

TOTAL CATECHESIS

the Creed

CATECHETICAL SESSIONS ON

Liturgy and the Sacraments

Christian Morality

Christian Prayer

Pray It! Study It! Live It!™ resources offer a holistic approach to learning, living, and passing on the Catholic faith.

TOTAL CATECHESIS

The Total Faith™ Initiative

Total Catechesis

Catechetical Sessions on Christian Morality

Catechetical Sessions on Christian Prayer

Catechetical Sessions on Liturgy and the Sacraments

Catechetical Sessions on the Creed

Total Youth Ministry

Ministry Resources for Community Life

Ministry Resources for Evangelization

Ministry Resources for Justice and Service

Ministry Resources for Pastoral Care

Ministry Resources for Prayer and Worship

Ministry Resources for Youth Leadership Development

Total Faith™ Initiative Coordinator's Manual

The Catholic Faith Handbook for Youth

The Catholic Youth Bible™

the Creed

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Liturgy and the Sacraments

Christian Morality

Christian Prayer

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Saint Mary's Press™

To my parents, Janice and John, who said yes for me at Baptism and taught me how and why to continue saying yes to God's unconditional love.

—Therese Brown



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Contents

Introduction	7
1 Introduction to the Liturgy	17
2 The Liturgical Year	30
3 Introduction to the Sacraments	47
4 The Sacrament of Baptism	61
5 The Sacrament of Confirmation	73
6 The Sacrament of the Eucharist	86
7 The Eucharistic Rite: An Intergenerational Session	98
8 The Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation	114
9 The Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick	129

10
**The Sacraments at the Service of Communion:
Holy Orders and Matrimony** 146

Acknowledgments 165

Introduction

The Total Faith™ Initiative: An Overview

In 1997 the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) published its blueprint for youth ministry in the twenty-first century. That document, *Renewing the Vision: A Framework for Catholic Youth Ministry*, highlights three goals for ministry with adolescents:

- to empower young people to live as disciples of Jesus Christ in our world today
- to draw young people to responsible participation in the life, mission, and work of the Catholic faith community
- to foster the total personal and spiritual growth of each young person

In *Renewing the Vision*, the bishops describe a rich and challenging vision for Catholic youth ministry. Catechesis is at the heart of that vision; throughout the document the bishops urge the Church to guide young people toward a life of fullness in Jesus Christ, and to give them the tools that will enable them to live out that fullness as Catholic Christians. To put it simply, the bishops call young people to embrace their faith as they study it, pray it, and live it. The bishops also challenge the faith community to surround young people with love, care, and attention and to include youth throughout the life of the parish.

By addressing each of the eight components for comprehensive youth ministry as articulated in *Renewing the Vision*, the TOTAL FAITH Initiative helps communities implement that vision. It addresses those elements in a way that pays attention to the intellectual, spiritual, and pastoral needs of young people. In this renewed vision, catechesis is one component of youth ministry; it is not distinct from it.

The initiative includes a three-part series that brings to the field of youth ministry the ancient yet timeless truths of the Catholic faith. The Scriptures and Tradition are set within a framework that any parish can apply in its everyday ministry with youth. From the initial proclamation of the Good News, through evangelization and outreach to effective catechesis,

The Pillars of the Catechism and Total Catechesis

Here is how the four parts, or pillars, of the *Catechism* and the Total Catechesis manuals are related:

- The first pillar of the *Catechism*, based on the Apostles' Creed, is covered in *Catechetical Sessions on the Creed*.
- The second pillar of the *Catechism*, based on the seven sacraments, is covered in *Catechetical Sessions on Liturgy and the Sacraments*.
- The third pillar of the *Catechism*, based on the Ten Commandments, is covered in *Catechetical Sessions on Christian Morality*.
- The fourth pillar of the *Catechism*, based on the Lord's Prayer, is covered in *Catechetical Sessions on Christian Prayer*.

In addition, the core text of the Total Catechesis series, *The Catholic Faith Handbook for Youth (CFH)*, follows the same structure. The Ad Hoc Committee to Oversee the Use of the Catechism, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, has found the *CFH* to be in conformity with the *Catechism*.

the TOTAL FAITH Initiative seeks to root youth in and connect them to the unchanging truths of their Catholic faith—while challenging them to apply the words of the Gospel and the teachings of Tradition to their daily lives. The TOTAL FAITH Initiative includes these components:

- *The Catholic Faith Handbook for Youth (CFH)* and the first edition of *The Catholic Youth Bible (CYB)* serve as the centerpieces of this initiative. Each book is an integrated resource for youth who are participating in the learning elements of the TOTAL FAITH Initiative.
- The **Total Youth Ministry** resource manuals address six of the components of youth ministry that are outlined in *Renewing the Vision*. The advocacy component, which is aimed primarily at the adult Church, is woven throughout the ministry resource manuals and is addressed specifically in the *TOTAL FAITH Initiative Coordinator's Manual*.
- The four catechetical manuals that comprise the **Total Catechesis** series are grounded in the content of the *CFH* and address the four pillars of the Catholic faith as outlined in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.

