

Catechumenate Session

APPRENTICES IN FAITH: A Resource for the RCIA
Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time • Year B • July 14, 2024

Catechist Preparation

Scripture

FIRST READING—AMOS 7:12-15

Amaziah insinuates that Amos is making a living by prophesying. This is Amos' sarcastic response: not at all, he works as a shepherd! His prophesying is the result of God's call.

SECOND READING—EPHESIANS 1:3-14 (OR 1: 3-10)

The first part of this reading is a benediction text that the author has inserted into his letter. The subject matter of this benediction is the action God takes in Christ to bless or to choose us.

GOSPEL—MARK 6:7-13

Rejected by his hometown, Jesus continues his ministry elsewhere and sends the Twelve out on a mission to further that ministry. They are to take nothing with them except their own trust in God.

Church Teaching

The biblical concept of election describes how God acts, intervenes, and is involved in our human history. Election is less about privilege and exalted status than it is about vocation and responsibility. Believers who experience the love of God in their own lives are motivated to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with others and therefore daily build up the Reign of God by serving others in love. Thus belonging to God leads to our special vocation to show others what this belonging means.

Dismissal Session

(Approximately 20 minutes)

Set the space with chairs in a circle. On a small table, place a candle, a green cloth, the parish Book of the Elect, and an open Bible or Lectionary.

Additional Background

Links: Israel—a Chosen People,
Amos, a prophet
The Rite of Election

Music: "The Servant Song," R. Gallard (GIA, OCP, WLP)
"God Has Chosen Me," B. Farrell (GIA, OCP)
"Psalm 85: Lord, Let Us See Your Kindness," M. Haugen (GIA)

Discover

1. Invite everyone to reflect quietly for one to two minutes on the Liturgy of the Word just celebrated. Recall words or phrases from the Liturgy of the Word such as
 - The Lord took me
 - Lord, let us see your kindness
 - He chose us
 - He destined us for adoption
 - In him we have redemption
 - Sealed with the promised Holy Spirit
 - Sent them out two by two
2. Ask:

What do you hear as a message for us today?

With whom would you want to share this message? Why?
3. Invite participants to share their thoughts with one or two people.

Deepen

1. Proclaim the Second Reading, Ephesians 1:3-14 (or 1: 3-10).
2. After a few moments of quiet, discuss:
 - God has chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world.
 - We have been blessed in many ways.
 - In Baptism, we become the adopted children of God.
 - We are called to continue the work of Christ here and now.
 - The Holy Spirit has been given to us as the first installment of our inheritance—eternity with God.
3. Ask:

What does this passage tell us about God?

How do you respond to the gifts God has lavished upon us?
4. Invite participants to share with one or two other people, then gather some feedback.

Pray

Sing or play a recording of today's Responsorial Psalm, Psalm 85:9-14.

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Extended Catechesis Session

(Approximately 45 to 60 minutes)

Sunday Word

Amos 7:12-15

Psalm 85:9-14

Ephesians 1:3-14 (or 1:3-10)

Mark 6:7-13

Welcome

Welcome everyone who is present, including sponsors, team members, and spouses who join the group. Invite one or two people to share some of the key points from the Dismissal Session.

Engage

1. Pass around the parish Book of the Elect so everyone has an opportunity to look at it.
2. Explain that on the first Sunday of Lent, the parish celebrates the Rite of Election. Those to be baptized sign their names in the Book of the Elect as their response to God's call to be baptized. Those who have already been baptized are already recorded in the Book of the Elect (see Revelation 7:5, 14:1).
3. Discuss:
 - Election is a political process for electing people for public office. The citizens vote for the person of their choice and the candidate with the most votes wins.
 - In a biblical context, election is founded on God (cite RCIA 119). The Church, through the office of the bishop, gives voice to God's choice not because of what the person has done but by the grace of God, who desires all people to be one with God in Christ.
4. Ask:

How do you experience God's election (choice) of you?

How do you respond to such a call from God?
5. Proclaim the Gospel, Mark 6:7-13.
6. Discuss:
 - Christ sent his disciples out to preach repentance.

- They were to take nothing with them for the journey. They were to rely on the generosity of those who welcomed them into their homes.
- They were to heal the sick.
- They were chosen to do this ministry.

Explore

1. Highlight the following discussion points:
 - God's chosen are to continue the mission of Christ here on earth.
 - In Baptism, we become members of the holy and elect of God, called to be faithful to the Covenant that we are God's chosen ones.
 - In the Old Testament, beginning with Abraham and Sarah, God forms a chosen race, a royal priesthood called to holiness.
 - God acts in total, absolute freedom; God chooses who he wants to lead the people.
 - In the New Testament, Jesus Christ is the ultimate fulfillment of God's plan of Salvation.
 - Jesus is the Anointed One, who had been foretold by the prophets.
 - The early followers of Jesus saw themselves as the means to carry on the mission of Jesus.
 - To be elected by God obliges us to bear witness to the world that God loves and saves us all.
2. Highlight key points from the participant handout's Catholic Teaching: Election and Mission. Also highlight the Key Terms and Voices of Faith.

Apply

1. Encourage the catechumens and candidates to complete these statements:

From the prayer, discussion, and study for this Sunday, I understand the Church's teaching to be...

I am challenged to live the message of this Sunday by...
2. Encourage the catechumens and candidates and their sponsors to discuss ways that they can carry out the mission of Christ this week.

Pray

Use Blessing of the Catechumens, RCIA 97E, or celebrate the Anointing of the Catechumens, RCIA 98-103.