

Purification and Enlightenment Session

APPRENTICES IN FAITH: A Resource for the RCIA
Second Sunday of Lent • Year B • February 25, 2024

Catechist Preparation

FIRST READING—GENESIS 22:1-2, 9A,10-13, 15-18

The entire scene is filled with suspense. The first verse reminds us that this is a test. The focus does not rest upon the horror of God's command to sacrifice Isaac but instead hones in step by step on Abraham's compliance in faith. Because he is faithful, Abraham and his descendants are blessed.

SECOND READING—ROMANS 8:31B-34

We owe a great debt to Christ who suffers, dies, and rises for our sakes. It is a debt we can never repay. In gratitude for Jesus' intercession on our behalf, we obey him as Lord. He holds the key to life. No one can snatch that key from our hands.

GOSPEL—MARK 9:2-10

Jesus goes up the mountain and takes with him the same three disciples who have witnessed his miracle of restoring health and life to the little girl (see Mark 5:37-42). They saw life being given back to the little girl. They now see another life, a glimpse of divine glory, a glory that makes possible all life.

Making Connections

Key Images and Symbols

His Exodus (*Catechism of the Catholic Church* [CCC] 129, 130, 571, 614, 1094)

It Is Good That We Are Here (CCC 1098)

Beloved Son (CCC 443, 445, 458, 479)

Listen to Him (CCC 425, 427, 554)

They No Longer Saw Anyone But Jesus (CCC 556, 592, 613, 2763)

Music Suggestions

"'Tis Good, Lord, to Be Here" (traditional)

"At the Name of Jesus" (traditional)

Psalm 27: The Lord Is My Light (various composers)

Dismissal Session

(Approximately 20 minutes)

Set the space with chairs in a circle. On a small table, place a purple cloth, an icon or picture of the Transfiguration, and the Bible or Lectionary.

Respond

1. Invite the group to reflect quietly on the Liturgy of the Word just celebrated.
2. Ask participants what word, phrase, or feeling stays with them. What is it that the word, phrase, or feeling speaks to them?

Enhance:

1. Proclaim the First Reading, Genesis 22:1-2, 9a, 10-13, 15-18.
2. Invite the elect and candidates (if they are present) to reflect on the reading and how their journeys are reflected in the reading. After reading aloud each question, allow time for quiet reflection.

In the first sentence we hear that God was giving Abraham a test. What does Abraham's response tell you about his relationship with God?

What does God's response tell you about God's relationship with Abraham?

In what way do you experience a test of your relationship with God? Is your relationship strong enough? Why or why not?

3. Invite those who wish to share a portion of their reflection with one other person or with the large group.

Pray

Pray together today's Responsorial Psalm, Psalm 116:10, 15, 16-17, 18-19.

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Extended Catechesis Session

(Approximately 45 to 60 minutes)

Sunday Word

Genesis 22:1-2, 9a, 10-13, 15-18

Psalms 116:10, 15, 16-17, 18-19

Romans 8:31b-34

Mark 9:2-10

Welcome

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

Uncover:

1. Use the Repent section of the participant handout and allow time for quiet reflection.
2. Then invite the elect and candidates (if present) to share their thoughts and reflections with their godparents or sponsors.
3. Gather responses to the third question in the large group.

Purify:

1. Use the Gospel (Mark 9:2-10) from today's liturgy as a basis for the following meditation.
2. Invite everyone to close their eyes and quiet themselves.
3. Lead the meditation slowly, pausing after each phrase.

See the high mountain . . .

Notice the cloud hovering at the top . . .

Listen to the voice that invites you to climb up . . .

Picture yourself climbing the mountain, surprised at how easy it is to climb . . .

See yourself standing with Peter, James, and John . . .

Together the four of you witness Jesus speaking with Moses and Elijah. You are filled with awe at the sight . . .

After a while, Moses and Elijah disappear and there is only Jesus. He comes to you and speaks to you, saying, "Do not be afraid" . . .

And then he leaves you . . .

4. After some quiet, invite all present to open their eyes and return to the group.
5. Use the Renew section of the participant handout and allow time for reflection and discussion of the questions given there.

Enlighten

1. Refer to the remaining sections of the participant handout. Discuss the following points:
 - The disciples are given a glimpse of divine glory in Jesus.
 - This Sunday draws us beyond ourselves. It draws us closer to the great mystery of God, and we long to shout, "Glory to God in the highest!"
 - The Transfiguration sheds light on the promise of what is to come to those who follow Christ through suffering and death.
 - Through Christ—and him alone—we are saved and made free.
2. Explore Key Images and Symbols with the participants.

Live

1. Proclaim the Second Reading, Romans 8:31b-34.
2. After a few moments of silence, repeat, "If God is for us, who can be against us?"
3. Encourage the elect and their sponsors/godparents to discuss the following questions:

What does this sentence tell us about God's unconditional love for each of us?

In what ways will it impact the choices you will make this coming week?
4. If the parish has a particular communal activity for Lent, encourage the elect and their sponsors/godparents to participate to the extent that they are able.
5. Review together Preparing for Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist on the participant handout.

Pray

Use the prayer from the participant handout.