

# Young Apprentices

A RESOURCE FOR THE OCIA

## CATECHUMENATE SESSION

Second Sunday of Lent • Year C • March 16, 2025

### Catechist Preparation

#### Scripture

**FIRST READING**—GENESIS 15:5-12, 17-18

The LORD promised Abram that his descendants would be as numerous as the stars in the sky. Abram put his faith in the LORD, offering sacrifice to him.

**SECOND READING**—PHILIPPIANS 3:17-4:1 OR 3:20-4:1

Saint Paul, concerned over some in the Christian community who are falling from the faith, urges them to remain firm in their baptismal commitment, keeping their gaze fixed on their citizenship in Heaven, from which will come their Savior, Jesus Christ.

**GOSPEL**—LUKE 9:28B-36

Luke sets the Transfiguration of Jesus on top of a mountain during a special visit as Jesus prays.

#### Church Teaching: Three Kinds of Prayer

Every Ash Wednesday the Church proclaims the same Gospel passage (see Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18), which presents Jesus' teaching on prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. These three religious activities help set the tone for the Lenten season as a preparation for or recalling of Baptism. The First Reading and the Gospel for this Sunday portray two occurrences of prayer: the trance or vision of Abram and the mountaintop transfiguration of Jesus as he is praying.

There are three basic forms of prayer: vocal prayer, meditation, and contemplative prayer. A prayer of meditation might begin with vocal prayer but shifts into a reflective process that engages thought, imagination, emotion, and desire in order to deepen

#### Additional Background

**Catechism of the Catholic Church:** 2698, 2709

**United States Catholic Catechism for Adults:** Chapter 35, especially the section entitled "Contemplative Prayer," page 474

**Our Catholic Heritage, Levels I and II:** pages 37, 69, 93, 101; Catholic Prayers and Practices

faith, prompt conversion, and strengthen one's will to follow Christ. Contemplative prayer shifts into a more direct or complete union with the Lord. The person praying becomes totally present to God as a self-offering to be purified and transformed.

### Dismissal Session

(Approximately 20 minutes)

Set the space with chairs in a circle. On a small table, place a purple cloth, a candle, a dish with sand, a crucifix, and an icon or picture of the Transfiguration. When the children are seated, light the candle and sit in quiet for a few minutes.

#### Discover

1. Invite the children to name images or phrases that they heard or sang about in the Liturgy of the Word. (*Responses will vary but could include sky, stars, birds, darkness, covenant, light, Salvation, Heaven, mountain, dazzling white, three tents, and cloud.*) You may wish to list these images on the board or on a flip chart as the children name them.
2. Ask the children what they notice about the things they named. (*Many have to do with things of nature; some have to do with light and dark.*)
3. Ask them to choose their favorite image or phrase and share what they think it means.

#### Deepen

1. Proclaim again the Gospel, Luke 9:28b-36
2. Lead the children in an experience of a guided meditation. Use these or similar words, pausing between each sentence or phrase.

*Close your eyes. Become quiet and still. Picture yourself in a beautiful place on mountain. Feel the warmth of the sun; see the deep blue sky. Lean back against a warm rock. Look out over creation. Imagine that you feel someone else is near. You look around to see who it is, and you are happy to see that it is Jesus! He says hello and comes to sit beside you. He*

*asks you why you have come to this mountaintop. He asks about your hopes and dreams. He asks you about your fears. What are you worried about? What makes you happy? You talk with him about all these things. Then he looks into your eyes and says to you, "Do not fear, I am with you always!" He gets up and walks away.*

3. After some quiet time, invite the children to share what they thought of during this prayer of meditation. How did it feel to be on the mountain? How did they feel when Jesus came to sit with them? What did they talk about with Jesus? What did they hear Jesus say to them?

### Pray

Close by praying the prayer on the front of the participant handout.

## Extended Catechesis Session

*(Approximately 45 to 60 minutes)*

### Supplies

In addition to the prayer table setup, you will need copies of the participant handout.

### Sunday Word

Genesis 15:5-12, 17-18

Psalms 27:1, 7-8, 8-9, 13-14

Philippians 3:17-4:1 or 3:20-4:1

Luke 9:28b-36

### Welcome

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

### Invite

1. Ask whether anyone in the group has taken a vacation in the mountains. Invite volunteers to share where they were, what they saw, and what they did.
2. Explain that in the Bible, mountaintops are places of meeting God.
3. Proclaim again today's Gospel, Luke 9:28b-36.

4. Reflect on the passage by asking the following or similar questions:

*Who went up the mountain with Jesus?*

*Why did Jesus go up the mountain?*

*What happened on the mountain?*

*What did the voice coming from the cloud say?*

5. Conclude by asking the children what they would have done if they had been there. Would they have kept this a secret, or would they have told someone about their experience? Why?

### Teach

1. Read and discuss **Key Teachings** and **Faith Words** from the participant handout.
2. Remind the children that Jesus went up the mountain to pray.
3. Highlight the following discussion points:
  - Prayer is a conversation with God.
  - There are various ways to pray.
4. Provide an experience of each of the three types of prayer named in the participant handout: vocal prayer, meditation, and contemplation.

### Challenge

1. Invite the children to choose a mantra or "prayer phrase" from among the following, or to create their own: *Be still and know that I am God; The Lord is my light and my Salvation; Jesus, I love you; or Jesus, be with me.*
2. Encourage them to pray their mantras three times a day for the next week.

### Prayer

If possible, celebrate the Anointing of the Catechumens (OCIA 98-103), or pray the prayer on the front of the participant handout.