

Inquiry Session: Charity

APPRENTICES IN FAITH: A Resource for the RCIA

Inquiry Session

(Approximately 60 minutes)

Prepare

Set the space and provide a focal point with a candle and a Bible, marking the Scripture citations noted in the participant materials. Provide name tags, and have some refreshments available. If the group is larger than five or six people, guide the participants to share in smaller groups.

Gather

1. Greet the participants as they arrive, and take time for introductions as the session begins. Survey the group to see how everyone is doing. Ask if anyone has any questions, then invite them to share, in small groups, any experiences of prayer, worship, or God they have had since the last session.
2. Invite the group to quietly read Reflect on Your Experience. Then encourage participants to share their responses to the question with another person. After a few moments, ask volunteers to share their thoughts, and make a list of examples of helping others. Explore with the whole group one's motivation for helping others.

Expand

1. Read and discuss Hear the Good News About Charity. Include the following points in your conversation:
 - The term *virtue* means the disposition to do what is good.
 - The story of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25–37) can help us understand the two-fold commandment of love.
 - Love, or charity, is a virtue that is linked with God's demonstration of love through Jesus Christ.

2. Read aloud each Scripture passage in Read the Word of God, followed by a moment of silent reflection. Then discuss each passage using these or similar questions:

- What message do you hear in the passage?
- What does the passage reveal about charity?

Reflect and Share

1. Invite the group to read Respond Through Action. Encourage the group to name some of the obstacles that might prevent someone from living the virtue of charity. Explore the dimension of charity that asks us to love everyone, even those that might be difficult to love.
2. Invite one or two participants in outreach ministries of the parish to be present and describe their ministry to the group. Encourage the group to participate in a future experience of these ministries.
3. Summarize the story of Blessed Teresa of Calcutta presented in Witness to the Gospel and ask the participants to share what they feel it reveals about Christian charity.

Pray

Lead a prayer of intercession. After a moment of silence, pray the following aloud and invite the participants to respond by saying, "Lord, hear our prayer": *For all who help those suffering from natural disasters, we pray . . . For all who care for children, we pray . . . For all who care for the elderly, in particular those in nursing homes and those who are homebound, we pray . . . For those who have no one to help them, we pray . . . Good and gracious God, you know our hearts. Hear our prayers for all those in need and for those who reach out to help others. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.*