

Doctrinal Session

APPRENTICES IN FAITH: A Resource for the RCIA
Handing on Divine Revelation

Catechist Preparation

Clarifying the Essentials

The heritage of faith has been entrusted to the Church.

- ◆ With the help of the Holy Spirit, the Church retains and hands on the teaching of the Apostles. (See *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 857.)
- ◆ Through the successors of Saint Peter and the Apostles, the Church retains this organic link without interruption down through the centuries. (See CCC 862.)

Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition make up one single Deposit of Faith.

- ◆ Sacred Scripture is God's speech set down in writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. (See CCC 81.)
- ◆ Sacred Tradition is comprised of Church doctrine, life, worship, and witness down through the ages. (See CCC 78.)
- ◆ Flowing together from the same source, Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition come together in the Church to open us to the truth of God's Revelation, the mystery of Jesus Christ. (See CCC 80.)

Why Is This Important?

The message and impact of Christ would be greatly diminished had there been no Apostles and no Church. The New Testament itself comes from the Church, that is, from those early witnesses to the Resurrection. As it was being written, believers were shedding their blood in witness to Christ. The Deposit of Faith—Scripture and Tradition—as well as the Apostles and their successors all form one organic, living body united to Christ in the Church.

In order that the full and living Gospel might always be preserved in the Church the apostles left bishops as their successors. They gave them "their own position of teaching authority."

SAINT IREANAUS, *ADVERSUS HAERESIS*

Doctrinal Session Guide

(Approximately 60 minutes)

Have the space set with chairs, and provide a focal point with a candle and a Bible. Provide name tags and have some refreshments available.

Welcome

Greet the participants as they arrive, and take time for introductions as the session begins. Then invite everyone to pray silently for the Spirit to open their mind and heart to God's message.

Engage

Invite the participants to read and reflect on the story in Insight and then explore the For Reflection questions together. Ask the group to consider how they learned to do everyday tasks of living: cleaning, cooking, yard work, and so on. Invite them to share their reflections in small groups. Then, in the large group, brainstorm other things they have learned through apprenticing or through learning family ways.

Teach

Summarize or invite the group to read Church Teaching. Then discuss the following:

- ◆ The Deposit of Faith has been entrusted to the Church.
- ◆ Scripture and Tradition comprise the Deposit of Faith.
- ◆ The Holy Spirit guides the Church as she hands on the faith to future generations.

Apply

Encourage the participants to complete these statements and share their thoughts:

*From the prayer, discussion, and study for this topic,
I understand the Church's teaching to be . . .
I am challenged to live the message of this teaching by . . .*

Pray

Use intercessory prayer for the leaders of our Church. The response is, "Lord, hear our prayer."
For our Holy Father . . . we pray to the Lord. (*Response*)
For our bishop . . . we pray to the Lord. (*Response*)
Add other appropriate petitions.