

Sample Proximate Preparation for Confirmation

Session Three: Scripture

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 (if allowed), 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 through Your personal revelation in Sacred Scripture. Open our hearts and minds to Your Word and will.

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

The Ascension of Jesus

Acts 1: 6-12

When they had gathered together they asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?" He answered them, "It is not for you to know the times or seasons that the Father has established by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." When he had said this, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him from their sight. While they were looking intently at the sky as he was going, suddenly two men dressed in white garments stood beside them. They said, "Men of Galilee, why are you standing there looking at the sky? This Jesus who has been taken up from you into heaven will return in the same way as you have seen him going into heaven." Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away.

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 the 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 the Apostles waited for the Holy Spirit so patiently, so will we.

Lesson:

Scripture

Leader:

*In this lesson you will instruct the candidates to better understand the role of Sacred Scripture in their personal faith journey and in growing closer in friendship with Jesus Christ. 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 Catholics, we are all called to encounter the Lord through His Sacred Scripture. God uses Sacred Scripture to reveal Himself to the whole world through Divine Revelation. Divine Revelation is “God’s self-communication through which He makes known the mystery of His divine plan” (*Rabe 34*). As Christians, we turn to the Bible to read the story of God. In both the Old and the New Testaments we Christians can encounter the Lord in a very special way. This is the story of God and His chosen people, between God and each of us. In the Old Testament God sets up the scene for Jesus’ coming.

Ask the candidates the following question:

How does it make you feel to know God wants to tell you about Himself?

As the candidates respond orally, write the responses 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 also cooperative learning experiences.

Continue by saying-

The Second Vatican Council said that “God chose certain men who...made full use of their own faculties and powers so that, though He acted in them and by them, it was as true authors that they cosigned to writing whatever He wanted written, and no more”(DV 11). Vatican II explained that God worked through human beings to tell us about His love for us.

In the Old Testament God calls His chosen people into a covenant relationship with Him. A covenant is a solemn agreement between God and human beings where mutual commitments are made (*Rabe 37*). We can read about the covenants that God made with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and others in the Jewish community.

In the New Testament, God fulfills what He promises in the Old Testament through Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. Throughout the Gospels, Jesus Christ teaches God's Word and performs many miracles, but it is through His passion, death and glorious resurrection that Jesus redeems us of our sins. After Christ's ascension to His Father, the Holy Spirit comes down on the Apostles and begins to inspire the early Church to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ.

At this time, we will look to Scripture to hear God's Word.

Instruct one of the confirmation candidates to read Luke 5:1-11. 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:

Reading Scripture can feel like a difficult task. Many times the Bible contains words or teachings that are hard to grasp. Asking a priest or teacher to help you is a good way to solve this problem.

Throughout your education you have been asked to read many different things. Text books, newspaper articles, poetry and novels are some of the things you as students are asked to read. You are taught to read these genres and look for particular things to be questioned on for an exam or a home work assignment. Reading the Bible is a much different experience. Your Bible should allow you to encounter God, to meet Him.

Activity

Scripture Session

Making Scripture part of our lives is the task of every Christian. Here are some simple steps to help the Word become “enfleshed” in you.

Sacred Scripture is one of the greatest riches possessed by Christians. Often attributed to St. Jerome, there is the saying that "ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of God". However, Catholics are often less comfortable with Scripture than Protestants. Is there an accessible way for Catholics to engage the Holy Bible?

Drawing from the ancient tradition of Benedictine monks and sisters, lectio divina is a way for Catholics to approach Scripture. Translated as "holy reading", lectio divina is a four step method of praying with the Bible.

Follow the four steps:

1. Read: Take the passage and get a sense of what is being said.
2. Reflect: Read through the passage a second time. This time go slowly. Use your brain during this part and reflect on the text. To guide your reflection, you might ask, "What does the passage say about God? What does this passage mean to me?"
3. Respond: Pay attention to your heart and your feelings. The operative question during this step is, "Now that I have reflected and gained some meaning into the passage, what do I want to pray for?" You may be prompted to offer prayers of thanksgiving. You may need to pray for someone else. Perhaps you realize you should pray for a change in behavior.
4. Rest: This may be the hardest step. Some find it easy to talk to God. However, this final step is a time for us to listen for God's quiet voice deep within us. If nothing else, it is a time to sit and rest in God's loving presence.

Take Luke 5:1-11 and prayerfully practice the four steps of lectio divina.