

Young Apprentices

A RESOURCE FOR THE RCIA

MYSTAGOGY: HOLY COMMUNION

Third Sunday of Easter • Year B • April 14, 2024

Introduction

A period of post-baptismal catechesis or mystagogy should be provided to assist the young neophytes and their companions who have completed their Christian initiation (RCIA 503). Mystagogy is the final period of post-baptismal catechesis intended to help the neophytes and the Christian community grow in their understanding of the Paschal Mystery through continuing to reflect on God's Word, by taking their place in the assembly for the celebration of the Eucharist, and by continuing to answer Christ's call to love others through works of charity (see RCIA 244).

This second of two Young Apprentices mystagogy sessions is offered to help neophytes and their companions continue to reflect on their experiences of the Easter Vigil, most particularly their encounters with Jesus in the Eucharist, or Holy Communion.

Supplies

Set the space with chairs in a circle and make the focal point a prayer table with a candle, a loaf of bread, a bunch of grapes, and a Bible or Lectionary. In addition, contact your parish social ministry to find out about an opportunity to help a local food bank through a special collection that the entire group could take part in.

If this is not possible, consider providing a list of local food pantries and specific needs of each, inviting the neophytes and their godparents/sponsors and families to consider responding to one of the needs listed.

Look ahead to Do! #2 to determine whether additional supplies or preparation will be needed.

Word of God

For this session, use the readings for the third Sunday of Easter, Year B. They are as follows:

Acts 3:13-15, 17-19

Psalm 4:2, 4, 7-8, 9

1 John 2:1-5a

Luke 24:35-48

Gather

1. Greet the children, their godparents/sponsors, and their families as they arrive.
2. Take time for introductions and check in with everyone to find out how they are doing since the celebration of the Easter Vigil. In particular, invite volunteers to share memories of the celebration.
3. As a gathering prayer, pray together the Lord's Prayer and exchange a sign of Christ's peace or sing a familiar refrain or hymn about the Eucharist.

Deepen

1. Ask volunteers to name the two main parts of the Mass, then review with them the following discussion points.

The Liturgy of the Word

- Sacred Scripture

Ask volunteers to name their favorite Scripture stories and what the meaning of those stories is for them. For example, the parable of the Forgiving Father (Prodigal Son) reminds us that God always loves and welcomes us, no matter what we have said or done.

- The challenge of the Word of God

Ask the group whether there is Scripture that is hard for them to live by. For example, Jesus tells us to love one another—but sometimes that is just hard to do! He tells us to clothe the naked, but we may find it hard to give up our clothes or money to help others in need.

The Liturgy of the Eucharist

- Christ is truly present in the bread and wine; they are his Body and Blood.

Remind the group that when we receive Holy Communion, we receive more than bread and wine. We receive Jesus himself. Jesus lives in us.

- Eucharist (Holy Communion) is the food for our spiritual journey.

The food we eat at our tables at home gives us strength for work and play. The food we receive in the Eucharist, or Holy Communion, gives us strength to live as Jesus wants us to live. It is food that gives us the courage and the faith to live as his disciples.

2. Highlight the Eucharist, or Holy Communion, by inviting the children to consider this new part of their lives. Remind them that they now share in the Eucharist; they join the procession to receive Jesus in Holy Communion. Ask:

How did it feel at the Easter Vigil to get to stay for the whole Mass and to come forward in the procession to receive Holy Communion?

How does it feel now that you are able to receive Holy Communion every week?

What difference does receiving Holy Communion make in your life?

Meditate

1. Proclaim the Gospel for the third Sunday of Easter, Year B, Luke 24:35-48.
2. Lead everyone present in a guided meditation, as outlined on the following page.

Share

1. After proclaiming the Gospel and leading the meditation, highlight the following discussion points:
 - We are companions on the journey; we do not travel alone.
Invite the group to name all those they can think of who walk with us and help us on our journeys of faith.
 - We receive nourishment for our spiritual journey through the Word proclaimed and the Body and Blood of Christ given to us in Holy Communion.

- When we go forth from the Mass, we are to be Christ's Body in the world. We are to honor him by saying and doing what he has commanded us to say and do.

Invite the group to share practical examples.

2. Read and discuss the Share section of the participant page.

Do!

1. Read and discuss the Do! section of the participant page.
2. Invite all present to consider with whom they share meals. Encourage them to think about
 - Whom they might prepare a meal for and then share it with
 - Ways that they can help at a local food pantry or soup kitchen
(Here share the opportunity or list of opportunities you prepared in advance.)

Pray

Sing or play a song about going forth to be Christ's Body in the world, such as "Go Make a Difference" (S. Angrisano and T. Tomaszek, OCP Publications) or "Whatsoever You Do" (W. Jabusch, most hymnals).

Guided Meditation



Get comfortable in your chair.

Quiet yourself.

Close your eyes.

Picture a beautiful park, or a favorite place to be on a warm, sunny day.

You and a friend are walking along, talking about your memories of the Easter Vigil and everything that has happened since then.

Someone else comes near the two of you, and even joins you as you are walking.

You are sure you know the person, but you just can't think of his name.

He joins in your conversation about the Easter Vigil and shares his memories and thoughts.

You listen to him, and you find his comments to be interesting.

What is he saying?

(Allow a couple of extra moments for reflection here.)

Soon the three of you come to a bench, and you sit down for a few minutes.

The person who joined your friend and you looks into your eyes and you recognize him—
it is Jesus!

You don't know what to say or do, but you are happy he is there with you!

You begin to talk to him.

What do you tell him? What do you ask him? *(Allow a bit of extra time for reflection.)*

What does he say to you? *(Allow a bit of extra time for reflection.)*

After a while, Jesus blesses you and departs.

*(Allow a bit of extra time for quiet reflection
and then invite all to open their eyes and return to the large group.)*