

Young Apprentices

A RESOURCE FOR THE RCIA

CATECHUMENATE SESSION

Fifth Sunday of Easter • Year B • April 28, 2024

Catechist Preparation

Scripture

FIRST READING—ACTS 9:26-31

Barnabas vouches for Paul to the Apostles, who are understandably skeptical given how he had formerly persecuted the Church.

SECOND READING—1 JOHN 3:18-24

Saint John exhorts the Church to be confident in keeping God's Commandment to believe in Christ and to love others according to his way.

GOSPEL—JOHN 15:1-8

Jesus describes himself as the true vine. Those who remain in him bear much fruit.

Church Teaching: The Church Carries on the Mission of Christ

The Body of Christ that is the Church exhibits both human and divine characteristics. In its humanity, the Church is formed of those who confess faith in Christ, its Head. In its divinity, those who are called together in Christ are animated by and gifted with the Holy Spirit.

The Church is one with Christ. In using the vine imagery, Jesus communicates to his followers that in their relationship to him, they will experience the union that permeates his relationship with his heavenly Father. If they abide in Christ, following his Commandments, their loving mutuality will issue forth in great fruitfulness, producing a complete joyfulness.

Additional Background

Catechism of the Catholic Church: 751, 752, 771, 789, 852

United States Catholic Catechism for Adults: Chapter 10 (The Church: Reflecting the Light of Christ), especially the section entitled "Upon This Rock—A Community of Love," pages 119–121

Our Catholic Heritage, Levels I and II: Chapter 4

Dismissal Session

(Approximately 20 minutes)

Set the space with chairs in a circle. On a small table, place a white cloth, a plant with vines, a candle, and an open Bible or Lectionary.

Discover

1. Invite the children to take a close look at the plant and to gently touch its leaves.
2. Discuss with the children
 - How the leaves need to be connected to the vine
 - What is needed to keep the whole plant alive
 - How one leaf can be used to start a new plant; how each leaf contains what is needed to bring about a new plant

Deepen

1. Place the plant in the center of the group and slowly and reflectively proclaim today's Gospel, John 15:1-8.
2. Invite the children to think about the reading, then ask:

Who is the vine?

Who is the vine grower?

Who are we?

What can we do to stay connected to the vine and to the vine grower?

Pray

Sing or play a recording of "We Are Many Parts" (M. Haugen/GIA).

Extended Catechesis Session

(Approximately 45 to 60 minutes)

Supplies

In addition to the prayer table setup, you will need copies of the participant handout and pencils or pens.

Sunday Word

Acts 9:26-31

Psalm 22:26-27, 28, 30, 31-32

1 John 3:18-24

John 15:1-8

Welcome

Welcome everyone and invite one or two children to share some of the key points from the Dismissal Session.

Invite

- Invite volunteers to share
 - Ways we use the word *love*
 - The meaning of the word *love*
 - The connection between love and our actions
- Proclaim the Second Reading, 1 John 3:18-24.
- Ask the children what they think each of the following phrases means. Encourage them to give examples.
 - “Love not in word or speech but in deed and truth.”
 - “ . . . [B]elieve in the name of [God’s] Son Jesus Christ . . . ”
 - “ . . . [L]ove one another . . . ”
- Invite the children to share what makes it hard for people to love in deed and truth. Be prepared to share examples from your own life.

Teach

- Read and discuss Key Teachings from the participant handout.
- Sing or play a recording of “We Are Many Parts” (M. Haugen/GIA). Highlight the following discussion points:
 - The Church is the People of God brought together through the saving action of Jesus Christ.
 - In Baptism we become part of the People of God, the Body of Christ, the Church.
 - The Church exists to carry on the mission of Christ.
 - The mission is to go out to the whole world and share the Good News that God loves all of us.
- Review this week’s Faith Words with the children.

Challenge

- Say to the children, “Think about one way you can share in the Christ’s mission this week. Who can you show or tell about the Good News of God’s great love for us?”
- Invite them to write the name of the person(s) they think of in the My Mission box on the participant handout.

Pray

Invite everyone to name people who have shared the Good News of God’s love with them. Then conclude with this prayer:

Loving God, thank you for all the people who have shared the Good News of your love with us. Help us to share that love with everyone we meet in the week to come. Amen.