

INTRODUCTION TO SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION IN A CORRECTIONAL FACILITY

As Catholic ministers in a correctional facility, our greatest impact is our presence as a witness of God's unconditional love for all, especially those considered "outcasts from society." Many of the people we meet in our ministry feel alienated from God, their families, the community, and the Church. For the first time, many of the people we meet can have a positive experience of Church. This positive experience leads to a desire to participate more fully in the sacramental life that the Church has to offer. It is not uncommon, then, that requests come to the chaplain of a correctional facility for the celebration of the sacraments. This manual will offer policies and guidelines for the celebration of all the sacraments, but will pay particular attention to the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist and Reconciliation.

BACKGROUND

Most sacramental preparation programs in a parish setting assume that the person going through them has had some regular church contact, enjoys a degree of harmony and stability in their life and home, and possesses necessary learning skills and abilities. Many of those to whom we minister do not enjoy such backgrounds. Consequently, the formation programs designed for the parish setting are not necessarily appropriate for the population we serve. It is not uncommon for a chaplain or volunteer to develop a formation program that he or she finds suitable for the people he or she serves.

The practices and policies for sacramental preparation have varied from one institution to another, and within an institution, from one volunteer to another. Consequently there is a lot of inconsistency regarding the practice of sacramental preparation. Some people feel that all the preparation one needs to celebrate the sacraments is the desire to do so. Thus, they undertake little or no formation. At the other end of the extreme, there are those who are concerned that many people in a correctional facility are in a state of mortal sin. Thus, they make access to the sacraments nearly impossible.

The intent of this manual is to bring about consistency in the practice of sacramental preparation; in particular, Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, and Reconciliation.

THEOLOGICAL GROUNDING FROM A CHURCH TEACHING PERSPECTIVE

The current widespread practice of preparation for the sacraments of initiation today is found in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults. This approach is geared less toward teaching information; rather, the emphasis is formation. The catechetical approach used in the RCIA is lectionary-based and is meant to facilitate initiation into a faith community.

This approach could be perceived as both supportive and problematic for sacramental preparation in a correctional setting. It is supportive in that it is not uncommon for a chaplaincy program to have a faith-sharing dimension to the program that is lectionary-based, even though this aspect of the program may not be explicitly associated with the sacramental preparation of the inmate. Lectionary based faith sharing enjoys a long tradition in prison ministry that predates widespread use of RCIA and its lectionary-based formula in the parish.

The RCIA approach appears problematic in that the premise of its structure assumes a faith community. Many of the people in correctional facilities have little or no history of association with a faith community. Their first and often only experience of a faith community happens in the correctional setting with a chaplain or volunteer. There are many obstacles in a correctional facility that breed isolation and deter the development of community. Further, it is often unrealistic to expect that participation in a faith community will be sustained once one leaves the correctional setting. This being the case, the validity of sacramental preparation in a correctional setting could be questioned. This section attempts to justify this practice by looking to Scripture and Church teaching

According to Canon Law, as Christian faithful, we have a duty to see that those who seek the sacraments are prepared to receive them (C 843). Therefore, we should not take lightly one's request to celebrate these sacraments, even if they are detained.

It is no secret that Christ had a preferential love for those who are incarcerated. He identified Himself as one of them "... I was in prison and you visited me ..." (Mt. 25:36). He defined his mission as one to the incarcerated "... He sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives..." (Lk 4:18). "The Son of Man came to seek and save the lost." (Lk 19:10). His stories of the prodigal son, and the lost sheep among others, proclaim Christ's option for the outcast which those in detention

surely are. Jesus, himself, endured arrest, trial, and sentencing just as those in detention have. The sacraments are a very concrete way that we as Church can make Christ present to those with whom he clearly loves and identifies.

In his encyclical titled *Catechesi Tradendae*, Pope John Paul writes that in the early Church, formation for the sacraments of initiation and the catechumenate were the same thing (paragraph 3). In other words, catechesis as the process by which one prepares to celebrate the sacraments is a practice dating back to the early Church. He states that the definitive aim of catechesis is intimacy with Christ (paragraph 5).

In prison ministry our goal is to create intimacy between Christ and the inmate. It is not uncommon for an inmate to proclaim through the presence of a chaplain and volunteers, "I realized Jesus never forgot me." Regarding sacramental preparation as initiation into a faith community, Christ tells us that where two or three are gathered in his name, that he is also with them (MT 18:20).

We are a faith-filled community of hope, and the primary purpose of our ministry is to create faith community with those to whom we minister. Sometimes the community formed is not perfect, but we live in faith that Christ through his presence makes it perfect. The development of a faith community in a correctional setting is achievable despite the challenges presented by a typical correctional setting. Such challenges make the presence of community much more miraculous. Its benefits are more appreciated. Community is at the heart of our ministry and thus makes the correctional setting an appropriate place to prepare for the celebration of the sacraments.

POLICIES

Listed below are certain policies regarding sacramental preparation for someone who is living out their faith in a correctional facility. **These are meant to be guidelines for discerning the appropriateness of administering certain sacraments in the correctional facilities where we serve.** It is understood that exceptions to the guidelines suggested may occur. *One should use good judgment in applying these guidelines to their own program.*

Every effort should be made to foster the faith development of God's people inside correctional facilities regardless of whether the sacraments are administered. Whether we decide to administer a particular sacrament for a detainee or not, we should keep in mind that our primary purpose through our presence is to communicate God's unconditional love and acceptance. *The Gospel calls us to be present to Christ in prison, not necessarily to help him make his First Communion.*

SOME CONSIDERATIONS

A decision to administer the sacraments should take into consideration the following questions:

- **Has the person been baptized before?** One must be baptized in order to receive the other sacraments. If the person has been baptized in the Roman Catholic tradition or another recognized Christian tradition, then that person cannot be baptized again. *If the person has been baptized Protestant, a Profession of Faith is necessary before celebration of the sacraments of First Eucharist and Confirmation.*
- **Does the person come from a Catholic background and tradition?**
Is his/her family Catholic? (Parents, spouse, etc ...) How will this person's faith be nurtured upon release?
- **How soon will the person be released?** If the person is going to be released within a few months or weeks, serious consideration should be given to referring the inmate to a parish upon release. The ideal environment for celebrating the sacraments is the faith community of the local parish. If the person is anticipating a lengthy sentence, then that person's faith community in all practicality will be in the correctional environment. Every effort should be made to prepare one for the celebration of sacraments within the institution.

- **What is the person's motivation to celebrate the sacraments now?** Getting the inmate to express his/her motivation for the celebration of the sacraments is vital to helping him/her discern their preparedness. Does the inmate express an understanding of the nature of the sacraments and the obligations that accompany them? If the inmate comes from a Catholic background, why has that person not celebrated the sacraments before?
- **Does the person show a desire to participate more fully in the life of the Church?** Does the person participate in the programs offered by the chaplaincy? Does he/she attend Mass and participate in the liturgy?

BAPTISM

1. Since Baptism is the primary sacrament of initiation and the basis for the whole Christian life, an inmate's request to be baptized should not be taken lightly.
2. Given current Church practice regarding initiation, if we are preparing one for baptism, we should prepare him/her for the other sacraments of initiation as well (Confirmation and Eucharist). (Can. 866)
3. Only one who has not yet been baptized can be baptized. (Can. 864)
4. If there is doubt as to whether one has been baptized or whether the baptism was valid, a conditional baptism may be celebrated. (Can. 869)
5. If a baptismal certificate cannot be obtained, and the person or a witness says the person has been baptized, we are to presume baptism. (Can. 876)
6. If the person was baptized in another faith tradition, baptism is not to be celebrated again unless there is serious concern as to the validity of the baptism. (Can. 869.2) **A Profession of Faith is necessary before celebration of the sacraments of First Eucharist and Confirmation.**
7. A sponsor should be obtained for the person to be baptized. (Can. 872)

SPONSORS

- i) Only one male or one female may serve as a sponsor, or one of each may serve. (Can. 873)
- ii) To be a sponsor one must:
 - A. Be designated by the one to be baptized. (Can. 874.1.1)
 - B. Be at least 16 years old. (Can. 874.1.2)
 - C. Be a Catholic who has been Confirmed and made First Communion. (Can. 874.1.3)
 - D. Cannot be the father or the mother of the person to be baptized. (Can. 874.1.5)
- iii) A baptized non-Catholic person may serve as a witness to the baptism along with a Catholic sponsor. (Can. 874.2)

ANOINTING OF THE SICK

1. This Sacrament commends one who is dangerously ill to Christ whom we believe can relieve and save them. (Can. 998)
2. This sacrament is administered with oil and the use of words from approved liturgical books. (Can. 1000)
3. Only a priest can validly administer this sacrament. (Can. 1003)
4. This sacrament may be administered to any baptized person who is in danger due to illness or age.
5. This sacrament may be administered repeatedly if the person recovers and becomes ill again.

MATRIMONY

1. This sacrament is celebrated between a man and a woman who have established between themselves a covenant that lasts all their lives. (Can. 1055)
2. One who has been married before cannot be married again unless an annulment has been granted. (Can. 1005)
3. Canon law requires that a couple be personally prepared to enter marriage so that they understand the holiness and the duties of this state of life. (Can. 1063.2)
4. It is not appropriate to celebrate this sacrament in a correctional facility for a number of reasons:
 - A. The correctional setting can be too emotional to discern whether one is adequately prepared or not.
 - B. The correctional environment is not conducive to healthy family development.
 - C. Many of the people in correctional facilities have not had a healthy family experience and may require more attention and preparation than can be provided.
 - D. The time and attention needed to adequately prepare one to celebrate this sacrament may provide a greater burden than can be met by a chaplain. In order to prepare a person for this sacrament, other important elements of the chaplaincy could suffer.

5. County, state and federal correctional facilities have their own policies regarding marriage. Those should be adhered to by the chaplains in those facilities.

HOLY ORDERS

1. In correctional facilities, we are unable to offer inmates the formation necessary for Holy Orders.

SCOPE AND SEQUENCE

Maturing in Christian faith is a life-long process. Sacramental preparation in a correctional facility must take into consideration the following:

- Many of those incarcerated in a correctional facility do not have a personal connection with the parishes in which they resided.
- Many are un-churched and do not attend Mass on a regular basis, if at all.
- Many have little or no concept of a nourishing faith community.
- Many are at a point in their lives where they are trying to establish or re-establish a personal faith identity.

As a result, sacramental preparation in a correctional facility must:

- ▶ Involve the active participation of the worshipping faith community;
 - Sacraments and rituals need to be celebrated within the community's regularly scheduled liturgy.
- ▶ Convey to the candidate/s a sense of being a part of a growing process, rather than just "jumping through the hoops of another program."
- ▶ Include rituals that celebrate significant moments in the candidate's faith journey.

With this in mind, the following scope and sequence is recommended:

- ▶ 8 themes and 5 rituals

Each theme covers a specific aspect of faith life and leads up to the celebration of a corresponding ritual.

Rituals are recommended to be celebrated within the community's regularly scheduled liturgy.

Once the candidate has been accepted into the process; the **Rite of Welcoming** is celebrated.

The **Anointing with Oil** ritual is optional can be celebrated at the end of each session.

