

CATECHETICAL SUNDAY

“MISSIONARY DISCIPLES IN THE
VINEYARD OF THE LORD”

CATECHISTS ARE
CALLED TO FACILITATE
AN ENCOUNTER
WITH JESUS CHRIST



PRAYER FOR CATECHETICAL SUNDAY



Good and gracious God,

You call us to work in your vineyard
so that others may know of your love and care for them.

Strengthen us as we set out as missionary disciples
so that we may be faithful messengers of your good news.

We ask this through Jesus Christ,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God for ever and ever.

Amen.



CATECHISTS ARE CALLED TO FACILITATE AN ENCOUNTER WITH JESUS CHRIST

- “I invite all Christians, everywhere, at this very moment, to a renewed personal encounter with Jesus Christ, or at least an openness to letting him encounter them; I ask all of you to do this unflinchingly each day. No one should think that this invitation is not meant for him or her, since “no one is excluded from the joy brought by the Lord”. (*Evangelii Gaudium*, no. 3)
- “...I never tire of repeating those words of Benedict XVI which take us to the very heart of the Gospel: ‘Being a Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a person, which gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction.’” (*Evangelii Gaudium*, no. 7)
- “Thanks solely to this encounter – or renewed encounter – with God’s love, which blossoms into an enriching friendship, we are liberated from our narrowness and self-absorption. We become fully human when we become more than human, when we let God bring us beyond ourselves in order to attain the fullest truth of our being.” (*Evangelii Gaudium*, no. 8)
- “...Meanwhile, the Gospel tells us constantly to run the risk of a face-to-face encounter with others, with their physical presence which challenges us, with their pain and their pleas, with their joy which infects us in our close and continuous interaction. True faith in the incarnate Son of God is inseparable from self-giving, from membership in the community, from service, from reconciliation with others. The Son of God, by becoming flesh, summoned us to the revolution of tenderness.” (*Evangelii Gaudium*, no. 88)

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- “...We need to help others to realize that the only way is to learn how to encounter others with the right attitude, which is to accept and esteem them as companions along the way, without interior resistance. Better yet, it means learning to find Jesus in the faces of others, in their voices, in their pleas. And learning to suffer in the embrace of the crucified Jesus whenever we are unjustly attacked or meet with ingratitude, never tiring of our decision to live in fraternity.” *(Evangelii Gaudium, no. 91)*
- “Proclaiming the Gospel message to different cultures also involves proclaiming it to professional, scientific and academic circles. This means an encounter between faith, reason and the sciences with a view to developing new approaches and arguments on the issue of credibility, a creative apologetics which would encourage greater openness to the Gospel on the part of all.” *(Evangelii Gaudium, no. 132)*
- “...Every expression of true beauty can thus be acknowledged as a path leading to an encounter with the Lord Jesus.” *(Evangelii Gaudium, no. 167)*
- “...Listening, in communication, is an openness of heart which makes possible that closeness without which genuine spiritual encounter cannot occur. Listening helps us to find the right gesture and word which shows that we are more than simply bystanders. Only through such respectful and compassionate listening can we enter on the paths of true growth and awaken a yearning for the Christian ideal: the desire to respond fully to God’s love and to bring to fruition what he has sown in our lives.” *(Evangelii Gaudium, no. 171)*

FOR YOUR REFLECTION...

- Q. What will a renewed personal encounter with Jesus Christ do for you?
- Q. Do you recognize in experiences of true beauty an encounter with Jesus Christ?
- Q. How can listening help you to experience a true encounter with Jesus Christ?
- Q. How can dialogue and consensus building help you to experience a true encounter with Jesus Christ?
- Q. How do your experiences of loving another person enhance or renew your relationship with God?
- Q. How challenging is it for you to find Jesus in the face of others?

“ALL OF US NEED TO GROW IN CHRIST.”

READINGS OF THE DAY

FIRST READING: EZEKIEL 18.25-28

A reading from the book of the Prophet Ezekiel.

Thus says the Lord:

“You object, O House of Israel!

You say, ‘The way of the Lord is unfair.’

Hear now, O house of Israel:

Is my way unfair?

Is it not your ways that are unfair?

When the righteous person turns away from their righteousness
and commits iniquity,

they shall die for it;

For the iniquity that they have committed they shall die.

Again, when the wicked person turns away

from the wickedness they have committed

and does what is lawful and right,

they shall save their life.

