

Living in **DISCIPLESHIP**



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Mystagogia: a time of Mission and Ministry

Aim: “A fuller and more effective understanding of mysteries through the Gospel – above all through *their* (neophytes) experience of the Sacraments they have received...” and welcome into the Parish.

[RCIA #235]

Mission definition:

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” [Mt 28: 19-20]

Ministry definition:

“You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy people; praise God who called you out of darkness and into His marvellous light.” [1Pt 2:9]

“Ministry is the activity of the Church as it is carried out by all members of the Church at every level, and under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, enabling it to carry on the mission of Jesus Christ to the world.”

[At Home with God’s People p. 132]

Jesus’ Manifesto:

- The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He has anointed me to bring Good News to the poor.
- He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind,
- To let the oppressed, go free,
- To proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour. [Lk 4: 18-19]



EASTER SEASON - SUNDAY GOSPEL SUMMARIES:

Ongoing conversion involves unfolding the experience and encounter of Easter, which holds particular elaboration for neophytes building their understanding of living Christian discipleship.

Masses where neophytes are present “should take into account the presence and needs of the neophytes.” [RCIA #238]

| SUNDAY | GOSPEL | SUGGESTED DISCUSSION |
|---|--|--|
| Sunday of the Resurrection | | |
| 2nd Sunday of Easter Year A, B, C | Jn 20: 19-31 “As the Father sent me, so am I sending you.” | Discuss the experience of the Easter Liturgies. |
| 3rd Sunday of Easter Year A Year B Year C | Lk 24: 13-3 The Road to Emmaus Lk 24: 35 – 48 “Peace be with you!” Jn 21: 1-19 “Feed my sheep...Follow me.” | Revisit topic: Images of the Church – how have they changed? Discuss the meaning of meal (bread and wine): the hospitality of the Eucharist, we are one in and through Communion. |
| 4th Sunday of Easter Year A Year B Year C | Jn 10: 1-10 “I am the gate of the sheepfold.” Jn 10: 11 – 18 “I am the good shepherd.” Jn 10: 27 – 30 “The sheep that belong to me listen to my voice;” | Good Shepherd Sunday Explore their vocations – How neophytes came to this point of the journey. |
| 5th Sunday of Easter Year A Year B Year C | Jn 14:1-12 “I am the way, the truth and the life” Jn 15: 1-8 “Make your home in Me, as I make mine in you.” Jn 13: 31-35 “love one another; just as I have loved you” | Discuss sainthood – The real challenges and struggles of saints. What are the consequences and responsibilities of being Catholic? |
| 6th Sunday of Easter Year A Year B Year C | Jn 14: 15-21 “I will not leave you orphans;” Jn 15: 9-17 “Remain in my love,” Jn 14: 23-29 “peace I give you, a peace the world cannot give, this is my gift to you.” | Revisit topic: Images of the Holy Spirit Unpack the gifts and fruits of the Spirit through story-telling how these can be used in life’s forward journey. |
| THE ASCENSION 7th Sunday of Easter Year A Year B Year C | Mt 28: 16-20 “Go, therefore, make disciples of all nations;” Mk 16: 15-20 “proclaim the Good News to all creation.” Lk 24: 46-53 “You are witnesses...” | Invite the Parish Priest or Deacon to attend. Expand on the previous week and discuss the neophytes understanding of their mission. |
| PENTECOST Year A Year B Year C | Jn 20: 19-23 ‘As the Father sent me, so am I sending you.’ Jn 15: 26-27, 16:12-15 “And you too will be witnesses,” Jn 14: 15-16, 23-26 <i>The Holy Spirit will teach you everything.</i> | Commissioning of neophytes. Invite the neophytes forward for the Solemn Blessing. Invite each parishioner to place their hand on the shoulder of their neighbour invoking the communion of spirit through which we go forth as one, together. |

‘Celebrate the close of post-baptismal catechesis.’

[RCIA #239]

