

Catechumenate Session Features

Participant Resource

Prayer

Provides text that correlates to the readings of the day and can be used as a gathering or closing prayer.

Sunday Word

Lists the Scripture readings for the corresponding Sunday, and provides a brief meditation on the readings.

Catholic Doctrine

Identifies and explores a particular aspect of Church teaching based on the corresponding Sunday's readings.

Catechumenate Session PARTICIPANT

APPRENTICES IN FAITH: A Resource for the RCIA
Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time • Year B • August 12, 2012

*Lord Jesus,
by your sacrifice on the cross
you saved us,
and by your holy meal,
the Eucharist,
you invite us
to share in your
saving sacrificial love—
bread broken
and cup poured out
for the sake of the world.*

Sunday Word
1 Kings 19:4–8
Psalm 34:2–9
Ephesians 4:30–5:2
John 6:41–51

Enough!
In his difficult ministry, Elijah the prophet has had enough. He prays for death as a deliverance from the challenges he faces. Instead, he receives nourishment from an angel of the Lord who provides a hearth cake and a jug of water. Strengthened by that food, Elijah walks for forty days and nights to God's mountain. Elijah eats and drinks what is provided by the angel. It is filling enough that he might accomplish what God intends for his prophetic ministry.

For the Life of the World
Saint Paul reminds the Ephesians and ourselves that Christ loved us so much that he handed himself over for us as a sacrificial offering to God.
In today's Gospel Jesus continues the dialogue with the people who continue to disbelieve him. He assures them that he is "... the living bread that came down from heaven" (John 6:51). This divine gift bestows true life in this world and in the eternal world which waits beyond this one.

**Catholic Doctrine:
Eucharist, Sacrifice and Sacrament**

This Is My Body, This Is My Blood
Sharing the Last Supper with the Apostles, Jesus knew suffering and death awaited him. His words and actions at that Passover meal anticipated the sacrifice of the cross by which his Body and Blood would truly be given up for us, sealing the New Covenant. This everlasting relationship between believers and Jesus would be proclaimed and perpetuated by the Apostles. They were instructed to carry on his message, ministry, and the eucharistic sacrament down through the ages.

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Christ's Sacrifice Made Present Again in Each Eucharist

The Paschal Mystery—Christ's life, Death, Resurrection and Ascension—is unlike any other event in history. While it actually took place at a particular point in time and in a particular place, it is totally unique in that Christ's death on the cross and his Resurrection also transcend that particular time and place.

The Paschal Mystery is made present in all times and places through the celebration of the sacraments, especially the Eucharist. All that Jesus does for us to save us participates in a divine reality that does not pass away. The abiding reality of Christ's Paschal Mystery stays present to us in the liturgy, and we become present to it and are made sharers in its many graces.

Distinctiveness of Church Teaching

The Eucharist is the sacrifice of Christ. It is also the sacrifice of the Church. The members of the Body of Christ who gather at Mass to celebrate this sacrament offer their own faithful lives, praise, sufferings, prayers, and good works. United with those of Jesus and his own total offering of self, our lives take on new meaning and value.

The Eucharist is a living, everlasting memorial. As often as this sacrament is celebrated, the work of our redemption is carried out, for:

- it makes present and actual the sacrifice Christ offered to God the Father on the cross on behalf of humanity;
- the sacrifice of the cross and the sacrifice of the Eucharist are one and the same: in a bloody manner on the cross, in a non-bloody manner in the Eucharist;
- it is offered for all the faithful, living and dead, throughout the ages.



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Key Terms

APOSTOLIC SUCCESSION

Through ordination, this is the handing on to the bishops the mission of the Apostles as their successors to preach the full and living Gospel, to pastor the faithful, to teach with authority, and to administer the sacraments (see *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 77).

SACRIFICE

Ritual offering rendered to God by a priest on behalf of the people, signifying their adoration, thankfulness, petition, and communion. Christ's Death on the Cross is the most perfect sacrifice. High priest of the New Covenant, Christ's sacrifice is perpetuated in the Eucharist (see *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 1545).

MASS

The Eucharist, the main sacramental celebration established by Jesus at the Last Supper. The term "Mass" derives from the Latin *missa* which denotes the "mission" of the faithful as they are sent forth from the celebration to live what they have received (see *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 1332).

Voices of Faith

The Church continues to reproduce this sacrifice [of Christ] in the sacrament of the altar so well-known to believers wherein it is evident to them that in what she offers she herself is offered.

—Saint Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*

The Church and the world have a great need for Eucharistic worship. Jesus awaits us in this sacrament of love. Let us not refuse the time to go to meet him in adoration, in contemplation full of faith . . . [in this sacrament]. Let our adoration never cease.

—Blessed Pope John Paul II, *Dominicae Cenae*

Further Reading

Catechism of the Catholic Church: 611 (Eucharist as the everlasting memorial of Christ's sacrifice), 613 (Christ's Death, the unique and definitive sacrifice that redeems us), 1085 (abiding presence of the cross and Resurrection in our lives).

United States Catholic Catechism for Adults: Chapter 17 (The Eucharist: Source and Summit of the Christian Life) especially the pages entitled "The Mass is a Sacrifice," pages 220–222.

Compendium—Catechism of the Catholic Church: 120 (Last Supper where Christ both instituted the Eucharist as the eternal memorial of his saving sacrifice and instituted the Apostles as priests of the New Covenant), 281 (through Eucharist the Church participates in the sacrifice of Jesus).

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APPRENTICES IN FAITH:
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Key Terms

Presents faith vocabulary and definitions related to the particular week's theme.

Voices of Faith

Offers wisdom and insight from a Saint and a Pope related to the weekly theme.

Further Reading

Provides optional resource citations that can be used by the catechumens for further information.