

Catechumenate Session

APPRENTICES IN FAITH: A Resource for the RCIA
Thirty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time • Year A • November 8, 2020

Catechist Preparation

Scripture

FIRST READING—WISDOM 6:12–16

This passage concludes the section on wisdom and the justice of God. The author personifies wisdom in the feminine. Wisdom is approachable; she is willing to come to those seeking her. The wisdom of God leads us closer to God.

SECOND READING—1 THESSALONIANS 4:13–18 OR 4:13–14

In this section of his letter, Saint Paul addresses the question of what happens to those believers who have died prior to the Second Coming.

GOSPEL READING—MATTHEW 25:1–13

The parable in this passage assumes the customary practice of the groom visiting the bride's house to finalize the marital agreement with her father. When the groom returns with the bride to his own home, the wedding feast begins.

Church Teaching

Prayer is as important to the soul as food is to the body. Prayer nourishes us precisely because it places us in communion with God. Prayer opens us to receive his promptings. In prayer, we surrender to his grace, even when we petition God on our behalf or that of another. For this reason, believers engage in prayer often, weaving its beautiful rhythms into that of the day, week, month, and year.

Additional Background

Catechism of the Catholic Church: 2728–2731

United States Catholic Catechism for Adults: page 476

Compendium—Catechism of the Catholic Church: 572–575

Dismissal Session

(Approximately 20 minutes)

Set the space with chairs in a circle. On a small table, place a green cloth, a candle, and a book of prayers or the *Liturgy of the Hours*, along with a rosary.

Discover

Invite everyone to reflect on today's liturgy quietly for 1–2 minutes. Then have participants recall an experience of waiting expectantly, using these questions:

- ◆ *What was the occasion, who were the people, and how did you prepare for this expected event?*
- ◆ *How did you respond to those who arrived on time? To those who did not arrive at the expected hour?*
- ◆ *What happened to the meal you had prepared?*
- ◆ *How is your experience similar to the parable in today's Gospel?*

Deepen

1. Proclaim the Gospel: Matthew 25:1–13. Then discuss the Gospel passage by asking the following:
 - ◆ *How did the wise and the foolish virgins act in this parable from today's Gospel?*
 - ◆ *With whom from the parable do you identify? Why?*
 - ◆ *Do you think the wise ones should have been willing to share? Why or why not?*
2. Invite each participant to explain what they think is meant by Jesus' call to stay awake since no one but the Father knows the day or the hour.

Pray

Sing or play a recording of today's Responsorial Psalm.

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Extended Catechesis Session

(Approximately 45 to 60 minutes)

Sunday Word

Wisdom 6:12–16

Psalms 63:2, 3–4, 5–6, 7–8

1 Thessalonians 4:13–18 or 4:13–14

Matthew 25:1–13

Welcome

Welcome everyone who is present, including sponsors, team members, and spouses who join the group. Invite one or two people to share some of the key points from the Dismissal Session.

Engage

1. Invite participants to explain how they “get ready” for a major life event such as a graduation, wedding, birth of a child, or retirement:
 - ◆ Does it occur with last minute preparation only or are there long-range plans made and carried out?
 - ◆ What kind of flexibility is there along the way?
 - ◆ What happens if no plans are made?
2. Then have the group discuss how we are to prepare for the Lord’s coming at the end of time. Emphasize the image of the “oil in our lamps” as a symbol for readiness.
3. Explain that we are called to live in this world trusting that God has prepared a place for us in Heaven. The Lord, the Bridegroom, comes unannounced, so we are called not to grow lax in our preparation. Our present focus needs to have a sense of readiness.

Explore

1. Highlight key points from the participant handout’s Church Teaching: Perseverance in Prayer, using these points:
 - ◆ The Lord Jesus Christ is the Bridegroom who will come to usher in the heavenly banquet at the end of time.
 - ◆ Our covenantal relationship with God requires communication. Prayer, our conversation with God, is an essential means of deepening our relationship with him.
 - ◆ Many challenges and distractions compete for our attention and often pull us away from our commitment to pray.
 - ◆ God waits patiently for us to spend time with him in prayer. God is always with us, we are never truly alone. We are to trust in God, who walks with us even in our darkest times.
2. Highlight the Key Terms and Voices of Faith sections.

Apply

1. Invite the catechumens and candidates to complete these statements, and share responses with a partner:

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 . . .
2. Invite sponsors and team members to share how their personal prayer life has grown and changed through the years. Time permitting, discuss the types of prayers of the Church, emphasizing that prayer is an ongoing conversation with God.

Pray

Invite everyone to spend some quiet time with God.