Total Catechesis: An Overview

Using tested strategies, catechists lead the participants through creative learning experiences and then invite them to reflect on those experiences. Prayer, the Scriptures, and other elements of Christian faith are carefully integrated into every manual in the series. These four manuals correspond to the four sections of the *CFH*:

- *Catechetical Sessions on Christian Morality*
- *Catechetical Sessions on Christian Prayer*
- *Catechetical Sessions on Liturgy and the Sacraments*
- *Catechetical Sessions on the Creed*

The manuals in the Total Catechesis series are Pray It! Study It! Live It!TM resources. The STUDY IT! component comprises a 45- to 60-minute core session focusing on the chapters found in the *CFH*. Optional activities, called session extensions, allow you to extend the core session to 90 minutes or longer. The PRAY IT! component offers a 10- to 15-minute prayer service on the session theme, and the LIVE IT! component suggests ways to connect the session topic to parish, community, and family life.

The Catholic Faith Handbook for Youth

The *CFH* is a teen's guide to the beliefs and practices of the Catholic Church. This book is an integrated text for youth who are participating in the learning elements of Total Catechesis. All the sessions in the Total Catechesis manuals are linked to this handbook. Leaders in youth ministry will also find it to be a helpful resource and guide for sharing and living the faith.

The Catholic Youth Bible

The *CYB* is designed for searchers and committed Christian youth to read and to apply the Scriptures to their life. The first edition of the *CYB* is linked to sessions throughout the Total Catechesis manuals and, therefore, is considered an important student resource.

An Added Feature: CD-ROMs

Each manual is accompanied by a CD-ROM containing the full content of its activities. This feature enables you to provide materials to catechists, adult leaders, parents, and young people in a variety of delivery methods, such as e-mail, Web site posting, and photocopying. Handouts and resources are provided in both color and black-and-white versions, and the latter can be customized for the particular needs of your group. Each CD-ROM also provides video clips, hyperlinks to suggested Web sites, and a selection from *A Quiet Place Apart*, a series of guided meditations from Saint Mary's Press.

Catechetical Sessions on Liturgy and the Sacraments: An Overview

Many experts feel that one reason it is harder today to appreciate the meaning of liturgy and the sacraments is because of modern technology and modern media (*CFH*, p. 135). Youth have a wide variety of stimuli competing for their attention. Liturgy and the sacraments may seem bland in comparison to the entertainment industry, which is always changing, new, and attractive. Once young people understand the nature of liturgy and the connections between the sacraments and their own lives, however, they can appreciate the fact that they can encounter the living God within these celebrations. Liturgy and the sacraments have everything to do with young people and what is most important to them.

The young people may have heard the word *liturgy*, but the opening sessions teach them about the meaning of liturgy and how the liturgical year is organized. The young people will explore the nature of signs, symbols, and rituals before moving into a study of the sacraments themselves. Though they may have learned about the sacraments earlier in their lives, the young people are now ripe for understanding them with greater insight. The sessions on the sacraments offer the young people an overview of the major symbols and their meaning, and an introduction to the rites themselves.

Such knowledge about the sacraments will enable the young people to give liturgy and the sacraments the rightful place they deserve in their lives—not as events that compete with entertainment, school, and sports, but as events that give meaning to all of life's experiences.

Session Outcomes

Chapter 1: “Introduction to the Liturgy”

- The learner will understand that the liturgy is the public, communal, and official worship of the Church.
- The learner will understand that in the liturgy God is at work bringing everyone to salvation.
- The learner will explore the truth that in the liturgy people experience the Holy Trinity at work, and that in the liturgy the mystery of the Holy Trinity is more deeply revealed.

Chapter 2: “The Liturgical Year”

- The learner will see that the liturgies within each year celebrate God’s saving power made real in the historical events of Jesus’ birth, death, and Resurrection and point toward the Parousia, the Second Coming of Christ.
- The learner will become acquainted with the symbols, feasts, colors, and meanings associated with each of the six major divisions of the year: Advent, Christmas, Ordinary Time, Lent, the Triduum, and Easter.

Chapter 3: “Introduction to the Sacraments”

- The learner will recognize signs, symbols, and rituals and understand their importance in the sacraments.
- The learner will be introduced to the seven sacraments, which will be more fully discussed in later chapters.
- The learner will experience ritual prayer that engages him or her in symbolic gestures and the use of symbolic objects.

Chapter 4: “The Sacrament of Baptism”

- The learner will understand the many effects of Baptism.
- The learner will study the rite of Baptism and understand the significance of the sacrament’s symbols.

Chapter 5: “The Sacrament of Confirmation”

- The learner will understand that Confirmation is about becoming a fully initiated Catholic and that the sacrament has several important effects on those who receive it.
- The learner will understand the symbols of Confirmation and the significance of the ritual of Confirmation.

Chapter 6: “The Sacrament of the Eucharist”

- The learner will understand that the Eucharist is the source and summit of the Christian life.
- The learner will understand several significant meanings that Catholics find in the sacrament of the Eucharist.
- The learner will be able to make concrete connections between the Eucharist and daily life.