SCOPE

8 Themes	Belonging Making Peace Listening Caring Giving Thanks for New Life Baptism Sharing ... Eucharist Confirmation
5 Rituals	Rite of Welcoming Scrutiny Presentation of Creed Rite of Blessing Anointing with Oil

SEQUENCE

Week 1	Ritual Session 1	Rite of Welcoming Belonging
Week 2	Session 2	Making Peace
Week 3	Ritual Session 3	Scrutiny Listening
Week 4	Session 4	Caring
Week 5	Ritual Session 5	Presentation of Creed Giving Thanks for New Life
Week 6	Session 6	Baptism
Week 7	Ritual Session 7	Rite of Blessing Sharing ... Eucharist
Week 8	Session 8 Celebration of Sacrament/s	Confirmation

PROCEDURES

Listed below are the recommended procedures for preparing one to celebrate the sacraments in detention.

REQUESTS

- ▶ At the community's liturgy, announcements should be made regarding the opportunity to prepare for the sacraments of initiation and reconciliation.
- ▶ A process by which inmates can request help in preparing to celebrate the sacraments should be developed. (Section 12, Sample A)
- ▶ Once an inmate has requested help in preparing to celebrate the sacraments, an initial meeting should be held with the inmate and the chaplain or a volunteer whom the chaplain has designated. A one-to-one approach is essential for this meeting in order to obtain all the pertinent information (*Section 12, Sample B*) and to discern with the inmate the questions mentioned in the policies section of this manual.
 - A copy of this form should be filed in the chaplain's office
 - Should the inmate be transferred prior to completing formation, efforts should be made to contact the chaplain of the next institution.
 - The inmate should be encouraged to contact the chaplain of the institution once he/she has been transferred.
- ▶ If the inmate is a minor (under 18), and requests baptism, the parents or legal guardian must be contacted for (written) permission. (*Section 12, Sample C*). (*Provision should be made for those circumstances when the parent or legal guardians are unknown or unreachable.*)
- ▶ Even if an inmate is 18 or older, someone may need to be contacted in order to find documentation of baptism. Occasionally, it is at this time one finds out that the inmate has not been baptized.
- ▶ Once all the pertinent information is obtained, the inmate enters into the formation program established for celebration of the sacraments of initiation and/or reconciliation.

RITE OF WELCOMING

Homily

Intercessions

Before the first intercession, the Presider calls the candidates to the altar. After the last intercession, the Presider continues with the following:

Presider: What is your name?

Candidate/s: Candidate/s say first name only.

Presider: What do you ask of God's Church?

Candidate/s: To be baptized. To be confirmed. To receive First Eucharist.
Each will reply as appropriate to their situation

Presider: God is our Creator and in him all living things have their existence. To know the one true God and Jesus Christ whom he sent is eternal life. Christ has been raised from the dead and appointed by God as Lord of life and ruler of all things, seen and unseen.

If, then, you wish to become his disciples, you must learn to make the mind of Jesus your own. You must work hard to live your life on the teachings of the Gospel and so to love the Lord your God and your neighbor. Are you ready to accept these teachings of the Gospel?

Candidate/s: I am

Presider: I mark you with the sign of the cross. It is the sign of Christians. It is Christ himself who now strengthens you with this sign of his love. Learn to know him and to follow him.

Presider makes the sign of the cross on the Candidate's forehead.

Almighty God, by the cross and resurrection of your Son, you have given life to your people. Your servant/s has/have received the sign of the cross. Make *him/her/them* living proof of its saving power and help him/her/them to remain strong in the footsteps of Christ.

All: Amen

Presentation of Gifts.

SCRUTINY

Homily

Creed

Presider calls candidate/s forward by first name/s. Candidates kneel.

Intercessory Prayers

After last prayer, Presider continues with the following:

Presider: Let us now pray in silence for N., whom God has called that he/she/they may remain faithful to him and courageously give witness to the Gospel.

All pray in silence.

Father of mercies, you sent your only Son to rescue us from slavery of sin and to give us freedom as your children.

Look with love on N., your son/daughter/children and fulfill his/her/their hopes.
He/she/they have already experienced temptation and acknowledge his/her/their faults.

Lead him/her/them from darkness into your light, cleanse him/her/them from sin, let him/her/they know the joy of your peace and guide him/her/them safely through life.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Candidates return to their seats.

Presentation of Gifts

PRESENTATION OF CREED

Homily

Presentation of Creed

Candidates are called forward. A copy of the Nicene Creed is handed to each one. They lead the assembly in reciting the Creed.

Intercessory Prayers.

Presider: Lord, eternal source of light, justice and truth, take under your care N. Purify him/her/them and make *him/her/them* holy. Give him/her/them true knowledge, sure hope, and some understanding and make him/her/them worthy to receive the grace of Baptism/Confirmation/First Communion.

All: Amen

Candidates return to their seats.

Presentation of Gifts.

RITE OF BLESSING

Homily

Profession of Faith

Presider calls Candidate/s forward.

Intercessory Prayers

Presider: Almighty and eternal God, you dwell on high yet you look on the lowly; to bring us your gift of salvation, you sent Jesus your Son, our Lord and God.

Look kindly on N., whom you have called. Strengthen him/her/them in faith, that he/she/they may know you, the one true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.

Keep him/her/them clean of heart and make him/her/them grow in truth, that he/she/they may be worthy to celebrate Baptism/Confirmation/First Communion and enter in the holy mysteries.

All: Amen

BLESSING OF OIL WITH ANOINTING

(Celebrated after each catechetical session)

Opening Prayer

Leader: Lord Jesus Christ, sent by the Father and anointed by the Spirit, when you read in the synagogue at Nazareth, you fulfilled the words of the prophet Isaiah that proclaimed liberty to captives and announced a season of forgiveness.

We pray for N., your servant/s who has/have opened his/her/their heart/s to your word. Grant that they may grasp your moment of grace.

Do not let his/her/their mind/s be troubled or their lives tied to earthly desires. Do not let him/her/them remain estranged from the hope of your promises or enslaved by a spirit of unbelief. Rather, let him/her/them believe in you, whom the Father has established as universal Lord and to whom he has subjected to all things.

Let him/her/them submit him/her/themselves to the Spirit of grace; so that, with hope in their calling, he/she/they may join in the priestly people and share in the abundant joy of the new Jerusalem where you live and reign for ever and ever.

All: Amen.

Blessing of Oil

Presider: O God, source of strength and defender of your people, you have chosen to make this oil, created by your hand, an effective sign of your power.

Bless this oil and strengthen N., who will be anointed with it. Grant him/her/them your wisdom to understand the Gospel more deeply and your strength to accept the challenges of Christian living. We ask this through Christ our Lord,

All: Amen

Anointing

Leader: Lord God, from the abundance of your mercy, enrich your servants and safeguard them. Strengthened by your blessing and anointed with this oil, may they always be thankful to you and praise you with unending joy.

All: Amen.

SESSION PLANS

- √ Eight themes will be presented here as material for the catechist to use in preparing inmates for the sacraments.
- √ The session plans will be delineated as follows:
 - ▶ Background for the Catechist
 - 1) Theological Reflection
 - 2) Personal Reflection (Life Experience)
 - ▶ Suggested Plan for One-to-One or Small Group Sharing
- √ This material should be treated as a starting point from which the catechist may begin a meaningful exploration of these themes. The catechist should read and reflect on each part of this plan.
- √ A one-to-one approach does seem most beneficial, but some small group sessions are also a possibility if conditions lend themselves. The recommended small group size should be 4-6 persons.
- √ The catechist may ask, "What does one need to know before celebrating the sacraments?"

The General Directory for Catechesis

"...the object of catechesis always seeks to promote communion with Jesus Christ..."

The National Catechetical Directory calls for

- **the strengthening of the person's awareness of God's love,**
 - **the call to participate in Christ's sacrifice,**
 - **the awareness of the gift of the Spirit.**
- √ Persons should be taught that the Holy Eucharist is the real body and blood of Christ and what appear to be bread and wine are actually his living body.
 - √ It is important that the catechist adapts each theme to the person's stage of intellectual, spiritual, emotional, and physical development.

SESSION OUTLINE

Time: 45 - 75 minutes.

Materials Needed:

- Music: Reflective, sing-along (make sure you have copies of words of the songs available if you expect the participants to sing).
- Manual:
- Handouts: As suggested by each session plan.
- Bible or NT: Try to provide one for each participant
- Environment: Be as creative as the facility guidelines will allow. As much as possible, take into account the liturgical season.

Set-up If possible, have one or two of the participants help you set up the environment. If this is not possible, set up before the participants arrive. If the objects used for the environment reflect the theme of the session, this may provide a great way to start the discussion.

Introduction Introduce the theme of the session and allow for some initial questions, if any. This may include some queries/clarifications of the current theme or questions from the previous session.

Be sure to introduce yourself by your first name always. If in a small group, allow participants to introduce themselves by their first names also. **The main objective here is to make everyone feel welcome.**

Opening Prayer This may take various forms, so be creative. When possible, have participants plan/write the prayer. Always ask for a volunteer ahead of time.

Theme Exploration The Manual contains the necessary Theological-Experiential background. You will have to read it in advance to prepare for the session.

The questions in the Session Plan can be done orally as a discussion either one-an-one or as a small group. It is possible to create a handout from the questions so feel free to do so. You may need to provide participants with pencils if you expect them to write. ***Please remember the facility's guidelines regarding pencils, pens, handouts, staples etc.***

You may also need to provide Bibles or NT for the participants. If this is not possible, a handout containing the Scripture readings is advisable.

The handouts for each session are to be copied for the participants. Adapt and modify but make sure the core of the message remains the same.

If you are doing one-on-one, you might want to skip or combine some steps.

SESSION I: BELONGING, COMMUNITY

BACKGROUND FOR CATECHIST

We all belong to a group. We belong to a certain family, a certain nation, a certain ethnic group, a certain race. We may belong to the PTA, a bowling league or a labor union. Some groups we belong to because we are born into them. Others we choose because of their purpose.

One of the most profound and beautiful experiences of belonging that any of us can know is that of belonging to a family. It is undoubtedly the best experience we can have of the fact that people do belong together and that we do need others. The family is our first and most fundamental experience of belonging that brings life itself.

Membership in a family does not depend first of all on us. It is not something we produce. Our entrance into our family is by birth, a result of the need two people have expressed for each other in the act of love. It is only the beginning. The same love by which we began to live nurtures us in our growth, giving life more and more. Sometimes the growth comes by startling changes. Sometimes it comes through apparent periods of slow, prolonged rest. But always, if there is openness and unselfishness on the part of those whose love gave life in the first place, new life can flower.

Belonging to a family is the human experience that most closely parallels the experience of being a Christian. In fact, we say we belong to God's family, the Church.

We do not belong to the family of God because of anything we have done. We do not belong to it because we have a right to belong. Like our membership in our own families, our membership in the family of God is purely gratuitous. It is "for free." It is the result of an act of love by somebody else. The life-giving love of Jesus, made visible in the sacrament of baptism, incorporates us into His body, the family of God.

The body is one and has many members, but all the members, many though they are, are one body; and so it is with Christ. It was in one spirit that all of us ... were baptized into one body ... You, then, are the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:12-13, 27)

And so we are born to life with others, in the family of God. But as with our own family at home, birth is only a beginning. Our baptism is only the start. The love God showed us there continues to nurture us, and we grow for example, through the Eucharist, a sign of the love that nourishes, and through penance, a sign of the love that restores. It is also given to us in the daily word and example of those who share Jesus' love with us. If the Christians around us are open and unselfish, our own Christian belonging can grow.

The gratuitousness of belonging to the family of God is certainly clear in the baptism of an infant. It is the baby's parents, who themselves received this gift once upon a time, who now present for baptism the product of their-love. In the baptism of an adult, the convert, who already believes, asks for faith nevertheless. This is a striking sign that faith is a gift, something we receive, not something we produce. So is our belonging to the family of God.

