

# Young Apprentices

A RESOURCE FOR THE RCIA

## CATECHUMENATE SESSION

Second Sunday of Lent • Year B • February 25, 2024

### Catechist Preparation

#### Scripture

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

When God calls, Abraham does not hesitate to step forward and to do the will of the Most High. Therefore God pledges fidelity to Abraham and his offspring.

**SECOND READING**—ROMANS 8:31B-34

Saint Paul asks and answers the rhetorical question: If God is for us, who can be against us? Nothing and nobody has power over us, for God handed over his own Son to be our Savior.

**GOSPEL**—MARK 9:2-10

The divine voice from Heaven commands that Peter, James, and John—and by extension all followers of Jesus—listen to and follow the Christ, the beloved Son of God.

#### Church Teaching: Sacrifice and Covenant

Each of today's Scripture readings touches on sacrifice. Isaac is prepared by Abraham, his father, as a sacrificial offering to God. Saint Paul speaks of how God's own Son, Jesus Christ, is not spared but "handed over" for our sakes. As Peter, James, and Andrew come down from the mountain of the Transfiguration, they hear about the Son of Man's impending death.

Jesus Christ, however, is the pinnacle. In his person, we find the culmination of all the Covenants described in the Old Testament (God's Covenant with Noah, with Abraham, and with Moses). The

#### Additional Background

**Catechism of the Catholic Church:** 583, 606, 608, 613

**United States Catholic Catechism for Adults:** Chapter 17 (The Eucharist), especially the section entitled "The Mass Is a Sacrifice," pages 220–222

**Our Catholic Heritage, Levels I and II:** pages 73–74, 120

Eucharist makes present for us the once-for-all sacrifice of Christ. It is also the sacrifice of the body of believers, the Church. All of our praise, sufferings, difficulties, prayers, and good works are united with Christ and his own total offering.

### Dismissal Session

(Approximately 20 minutes)

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

#### Discover

Invite the children to reflect on the liturgy just celebrated and ask them to share an image, a word, or a phrase that stood out to them.

#### Deepen

1. Proclaim the First Reading, Genesis 22:1-2, 9a, 10-13, 15-18.
2. Invite the children to quiet themselves and to close their eyes.
3. Lead the children in a guided meditation using these or similar words:

*Picture in your mind a beautiful place in nature where you are at peace—the beach, your backyard, a mountain, a meadow—a place where you like to be alone.*

*Picture yourself sitting down in that place. (Pause)*

*Imagine Jesus walking toward you. At first you might be nervous or afraid, but Jesus tells you to be not afraid. He invites you to talk to him about your life—the people in your life—your family and friends; what you like to do; your hopes and dreams; and what makes you afraid. (Pause)*

*Next, Jesus asks whether you trust him. In the quiet of your heart, answer him. (Pause)*

*Jesus asks whether you will do what he asks. Will you love him? Will you love others? In the quiet of your heart, answer him. (Pause)*

*Think about the story of Abraham and Isaac. What might Jesus ask you to sacrifice to show your love for God and others? Time? Money? Things you own?  
(Pause)*

*(Allow the children a few more moments for quiet reflection. Then conclude the meditation with the following directive.)*

*When you are ready, open your eyes and stay quiet until it is time to close with prayer.*

### **Pray**

When the children are ready, conclude by praying together the prayer on the participant page.

## **Extended Catechesis Session**

*(Approximately 45 to 60 minutes)*

### **Supplies**

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

### **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**

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

### **Invite**

1. Proclaim again the First Reading, Genesis 22:1-2, 9a, 10-13, 15-18.
2. Discuss the reading, highlighting the following points:
  - Abraham was given a very hard choice to make.
  - Despite how hard the choice was, Abraham was willing to give all to God, even sacrificing his son.
  - In the end, God did not make Abraham sacrifice his son. God provided a ram (sheep) for the sacrifice instead.

- The story of Abraham and Isaac shows us that to be holy means to live as the Lord directs; to respond: "Here I am, Lord, I come to do your will."
- This story also tells us that God is with us no matter what happens.

### **Teach**

1. Read and discuss Key Teachings and Faith Words from the participant handout.
2. Discuss further the history and meaning of sacrifice.
  - Sacrifices in the Old Testament, like the sacrifice of Abraham, were offered as worship to God. They were also made to atone, or make up, for sins.
  - The greatest sacrifice ever made was the sacrifice made by Jesus, who died on the Cross to free us from our sins.
  - Sacrifices happen all around us each day. We make sacrifices to help others, and others sacrifice to help, to teach, and to protect us.

### **Challenge**

1. Explain to the children that Lent is a time for us to sacrifice—to offer up something or to do something to deepen our Covenant relationship with God.
2. Invite them to decide on one sacrifice they will make this week to show their love for God and for others.
3. Have them write their choices in the My Sacrifice box on the participant handout.
4. Encourage them to complete the Sacrifice Acrostic with their families.

### **Pray**

Begin by inviting volunteers to share what they wrote in the My Sacrifice box. Then pray the Prayer of Blessing 97C from the RCIA.