

Doctrinal Session

APPRENTICES IN FAITH: A Resource for the OCIA
But Deliver Us from Evil

Catechist Preparation

Clarifying the Essentials

Satan attempts to influence us, turning us away from God's plan of Salvation.

- The Devil even attempts to derail the mission of Jesus at its outset (see *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 394).
- Although the Devil cannot prevent the progress of God's reign, he can do serious damage to individuals and society (see CCC 395).

Kingship, power, and glory belong solely to God.

- Satan, the deceiver, falsely claims these divine titles (see Luke 4:5-6; CCC 2855).
- In saying "Amen" in the final doxology of the Lord's Prayer, we are affirming, "So be it!" (see CCC 2856).

Why Is This Important?

Satan is a fallen angel, a creature who has chosen to rebel against God. He has been characterized by Sacred Scripture as the "father of lies" (John 8:44). Evil is deadly and real, not some amorphous, nebulous quasi-reality. Believers and nonbelievers alike frequently question why God allows evil in the world. The question is taken up in Sacred Scripture, most poignantly in the Book of Job. The whole mystery of Christ responds to the problem of evil. We can be confident that evil will not triumph over us if we hold fast to Christ. Our free will, by which we may choose evil, is also our means of choosing good. God loves us so much that he desires our free response to his invitation to embrace goodness, truth, and light in Christ.

When once we seek God's protection against evil, having obtained this, we stand secure and safe against all the works of the devil and of the world. For what fear, indeed, is there with regard to the world for one who has God as protector in the world?

SAINT CYPRIAN

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.

Welcome

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

Pray

Chant or speak together the Our Father.

Engage

1. Hand out recent news articles. Ask small groups to surface examples of what they consider to be evil. Discuss what constitutes evil and what guidance we have to recognize that which is evil. Then ask, "How ought we respond to such evil?"
2. Continue with the *Insight* and *For Reflection* sections of the participant handout.

Teach

Discuss the *Church Teaching* section, using these points:

- Evil is real and exists in our world. It is often seductive and elusive. Developing the ability to know the difference between evil and good is necessary and an ongoing task.
- The primary quality of evil is deceit. Satan will do everything possible to deter us from accepting God's will for us. Yet in Christ, we see the lies, know the truth, and rely on the hope in God's plan of Salvation.
- Jesus prays for his disciples that they might be delivered from the hands of the wicked. He has overcome all evil through his Paschal Mystery. Nevertheless, evil is still very present until the end of time.

Allow some time for questions and clarifications.

Apply

Encourage the participants to complete this statement:
I am challenged to live the message of this teaching by . . .

Pray

Pray the prayer to Saint Michael the Archangel.