

## 7.05 - How the Baptismal Catechumenate Inspires All Catechesis - Mary Birmingham



- **GDC**
- The model for all catechesis is the baptismal catechumenate when, by specific formation, an adult converted to belief is brought to explicit profession of baptismal faith during the Paschal Vigil. This catechumenal formation should inspire other forms of catechesis in both their objectives and in their dynamism. GDC 59:
- The Church assumes that every Catholic has been formed with all the principles set forth in the RCIA.
- **GDC 85-86**
- Promote knowledge of the faith. (Scripture and Doctrine)
- Include liturgical education. (Liturgy and Sacraments)
- Provide moral formation/conversion centered catechesis.
- Teach people to pray.
- Include education for community life.
- Formation in missionary activity of the Church.
- **The aforementioned elements were inspired by paragraph 75 of the RCIA and were meant to be adapted for all catechesis.**
- **THERE ARE 7 ELEMENTS OF FORMATION ESSENTIAL TO THE JOURNEY OF CATECHUMENS. THE RCIA IS...**
- Conversion Centered
- 2. Mystagogical Model
- 3. Paschal Mystery
- 4. Liturgical Catechesis
- 5. Scripture and Tradition
- 6. Community
- 7. Apostolic Life/Service
- **CONVERSION CENTERED**
- Catechumens are invited into intimate union with Jesus through prayer, personal sharing of stories—their story, story of other Christians, story of the

Church and her saints, and ultimately the story of Jesus.

### **MYSTAGOGICAL MODEL**

- Mystagogical formation invites catechumens to reflect upon their human experience—everyday life, liturgy, scripture and worship--and then extract and draw meaning, conversion and doctrine from that experience

### **PASCHAL MYSTERY**

Fosters deep and lasting conversion to Jesus Christ"-- participation in his life, death and resurrection—intimate union with Jesus.

Invites Immersion in the Spiritual life [75.3]

### **LITURGICAL CATECHESIS**

Formation is liturgically based—situated within the context of the liturgical year, the liturgy, Sunday Liturgy of the Word, and the sacraments (*primo theologia*).

**Liturgical Catechesis** helps catechumens prepare to enter into the liturgy, celebrate the liturgy and reflect on the liturgy in order to appropriate conversion of heart that leads to mission.

### **LITURGY IS BROAD TOPIC LET US CONSIDER: THE LITURGICAL YEAR**

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

### **PRIMARY CONTEXT OF THE RCIA**

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

### ➤ **OTHER LITURGICAL ELEMENTS OF CATECHESIS**

➤ **Ritual Prayers:** Lord's Prayer, Creed, Eucharistic Prayers, Prefaces, etc.

➤ **Symbols and Symbolic actions:**

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

### **Scripture and Tradition:**

Suitable catechesis for Maureen includes formation in Scripture and an appropriate

acquaintance with dogmas and precepts of the church. [RCIA 75.1]

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

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

#### WHAT DETERMINES DOCTRINE?

- That which flows logically from the liturgical year or the Sunday liturgy.

#### CATECHESIS IN THE LIFE OF THE COMMUNITY

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

#### CATECHESIS IN THE APOSTOLIC LIFE/SERVICE

- Catechumens are invited to serve God's people and share the Good News.
- All catechesis evangelization, and initiatory formation leads to outreach and a life of service—building the Kingdom of God.

#### CATECHUMENS WILL LEARN THAT...

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

#### ASK CONVERSION CENTERED QUESTIONS

- How does what we shared today invite us to enter into a deeper relationship with Jesus' life, his death and resurrection?"

#### IN SHORT, THE INTENTION OF THE RCIA

- \* Conversion centered,
- \* Provides formation on the liturgy,
- \* Provides conversion centered catechesis on the doctrines we teach and the Scriptures we proclaim,
- \* Forms Maureen in the life of the community and its outreach and apostolic mission.

#### HOW DO WE ACCOMPLISH THESE GOALS OF CATECHESIS?

- \* Refer to handout,

"CATECHESIS INSPIRED BY THE BAPTISMAL CATECHUMENATE"

## RESOURCES

- \* **Formed in Faith** (Sessions for Inquiry, Catechumenate, and Ongoing Faith Formation), Mary Birmingham. World Library Publications (wlpmusic.com)
- \* **Confirming Adult Catholics**: Five Sessions for Preparation and Reflection, Mary Birmingham. World Library Publications (wlpmusic.com)
- \* **Purified and Enlightened** - RCIA Sessions for Lent, Mary Birmingham. World Library Publications (wlpmusic.com)
- \* **Year Round Catechumenate** Mary Birmingham, Liturgical Training Publications
- \* **Faith, Life and Creed** (A Complete Catechesis for Christian Life
- \* (User friendly sessions for breaking open the Word for every Sunday of each cycle plus 41 doctrinal sessions). Available through (TEAMRCIA.COM).
- \* **Come to the Table**
- \* Resource for small faith communities. <https://pastoral.center/>
- \* **Word and Worship Workbook, Year A, B and C**, Mary Birmingham, Paulist Press
  
- \* **Contact me at:**  
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