

Catechumenate Session

APPRENTICES IN FAITH: A Resource for the RCIA
All Saints • Year A • November 1, 2020

Catechist Preparation

Scripture

FIRST READING—Revelation 7:2–4, 9–14

The number 144,000 given in this section from Revelation has no significance other than being an unimaginably large number. One thousand is itself a large number and 144 is the square of 12 (the twelve tribes of Israel multiplied by the Twelve Apostles). In apostolic times “Israel” symbolized the Church.

SECOND READING—1 John 3:1–3

This passage from the First Letter of John emphasizes the progressive nature of our calling. We are not made perfect in Baptism in order to disregard ethical concerns, but to work toward the kingdom each day by what we say and do, striving always to be like Christ.

GOSPEL—Matthew 5:1–12a

There are textual clues to highlight the significance of the Beatitudes: Jesus goes up the mountain (much like Moses did in the giving of the Law) and he sits down (teachers in classical times taught from a seated position).

Church Teaching

Saints are ordinary men and women who, throughout Christianity, have striven to become holy. The trajectory of their lives exhibited a special character worth emulating and that character is how Christlike they were. We venerate them with deep affection as brothers and sisters whom we might follow. When we pray, we ask them to intercede for us before God much as we would ask a friend to put in “a good word” for us with a powerful benefactor.

Additional Background

Catechism of the Catholic Church: 946–962

United States Catholic Catechism for Adults: pages 151–162

Compendium—Catechism of the Catholic Church: 194–195

Dismissal Session

(Approximately 20 minutes)

Set a table with a white cloth, a candle, and pictures of Saints. If your parish is named after a Saint, provide a picture of that Saint.

Discover

1. Ask the following questions, and invite the group to reflect on them quietly before sharing their responses with one or two other people:

What did you see or hear in the Liturgy of the Word?

What word, phrase, or image from the readings stays with you?

2. Invite several volunteers to share their reflections with the large group.

Deepen

1. Ask the following questions and invite participants to reflect on them quietly:

With which Beatitude do you most identify?

Why?

What did you hear as the message for you today?

2. Invite participants to share their responses with the large group.

Pray

Play a musical setting of the Beatitudes used in your parish. Or play a recording or instrumental music and prayerfully read aloud the Beatitudes, pausing after each Beatitude so that everyone may reflect on its meaning for their life.

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Extended Catechesis Session

(Approximately 45 to 60 minutes)

Readings

Revelation 7:2–4, 9–14

Psalm 24:1–4ab, 5–6

1 John 3:1–3

Matthew 5:1–12a

Welcome

Begin by welcoming everyone who is present, including sponsors, team members, and spouses who are joining the group.

Engage

Begin by rephrasing one or two questions from the Dismissal Session, and invite the group to share in small groups. Then ask several volunteers to share their reflections with the large group.

Explore

- Summarize or invite the group to read the **Sunday Word** section of the participant resource. Then discuss the following:
 - God so loves us that we are called God's children. What does this say about God's desire for us now? In the future?
 - The Beatitudes have rich meaning for people of faith.
- Invite the group to read the **Catholic Doctrine** section of the participant resource. Then highlight the following points:
 - The Solemnity of All Saints is a holy day of obligation. It acknowledges the Communion of Saints and, in a particular way, those who have died and gone to Heaven.
 - Sainthood (sanctity) is possible and is the call for every human being.

- Read the stories of some of the more common saints and discuss the process of formal canonization.
- Describe the Litany of the Saints that is prayed at the Easter Vigil and on other occasions.
- Highlight the **Key Terms, Voices of Faith, and Further Reading** sections.

Apply

- Encourage catechumens, candidates, and their sponsors to spend time looking up stories of saints either on the Internet or in a book, such as Butler's *Lives of the Saints*.
- Invite the catechumens and candidates to complete these statements:

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

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

Pray

Pray this or another portion of the Litany of the Saints.

Holy Mary, Mother of God	pray for us
Holy angels of God	pray for us
Saint John the Baptist	pray for us
Saint Joseph	pray for us
Saint Peter and St. Paul	pray for us
Saint Mary Magdelene	pray for us
Saint Francis and St. Dominic	pray for us
Saint Teresa of Jesus	pray for us
All holy men and women	pray for us