

Purification and Enlightenment Session

APPRENTICES IN FAITH: A Resource for the RCIA
Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord • Year B • March 29, 2015

Catechist Preparation

FIRST READING—ISAIAH 50:4-7

After commemorating the saving entrance of Jesus into Jerusalem, we begin the liturgy by contemplating the image of the Suffering Servant from the prophet Isaiah. This image prefigures the work of Christ on our behalf as he suffers and dies for our sins.

SECOND READING—PHILIPPIANS 2:6-11

We meditate further using Paul's sublime Christological hymn extolling Jesus, who "emptied himself, taking the form of a slave" (Philippians 2:7) only to be raised up to glory, a glory above all others.

GOSPEL—MARK 14:1-15:47

Mark's Gospel account is the shortest of all four Gospels in the New Testament. The picture of Jesus that this Gospel draws is a very active, potent preacher and healer who confronted the sinfulness and hypocrisy of his day and age. He worked tirelessly, moving throughout the land to spread the Good News of the kingdom. Now he undertakes the greatest work in his earthly mission. He mounts the Cross to save us from sin and death.

Making Connections

Key Images and Symbols

Jerusalem (*Catechism of the Catholic Church* [CCC] 559, 569, 570)

Cross (CCC 616, 618, 2166)

That We May See and Believe (CCC 142, 1067, 1068, 1072, 1075, 1076, 1082)

Veil of the Sanctuary (CCC 585, 593)

Son of God (CCC 442, 444, 663)

Music Suggestions

"Jesus, Remember Me" (J. Berthier/Taizé/GIA)

"Stay Here and Keep Watch" (J. Berthier/Taizé/GIA)

"Adoramus Te Christe" (M. Haugen/GIA)

Dismissal Session

(Approximately 20 minutes)

Set the space with chairs in a circle. On a small table, place a red cloth, a crucifix, palm branches, and a Bible or Lectionary.

Respond:

Allow for a sufficient amount of quiet time for the group to reflect or journal on their experiences of the Liturgy of the Word. After some time, invite volunteers to share what touched or surprised them during the liturgy.

Enhance:

1. Lead a guided meditation, using these or similar words. Pause after each phrase.

Close your eyes and quiet yourself. Imagine yourself as part of crowd walking on the road to Jerusalem . . .

What do you see? . . . What do you hear? . . .

What do you feel?

There seems to be something happening behind you.

You stop and watch and wait. The crowd seems to part and there you see a man riding on a donkey. The people are throwing their cloaks down on the path in front of him; they are waving palm branches and crying out, "Hosanna to the Son of David". . .

As the man on the donkey comes near you, your eyes meet and they hold your attention. He is speaking to your heart. What does he say to you? (Long pause)

You speak to him about your desire to be baptized. (Long pause)

What does he say in response to you? (Long pause)

You continue to walk with the crowd and then he is hidden from your view . . .

2. After allowing time for further quiet reflection, invite all to open their eyes and rejoin the group.

Pray

Invite participants to spend time in quiet prayer, saying, "In the quiet of your heart, talk to the Lord about your heart's desire for Baptism."

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Extended Catechesis Session

(Approximately 45 to 60 minutes)

Sunday Word

Mark 11:1-10 or John 12:12-16 (at the procession with palms)

Isaiah 50:4-7

Psalms 22:8-9, 17-18, 19-20, 23-24

Philippians 2:6-11

Mark 14:1-15:47

Welcome

Begin by welcoming everyone who is present, including godparents, sponsors, team members, and spouses who are joining the group. Spend a few minutes to gather some further reflections about the Liturgy of the Word just celebrated.

Uncover

1. Play or sing the chant "Jesus, Remember Me" (J. Berthier/Taizé/GIA Publications). As you do so, pass the crucifix around the group, encouraging each person to gaze upon it for a few minutes.
2. Use The King section of the participant handout and allow time for quiet reflection on the questions presented there. Then invite the elect and candidates (if present) to share with their godparents or sponsors.
3. Invite volunteers to share their reflections and responses with the large group.

Purify

1. Again play or sing the chant "Jesus, Remember Me" as you pass the crucifix around the group and encourage each person to again gaze upon it for a few moments.
2. Use The Song of God section of the participant handout and allow time for quiet reflection on the question given at the end. Then invite the elect and candidates (if present) to share with their godparents or sponsors.

3. Invite volunteers to share their reflections and responses with the large group.

Enlighten

1. Refer to Church Teaching: Jesus Christ, Son of God, in the participant resource. Discuss the following points:
 - Jesus willingly stretched out his arms to embrace death, not to be conquered by it but to conquer all sin and death for us.
 - Jesus willingly embraced death to save us.
 - In Baptism, we are immersed in the Death and Resurrection of Jesus.
2. Explore Key Images and Symbols.
3. Conclude with the participant handout's Preparing for Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist.

Live

The celebration of Baptism is just a few days away. Encourage the elect and their sponsors/godparents to participate in the Triduum liturgies.

Pray

Use the Responsorial Psalm from today's liturgy.