "he will come to judge the living and the dead."
  - There is a distinction between personal judgment at the end of one's life which results in Heaven (eternal life in the presence of God),

Purgatory (purification in order to enter the joy of Heaven), or hell (eternal life in the absence of God) and the Final Judgment at the end of the world.

- If one has striven to be a faithful disciple of Jesus Christ, one will see God. If a person turned away from Christ and did not choose to follow the Great Commandment, that person will be judged accordingly.
  - Through Christ all have been redeemed, but each person must choose to accept Redemption and to act (live) accordingly.
3. Highlight the **Key Terms, Voices of Faith,** and **Further Reading** sections.

### Apply

1. Give each of the catechumens and candidates a copy of the Act of Contrition. Go over its meaning, and encourage them to pray it every night.
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

If possible, this Sunday would be an excellent opportunity to use the Rite of Anointing of the Catechumens with oil (RCIA 102, 103). Or pray the minor exorcism (RCIA 94G). Have the sponsor stand behind with their hand on the shoulder of the catechumen.