Because that person considered and turned away

from all the transgressions that they have committed,

they shall surely live;

they shall not die.”

The word of the Lord.

FOR YOUR REFLECTION

Q. How might iniquities act as a hindrance to the process of evangelization?

Q. In your role as a catechist, how might you positively address these concerns?

Q. As a catechist, what is the implication of your own ongoing conversion?

How is this evident in your life?

“THE TRANSLATION OF ‘CATECHIST’ IN SOME LANGUAGES IS ‘TO GRAB A HAND AND WALK ALONG WITH.’... CATECHISTS HAVE THE PRIVILEGE OF BEING COMPANIONS... GOD IS WITHIN THOSE WHO SERVE; GOD IS ALREADY PRESENT IN THEIR LIVES.”

RESPONSORIAL PSALM
PSALM 25.4-5A, 6+7B, 8-9 (R.6)

R. Lord, be mindful of your mercy.

Make me to know your ways, O Lord;
teach me your paths.
Lead me in your truth, and teach me,
for you are the God of my salvation. R.

Be mindful of your mercy, O Lord, and of your steadfast love,
for they have been from of old.
According to your steadfast love remember me,
for the sake of your goodness, O Lord! R.

Good and upright is the Lord;
therefore he instructs sinners in the way.
He leads the humble in what is right,
and teaches the humble his way. R.



FOR YOUR REFLECTION

Q. Can you name an experience you have had when you have felt led by God?

Q. As a catechist, what are some of the ways that you discern God's ways in your own life?

Q. How might the discernment of God's ways also be a communal process? Could you provide an example?

“AT THE VERY HEART OF THE GOSPEL IS LIFE IN COMMUNITY AND ENGAGEMENT WITH OTHERS.”

SECOND READING: PHILIPPIANS 2.1-11

THE SHORTER VERSION (1-5) ENDS AT THE ASTERISK.

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Philippians.

Brothers and sisters:
If there is any encouragement in Christ,
any consolation from love,
and sharing in the Spirit,
any compassion and sympathy,
then make my joy complete:
be of the same mind,
having the same love,
being in full accord and of one mind.
Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit,
but in humility regard others as better than yourselves.
Let each of you look not to your own interests,
but to the interests of others.
Let the same mind be in you
that was in Christ Jesus,*
who, though he was in the form of God,
did not regard equality with God as something to be
exploited,

but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave,
being born in human likeness.
And being found in human form,
he humbled himself
and became obedient to the point of death—
even death on a cross.
Therefore God highly exalted him
and gave him the name that is above every name,
so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

The word of the Lord.

FOR YOUR REFLECTION

- Q. What are some of the categories that are commonly used to divide members of a faith community?
- Q. What might be some of the ways to break down barriers within a faith community?
- Q. What role does service to others play within the process of evangelization?

“INDEED, ANYONE WHO HAS TRULY EXPERIENCED GOD’S SAVING LOVE DOES NOT NEED MUCH TIME OR LENGTHY TRAINING TO GO OUT AND PROCLAIM THAT LOVE.”

GOSPEL: MATTHEW 21.28-32

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Jesus said to the chief priests and the elders of the people:

“What do you think?

A man had two sons;

he went to the first and said,

‘Son, go and work in the vineyard today.’

He answered, ‘I will not’;

but later he changed his mind and went.

The father went to the second and said the same;

and he answered, ‘I am going, sir’;

but he did not go.

Which of the two did the will of his father?”

They said, “The first.”

Jesus said to them,

“Truly I tell you,

the tax collectors and the prostitutes

are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you.

For John came to you in the way of righteousness

and you did not believe him,

but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him;

and even after you saw it,

you did not change your minds and believe him.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

FOR YOUR REFLECTION

- Q. What are some of the reasons you are reluctant to go out into the “vineyard”?
- Q. How can you help others to become more aware that their actions are often unknowingly in harmony with the message of the Gospel?

**“MODERN MAN LISTENS MORE WILLINGLY TO WITNESSES THAN TO TEACHERS,
AND IF HE DOES LISTEN TO TEACHERS, IT IS BECAUSE THEY ARE WITNESSES.”**

CLOSING

FOR YOUR REFLECTION

As a catechist, I am called to be a missionary disciple: to facilitate encounters with Christ, accompany others, and live in solidarity with the poor and marginalized. What is one concrete thing I can do to deepen my understanding of what it means to be a missionary disciple in my day-to-day life?

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