

Doctrinal Session

APPRENTICES IN FAITH: A Resource for the RCIA
Our Father

Catechist Preparation

Clarifying the Essentials

The Lord's Prayer is the consummate expression of the praying Church.

- ◆ The gift of this prayer, bestowed by Jesus and instilled in believers' hearts through the Holy Spirit was received, celebrated and lived by the Church from her beginning (see *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 2767).
- ◆ As part of the Mass, this prayer summarizes all that we ask for in the Eucharistic Prayer, and anticipates the heavenly banquet of which Holy Communion provides a foretaste (see CCC 2770).

The Holy Spirit empowers believers to pray the Lord's Prayer.

- ◆ Throughout a lifetime of faithful use, this prayer engenders filial trust, joyous surety, humble boldness, and the certitude of being loved by God (see CCC 2778).
- ◆ Praying it in conjunction with continual conversion develops the essential dispositions of cooperating with God's grace and becoming more devoted to him as his trusting child (see CCC 2784).

Why Is This Important?

The Lord's Prayer summarizes the Good News of our release from bondage to sin. We go through much in life that affects us both positively and negatively. We grow in our relationship to the Father, through his Son Jesus, in the Holy Spirit. The one bedrock constant in that graced relationship is that we are the Father's adopted sons and daughter—brothers and sisters to one another in Christ.

*... there is not one, not a single one,
whether father or mother or friend, who loves us
as much as the God who created us.*

SAINT JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

Doctrinal Session Guide

(Approximately 60 minutes)

Arrange chairs in a circle. Place in the center a candle, an open Bible, a rosary, and prayer booklets.

Welcome

Greet people as they arrive. Check in with everyone to find out how they are doing.

Pray

Invite everyone to speak to God in the quiet of the heart asking for what they need at this time.

Engage

1. Proclaim Matthew 6:5–13. Then ask, *What words or phrases caught your attention?*
2. Continue with the **Insight** and **For Reflection** sections of the participant handout.

Teach

1. Explain that the Gospels of Matthew and Luke each give us a version of the Lord's Prayer. Matthew's version is the one that we are most familiar with, and is used in Mass. It contains seven petitions, summarizing the Gospel. This prayer describes the relationship between the Father and the Son. It also describes our relationship with God the Father. The "Our" indicates the communal aspect of the prayer.
2. Discuss the **Church Teaching** section. As time permits, answer any questions or concerns raised by participants' responses at the beginning of the session.

Apply

Encourage the participants to complete these statements:

From the prayer, discussion and study for this topic I understand the essence of this Church teaching to be . . .

What insight into this Church teaching did I gain?

Pray

Pray together the Our Father. Be sure to have sufficient copies of the text available for each catechumen and candidate.