The pouring of the life-giving waters of baptism symbolizes birth. It makes visible the life-giving that is happening – the life of new membership to the family of God.

The Christian community stands by, giving the witness of their faith. A baptism is a family affair, an affair of the family of God, just as much as our physical birth is an affair that intensely concerns our whole family at home. The priest or deacon, the parents and godparents, relatives and friends, and, more and more nowadays, other members of the parish come to participate. This new life is a life with others. It is belonging.

Birth – in this case, rebirth – is only a beginning. The anointing with oil, the bestowing of the white garment, the conferral of the lighted candle, all look to the future. These rites declare that not all is accomplished at baptism. They point to living as a member of Christ's body, as a member of his family. They underline the necessity of support from those with whom the newly baptized Christian shares Christian life and belonging. Baptism is but a beginning. Belonging to the family of God is both a gift and a task. Birth must be followed by growth.

Our belonging to the family of God is just the beginning of an exchange of life and growth with our brothers and sisters in Christ all around us, in order that we all may "have life and have it to the full..." (John 10: 10).

For Personal Reflection

- ✚ Reflect on your experience of belonging to a group and your experience of confinement.
- ✚ Think about what membership in a group might mean to the inmate – its assets and liabilities.
- ✚ Does a person change in order to "belong" to a group?
- ✚ How does changing relate to group membership?
- ✚ How does all this relate to Christian community?

SUGGESTED PLAN

ONE-TO-ONE OR GROUP SHARING

Goal: To understand the concept of Church as a community to which we belong.

Objectives To understand the importance of living in and belonging to a community; to describe the concept of "Church".

1. Reflect and share on your being together (especially if you have previous history together.) Talk about being together to prepare for the sacraments. You are together because of Jesus. Communion has to do with coming together with each other and with Jesus. Share a personal experience of unity or community that you have had, one that really means something to you and that brings out the value and beauty of being united in affection and trust. Do some meshing of positive and negative experiences of community and belonging.

2. Share thoughts/insights on the following:

- What are some important things that have happened in your life? Which could be described as good? Which as bad? Why?
- How much control do you feel you have had in your life?
- If you could relive your life, in what ways would it be different? Why?
- What difference do you think celebrating your Baptism, Confirmation and/or First Communion might make in your life?

3. Share a Gospel story:

Luke 24: 13-15 Disciples on the way to Emmaus

John 21:1-14 Jesus prepares breakfast for his disciples

Explore insights/feelings. Point out the similarities between the Gospel account and what happens at Eucharist, i.e., both meals shared by people who are friends of Jesus; bread is blessed, broken and eaten in both meals. Like the friends of Jesus that morning, we can become more united because of our union with Jesus.

4. Jesus taught his friends a prayer and told us to pray to God as "our Father". We are brothers and sisters with one Father. If the participant/s does not know the Lord's Prayer as yet, this would be a good time to encourage learning it.

Closing Prayer/Reflection

Ask participants to close their eyes. Ask them to think of their life experiences: the good times as well as the not so good times. After a few moments; slowly read the poem, "*Footprints in the Sand.*"

Footprints in the Sand

One night I dreamed I was walking along the beach with the Lord. Many scenes from my life flashed across the sky. In each scene, I noticed footprints in the sand. Sometimes there were two sets of footprints, other times there were one set of footprints.

This bothered me because I noticed that during the low periods of my life, when I was suffering from anguish, sorrow, or defeat, I could see only one set of footprints.

So I said to the Lord, "You promised me Lord, that if I followed you, you would walk with me always. But I have noticed that during the most trying periods of my life there have been only one set of footprints in the sand. Why, when I needed you the most, you have not been there for me"

The Lord replied, "The times when you have seen only one set of footprints is when I carried you."

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come
thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation.
But deliver us from evil.
Amen

SESSION II: MAKING PEACE

BACKGROUND FOR CATECHIST

From the dawn of Judea-Christian history, the oneness of God's people was accepted as a gift from God. It was God who formed Israel into one people in the desert. The law that he gave them in the Old Testament was not only a sign of his concern for them, but also a source of their unity in him. To violate God's law was to disrupt the community, and this meant sinning against God.

When the covenant between God and the human race was fulfilled in Christ, a new law was formed. This law goes far beyond the legal. It is crystallized in the Sermon on the Mount, in the Beatitudes, which call upon people to share the spirit of Christ - a spirit of love, of justice, of truth, of patience, of forgiveness. To refuse to respond to this call not only weakens the bonds of fellowship but also strains our relationship with God. We Christians know that whatever we do to build up or tear down the human community also profoundly affects our relationship to the Creator of all people. When we recognize this fundamental truth, we are taking seriously Christ's words: "As often as you did it for one of my least brothers, you did it for me" (Matthew 25:40). Only if we take these words very seriously can we begin to build a world neighborhood.

It would not be at all surprising that our celebration of life together, our concern for building a world neighborhood and our concern for everything we do that impedes it, finds expression in the Eucharist. The entire Eucharistic liturgy, as the whole of our Christian lives, points toward unity. But certain elements of the Eucharistic liturgy make this concern more evident. These elements are the Penitential Rite, in which we seek forgiveness of God and of one another for our failure to foster the unity he gives us; the Prayers of the Faithful, in which we pray for the needs of the human family; and the Sign of Peace, in which we show both the oneness we have and the oneness we seek in the Eucharist.

The Penitential Rite appears in our celebration as a moment of honesty, of sober realism - always needed, though perhaps not always welcome. In this rite, we confess openly to one another and to God our failure to respond to' his gift of unity. In it, we seek the forgiveness of our Father and our brothers and sisters. The priest pronounces absolution, God's word of forgiving love.

The inclusion of this rite in the celebration serves as a reminder that the Eucharist is a great moment in our Christian awareness of the sometimes forgotten truth that, in this celebration, Christ, through the ministry of the priest, truly forgives our daily sins, our failures in building up the human community.

The sign of peace takes place within the Communion rite. Both a prayer and a gesture make up the Sign of Peace. First of all, the priest prays in the name of the gathered community for the peace and unity that only the risen Lord Jesus can bring. In this way, we recognize both the source of our unity and the fact that we have not yet fully experienced the peace that accompanies it. Then we exchange with one another a greeting peace. This gesture is a sign of our willingness to be united with one another despite any differences we may have. It is a pledge of our mutual love before we share in the one bread, the sign of the love that nourishes us.

Though each of these rites takes place within a different movement of the Eucharistic celebration, they are very closely related. In each rite we recognize who we are now and who we are called to be. In each we admit that we have fallen short of our task, that we are at a distance from our goal, and we offer a pledge for the future. Through each, God speaks to us, offering to restore or strengthen his gift of unity.

Each rite offers us a way of responding to Christ's words. "If you bring your gift to the altar and there recall that your brother has anything against you, leave your gift at the altar, go first to be reconciled with your brother, and then come and offer your gift" (Matthew 5:23-24). Each rite offers Christ a means of fulfilling his promise. "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you" (John 14:27).

In a world at once more united yet more fragmented than ever, the concern that these rites express and the promise that they fulfill in the Eucharist should speak to us in a special way. They show us something of what our Christian Eucharist is really all about: reconciling. And reconciling is about making peace.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation

Guilt because of human weakness or plain malice is a common experience in most people's lives. From the earliest times, people of all cultures have felt the need to seek forgiveness from wrongdoing. In primitive times, the community dealt with offending members in a public manner, thereby underlining the social/communal nature of serious sin. Not every sin was publicly punished but the more serious ones were, such as murder, adultery, apostasy, stealing, etc. Generally speaking, the community had two purposes in mind:

- a) A suitable punishment which we would identify today as Retributive Justice;
- b) An element of rehabilitation which we would identify today as Restorative Justice.

In our Judea-Christian tradition, the spiritual dimension of reconciliation is evident from the punishment of Adam and Eve, to the story of Joseph's forgiveness of his brothers, to the plea of David for God's mercy for his wickedness. In the New Testament, Jesus highlights the compassion and mercy of God for his people in such incidents as:

The Forgiveness of Peter
The Good Thief

The Woman Caught in Adultery
The Prodigal Son

In all these instances we have the following elements:

Remorse

Compassion

Forgiveness

Restoration

In the early Church, following the teaching of Jesus, the practice of seeking forgiveness from the Church began to take hold. Penance in "sackcloth and ashes" pointed to the confession of sin to someone who assigned such a public acknowledgement of wrongdoing. It also pointed to the desire of the penitent to be reconciled with God and the community.

Over the centuries, the elements of what we now refer to as the Sacrament of Reconciliation began to be refined. We now recognize these essential elements:

Contrition A sincere sorrow for wrongdoing because it damages the relationship between ourselves and God and weakens the fabric of the community. A determination to avoid future sin is part of contrition.

Confession A naming of serious sins committed since one's last confession in the presence of a priest. Less serious sins may be named also.

Absolution The priest, in the name of God and the Church, pronounces the words of forgiveness which bring "pardon and peace" to the repentant sinner.

Penance A token prayer or act of charity to restore the balance ... to make reparation for damage done to self and community.

Note: Penance has now been reduced to a token prayer or act of charity but its original purpose was a serious act or acts of reparation both to restore the balance (make up of damage/harm done to the community), and to restore the penitent to a healthy sense of self (at one with God and community). The restoration of the sinner/penitent and the community was effected.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is understood as .part of a process of "conversion" in which a person struggles to come to terms with a pattern of life and behavior that has proven to be empty, unfulfilling, false, self-destructive and painful; a pattern that continues to nurture a state of alienation form God and one's own better nature. Through God's grace and providence, the Sacrament of Reconciliation affords an opportunity to concretize a decision made to turn away from sin and selfishness and find peace, pardon and purpose by submitting oneself to the healing mercy of God.

Up to our own time, the Sacrament of Reconciliation was inadequately referred to as "confession" or "penance". In recent times, the term "Reconciliation" has been introduced to more accurately reflect the meaning of the Sacrament and its elements of remorse, compassion, forgiveness and restoration.

Relapse and Addiction

Relapse: Though we are called to perfection, God realizes that we are engaged in a continuing struggle with our own weakness and the influence of society around us. Sometimes our strong determination to avoid future sin collapses and we succumb to temptation and human weakness. God's love for us does not change. When we come to our senses, we seek out God's forgiveness once more. God will not turn down a humble and contrite heart. We have phrase in Spanish - "Dios es muy grande" - which may be translated as "God has a big heart" or more accurately, "When nobody else understands us, God understands us."

Addiction: Addiction complicates the relapse/recidivism process. Addictions come in many forms and establish strong patterns of behavior not easily controlled. People have to deal with addiction in the areas of drugs, alcohol, sex, stealing, violence, telling lies, etc. God takes this into account as we struggle with the frustration and disappointment of relapse after relapse. What God looks for is sincerity - a strong determination to do one's best (despite fear of one's weakness), and to take steps to build strength and to avoid what would make relapse more likely. (*Fr. John Murray.*)

For Personal Reflection

- ✚ Reflect on the background of the inmate related to this topic.
 - ▶ What has been that person's experience in "peace making"?
 - ▶ Why might this be an especially difficult area for this person to integrate?

- ✚ Reflect on your own experience of God's mercy and compassion both in general and in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

- ✚ Think about the double load of guilt the incarcerated carry - their sins that are crimes and the need they have to be reassured that God's mercy is limitless.