Chapter 7: “The Eucharistic Rite: An Intergenerational Session”

- The learner will become familiar or will refamiliarize himself or herself with the movement of the Eucharistic rite.
- The learner will understand the rich meaning of the four different parts of the Eucharistic liturgy.
- The learner will understand the effects of attending the liturgy and receiving the Eucharist.

Chapter 8: “The Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation”

- The learner will explore the different dimensions of the sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation.
- The learner will reflect on the steps a person goes through when receiving the sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation and will recognize the connections between the healing power of the sacrament and the injury of sin.
- The learner will be able to make connections between the sacrament and the sin and reparation that occur in daily life.

Chapter 9: “The Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick”

- The learner will recognize how Jesus’ work of healing continues in the sacrament of Anointing of the Sick.
- The learner will understand the sacrament of Anointing of the Sick as a sacrament that brings spiritual and physical healing to people who are aging or who have a chronic illness as well as to those who face an imminent death.
- The learner will understand that the sacrament of Anointing of the Sick has significance for the way we live our lives. This sacrament invites us to be a healing presence in the world, to see God as the source of all healing, and to view our own suffering within the Paschal mystery of Jesus Christ.

Chapter 10: “The Sacraments at the Service of Communion: Holy Orders and Matrimony”

- The learner will recognize that the sacraments at the service of Communion focus on serving God and the Church.
- The learner will recognize the connection between the rite of Holy Orders and the rite of Matrimony and the lived life of these calls, as well as characteristics unique to each sacrament.
- The learner will become more conscious of the everyday noise that can make it difficult for people to hear how God calls them.

How to Use This Manual

You may present the material in this manual in its entirety, or you may select sessions and activities that you think will be best for the young people with whom you work. The sessions and activities are not sequential, so you may organize them in the way that is most appropriate for your situation.

Each session begins with a brief overview, a list of expected outcomes, and a list of recommended background reading that includes corresponding *CFH* pages, related *Catechism* paragraphs, scriptural connections, and *CYB* article connections. All articles are excerpted from the first edition of the *CYB*. The next element is a suggested schedule, which is to be used as a starting point and modified according to your circumstances. A checklist of the preparation required, including all materials needed, is the next part of the presentation of every session. A complete description of the session procedure is then provided, including a core activity, session extensions, prayer experiences, and options and actions. The procedure descriptions are formatted as follows.

STUDY IT! A Core Session and Session Extensions

Each session can be expanded and customized to meet your schedule and the needs of your group. All the sessions begin with a core activity that should be used before any other activity in the session plan. Core sessions are structured for a 40- to 45-minute time frame and correspond to the content in the *CFH*. You may expand the sessions by using additional activities known as session extensions. These strategies vary in length from 10 to 60 minutes. Session extensions are intended for further development and study of the session theme and topics.

All the learning strategies in this manual are based on the praxis method of experience, analysis, and reflection, in dialogue with the Scriptures and Tradition, leading to synthesis of new learnings and insights. Variations are often suggested, including ideas for gender-specific groups and for larger or smaller groups.

Some manuals include sidebars that suggest specific *CFH* connections, and all manuals incorporate sidebars that suggest specific musical selections from *Spirit & Song* (Portland, OR: OCP Publications, 1999). The lists in those sidebars are not exhaustive; music resources are available from a variety of music publishers, and a Bible concordance will provide additional citations if you want to add a more substantial scriptural component to a session. *The Saint Mary's Press Essential Bible Concordance* offers a simple, user-friendly index to key words in the Bible. Some of the sessions provide a list of media resources—such as print, video, and Internet—for more exploration. Family approaches provide simple, follow-up suggestions for family learning, enrichment, celebration, prayer, and service. In addition, all the activities can be enhanced by the creativity and expertise of the adult leader.

Because catechesis requires personal reflection, a Journal Activities sidebar with questions and suggestions for deeper analysis and reflection is provided in most sessions. Although those questions and suggestions may be used for oral discussion, it is recommended that they be employed to prompt a written exercise. An ongoing journal, reflection papers, or letters to themselves or God can help the participants process the material and activities, making connections to their own lives.

PRAY IT! Prayer Experiences

Each session includes opportunities and suggestions for prayer focused on the session's theme. Prayer forms include guided meditation, shared prayer, music, silence, prayers by young people, reflective reading, and experiences created by the participants. The PRAY IT! component gives the young people an opportunity to bring their insights and concerns to God in prayer. The time frame for prayer experiences varies from 5 to 20 minutes.

LIVE IT! Options and Actions

This manual can be a springboard for connections with other youth ministry experiences. Therefore all its sessions include additional strategies to support the learning process. Those activities provide good follow-up for the STUDY IT! core activities, and allow for age-appropriate assimilation of the material. They might include off-site events, intergenerational ideas, parish involvement, prayer and liturgical celebrations, service options, and social action.

Session Talk Points

To encourage and support the growth of family faith, each session offers a “take home” handout that presents talk points, to encourage ongoing conversation about the session's topics. The handout includes a summary of

the session content, which is taken directly from the corresponding chapter of the *CFH*. Participants can also use the handout with small community groups, with peer groups, and for personal reflection. With this material available on a CD-ROM, you can customize it and choose a means of delivery that works best for your situation.

