

Loyola Press Catechetical Formation Series

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Session Two: The Catechetical Process

Name	Parish
Date	

Focus

Faith Formation experiences should not feel like “school.” Catechists are not teachers of a subject, but facilitators of an encounter with the Risen Christ. This encounter is one of mystery and mystery transcends our intellectual capacities. Throughout Scripture, God communicates with his people, not solely through words, but through a language of mystery: signs and symbols including a burning bush, a column of smoke, a pillar of fire, a mighty wind, a whispering sound, tongues of fire, and so on. As Catholics, we rely on this language of mystery – our sacramental life – to encounter the mysterious presence of Christ in our midst. Faith formation, like worship, must integrate this language of mystery so that both the head and the heart are touched by God’s Word. In this installment of our Catechist Formation Series, we will look at a catechetical process that provides a rhythm and flow for a faith formation session in order to create a climate of prayer that enables participants to enter into and encounter the mysterious presence of the Risen Christ.

Learning Outcomes – At the end of this session, the catechist will be able to...

- articulate a biblical understanding of *mystery*
- identify the components of a language of mystery: space, music/song, silence, storytelling, movement/gesture, sign/symbol, ritual, and works
- create a climate of prayer in which the content of our faith is transmitted
- identify the steps of the catechetical process
- incorporate the language of mystery into each of the steps of the catechetical process

Pause #1: The Message, the Messenger, and the Method

When it comes to the Message, the Messenger, or the Method, why can we point the finger of blame at the Methods we tend to rely on as the cause of faith formation being seen as boring? How would you describe the most common method(s) used in traditional faith formation settings?

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Pause #2: A Language of Mystery

What is your understanding of a “language of mystery”? What are the components of a language of mystery? How are some of these components present in your own everyday life?

Pause #3: Resembling Mass More Than Class

What does it mean to say that your faith formation sessions should “resemble the Mass more than class”? Identify and briefly describe each of the components of a language of mystery.

Pause #4: Transforming Your Space

What are some specific things that you can do as a catechist to transform the space you are in for faith formation and to establish a climate of prayer as your participants gather?

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Pause #5: The ENGAGE Step

What is your understanding of the ENGAGE step? What did St. Ignatius mean when he advised teachers to “enter through their door but be sure to leave through your door”? How can the following components of a language of mystery enhance the ENGAGE step: music/song, silence, movement/gesture, sign & symbol, and sacred space?

Pause #6: The EXPLORE Step

What is your understanding of the EXPLORE step? Why is it important to begin this step with a proclamation from Scripture? Why is presenting the content of our Catholic faith so important? How can the following components of a language of mystery enhance the EXPLORE step: music/singing, ritual, movement/gesture, and storytelling?

Pause #7: The REFLECT Step

What is your understanding of the REFLECT step? Describe the steps involved in leading participants in reflective prayer. How can the following components of a language of mystery enhance the REFLECT step: silence, sacred space, ritual, music, movement/gesture, and sign & symbol?

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Pause #8: The RESPOND Step

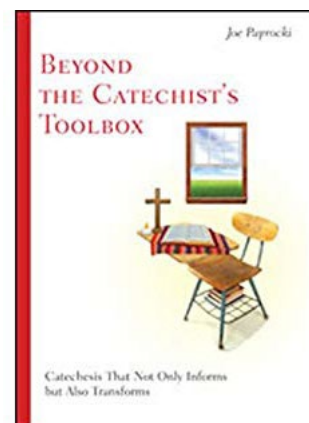
What is your understanding of the RESPOND step? How is this step similar to the dismissal rite at Mass? Why is it important to include assessment in faith formation? How can the following components of a language of mystery enhance the RESPOND step: silence, movement/gesture, ritual, music/singing, and works?

Summary

What are 3 to 5 main takeaways you gained from this session? Describe how these insights will affect your approach to serving as a catechist

Assigned Reading

After reading *Beyond the Catechist's Toolbox: Catechesis That Not Only Informs but also Transforms*, describe 3 main insights you gained and how they will have impact on your role as a catechist.



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