



Why begin a discussion of the initiatory catechesis of the RCIA with the story of Michael?

Michael's initiation journey is a journey the Church hopes we will all make in our search for the living God—children, teens and adults.

Thus, my mission in this session is to:

- 1. Illustrate that the RCIA is the premier model for ALL catechesis in the church.
- 2. Explore the overarching dynamics of the RCIA.
- 3. Provide a model for creating a conversion centered liturgical experience.

*When the Church tells us...

*The model for all catechesis is the baptismal catechumenate when, by specific formation, an adult converted to belief is brought to explicit profession of baptismal faith during the Paschal Vigil. This catechumenal formation should inspire other forms of catechesis in both their objectives and in their dynamism. GDC 59:



The fullness of Christian formation is embodied in the catechumenate and thus upholds that as a model for every Catholic.

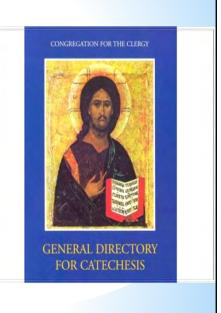
In other words, the Church assumes that every Catholic has been formed with all the principles set forth in the RCIA.

*The Church understands....

What does the GDC's insistence that RCIA should inspire all forms of catechesis practically mean for your catechetical ministry? (GDC 85-86)

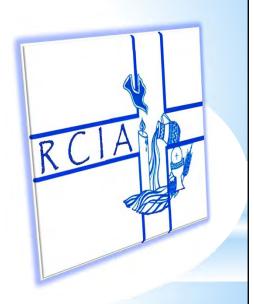


- *Promote knowledge of the faith. (Scripture and Doctrine)
- *Include liturgical education.
 (Liturgy and Sacraments)
- *Provide moral formation/conversion centered catechesis.
- *Teach people to pray.
- *Include education for community life.
- *Formation in missionary activity of the Church.
- *8₅-86



*The aforementioned elements were inspired by paragraph 75 of the RCIA and were meant to be adapted for all catechesis.

*What does #75-81 set forth as primary initiatory formation?



* There are 7 elements of formation essential to the initiation process. The RCIA is...

- 1. Conversion Centered
- 2. Mystagogical Model
- 3. Paschal Mystery
- 4. Liturgical Catechesis
- 5. Scripture and Tradition
- 6. Community
- 7. Apostolic Life/Service



2. Conversion Centered

RCIA is a process of gradual conversion—a change of heart, transformation, metanoia.

Person sees their story in light of Christian story.

Catechumens are invited into intimate union with Jesus through prayer, personal sharing of stories—their story, story of other Christians, story of the Church and her saints, and ultimately the story of Jesus.



If you invite those you serve to reflect upon the way Christ is calling them to change their lives, their outlook, their attitudes or behaviors, if you intentionally are in the business of making committed disciples, your ministry is fostering conversion in their lives and...

YOUR MINISTRY IS INSPIRED BY THE BAPTISMAL CATECHUMENATE.

1. Mystagogical Model

Mystagogia is at the heart of the catechetical enterprise.

RCIA is a return to a mystagogical model of the early Church Fathers.

Mystagogical formation reflects upon human experience—everyday life, liturgy, scripture and worship--and then extracts and draws meaning, conversion and doctrine from that experience.

"Now is the time to speak of the mysteries and to reflect systematically on the sacred ritual actions. We would not have considered it helpful to those not yet initiated, but rather a betrayal of them, if we had decided to give such a detailed explanation before baptism. Indeed it is better for the light of the mysteries themselves to have inundated you as a surprise than it would have been for us to have given an explanation beforehand.

* Ambrose of Milan – Late 4th Century De Mysteriis

Yes, we taught Michael about baptism. We dutifully explained our doctrine of baptism.

We prepared him to encounter the Scriptures, the symbols and enter deeply into the sacramental mysteries.

We engaged in mystagogical reflection on the sacred symbols of baptism (water, oil, light, garment), the Scriptures that define the sacrament and the doctrines that flow from it.

BUT...

It was not until he experienced those death dealing, life giving waters that he really understood baptism.

If and when you help those you serve reflect and draw meaning from their experience of life, the liturgical year, Scripture, liturgy, sacraments and tradition,

YOUR MINISTRY IS INSPIRED BY THE BAPTISMAL CATECHUMENATE.

3. Catechesis in the Paschal Mystery

Catechesis in the Paschal Mystery "fosters deep and lasting conversion to Jesus Christ"-- participation in his life, death and resurrection—intimate union with Jesus.

Immerses a person in the Spiritual life [75-3

Fosters a love relationship with God, life of prayer---individual and communal.

Experienced primarily in the liturgythe primary place where the Paschal Mystery is celebrated and made present.

HOPE BEGINNING SATTLE PASCHAL Mystery

HOPE BEGINNING SATTLE PASCHAL CLORY EUCHARIST REBIRTH

DEATH CELEBRATION MYSTERY

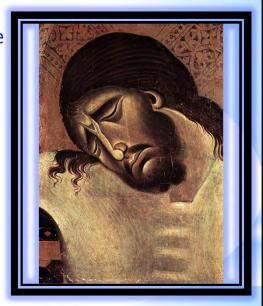
RESURRECTION LIGHT DYING RISING

DAGGIES DEVASTATION INSPIRATION PROMISE

SACRIFICE LIFE REDEMPTION

NEW LIFE

The RCIA insists that we intentionally invite those we serve to enter deeply into the cycle of death and resurrection and join their lives to the Paschal Mystery of Christ.



No matter what your ministry,

When you invite those you serve to reflect on the way in which God is calling them to live the daily cycle of dying and rising in their lives,

When you invite them into intimate communion with the living Christ,

When you ask the hard questions,

When you teach them about the grace and strength they will receive to live the Christian life when they join their lives—their joys and sorrows--to the cross of Christ...

YOUR MINISTRY IS INSPIRED BY THE BAPTISMAL CATECHUMENATE.

4. LITURGICAL CATECHESIS

Initiatory formation is primarily liturgically based—it is situated first within the context of the liturgical year, the liturgy, Sunday Liturgy of the Word, and the sacraments which the Church insists is primary formation—primo theologia.



Liturgical Catechesis helps adults and children prepare to enter into the liturgy, celebrate the liturgy and reflect on the liturgy in order to appropriate conversion of heart that leads to mission. The liturgy is a broad topic. What does the Church mean when it says we must form people in the liturgy?

Liturgical Year

The liturgical year, makes present the paschal mystery.

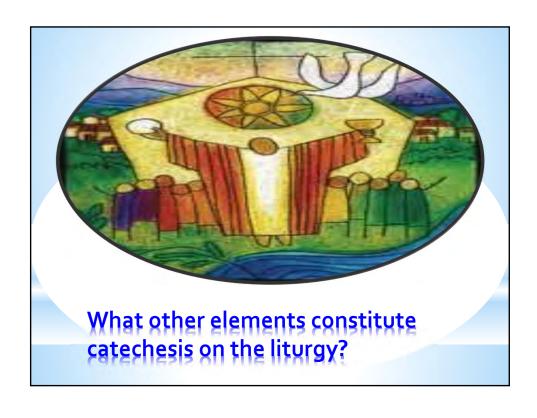
"Within the cycle of a year, moreover, the Church unfolds the whole mystery of Christ, from his incarnation and birth until his ascension, the day of Pentecost, and the expectation of blessed hope and of the Lord's return" [CSL, 102].

