

Catechumenate Session

APPRENTICES IN FAITH: A Resource for the RCIA
Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time • Year B • February 11, 2024

Catechist Preparation

Scripture

FIRST READING—LEVITICUS 13:1-2, 44-46

Given how extensively this book treats skin disease in chapters 13 and 14, there may have been an epidemic of skin disorders. The careful examination of the sick person's condition was undertaken to protect the community. Even cuts and bruises were examined, because blood was seen as conveying the very power of God within oneself.

SECOND READING—1 CORINTHIANS 10:31-11:1

Paul excludes believers from partaking publicly of food used by pagans so that scandal is not given, but if it is served privately, charity enables one to partake. Love is the only absolute for Paul.

GOSPEL—MARK 1:40-45

Jesus commands the healed leper to tell no one but the priest of his healing, for only the priest could determine if the excluded person would be readmitted to the community. Jesus heals us such that we are given to one another in community.

Church Teaching

Whether we are relatively healthy or sick, Christ the Lord has given us to each other. As we journey in this world to the life beyond this one, our eyes are fixed firmly on eternity and the promise of a life totally united with God. Even so, as we strive toward that new life, we are more than cognizant of one another and how we might assist each other to that blessed day.

Additional Background

Catechism of the Catholic Church: 1500, 1504, 1509, 1511

United States Catholic Catechism for Adults: page 256

Compendium—Catechism of the Catholic Church: 313–316, 320

Dismissal Session

(Approximately 20 minutes)

Set the space with chairs in a circle. On a small table, place a green cloth, a candle, and an enthroned (reverently opened) Bible or Lectionary. If possible, have the ritual book *The Pastoral Care of the Sick* available to view.

Discover

Invite everyone to reflect on today's liturgy quietly for one to two minutes. Then have participants respond to the following questions:

What did you hear during the Liturgy of the Word that touched your heart?

Which words or phrases from the readings stay with you?

Deepen

Proclaim the Gospel, Mark 1:40-45. Then discuss the Gospel passage using these questions and supporting information:

- ◆ Leprosy was a common skin disease at this time. Those afflicted survived through begging.

If you had been cured like the leper, how would you have responded?

- ◆ Those who were deemed “unclean” lived outside the village and had to announce themselves as they approached others. This was to help protect others from being infected.

What are some similar situations today or in the recent past?

- ◆ The priest declared a person unclean according to the prescriptions of the Mosaic laws. The priest also declared whether a person was clean and able to rejoin the group.

How is this similar to the practice of celebrating the Anointing of the Sick?

Pray

Use the Responsorial Psalm from today's liturgy.

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Extended Catechesis Session

(Approximately 45 to 60 minutes)

Sunday Word

Leviticus 13:1-2, 44-46

Psalms 32:1-2, 5, 11

1 Corinthians 10:31-11:1

Mark 1:40-45

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 remember when they or people they love were sick. Have them describe the details of when that happened and who was with them.
2. Now have one or two parishioners who have experienced receiving the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick share with the group:
 - ◆ When they received the sacrament
 - ◆ What prompted them to request the sacrament
 - ◆ How they were comforted by receiving the sacrament

Explore

1. Highlight key points from the participant handout's Church Teaching: Anointing of the Sick:
 - ◆ Jesus frequently heals people of their infirmities. Though he did not heal everyone, his healing was also an invitation to a deeper faith.
 - ◆ Jesus' ministry of healing proclaimed God's victory over our broken humanity; it announced the coming of the Reign of God when sickness and death would be no more.
 - ◆ The Church also has a special care and concern for the sick and their loved ones. The Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick continues the healing ministry of the Lord today.

- ◆ This sacrament is readily available to all who suffer serious physical and mental illnesses. Sometimes those facing addictions or those preparing for major surgery seek God's grace in this Sacrament of Healing.
 - ◆ The rite is very simple: It consists of proclaiming Scripture, a laying on of hands by the minister, and the anointing itself with the prescribed words. Usually the forehead and hands are anointed.
 - ◆ Family members are encouraged to be present and join in the prayers during the Rite of Anointing .
 - ◆ This sacrament can be celebrated in many settings. The minister is either a priest or bishop.
 - ◆ The sacrament conveys God's grace, as all sacraments do. Four special graces are given in this sacrament:
 - The Holy Spirit's gifts of strength, peace, and courage
 - Oneness with Christ, especially through the suffering
 - Unity with the whole Body of Christ through the prayers of the Church
 - Preparation for the final journey of eternal life, if the person is dying
2. Highlight the Key Terms and Voices of Faith sections.

Apply

Invite the catechumens and candidates to complete these statements and share responses with partners:

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

Use the prayer found on the participant handout.