

Doctrinal Session

APPRENTICES IN FAITH: A Resource for the OCIA
Thy Will Be Done on Earth as It Is in Heaven

Catechist Preparation

Clarifying the Essentials

The will of God is that all people be saved and arrive at knowledge of the truth.

- The patience of God continually directs us to his New Commandment, which sums up all others: Love others as I have loved you (see *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 2822).
- Praying that God's will be done, we ask that God's loving plan be realized on earth as it is already in Heaven (see CCC 2823).

As God the Father's adopted children in Christ, we commit ourselves to become one in spirit with the Lord.

- Jesus teaches us humility (see CCC 2825).
- Through prayer we can discern God's will for us and gain the endurance needed to live out his will in our lives (see CCC 2826).

Why Is This Important?

Alone, we can never hope to have all the answers in life. Our judgment is clouded because we are fallen creatures who do not always see the right way. God's will is, for us, like a compass. It points us to "true north"—that is, to the goodness, truth, and beauty of the kingdom. Discerning God's will is not, however, as simple as consulting a tool whose needle points "this way." To discern God's will, we must immerse ourselves in Sacred Scripture. We ought to dialogue with holy people. We should avail ourselves of the sacraments, especially the Eucharist and Penance and Reconciliation. We are to pray without ceasing.

Doctrinal Session Guide

(Approximately 60 minutes)

Arrange chairs in a circle. Place in the center a candle, an open Bible, a rosary, and prayer booklets.

*We pray that God's will may be
accomplished in sinners also, even as
it is accomplished in the saints and the just.*

SAINT AUGUSTINE

Welcome

Greet people as they arrive. Check in with everyone to find out how they are doing.

Pray

Invite all to meditate silently on the words "thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."

Engage

Begin with the *Insight* and *For Reflection* sections of the participant handout. Explore these points:

- Although there may be unforeseen variables that affect the path of our lives, it is important to have goals and a plan for achieving them.
- Flexibility is an important quality to have. To be able to change and adapt is different from being ambivalent.
- A compass always points north; it is important for each of us to know the "north" of our compass.

Teach

Begin with the *Church Teaching* section, and discuss these points:

- To do God's will is the desire of the believer. To discern God's will is not always easy. We are helped by Sacred Scripture, the teachings of the Church, and the lives of the saints.
- Jesus is the example *par excellence* of what it means to do the will of God. His entire life conforms to the Father's will (see Luke 22:42).
- Mary also shows us what it means to do God's will (see Luke 1:38).

Apply

Encourage the participants to complete these statements:

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

In what way am I affirmed in my understanding?

Pray

Sing or listen to a recording of "Servant Song" (Gillard) or "The Summons" (Bell).