

Catechumenate Session

APPRENTICES IN FAITH: A Resource for the RCIA
Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe • Year B • November 22, 2015



*All-powerful God
and Father,
you raised your Son
from death
and placed him
at your right hand
to rule the nations
as the everlasting King
over all creation.
Living in the Holy Spirit,
may our hearts
burn with divine love
and may all our
words and deeds
mark us as
faithful followers
of Christ.*

Sunday Word

Daniel 7:13–14

Psalm 93:1–2, 5

Revelation 1:5–8

John 18:33b–37

We Pledge Ourselves in Service

The Son of Man shows us an authentic humanity. He leads us to those best qualities and most human ideals established in the divine vision for us. The Son of Man is Jesus Christ who receives from his heavenly Father all that he needs in order to lead us: dominion, glory, and kingship.

We Acclaim Him as the Alpha and Omega

Christ is the beginning and the end. He is everything because he is risen, “the firstborn of the dead (Revelation 1:5). He is everything because he loved us, died for us, and freed us from the bondage of sin. Therefore he is above every earthly ruler. Glory and power belong to him alone.

We Listen to and Live His Truth

Members of the Kingdom of God listen to and heed the voice of Jesus. The Son of Man schools us in humanity and in faith. He is crowned by his own self-sacrifice. By his words and deeds, Christ “testifies to the truth” (see John 18:37).

Catholic Doctrine: Jesus and the Kingdom of God

Christ reigns as King. He inaugurates the Kingdom of God among us by his earthly life and mission. He leads us into that kingdom by teaching us through word and example what it means to be faithful and truly human.

The Kingdom of God does not denote a political or territorial reality. Nonetheless, it is the very real dominion of God coming about among us. In this sense, the kingdom is grounded in this world. On the other hand, the kingdom points beyond this world to the goal of humanity. It is a symbol or metaphor for the blessed eternity experienced in the divine presence.

The culminating effect of Jesus' saving ministry and his Paschal Mystery was that disciples were drawn to him. All are invited into union with Christ, who leads his followers into the Kingdom of God. No one is excluded from entering the kingdom except those who exclude themselves. First proffered to Israel, membership now includes anyone who accepts that Christ is the Eternal Word and acts upon the validity of that Word. The kingdom especially belongs to those who are poor and lowly; that is, those who humbly submit to the Good News Christ brings.

The door to the kingdom is open to anyone who embraces the divine plan. Even sinners who sincerely pursue conversion can be raised to a new dignity as they accept the changes brought about by grace.

Distinctiveness of Church Teaching

Christ invites a radical choice from his followers: to give everything in order to attain the treasure of the kingdom. Words are not enough. Deeds are required.

Sin, death, and human limits are shown to be what they are. Priorities established by the kingdom prevail over this world and reveal it to be deficient. At the same time, the kingdom functions as a promise of future glory. What we see and touch now is not the entirety of God's design. There is much more. And it is better.



Key Terms

KINGDOM OF GOD

Dominion or rule of God. It is inaugurated by the Incarnation of Christ, made known through the Gospel, present in the Person of Jesus Christ and remains in our midst through the Sacraments (see *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 543–550).

CHRIST THE KING

Messianic title of Jesus. He alone leads us into the kingdom. No earthly ruler or leader, and no earthly priorities, stand above or higher than Christ the Lord (see *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 440).

Voices of Faith

Sacraments are signs that participate in the reality which they signify, that is, Christ's passion. They demonstrate what is effected in us by Christ's passion, that is, grace. They prefigure what Christ's passion pledges to us, that is, future glory.

—Saint Thomas Aquinas

God's kingdom aims at transforming human relationships. It gradually matures among us as people step-by-step learn to love, forgive and serve one another.

—Pope John Paul II

Further Reading

Catechism of the Catholic Church: 542 (Christ and his Paschal Mystery at the heart of the kingdom), 546 (parables invite us into the kingdom), 551 (keys of the kingdom given to Peter and the Apostles)

United States Catholic Catechism for Adults:

Chapter 7 (The Good News: God Has Sent His Son), especially the section entitled "Gospel Portraits of Jesus," which details Scripture and the teaching of Jesus on the kingdom, pages 79–80

Compendium—Catechism of the Catholic Church:

107 (who is invited into the kingdom), 108 (signs and miracles of Jesus manifest the kingdom), 133 (seedbed of the kingdom found in the Church)