

Catechumenate Session Features

Catechist Resource

Catechist Preparation

Presents helpful background information on the readings and doctrinal theme present in the Catechumenate session.

Scripture

Provides a focus on exegetical points or highlights to illuminate or explain the scriptural texts.

Church Teaching

Summarizes the doctrinal content explored in the participant material.

Catechumenate Session
APPRENTICES IN FAITH: A Resource for the RCIA
Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time • Year B • August 9, 2009

Catechist Preparation

Scripture
FIRST READING—1 Kings 19:4-8
The story of Elijah's journey into the desert is only one part in a larger cycle of stories that detail this prophet's running battles with the faithless King Ahab and the scheming Queen Jezebel.
SECOND READING—Ephesians 4:30-5:2
In mentioning "... the Holy Spirit of God, with which you were marked with a seal ..." (Ephesians 4:30), St. Paul is more than likely alluding to the constellation of initiation rituals during which early Christians were baptized, confirmed, and received Eucharist.
GOSPEL—John 6:41-51
The promise here that Jesus will give his flesh "... for the life of the world" (John 6:51) echoes what has been previously recorded in John 1:14 (the Word became flesh) and John 3:16 (God gave his only Son).

Church Teaching
The Eucharist is not a superficial reenactment of the Last Supper. In a most immediate and intimate way, the Eucharist puts us in touch with the very heart of the self-giving on the Cross that Jesus promises in the Gospel and of which he spoke at that final meal with his followers.
As we partake of this sacrament, we are drawn out of ourselves, united to Christ, lifted up, and transformed by the Paschal Mystery. In short, the Eucharist transforms and changes those who receive it.

Additional Background
Catechism of the Catholic Church: 77, 611, 1322-1419
United States Catholic Catechism for Adults: pages 213-232
Compendium—Catechism of the Catholic Church: 271-294

Dismissal Session
(Approximately 20 minutes)
Have environment set with a green cloth, a candle and a place for a book containing the Sunday Scriptures. If possible have a glass of wine and a piece of bread on the green cloth.

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. Invite the group to share what they think of when they hear the phrase "I am the bread of life" (John 6:48). Ask them to reflect on what they think it means for their life.
2. Ask the following questions, and invite the group to reflect on them quietly before sharing their responses with one or two other people:
God provided food and drink for Elijah. How do you recognize the nourishment that God provides for you?
Jesus sacrifices himself for us. In what ways do you make sacrifices for others, in particular for those you love?

Pray
Use the Responsorial Psalm of the day (Psalm 34:2-3, 4-5, 6-7, 8-9) or play a musical setting of the psalm verse, which is "Taste and see the goodness of the Lord."

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Dismissal Session

Offers a simple, consistent format that gives the catechist tools to facilitate a catechumenal dismissal session.

Discover

Offers a simple method to solicit the participants' response to the Liturgy of the Word.

Pray

Concludes the Dismissal session with a creative prayer experience.

Deepen

Provides questions the catechist can use to focus the sharing on a particular aspect of the Scriptures.

Catechumenate Session Features

Catechist Resource

Extended Catechesis Session

Guides the catechist in leading the extended sharing which takes place among catechumens after the Sunday Mass or later in the week.

Welcome

Reminds the catechist to gather everyone in an atmosphere of hospitality and warmth.

Engage

Connects the whole group by reflecting on the Sunday Scriptures.

Explore

Presents some major points for use in group discussion and guides the catechist through the elements of the participant's page.

Apply

Gives the catechist tips so the group might integrate the wisdom they are exploring in Sacred Scripture and Tradition.

Pray

Offers ideas or specific text with which to conclude the session.

CATECHIST

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Extended Catechesis Session

(Approximately 45 to 60 minutes)

Readings

1 Kings 19:4-8
Psalm 34:2-3, 4-5, 6-7, 8-9
Ephesians 4:30-5:2
John 6:41-51

Welcome

Begin by welcoming everyone who is present, including sponsors, team members, and spouses who are joining the group.

Engage

Rephrase one or two questions from the Dismissal Session, and invite the group to share their responses in small groups. Then ask several volunteers to share their reflections with the large group.

Explore

- Summarize or invite the group to read the Sunday Word section of the participant resource. Then discuss the following:
 - The Eucharist nourishes us to do the work of the Gospel.
 - The elements of ritual offering are take, bless, break, and eat.
 - God has an overwhelming love for us and a desire to share life with us.
 - John 3:16: "For God so loved the world . . ."
- Invite the group to read the Catholic Doctrine section of the participant resource. Then highlight the following points:
 - Christ is really present in the bread and wine. At Mass the bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Christ.
 - The Mass transcends time and place. The Mass is not a mere reenactment of the Last Supper.

Apply

- The journey of faith is a journey from "me-centeredness" to "other-centeredness" or from selfishness to selflessness—our own sharing in the Paschal Mystery. Encourage the participants to be aware of the many opportunities to put others' needs before their own. Invite them to think of examples of possible outreach they could do in the home or at work. Consider contacting a local soup kitchen and asking the group if they would cook and serve a meal to those who come.
- 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

Pray this or another Memorial Acclamation from the Mass: *Christ has died, Christ is risen. Christ will come again.*

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