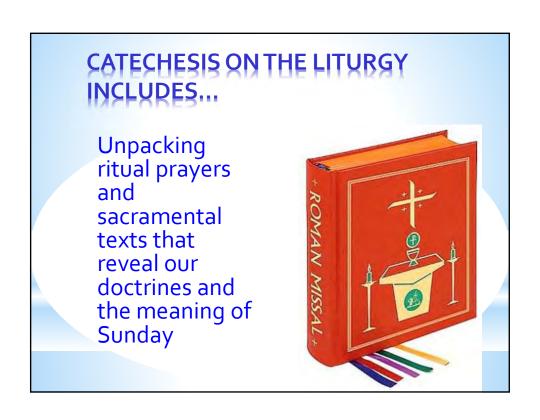
In short, the Church insists upon it.

WHY THE LITURGICAL YEAR?

- #16: Catechists, when they are teaching, should see that their instruction is filled with the spirit of the Gospel, adapted to liturgical signs and the cycle of the Church's year, and suited to the needs of catechumens.
- #74: A suitable catechesis is provided, planned to be gradual and complete in its coverage, accommodated to the liturgical year..."
- #82: There should be celebrations of the word in accord with the liturgical season.
- #82.3 Celebration of the word of God have as their main purpose: to explain the signs, celebrations and seasons of the liturgy.

The primary means of formation in the RCIA is the liturgical year.





Liturgical catechesis insists that we take the time to unpack the ritual prayers of the Mass such as the Creed, the Lord's Prayer and the Eucharistic Prayers with those we serve.



- *Community—gathering of assembly.
- *Cross- signing with the cross.
- *Word--proclamation of the word.
- *Water--immersion in baptismal water.
- *Imposition of hands--laying on of hands.
- *Oil--anointing with oil.
- *Garment–putting on new clothes.
- *Bread--sharing Eucharistic bread.
- *Wine-sharing Eucharistic wine.



SACRAMENTAL SYMBOLS AND SYMBOLIC ACTIONS

No matter what your ministry, when you help people unpack their experience of the liturgical year, the ritual prayers, the Sunday Liturgy of the Word, the sacramental symbols...

YOUR MINISTRY IS INSPIRED BY THE BAPTISMAL CATECHUMENATE.

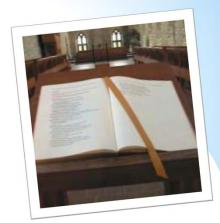
Suitable catechesis also includes formation in Scripture and an appropriate acquaintance with dogmas and precepts of the church. [RCIA 75.1]

5. CATECHESIS: SCRIPTURE AND TRADITION

Scriptures are integral to initiation catechesis.

In one complete Lectionary cycle the truths of our faith are set out.

Scriptures of the liturgy reveal the mysteries we hold dear—the truths revealed by God--DOGMA.



WORD Formation in Scripture

When you reflect on the Sunday or Sacramental Scriptures with those you serve...

- 1. When you proclaim the Word,
- 2. When you reflect on the proclamation you just experienced,
- When you ask, "What did you hear, what spoke to your heart, what change took place, what is challenge?"
- 3. When you interpret the Scriptures (exegesis),

- 4. When you invite those you serve to make a decision to pattern their lives in accord with the Word and to go out build the Kingdom of God,
- 5. You are forming catechumens according to the principles set forth in the RCIA.

Catechesis in Scripture and Doctrine that is inspired by the baptismal catechymenate includes:

Reflection on the mystery of Christ as it unfolds in the liturgical year.

Reflection on the Sunday Scriptures.

Reflection on the doctrines of the Church that flow out of the liturgical year and the Sunday Scriptures.

Teaching people how to pray.

Teaching people the morality characteristic of the Gospel how to live a moral life.

What determines the doctrines we are to teach?

- •That which flows logically from the liturgical year or the Sunday liturgy.
- •The only syllabus is the liturgical year.



No matter what your ministry, when you help people unpack their experience of the Scriptures and Tradition—the teachings of the Church...

YOUR MINISTRY IS INSPIRED BY
THE BAPTISMAL
CATECHUMENATE.

What does a suitable catechesis in community life include?

Apprenticeship

[75.2] Catechumens are formed in the life of the community—its prayer, its activities, its play and its social outreach.



6 COMMUNITY: CATECHESIS IN THE LIFE OF THE COMMUNITY

No matter what your ministry, when you mentor those you serve, when you get them incorporated into the life of the parish, retreats, social activities, outreach...

YOUR MINISTRY IS INSPIRED BY THE BAPTISMAL CATECHUMENATE.

7 Catechesis in the Apostolic Life/Service

All catechesis evangelization, and initiatory formation leads to outreach and a life of service—building the Kingdom of God.

What is suitable catechesis in the Apostolic Life/Service?

- *Living the paschal mystery leads to mission.
- *Liturgy leads to mission.
- *The Word leads to mission.
- *Doctrine leads to mission.
- *Community embodies it.
- *Apostolic Life is the way it is carried out.
- *CCC: 1997 Eucharist commits us to the poor.

Recognizing that...

No matter what your ministry, when you mentor those you serve, when you help those you serve recognize their call to serve others, when you get them involved in outreach, when you teach them how to share the good news to others...

YOUR MINISTRY IS INSPIRED BY THE BAPTISMAL CATECHUMENATE.

Conversion centered catechesis:

How can I incorporate a conversion centered element to my session that invites the participants into closer relationship with the life and mission of Jesus?

What questions do I need to ask?

- *Keep in mind: Conversion must be at the heart of all we do.
- *No matter what we are teaching, what our focus, we must make time to ask the bottom line question:
- *"How does what we shared today invite us to enter into a deeper relationship with Jesus and his cross and resurrection?"

- *The intention of the RCIA is to insure that what we do with catechumens is:
- * conversion centered,
- *provides formation on the liturgy.
- *provides conversion centered catechesis on the doctrines we teach and the Scriptures we proclaim
- *forms those we serve in the life of the community and its outreach and apostolic mission.
- *to create a community of people who are willing to embrace the holy fire of conversion, to step outside their comfort zone, to choose love over the status quo and ways of the world—which ultimately leads to mission.



