

Doctrinal Session

APPRENTICES IN FAITH: A Resource for the RCIA
We Are Built for Prayer

Catechist Preparation

Clarifying the Essentials

While he was in the flesh, Jesus learned to pray.

- ◆ Jesus was steeped in the Jewish traditions of his home, the synagogue, and the Temple (see *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 2599).
- ◆ The action of the Holy Spirit is a prominent theme in the Gospel according to Luke. Jesus prayed before special moments in his own ministry and before decisive moments for his disciples (see CCC 2600).

Jesus teaches others to pray.

- ◆ His example shows the filial nature of prayer. He boldly trusts God the Father to grant what we ask (see CCC 2610).
- ◆ He reminds the disciples that once he returns to the Father in glory, we are to ask in his name, for he is “the way, the truth and the life” (John 14:6; see CCC 2614).

Why Is This Important?

Because we are created in the image and likeness of God, we have a built-in bond with God. He had fashioned us most marvelously to respond both in prayer and in loving action. We are built for prayer. Jesus has given us a rich example and teaching about prayer. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, communicates to us the filial attitude and the Spirit of truth that grounds us for reverent, effective praying.

Doctrinal Session Guide

(Approximately 60 minutes)

Have chairs set in a circle, and in the center a candle and an open Bible. Have nametags and refreshments available.

*For me, prayer is a surge of the heart;
it is a simple look turned toward heaven,
it is a cry of recognition and of love,
embracing both trial and joy.*

SAINT THÉRÈSE OF LISIEUX

Welcome

Greet people as they arrive. Take time for introductions and check in with everyone to find out how they are doing.

Pray

Reflect on the quotation from Saint Thérèse.

Engage

1. Write on a whiteboard all the words, phrases or feelings that come to mind when you hear the word “prayer.” Then reflectively read the list aloud.
2. Have partners reflect and discuss:
*What is your understanding of prayer and why we pray?
Who taught you to pray? How do you pray?
Do you have a favorite prayer? If so, what is it?*
3. Continue with the **Insight** and **For Reflection** sections, inviting any questions they may have.

Teach

Discuss the **Church Teaching** section, using these points:

- ◆ God plants within us a desire to communicate with Him. This is called prayer.
- ◆ The Triune God invites us into a deepening relationship. Prayer is our response to that invitation, and can take many forms.
- ◆ Jesus taught us how to pray. He taught his disciples to pray the Our Father.

Apply

Encourage the participants to complete these statements:

*From our study of this topic, I understand the
essence of this Church teaching to be . . .*

*I am challenged to live the message of this
teaching by . . .*

Pray

Allow for a few minutes of silent prayer. Conclude by saying: *We thank you, God, for hearing our prayer. Help us turn to you often, that we may know your presence and your peace. We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.*