SUGGESTED PLAN ONE-TO-ONE OR GROUP SHARING

Goal: To experience "reconciliation" as the necessary step toward healing and wholeness.

Objectives: To understand the concept of "reconciliation".

1. What do you feel about retaliation, grudges and about making up?
 - ▶ Have you ever made up with someone? How?
 - ▶ Talk about the difficulty and the feelings after you make up.
2. What are some ways people make up and restore peace with one another?
3. Share about an incident in which you asked forgiveness of someone you hurt.
4. Share about an incident in which someone asked you forgiveness for something they did that hurt you.
5. Read Matthew 18:21-22.
 - ▶ In the exchange between Jesus and Peter, how many times do we forgive?
 - ▶ How you think Peter felt about Jesus' words?
 - ▶ What do you think?
 - ▶ Do you think what Jesus asked of Peter is too hard? Why or why not?
6. Read the "*Prayer of Saint Francis*" together. Initiate some discussion on the different components of the prayer.
7. Pass out copies of the handout on the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Go over the handout either silently or aloud. Allow participant/s to ask you questions that 'might arise.

OPTIONAL:

You may want to substitute this session with a Reconciliation Service.
(See Section X of the Manual).

Note to Catechist:

The **Scrutiny** takes place at the following liturgy. You may take time to go over the Ritual with the candidates. (See section VI of the Manual)

Closing Prayer

Pray the *Prayer of Saint Francis* together.

Prayer of Saint Francis

Lord, make me a channel of your peace;
where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled
as to console;
to be understood as to understand;
to be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive;
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

Saint Francis of Assisi

SESSION III: LISTENING

BACKGROUND FOR CATECHIST

Listening is of the utmost importance in our Christian lives. We are summoned to listen to the continuing expression of God's love through the risen Christ.

Jesus Christ is present in his Church, summoning men and women to become witnesses to his resurrection and life. He is present when the community gathers in response to his call. He is present in the sacraments to express his love. He is present in his word when Scripture is read in his Church.

To listen to the risen Christ, to be attentive as he speaks to us today, requires a good deal of perception, a large measure of patience, and most of all, Christian faith. Listening for the living Christ is an activity, not a mechanical process or a passive performance.

The gospel accounts mention that Jesus and his disciples themselves participated in this synagogue liturgy of listening to God's Word in the Scriptures (Mark 1:39; Matthew 4:23; Luke 4:16-22; John 6:59). On one such occasion, Christ introduced a new dimension to God's design for his people.

"He came to Nazareth where he had been reared, and entering the synagogue on the Sabbath as he was in the habit of doing, he stood up to do the reading. When the book to the prophet Isaiah was handed him, he unrolled the scroll and found the passage where it is written:

*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; therefore he has anointed me,
He has sent me to bring glad tidings to the poor
to proclaim liberty to captives, recovery of sight to the blind
and release to prisoners.
To announce a year of favor from the Lord.*

Rolling up the scroll he gave it back to the assistant and sat down. All in the synagogue had their eyes fixed on him. Then he began by saying to them, "Today this Scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing". All who were present spoke favorable of him. They marveled at the appealing discourse which came from his lips." (Luke 4:16-22).

The traditional liturgy of the synagogue served as the framework within which Jesus, in the context of the commentary on the reading, inserted a new dimension – one that is specifically Christian: he announced the fulfillment of the words of the Law and the summons of the prophets. He took this occasion of patient listening and spoke a new word: he announced the gospel, the “good news”. He proclaimed the word of liberation and invited his hearers to lend a responsive ear.

One day this new dimension that Jesus had brought to the lives of those around him would find its way into their own liturgy. It would be crystallized in the gospel accounts and in the letters of some early Christians; it would be read in the Christian gatherings along with the Word of the same God of former times. These gatherings would be marked by a spirit of attentive listening, founded on the belief that the same Christ who spoke this new Word was truly alive and continued to manifest the Father's love.

In the second century, this gathering was incorporated into the Sunday celebration of the Eucharist; and by the fourth century, it had become a feature of every such celebration. Readings from Scripture, the Word of God, formed the core of the fore-Mass in the liturgy. ***Hence it is often called the Liturgy of the Word.***

The form of the Liturgy of the Word today shows the influence of the historical development. And the rhythm of "hearing and responding" underlines the fact that for Christians, listening is something we do, not something that happens to us.

The Entrance Liturgy, which through song, dialogue, and prayer has served to draw us together, also prepares us to listen to God, who speaks to us. This first movement of our celebration opens us to the presence of Christ in the Word.

First, through a reading from the Old Testament, we hear once again the Word that God spoke in Israel. We respond to this Word, which represents the beginning of God's explicit call to his people, by singing the responsorial psalm. In this way, we seek to make God's Word our own.

Then we hear the apostles tell us what it means truly to listen to the Word of God and to welcome his word as a living force in our lives. After the reading of the epistle, we rise to welcome the Word of God. Through our Alleluia, we acclaim Christ, who announces the "good news," in a reading from the gospel accounts. In the homily that follows, the celebrant tries to help us understand the Word of God as an expression of love for us and to respond to God's Word in love.

The Creed offers us a means of assenting to the Word of God that we have heard in the readings and the homily. Its place in the celebration also indicates why we include the Liturgy of the Word within the celebration of the Eucharist: that Christians should be nourished at the table of the Word before they are nourished at the sacramental table. The Eucharist is celebrated fully only in faith, and it is the Word of God that gives rise to that faith. Hearing the sacred Word, commemorating what God has done among us, is really our best preparation for his continuing action of love for us, which is the gift of his Son in the Eucharist.

Within the Eucharistic celebration, the proclamation of the Word of the living God becomes a contemporary challenge, an invitation today to open our ears and our hearts to the Lord who speaks, a summons to continue the meaning of Jesus Christ in our world. For the Christian who has heard the "good news", listening is indeed a full-time job.

For Personal Reflection

- ☒ Reflect on the history and lived experience of the incarcerated and their concept of listening:
- ☒ Reflect on the growing-up environment of the incarcerated – geared to fierce independence.
- ☒ For most, there is a struggle for survival that makes listening and all it entails seem almost a weakness.

SUGGESTED PLAN

ONE- TO-ONE OR GROUP SHARING

1. Share the following about listening:
 - a) Who do you listen to? Why?
 - b) Who don't you listen to? Why?
 - c) What would make you listen or pay attention to someone?
 - d) Does anyone listen to you? Why?
 - e) Where do you do your best listening?

2. Give each participant a copy of the Bible and take a "walk-through." Give some very general catechesis on the Bible. The Bible is a special book telling us about God's love for us and all he does for his people.
 - Share your favorite section from the Old Testament and New Testament. Allow participants to find favorite stories from the Bible.

8. Look up some of the following passages. Ask participants to determine the "Good News" in each passage that is read.

Deut 32:3-4	Rom. 8:14-17	Matt. 5:1-12
Rom 8:31-39	Mark 1:14-15	2 Cor. 5:1-5
Mark 10:28-31	2 Cor. 3:17-18	Jn 14:23
Phil 4:4-7	Jn 3:16	Jn 15:11-17
Col 1:13-14		

1. Discuss the special time each week at the Liturgy of the Word when the Christian community gathers to listen together.

Note: Allow participants to keep the Bible.

1. Closing Prayer: Guided Imagery on the Bible.

GUIDED IMAGERY ON THE BIBLE

First hand out a copy of the prayer starters listed below. Make sure everyone has a copy of the Bible.

Dt 6: 4-6	Mat 6: 5-14	Ps 62: 6-9	Lk 12: 2231
Prov 3: 21-31	Jn 6: 35-40	Is 58: 5-11	Eph 4: 1-6
Jer 29: 11-13	2 Tim 1: 6-8		

Play soft background music. Slowly and meditatively read the following:

"Here is a list of prayer starters. Choose one. For now just find the place in the Bible where the Scripture is located and mark it."

(Give a few minutes for this)

"Close your eyes for a moment... Hold your Bible in your hands ... Feel its weight and presence ... Feel God's presence..."

Think of how people have been inspired by God to write this Holy Book ... Thank God for those people ... Imagine the people in prison or jails who are not allowed to keep a Bible ... Say a short prayer for them...

Think of the wonderful stories told by God's people that are in this Book ... Stories of hope and wonder ... Stories of pain and suffering ... Stories of war and rebirth ... Stories of love and happiness ... Stories of sadness and healing...

Think of the wonderful messages found in this special Book ... "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son ... Let the children come to me ... The kingdom of God belongs to them ... Blessed are you who mourn... For you shall be comforted... Blessed are you who show mercy... Mercy shall be yours ... The Lord is my shepherd ... there is nothing I shall want... Blessed are you who are peace makers ... You shall be called children of God ... Why do look for the living among the dead?... God looked at everything he had made and found it very good..."

When you are ready, turn to the prayer starter you selected ... Slowly, silently read the passage ... Hear the words God intends for you today ... Slowly read the passage again... Let God speak to you through these words...

And let us pray ... Our Father ... Hail Mary...

SESSION IV CARING

BACKGROUND FOR CATECHIST

For Saint Paul, the Church community, the family of God, is a community of mutual service in which each member serves the others, in which each part is equally concerned for the whole and all its parts. In Paul's description of the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:4-11), his first concern is not so much who possesses what gift, who has what to offer; but that each person offers what he or she has, and that all work together for the common good.

Paul was not a visionary without roots, a dreamer divorced from reality. His vision is a beautiful reflection on the essential meaning of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is the identification of God with humanity – in a word, of the lover with the beloved. God cares for us. This is the Incarnation. As in every relationship of love, the depth of identification is a measure of the depth of the love. Christ achieved a degree of identification with us that staggers our imagination and challenges the human spirit. He so shared our human condition, he was so much at one with us in our situation, that he could tell his disciples, "He who welcomes you welcomes me" (Matthew 10:40). He could say to Paul, "*Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?*" (Acts 9:4). He could tell each person who would follow him, "*As often as you did it for one of my least brothers, you did it for me.*" (Matthew 25:40)

The love that Christ's identification with us signifies, calls for a response as all love does. It seeks to evoke an identification on our part with him. And it is his identification with us that makes that response possible. Christ has not departed from our midst. He is not simply an historical memory, to be thought of on occasion. He is present to us in many ways as he promised – not the least of which is in our brothers and sisters.

The fact that he has so identified himself with each of us and with all of us together offers us the opportunity of finding him in one another. By identifying with one another, we respond to Christ's offer of love. In the service of others, we identify in our turn with Christ. Is there any other way to understand this appeal of St. John's to Christians? "Beloved, if God has loved us so, we must have the same love for one another" (1 John 4:11).

The Christian community is a community of people because they are aware of God's identification in love with each one of them and all of them together. They respond to his love in their service of one another. Each offers what he or she has, who he or she is, to the others, and thus serves the good of all. Within the Christian community, the service of the Christian to others builds up the Church, strengthens God's family so that together they are a sign to the world of the love of God. Within the world community, the service of Christians to others strengthens the whole human family and is a sign to each of us that God has identified himself with every person, that God loves every person as an individual.

Every act of service, every gesture of caring that we Christians manifest toward others, is a sign of the identification of God with all humankind.

Nowhere does the fact that God cares for us become more evident than in our Christian celebration of the Eucharist. In the Eucharistic celebration, we nourish the life that is ours through God's love made visible in baptism. We celebrate the reality that ours is a shared life, and we strengthen the unity we have. We express our desire to share our life with others, and we recognize we have not done so to the full. We listen to God's word of love for us, which tells of his care for us.