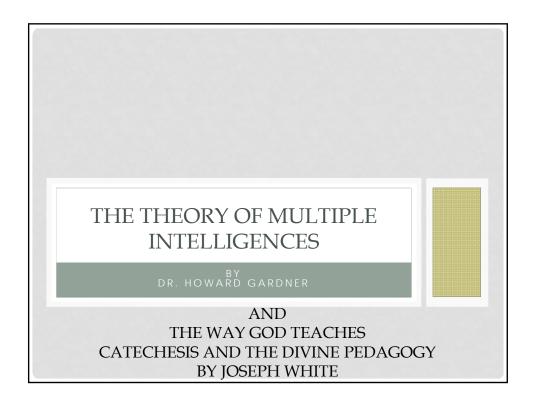
- *HOW DO WE ACCOMPLISH THESE GOALS OF CATECHESIS?
- *Refer to handout,
- "CATECHESIS INSPIRED BY THE BAPTISMAL CATECHUMENATE"

* Resources

- *Formed in Faith (Sessions for Inquiry, Catechumenate, and Ongoing Faith Formation), Mary Birmingham. World Library Publications (wlpmusic.com)
- *Confirming Adult Catholics: Five Sessions for Preparation and Reflection, Mary Birmingham. World Library Publications (wlpmusic.com)
- * <u>Purified and Enlightened</u> RCIA Sessions for Lent, Mary Birmingham. World Library Publications (wlpmusic.com)
- *Year Round Catechumenate Mary Birmingham, Liturgical Training Publications

* Resources

- * Faith, Life and Creed (A Complete Catechesis for Christian Life
- *(User friendly sessions for breaking open the Word for every Sunday of each cycle plus 41 doctrinal sessions). Available through (TEAMRCIA.COM).
- * Word and Worship Workbook, Year A, B and C, Mary Birmingham, Pauist Press
- *mbirmingham@cfl.rr.com



- Linguistic Intelligence
- Spatial Intelligence
- Logical Mathematical Intelligence
- Musical Rhythm Intelligence

- Bodily-Kinesthetic
- Naturalist Intelligence
- Interpersonal Intelligence
- Intrapersonal Intelligence

LINGUISTIC INTELLIGENCE

• The ability to read, write and speak well.

People high in this intelligence learn best from reading, writing, speaking, storytelling, poetry and creative writing.

SPATIAL INTELLIGENCE

 The ability to read charts, graph and diagrams and excel in the visual arts such as painting, drawing or photography. People high in this intelligence may benefit from Bible timelines, visual media such as movie clips, pictures, icons and statues.

LOGICAL MATHMATICAL INTELLIGENCE

• The ability to use numbers, solve puzzles or to use the scientific method. People high in this intelligence might well benefit from puzzles, riddles, brainteasers. They may also enjoy logical arguments of the faith such as Thomas Aquinas and the Summa (apologetics with the condition and understanding of the great apologist Justin Martyr who respected the previous spiritual experience of the Greek speaking people prior to Christianity through Greek Philosophy—his premise that logos spermaticus—the Spirit prepared and created a fertile field through Greek philosophy for the Hellenistic word to embrace the true LOGOS). Such people may benefit from typology, biblical exegesis.

MUSICAL/RHYTHMIC INTELLIGENCE

 Skilled at singing, playing instrument, composing, appreciating the music of the great masters of the centuries. People with this intelligence will enjoy singing, playing or engaging in mediation set to music.

BODILY KINESTHETIC INTELLIGENCE

 Skilled at using the body in physical movement or hands on learning activities. Acting could be such an activity for this type of learning model.
 Dramatization of scripture stories or scenes from the life of a saint or other hands on movement exercise.

NATURALIST INTELLIGENCE

- Sensitivity to the features of the natural world: the ability to discriminate between various types of living things (Crocodile Hunter, Jane Goodal examples)
- People with this type of intelligence will enjoy opportunities to explore Gods creation, to have sessions outside, to go on walks for prayerful meditation, to participate in outdoor Stations and object lessons related to natural world.

INTERPERSONAL INTELLIGENCE

 The ability to relate to to various types of people—works in groups and get along with others. People with this type of intelligence benefit from participation in group activities and service projects.

INTRAPERSONAL INTELLIGENCE

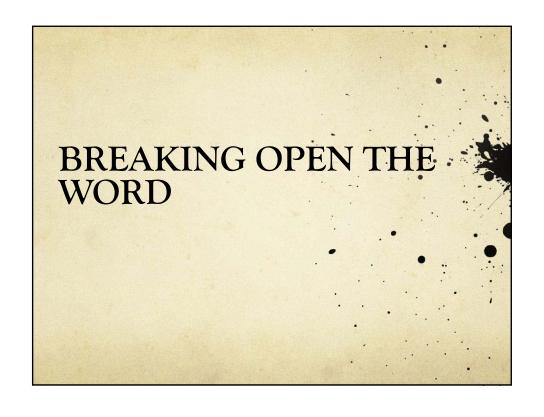
- Skill at introspection and contemplation. (i.e. St. Theresa, great mystics)
- People with this intelligence benefit from independent work, introspection and reflection, contemplative prayer and journaling.

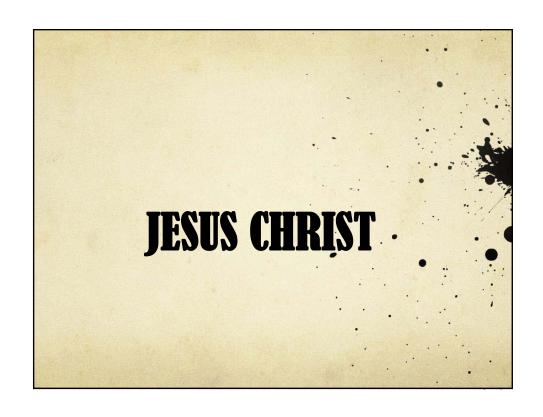
CRITICAL REFLECTION EXERCISE

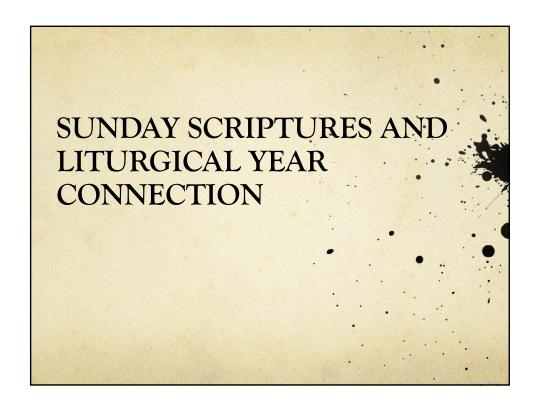
- Read through the various intelligences and reflect in groups of two.
- Determine which best describes your learning style.
- Write your answer on a post it note. (There could be more than one—post the most dominate. If another is equally dominate list it on a separate post it.)
- Place your post it note that most describes your best intelligence on the designated poster paper on the wall.

WIDER GROUP CRITICAL REFLECTION IMPLICATIONS

- Which group has the most post its? What does that tell us about the people to whom we minister?
- What are some things that can be included in ministry settings that will appeal to various intelligence styles—consider each intelligence.









What do you know?

Part I: Divide chart paper in half. List everything you "know" about Jesus Christ on the left side of the paper.

Appoint a scribe.

After four minutes scribes stand and present the answers from each table.

- O Part II: Considering what you know about Jesus, what is that could prompt martyrs to give their lives in support of his life and mission?
- O Discuss your answers.
- Write a summary of your answers on right column.
- O Scribes present each group's responses.

Who is
Jesus
for you?



STEP 2. UNDERSTANDING THE EXPERIENCE

Based on the previous exercise-what you know about Jesus and
who Jesus is for you--how would
you articulate your basic
understanding of the Christ
event?

STEP 3. PRESENT THE TRADITION

WHAT DO WE OFFICIALLY BELIEVE ABOUT JESUS CHRIST?

