

Reconciliation

Catechist Orientation

Goals

- To welcome catechists in a hospitable environment
- To affirm the important role of the catechist
- To reflect on the catechists' experience of First Penance
- To inform the catechists about **Call to Celebrate: Reconciliation:**
 - the philosophy of the program
 - the content
 - the resources available

Materials

- Beverages and light refreshments
- Nametags
- Copies of **Call to Celebrate: Reconciliation Child's Book**
- Copies of **Call to Celebrate: Reconciliation Catechist Edition**
- Copies of **Call to Celebrate: Reconciliation Family Guide**
- *Songs of Celebration* CD
- A prayer table covered in a purple cloth with a candle, a Bible on a stand, and a clear glass bowl with holy water
- Matches or lighter

Welcome and Opening Prayer (30 minutes)

Welcome the catechists and distribute nametags.

Begin the session with welcoming words and introduce yourself.

Have the catechists introduce themselves to one another.

Review the goals and agenda for the gathering.

Gather the group around the prayer setting.

Begin the prayer by singing or listening to "We Are Called," *Songs of Celebration*, track 1.

Light the candle and lead the catechists in the following reflection. Pause after each question.

- Recall your own First Penance day.
- Where was it? Who was there? Did you celebrate individually or with a group?
- Do you remember any sensate experiences smell, sound or touch?
- What were your feelings as you anticipated the celebration? As you celebrated it?
- How were you prepared for the event?
- Was there anything that stood out for you as memorable about your preparation or celebration?

Invite catechists to share any significant memories they may have of their own First Penance.

Read *John 20:19–23*.

Allow time for silent reflection.

Pose and then discuss the question:

- How do you want the children you will be catechizing to hear the message of this Gospel?

Close with a blessing. Ask the catechists to stand, and extend your hands over them as you say:

Lord God, in your loving kindness, strengthen and direct these catechists. Let your Spirit uphold them as they prepare to share their time and talent with your children. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Program Overview (15 minutes)

Components

Distribute copies of the *Catechist Guide*, *Child's Book*, *Songs of Celebration* CD, and *Family Guide* for **Call to Celebrate: Reconciliation**.

Explain what each is for and have catechists page through them.

Scope and Sequence

Invite catechists to turn to the Table of Contents on p. iii of the *Catechist Edition*. Go through it quickly, pointing out the articles in the front pages and the resources in the back pages.

Note the number of chapters (6) in the *Child's Book*.

Turn to the Scope and Sequence section on pp.vi–vii. Explain that scope and sequence section gives the overview of the content for each chapter. Note each of the features in the left column, and go through one chapter column to familiarize catechists with the format. Go through the Ritual Focus row and point out that the flow of the chapters is based on the steps in the Rite of Penance. Review the Rite, if necessary.

Tell catechists that each chapter is structured with a three-step process: Celebrate, Remember, and Live, and point out the family-oriented Faith at Home page.

Lesson Overview (30 minutes)

Child's Book

Use Chapter 2 of the *Child's Book* and show the process of a session:

Celebrate

- celebration and reflection

Remember

- proclamation and breaking open the Bible reading
- understanding the doctrine
- learning about the ritual action of the sacrament

Live

- making connections to their lives and their families

Point out the *Faith at Home* boxes in the *Remember* section and the *Signs of Faith* feature in the *Celebrate and Remember* pages.

Catechist Edition

Use Chapter 2 of the *Catechist Edition* as a guide.

Familiarize catechists with the background and resources in the left-hand column on p. 12A.

Encourage them to read and reflect on the essay in the main column as they are planning their lessons. Note the reflection questions and Catechist Prayer.

Review the planner on p. 12B. Note the materials needed for each lesson, and have catechists turn to the pages noted to find the Activity Masters and Scripture Dramas, Narrations, Pantomimes and more.

Go to pp. 12–21 the catechists that the side wrap gives a step-by-step lesson plan for the *Child's Book* pages, and the bottom boxes gives them additional background, activities, and tips. Instruct them to page through the lesson and then ask for any questions.

Turn to the Catholic Source Book, pp. 62–73. Have catechists page through it and make note of the additional activities provided in the wrap.

Break for refreshments and conversation.

Administrative Details (10 minutes)

Elicit any questions the catechists have about the components and resources.

Allow time for administrative details, such as calendars and class lists.

Remind them of the next session which will be catechist training on liturgical catechesis. This is the method they will be using throughout the program.

Ask them to read pp. iv–xv before the training session.

Closing Prayer (10 minutes)

Gather the catechists in a circle around the prayer space.

Sing “We Are Called,” *Songs of Celebration* CD, track 1, or another appropriate song from your parish repertoire.

Make the Sign of the Cross and say:

Let us call to mind the goodness of God who gives us all good things. I bless you with this water to remind you of the gift of your Baptism and your call to hand on the faith. (Sprinkle the group with water.) Let us join in the prayer that Jesus has taught us.

Pray the Lord's Prayer together.

Thank catechists for their attendance.

