

Doctrinal Session

APPRENTICES IN FAITH: A Resource for the RCIA
Paschal Mystery in the Liturgy

Catechist Preparation

Clarifying the Essentials

The source of all blessings originates in God the Father and gives us an abundance of life.

- ◆ From beginning to end, throughout all time and history, God's work is nothing but a blessing (see *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 1079).
- ◆ The liturgy contains a dual dimension: God the Father fills us with blessings in his Word made flesh, Jesus Christ, poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit; the Church blesses the Father by worship, praise, and thanksgiving, petitioning God for the gift of his Son and the Holy Spirit (see CCC 1083).

The liturgy of the Church not only recalls the events that saved us but makes them sacramentally present again in our lives and enables us to share in them.

- ◆ Christ links the Church to himself in order to accomplish the great work of Salvation among us in our own time and for our own sake (see CCC 1089).
- ◆ Liturgy actualizes, or makes present for us, the saving event of the Paschal Mystery; in other words, the Paschal Mystery of Christ is celebrated, not repeated (see CCC 1104).

Why Is This Important?

Liturgy takes place through perceptible signs that nourish, strengthen, and express faith. In these perceptible signs we encounter the Paschal Mystery. It is a real event that occurred in history and is unique. All historical events fade and pass away. However, because all that Christ did to save us participates in the divine eternity, the Paschal Mystery transcends time and is present to all time.

*‘(God) desires nothing from us
except our salvation.*

SAINT JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

Doctrinal Session Guide

(Approximately 60 minutes)

Arrange the space with chairs and a focal point with a candle, a Bible, and a crucifix. Provide name tags and have some refreshments available.

Welcome

Greet the participants as they arrive, and take time for introductions as the session begins. Reverently hold a Bible up high, open it, and proclaim Ephesians 1:3–6 as a gathering prayer.

Engage

1. Invite the participants to share with several others a photograph that they carry with them. Have them talk about their photos, sharing the significance of the photo they carry.
2. Ask the participants to read Insight silently, then invite the group to discuss the For Reflection questions together.

Teach

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

- ◆ Liturgy is the work of the People of God gathered to give thanks and praise to God who is the source of all life and the gracious giver of abundant blessings.
- ◆ In liturgy we remember who we are and who we are called to become.
- ◆ We proclaim the mystery of Salvation through the liturgy.

Apply

Encourage the participants to complete the following statements and reflect on the questions:

*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

Invite participants to participate in a moment of silent, reflective prayer. Play a recording of one of the suggested songs for this session, or another appropriate hymn.