Handouts and Resources

All the necessary handouts and resources for a session are found at the end of that session in the manual. They are also found on the accompanying CD-ROM, in both color and black-and-white versions. The black-and-white materials may be customized to suit your particular needs.

Teaching This Course

Preparing Yourself

Read each session or activity before you facilitate it; then use it creatively to meet the needs of the young people in your group. Knowing your audience will help you determine which strategies will work best for it. Some of the activities require preparation. Allow yourself adequate time to get ready.

All the sessions include presentations of key concepts and teachings. The session plans offer guidelines for these talks. Preparing for those presentations is vital to the success of each session. You will want to review relevant content in the *CFH* and the *Catechism*. Spend time putting these presentations together so that they are clear and hold the attention of the participants.

Standard Materials

To save time, consider gathering frequently used materials in bins and storing those bins in a place that is accessible to all staff and volunteer leaders. Here are some recommendations for organizing the bins.

Supply Bin

The following items appear frequently in the materials checklists:

- *The Catholic Youth Bible*, at least one for every two participants
- *The Catholic Faith Handbook for Youth*, at least one for every two participants
- masking tape
- cellophane tape
- washable and permanent markers (thick-line and thin-line)
- pens or pencils

- self-stick notes
- scissors
- newsprint
- blank paper, scrap paper, and notebook paper
- journals, one for each participant
- index cards
- baskets
- candles and matches
- items to create a prayer space (for example, a colored cloth, a cross, a bowl for water, and a vase for flowers)

Music Bin

Young people often find profound meaning in the music and lyrics of songs, both past and present. Also, the right music can set the appropriate mood for a prayer or an activity. Begin with a small collection of tapes or CDs in a music bin, and add to it over time. You might ask the young people to put some of their favorite music in the bin. The bin might include the following styles of music:

- *Prayerful, reflective instrumental music*, such as the kind that is available in the adult alternative section of music stores. Labels that specialize in this type of music include Windham Hill and Narada.
- *Popular songs with powerful messages*. If you are not well versed in popular music, ask the young people to offer suggestions.
- *The music of contemporary Catholic artists*. Many young people are familiar with the work of Catholic musicians such as Steve Angrisano, Sarah Hart, David W. Kauffman, Michael Mahler, Jesse Manibusan, and Danielle Rose.

Also consider including songbooks and hymnals. Many of the musical selections suggested in Total Catechesis are taken from the *Spirit & Song* hymnal, published by Oregon Catholic Press (OCP). If you wish to order copies of this hymnal, please contact OCP directly at www.ocp.org or by calling 800-548-8749. Including copies of your parish's chosen hymnal is a suitable option as well. You might also check with your liturgy or music director for recordings of parish hymns.

Some Closing Thoughts

As a catechist you have taken on an exciting and profoundly important task. We hope you find this material helpful as you invite young people into a deeper relationship with the marvelous community of faith we know as the Catholic Church. Please be assured of our continual prayers for you and the young people you serve.

Your Comments or Suggestions

Saint Mary's Press wants to know your reactions to the materials in the Total Catechesis series. We are open to all kinds of suggestions, including these:

- an alternative way to conduct an activity
- an audiovisual or other media resource that worked well with this material
- a book or an article you found helpful
- an original activity or process
- a prayer experience or service
- a helpful preparation for other leaders
- an observation about the themes or content of this material

If you have a comment or suggestion, please write to us at 702 Terrace Heights, Winona, MN 55987-1318; call us at our toll-free number, 800-533-8095; or e-mail us at smp@smp.org. Your ideas will help improve future editions of Total Catechesis.

1

Introduction to the Liturgy

AT A GLANCE

Study It

Core Session

- ◆ Is the Media Preaching to Us? (45 minutes)

Session Extensions

- ◆ The Holy Trinity in the Mass (30 minutes)
- ◆ One at the Table of Mission (20 minutes)

Pray It

- ◆ The Cross (10 minutes)

Live It

- ◆ Prayer to the Holy Spirit
- ◆ Guest speaker about the liturgy
- ◆ Liturgy of the Hours
- ◆ Liturgical ministries

Overview

In a culture with many distractions and so much stimulation, the liturgy can seem boring to some young people. The liturgy involves young people more than they know—it involves the participation of the whole people of God and is the means of every person's salvation. Learning about the meaning of liturgy, some of the terminology surrounding the liturgy, and the Trinity's work within the liturgy can help young people recognize the deeper meaning within the public, communal, and official worship of the Church.

Outcomes

- ◆ The learner will understand that the liturgy is the public, communal, and official worship of the Church.
- ◆ The learner will understand that in the liturgy God is at work bringing everyone to salvation.
- ◆ The learner will explore the truth that in the liturgy people experience the Holy Trinity at work, and that in the liturgy the mystery of the Holy Trinity is more deeply revealed.