Also in the celebration of the Eucharist, our response to God's loving care for us becomes evident through our care for one another. In the Prayers of the Faithful, we declare in effect that the community to which we belong is not turned in on itself, but is turned toward service to others. We show that the life we celebrate is truly to be shared. We give evidence of truly having listened to God's word of love. In the Prayers of the Faithful, we show that we care.

We pray for the whole Church, that this community may truly become a sign of the interrelatedness of life in Jesus Christ. We pray, for example, for civil authorities, for those oppressed by various needs, and for the salvation of the world, that every member of the human family may become aware that someone cares for him or her.

All the richness of God's care converges in the Eucharist. In this Christian celebration, we become aware through word and symbol of how much God loves us, of how deeply he has identified himself with us. The Prayers of the Faithful, our prayerful concern for one another, expresses our response to God's love.

For Personal Reflection

- ✚ How have you shown your family and friends you care for them?
- ✚ How have they shown you their care and concern?
- ✚ Think about the caring the inmates have experienced:
 - family bonding in a certain cultural milieu;
 - a fierce, sometimes misplaced, loyalty of and toward fellow gang members.

SUGGESTED PLAN ONE TO ONE OR SMALL GROUP

1. Share some experiences of caring and being cared.
2. Read and discuss the following passages:
 - a) Luke 10:25-37
 - b) Matt. 25:31-40
 - c) Isaiah 58:6-11
3. Caring has to be translated into the everyday here-and-now. Explore possibilities – even in confinement - for caring attitudes and actions.
4. At the next Liturgy the inmate attends, ask him or her to listen especially for the prayers in which we express in a special way our concern for one another - *The Prayers of the Faithful*.
5. Hand out copies of the **Nicene Creed**. Ask participants to read it silently, then read it aloud together.

Note to Catechist:

The **Presentation of the Creed** will take place at the next liturgy. You may take time to go over the ritual with the participants. (See Section VI of the Manual)

The Nicene Creed

I believe in one God,
the Father, almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the only Begotten Son of God,
born of the Father before all ages.
God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,
begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven,
and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary,
and became man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate,
he suffered death and was buried,
and rose again on the third day
in accordance with the Scriptures.
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand at the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead
and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified,
who has spoken through the Prophets.
I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.
I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins
and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead
and the life of the world to come. Amen

SESSION V GIVING THANKS FOR NEW LIFE

BACKGROUND FOR CATECHIST

In the course of human development, we often experience "dying" in order to grow and to live more fully. Death is present to some degree in everything that diminishes life in our human experience - in pain, suffering, alienation, frustration. Death manifests itself in prejudice, bigotry, hatred, violence – in everything that poses an obstacle to growth, development, and dignity. Whatever in our experience is dehumanizing, whatever is hostile to life, is death in some form.

Leaving behind the former self and taking up the new self; in passing from childhood to adolescence or from adolescence to adulthood is a familiar example of the real, though perhaps at times unconscious, dying that is involved in human development.

And certainly a kind of dying takes place when two people decide to give up some of their independence and self-consideration as individuals in order to enter the life of marriage and parenthood. The same "dying" is at work in the decision to enter religious life or ministry.

At times the death we encounter is a lessening of life and an obstacle to growth. At others times, the dying we experience is in order that we may grow. In both cases, however, there is a force that prevents the dying from becoming complete, and also enables growth to take place no matter how painful or difficult. That force is love. Love alone in its various manifestations is capable of overcoming death. Love alone is able to offer a person the security needed in order to give up the old life and take on the new. Love is the most powerful life-giving force we know.

Nowhere is the reality of love as the most powerful life-giving force more obvious than in the life of Jesus Christ. In him we encounter God's love for us in a form so absolute that it is capable of overcoming death in all its forms. And so it offers the possibility of growth to the fullness of life. We Christians believe that in Jesus Christ, God delivers us from sin, which is, after all, another form of death.

Our Celebration of the Eucharist is an acknowledgment of our gratitude to God for what he has done for us, but especially for having freed us from death.

It is above all in the Eucharistic Prayer that we acknowledge in thankful praise the events by which we have all been saved and most of all, the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. As at the first Eucharist, the elements of bread and wine are transformed by the creative word of Jesus Christ; and they become his body and blood. In the context of the Eucharistic Prayer, these elements receive from Christ a new and deeper meaning and so serve to open us out onto Jesus Christ. They make Christ really present to us in a sacramental manner, Christ who is already present to us in the liturgical assembly, in the presider in liturgical service, in the ministry of the Word, and in all the other sacraments.

The words of consecration that the celebrant pronounces in this prayer of thanksgiving are not a magic formula, but rather an essential part of our prayer. These words, and the words just before them, tell us something about Christ's purpose in making himself present in this way and something about the kind of presence it is.

It becomes evident both in word and in gesture that Christ is really present to us in the bread and in the wine to offer himself to us and to be taken by us, so that he may be intimately present in each of our hearts and in the heart of the whole community of believers. Christ is not present "just to be there." He is present to give himself to us and to be accepted by us so that he may truly live in us and we in him.

The words of consecration themselves tell us something more of the manner or character of his presence. They tell us that he is present to us in a sacrificial way. They tell us that we are offered Christ's body, which has been "given up for us," and his blood which has been "shed for us." It is this self-giving, real presence of Christ that gives the Eucharist its character of sacrifice. It is this self-giving of Christ, too, that we commemorate, and in which we participate, when we make the sacrifice of the Eucharist our own.

The Memorial Acclamation that follows the words of consecration is, in a sense, a summary of the whole of the Eucharistic Prayer. Also, it is a joyous expression of our belief that God has saved us in Jesus Christ and

especially that this salvation touches us in a real and visible manner in the Eucharist.

The prayer itself closes with the great Amen, the community's expression of faith. Here we voice our Yes to Christ who has made himself present to us, and we express our desire to open ourselves to his saving presence.

Human experience shows us that death is inevitable, that it is a reality every person must encounter. At the same time, it shows us that death is not simply an ultimate reality, one that lies in the future, but a real force at work in the here-and-now in our lives. Jesus Christ has shown us that death is not the ultimate reality at all; it is life, not death that has the final say. And in the Eucharist we give thanks that in Christ, God's love has overcome death in all its forms. We give thanks for life itself.

For Personal Reflection

☒ Spend time reflecting on the following experiences:

- life and death
- joy and suffering
- belonging and alienation
- peace and frustration.

SUGGESTED PLAN

ONE-TO-ONE OR SMALL GROUP

1. Share personal experiences on any of the following:

- Prejudice
- Hatred
- Violence
- Joy
- Laughter
- Death

2. What is your attitude towards death?

3. What gives human life dignity and sacredness?

- Read Matt. 10:28-31.
- What thoughts and feelings come to mind as you read?

4. Read and discuss John 13:34-36.
 - How do you see this Gospel message in your own life?
 - Is this a hard or easy instruction? Why or why not?
5. Read, reflect, and share on Jesus' passion, death and resurrection from one of the Gospel accounts. What does this mean for us Christians today?

The 10 Commandments

6. Pass out the handout on the 10 Commandments. Spend some time for reading, questions and discussion.

The 10 Commandments

- I. I am the Lord, your God: you shall not have strange gods before me.
- II. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.
- III. Remember to keep holy the Lord's day.
- IV. Honor your father and your mother.
- V. You shall not kill.
- VI. You shall not commit adultery.
- VII. You shall not steal.
- VIII. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
- IX. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.
- X. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.

SESSION VI BAPTISM

BACKGROUND FOR CATECHIST

St. Paul in his letter to the Christian communities he had founded compared the Church to a human body. He said that all who are members of the Church perform a vital function. The Church's individual members through their faith and love, build up and strengthen the Body of the Church. We are not automatically born into this Body, but become members through the Sacraments of Initiation. These three sacraments are Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist. The meaning of "initiate" is to admit a person, through formal ceremonies into a group or society to help that person grow in knowledge and understanding of the group. Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist create that same sense of being related to those with whom we share a common faith in the Risen Jesus, of the Good News he preached, and of the Church, the community he founded. These are the sacraments that begin and sustain our lifelong commitment to Christ and to the Church.

In a time when the baptism of infants has become customary, this sacrament corresponds to a person's birth into his or her natural family. If for some reason, parents did not see to the baptism of their child, the responsibility often rests with the adult, who after due preparation, requests Baptism.

Baptism affirms that every human being lives in relationship with others. Baptism brings about a lifelong relationship with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. In this Sacrament, God claims us as his own and offers us the possibility of eternal life.

Baptism also makes us members of Jesus' community of faith. It is hoped that our belief in Jesus and the Gospel is encouraged and strengthened by the faith and good example of the sponsors and family. The symbols and ritual of Baptism remind us that these are the effects of the sacrament.

The primary symbols of Baptism are water, oil, the baptismal garment, and the baptismal candle. One of the deepest mysteries of life is the stubborn presence of evil and sin. This is an unfortunate side effect of humanity's first refusal of God's love. This inherited condition is called original sin. The waters of Baptism symbolize cleansing and forgiveness of original sin, and for adults, personal sin. While sin and evil continue to

be a feature of human life, Baptism celebrates the fact that they have been overcome by the resurrection of Jesus. Water, a substance that is necessary for life, also represents the gift of new and everlasting life given by God at Baptism.

In the early Church, oil was commonly used for medicinal purposes. In the ritual of Baptism, the anointing with blessed oil represents healing and strength.

Near the end of the baptism ritual, the newly baptized person is clothed with a white garment. This garment represents innocence, purity, and transformation of life, which begins on the day of Baptism and concludes with the life in heaven. The presider lights a candle and hands it to the baptized person saying, "Receive the light of Christ". The candle also teaches something about faith. Like the flame, our faith is fragile and must be tended carefully. Before faith can become a source of light and warmth, it must be encouraged by the words and deeds of parents, sponsors, and other members of the community, who teach faith by their own good example

For Personal Reflection

- ✚ What has been your experience of initiation into groups - clubs, fraternities, sororities, jobs, etc.?
- ✚ Think about what life experiences you have heard from inmates about their initiation into gangs.
- ✚ How does this initiation relate to Baptism?
 - What is different?

SUGGESTED PLAN

ONE-TO-ONE OR SMALL GROUP

1. Reflect and share on your experiences of belonging to a group. Describe the rituals of initiation you experienced in order to belong.
2. Reflect on Baptism from scripture:
 - Matthew 3:13-17
 - Matthew 28:19
 - John 3:5-8
 - Romans 6:3-4
 - Galatians 3:18-22
3. Go over the Baptismal Rite. (See Section IX of the Manual)
 - What words and symbols emphasize welcoming and community?
 - Water: What are some meanings connected with water?
 - White garment/candle: What do these suggest?
 - Baptismal Promises - go over each one.
 - What are they saying?
 - What do they mean?
 - What are the implications?
4. Have the Candidate/s for baptism reflect on why he/she/they desire/s membership in the Catholic Church.
5. Generate some discussion on practices, beliefs, customs and traditions of the Roman Catholic Church.

Note to Catechist

The **Rite of Blessing** takes place at the next liturgy. You may take time to go over the Ritual with the participant/s. (See Section VI of the Manual)

SESSION VII SHARING A MEAL

BACKGROUND FOR CATECHIST

Eating and drinking are not merely necessities in our life, things we have to do simply to remain alive. They can and probably should be activities whose meanings extend beyond the purely useful or necessary. They are signs of companionship and unity, times for sharing interests and life.

