

Liturgy and Catechesis: A Practical Method for Teaching and Learning the Faith

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Principles, meanings, and links

Principles for good liturgy

1. Full, conscious, and active participation
 - tell a good story
 - Word and Sacrament
 - Powerful symbols
2. Create an emotional response
3. Convert hearts to action

Catechesis

1. Initiation is the reason parishes exist
2. The whole community has to be involved
3. The Easter Vigil is the guide book
4. Good News has to sound like good news
5. The whole thing is staged and gauged

Link: liturgy and catechesis

- Sunday prepares us for Easter Vigil
- Domestic church prepares us for Sunday
- Focus on catechumenate, year-round
- Involve the entire parish in prayer and discernment
- “Require” RCIA attendance from all leaders
- Catechetical method
 - Reflect on the shift
 - Notice the change
 - Be intentional about divine encounter
- Catechesis is more like liturgy than school
- Question everything
 - What did you see, hear, feel? What does it mean? What will you do differently now?
 - Where did you experience God this week? Or how was God absent?
 - Parish-wide faith question of the week
 - All flowing from and leading to the liturgy

- Domestic church support
 - Prayer resources
 - Liturgical year resources
 - Scripture resources
- Catechetical events
- Parish retreats
 - Food
 - Conversion experiences
 - Commitment to action
 - 50/50 contract
- Adult formation
 - Use children's programs as a springboard
 - Listen to the adult communities in your parish. What would sound like Good News to them?
 - No lectures. Use good adult learning models.
- Emphasize social mission to the poor.
- Everything is connected to baptism.

Blindspots

- We have to teach the facts of the faith while we have a captive audience.
- The liturgy isn't good enough.
- The ____ [pastor, DRE, music minister, RCIA director, bishop] will never go for it.
- Parents won't participate.
- What else?

Next action

1. What is your deepest, truest hope for your parish?
2. What one, concrete thing can you do by the end of the month to move one step closer to making that hope a reality?

Primary mission

It is useful to remember that:

- Mission *ad gentes* [mission to those who have never heard the Gospel],...is the missionary responsibility most specifically entrusted to the church by Jesus,...which continues to be the paradigm and primary task of missionary activity.
- The model for all catechesis is the baptismal catechumenate.... This catechumenal formation should inspire the other forms of catechesis....
- Catechesis for adults...must be considered the chief form of catechesis. All the other forms, which are indeed always necessary, are in some way oriented to it.

(GDC 59)