CCC: 422-682; USCCA: 77-87; 89-99

- O Let us read together:
- O We confess faith in Jesus of Nazareth who was born a Jew.
- O He was born of a Jewish woman at Bethlehem at the time of King Herod and emperor Caesar Augustus.
- O Jesus was a carpenter by trade.
- O He was tortured and crucified in Jerusalem at the hands of Pontius Pilate.

WHAT WE BELIEVE

- O Jesus is the eternal Son of God.
- O Jesus is "God's Word made flesh and dwelt among us." (1:14,16)
- O What we believe about Jesus is found in Sacred Scriptures, Tradition and is summarized in the Nicene Creed.

ULTIMATELY...



- O Jesus' mission would be to save people from their sins.
- O Jesus' had two
 distinct roles; God's
 Son and his role as
 the Suffering
 Servant who would
 give his life for the
 many.

WHY DID JESUS BECOME A HUMAN BEING?

- O Jesus became a human being in order to reconcile us with God.
- O Jesus became a human being so we might know God's love for us.

THE HEART OF OUR BELIEF

- O Jesus is fully human and fully divine.
- Jesus is the second person of the Blessed Trinity (three Persons in one God)
- Jesus established a kingdom of peace and harmony—a new way of living and being in the world.
- O Jesus suffered, died and rose from the dead in order to save humanity from sin and to open the gates of eternal life.

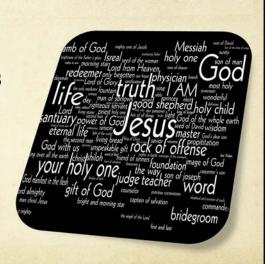


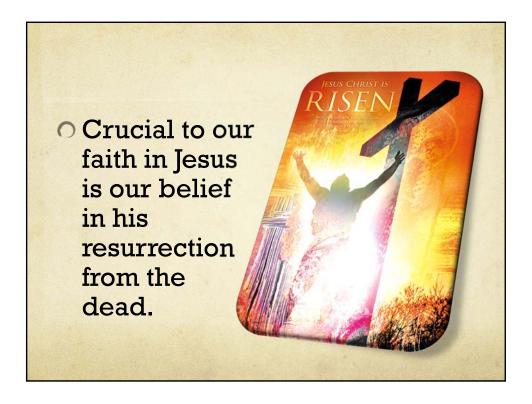
- O We can articulate articles of belief, but unless and until we foster an intimate personal relationship with him, what we know about Jesus is simply information, biography and history.
- O How do we move from an intellectual understanding of who Jesus is to professing him as Lord and Master of the Universe and of our lives?

Critical Reflection

- O Step One:
 - O Consider the Jesus event from an historical perspective.
- O Step Two:
 - Pray for the gift of faith and then yield to it—yield to the intimate relationship he invites.

Now do we know that Jesus is who we say he is and he accomplished what he set out to do?





Critical Reflection

- O Have you ever doubted that Jesus rose from the dead?
- O Have you ever doubted that Jesus is who we believe he is?
- O How do you handle your doubts?
- O How do you feel about them?

- O Have you ever had to explain why you believe Jesus rose from the dead?
- O What did you say?

MAKING THE CASE

- O Jesus was insistent that he would rise from the dead.
- O Jesus repeatedly told his disciples that he would.
- O If it turned out that it was not true, he would simply be another imposter and a religion that has lasted over two thousand years would not have survived if the resurrection were a lie or a hoax.

WHAT TOOK PLACE AT CALVARY?



- Jesus was tortured and beaten.
- Iron stakes were driven into his wrists.
- He died at 3:00-the time paschal lambs were being slain for the sacrifice to atone for sin.
- Cataclysmic events followed—sky darkened, earth shook.
- Pilate secured the tomb by placing guards at the entrance in order to insure the body would not be stolen.
- The disciples went into hiding believing Jesus was not who they thought he was. Their dream went up in smoke.

It seemed as though the Jewish authorities accomplished their mission to silence and stop Jesus.

Why did the terrified disciples come out of hiding and risk martyrdom for their faith in Christ in such a small amount of time?



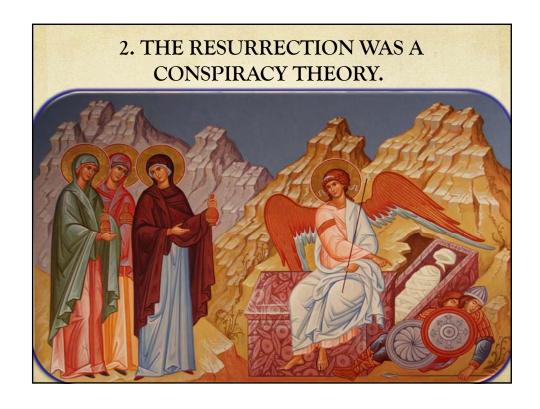
Something happened!

- O Five possible hypotheses concerning the resurrection have been presented over the centuries.
- Only one is accepted by faithful Christians.

- O 1. Jesus did not really die on the cross.
- O 2. The resurrection was a conspiracy.
- 3. The disciples were hallucinating.
- 4. The story is a legend and not factual.
- 5. It really happened.

1. JESUS DID NOT REALLY DIE.

- Medical professionals have argued that the spear that was thrust into Jesus side would have penetrated the right lung as well as the heart ensuring his death.
- Outside sources attested to his death: Jewish historian Josephus, philosophers Lucian and Tacitus
- O Even scholars who deny the resurrection confirm that he lived and he died.



THE CONSPIRACY THEORY

STOLEN BODY THEORY.

Joseph of Arimathea was a member of the Sanhedrin—the Jewish Council.

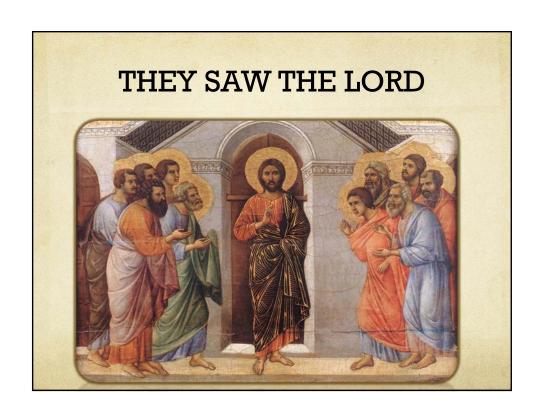
He offered the use of his tomb which would have been in a prominent place in the cemetery.

Because of that and the many non-believing witnesses at the tomb, the Roman guards would have had to be coconspirators.

We know the tomb was empty as Jesus' enemies accused the disciples of stealing his body.



- Even though there was no denying an empty tomb that alone would never have convinced Jesus' disciples that he rose from the dead.
- O SOMETHING HAPPENED.
- O WHAT WAS IT?



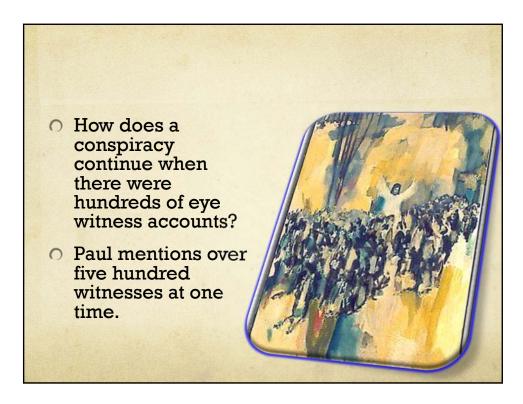
A CASE FOR THE RESURRECTION.

