

Catechumenate Session

APPRENTICES IN FAITH: A Resource for the RCIA
Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time • Year B • January 29, 2012

Catechist Preparation

Scripture

FIRST READING—DEUTERONOMY 18:15–20

When prophets are mentioned, the passage contains a warning regarding falsely speaking God's Word. Thus by the time this was written, people are to discern God's will in the Law itself.

SECOND READING—1 CORINTHIANS 7:32–35

Saint Paul's stated desire at the outset of this passage is to free the believer from anxiety. The ties that bind us to one another in this world are workable only if we rely totally on the Lord Jesus.

GOSPEL READING—MARK 1:21–28

This scene tells us how Jesus taught and what amazing affect his teaching had on others. The people are utterly captivated by what he has to say to them and how what he does when he heals fits with his words.

Church Teaching

Jesus' teaching is meant for all of life. No part of our lives is excluded from the illuminating effect of his teaching. While it may take years for a believer to begin to appreciate the significance of Jesus' teaching and how it applies to one's life and relationships, that does not mean that we do not strive to put that powerful teaching into practice now. We meditate on Sacred Scripture and on the Church's teachings. We share with one another our own personal response to the question "What is this?" In such fashion we are formed by prophetic teaching of Jesus who is Lord.

Additional Background

Catechism of the Catholic Church: 427, 446, 461, 783

United States Catholic Catechism for Adults: pages 85–86

Compendium—Catechism of the Catholic Church: : 84–85, 101

Dismissal Session

(Approximately 20 minutes)

Set space with chairs in a circle. On a small table, place a green cloth, a candle, and an enthroned (reverently opened) Bible.

Discover

Invite everyone to reflect on today's Liturgy quietly for 1–2 minutes. Then have participants reflect on the meaning of these phrases:

- ◆ A prophet like me the Lord will raise up for you. To him you shall listen.
- ◆ Whoever will not listen to my words, I the Lord, will make him answer for it.
- ◆ If a prophet presumes to speak an oracle that I have not commanded . . . he shall die.
- ◆ If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.
- ◆ The people were astonished at his teaching.
- ◆ He taught as one having authority.

Deepen

Proclaim the First Reading: Deuteronomy 18:15–20. Then discuss the following questions:

- ◆ *Who today speaks as Moses did?*
- ◆ *Why or why not would you listen to a prophet from the Church?*
- ◆ *How might you be able to distinguish a true prophet from a false prophet?*

Pray

Sing or play a recording of today's Responsorial Psalm.

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Extended Catechesis Session

(Approximately 45 to 60 minutes)

Sunday Word

Deuteronomy 18:15–20

Psalms 95:1–2, 6–7, 7–9

1 Corinthians 7:32–35

Mark 1:21–28

Welcome

Welcome everyone who is present, including sponsors, team members, and spouses who join the group. Invite one or two people to share some of the key points from the Dismissal Session.

Engage

Proclaim the Gospel: Mark 1:21–28. Then discuss the meaning of the passage by asking these questions and emphasizing these points:

- ◆ What attracts you to listen to a speaker?
—Note as teacher and healer how the people responded to Jesus.
- ◆ What are your expectations of an effective teacher?
—Note how Jesus called the people to faithfulness to the Covenant.
- ◆ How do you describe Jesus?
—Note the difference in your life of knowing Jesus, especially the challenges to hear and obey God's Word.

Explore

1. Highlight key points from the Participant Handout's Church Teaching: Prophet, Teacher and Lord, using these points:
 - ◆ Jesus teaches with an authority different from that of the Scribes and Pharisees.
 - ◆ His teaching is healing and his healing teaches.

- ◆ The Church describes Jesus by professing that he is Prophet, Teacher and Lord.
- ◆ Jesus is Prophet. He is the eternal Word of God made flesh among us. Jesus mediates between God and humanity.
- ◆ Jesus is Teacher. Jesus' whole life teaches. He opens up for all the mystery of God and his plan of Salvation. Jesus teaches that God loves us, reconciles us to himself, offers us a share in the Divine life and show us how to become holy.
- ◆ Jesus is Lord. He is fully God and fully man. Jesus is the Messiah, the Redeemer, and the Savior. In the Creed, we profess the divinity and the humanity of Jesus.

2. Highlight the Key Terms and Voices of Faith sections.

Apply

1. Invite the catechumens and candidates to complete these statements, and share responses with a partner:

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 . . .

2. Invite the catechumens and candidates with their sponsors to consider one way they can put their faith into action this week.

Pray

Use the blessing prayer in the RCIA text #96 B. This might be a Sunday to also celebrate the Anointing with the Oil of Catechumens, see RCIA # 98–103.