

Catechumenate Session

APPRENTICES IN FAITH: A Resource for the RCIA
The Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ • Year B • June 2, 2024

Catechist Preparation

Scripture

FIRST READING—EXODUS 24:3-8

Moses' ritual sprinkling of half of the blood from the slaughtered animals (the other half is sprinkled on the altar) seals the Covenant relationship between the people and God. But the emphasis in this passage is not on the ritual so much as it is on the peoples' adherence to God's word.

SECOND READING—HEBREWS 9:11-15

In the preceding section, the author of the letter first examines the Old Testament priestly ministry, Covenant, and sanctuary rituals of the Jerusalem Temple. Now the author applies these to Jesus' own self-sacrificing Death by which the New Covenant is established.

GOSPEL—MARK 14:12-16, 22-26

This account of the final Passover meal Jesus celebrates with his disciples in anticipation of his Cross is also an account of the first Eucharistic meal. The first Passover delivered God's people as led by Moses. This new Passover delivers all people from death and sin as led by Christ and his Church.

Church Teaching

Reverence for the Lord's presence in the Eucharist dates from the earliest generation of Christians, as attested by the "Bread of Life" discourses in John's Gospel, the many meal narratives with Eucharistic overtones in Luke and the other Gospel writers, and the first letter to the Corinthians. The significance of the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist is that we are to become the Body of Christ. The dynamic of divine love enters us and seeks to spread outward to others until it fills the world.

Additional Background

Links – History of the Development of this Feast
Corpus Christi Processions
Melchizedek

Music – "Pange Lingua," Thomas Aquinas, GIA, OCP, WLP
"One Bread, One Body," J. Foley, GIA, OCP, WLP
"The Supper of the Lord," L. Rosania, OCP

Dismissal Session

(Approximately 20 minutes)

Set the space with chairs in a circle. On a small table, place a white cloth, a variety of breads, a bunch of red grapes, a chalice, and a paten (plate).

Discover

Pass around the breads and the grapes.

Ask:

How often do you eat some form of bread?

What do you understand by the phrase "bread is the staff of life"?

Why are the grapes present?

When is wine part of a meal?

Proclaim the Gospel passage, Mark 14:12-16, 22-26.

Take one loaf of bread and pass it around. This time, invite the participants to break off a piece and eat it.

Ask:

What does it mean to say that we are all part of the one Body?

What does it mean to say that we participate in the Body and Blood of Christ?

What do you understand it means to receive the Eucharist?

Summarize the discussion.

Pray

Play a recording of or sing a Eucharistic hymn that is part of the parish repertoire.

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Extended Catechesis Session

(Approximately 45 to 60 minutes)

Sunday Word

Exodus 24:3-8

Psalm 116:12-13, 15-18

Hebrews 9:11-15

Mark 14:12-16, 22-26

Engage

Lead a reflection on bread using these or similar words.

Consider what goes into baking bread:

- Various ingredients such as
 - Flour (and the steps that go into producing flour)
 - Yeast
 - Sugar
 - Salt
- The kneading of the dough
- Time to allow it to rise
- Heat to change the ingredients into a new substance.

Invite participants to work with partners or in groups of three. Ask them to share some insights that this reflection gives us about Eucharist.

After some time, gather feedback from their sharing.

Teach

- We believe that Jesus becomes present in the bread and wine.
- During the Eucharistic Prayer, the priest or bishop speaks the words that Jesus spoke at the Last Supper. By this action, the bread and wine are changed into the Body and Blood of Christ. The elements are no longer bread and wine but the very presence of Christ.
- Christ is totally present in each species; thus communicants receive Christ fully whether they receive one or both species.

- When we participate in the Eucharistic celebration, we join in Christ's own self-sacrifice to the Father.

Discuss

- The Eucharist is something done in remembrance of what Jesus did at the Last Supper. It is real at every Eucharist: Christ is made present—whole and complete—though the external characteristics of the bread and wine remain.
- We believe that we take and eat and take and drink the Body and Blood of Christ.
- Our “Amen” when we receive Communion proclaims our belief in the Real Presence of Christ.
- The Eucharist is the food for disciples; it provides the strength and the grace needed for disciples to go out to the world and witness to the saving action of Christ.

Highlight key points from the participant handout's Catholic Doctrine: The Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist. Also highlight the Key Terms and Voices of Faith.

Apply

Encourage 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...

Invite someone from the parish or from a neighboring parish to explain Eucharistic adoration and its significance. Encourage the catechumens/candidates and their sponsors to spend time this week in Eucharistic adoration.

Pray

Use the Collect from today's liturgy.