Background Reading

- ◆ This session covers pages 134–138 of *The Catholic Faith Handbook for Youth*.
- ◆ For further exploration, check out paragraph numbers 1066–1144 of the *Catechism*.
- ◆ Scriptural connections: Matt. 26:26–29 (the Last Supper), Rom. 12:1–8 (the body of Christ)

- ◆ *Catholic Youth Bible* article connections: “God Bless You” (Num. 6:22–27), “The New Covenant” (Matt. 26:26–29), “We Are the Body of Christ!” (Rom. 12:1–8), “The Body of Christ” (1 Cor. 12:12–31)

Study it!

Core Session

Is the Media Preaching to Us? (45 minutes)

Preparation

- Make copies of handout 1, “Introduction to the Liturgy,” one for each participant, and gather least one of the other items listed here:
 - a film with clips from advertisements, TV shows, infomercials, or previews of recently released movies (as one would find prior to a feature presentation of a recent release); and a VCR or a DVD player and a television
 - several magazines that are popular among young people, as well as one or two news or home decorating periodicals that appeal to adults
 - the local newspaper
 - a recording of popular music and a tape player or a CD player
 - photographs of local billboards, if you have them in your area
- Review the summary points in step 6 of this session and the relevant material on pages 134–138 of *The Catholic Faith Handbook for Youth (CFH)*. Be prepared to share the information with the young people.
- The focus of this activity is to help the young people be discerning about the messages they receive through the media, so you will want to provide them with a mix of media that both supports and contradicts Gospel values. Though you want some of the media to contain the negative messages of popular culture, be sure to preview it for its level of language, violence, and sexuality.

1. Read aloud the following passage from the *CFH* and invite the participants to react to it:

Many experts feel that one reason it is harder today to appreciate the meaning of liturgy and the sacraments is because of modern technology and modern media. Before we had movies and television, the Bible stories read at Mass and the priest’s homilies were people’s “entertainment” and education. Before we had books and magazines, the Church’s stained-glass windows and statues were the people’s source of

visual information and art. Before we had radio and newspapers, talking with your neighbors after Church was your main source of community news. (P. 135)

2. Point out that if we receive our main forms of entertainment, education, information, art, or community from the media rather than from the liturgy or the parish community, we may be unconsciously adopting the values and messages of the media in a way that competes with the readings and homilies we hear at Mass.

3. If you will be using a variety of media or examples such as magazines and newspapers, arrange the participants in small groups of three to five people. Otherwise, keep the participants together in the large group for the film presentation. Ask them to listen and look for value messages and advice about life from the various media sources you provide. For example, if a reading or a homily might help the young people learn how to relate to one another in a Christian way, how might the media be communicating information about relationships? Ask the participants if they think the media preaches to us.

4. After you have shared the media samples with the participants, ask them to come up with some main points for a “culture homily,” in small groups of three to five people. They should base their homily on the material they just saw or read or on other messages they have seen or heard through the media.

5. Invite representatives from the different groups to share some of the messages of their culture homily. Read this quote from the *CFH*: “You have to look harder today at what God is offering us in the sacred liturgy (the Mass and the sacraments) to discover its true and eternal value” (p. 135).

Ask the participants these questions:

- Do certain values we hold or messages we hear make it difficult for us to hear the Good News of Jesus Christ in the liturgy?
- Do we have to look harder at what God offers us at Mass?
- What messages from our culture support or deepen our appreciation for the liturgy?

6. Conduct a presentation on the significance of the liturgy, using key phrases from steps 1, 2, and 5 of this activity and the following bullet points, which are taken from pages 135–136 of the *CFH*:

- Liturgy is the public, communal, and official worship of the Church.
- It is public, as a sign of our faith to the local community.
- It is communal, which means it isn’t a prayer that you do alone.
- It is official, which means the Church governs it.

Mediaconnections

- ◆ Continue the type of reflection you did as a group in the core session. Observe ways the media tries to “sell” products and ideas to us. Does the Gospel message get lost more easily now that it has so much competition? Could the Gospel message be conveyed by some of the means the media use?

- The Eucharist (or Mass) is the central liturgy of the Catholic Church and the basis for most other liturgical celebrations. The other six sacraments of the Church—Baptism, Confirmation, Penance and Reconciliation, Anointing of the Sick, Holy Orders, and Matrimony—have their own liturgical rituals.

Pause to ask these questions: What might happen to the liturgy if it were not public or communal or official? Would the liturgy become more vulnerable to the values of the culture?

- The word *liturgy* is taken from the Greek word *liturgia*, which means “a public work” or “service on behalf of the people.” For Christians *liturgy* means the participation of the People of God in the work of God. So our liturgies aren’t something we do, but something God does and we participate in.
- In the liturgy, God is at work bringing us to our salvation. That is why participation in the liturgy is just as important as having faith in Jesus and avoiding sin and living a moral life. In the liturgy we learn about the great mysteries of our faith by participating in them. We learn about the mystery of the Trinity by experiencing the Trinity in the liturgy. We learn about the Incarnation of Jesus Christ by experiencing him as true God and true man. We learn about the Paschal mystery as we participate in the Passion, death, and Resurrection of Christ through the Eucharist.

