

Doctrinal Session

APPRENTICES IN FAITH: A Resource for the OCIA
The Fall and Original Sin

Catechist Preparation

Clarifying the Essentials

Behind the sin of our first parents, Original Sin, lies the seductive voice of the fallen angel, Satan.

- Tempted by the Devil, Satan, our first parents allowed trust in their Creator to wither and therefore disobeyed God's command (see *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 397).
- Our first parents fell, seduced by the Devil, which opened them and us to a distorted, or fallen, preference for ourselves and our way versus openness always to God's way (see CCC 398).

Satan's power is not infinite; God's power is. God, according to his own purposes and plan, will prevail over sin and evil.

- The first proclamation of the Good News occurs after the fall of humanity where God acts immediately to deepen his friendship with humanity (see Genesis 3:15 and CCC 410).
- Good and evil are not two equally powerful realities balanced at opposite ends of a cosmic seesaw, with both having the same potency to affect the universe or us. God is all good and all powerful (see CCC 395).

Why Is This Important?

Original Sin is the most wrongful wounding of the world. All sin stands in contradiction to God, to his love, and to his plan. Yet Sacred Tradition later describes Original Sin as a "happy fault" because by it we receive the Redeemer, the Son of God, the second Adam in whom we find grace, peace, and light—and in whom Satan, death, and sin find defeat. Truly, where sin abounds, there grace abounds even more.

*The confidence of Christians
is the resurrection of the dead;
believing this we live.*

TERTULLIAN, *DE RESURRECTIONE CARNIS* 1

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. You will also need copies of the Act of Contrition.

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 how Hank's story reflects their own life story. Then have them share their response to the story, and explore the **For Reflection** questions together. Conclude by inviting them to share what comes to mind when they hear the word *sin* and the word *grace*.

Teach

Summarize or invite the group to read **Church Teaching**. Then discuss the following:

- Sin and evil are part of our world. Through the sin of our first parents, we are born into a world that struggles between good and evil.
- God's grace supersedes sin and is readily available to all who accept and respond to such a lavish gift.

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

Reflect with the participants on the reality of sin and evil in their own lives and in the world. Then pray the Act of Contrition together.