- The disciples saw the Lord.
- An encounter with the risen Lord is the only thing that could have moved them from horrified terror to bold witness.
- There were multiple eyewitnesses.



- Jesus appeared first to the women. Had this been a conspiracy, the conspirators would never have Jesus appear first to witnesses who could not lawfully testify.
- O If they were trying to prove the resurrection they would hardly create a story in which the eyewitnesses (women) could not testify to it.





MARTYRDOM

- O The disciples very quickly shifted from frightened cowards to courageous martyr-willing disciples. Would they have done so for a lie? Hardly.
- They acted as they did because of their absolute assurance and conviction that Jesus was alive.

3. THE DISCIPLES WERE HALLUCINATING.

- O Preposterous!
- O Maybe one person could hallucinate. But it is unheard of for multiple people to hallucinate at the same time about the same thing.

4. THE STORY IS A LEGEND AND NOT FACTUAL.

Legends do not emerge when there are eye-witnesses still alive that can deny the truthfulness of the legend. If it was just a legend it should have died out.

- O If the Christ story was just a legend it should have died out.
- O The disciples went from coward to martyr in a matter of days.
- O They encountered the risen Christ who reminded them of all he had taught them.
- O He strengthened them for the new mission.

5. IT REALLY HAPPENED.

- O There are no absolute proofs for the resurrection.
- O There is ample evidence that events happened the way they are recorded.
- Not one shred of evidence to deny the resurrection has been found in two thousand years of Christian history.

Jesus died and rose from the dead as he said he would.

So what?

So everything, that's what!

- OFOR ME HE IS THE ONE,
- OTHE ONE AND ONLY ONE!

O He is my All in All!
O HE WANTS TO BE YOURS.

The fact of Jesus' resurrection tells us that everything he promised us is true.

SPECIFICALLY...

- O Jesus IS God's Son.
- O Jesus <u>did</u> return to his Father's right hand where he judges the hearts of men and women.
- O Jesus <u>did</u> open the gates of heaven for believers and paid the ultimate price for our sins.
- O God **IS** the merciful Father who loves his children and desires intimate communion with them.

- O Jesus <u>did</u> send his Spirit to be his ongoing presence in the world until he returns in glory.
- O Jesus <u>does</u> live within us, his life and his light are what guide and lead us if we but yield to it.
- O Whenever two or more are gathered in his name he <u>IS</u> present among us.

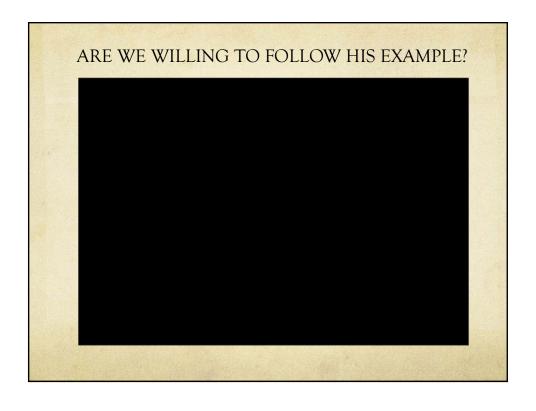
STEP 4. CRITICAL REFLECTION

- O What did you hear in today's reflection on Jesus Christ that may have strengthened your faith in him?
- O Looking back on your life, where do you see the healing, compassionate hand of Christ in your life?

If you were called upon to share your faith in Christ with someone who does not believe in him, what did you hear today that could help you give compelling witness?

IMPLICATIONS

O Jesus invites us to participate in his death and resurrection—to be willing to die for the sake of others and so rise again to new life in Christ.

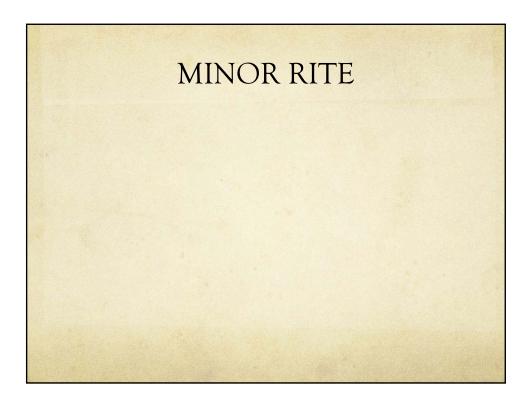


STEP 5. CONVERSION AND TRANSFORMATION

- O Is your relationship with Jesus what it could be?
- What needs to happen in your life to grow in intimate friendship with Jesus?

STEP 5. DECISION TO ACT/CHANGE/RESPOND

- O What does this reflection on Jesus Christ compel you to do or to become in response?
- O Who in your present world needs you to be Christ for them—to lay down your life for them?
- In what way does this teaching specifically exhort you to go out and sacrifice yourself to repair our world?



BREAKING OPEN THE WORD

Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Cycle B

God of My Life

Only in love can I find you, my God. In love the gates of my soul spring open, allowing me to breathe a new air of freedom and forget my own petty self.

In love my whole being streams forth out of the rigid confines of narrowness and anxious selfassertion,

which makes me a prisoner of my own poverty and emptiness.

In love all the powers of my soul flow out toward you, wanting never more to return,

but to lose themselves completely in you,

since by your love you are the inmost center of my heart, closer to me than I am to myself.

But when I love you, when I manage to break out of the narrow circle of self and leave behind the restless agony

of unanswered questions,

when my blinded eyes no longer look merely from afar and from the outside upon your unapproachable brightness, and much more when you yourself,

O Incomprehensible One, have become through love the inmost center of my life, then I can bury myself entirely in you, O mysterious God, and with myself all my questions. Karl Rahner

LITURGICAL CONTEXT

In the gospels of this week Mark continues to answer the question:

"Just who is this Jesus?"



Jesus departed from there and came to his native place, accompanied by his disciples.

when the Sabbath came he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astonished. they said, "Where did this man get all this? what kind of wisdom has been given him? what mighty deeds are wrought by his hands! is he not the carpenter, the son of Mary, and the brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon?

and are not his sisters here with us?" and they took offense at him.

Jesus said to them,

"a prophet is not without honor except in his native place

and among his own kin and in his own house." so he was not able to perform any mighty deed there,

apart from curing a few sick people by laying his hands on them.

he was amazed at their lack of faith. (Mark 6: 1-6)

- Emmaus Step 1. Name your EXPERIENCE
- What personally spoke to your life in the Gospel?

USING THE EMMAUS MODEL TO UNPACK SCRIPTURE AND BRING ABOUT CONVERSION.

- EMMAUS STEP 2. EXPRESS YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE GOSPEL
- How do you understand this story?
- What do you think Mark was trying to communicate in this Gospel?
- What was he saying to that first century Palestinian audience?

- STEP 3. PRESENTING THE TRADITION/EXEGESIS/SCRIPTURAL SCHOLARSHIP
- Let's pretend we are Biblical scholars. Considering what you already know about the first century community—how they would have heard this story—what can you draw out of this text?