Reconciliation

Catechist Training

Goals

- To introduce the method of liturgical catechesis
- To present the underlying meaning of the Sacrament of Reconciliation
- To show how to design a prayer space and lead prayer
- To explain sacraments as actions of a faith community

Advance Preparation

Familiarize yourself with the ritual action in the opening prayer.

Select three persons to carry the holy water, candle, and Bible in procession.

Rehearse the suggested song “We Are Called,” *Songs of Celebration* CD, track 1.

Materials

- A table covered with a white cloth
- A Bible on a stand
- A large candle
- Candles for each participant
- Matches or a lighter
- A large, clear glass bowl with water
- Plants and flowers, if appropriate
- *Songs of Celebration* CD
- Copies of the following articles from the www.osvcurriculum.com:
 - “What Is Liturgical Catechesis?”
 - “How to Lead Prayer”
 - “Role of the Prayer Leader”
 - “What Is a Sacrament?”
 - “Reconciliation”
 - “History of Reconciliation”
- Poster board or chart paper
- *Reconciliation Stories of Celebration* video

Opening Prayer Service and Reflection (20 minutes)

Sing together “We Are Called,” *Songs of Celebration* CD, track 1.

As you sing, walk forward slowly. Follow the persons carrying the holy water, candle, and Bible.

Lead the opening prayer.

Leader: *Let us begin. God, our loving Father, we are gathered here in your presence. Send us your Holy Spirit to help us live as disciples of your Son, Jesus. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

All: *Amen.*

Leader: *On the day of our Baptism, we were claimed for Christ. By water and the Holy Spirit we received the gifts of faith and new life. Let us once again remember those promises together.*

Come forward and gather around the holy water and candle.

Do you say “no” to sin, so that you can live always as God’s children?

All: *We do.*

Leader: *Do you believe in God, the Father almighty?*

All: *We do.*

Leader: *Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord?*

All: *We do.*

Leader: *Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?*

All: *We do.*

Leader: *This is our faith. This is the faith of the Church. We are proud to profess it in Christ Jesus.*

All: *Amen.*

Leader: *Come to the water, make the Sign of the Cross, and thank God for the gift of our Baptism.*

When everyone has made the Sign of the Cross, light small candles from the large candle and distribute them to each catechist, saying:

[Name], You are the light of Christ.

Have catechists return to their seats and continue:

Leader: *Loving God, in Baptism we were united to your Son, Jesus. Open our hearts to the Holy Spirit as we remember our Baptism. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

All: *Amen.*

Leader: *The Lord be with you.*

All: *And with your spirit.*

Leader: *A reading from the Acts of the Apostles*

Read Acts 17:16–34.

The word of the Lord.

All: *Thanks be to God.*

Leader: *What image or phrase is important for you in this reading?*

When the discussion is finished, continue the prayer:

Let us stand and pray as Jesus taught us.

Pray the Lord's Prayer together.

Let us offer each other the Sign of Peace.

Reflection on Prayer (20 minutes)

Organize the catechists into smaller groups of five or six.

Invite the catechists to recall the ritual moments of the celebration. Do a guided meditation using the prompts from the celebration. Pause after each prompt.

Pause for a few minutes of silence. Then invite the groups to share their feelings about the celebration in their small group. Encourage them to stay with their feelings. After 5 to 7 minutes, invite sharing with the large group.

Naming (20 minutes)

Ask the participants to name what they learned about God, Jesus, the Church, or their own Christian life from the celebration.

Take each category separately and list their responses on the board or on chart paper. When they have completed their lists, use phrases from their lists to summarize what they have said about Baptism, the Church, and faith. Comment on how much “content” they came up with from their experience of reflecting on the celebration.

Distribute the article, “What Is Liturgical Catechesis?” Summarize the main parts of the article, and explain that this is the model of catechesis upon which *Call to Celebrate* is based. Emphasize that this is what they have just done.

Rotation and Break (5 minutes)

Setting up a Prayer Space and Leading Prayer (20 minutes)

Gather catechists around the prayer space and pass out “How to Lead Prayer.” Give catechists ideas on setting up a prayer space in their meeting place. Note where and how they can obtain materials for the space, and emphasize the importance of a prayer environment.

Distribute the article, “Role of the Prayer Leader,” and summarize it for the catechists. Practice leading the procession and prayer gestures with them.

Rotation and Break (5 minutes)

A Theology of Sacrament and Eucharist (30 minutes)

Play Part 3 of the *Reconciliation Stories of Celebration* video. After catechists have viewed the video, use the questions in the guide for discussion.

Summarize these important points:

- Sacraments are *actions* of God and a faith community.
- In the Sacrament of Reconciliation, we *experience the forgiveness of God* through the words and actions of the priest.
- There are two different ways the Church celebrates the sacrament. Refer catechists to the outline of the individual and communal rites in the *Child's Book*, pp. 68–69.

Distribute the articles, “What Is a Sacrament?,” “Reconciliation,” and “History of Reconciliation.” Encourage catechists to read the articles later.

Closing Blessing (5 minutes)

Thank the catechists for attending the session.

Extend your hands over the catechists and pray in these or similar words:

God, the Father of mercies, has sent his Son into the world. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, may you continue to be transformed into the Body of Christ and witness his love in the world. Amen.