

Liturgical Resources

APPRENTICES IN FAITH: A Resource for the RCIA
Preparation for Reception into Full Communion with the Catholic Church

Preparation

Prior to the celebration of Reception into Full Communion with the Catholic Church, it is important to provide a time for spiritual preparation for the candidates and their sponsors and members of the RCIA team. This outline is merely a suggestion for how to facilitate the preparation time.

Setting

Arrange chairs in a circle near the baptismal font.

Gathering

1. Welcome everyone. Lead the opening prayer, using these or similar words: *Father, we gather today to prepare for our reception into full communion with the Catholic Church. You have called us on this journey. We thank and praise to you. You have helped us to know you the one, true God. We give thanks and praise to you. You have opened our minds and hearts to your marvelous works. We give thanks and praise to you. For what else do we say thanks and praise for?* (pause for additions) *For these and all the prayers we hold in the quiet of our hearts, we pray the words that Jesus taught us to pray: Our Father . . .*
2. Invite the participants to quietly reflect on their journey of faith, naming events and people who have helped them to arrive on this day of preparation for full communion with the Catholic Church. Ask them to consider such questions as:

Through the years, who has helped you to know Jesus? In what ways have they helped you?

In what way has your experience of prayer changed and/or deepened?

What and/or who has brought you to the decision to seek union and communion with the Catholic faith?
3. Allow some time for reflection in small groups. Then invite volunteers to share with the large group.

4. Encourage the participants to reflect on the baptismal formula for the renunciation of sin and Profession of Faith. Use these or similar words: *Let us recall that in the celebration of Baptism, we are called to reject Satan, his works, and his empty promises.* Ask the following questions:

When you renew your Baptism, what are you saying no to?

*What are the works of Satan that you reject?
When and where do you encounter his works?*

What are some of Satan's empty promises, and why are his promises so tempting?

(A ritual suggestion: Have the participants write their responses on paper. Use a small brazier and burn the papers as a symbolic letting go of the temptations.)

5. Continue to lead the reflection, using these, or similar, words: *In the celebration of Baptism, we profess our faith in God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—and in the Church.* Ask the following questions:

When you renew your Baptism, what are you saying yes to?

What do you mean when you say that you believe in God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?

What does it mean for you to say that you believe in the Church?
6. Invite the candidates and their sponsors to come to the water and to remind themselves of their Baptism by dipping their hand into the holy water and making the sign of the cross.
7. Encourage the candidates and their sponsors to spend time throughout the day thinking about what it will mean for them to be confirmed and to receive Eucharist for the first time.
8. Conclude with a spontaneous prayer, asking that God's wisdom may continue to bless the candidates on their journey of faith.