- ❖ Pope Francis in his new encyclical *Laudato Si*, said of him: His appearance was not that of an ascetic set apart from the world...Jesus worked with his hands, in daily contact with matter created by God ...It is striking that most of his life was dedicated to this task in a simple life which <u>awakened no admiration at all</u>. "Is this not the carpenter, the son of Mary?" (Mk 6)
- How does that speak to our lives today?

WHAT DO THE SCHOLARS TELL US ABOUT THIS TEXT?

"Who does he think he is? He is just a carpenter's son!

He has questionable parentage.

If he thinks he can improve his social standing in this honor and shame based culture, think again! • Skepticism, cynicism and gossip is a killer in all ages!

- EMMAUS STEP 4. CRITICAL REFLECTION
- Why is skepticism such an obstacle to faith?
- In what way has skepticism been an obstacle to your faith?
- Would you stand with the skeptics of Nazareth or would you (do you) see Christ for who he really is—Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior of the world—savior of your life?
- How does the experience of Nazareth relate to issues in our own communities today? Would we welcome Jesus? Would you?

USING THE EMMAUS MODEL TO UNPACK SCRIPTURE AND BRING ABOUT CONVERSION.

- The world fosters and encourages skepticism, and lack of faith in anything.
- Christians are called to stand against that skepticism with faith and love.

- EMMAUS STEP 5. CONVERSION AND TRANSFORMATION
- What is the lesson for me in this Gospel? What do I need to change in my life?
- Where does skepticism and lack of faith and lack of love lurk in my own heart?
- In what way does this Gospel invite me into more intimate friendship with God and ultimately to be a better disciple?

- EMMAUS STEP 6. DECISION TO ACT, CHANGE, RESPOND
- In what way specifically does this story of Jesus compel you to act—what is he calling you to do in response?
- In what way are you being called to sacrifice yourself to repair our world?

- ❖ Francis said to take on the smell of sheep.

 We have been given a sacred trust—to wash the feet of those God invites into his household of faith.
- ❖ We need every tool in our arsenal as we go forth to do this very important work of evangelization.
- ❖Jesus gave us all we need to get the job done on the road to Emmaus.

Prayer of Pope Clement XI

- Lord, I believe in you: increase my faith.
- I trust in you: strengthen my trust.
- I love you: let me love you more and more.
- I am sorry for my sins: deepen my sorrow.
- I worship you as my first beginning.
- I long for you as my last end.
- I praise you as my constant helper.

- And I call you as my loving protector.
- I want to do what you ask of me:
- In the way you ask, for as long as you ask, because you ask it.
- Let me love you Lord as my God.
- And see myself as I really am: a pilgrim in this world.
- A Christian called to respect and love all those lives I touch.

MINOR RITE

• What doctrines naturally flow from this liturgy?

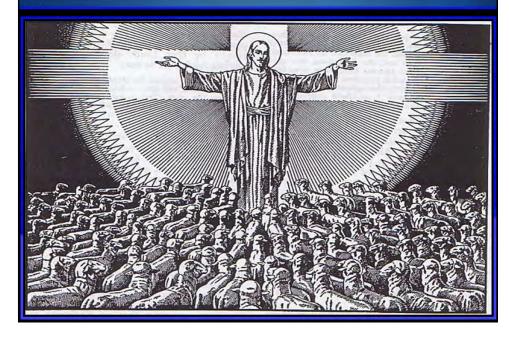
Resources

- Faith, Life and Creed (A Complete Catechesis for Christian Life
- (User friendly sessions for breaking open the Word for every Sunday of each cycle plus 41 doctrinal sessions). Available through (TEAMRCIA.COM or PASTORALPLANNING.COM).
- Word and Worship Workbook, Year A, B and C, Mary Birmingham, Paulist Press
 - mbirmingham@cfl.rr.com

Resources

- <u>Formed in Faith</u> (Sessions for Inquiry, Catechumenate, and Ongoing Faith Formation), Mary Birmingham. World Library Publications (wlpmusic.com)
- <u>Confirming Adult Catholics</u>: Five Sessions for Preparation and Reflection, Mary Birmingham. World Library Publications (wlpmusic.com)
- <u>Purified and Enlightened</u> RCIA Sessions for Lent, Mary Birmingham. World Library Publications (wlpmusic.com)
- Year Round Catechumenate Mary Birmingham, Liturgical Training Publications

THE ART OF STORYTELLING



♦ Human life is so bound up in stories that we are thoroughly desensitized to their amazing power to lure us in.

The Chronicles of Narnia: Voyage of the Dawn Treader by CS Lewis

- **♦** A little background:
- ♦ Edmund and Lucy Pevensy along with their bratty cousin, Eustace, are transported through a painting into Narnia where they join Prince Caspian on a voyage to the west. The children are tested on this voyage, and visit strange lands and encounter unusual creatures. Eustace is turned into a dragon, and then helped to return to human form by Aslan, the lion god.

- **▶** Before we begin.
- Make sure to pay attention to your surroundings—your chair, your hands, the sounds outside, the sounds in the room.
- Concentrate on those things.

- - How many of you got caught up in the story?
 - **♦** What did you hear?
 - What was it in the story that inspires Christians?

- Jonathan Gottschall in his book, *The Storytelling Animal* insists that we were just given a test we could not pass.
- He insists that the "human mind yields helplessly to the suction of story. No matter how hard we concentrate, no matter how deep we dig in our heels, we just cannot resist the gravity of alternate world."
- If ever there was an alternate world it is found in the Christian story, the witness of Christian life, the witness of Christian signs and wonders.

- **♦** The storyteller is not an all powerful architect of our listening experience.
- The storyteller guides how we will hear the story, but he or she does not determine it.
- The storyteller tells his or her story but by itself, it is lifeless.
- Every story needs a receiver of the story.
- A catalyst is needed to bring the story to life.
- That catalyst is the listener's imagination.

♦ CONVERSION IS ALWAYS THE GOAL!

Storytelling is about adressing the mind and the heart.

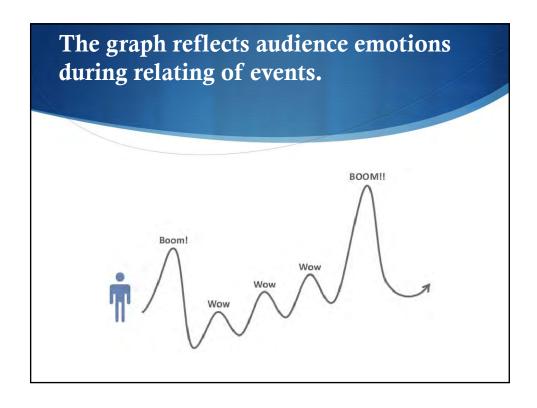
♦ Storytelling means to find a language that creates emotional impact.

- **♦** Storytelling is about conveying a meaning.
- **♦** It is always moralistic and intentional

- ♦ Stories are a particular type of human communication designed to persuade an audience of a storyteller's worldview.
- The storyteller does this by placing characters, real or fictional, onto a stage and showing what happens to these characters over a period of time.
- ▶ Each character pursues some type of goal in accordance with his or her values, and either succeeds or fails according to the storyteller's view of how the world works."

