

Young Apprentices

A RESOURCE FOR THE RCIA

MYSTAGOGY: LOVE ONE ANOTHER

Sixth Sunday of Easter • Year B • May 5, 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. You will also need a basket containing several cutout paper hearts for each member of the group.

Catechist Preparation

1. Read the Scriptures for the sixth Sunday of Easter.
2. Think about what it means to show no partiality as God shows no partiality. How might this impact the way you think about and treat the many people who are a part of your life?
3. The heart of today's Gospel is similar to last week's Second Reading and Gospel. Consider what you have done to "remain in Christ" this past week and the ways in which you have shown God's love to others.

Word of God

Acts 10:25-26, 34-35, 44-48

Psalm 98:1, 2-3, 3-4

1 John 4:7-10

John 15:9-17

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 prayer table. Point out that once again, the plant with vines is a part of the environment for prayer. Ask the group to recall why the plant was a part of last week's environment. (*The Gospel talked about the vine, the vine grower, and the branches. The vine and branches remind us to remain in Jesus, and that Jesus is the vine and we are the branches.*)
2. Ask the participants how many of them did the BRANCHES activity with their families. Invite those who did so to share the words and phrases they came up with using the letters of the word "branches."
3. Tell the group that today's Gospel has some similar words and phrases to last week's Second Reading and Gospel. Light the Paschal or prayer table candle, sing an Alleluia sung at your parish, and invite all to listen as you proclaim the Gospel, John 15:9-17.
4. Invite participants to name words, images, or phrases that stood out for them. (*Remain in my love, keep my commandments, love one another as I have loved you, I chose you, bear fruit, and so forth.*)
5. Invite volunteers to share the words or phrases that are similar to last week's Second Reading and Gospel. (*Remain, keep my commandments, love one another.*)
6. 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.
7. Refer to the Deepen section of the participant handout.

Meditate

1. Ask the children what they think each of the following phrases from the Gospel means. Encourage them to give specific examples.
 - Remain in my love.
 - If you keep my commandments, you will remain in my love.
 - You are my friends if you do what I command you.
 - Love one another as I love you.
2. Highlight the following points as you continue a discussion about love.
 - Love is a very familiar word; we hear and say it often.
 - In the Gospels, Jesus tells us over and over to love one another.
3. Read and discuss the Meditate section of the participant handout.

Share

1. Remind the group that in Baptism, we are chosen by God to be his daughters and sons and to share in the Church's mission of spreading the Good News and the love of God to all we meet.
2. Review with the group the Share section of the participant handout.

Do

1. Invite everyone present to take several paper hearts from the basket.
2. Challenge the group to carry their hearts with them this week and to give their hearts to those they see doing loving deeds or to those they hear saying loving words. Encourage them to make more paper hearts if they need to, and suggest that they write a message from today's readings—such as “God is love,” “Love one another,” or “Remain in my love”—on their hearts.

Pray

Invite those gathered to quiet themselves. Read the first portion of today's Second Reading. Then invite the group to reflect quietly on the following questions: “Who has shown me love in recent days? Whom can I show love to in the coming week?”

Conclude by praying, “*Lord Jesus, we thank you for those who show us love each day. Give us eyes to see those around us who need your love. Help us share your love with them through what we say and through what we do. Amen.*” Sing an Easter Alleluia or refrain.