

Young Apprentices

A RESOURCE FOR THE RCIA

MYSTAGOGY: REMAIN IN ME

Fifth Sunday of Easter • Year B • April 28, 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).

Supplies

The optimum setting for this session is in the church, gathered around the baptismal font. If a different space must be used, set the space with chairs in a circle and a prayer table covered in white and containing a large white candle, a bowl of holy water, a Bible, and a plant with vines.

Catechist Preparation

1. Read the Scriptures for the fifth Sunday of Easter.
2. Reflect on the first section of today's Gospel, "[The Father] takes away every branch in me that does not bear fruit, and every one that does he prunes so that it bears more fruit." Where have you experienced this in your own life?
3. The heart of today's Gospel is the command to remain in Christ. What are you doing to fulfill this command?

Word of God

Acts 9:26-31

Psalms 22:26-27, 28, 30, 31-32

1 John 3:18-24

John 15:1-8

Gather

1. Greet the children and their families as they arrive.
2. Take time for introductions and check in with everyone to find out how they are doing.

Deepen

1. Gather the group around the baptismal font or the prayer table.
2. Light the candle and sing an Easter Alleluia.
3. Proclaim the Gospel, John 15:1-8.
4. Invite participants to name words, images, or phrases that stood out for them. (*I am the true vine; You are already pruned; Remain in me; You are the branches; and so forth.*)
5. Invite all to bless themselves with the holy water and to return to their places as the group sings an Easter Alleluia or another Easter refrain.
6. Refer to the Deepen section of the participant handout.

Meditate

1. Invite volunteers to share
 - ways we use the word *love*
 - the meaning of the word *love*
 - the connection between love and our actions
2. Ask the children what they think each of the following phrases from the Gospel means. Encourage them to give specific examples.
 - I am the vine, you are the branches.
 - Without me you can do nothing.
 - Bear much fruit.
 - Become my disciples.
3. Read and discuss the Meditate section of the participant handout.

Share

1. Summarize today's discussion by writing the word BRANCHES vertically on the whiteboard or flip chart.
2. Challenge the group to think of words or phrases that use the letters in the word "branches" and that describe ways to remain in Christ. For example, "B" could stand for Read the Bible.
3. Review with the group the Share section of the participant handout.

Do

1. Encourage the children to take some quiet time to think about what they will do to stay connected to the vine and to the vine grower (Jesus and God the Father) in the coming week.
2. Also encourage them to watch for opportunities every day to love one another just as Jesus commanded us to do.

Pray

Remind the group that the first part of the commandment given in the Second Reading states that we should believe in the name of God's Son, Jesus Christ. Explain that today's closing prayer is a portion of the Litany of the Holy Name of Jesus. Take the part of the leader, and invite the group to respond, "Have mercy on us."

(Note: You may wish to make copies of the portion of the litany you are praying today, and encourage the children and their families to continue to pray the litany in the coming week.)