

Inquiry Session: Community

APPRENTICES IN FAITH: A Resource for the OCIA

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 whether 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. Provide time for the group to read **Reflect on Your Experience**. Create a written list of groups and memberships to which everyone present belongs. Offer your own input, and ask the participants to share other groups or memberships to add to the list. Discuss some of the benefits of belonging to particular groups.

Expand

1. Read and discuss **Hear the Good News About Community**. Include the following points in your conversation:
 - Church is a community.
 - Church is a group to which we freely choose to belong.
 - Church is the place where Jesus' saving action is mediated.
 - The Spirit dwells within the Church.

- The term *ecclesia* means "convocation" or "called together."
- We are called to work together as a community of faith.

2. Read aloud each Scripture passage in **Read the Word of God**, following with 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 community and what it means to belong to a community of faith?

Reflect and Share

Invite the group to read **Respond Through Action** and **Witness to the Gospel**. Discuss the following:

- The struggle to become less selfish—to work for the common good of all
- The challenge to use our gifts to share the Good News of Jesus with others
- Times we might push others away. Why might we make that choice?
- Times we join with others. What might cause us to make that choice?
- Saint Catherine of Siena's gift to the community

Pray

Take a few minutes to look over the list of groups to which people belong that you created with the participants. Then invite everyone to give thanks to God, in the silence of their hearts, for the many blessings mediated through the groups. Play or sing a song about the Church, the Body of Christ.