Conclude by noting that the content of this session is drawn from the first half of chapter 14 of the *CFH*. Encourage the participants to read and review it in the next few days.

Session Extensions

The Holy Trinity in the Mass (30 minutes)

Preparation

- Gather the following items:
 - several copies of *The Catholic Faith Handbook for Youth (CFH)*
 - four (or eight) copies of handout 2, “The Holy Trinity”
 - printed copies of the day’s readings or of the upcoming Sunday readings
 - several copies of the *Sacramentary* so that participants can look at the order of the Mass (If the *Sacramentary* is not available, use a missal.)
- Review the summary points in step 1 of this session and the relevant material on pages 137–138 of the *CFH*. Be prepared to share the information with the young people.
- Familiarize yourself with the *Sacramentary* or other resources you are using with the participants for the order of the Mass so that you can easily help them find their way through the book.

1. Conduct a presentation on the Trinity in the liturgy, using key points from the preceding activity and the following bullet points, which are taken from pages 137–138 of the *CFH*:

- The Church’s sacred liturgy is completely trinitarian. In the liturgy we experience the Holy Trinity at work, and through that experience the mystery of the Holy Trinity is more deeply revealed. (*You may want to review the definition of the Trinity before moving on.*)
- We acknowledge the Father as the source of all our blessings. In the Scripture readings and the liturgical prayers, we recall important moments of salvation history in which the Father was at work. We remember and celebrate the Father’s greatest gift to us, the gift of his Son, who gave himself up for us so that we might be saved.
- Jesus Christ plays a central role in the liturgy because he not only gave us the sacred liturgy, he also makes himself present to us through liturgical celebrations. Something that makes Christ’s presence real is called a sacrament; thus we say that liturgy is sacramental. The Church itself is also a sacrament because it makes Christ’s presence real by the power of the Holy Spirit.
- Jesus Christ is present in the assembly, because we are the Body of Christ. He is present in the word of God, the Scriptures. The part of the liturgy in which the Scriptures are proclaimed is called the liturgy of the word, and is an essential part of every liturgical celebration. And in a special way, Christ is present during the Eucharist because his body and blood are present in the bread and the wine. Thus liturgy is the work of both Christ, the head, and the Church, his body.
- The Holy Spirit reveals Christ present in the community, the Scriptures, and the physical signs of liturgical celebrations. But the Holy Spirit is at work even before that, preparing us to receive Christ in the liturgy. And the Holy Spirit does more than just reveal Christ in the liturgy. Through the Holy Spirit, the saving work of Christ is actually made real and present in the liturgy.

Answer any questions that may arise from this presentation. Conclude with this statement, which is taken from page 135 of the *CFH*:

- It is important that you understand this last point. The liturgy and the sacraments are not just celebrations of past events. They make the saving power of Christ available to us, just as it was available to the original disciples and Apostles. Remember, Christ is alive! After his Resurrection he ascended into heaven so space and time would not limit him and he could be available to everyone everywhere. Of course he is close to us all the time, but we have his promise that his presence and power is available in a special way through the liturgy and the sacraments of the Church.

2. Explain that the participants will be doing a search for the presence of the three persons of the Trinity in the liturgy of the Eucharist. Review the

JournalACTIVITIES

- ◆ “Perhaps the greatest source of friction that exists between teens and parents when it comes to religion is the argument about going to Sunday Mass” (*CFH*, p. 134). Is that your own experience? What is the cause of this type of friction?
- ◆ Why is it important for the liturgy to be public, communal, and official? What might happen if one of these characteristics were not part of the liturgy?
- ◆ How do you feel about the liturgy you experience at your parish? How could you contribute to the liturgical celebration in a way that emphasizes that it is alive?

different parts of the Mass with the participants, looking over the order of the Mass with them. Point the young people to “Parts of the Mass,” on pages 378–379 of the *CFH*, which provides a helpful outline of the Mass, or to pages 178–179, “An Outline for the Eucharist.” Handout 11, “The Eucharistic Rite,” in chapter 7 of this manual, provides an outline of the Eucharist based on the information from the *CFH*.

3. Divide participants into four small groups (or eight, if necessary), and assign each group the task of looking for references to the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit, and references to God, respectively. Distribute a copy of handout 2 to each group so the participants can look more specifically for special characteristics of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Then assign half the groups the task of looking at the introductory rites and the liturgy of the word. These groups will need copies of the Sunday readings and the order of the Mass in the *Sacramentary* or missal. Ask the other groups to look at the liturgy of the Eucharist and the concluding rites. These groups will need the order of the Mass in the *Sacramentary* or a missal.

4. Give the participants a fair amount of time to work on this. You will likely need to move around and answer questions from the young people about the order of the Mass. When the groups are finished, ask a representative from each group to share what her or his group found. Suggest that the young people listen carefully for the presence of the Holy Trinity at Mass.

One at the Table of Mission (20 minutes)

Preparation

- Gather the following items:
 - a bag of pennies (enough for all but six participants) and six nickels
 - food that is well liked by the participants
- Set up a table with various foods items.
- Place the bag of pennies and nickels in a place where the participants can reach in and take a coin as they arrive.

