

Young Apprentices

A RESOURCE FOR THE OCIA

INQUIRY SESSION: SACRAMENTS

Inquiry Session (Approximately 60 minutes)

Prepare

If possible have available symbols of the sacraments, such as a bowl of water; unconsecrated hosts; a chalice of wine; a stole; the holy oils; and the ritual books for the sacraments, including the Roman Missal.

Set the space with chairs in a circle and in the center place a candle and a Bible. (Mark the Scripture citations noted in the participant materials.)

If needed, have name tags. Have some refreshments available, too.

Gather (10–15 minutes)

1. Greet the children as they arrive. Invite each child to share his or her name and something good that happened since the last time the group gathered.

Take time to find out how the children are doing.

Ask whether they had an experience of prayer or church since the last session.

2. Read together the **My Story** section of the participant page and discuss the questions found there.

3. Use the following or similar questions to explore what the children know about the sacraments or have experienced or seen regarding the sacraments.

Who here has been baptized? Into what faith tradition were you baptized?

How many of you have been to a celebration of Baptism in the Catholic Church? What do you remember about it?

Has anyone here today been to or been a part of a Catholic wedding? If so, where was the wedding? What do you remember about it?

*How many of you have been to a Catholic Mass?
What are some of the things Catholics do at Mass?*

What questions do you have about these sacraments?

Expand (20–25 minutes)

1. Read and discuss the **God's Story** section of the participant page.

As you explain each of the three groups of the sacraments, take the time to show the children the symbols that are used with each, including the ritual books and Roman Missal.

- Sacraments are special celebrations of the Church.
- There are three groups of sacraments.
- The first group of sacraments is called the Sacraments of Initiation—Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist. These sacraments make us members of the family of God and of the Catholic Church.
- The second group of sacraments is called the Sacraments of Healing—Penance and Reconciliation and the Anointing of the Sick.

The Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation is celebrated after a person has been baptized and before a person celebrates First Eucharist.

This sacrament makes right again a person's relationship with God and with the members of the Church.

Ask the children whether any of their friends have celebrated the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation. If so, ask what their friends said about the sacrament.

The Anointing of the Sick is a sacrament that is celebrated with those who are in need of healing. This sacrament might be celebrated in

a hospital room, in a person's home, or with the whole parish once or twice a year. A person may receive this sacrament as often as needed.

- The third group of sacraments is called Sacraments at the Service of Communion.

This means that these sacraments serve the community.

The Sacrament of Holy Orders is for those who are to be a priest or a deacon. The symbol for this sacrament is the stole. The priest wears the stole around his neck. The deacon wears the stole as a sash on one shoulder across his chest.

Invite volunteers to share ways that priests and deacons serve the Church.

The Sacrament of Matrimony (or marriage) is celebrated by the couple that is getting married. One of the symbols of the sacrament is the wedding ring.

A married couple serves the Church by being witnesses of God's love to others.

2. Read aloud the following Scripture passages. Invite the children to name which sacrament each passage describes.

Matthew 28:19-20

(The Commissioning of the Disciples)

1 Corinthians 11:23-26

(Tradition of the Institution)

James 5:13-15 (Anointing of the Sick)

Our Response (10–15 minutes)

1. Review the names of the three groups of sacraments, and the individual names of the Seven Sacraments. Invite the children to point out or name the symbols for each.
2. Point out the ***Faith Words*** section of the participant page. Review the faith words with the children.
3. Invite the children to listen to the story of a saint who had a very unusual baptism. Use the participant page or tell in your own words the story of Saint Ambrose.

Pray: (2–3 minutes)

Conclude with the following prayer, inviting the children to echo each line after you.

God our Father,
you invite us to be your children,
to be holy in your sight/
and happy in your presence./

Receive us as a loving Father/
so that we may one day share/
the joy and love/
of your holy Church.

Amen.

Based on the Rite of Penance, Appendix II 36f