PRAYERS for EASTER MEETINGS

| SUNDAY YEAR A | PRAYER | |
|-----------------|--|--|
| 2 ND | Opening Prayer: The Collect Closing Prayer: Prayer after Communion | God of everlasting mercy, who in the very recurrence of the Paschal feast, kindle the faith of the people you have made your own, increase, we pray, the grace you have bestowed, that we may all grasp and rightly understand in what font we have been washed, by whose Spirit we have been reborn, and by whose Blood we have been redeemed. Amen [Edited] Grant, we pray, almighty God, that our reception of the Paschal Sacrament may have a continuing effect in minds and hearts. Through Christ our Lord. Amen [Edited] |
| 3 RD | Opening Prayer: The Collect Closing Prayer: Psalm 15: 7-11 | May we exult for every, O God, in renewed youthfulness of spirit, so that, rejoicing now in the restored glory of our adoption, we may look forward in confident hope to the rejoicing of the day of resurrection. Amen [Edited] <i>R. Lord, You will show us the path of life.</i> My heart rejoices, my soul is glad; even my body shall rest in safety. For you will not leave my soul among the dead, nor let your beloved know decay. <i>R</i> You will show me the path of life, the fullness of joy in your presence, at your right-hand happiness for ever. <i>R</i> |
| 4 TH | Opening Prayer: The Collect Closing Prayer: The Our Father | Almighty ever-living God, lead us to a share in the joys of heaven, so that we, the humble flock, may reach where the brave Shepherd has gone before. Amen. [Edited] (You may wish to ask the neophytes to bring in their Presentation of the Our Father to pray the Closing Prayer together in reminiscence of their journey) |
| 5 TH | Opening Prayer: Gospel Acclamation Closing Prayer: The Collect | Alleluia, alleluia! I am the way, the truth and the life, says the Lord; no one comes to the Father, except through me. Alleluia! Almighty every-living God, constantly accomplish the Paschal Mystery within us, that you were pleased to make new in Holy Baptism under your protected care, will bear much fruit and come to the joys of life eternal. Amen [Edited] |
| 6 TH | Opening Prayer: The Collect Closing Prayer: Solemn Blessing of Easter | Grant, almighty God, that we may celebrate with heartfelt devotion these days of joy, which we keep in honour of You, the risen Lord, and that what we relive in remembrance, we may always hold to in what we do. Amen [Edited] May God, who by the Resurrection of His Only Begotten Son was pleased to confer on us the gift of redemption and of adoption, give us gladness by His blessing. Amen [Edited] May He, by whose redeeming work we have received the gift of everlasting freedom, make us heirs to an eternal inheritance. Amen [Edited] And may we, who have already risen with Christ in Baptism through faith, by living in a right manner on this earth, be united with Him in the homeland of heaven. Amen [Edited] |
| ASCENSION | Opening Prayer: The Collect Closing Prayer: Solemn Blessing of The Ascension | May almighty God bless us, for His Only Begotten Son, pierced the heights of heaven and unlocked for you the way to ascend to where He is. Amen [Edited] May He grant that, as Christ after His Resurrection was seen plainly by His disciples, so when He comes as Judge He may show Himself merciful to you for all eternity. Amen And may you, who believe He is seated with the Father in His majesty, know with joy the fulfilment of His promise to stay with you until the end of time. Amen |
| PENTECOST | Opening Prayer: The Collect Closing Prayer: Pentecost Prayer | O God, who by the mystery of today's great feast, sanctify your whole Church in every people and nation, pour out the gifts of the Holy Spirit across the face of the earth so that the Birthday of the universal Church is celebrated by every heart and in every corner of your creation. Amen [Edited] Lord help me to use the grace & gift of (name....) to boldly witness to the faith. (Each person names a grace & gift they recognise in themselves.) All: God our Father, You sent Your Holy Spirit upon the Apostles, and through them and their successors You give the Spirit to Your people. May His work begun at Pentecost continue to grow in the hearts of us all. Through Christ our Lord. Amen [Edited] |



Living discipleship with new members in our Parishes

...together we form the Body of Christ.

- ❖ No longer are the neophytes' outsiders looking in.
- ❖ Now through full initiation, they are looking from within.
- ❖ How can we as a parish community be inspired by embracing neophytes in our midst?

[Ministry & Liturgy New Tools]

“The picture that the RCIA gives is of committed Christians, living a committed Christian life, with great emphasis on community support and the joyful welcome of newcomers; a Church engaged in continuing conversion and renewal as it involves itself in the training of its inquirers, catechumens' and neophytes; a Church that is missionary in character and sees itself as the servant of the world.”

[The Parish Companion John Wilcken p. 131]

Parishes may offer an Anniversary Mass, for the previous year's RCIA group to celebrate “their spiritual experiences, and to renew their commitment.” [RCIA #240]

This is an opportunity to extend and introduce former neophytes to the current RCIA group in a relaxed and welcoming setting, which celebrates the living dynamics of the Parish mission and life.



