

Doctrinal Session

APPRENTICES IN FAITH: A Resource for the RCIA
God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

Catechist Preparation

Clarifying the Essentials

Faith in God and loving him with every fiber of our being has tremendous implications.

- ◆ God's majesty is great, and believers respond to that greatness by placing him first before all else (see *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 223).
- ◆ All that we are and all that we have that is "good" comes from God; therefore, we live in thanksgiving (see CCC 224).
- ◆ Since all people are created in the image and likeness of God, we uphold the basic unity and dignity of all human beings (see CCC 225).

Invited by God's mercy and love to share in the life of the Holy Trinity, we are drawn up into Divine Mystery.

- ◆ When we glorify the Father, we also glorify the Son and the Holy Spirit; all who follow Christ do so because they are prompted by the Father in the Holy Spirit (see CCC 259).
- ◆ Because we are created in the image and likeness of God, only human beings are capable of self-knowledge, self-possession, and of freely entering into communion with God and with other persons (see CCC 357).

Why Is This Important?

God created us for the purpose of serving and loving him. Due to Original Sin, our human nature is fallen, and we are subject to sin and death. Our words and actions do not always "image" him in whose image and likeness we have been created. The Son was sent by the Father to conquer sin and death and free us for life in God, now and forever. We can only marvel at the depths of God's love and awesome power.

*Everything comes from love, all is
ordained for the salvation of (humanity),
God does nothing without this goal in mind.*

SAINT CATHERINE OF SIENA, *DIALOGUE ON PROVIDENCE*

Doctrinal Session Guide

(Approximately 60 minutes)

Have the space set with chairs, and provide a focal point with a candle and a Bible. Provide name tags and have some refreshments available.

Welcome

Greet the participants as they arrive, and take time for introductions as the session begins. Pray the Sign of the Cross.

Engage

On newsprint or white board, list all the words and phrases that people use to describe parents. Invite the participants to read and reflect on the story in Insight, share their response to the story, and explore the For Reflection questions together. Then make a second list that includes all the words and phrases that people use to describe God. Ask the participants what these lists might reveal about God.

Teach

Summarize or invite the group to read Church Teaching. Then discuss the following:

- ◆ God is Trinitarian: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- ◆ The Trinity is One God in Three Divine Persons. The Persons in the Trinity are equal and distinct and understood in relation to each other.
- ◆ While we attribute certain activities to one Person of the Trinity, for example, creation to the Father, Salvation to the Son, and sanctification to the Holy Spirit, the "works" of God are always the work of the Three Divine Persons.
- ◆ We are baptized into the mystery of the Holy Trinity.

Apply

Encourage the participants to complete these statements and share their thoughts:

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

I am challenged to live the message of this teaching by . . .

Pray

Pray the Apostles' Creed together.