

Young Apprentices

A RESOURCE FOR THE OCIA

MYSTAGOGY: BAPTISM

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

Introduction

A period of post-baptismal catechesis, or mystagogy, should be provided to assist the young neophytes and their companions who have completed their Christian initiation (see OCIA 330). Mystagogy is the final period of post-baptismal catechesis intended to help the neophytes and the Christian community grow in their understanding of the Paschal Mystery through continuing to reflect on God's Word, by taking their place in the assembly for the celebration of the Eucharist, and by continuing to answer Christ's call to love others through works of charity (see OCIA 244).

This session is offered to help neophytes and their companions continue to reflect on their experience of the Easter Vigil, most particularly their experience of Baptism.

Supplies

The optimum setting for this session is in the church, gathered around the Paschal candle and the baptismal font. If a different space must be used, set the space with chairs in a circle around a prayer table containing a large white candle, a large glass bowl of holy water, and a Bible. You will also need copies of the participant handout.

Word of God

Acts 5:12-16

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

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

John 20:19-31

Gather

1. Greet the children and their families as they arrive.
2. Take time for introductions and check in with everyone to find out how they are doing.
3. As a gathering prayer, invite all to stand and sing a portion of the Litany of Saints that was sung at the Easter Vigil. Then lead the group in remembering the Order of Baptism on that night. Invite all to share one or two memories.

Deepen

1. Brainstorm with the whole group the many ways that water is part of life. Be sure to include both the positive and negative aspects of water.
2. Summarize the discussion using these or similar words:
 - Water is absolutely necessary for all living things. Ask: *What would happen to a plant or to the crops if there was no rain? What would happen to our bodies if we had no water to drink?*
 - Water is also a very powerful force. Ask: *What can happen to you if you dive into the deep end of a swimming pool but do not know how to swim? What happens when there is too much water, like in a flood or hurricane?*
 - Water is the most important symbol of Baptism. We experience the powerful force of water as it is poured over us, and we experience the new life of water as we rise up as new creations in Christ.

Meditate

1. Proclaim the Gospel, John 20:19-31.
2. Ask the following questions, pausing between each to allow time for quiet reflection:

Have you ever felt like Thomas? When? Why?

How do you feel when you doubt?

In what way are we called to walk by faith and not by sight?

3. Invite volunteers to share some of their responses to the questions.
4. If possible, play or sing “We Walk By Faith” (M. Haugen/GIA Publications).

Share

1. Read and discuss the **Share** section of the participant handout.
2. Explore with the neophytes these discussion points:
 - Baptism is the first sacrament we celebrate.
 - Baptism leads to, or is the gateway to, all the other sacraments.
 - Baptism makes us members of the family of God. We are now God’s daughters and sons, heirs of Heaven, and sisters and brothers to all.
3. Point out to the group that when we enter the Church, the baptismal font or the holy water fonts are there so that we can touch the holy water and make the Sign of the Cross as a reminder of our Baptism.

Do

1. Invite everyone to come forward to the font or to the bowl of holy water and to touch the water and make the Sign of the Cross as a reminder that they have been baptized.
2. Encourage the neophytes to make thank-you cards to give to people who were helpful to them as they prepared for Baptism.

Pray

Invite all to close their eyes. Ask them to picture one by one each person who helped them as they prepared for Baptism. As they picture each person, encourage them to ask Jesus to bless that person in a special way.