

Young Apprentices

A RESOURCE FOR THE RCIA

PURIFICATION AND ENLIGHTENMENT

Preparation for the Second Rite of Scrutiny • Fourth Sunday of Lent • Year A Readings Used

Introduction

The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA), paragraphs 291–303, offers direction for celebrating Penitential Rites with children and youth in the RCIA process. In addition, paragraph 291 of the Rite suggests that the guidelines given for the celebration of the scrutinies with adults (RCIA 141–146) may be followed and adapted.

If it is your parish's practice to celebrate one or more Rites of Scrutiny with the children and youth, it is important to provide opportunities for spiritual preparation for the elect, their godparents or sponsors, and members of the team.

Some parishes offer a time of preparation to the whole parish in the form of Lenten gatherings or evenings of reflection. Regardless of your parish's practice, the following two options are offered as suggestions to assist you in your preparation and planning of the second Rite of Scrutiny.



Option 1

Supplies

In addition to the prayer table setup, you will need a flip chart or whiteboard, markers, small slips of paper for each person present with the word DARKNESS written on one side and the word LIGHT written on the other, and pencils or pens. You may also wish to prepare a handout or post for all to see the discussion questions to be used (see Reflecting on God's Word #5).

Setting

Arrange chairs in a circle. Place a small table in the middle with a purple cloth, a Bible or Lectionary, a candle, a cross, and a symbol that the parish may be using for Lent (such as a bowl of sand). If parishioners are present, arrange chairs for them in separate small groups. (The groups should not be larger than five or six people.)

If the session is held in the church, use the environment that has been set for Lent.

Gathering

1. Welcome the children and families.
2. Ask a volunteer to light the candle on the prayer table.
3. Invite everyone to quiet themselves.
4. Begin by praying together the Sign of the Cross, and then pray:
*God of light,
send your Holy Spirit to open our minds and hearts
as we gather to prepare for our second Rite of Scrutiny.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen.*

5. Briefly explain that the Rite of Scrutiny is very simple, and that the godparents or sponsors will rehearse for the ritual and guide the elect through it.
The purpose of this gathering is for everyone to have the opportunity to prepare spiritually for the celebration of the Rite.

Reflecting on God's Word

1. Proclaim the Second Reading for the Second Scrutiny, Ephesians 5:18-24.
2. After a pause, lead all present in a discussion of their experiences of light and darkness using these or similar questions:
*Which do you prefer—light or darkness? Why?
Describe the darkest place you have ever experienced.
Where was it? What was it like? How did you feel being there?
Describe the brightest place you have ever experienced.
Where was it? What was it like? How did you feel being there?*
3. Proclaim the reading (Ephesians 5:18-24) again.
4. Continue the discussion, highlighting these points:
 - Light produces goodness.
 - We are called to live as children of light.
 - We are to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.
 - Works of darkness are fruitless and we are to expose them for what they are.

5. Invite the elect and their parents, godparents, or sponsors to think about today's world and consider:
*What makes some deeds fruitless?
What might be some fruitless deeds of darkness that need to be brought to light for all to see?*
6. After some time for sharing, gather responses from the entire group. Record the responses on a flip chart or on the whiteboard.

Continuing the Reflection

1. Proclaim the reading (Ephesians 5:8-14) again.
2. Emphasize again that we are to live as children of the light and to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.
3. Ask:
*How do we learn what is pleasing to the Lord?
What are some examples of things that are pleasing to the Lord?*
Record responses on the flip chart or whiteboard for all to see.

Making the Connection

1. Give each person a slip of paper and a pencil or pen.
2. Invite each person to think about his or her life and what fruitless deeds of darkness he or she may be taking part in, and to write that deed on the side of the paper labeled DARKNESS.
3. Invite each person to then think about one thing he or she does that is pleasing to the Lord, and to write his or her thought on the side of the paper labeled LIGHT.
4. After all have written their thoughts, encourage the group to continue to think about fruitless deeds of darkness and things pleasing to the Lord in preparation for the celebration of the second Rite of Scrutiny.

Concluding Prayer

Conclude the gathering by singing "Amazing Grace" or another hymn that speaks of living as children of light. As you sing, invite each person to place his or her slip of paper in the basket on the prayer table. (Note: The fruitless deeds of darkness and the things pleasing to the Lord may be used in the preparation of the intercessions for the elect for the Second Scrutiny.)

In accord with the *Code of Canon Law*, I hereby grant the *Imprimatur* ("Permission to Publish") regarding the publication of *Young Apprentices: A Resource for the RCIA*.

Most Reverend Joseph R. Binzer, Auxiliary Bishop, Vicar General • Archdiocese of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, Ohio • January 30, 2015.

The *Imprimatur* ("Permission to Publish") is a declaration that the work is considered to be free of doctrinal or moral error.

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Option 2

To Begin

Follow the directions for Setting and Gathering as given in Option 1. For this option, you will need the following supplies: prayer table setup, Bibles or copies of the Gospel reading for each person or small group, small slips of paper for each participant with the words MY BLINDNESS written on one side and BLINDNESS IN THE WORLD on the other side, and pencils or pens. Then continue as follows.

Reflecting on God's Word

1. Proclaim the Gospel for the Second Scrutiny (fourth Sunday of Lent, Cycle A), John 9:1-41.
2. After a pause, ask the elect and their parents, godparents, or sponsors to share what they heard in the Gospel—a word, a phrase, a thought, or a feeling.
3. Briefly comment on the reading, highlighting the following or similar points:
 - The disciples connected the man's blindness with sin.
 - Jesus assures them that the man's blindness was not due to his sin or to his parent's sin. It is so that the works of God may be made visible through him.
 - The blind man's neighbors, the Pharisees, and the Jews could not believe that the man had been healed. They were "blind" to the healing power of God.
 - The man born blind suffered physical blindness, while his neighbors, the Pharisees, and the Jews suffered spiritual blindness.
4. Invite the elect and their parents, godparents, or sponsors to use the Bibles or copies of the reading to help discover and discuss
 - The types of blindness named in the Gospel
 - The message of Jesus about blindness
 - The ways in which we experience blindness today

Making the Connection

5. After some time, give each participant one of the slips of paper and a pencil or pen. Invite participants to think about an area of blindness in their own lives—perhaps they ignore the classmate or coworker who needs a friend, or maybe they choose not to see what would be helpful to a neighbor or relative—and to write that area of blindness on the side of the paper labeled MY BLINDNESS.
6. Then ask participants to think about the blindness they see in the world—perhaps world leaders are greedy and do not see the needs of the people who live in their countries, or perhaps people are not caring for planet Earth so that there will be food and water for future generations. Invite each person to write his or her thoughts on the side of the paper labeled BLINDNESS IN THE WORLD.
7. After all have written their thoughts on their papers, encourage the group to continue thinking about the ways we are blind and the blindness in the world as they prepare for the second Rite of Scrutiny.

Concluding Prayer

Conclude the gathering by singing "Amazing Grace" or another hymn that speaks of being healed of blindness. As you sing, invite each person to place his or her slip of paper in the basket on the prayer table. (Note: The personal and world blindnesses named may be used in the preparation of the intercessions for the elect for the Second Scrutiny.)