CHRISTIAN INITIATION JOURNEY: FROM ENQUIRY TO FULL INITIATION

| STAGE OF RCIA | RCIA TEXT | KERYGMA RELATIONSHIP | EVANGELIA SCRIPTURE | KOINONIA COMMUNITY | LEITOURGIA PRAYER & WORSHIP | DIAKONIA MISSION |
|-------------------------|-----------|---|--|--|---|---|
| EARLY CHURCH | | Building a relationship with Christ – becoming one with Him | Knowledge of Christ’s teaching and Scripture. Witnessing to others. | Entering Community + Building Community | Liturgy Prayer Worship | Doing God’s work in the wider Community. |
| ENQUIRY | #36 - 40 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First response to Christ’s calling to ‘<i>come and see</i>’ • discovery of relationship with Christ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fundamentals of Christian teaching • primary proclamation of the Gospel | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a sense of Church • introduction to members of the parish community | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mass of the Catechumens • Introducing prayer experience • the practice of calling on God in prayer. • Liturgical Rites | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial conversion • Called to contemplate the mystery of God’s love and how this impacts their life. |
| RITE OF ACCEPT/ WELCOME | #41 - 74 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of catechumens/candidates to the Parish Community • Welcome by Parish community | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • #60 ‘... share with us the table of God’s word.’ • #64 ‘Presentation of a Bible’ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduced to the Parish Community | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rite of Acceptance / Welcome • Prayer over the Catechumens • Blessing • General Intercession | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • #67 ‘Go in peace, and may the Lord remain with you always.’ |
| CATECHUMENATE | #75 – 104 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • #75.2 ‘social consequences’ • #75.3 ‘The Church, like a mother, helps ...on their journey, hope set on Christ sharing in the mystery of Christ’s death and Resurrection. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • #75.3 Celebrate Liturgy of the Word. • #75.1 ‘suitable catechesis gradual and complete in its coverage’ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • #75.2 ‘helped by the example and support of sponsors, godparents, and the entire Christian community.’ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • #75.3 Celebrate Liturgy of the Word. • #75.2 ‘Turn more readily to God in prayer.’ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • #75.1 Develop ‘a profound sense of the mystery of salvation in which they desire to participate.’ • #75.2 ‘Bear witness to the faith, ... hopes set on Christ, ... practice love of neighbour’ • #76 ‘led into the life of faith, worship, and charity belonging to the people of God.’ |

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|---|------------|---|--|--|--|--|
| RITE OF ELECTION | #105 - 124 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> #108 The Church community 'arrive at a judgement about the state of formation and progress.' Discernment by RCIA Team and catechumens/candidates | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> #107 'the catechumens/candidates are expected to have ... developed sufficient acquaintance with Christian teaching' | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> #106 'testimony of godparents, sponsors, catechists, Parish Priests, ... the Church judges their state of readiness'. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rite of Election of Catechumens & Formal Recognition of Candidates Catechumens now called the elect or <i>illuminandi</i> (those who will be enlightened) #112 The significance of the Homily | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> #107 'the catechumens/candidates are expected to have undergone a conversion of mind and in action ...as well as a spirit of faith and charity.' |
| PURIFICATION & ENLIGHTENMENT | #125 - 197 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> #125 'renew the entire community along with those being prepared to celebrate the Paschal Mystery | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Celebrating the Lenten Readings. Scrutinies Presentations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> #125 'renew the entire community along with those being prepared to celebrate the Paschal Mystery | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> #125 Liturgies of Lent reminder of Baptism already received or preparing with intention to receive the Sacraments of Initiation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> #126 'a period of intense preparation, interior reflection' #125 'preparation for the celebration of the Paschal Mystery |
| SACRAMENTS OF INITIATION/ FULL COMMUNION | #198 - 305 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Baptism Confirmation Eucharist Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Baptism Confirmation Eucharist Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Baptism Confirmation Eucharist Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Baptism Confirmation Eucharist Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord. |
| ONGOING CONVERSION & DISCIPLESHIP | #234 - 241 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing strengthening #234 'the community of the faithful ... give thoughtful and friendly help.' #236 'the neophytes experience full, joyful welcome into the community, the faithful renewal of inspiration and outlook'. One in Christ's family | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing deepening and understanding of Scripture #235 'more effective understanding of the mysteries of the Gospel 'Go and make disciples of all nations...' | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing strengthening and building of community relationship #234 'the community & neophytes together grow in deepening their grasp of the Paschal Mystery' | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing deepening of experience and encounter with Christ and the community through prayer and worship #234 'the community & neophytes together grow in deepening their grasp of the Paschal Mystery ... meditating on the Gospel , sharing in the Eucharist' | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing understanding and activity of mission #234 'the community & neophytes together grow in deepening their grasp of the Paschal Mystery ... doing works of charity' Christian discipleship – service & mission |

