

Catechumenate Session

APPRENTICES IN FAITH: A Resource for the OCIA
Third Sunday of Easter • Year C • May 4, 2025



O Lord,
we sing your praises,
for you have brought us
into new life,
the life of your Son,
who does not
leave us orphaned
but shepherds us
as his flock, his people.
Amen.

Sunday Word

Acts 5:27-32, 40b-41

Psalm 30:2, 4, 5-6, 11-12, 13

Revelation 5:11-14

John 21:1-19 or 21:1-14

Exalted as Leader and Savior

Peter and the other Apostles cannot be silent. They speak out as witnesses to what they have seen and heard in Christ. The Risen Lord is exalted as leader and Savior. He grants repentance and forgiveness of sins to all those who believe and obey him.

Worthy Is the Lamb

God grants John a vision of the heavenly hosts. They surround the divine throne and praise Christ for his loving sacrifice. Power, riches, wisdom, strength, honor, glory, and blessing belong to the Risen Lord, the Lamb slain for our sakes.

What They Know Best

After the terrifying events of the Cross, Peter and the other disciples return to their former occupation, doing what they know best. It is a consolation to pursue fishing routines that are ingrained. Suddenly, a stranger calls to them from the shore, telling them to cast their nets elsewhere. The call and the actions of taking and giving bread, much like the Last Supper, point to a renewed discipleship in the Risen Lord. Christ nourishes his followers in love and provides for the apostolic mission. This is what the disciples now know best.

Church Teaching: Eucharist and Mission

Sent Forth

Jesus, the divine emissary from the Father to humanity, called to himself those who would be associated with him in his work. He chose twelve whom he appointed Apostles. They accompanied him in his earthly ministry. He also sent them out to heal and preach in his name. From that time onward, the Apostles (from the Greek, *apostolos* for “messenger”) became Christ’s emissaries.

This notion of sending prevails in all the accounts of the Gospel but most especially in John’s Gospel, where Jesus reiterates that as he himself has been sent by the Father, so too he sends

the disciples. (See, for example, John 5:19, 13:20, 15:5, 17:18, and 20:21.) The idea of sending is also contained in the Pauline letters, which describe the Apostles being called by God as “ministers of a new covenant,” “servants of God,” “ambassadors for Christ,” and “servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God,” (see 2 Corinthians 3:6, 6:4, 5:20 and 1 Corinthians 4:1).

An Apostolic Church

The whole Church, by nature, is apostolic. All her members share in the work of the apostolate, varying in degree and scope, according to individual vocations and stations in life. Thus fruitful discipleship, which emulates Christ, cannot turn in upon itself. The impulse for Christian discipleship is outward.

The task of discipleship in pursuing apostolic work requires nourishment, which leads us to the Eucharist. This sacramental meal makes present the loving sacrifice of Jesus, strengthening and empowering us that we might take up the Cross of Christ and spread Good News by word and example. In other words, the Eucharist leads us to evangelize.

The Eucharist is the source and summit of the Christian life. Those who join together in the celebration of the Eucharist not only offer to God the sacrifice of Christ but offer to God themselves and their lives. This sacrament thus brings to perfection all the gifts offered and all the sacrifices made for the Kingdom of God by uniting them to Christ’s sacrifice for the sake of the life of the world.

Distinctiveness of Church Teaching

The Eucharistic meal feeds us so that we might give ourselves to the mission of Christ in every walk of life, in all circumstances. It enables us to go beyond ourselves. It increases our love for the poor and unfortunate.

The very name given to the entire liturgical celebration of the Eucharist, the Mass, derives from *missa*, Latin for “being sent.” The name indicates the thrust of the sacrifice and of our lives. We are to go forth to spend our lives in service as bread broken and as cup poured out for the life of the world. In this sacrifice, God gives himself to us. We are enjoined to do the same for our brothers and sisters in need; that is, to go forth and glorify the Lord by our lives.

Key Terms

APOSTLE

From the Greek *apostolos*, which means “one who is sent,” as Jesus was sent from his Father and as he sent the disciples to preach the Good News to the world. This apostolic mission is a permanent feature of the Church (see *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 858).

APOSTOLATE

Activity, by word and example, in every area of life that fulfills the apostolic nature of the entire Church by the Christian who seeks to extend the Kingdom of God throughout the whole world (see *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 863).

MISSION

Describes the apostolic impulse in spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ everywhere. The Church continues the mission of Jesus through the Holy Spirit, according to God’s plan. Clergy, laity, and religious all are called to participate in the apostolic mission (see *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 913).

Voices of Faith

They see a fire of coals, for the Savior had . . . put a fish on it that he had caught by his ineffable power . . . For he first caught one fish as the firstfruits of those who were to come . . . Then afterward the disciples caught the multitude in their nets, being enabled by his divine bidding to catch what they were fishing for.

—Saint Cyril of Alexandria

The Body and Blood of Christ are given to us so that we ourselves will be transformed. . . . We are to become the Body of Christ, his own Flesh and Blood. . . . His dynamic enters into us and then seeks to spread outward to others until it fills the world, so that his love can truly become the dominant measure of the world.

—Pope Benedict XVI

Further Reading

***Catechism of the Catholic Church*:** 857 (Church is apostolic), 863 (the apostolate), 1368 (Eucharist unites us with Christ’s sacrifice), 1396 (Eucharist makes the Church), 1397 (Eucharist commits us to the poor)

***United States Catholic Catechism for Adults*:**

Chapter 17 (The Eucharist: Source and Summit of the Christian Life), especially the section entitled “The Eucharist Transforms the Recipient,” pages 225–227

***Compendium—Catechism of the Catholic Church*:**

188 (vocation of laity to the apostolate), 292 (effects of the Eucharist)