“YOU ARE A CHOSEN PEOPLE”

CATECHESIS IN MYSTAGOGIA

"BUT YOU ARE 'A CHOSEN RACE, A ROYAL PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE OF HIS OWN, SO THAT YOU MAY ANNOUNCE THE PRAISES' OF HIM WHO CALLED YOU OUT OF DARKNESS INTO HIS WONDERFUL LIGHT."

—1 PETER 2:9
I. INTRODUCTION

• Catechesis in the period of Mystagogia is centered on a deeper understanding of the Paschal Mystery as it pertains to the call to discipleship and mission to the world. This period strengthens their new faith and their new baptismal identity as participants in the Paschal Mystery of Christ:

“This is a time for the community and the neophytes together to grow in deepening their grasp of the paschal mystery and in making it a part of their lives through meditation on the Gospel, sharing in the eucharist, and doing works of charity.” —RCIA 244

• Catechesis in this period has as its goal to deepen the experience of the neophytes in living out the Christian life.

II. CONTENT OF CATECHESIS IN MYSTAGOGIA

• The content of catechesis in the period of Mystagogia can be framed around the new baptismal mission and identity of the neophytes as sharers in the mission of Christ as priest, prophet, and king.

• This is crucial to strengthening the identity and mission of the neophytes and to developing their understanding and practice of their sharing in the messianic mission of Christ as continued in and through the Church.

• *Lumen Gentium*, the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church from Vatican II, provides the catechetical and theological framework for this baptismal identity and mission, which should be at the heart of catechesis in Mystagogia.
SHARERS IN THE PRIESTLY MISSION OF CHRIST

• Through Baptism, the neophytes have become intimately joined to the mission of Christ's priesthood and are called to prayer, praise, and worship of God.

• Catechesis in Mystagogia and the neophyte year should strengthen the full, conscious, and active participation of the neophytes in the liturgy and sacraments.
  
  → Present catechetical sessions that deepen their understanding and experience of the Mass as the "source and summit of the Christian life."
  
  → Present catechetical sessions on the sacraments, especially Penance and the Eucharist.
  
  → Teach to and from the liturgical rites, which is particularly important during this period.
  
  → Discuss and reflect upon the effect that the newly received sacraments are having in their personal lives.

• The catechetical formation of the neophytes must also include a solid and systematic catechesis on prayer. The elements of a solid catechesis on prayer in Part IV of the Catechism are:
  
  → Prayer as Covenant and Communion with God —CCC 2558-2565
  
  → Prayer in Salvation History —CCC 2566-2622
  
  → The Different Kinds of Prayer —CCC 2626-2649
  
  → The Way of Prayer —CCC 2663-2682
  
  → Guides for Prayer —CCC 2683-2699
  
  → Expressions of Prayer —CCC 2700-2724
  
  → The Battle of Prayer —CCC 2725-2745
  
  → The Our Father as the Model Prayer —CCC 2759-2865
SHARERS IN THE PROPHETIC MISSION OF CHRIST

• Through Baptism, the neophytes are joined to the prophetic mission of Christ, in which they are called to proclaim the Gospel and be convincing witnesses of Christ through word and deed.

• Catechetical formation in this period should also include catechesis on the call and mission of New Evangelization. This catechesis should include:
  → An understanding of the Church’s mission of evangelization
  → The baptismal call to share and witness the faith through word and deed
  → The particular role of the laity in proclaiming the Gospel through holiness of life to the ordinary places of secular life (LG 34)
  → Participation in the public square

SHARERS IN THE KINGLY MISSION OF CHRIST

• Through Baptism, the neophytes also come to share in the kingly mission of Christ, through which they are first and foremost called to royal freedom by reigning over sin and death through holiness and ongoing conversion.

• Also through their Baptism, the neophytes reign with Christ the King, who came not to be served, but to serve.

• Catechesis should be given on Catholic social teaching and the corporal and spiritual works of mercy, along with organized opportunities of service.

OTHER IMPORTANT CATECHETICAL TOPICS

• Other important catechetical topics to help strengthen the neophytes’ Catholic identity and mission:
  → Vatican II and its proper interpretation and purpose
  → Church History: Our Catholic Story
  → Discussion of current events/issues in light of the Catholic faith to help them to form a Catholic worldview
III. THE NEOPHYTE YEAR

• Catechetical instruction and formation does not end for the neophytes at Pentecost, but should continue to some extent until the anniversary of their initiation.

• The frequency of sessions can vary, but should last at least once a month.

• The development of a neophyte year team is recommended to organize and teach the catechetical sessions.

SUGGESTED RESOURCES:

→ Symbolon Resources
→ A Biblical Walk Through the Mass, Edward Sri
→ The Great Adventure Bible Timeline, Jeff Cavins
→ Catholic Explorer series
→ A Quick Journey Through the Bible studies
→ Epic: A Journey Church History series
PARISH DISCUSSION AND ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

1. What are we doing well?

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2. What needs to be improved?

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3. Questions or action items for further implementation?

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