1. As the participants enter, ask them each to take a coin from the bag and stand at a distance from the table. Welcome all the participants to the “party”; then invite only those who have nickels to come to the food table.

2. Tell those who have pennies that they cannot come to the table. Then lead the group in a discussion using the following questions:

- Why is it important for you to be able to eat at the table?
- How does it make you feel to be left standing just this far away from the food, unable to eat it?
- Are you willing to complete the necessary steps in order to come to the table?

3. With the six participants who have nickels, decide on a simple initiation rite. Invite all the remaining participants to complete the rite and join the others at the table. For example, those who need to be initiated must do a somersault or sing a verse of “Row, Row, Row Your Boat.”

4. Invite the six participants with the nickels to share their reflections on the following questions:

- How did it feel to be fully initiated and allowed to eat at the table?
- What freedom did it bring? What responsibilities did it bring?

5. Conclude the activity with the following comments from page 136 of *The Catholic Faith Handbook for Youth*:

- In the liturgy, God is at work bringing us to our salvation. That is why participation in the liturgy is just as important as having faith in Jesus and avoiding sin and living a moral life. In the liturgy we learn about the great mysteries of our faith by participating in them. We learn about the mystery of the Trinity by experiencing the Trinity in the liturgy. We learn about the Incarnation of Jesus Christ by experiencing him as true God and true man. We learn about the Paschal mystery as we participate in the Passion, death, and Resurrection of Christ through the Eucharist.

Ask the participants if the experience of being excluded from the table reminds them of the blessings that participating in the Eucharist brings.

Pray!

The Cross (10 minutes)

Preparation

- Gather the following items:
 - a large candle (one that can be safely passed around a circle)
 - matches
 - a cross or a picture of a cross for each student to study
 - The Catholic Faith Handbook for Youth (CFH)*
 - a recording of a song with the theme of love of God and others
 - a tape player or a CD player
- Read the article “The Cross,” on page 138 of the *CFH*.

1. Gather the participants in a circle, seating them on the floor. Place the candle on the floor in the center of the circle and light it. Distribute a cross to each participant.

Spirit & Song connections

- ◆ “Gather Your People,” by Bob Hurd, harmony by Craig Kingsbury
- ◆ “Somos el Cuerpo de Cristo/We Are the Body of Christ,” by Jaime Cortez
- ◆ “Ven al Banquete / Come to the Feast,” by Bob Hurd

Familyconnections

- ◆ Ask parents, older siblings, or other relatives about significant liturgical experiences they have had and about liturgical experiences they may have had prior to Vatican II.
- ◆ Visit several Catholic parishes for Sunday Mass with the participants and their families. Afterward, have them discuss the liturgy as the “public, communal, and official worship of the Church” (*CFH*, p. 135). What is the value of having differences between parishes? What is the value of using the same prayers in every Catholic Mass?

2. Begin the prayer slowly with the sign of the cross.

3. Invite a volunteer to read the article “The Cross,” from page 138 in the *CFH*, to the group. Then allow some time for quiet reflection. If you do not have the *CFH* available, share this part of the article:

Some people describe liturgy as the two beams of the cross: the vertical beam representing our relationship with God, the horizontal beam representing our relationship with our brothers and sisters in Christ. As you gather with these other Christians, you recognize them as your family members.

Provide the participants a moment of silence.

4. Play some quiet music. Continue by asking the participants to pray quietly their response to these questions:

- How does my encounter with God in the liturgy help me in my relationship with my brothers and sisters in Christ?
- How does my encounter with my brothers and sisters in Christ in the liturgy help me in my relationship with God?

5. Invite the participants to pray for their brothers and sisters in Christ. Pick up the candle and share the first name of a person you would like to pray for. Pass the candle to a participant, inviting him or her to share a name, to mention a group of people, or to pray for a special intention, and then to pass the candle to another participant. Continue this until all the participants have received the candle and said a prayer. Conclude with the Glory Be, on page 382 of the *CFH*.



Options and Actions

- **Prayer to the Holy Spirit.** Point the young people to the Prayer to the Holy Spirit, on page 385 of *The Catholic Faith Handbook for Youth (CFH)*, or provide copies of this prayer for them. Invite the participants to prepare for the upcoming Sunday’s celebration of the Eucharist by asking the Holy Spirit to prepare their hearts for the liturgy.
- **Guest speaker about the liturgy.** Invite a priest or liturgist to come and talk about the importance of the liturgy.
- **Liturgy of the Hours.** Review the material about the Liturgy of the Hours on pages 347–349 of the *CFH*. Give the participants the opportunity to experience this type of liturgy by leading them in prayer. See the activity “Praying the liturgy of the Hours,” in chapter 8 of the Total Catechesis manual *Catechetical Sessions on Christian Prayer*.
- **Liturgical ministries.** Provide the participants with information about the liturgical ministries they might want to become involved in and the names of people to contact about doing so.

Introduction to the Liturgy

This session covers pages 134–138 of *The Catholic Faith Handbook for Youth*. For further exploration, check out paragraph numbers 1066–1144 of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.