Storytelling is sequential and all about suspense.

- ♦ Stories are experienced as a sequence of events linked by cause and effect.
- ♦ Without suspense, without tension there is no reason to follow the line of events.
- **♦** Effective storytelling puts events into an arc-of suspense.



- ♦ Neuro-science suggests that a story without a dramatic arc has little influence on audience behavior.
- ♦ Stories provide intangible value that sells. Stories connect to other people emotionally, they convince and they convert.

- ♦ It is our job as catechists to give those God has entrusted to us something to imagine.
- **♦** (My story), God's story, another's story, story from literature.

KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

- Past generations were analytical thinkers.
- **♦** Things have changed.
- People today learn best through the medium of story.
- People want the information—but they want it in a way that will hold their attention.

- It is always said that Jesus was a great Teacher because of the way he told stories.
- Primarily he was a great Teacher because he knew his audience—how they lived—how they thought.
- He adapted his teaching to his audience and their way of thinking.
- It is important that we have a sense of the people to whom we are speaking.

MEMORIZING

- **▶** Do not memorize.
- Tell your story freestyle.
- Memorizing limits flexibility.
- There will be times when you leave out something you thought was important.

Preparation

- Choose a story from your life, someone else's life or the Bible
- Consider your theme. Keep it in your consciousness.
- Quietly think through the story.
- Put yourself in the story.

- Imagine the surroundings for your story—time, place, feelings.
- Imagine all the specific details surrounding the story.
- ◆ Think about how this story can relate to other people's thoughts and feelings and what is going on in their lives.

PUT YOURSELF IN THE STORY Preparation: Reflection Questions

- Close your eyes.
- Put yourself in the story.
- What do you see? Describe the people in your story.
- What sounds do you hear?
- **♦** What do you smell?

- What is the weather like?
- Describe the feelings, attitudes and moods of the people in your story.
- What are they thinking at various times in the story?

- The storyteller must thoroughly study the theme.
- One must know a lot to teach a little.
- Use your imagination to make the story come alive as you prepare. Give your characters personalities—even if you are the character.
- **♦** Live the story--know and feel the emotions...breathe the breath of life into the characters.
- If you are convinced so too will your listener. Don't just tell it, live it!"

CHARACTERISTICS OF A GOOD STORY

- 1. A single theme, clearly defined
 - 2. A well developed plot
 - 3. Style: vivid word pictures, pleasing sounds and rhythm
- 2. 4. Well crafted characters
 - 5. Faithful to source
 - 6. Dramatic appeal
 - 7. Appropriateness to listeners

IMPORTANT QUALITIES IN A STORYTELLER

- **♦** Salesmanship
- Sincerity--don't try to fake excitement, happiness, sadness. Be authentic!
- **♦** Wholeheartedness

IMPORTANT QUALITIES IN A STORYTELLER

- Enthusiasm--this does not mean artificial or noisy excitement
- ♦ Animation--in your gestures, voice, facial expressions and most importantly be yourself
- Finer points of presentation include: emphasis, repetition, transition, pause.

- ♦ State the truth of your story out loud—what are you trying to teach or convey. Such as:
- "God can teach us profound life lessons in the least expected way."
- ♦ This story invites us deeply into the the mystery of the cross. We pass through the cross to healing and wholeness.

FIND A MEMORY HOOK

- A phrase, concept, or attitude repeated in the story that helps make the story memorable.
- "Slow down, girl."
- We are there and it is now."

PLAN YOUR FIRST WORDS.

- Pull the listener "in" within the first few sentences. Craft a great beginning.
- Do not spend a lot of time introducing your story.
- Never start a story by saying:
- Once upon a time.
- I want to thank Michele for inviting me to share my story with you today...
- Let me tell you about this amazing witness someone share with me at the parish fish fry last week...
- ♦ The story I am about to tell takes place at a supermarket in the year 2002.
- Bear with me I'm not a good public speaker....

PLAN YOUR FIRST WORDS.

- **▲** Instead...
 - "It was a cold, wet, 40 degree fall evening. Rehearsal had taken far too long...the choir director was in a foul mood..."
 - Eustace was an ill-tempered mean-spirited boy who always wanted things his own way. (The Voyage of the Dawn Treader)

PLAN YOUR LAST WORDS:

Consider the ending.

Make it punctuate your theme.

- **♦** Never say:
- And they lived happily ever after.
- And that is the story of Charles.
- The end.

- Instead...be more creative. Let the ending highlight your theme without saying, "the point of this story is..."
- "In that instant a lightening bolt of conversion hit me in the face: if I am not willing to drink from this man's cup, how dare I drink from the cup inside."
- ♦ Then he caught hold of me...and threw me into the water. It hurt a lot—but only for a moment—Then I saw...I turned into a boy again.

RESEARCH

- Research information that will give you facts about your story: your point, your theme, the bible story you have chosen. (Woman at the Well)
- Anything that will provide, color, interest and insight and that will enhance the final story.
- Use sparingly. Cultural customs, historical facts, family history are like seasoning—too much is way too much and spoils the food.

TIGHTEN UP YOUR STORY.

- **♦** Think of your story.
- Consider everything crucial to making your point.
- **♦** Cut everything not crucial.

Be picky when it comes to details!

- ♦ Your audience does not need to know every detail of your story.
- All the particulars of your story are not that important unless they set the stage or support your theme.
- ♦ Avoid things like who sat where, what they wore, who said what in what order, what day it was or precise sequence of events. Leave some of these details out unless they are necessary.

ADD DESCRIPTION

- Add enough description so the audience can see, hear, taste and smell everything happening.
- Keep in mind the language of poets.
- ♦ How can we speak of the awesomeness of creation without using the language of poets?

♦ You will be present at the threshold of dawn's first light, water's first flow, the star's first glimmer, the animal's first ravenous howl, the seed's agonizing rupture from earth's womb and humanity's entrance on the world's stage.

And so, with all the people of God, on that mother of all nights we will be able to say:

- We are there and it is now as we stand with Abraham and Sarah in their first eternal covenant of faith.
- We are there and it is now as we trudge though the parted waters of death, pursued and exhausted by Pharaoh's onslaught, only to be enfolded in the protective mantle of God's liberating providence.
- We are there and it is now as we call down that great and terrible day of the Lord's visitation, when sin comes to an end and we are gathered as one people to process majestically to the gates of the jeweled eternal city. (Mary Birmingham, Word and Worship Workbook, Year A,B and C, "Holy Week, Easter Triduum, The Easter Season: An Overview")

REPEAT PHRASES

- ♦ Where possible repeat phrases and invite others to repeat them with you where appropriate.
- "We are there and it is now."

BODY MOVEMENTS

- Choose them carefully and sparingly. Let them tell the story.
- Hands by your side or right in front of you as much as you are able.
- When gesturing move hands up and out and then back down to the side.
- Do not gesture below the waist. (denotes lack of confidence)
- Gestures above shoulders convey excitement-panic, surprise, praise, worship. Save big and high gestures for those moments.
- Otherwise—keep gestures below the shoulders. (King and His Court)

PACE YOUR DELIVERY

- Slow down.
- Use effective pauses.
- Change the tone of your voice or use pauses and body movement to delineate characters.
- Let your facial expressions say more than your words whenever possible.
- Pay attention to the filler words you use: um, like, uh, you know...