Eating and drinking together seems always to have had this meaning. It was certainly so in the time of Jesus. We know this from looking at the celebration of the first Eucharist. Quite clearly, the first Eucharistic celebration was a meal, a gathering of close friends to share food and drink for a purpose beyond the purely utilitarian.

The scriptural accounts of the celebration reveal the early Church's understanding of the meaning of that meal.

Whether or not the Last Supper was actually a Passover meal, it was certainly understood by the gospel writers to have been influenced by the atmosphere of the Passover week, during which it took place. The Passover meal is described in the Old Testament as a memorial or commemoration. "This day shall be a memorial feast for you, which all your generations shall celebrate with pilgrimage to the Lord, as a perpetual institution." (Exodus 12: 14) The Israelites were to commemorate their liberation from slavery in Egypt - the event that sealed God's covenant with them.

At the same time, the meal was a covenant pledge for the future. Sharing food and drink at this meal was indeed a sign of the unity the Israelites experience because of what God had done for them. At the farewell supper he shared with his friends, Jesus took the core of a meal steeped in the tradition of the Passover and gave it a penitent and immensely richer meaning. He announced, through it, his death and resurrection. This new commemoration recalls God's new and most wonderful work for us - deliverance in Christ from sin and death. It renders Christ present to us through the mediation of the bread and wine we share.

Because the Eucharist was clearly a meal, the sharing of food and drink was central. Thus it was a sign of the unity that the followers of Christ have. It was a source of the unity they share because, through sharing in the bread and wine, they share Christ. In our own Eucharist, although the meal as such has disappeared, sharing food remains central.

*I am the bread of life...
I myself am the living bread come down from heaven.
If anyone eats this bread, he shall live forever;
The bread I will give is my flesh for the life of the world...
For my flesh is real food and my blood real drink.
The man who feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood
remains in me, and I in him.
(John 6:47, 51, 55-56)*

Saint John's choice of words is important. His understanding of the Eucharist centers around nourishment and life. The understanding of the other evangelists and of Saint Paul center around life-giving sacrifice. We need the perspective offered by St. John to appreciate the full significance of eating and drinking together in the Eucharist. Through his eyes we see that the food and drink we share in the Eucharist is true nourishment which has life-giving power.

It is in the Communion rite of the Eucharist that the gift offered is accepted. After we have declared our Yes to Christ who offers his life-giving presence to us, we pray together the Our Father, in which we ask God for the sustenance we need to live as his sons and daughters. Then we exchange a greeting of peace, a sign of oneness we have in Jesus and which we seek to strengthen in him.

Finally, the presider breaks the Eucharistic bread for the community and invites us to come and share in the nourishment and its life-giving power. It is this Communion together that makes possible our personal communion with Jesus. Then this personal communion makes possible an even deeper union together, "one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:26). After we have received Communion, the presider prays in our name, and his prayer frequently points to the sacramental Communion in which we have participated as a manner in which Jesus Christ draws us closer to himself and to one another.

For Personal Reflection

- ✚ What does it mean to share food with friends?
- ✚ Who are invited?
- ✚ What is the atmosphere like?
- ✚ How does this experience make you feel?
- ✚ How does the experience of sharing Holy Communion at Mass make you feel?
 - Is it similar to sharing food with friends? Why or why not?

SUGGESTED PLAN

ONE-TO-ONE OR SMALL "GROUP

1. Introduce the sharing by talking about the following:
 - a) Favorite foods
 - b) Favorite places to eat.
2. Ask: What have been the most memorable meals in your life? Why were they so?
3. Share and discuss some Gospel stories of Jesus eating with his friends:
 - a) John 2:1-12
 - b) Luke 24:13-31
 - c) John 21:1-14
4. Read and discuss Matthew 26:17-30

Note: An interesting point to make is verse 23 – Jesus knowingly shares a meal with his betrayer and will offer his life even for Judas.

5. Spend time with some focus on the meal aspects of the Eucharistic liturgy.

SESSION VIII CONFIRMATION

BACKGROUND FOR CATECHIST

Confirmation is the third sacrament of initiation. In the early Church, the rituals of Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist were celebrated together as one sacrament of initiation. Catechumens, those being initiated into the Christian community, celebrated these rituals after a lengthy process of preparation that included faith, moral values, and prayer. Today, we call this preparation the R.C.I.A. (Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults). Over the years these rituals became separated from each other and were celebrated as separate sacraments at different points in people's lives.

Confirmation is really a beginning; the journey or process of initiation that lasts a lifetime. Persons seeking Confirmation must have a genuine desire to grow in understanding, moral values, and prayerful participation. The sacrament of Confirmation calls individuals to full, mature participation in the three essential aspects of the Church; that is they must be ready to publicly affirm their personal belief in God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; in the Catholic Church as a forgiving community of saints and sinners; in the resurrection of the body and eternal life. Faith commitment must include the sincere desire to live out the primary commandment of love of God and neighbor. Finally, persons who enter into confirmation must be prepared to fully participate in the celebration of God's love that comprises the communal prayer of the Church, which is the Liturgy or Mass.

Confirmation, in its present celebration requires a mature faith commitment; therefore, the freedom of candidates must be ensured. Since persons will be ready to take this step in faith at different times, personal desire and readiness must be the criterion for celebrating the sacrament of Confirmation; not "something I have to do."

The Church is a community of persons who share a common faith. Faith is a way of seeing. Catholic Christians see the world under the power and care of God, active in their lives and in the universe.

They see in Jesus the fullness of God and the fullness of humanity. They see death as a new beginning in eternal life. To have faith is not simply to accept certain statements as true. To have faith is to see reality from a

certain viewpoint, and to desire to become a full member of the Church is to begin to share this common way of seeing and to grow in this understanding of faith. Faith means looking deeply at our experiences and seeing God's care and action in our lives.

Most people equate morality with personal and interpersonal issues, most frequently with questions about sexual behavior. They see morality as something between God and the individual, or between two individuals.

It is important to recognize that morality also concerns society. Christian moral guidelines challenge us to reflect on the values and structures of our society to change them. Issues such as hunger, poverty, racism, abortion, sexism, and the nuclear arms race are moral issues that confront Christians today. Christians must be concerned not only with respect for their neighbor's property, but for the rights of people in other parts of the world to a decent standard of living. We often feel powerless to influence the sinful social structures of the world. However as Christians, we recognize that the challenge of Jesus mandates involvement on this level. It is important to recognize not only our responsibility, but also our ability to make a difference in society. Writing government officials, reading church social teaching are just two ways in which this societal level of morality can be addressed. Only when we recognize the importance of all three levels of moral concern – personal, interpersonal, and societal – will we be able to translate the Christian ethical mandate into action.

How do you define “spirit”? The easiest way to understand spirit is to look at the effects spirit has on a group, such as school spirit. When members of a group have spirit, they have unity. They share a sense of belonging. Members of a spirit-filled group also share and communicate enthusiasm – a feeling of life and joy and confidence. They also share courage. The tasks ahead may be great but they are committed to giving their all.

These three major effects of spirit – unity, enthusiasm, and courage – were seen in the early Church community after the experience of Pentecost. This experience is recorded in Chapter 2 of the Acts of the Apostles. After Jesus had ascended to his Father, the apostles felt lost and scared, depressed and confused. On Pentecost, the house where the apostles were staying was filled with the noise of a powerful wind.

Something like tongues of fire settled on each one of them. After this experience, their lives took on a whole new meaning.

The loud wind is a symbol of the mighty, creative breath of God. The story of Creation in Genesis describes the powerful creative Spirit of God moving over the waters, bringing order out of chaos. The breath or Spirit of God brought light out of darkness and life out of the forces of destruction. In the Pentecost experience, this same breath, the Spirit of God, brought new life, new enthusiasm out of a seemingly hopeless and depressing situation. The Spirit breathed into the apostles a new sense of purpose and challenge.

The traditional gifts of the Holy Spirit are based in Isaiah. They are Wisdom, Understanding, Counsel, Strength, Knowledge, Piety, and Fear of the Lord (Is 11:2-3). Counsel is the ability to make good decisions. Strength is also understood as courage. Fear of the Lord and Piety can be understood as reverence and wonder in God's presence.

For Personal Reflection

- ☒ Where do you see God's care and action in your life?

- ☒ Where do you see it for the incarcerated?

SUGGESTED PLAN

ONE-TO-ONE OR SMALL GROUP

1. Reflect and share on the presence of God's action in your life.
2. Share an experience or time in your life in which you felt confused, depressed, or lifeless. What happened to bring you out of your depression?
3. What images do you think of when you think of the Holy Spirit? Why?
4. What do the following images imply: dove, wind, tongues of flames?
5. Read and discuss the following Scripture passages:
 - a) Acts 2:1-28, 32, 42-47
 - b) Galatians 5:16-26
 - c) 1 Cor. 12:1-11
6. Cross and compare the following Scripture passage with the prayer at the *Laying on of Hands* during the Rite of Confirmation. (Section VIII of the Manual)
 - Isaiah 11:2-3
7. Go over the Confirmation Rite. (Section VIII of the Manual)
 - What words and symbols represent God's action in our lives?

Rite of Baptism

Presider: N., you have asked to be baptized. In doing so, you are accepting the responsibility of practicing the faith. It will be your duty to keep God's commandments as Christ taught us, by loving God and neighbor. Do you clearly understand what you are undertaking?

R: I do.

Presider: Godparents, are you ready to give example to help N., in his/her Christian discipleship?

R: We are.

Presider: N., the Christian community welcomes you with great joy. In its name, I claim you for Christ our Savior by the sign of his cross. I now trace the cross on your forehead and invite your godparents to do the same.

Anointing

Presider: We anoint you with the oil of salvation in the name of Christ our Savior; may he strengthen you with his power, who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

Amen.

Intercessions:

The intercessions used here are those that are regularly used at the liturgy. The Presider adds the following after all the intercessions have been read:

Once born again of water and the Holy Spirit, may N. always live in that Spirit and make his/her new life known to all he/she meets. We pray to the Lord.

Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, source of all life and love, your Church thanks you and prays for N.

You have brought him/her/them out of the darkness and into your marvelous light. You have made him/her/them your adopted child/children and temple of the Holy Spirit.

Help him/her/them in all the dangers of this life and strengthen him/her/them in the constant effort to reach your kingdom, through the power of Christ our Savior.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen

Blessing of Baptismal Water

Presider: Father, God of mercy, through these waters of Baptism you have filled us with new life as your very own children.

All: Blessed be God.

Presider: From all who are baptized in water and the Holy Spirit, you have formed one people, united in your Son, Jesus Christ.

All: Blessed be God.

Presider: You have set us free and filled our hearts with the Spirit of your love, that we may live in your peace.

All: Blessed be God.

Presider: You call those who have been baptized to announce the Good News of Jesus Christ to people everywhere.

All: Blessed be God.

Presider: You have called N., to this cleansing water and new birth that by sharing the faith of your church he/she/they might have eternal life.

Bless this water in which N. will be baptized. We ask this in the name of Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Renunciation of Sin

Presider: N., you have come here to present yourself for baptism. Through water and the Holy Spirit you are to receive the gift of new life from God who is love.

On your part, you must practice the faith. See to it that the divine life, which God now gives you, is kept from the poison of sin to always grow stronger in your heart.

If you are ready to accept this responsibility, profess now the vows of Baptism. Reject sin. Profess your faith in Christ Jesus. This is the faith of the Church. This is the faith in which you are about to be baptized.

Presider: Do you reject Satan?

R: I do.

Presider: And all his empty promises?

R: I do.

