

Doctrinal Session

APPRENTICES IN FAITH: A Resource for the OCIA
Our Potential in the Divine

Catechist Preparation

Clarifying the Essentials

Human beings are created by God to be religious.

- The word *religion* comes from the Latin “to bind fast,” which suggests being tied to or related to something.
- Religion proposes a set of beliefs and practices by which we love, serve, and worship God.

God creates each person to have a soul.

- The soul is our essential, core self (see *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 363).
- Our human destiny, imprinted on our souls, is total union and eternal happiness with God (see CCC 1703).
- Free will—a gift from God—enables us to either choose God or reject him (see CCC 1704).

Our vocation in this world can only be found in relationship with God.

- Some people ignore or turn their back on God (see CCC 2125).
- People who turn their back on God often substitute other beliefs and practices in place of God (see CCC 2113).

Why Is This Important?

By our human nature and divine vocation, we are religious beings. By orienting ourselves to God, who is the Good, the True, and the Beautiful, we realize our potential, which finds ultimate fulfillment in Heaven.

*When I am completely united
to you [my God], there will be
no more sorrow or trials; entirely full
of you, my life will be complete.*

SAINT AUGUSTINE, CONFESSIONS

Doctrinal Session Guide

(Approximately 60 minutes)

Have the space set with chairs, and provide a focal point with a candle and a Bible. Provide name tags and have some refreshments available.

Welcome

Greet the participants as they arrive, and take time for introductions as the session begins. Then invite everyone to pray silently for the Spirit to open their mind and heart to God’s message.

Engage

Invite the group to read and reflect on the story in *Insight*. Ask the participants to reflect on a time when they might have had a similar experience or felt as Ted feels in the story and explore the *For Reflection* questions. After a time of quiet reflection, invite the participants to share with one or two other people.

Teach

1. Summarize or invite the group to read *Church Teaching*. Then discuss the following:
 - God created us. We are called to know and love God, the One who created us.
 - We long for completeness that only God can fulfill.
2. Read either a portion of Psalm 139 or Isaiah 43:1-7, then ask:

What word or phrase from the reading stays with you?

What does the reading say about who God is?

About what God desires?
3. Discuss the religious practices we participate in as a community and as individuals. Where do we find meaning in them?

Apply

Encourage the participants to complete these statements and share their thoughts:

*From the prayer, discussion, and study for this topic,
I understand the Church’s teaching to be . . .*

I am challenged to live the message of this teaching by . . .

Pray

Proclaim the Scripture on the participant page. Play a music selection or sing a song proclaiming God’s love.