

Catechumenate Session

APPRENTICES IN FAITH: A Resource for the RCIA
Third Sunday of Easter • Year B • April 14, 2024

*Loving God,
your plan for Salvation
is fulfilled in Christ,
the Risen Lord.*

*The reign of sin and death
is overcome by Christ,
the Risen Lord.*

*Make us witnesses to the
Good News of Christ,
our Risen Lord.*

*Praised be
Jesus Christ forever.*



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Sunday Word

Acts 3:13-15, 17-19

Psalm 4:2, 4, 7-8, 9

1 John 2:1-5a

Luke 24:35-48

Author of Life

Peter preaches to the people about the Risen Lord Jesus. He describes Christ as “the author of life.” He who “writes” his life in us has been raised from the dead. Death has no power over him or the community established in his name that witnesses to him as Lord of life.

Expiation for Our Sins

The loving sacrifice of Christ makes up for our sins. His Cross prevents sin from gaining a foothold in our lives if we but remain faithful to his teachings and follow his command to love God and one another.

Fulfillment of the Law and Prophets

The Risen Lord appears to the disciples, who react, at first, with fear. He is their beloved Master and Guide, who shows them his hands and feet, which the nails had pierced. It is the Lord Jesus. He is risen! He is truly risen!

Church Teaching: Bearing Witness

Sharing What We Have

When something utterly good occurs in our lives, we can hardly keep silent about it. We naturally want to savor such astounding news by sharing it with others. Others congratulate us and in turn share this news with even more people, thereby extending and expanding this fortuitous turn of events.

The impetus for telling good news to others comes from our desire to share happiness. Life is sometimes so momentous that we cannot bear it on our own. Sometimes we *must* share. We need an ear, an understanding brother or sister to lend us support, encouragement, sympathy, and empathy.

Evangelizers

The Gospel is a profoundly life-changing message: the Lord Jesus Christ has been sent by God the Father to save us from sin and death. Jesus loves us so much that he died for our sakes and opened for all the way to eternal happiness with God.

The Risen Lord tells those first disciples that they will be his witnesses. By our Baptism, we inherit this mantle. We are his disciples; we are to be evangelizers of the Gospel! We cannot remain silent about the impact of the Good News. We must give witness that Jesus is Lord and Savior.

What does it mean for us to be evangelizers?

- ◆ *We are not alone.* While witness may be given by an individual in individual circumstances, we are nonetheless empowered and encouraged precisely because we are members of the Body of Christ, the Church. We rely on each other for help, for support, and for wisdom as we witness to the Good News.
- ◆ *Salvation is sensible.* The gift of God given to each one of us in Christ does not arrive out of nowhere. The plan of Salvation is discernable through the teachings of the Church. God is revealed as loving and faithful, a love and fidelity culminating in Christ. Each believer is a living thread in this grand tapestry, this story of Salvation.
- ◆ *It is ordinary and immediate.* Being an evangelizer might mean something dramatic. On the other hand, bearing witness to Christ *always* means that by what we say and do in our everyday lives, we testify to the love of God and neighbor such that others see us and ask themselves, “Why?”

Distinctiveness of Church Teaching

You are a disciple. You can make a difference in turning the world to Christ! How shall you do that now, today, by being Good News for others?

Key Terms

EVANGELIZATION

Proclaiming Christ and his Good News by word and deed; to share faith with others (see *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 905).

GOOD NEWS

The Gospel, the heartening message that God’s loving mercy is revealed in Jesus Christ for all peoples, for all time (see *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 571).

SALVATION

Forgiveness of sins and being restored as friends of God; accomplished only by divine initiative and grace (see *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 169).

Voices of Faith

As we have opportunity, let us work to cooperate with our salvation. Let us get oil for our lamps. Let us labor to add to our talent. For if we are backward and spend our time in sloth here, no one will pity us any more hereafter, though we should wail ten thousand times.

— Saint John Chrysostom

Those who allow themselves to be led by the Spirit understand that placing oneself at the service of the Gospel is not an optional extra, because they are aware of the urgency of transmitting this Good News to others. Nevertheless, we need to be reminded again that we can be witnesses of Christ only if we allow ourselves to be led by the Holy Spirit who is “the principal agent of evangelization” (cf. *Evangelii Nuntiandi* 75) and “the principal agent of mission” (cf. *Redemptoris Missio* 21).

— Pope Benedict XVI

Further Reading

Catechism of the Catholic Church:

904 (lay people as witnesses to Christ), 785 (witness in the world), 863 (lay apostolate)

United States Catholic Catechism for Adults:

Chapter 11 (The Four Marks of the Church), especially the section entitled “Make Disciples,” pages 135–137

Compendium—Catechism of the Catholic Church:

80 (spreading Good News), 172 (the Church proclaims the Gospel), 190 (laity and evangelization)