

Sample Proximate Preparation for Confirmation Session One: Discipleship

Words in *Italics* are for the Leader
Words in **Red** are to be spoken.

Prayer:

This can be used as a gathering prayer or as a prayer before dismissal from the catechetical session. Please set the mood allowing for a prayerful experience. Depending on space and availability, the catechist might want to dim the lights and light a candle, or perhaps set up a particular section of the meeting space to gather for prayer.

Leader: In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, Amen. Loving Holy Spirit, guide us on our Christian journey as disciples of Jesus Christ. Open our hearts and minds to Your Word and will.

Reader (you may choose one of the candidates to proclaim this Gospel):

The Call of Matthew

Matthew 9:9-13

As Jesus passed on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the customs post. He said to him, "Follow me." And he got up and followed him. While he was at table in his house, many tax collectors and sinners came and sat with Jesus and his disciples. The Pharisees saw this and said to his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" He heard this and said, "Those who are well do not need a physician, but the sick do. Go and learn the meaning of the words, 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' I did not come to call the righteous but sinners."

Leader: Please take a moment to reflect silently. Then-

As a faithful Christian community gathered here today we remember these special intentions. Please respond "Lord, hear our prayer."

Reader (you may choose one of the candidates to offer these intentions)

- 1.) For our church leaders, that they will continue by the grace of the Holy Spirit, to bring us closer to true faith in Jesus Christ. We pray to the Lord.
- 2.) For those receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation, that they will be open to the Holy Spirit leading them in their faith journey. We pray to the Lord.
- 3.) For vocations, that those who the Holy Spirit is calling to religious life will answer this special calling. We pray to the Lord.

Leader: As we gather today let us remember that just as Matthew was called, so are we called to follow in Jesus' footsteps.

Lesson:

Discipleship

Leader:

*In this lesson you will instruct the candidates to better understand their role as modern day disciples of Jesus Christ, the risen Lord and Savior. Keep in mind that added resources for this session are the **National Directory for Catechesis** and the text provided by your religious education program.*

As baptized Catholic Christians, we are all called to be disciples of Jesus Christ. During His earthly work, Jesus called people from all walks of life to be not only His followers (those who would study under Him) but also as His closest friends. In the Gospel according to John (*John 15:15*) Jesus says, “I no longer call you slaves, because a slave does not know what his master is doing. I have called you friends, because I have told you everything I have heard from my Father.”

Ask the candidates the following questions:

How does it make you feel to have Jesus call you friend?

You may want to collect the responses orally and write them down on a board where all of the other candidates can see and share in the thoughts of the group. This allows for not only faith sharing but cooperative learning experiences.

Continue by saying:

The Magisterium, or teaching body of the Roman Catholic Church, says that discipleship is “...accepting the invitation to belong to *God's family*, to live in conformity with His way of life...”(*Catechism of the Catholic Church 2233*). We learn about God’s way of life by following the way Jesus lived when He was on earth. Jesus is the goal that we as Catholic Christians try to emulate. We are human beings and susceptible to sin, but we turn to the example of Jesus to try and live more righteous lives.

The earliest disciples of Jesus were not always people in society who would be held in high esteem. Jesus chose many people whom society put aside. Jesus spent much of his time with the sinful people of the community and changed their hearts toward God and living according to the Father’s will.

At this time we will look to Scripture to hear what Jesus tells us about how a disciple of His acts.

*Instruct one of the confirmation candidates to read Matthew 25:31–41. This will correspond with **Activity 1**. You may ask the candidates to do this individually or in small cooperative learning groups.*

When they have completed this activity, please allow for some time to have the candidates share their responses with the larger group.

Continue by saying:

Following Jesus is not always easy, but the reward that Jesus promises us outweighs any earthly discomfort. He promises us eternal life with Him in heaven with His Father.

The best examples of disciples are the saints. As you know, those receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation select the name of a saint as their Confirmation name. The name that is chosen should be the name of a saint who means something special to you, a saint that inspires you to come closer to Jesus.

For example, Saint Francis of Assisi was a man who during the Middle Ages turned away from a world of material goods in exchange for a much simpler life which would bring him to experience God more intimately.

Saint Teresa of Avila is another popular saint who was a famous Spanish Mystic and theologian who renewed the Carmelite order.

These are two saints' names that you may look into taking.

These saints are merely a suggestion for you to consider. If there are other saints you wish to incorporate, please feel free to do so. Make sure to give the candidates a bit of the background of the saint to make the connection as to why they are people to be admired as disciples.

Then say:

We are all called to be holy and to live lives according to the teachings of the Church. When choosing a saint's name, think of someone whom you want to turn to, asking that he/she intercede for you as you continue your spiritual journey in the Catholic faith. Try to live your life as that saint did, walking in Jesus' footsteps.

Activity 1

Matthew and Discipleship

After hearing a reading of Matthew 25:31–41, reflect on how you have carried out these actions within your family, within your circle of friends, at school, and in your own ordinary way.

Matthew, Chapter 25	Discipleship Gifts and Skills Needed
"For I was hungry and you gave me food." (verse 35)	
"I was thirsty and you gave me drink." (verse 35)	
"[I was] a stranger and you welcomed me." (verse 35)	
"[I was] naked and you clothed me." (verse 36)	

<p>“[I was] ill and you cared for me.” (verse 36)</p>	
<p>“[I was] in prison and you visited me.” (verse 36)</p>	