Profession of Faith

Presider: Do you believe in God the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth?

R: I do.

Presider: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, was crucified, died and was buried, rose from the dead and is now seated at the right hand of the Father?

R: I do.

Presider: Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and life everlasting?

R: I do.

Presider: This is our faith. This is the faith of the Church. We are proud to profess it in Christ Jesus our Lord.

R: Amen.

Baptism

Presider: N., is it your will to be baptized into the faith of the Church?

R: Yes

Presider: N., I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

Anointing with Chrism (Omitted for RCIA)

Presider: God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ has freed you from sin, given you a new birth by water and the Holy Spirit, and welcomed you into his holy people. He now anoints you with the chrism of salvation. As Christ was anointed Priest, Prophet and King, so may you live always as a member of his body, sharing everlasting life.

All: Amen

Clothing with White Garment

Presider: N., you have become a new creation and have clothed yourself in Christ. See in this white garment the outward sign of your Christian dignity. With your family and friends to help you by word and example, bring that dignity unstained into the everlasting life of heaven.

Lighted Candle

Presider: N., receive the light of Christ.

This light is entrusted to you to be kept burning brightly. You have been enlightened by Christ. You are to walk always as a child of the light. Keep the flame of faith alive in your heart. When the Lord comes, may you go out to meet him with all the saints in the heavenly kingdom.

Rite of Confirmation

Gospel

Presentation of Candidate/s

After the Gospel, before the Homily, the Chaplain/Coordinator invites the candidate/s to stand and presents him/her/them to the Presider. The following words (or similar) may be used.

Chaplain/Coordinator:

Fr./Bishop N., our faith community here at (name of institution) welcomes you and wishes to present (names) to you for confirmation. He/she/they have been prepared and is/are accompanied by (a) sponsor/s. It is our privilege to present him/her/them to you at this time.

Homily

The Presider will give the homily

Renewal of Baptismal Promises

Candidate/s is/are called forward and stands before the Presider.

Presider: Do you reject Satan and all his empty promises?

R: I do

Presider: Do you believe in God the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth?

R: I do.

Presider: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, was crucified, died and was buried, rose from the dead and is now seated at the right hand of the Father?

R: I do.

Presider: Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who came upon the apostles at Pentecost and today is given to you sacramentally in Confirmation?

R: I do.

Presider: Do you believe in the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and life everlasting?

R: I do.

Presider: This is our faith. This is the faith of the Church. We are proud to profess it in Christ Jesus our Lord.

R: Amen.

The Laying on of Hands

The laying on of hands on the Candidates by the Presider expresses the biblical gesture by which the gift of the Holy Spirit is invoked.

Presider: My dear friends, in Baptism, God our Father gave new birth or eternal life to *(name/s)*. Let us pray to our Father that he will pour out the Holy Spirit to strengthen *(name/s)* with his gifts and anoint him/her/them to be more like Christ, the Son of God.

All pray in silence for a short time.

The Presider (alone) extends his hands over the Candidate/s.

Presider: All powerful God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, by water and the Holy Spirit, you freed *(name/s)* from sin and gave him/her/them new life. Send your Holy Spirit upon him/her/them to be his/her/their helper and guide. Give him/her/them the spirit of wisdom and understanding; the spirit of right judgment and courage; the spirit of knowledge and reverence. Fill him/her/them with the spirit of wonder and awe in your presence. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

R: Amen

Anointing with Chrism

Through the anointing with chrism (perfumed oil), the baptized person receives the indelible character, the seal of the Lord, together with the gift of the Spirit, which conforms him/her/them more closely to Christ and gives the grace of spreading the Lord's presence among all people.

Presider: N., be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit.

R: Amen.

Presider: Peace be with you.

R: And with your Spirit.

RECONCILIATION SERVICE

Reconciliation is an important component to all chaplains and prison ministers. Often, inmates ask for "confession" and their names/requests go on a list for the next visiting priest. Many times, however, institutions do not enjoy the luxury of regularly visiting priests for confessions.

Nevertheless, inmates need to be given an opportunity to experience God's love and forgiveness.

The following is a suggestion for a reconciliation service in the absence of a priest.

In an effort to enhance your service, you will need:

A small table	Bowl of water	Crucifix	Candle
Cloth	A small towel	Bible	CD player

A plant, picture, icon or some other adornment (something meaningful to the inmates would be most appropriate)

Music (recommended)

On Eagle's Wings	Michael Joncas
The Cry of the Poor	John Fahey
You are Mine	David Haas
I Will Not Forget You	Carey Landry
Peace is Flowing Like a River	Carey Landry
Prayer of Saint Francis	Sebastian Temple
Be With Me Lord	Tom Booth
Tu Vas Conmigo	Bob Hurd

Welcome

The Presider welcomes the assembly by introducing his/herself and by inviting the assembly to say their first names.

Opening Song

Greeting

Presider: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit

All: Amen.

Presider: May the God of Mercy and peace be with you.

All: And with your Spirit.

Opening Prayer

Presider: Good and merciful God, source of all reconciliation and gift of forgiveness and peace, you have brought us here alone and together to receive your mercy and grace.

Touch our hearts and convert us to yourself. Where we have been divided and scattered, may your love make us one again; where unfaithfulness has brought weakness, may your power heal and strengthen; where turning away from you has brought death, may your Spirit bring us to new life.

Give us new hearts to love so that our lives may reflect the love of Jesus. And may the world see the glory of Christ in us. This we pray in Jesus' name.

All: Amen.

Presider: My brothers/sisters, as you come before God to present your weakness and failings, remember that our God is not a harsh, demanding God. Our God is gentle, merciful and compassionate. Remember the words of the prophet Isaiah:

To you our God says: "You are precious in my eyes, and honored, and I love you." (Is 43:3)

To you our God proclaims: "Even if a mother should forget the child she has nursed, I will never forget you." (Is 49:15)

Reading from John 8:3-11

Then the scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery and made her stand in the middle.

They said to him,

“Teacher, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery.

Now in the law, Moses commanded us to stone such women.

So what do you say?”

They said this to test him,

so that they could have some charge to bring against him.

Jesus bent down and began to write on the ground with his finger.

But when they continued asking him,

he straightened up and said to them,

“Let the one among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.”

Again he bent down and wrote on the ground.

And in response, they went away one by one,

beginning with the elders.

So he was left alone with the woman before him.

Then Jesus straightened up and said to her,

“Woman, where are they?

Has no one condemned you?”

She replied, “No one, sir.”

Then Jesus said, “Neither do I condemn you.

Go, [and] from now on do not sin any more.”

Reflection

The Presider gives a reflection from the Gospel. The reflection must stress God's unconditional love, forgiveness and mercy. The reflection leads to the examination of conscience. The reflection may include the following:

We need forgiveness and we need to forgive. We all must admit a common fault: we have failed to love enough. We have sinned against God and against one another. We need to be healed by God's love. To be healed, we ask forgiveness and give forgiveness. By joining with one another we become a sign of God's love and unity.

Today is an essential step on our journey home. We pray that we become more aware of our call to be part of a forgiving community.

Examination of Conscience

Pass out copies of the handout on the Sacrament of Reconciliation

Slowly and reflectively read through the handout.

Presider: I invite you to say a prayer in the silence of your heart asking God's forgiveness for all the pain and hurt you have caused others.

Pause

I also invite you to say a prayer of forgiveness for all those who have caused pain and hurtfulness in your life.

Pause

Presider: Let us pray.

All: My God, I am sorry for my sins with all my heart. In choosing to do wrong and failing to do good I have hurt myself and others whom you love. I firmly intend with your help, to do penance and with your grace to avoid whatever leads me to sin.

Pause

Presider: Please come forward and bathe your hands in the forgiveness of our God.

Soft music may be played at this time. Assembly comes forward one at a time and washes their hands in the water and come before the Presider who says:

Presider: Our savior, Jesus Christ, suffered and died for us. In his name I ask for God's pardon and peace for you. Amen.

Conclusion

Presider: Let us pray

All: Lord, make me a channel of your peace.

Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek
to be consoled as to console;
to be understood as to understand;
to be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive;
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

Saint Francis of Assisi

Presider: May the Lord continue to guide your hearts in the way of his love.
May the Lord give you peace now and for all days.

All: Amen

Presider: God has forgiven your failings and weaknesses and reconciled you.
Go now in peace.

All: May God be praised now and forever. Amen.

Closing Song

CATECHISTS

QUALITIES AND QUALIFICATIONS

Volunteers interested in doing sacramental preparation should be interviewed and approved by the Catholic chaplain of the institution in which they will be working or by the Director of the Criminal Justice Ministry of the diocese in which the institution is located. The chaplain or director should have an opportunity to observe them in a correctional institutional setting prior to their being approved for this specialized ministry.

Prospective volunteers should demonstrate:

- a. Common sense,
- b. Good judgment,
- c. Willingness to be available,
- d. Qualities of understanding, tact, and discretion,
- e. Competency to prepare another for the sacraments,
 - ▶ some formal catechetical training,
 - ▶ some experience in sacramental preparation,
- f. An understanding of prison ministry.

The Catechist must be aware of the various backgrounds of those in a correctional institution:

- ▶ Many who present themselves for the sacraments have not had a healthy family environment, and thus have not had their parents as their first catechist.
- ▶ It is not uncommon for formal education to have been interrupted, scattered, or non-existent.
- ▶ For many who are incarcerated their life experience has given them a very different sense of what life has to offer.

With the above points in mind, a catechist should focus less on memorization, theological detail and vocabulary, and more on nurturing faith, prayerfulness, openness, and understanding.

TRAINING

“A training, at once many-sided and complete, is indispensable if the apostolate is to attain full efficacy.”

Vatican II, *The Decree on the Apostolate of Lay People*

To participate as a catechist in prison ministry, the following is strongly recommended:

Training offered by the Diocesan Criminal Justice Ministry or Diocesan Department of Religious Education and Formation

- ▶ Initial Training
- ▶ Faith Sharing
- ▶ One-on-One

The following is also recommended:

Training offered by the Department of Religious Education and Formation

- ▶ Catechist Formation
- ▶ Three Levels

Other workshops/seminars

Forums:

- ▶ Regional Congresses
- ▶ Offerings from Worship Office or Office of Religious Education.

Topics:

- ▶ Catechesis
- ▶ Sacramental Formation
- ▶ Prayer
- ▶ RCIA

ADDENDUM SUPPLEMENTAL DOCUMENTS

- 1. Sample A – Schedule of Sacraments**
- 2. Sample B – Inmate Information/Sacramental Request Form**
- 3. Sample C –Parental/Guardian Consent Form for Minor Inmates
(under age 18)**
- 4. Sample D –Family/Godparent Request Form to Attend
Sacramental Service at a Correctional Institution**
- 5. Sample E – Inmate Record of Sacraments**
- 6. Rite of Communion Service Outside Mass**

OFFICE OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHAPLAIN

Date: _____ Dorm/Unit/Module: _____

Name	See the Chaplain	Confession	Bible	Rosary	Talk to a Volunteer	Baptism	1st Communion	Confirmation
1.								
2.								
3.								
4.								
5.								
6.								
7.								
8.								
9.								