NERVOUSNESS

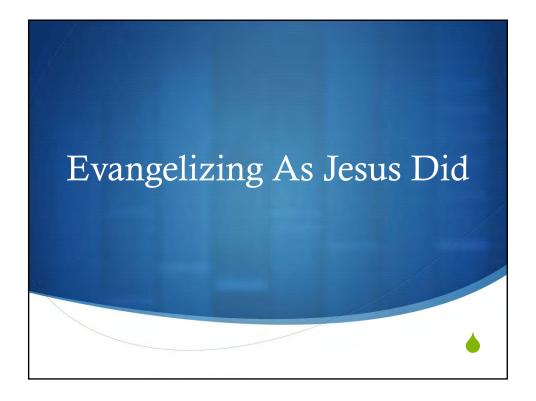
- **♦** It is a gift.
- Keeps us on our toes.
- Compels us to prepare.
- **♦** Keeps the adrenaline flowing. Adrenaline sharpens the mind and senses.
- Give us extra energy.
- Thank God for it. It is his work after all!

BIBLE STORIES

- Use these same principles to tell a Bible story.
- Scripture in liturgy is formal, necessary proclamation.
- Scripture shared in story-form and free style in catechetical settings captivates the listener to hear it in a new way.

PRAY, PRAY, PRAY

- Pray your way through preparation.
- Ask God for the skill to tell stories as creatively as Jesus told them.
- Pray your way through the telling.
- Say to God, "More of you and less of me." "Give me a well trained tongue that I may worthily proclaim your praise!"



Scenario

◆ Charles entered into conversation with Jim. Charles is a committed Christian and Jim is an agnostic. The topic of 9/11 came up. Jim tells Charles that it was 9/11 that challenged his faith in God. Seeing all the death and destruction made him question the existence of God.

Emmaus Model of Adult Learning

- What was Jesus' first question to the disciples he met on the road to Emmaus?
- **♦** "What are you discussing as you walk along?"
- What was their response?
- They shared their EXPERIENCE.

Then what did Jesus do?

UNDERSTANDING

- He allowed them to freely articulate their UNDERSTANDING of the Jerusalem events BEFORE he taught them.
- ♦ He used their **UNDERSTANDING** of events (they were downcast) as a springboard to teach and explain everything in the prophetic **TRADITION** that referred to him (dogma).

- ◆ TRADITION: He used word, ritual and sacrament to help reveal his identity AND to explain the meaning of their experience. ("They recognized him in the breaking of the bread")
- He helped them bring their EXPERIENCE and their UNDERSTANDING of it into dialogue with the prophetic TRADITION.

TRADITION

- ♦ Jesus taught them the prophetic, messianic TRADITION. He taught them using words, Scripture, actions and symbol.
- ♦ He taught them by using what they already knew deep in their hearts.

THEN WHAT HAPPENED? CRITICAL REFLECTION

- ♦ They entered into CRITICAL REFLECTION on their experience of the Risen Christ.
- They shared how it touched them.
- ♦ They shared what they learned.
- ♦ They reflected upon the TRADITION and what it meant.
- "Were not our hearts burning within us?"

WHAT WAS THE OUTCOME? CONVERSION AND TRANSFORMATION

◆ Their lives TRANSFORMED, they embraced Christ they encountered in his Word, in the Prophetic Tradition, in ritual action and went back to Jerusalem.

Decision

- THEY MADE A DECISION TO WALK INTO THE LION'S DEN AND EMBRACE THE PASCHAL MYSTERY IN THEIR LIVES.
- **♦** CONVERSION!!!
- The unity of word and action—hearers and doers!

Emmaus Model of Adult Learning 6 step process

Experience Step 1

- Catechumens' articulate their human experience of an event, scripture, doctrine, or theme.
- ♦ What did they experience?

Understanding Step 2

- Catechumens name their understanding of the event, Scripture, doctrine, or teaching—what it meant to them.
- ♦ Catechumens express their personal interpretation of the experience.
- Getting their assumptions out on the table.

Teaching the Tradition Step 3

- ♦ Share the TRADITION.
- Provide the 'content' of the tradition in ways that invite conversion.
- Present exegesis, Catholic Tradition.

Critical Reflection Step 4

- Critically reflect on the TRADITION and the conversion it invites.
- ♦ Appropriate and connect the Tradition with catechumens' lives—finding meaning for their lives.

Step 4 Critical Reflection

- ♦ Catechumens make sense of the Christian story and of their own lives by placing them in dialogue with the Christian TRADITION.
- Having had the meaning of the Scriptures opened for the disciples, and having encountered him in sacrament, the question becomes, "What are you going to do about it? How does it have any meaningful impact on your life?"
- This step facilitates conversion, expresses learnings, appropriates the material, discerns what needs to change and where growth is needed.

Conversion and Transformation Step 5

- ♦ Catechumens' articulate their new or renewed relationship with Christ.
- Catechumens name the change of heart, change of attitude to which they hope to commit.
- Catechumens/participants articulate new insight.

Decision Step 6

- Catechumens make the decision to change behaviors, actions, attitudes and world view.
- Decision to act—to "return to Jerusalem".
- ◆ Decision <u>for</u> committed discipleship. Catechumens articulate the explicit steps they intend to take to change, to go out and live as a committed disciple in the world—to go out and repair our world.

Summary

- **♦ NAMING THEIR EXPERIENCE**
- **♦ UNDERSTANDING THEIR EXPERIENCE**
- **♦** PRESENTING THE TRADITION
- **♦** CRITICAL REFLECTION
- **♦** CONVERSION AND TRANSFORMATION
- **♦** DECISION

Strategies for effective transmission of content

- ♦ Attention to multiple learning styles—the visual learner, auditory learner, tactile learner—thus use of various media.
- ♦ Various styles of presentation, teacher/student, small group, large group interaction, group readings, activities, variety of postures and gestures.
- Stay on Point: Keeping key themes at the fore.

The Way God Teaches Catechesis and the Divine Pedagogy By Joseph White Theory o Multiple Intelligences by DR. Howard Gardner

- Linguistic Intelligence
- Spatial Intelligence
- Logical Mathematical Intelligence
- Musical Rhythm Intelligence

- ♦ Bodily-Kinesthetic
- Naturalist Intelligence
- Interpersonal Intelligence
- Intrapersonal Intelligence

Strategies cont...

- ♦ Handouts: provide handouts to affirm the visual learner.
- Multiple medias: story telling, videos, PPT, group reading, flip charts, post its, slides, graphics, art.

Strategies cont...

- Stories: stories that emphasize the point being made—they are remembered long after the key principles are forgotten.
- Rationale and Research: organize content, know the material, identify sources thus establishing credibility.
- ♦ Help learners experience the new content but then summarize it and appropriate the new information.

Resources

- Faith, Life and Creed (A Complete Catechesis for Christian Life
- (User friendly sessions for breaking open the Word for every Sunday of each cycle plus 41 doctrinal sessions). Available through (TEAMRCIA.COM or pastoralplanning.com).
- Word and Worship Workbook, Year A, B and C, Mary Birmingham, Paulist Press