Consider the Christian Initiation Criteria *after* full initiation:

| KERYGMA RELATIONSHIP | EVANGELIA SCRIPTURE | KOINONIA COMMUNITY | LEITOURGIA LITURGY | DIAKONIA SERVICE & MISSION 'Show me your faith apart from your works, and I by my works I will show you my faith.' [James 2: 18] |
|--|--|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are our expectations of neophytes? • Are our expectations to join parish ministries too high? • #234 'the community of the faithful ... give thoughtful and friendly help.' • #236 'the neophytes experience full, joyful welcome into the community, the faithful renewal of inspiration and outlook'. • One in Christ's family ○ We are one in the Body of Christ ○ Full initiation and Communion with the Church ○ 'The spirit in you and with you ... I will not leave you orphans' ○ 'So I am sending you!' ○ 'Go and make disciples of all nations!' ○ Live the Beatitudes Mt 5: 1-12 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • #235 'more effective understanding of the mysteries of the Gospel ○ The challenge of the Easter Readings ○ 'Go and make disciples of all nations...' ○ 'The spirit in you and with you ... I will not leave you orphans' ○ 'So I am sending you!' ○ Live the Beatitudes Mt 5:1-12 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the parish expectations of neophytes? • Are the parish community expectations too high? • #234 'the community & neophytes together grow in deepening their grasp of the Paschal Mystery' ○ Parish Ministries? ○ Ministries of the Mass? ○ Corporal Works of Mercy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Refer Service & Mission</i> ○ Spiritual Works of Mercy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Refer Service & Mission</i> ○ Live the Beatitudes Mt 5:1-12 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • #234 'the community & neophytes together grow in deepening their grasp of the Paschal Mystery ... meditating on the Gospel, sharing in the Eucharist' ○ The Liturgical Season of Easter ○ The challenge of the Easter Readings ○ Parish Ministries? ○ Ministries of the Mass? ○ Deepening grasp of the Paschal Mystery through prayer ○ 'Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord.' | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the parish expectations of neophytes? • Are we expecting too much? • #234 'the community & neophytes together grow in deepening their grasp of the Paschal Mystery ... doing works of charity' • Christian discipleship – service & mission ○ Corporal Works of Mercy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Feed the hungry ▪ Shelter the homeless ▪ Clothe the naked ▪ Give alms to the poor ▪ Visit the sick & imprisoned ▪ Bury the dead <small>(Loyola Press)</small> ○ Spiritual Works of Mercy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Instruct ▪ Advise ▪ Console ▪ Comfort ▪ Forgive ▪ Bear wrongs patiently <small>(Loyola Press)</small> ○ Live the Beatitudes Mt 5:1-12 ○ 'So I am sending you!' ○ 'Go and make disciples of all nations!' ○ 'Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord.' |

Consequences of becoming Catholic ...

Parish Ministry:

The parish community should affirm the presence of the neophytes in their midst, offering them an example of support during the period of post-baptismal catechesis during the Easter Season through:

- I. Full, conscious, and active participation in the Liturgy of the Word
- II. Through Him, with Him and in Him by their surrender to the Eucharist
- III. Live the example of charity through their own mission, service, and care of others.

By living the tenets of faith, the parish community offers renewal of empirical prayer life, which has received rejuvenation over the Lent, Holy Week and Easter Liturgies, that is expressed in the attention and vitality they show to:

- a) Faith
- b) The Church
- c) The world

[RCIA # 234 -235]

As a parish community, including godparents and sponsors, what impact has the celebration of Easter had upon or lives in how we bear witness to the celebration of our greatest Feast of Easter?

Consider what impact we may have on the neophytes in our midst. As a living reality of the Body of Christ in our local communities, are we animated by the salvific joy of salvation we have been gifted Through Christ's Resurrection?

Remember, for the parish community who have already experienced "a fuller and more effective understanding of the mysteries of the Gospel through Easter", we are gifted with further reminder, to pull ourselves out of complacency, as we live our discipleship more faithfully. Moreover, communion through shared sacramental experience is strengthened by godparents who offer personal invitation and introduction to the wider Church community, as they too "in turn, have received renewal of inspiration and of outlook."

[RCIA # 236]

What possible Parish ministries could the neophytes be invited to join, which 'increases their contact with the rest of the faithful and has an impact on the experience of the community'? [RCIA #236]

Live the Gospel, and if necessary use words.

[Attributed to St Francis of Assisi]

1. Meditation on the Gospel
 2. Sharing in the Eucharist
 3. Doing works of charity
 4. Other
- } RCIA #234

Ongoing conversion continues in all our lives. How the neophytes choose to live their discipleship is not restricted to Parish ministries, but may serve others in many and varied ways in the wider community. In particular, the neophytes may be interested in supporting the new RCIA journey.

Remember, we are “a Pentecost people with a mission to the world.”
[Alain Corne, RCIA Coordinator Broken Bay, *Ten Reasons Why My Parish Needs a Catechumenate*]



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