Session Summary

The Liturgy

Many experts feel that one reason it is harder today to appreciate the meaning of liturgy and the sacraments is because of modern technology and modern media. Before we had movies and television, the Bible stories read at Mass and the priest's homilies were people's "entertainment" and education. Before we had books and magazines, the Church's stained-glass windows and statues were the people's source of visual information and art. Before we had radio and newspapers, talking with your neighbors after Church was your main source of community news.

You have to look harder today at what God offers us in the sacred liturgy (the Mass and the sacraments) to discover its true and eternal value.

- Liturgy is the public, communal, and official worship of the Church.
- It is public, as a sign of our faith to the local community.
- It is communal, which means it isn't a prayer that you do alone.
- It is official, which means the Church governs it.
- The Eucharist (or Mass) is the central liturgy of the Catholic Church and the basis for most other liturgical celebrations. The other six sacraments of the Church—Baptism, Confirmation, Penance and Reconciliation, Anointing of the Sick, Holy Orders, and Matrimony—have their own liturgical rituals.
- The word *liturgy* is taken from the Greek word *liturgia*, which means "a public work" or "service on behalf of the people." For Christians *liturgy* means the participation of the People of God in the work of God. So our liturgies aren't something we do, but something God does and we participate in.
- In the liturgy, God is at work bringing us to our salvation. That is why participation in the liturgy is just as important as having faith in Jesus and avoiding sin and living a moral life. In the liturgy we learn about the great mysteries of our faith by participating in them. We learn about the mystery of the Trinity by experiencing the Trinity in the liturgy. We learn about the Incarnation of Jesus Christ by experiencing him as true God and true man.

We learn about the Paschal mystery as we participate in the Passion, death, and Resurrection of Christ through the Eucharist.

Liturgy and the Holy Trinity

- The Church's sacred liturgy is completely trinitarian. In the liturgy we experience the Holy Trinity at work, and through that experience the mystery of the Holy Trinity is more deeply revealed.
- We acknowledge the Father as the source of all our blessings. In the Scripture readings and the liturgical prayers, we recall important moments of salvation history in which the Father was at work. We remember and celebrate the Father's greatest gift to us, the gift of his Son, who gave himself up for us so that we might be saved.
- Jesus Christ plays a central role in the liturgy because he not only gave us the sacred liturgy, he also makes himself present to us through liturgical celebrations. Something that makes Christ's presence real is called a sacrament; thus we say that liturgy is sacramental. The Church itself is also a sacrament because it makes Christ's presence real by the power of the Holy Spirit.
- Jesus Christ is present in the assembly, because we are the Body of Christ. He is present in the word of God, the Scriptures. The part of the liturgy in which the Scriptures are proclaimed is called the liturgy of the word, and is an essential part of every liturgical celebration. And in a special way, Christ is present during the Eucharist because his body and blood are present in the bread and the wine. Thus liturgy is the work of both Christ, the head, and the Church, his body.
- The Holy Spirit reveals Christ present in the community, the Scriptures, and the physical signs of liturgical celebrations. But the Holy Spirit is at work even before that, preparing us to receive Christ in the liturgy. And the Holy Spirit does more than just reveal Christ in the liturgy. Through the Holy Spirit, the saving work of Christ is actually made real and present in the liturgy.
- It is important that you understand this last point. The liturgy and the sacraments are not just celebrations of past events. They make the saving power of Christ available to us, just as it was available to the original disciples and Apostles. Remember, Christ is alive! After his Resurrection he ascended into heaven so space and time would not limit him and so that he could be available to everyone everywhere. Of course he is close to us all the time, but we have his promise that his presence and power is available in a special way through the liturgy and the sacraments of the Church.

(All summary points are taken from *The Catholic Faith Handbook for Youth*, by Brian Singer-Towns et al. [Winona, MN: Saint Mary's Press, 2004], pages 135–138. Copyright © 2004 by Saint Mary's Press. All rights reserved.)

Talk Points

- When you think of your week, where does the Sunday liturgy of the Eucharist or any other liturgical celebration you participate in fit?
- Where is there evidence in your life of the Body of Christ? As a member of the Body of Christ, what can you give to other members of this body?
- Talk about a liturgical celebration that has especially affected you or that has left you with a significant memory.

The Holy Trinity

The Father

- Acknowledgment of Father as the source of all our blessings
- Remembrance of important moments of salvation history in which the Father was at work
- Remembrance and celebration of the Father's gift to us of his Son

The Son

- Presence of Christ through liturgical celebrations
- Presence of Christ in the people assembled
- Presence of Christ in the Scriptures
- Presence of Christ in the Eucharist

The Holy Spirit

- Reveals Christ present in the community
- Reveals Christ present in the Scriptures
- Reveals Christ present in the physical signs of liturgical celebrations
- Prepares us for receiving Christ in the liturgy
- Makes the saving work of Christ real

(This material is adapted from the section "Liturgy and the Holy Trinity," in *The Catholic Faith Handbook for Youth*, by Brian Singer-Towns et al. [Winona, MN: Saint Mary's Press, 2004], pages 137–138. Copyright © 2004 by Saint Mary's Press. All rights reserved.)