

Young Apprentices

A RESOURCE FOR THE OCIA

CATECHUMENATE SESSION

Second Sunday of Easter (or Sunday of Divine Mercy) • Year C • April 27, 2025

Catechist Preparation

Scripture

FIRST READING—ACTS 5:12-16

Today's reading summarizes the early Church's growth and success in the exercise of her gifts, and the faith with which the Apostles are met as they go about the mission entrusted to them by Christ.

SECOND READING—REVELATION 1:9-11A, 12-13, 17-19

The apocalyptic visions contained in the Book of Revelation supply the content of the Second Readings over the course of the Easter Season in year C of the Lectionary cycle. Today's passage centers on a vision of "one like the Son of Man" (vs. 13), who is revealed to be Lord of all.

GOSPEL—JOHN 20:19-31

Thomas the Apostle insists he will never believe the Lord is risen unless he sees and touches his wounds. Suddenly, Christ appears to the disciples and confronts the unbelieving Thomas. A profoundly moved Thomas professes faith. The final verses seem to be aimed directly at us. We have not seen as Thomas did, but we are called upon to believe.

Church Teaching: Baptism

Through Baptism we are born anew by the gift of faith, a seed that grows within us as encouraged and nurtured by others of faith. We become part of a living tradition handed down from the time of the Apostles to the present day. Our relationship with God can at times be tested, our faith strained. In those difficult times of doubt and struggle, individuals can turn to the community formed by God, to the household of the faithful, and seek renewal, comfort, and strength.

Additional Background

Catechism of the Catholic Church: 142–184

United States Catholic Catechism for Adults: pages 35–47

Our Catholic Heritage, Levels I and II: pages 92, 114–116

Dismissal Session

(Approximately 20 minutes)

Set the space with chairs in a circle. On a small table, place a white cloth, a bowl of holy water, a candle, and an open Bible or Lectionary.

Discover

1. Invite the children to name again the days of the Triduum. Ask volunteers to share how they celebrated those days, including Easter Sunday.
2. Ask how many were able to come to the Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Vigil, and Easter Sunday liturgies. Ask what they experienced, liked, and remembered about each of these liturgies.

3. Invite the group to think about the liturgy just celebrated. Then ask:

*What was different about the worship space today?
Why?*

*What words and phrases do you remember
from the readings? The homily? The songs?
The prayers?*

Deepen

1. Ask a volunteer to name the key person, other than Jesus, who was mentioned in today's Gospel.
2. Proclaim the Gospel, John 20:19-31, inviting the children to listen carefully for what Thomas says and does.
3. Invite volunteers to recall what Thomas said and did.
4. Ask the children whether they are ever like Thomas, doubting something someone tells them unless they see it for themselves. Be prepared to share an example from your own life.

Pray

Pray together the prayer from the front of the participant handbook. Conclude by singing an Easter Alleluia, refrain, or familiar Easter hymn.

Extended Catechesis Session

(Approximately 45 to 60 minutes)

Supplies

If possible, gather in the church near the baptismal font and light the Paschal candle. If you cannot gather there, you will need the prayer table setup. You will also need copies of the participant handout and copies of the Nicene Creed, Apostles' Creed, and Profession of Faith from the Order of Baptism (see Teach #2 and #3).

Sunday Word

Acts 5:12-16

Psalm 118:2-4, 13-15, 22-24

Revelation 1:9-11a, 12-13, 17-19

John 20:19-31

Welcome

Welcome everyone and invite one or two children to share some of the key points from the **Dismissal Session**.

Invite

1. Recall with the group that at the Easter Vigil, those who had been preparing to celebrate the Sacraments of Initiation were baptized, were confirmed, and received the Eucharist for the first time.
2. Invite the children to focus with you on the Sacrament of Baptism and on the waters of the font.
3. Begin by asking the group to brainstorm all the ways that water is a part of life. Be sure to include examples of everyday uses of water, its life-giving properties, and its destructive potential.
4. Conclude by reminding the children that water is a powerful symbol of Baptism. It is a symbol of both death—the putting to death of Original Sin and all personal sin—and life—the rising to new life in Christ Jesus.

Teach

1. Continue the discussion, highlighting the following points:
 - One of the parts of the Order of Baptism is the Profession of Faith. In a profession of faith, people state what they believe.
 - In the celebration of the Mass, the assembly professes their faith by reciting the Nicene Creed or the Apostles' Creed. *(If time allows, review the words to the creeds and invite volunteers to name the beliefs we profess in each creed.)*
 - In the celebration of the Order of Baptism, the assembly responds "I do" to a series of questions about their belief in God the Father, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, and the faith of the Church. *(If time allows, review with the children the questions to which the assembly responds.)*
2. Invite the children to consider all of the things that they have learned about God the Father, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, and the Catholic Church in recent weeks. Invite volunteers to then complete this statement: "I believe ____."
3. Proclaim the Gospel, John 20:19-31.
4. Invite a volunteer to name the person in the Gospel who had a difficult time believing, and why.
5. Ask the children what makes it difficult for them to believe at times. Be prepared to share your own examples.

Challenge

1. Point out to the children that the participant handout has a different look to it for the Easter Season. Instead of **Key Teachings** and **Faith Words**, they will have room to continue to reflect on today's discussion.
2. Review the directions for the **Water of Life** and **I Believe** sections of their handouts.

Prayer

Conclude by praying the prayer on the front of the participant handout, and by singing an Easter Alleluia, refrain, or familiar Easter hymn.