SAMPLE A

OFFICE OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHAPLAIN

I/we hereby give permission for: _____

to celebrate the sacrament [s] of

Baptism

1st Communion

Confirmation

This celebration will occur at _____

PLEASE NOTE: A COPY THE BAPTISMAL CERTIFICATE OF YOUR SON/DAUGHTER IS NECESSARY FOR THE CELEBRATION OF THE SACRAMENTS OF 1st COMMUNION AND CONFIRMATION. PLEASE FORWARD TO US AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

Name of Parent or Legal Guardian

Signature

Name of Parent or Legal Guardian

Signature

Date signed: _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN: PLEASE FILL AND SIGN AND RETURN AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO:

SAMPLE C

OFFICE OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHAPLAIN

Special Visit Request

Date: _____

Facility: _____

To: _____

On: _____
Date

_____ will celebrate the sacraments of
Name

Baptism

Confirmation

First Communion

during our regularly scheduled service at _____

Permission is requested for the following family members and godparents to attend the service:

Name

Relationship

In Christ Jesus

Approved:

Chaplain

Date: _____

SAMPLE D

OFFICE OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHAPLAIN

Name of Chaplain: _____ Name of Institution: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Record of Sacraments on: _____

Name	Date of Birth	Sacrament	Church of Baptism	Date of Baptism	Parents	Godparents/ Sponsors

RITE OF DISTRIBUTING HOLY COMMUNION OUTSIDE OF MASS¹

THE LONG RITE WITH THE CELEBRATION OF THE WORD

This rite is to be used chiefly when Mass is not celebrated or when communion is not distributed at scheduled times. The purpose is that the people should be nourished by the word of God. By hearing it they learn that the marvels it proclaims reach their climax in the paschal mystery of which the Mass is a sacramental memorial and in which they share by communion. Nourished by God's word, they are led on to grateful and fruitful participation in the saving mysteries.

INTRODUCTORY RITES

After the people have assembled and preparations for the service are complete, all stand for the greeting of the minister. The assembly's responses are printed below in **bold**.

Greeting

If the minister is a priest or deacon, he says:

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
and the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit
be with you all.

Or:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Or:

The Lord be with you.

The people answer: **And with your spirit.**

¹ USCCB: International Commission on English in the Liturgy, *The Rites of the Catholic Church – Volume One*, (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1990), pp. 649-653. Certain elements of the rites and the people's responses have been modified to conform to those in the *Revised Roman Missal*, effective November, 2011.

If the minister is not a priest or deacon, he greets those present with these or similar words:

Brothers (and/or Sisters),
the Lord invites us (you) to his table
to share in the body of Christ:
bless him for his goodness.

The people answer: **Blessed be God for ever.**

PENITENTIAL RITE

The penitential rite follows, and the minister invites the people to recall their sins and to repent of them in these words:

Brothers (and sisters),
to prepare ourselves for this celebration,
let us call to mind our sins

A pause for silent reflection follows.

All say:

**I confess to almighty God
and to you, my brothers (and sisters),
that I have greatly sinned,
in my thoughts and in my words,
in what I have done and in what I have failed to do,**

They strike their breast, and say:

**through my fault, through my fault,
through my most grievous fault;**

Then they continue:

**therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin,
all the Angels and Saints,
and you, my brothers and sisters,
to pray for me to the Lord our God.**

The minister concludes;

May almighty God have mercy on us,
forgive us our sins,
and bring us to everlasting life.

The people answer: **Amen.**

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The Liturgy of the Word now takes place as at Mass. Texts are chosen for the occasion either from the Mass of the day or from the votive Masses of the Holy Eucharist or the Precious Blood, the readings for which are in the Lectionary. A list of these passages can be found in the Addendum to this Ritual. The Lectionary offers a wide range of readings which may be drawn upon for particular needs, such as the votive Mass of the Sacred Heart (see Addendum).

There may be one or more readings, the first followed by a psalm or some chant or by a period of silent prayer.

1st Reading:

The reader begins with: A Reading from the...

To indicate the end of the reading, the reader acclaims: The word of the Lord

The people answer: **Thanks be to God.**

Responsorial Psalm

The reader begins the Responsorial Psalm by reciting the responsorial verse.

The people answer by reciting the responsorial verse and repeat the recitation following each passage as directed by the reader.

2nd Reading (if applicable):

The reader begins with: A Reading from the...

To indicate the end of the reading, the reader acclaims: The word of the Lord

The people answer: **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Reading

The minister begins with: The Lord be with you.

The people answer: **And with your spirit.**

The minister acclaims: A reading from the holy Gospel according to N.

The people answer: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

At the end of the Gospel, the minister acclaims: The Gospel of the Lord

The people answer: **Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.**

Then follows the **Homily** (minister is a priest or deacon); otherwise a **Reflection**.

Prayer of the Faithful (General Intercession)

The minister begins the prayer with an invitation to the people, such as:

My brothers (and/or sisters), let us bring our needs and requests before our God:

Each petition is concluded with the statement: we pray to the Lord.

The people respond to each prayer petition with: **Lord, hear our Prayer.**

The minister then concludes with a short prayer, such as:

Lord God, look upon us and hear our prayers. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

The people answer: **Amen**

COMMUNION RITE

The Lord's Prayer

After the Prayer of the Faithful, the minister goes to the place where the sacrament is reserved, takes the ciborium or pyx containing the body of the Lord, places it on the altar and genuflects. He then introduces the Lord's Prayer in these or similar words:

At the Savior's command
and formed by divine teaching,
we dare to say:

He continues with the people:

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

The minister then acclaims:

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,
graciously grant peace in our days,
that, by the help of your mercy,
we may be always free from sin
and safe from all distress,
as we await the blessed hope
and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

The people answer:

**For the kingdom,
the power and the glory are yours
now and for ever.**

The minister continues:

Lord Jesus Christ,
who said to your Apostles:
Peace I leave you, my peace I give you;
look not on our sins,
but on the faith of your Church,
and graciously grant her peace and unity
in accordance with your will.
Who live and reign for ever and ever.

The people answer: **Amen.**

The minister acclaims:

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

The people answer: **And with your spirit.**

The minister may invite the people in these or similar words:

Let us offer each other the sign of peace.

All make an appropriate sign of peace, according to local custom.

Invitation to Communion

The minister genuflects. Taking a host, he raises it slightly over the vessel or pyx and, facing the people, says;

Behold the Lamb of God,
behold him who takes away the sins of the world.
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

The communicants say once:

**Lord, I am not worthy
that you should enter under my roof,
but only say the word
and my soul shall be healed.**

Distribution of Communion

If the minister receives communion, he says quietly:

May the body of Christ bring me to everlasting life.

Then he takes the vessel or pyx and goes to the communicants. He takes a host for each one, raises it slightly, and says:

The body of Christ.

The communicant answers: **Amen**, and receives communion.

After communion, the minister puts any particle left on the plate into the pyx, and he may wash his hands. He returns any remaining hosts to the tabernacle (if applicable to the institution) and genuflects.

A period of silence may now be observed, or a psalm or song of praise may be sung.

Prayer after Communion (Concluding prayer)

The minister then says the concluding prayer:

Let us pray.
Lord Jesus Christ,
you gave us the Eucharist
as the memorial of your suffering and death.
May our worship of this sacrament of your body and blood

help us to experience the salvation you won for us
and the peace of the kingdom
where you live with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

The people answer: **Amen**

(Other prayers may be chosen.)

CONCLUDING RITE

Blessing

If the minister is a priest or deacon, he extends his hands and, facing the people, says:

The Lord be with you.

The people answer: **And with your spirit.**

He blesses the people with these words:

May almighty God bless you,
the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

If the minister is not a priest or deacon, he invokes God's blessing and, crossing himself, says:

May the Lord bless us,
protect us from all evil,
and lead us to everlasting life.

Or:

May the almighty and merciful God bless and protect us,
the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

The people answer: **Amen.**

Dismissal

Finally the minister says:

Go in the peace of Christ.

The people answer: **Thanks be to God.**

Then after customary reverence, the minister leaves (or concludes the service).

TEXTS FOR USE IN THE RITE OF DISTRIBUTING HOLY COMMUNION OUTSIDE OF MASS

BIBLICAL READINGS

READINGS FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT

Genesis 14:18-20

Melchisedech brought bread and wine.

Exodus 12:21-27

When the Lord sees the blood on the door, he will pass over your home.

Exodus 16:2-4, 12-15

I will rain bread from heaven upon you.

Exodus 24:3-8

This is the blood of the covenant that the Lord God has made with you.

Deuteronomy 8:2-3, 15b-16a

He gave you food which you and your fathers did not know.

1 Kings 19:4-8

Strengthened by the food, he walked to the mountain of the Lord.

Proverbs 9:1-6

Come and eat my bread, drink the wine I have prepared.

READINGS FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT

Acts 2:42-47

They continued in fellowship with the apostles and in the Breaking of the bread.

Acts 10:34a, 37-43

After he was raised from the dead, we ate and drank with him.

1 Corinthians 10:16-17

Though we are many, we are one bread and one body.

1 Corinthians 11:23-26

Each time you eat this bread and drink this cup, you are proclaiming the death of the Lord Jesus.

Hebrews 9:11-15

The blood of Christ purifies our hearts from sin.

Hebrews 12:18-19, 22-24

Jesus brings you to the Father by shedding his blood for you.

1 Peter 1:17-21

You have been redeemed by the precious blood of Jesus Christ.

1 John 5:4-7a, 8b

The Spirit, the water, and the blood give witness.

Revelation 1:5-8

Because he loves us, he has saved us from sin with his blood.

Revelation 7:9-14

They have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 23:1-3, 4, 5, 6

R (1): The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

Psalm 34:2-3, 4-5, 6-7, 8-9

R (9a): Taste and see the goodness of the Lord.

Psalm 40:2 and 4ab, 7-8a, 8b-9, 10

R (8a and 9a): Here I am, Lord; I come to do your will.

Psalm 78:3-4a and 7ab, 23-24, 25, 54

R (24b): The Lord gave them bread from heaven.

Psalm 110: 1, 2, 3, 4

R (4bc): You are a priest for ever, in the line of Melchisedech.

Psalm 116:12-13, 15 and 16bc, 17-18R

R (13): I will take the cup of salvation, and call on the name of the Lord.

or (1 Corinthians 10:16): **Our blessing-cup is a communion with the blood of Christ.**

Psalm 145:10-11, 15-16, 17-18

R (see 16): The hand of the Lord feeds us; he answers all our needs.

Psalm 148:12-13, 14-15, 19-20

R (12a): Praise the Lord, Jerusalem.

or (John 6:58c): **Whoever eats this bread will live forever.**

ALLELUIA VERSE BEFORE THE GOSPEL

John 6:51

I am the living bread from heaven, says the Lord; if anyone eats this bread he will live for ever.

John 6:56

Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood, says the Lord, will live in me and I in him.

John 6:57

As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so he who eats me will live because of me.

See Revelation 1:5ab

Jesus Christ, you are the faithful witness, firstborn from the dead.

Revelation 5:9

You are worthy, O Lord, to receive the book and open its seals.

GOSPEL

Mark 14:12-16, 22-26

This is my body. This is my blood.

Mark 15:16-20

They dressed Jesus up in purple and put a crown of thorns on him.

Luke 9:11b-17

All the people at and were satisfied.

Luke 22:39-44

His sweat became like drops of blood falling to the ground.

Luke 24:13-35 (longer) or **13-16, 28-35** (shorter)

They recognized him at the breaking of the bread.

John 6:1-15

They gave the people all the food they wanted.

John 6:24-35

If you come to me, you will never be hungry. He who believes in me will never know thirst.

John 6:41-51

I am the living bread from heaven.

John 6:51-58

My flesh and blood are true food and drink.

John 19:31-37

When they pierced his side with a spear, blood and water flowed out.

John 21:1-14

Jesus took the bread and gave it to the