

Introduction to the *Program Guide: A Manual for Directors, Pastors, and Administrators*

WELCOME TO CELEBRATING THE LECTIONARY

Although catechesis is ideally a year-round process, the reality is that many programs have a fall to spring cycle. In recognition of this fact, CTL begins each year in the fall and includes year-round sessions for all age levels.

The Church, “In the course of the year . . . unfolds the whole mystery of Christ from his incarnation and nativity through his ascension, to Pentecost and the expectation of the blessed hope of the coming of the Lord” (Sacrosanctum Concilium 102 § 2; CCC 1194).

Celebrating the Lectionary is a multi-dimensional, liturgy-based resource created collaboratively by faith formation experts, Scripture scholars, liturgists, and theologians in order to allow all parish members to engage with the liturgy at their own level without diminishing its depth of meaning and content. The format allows the materials to be tailored to fit your parish’s program. Each group leader can handpick activities, interactive reflections, personal reflections, crafts, and take-home materials to meet their individual group’s needs and interests. CTL provides year-round catechesis, from September to August.

This *Program Guide* provides information on the *Celebrating the Lectionary* program that will help you implement CTL’s vision of liturgy-based formation for your entire faith community. In the *Program Guide* resource, you will find an overview of the many resources included in CTL, background information on the program and its content, and tips on how to tailor CTL to fit your parish’s or school’s individual needs.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF CELEBRATING THE LECTIONARY

This year’s CTL resources include material for every Sunday and Holy Day from September 6, 2009, through August 29, 2010.

All of the resources related to the *Celebrating the Lectionary* program are written based on the following principles:

- *Growth in faith is lifelong.* From the time we are born to the time we die, we are always growing in our relationship with God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Our faith is a free gift from God, which deepens through our relationships with family, friends, and the Church community. We grow in faith by developing both its cognitive and spiritual dimensions. As Catholics, the Church’s liturgy and its Lectionary readings, the sacraments, doctrinal teachings, and tradition are the primary tools we have to help us mature in faith throughout our lives.
- *Growth in faith is yearlong.* Just as the Church’s liturgical year is twelve months and the celebration of the liturgy continues during the summer, so our faith development progresses throughout the entire year. Combining the principle that growth in faith is yearlong with the reality that most parish faith formation programs are run on a school-year schedule and begin in September, the CTL year begins in September and runs through the following August. Thus, year-round material is provided, overlapping two liturgical years.
- *Growth in faith involves the faith community.* Whether you are using CTL in a parish community or a school community, as Catholics we believe our growth in faith occurs within the context of the Church, and thus, the Catholic community. We grow in our relationship with God with the support, help, and guidance of our fellow Catholics. Based on this principle, CTL centers all of its resources for all age groups, from preschool through adult, on the same weekly themes and focus statements. The themes and focus statements have been developed by the authors of the resources so that they are universally suitable for the faith development of the children, adolescents, teens, and adults for which the resources are intended.
- *Prayer is essential to growth in faith.* The best formation in faith addresses the many dimensions of the human person: spiritual, cognitive, emotional, and psychological. Since human beings are spiritual by nature and intended to grow in their relationship with their Creator, prayer is a vital component of faith formation sessions for all of the members of the Catholic Church, young and old. This Program Guide contains intergenerational prayer services that you may choose to implement, or you may use the Opening Prayer and Closing Prayer experiences included in each session

of each CTL resource. The suggestions and prayers provided in these sections can be used as is or adapted to better meet the needs of your group. However you facilitate the formation in faith of your children, youth, and adults, always include prayer as part of the session. When you have to cut components in a session because of time, do not cut prayer.

- *Music is integral to growth in faith.* Music is prayer. The use of music in faith formation sessions, catechumenate sessions, and the Liturgy of the Word with children helps those involved raise their minds and hearts to God. When the music sung and played in these sessions is used in parish's or school's celebration of the liturgy, it also connects our growth in faith to the Church's liturgy and the larger faith community. From early on, children are taught the importance of active participation in the Church's liturgy through song. The rhythm of the liturgical year is integrated into the spiritual development of all ages and a repertoire of liturgical music is developed and reinforced yearly. Thus, CTL provides liturgical music suggestions for the Opening and Closing prayers in each age-appropriate resource and *Christian Initiation of Children*. Suggestions for centering the children as they gather in their separate space to celebrate the Liturgy of the Word are also given. The music suggestions are appropriate pastorally, theologically, and musically and are available from major liturgical music publishers.

UNDERSTANDING THE PROGRAM COMPONENTS

Faith Formation Resources

- *God with Us* (ages 3–5) asks your youngest parish members what the liturgy and its Lectionary readings reveal about God—the Father, Son (Jesus), and the Holy Spirit. These sessions are designed for groups who are not yet readers and who are developing basic manipulative skills.
- *Pray and Celebrate* (ages 6–8) helps the children see their faith in light of the Church's sacraments and the sacramentality of all life and faith. These sessions are designed for children in the primary grades who are beginning to read and whose manipulative skills are developed.
- *Righteous Living* (ages 9–11) is geared toward children who are growing increasingly independent. *Righteous Living* explores how the liturgy and Lectionary readings teach us to live, with doctrinal focus on Church teaching about morality, decision-making, and how to treat others. The sessions in this resource are designed for children who have some reading proficiency and the ability to work in groups.
- *Covenant People* (ages 12–14) explores questions about what it means to be the people of God, with connections to the history of the faith community and the Church developed based on the liturgy and its Lectionary readings. This resource focuses on activities that help adolescents to develop a strong sense of community and their own ability to reflect on their faith.
- *Spirit Alive* (high school youth) explores our participation in self-giving actions and God's saving acts through time. The sessions take a youth ministry, community-building approach to understanding Scripture and how to live Jesus' mission every day. Bilingual (Spanish-English) components are provided.
- *Justice and Mercy* (adult) explores the liturgy and its Lectionary readings for ways to live out the mission of Jesus and our Catholic identity in the world. The sessions present the Lectionary readings and their related Church teachings from the major documents of the Church, especially the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* using adult pedagogical techniques.

Christian Initiation Resources

- *Christian Initiation of Children* includes catechumenate sessions for children ages 5–14, both unbaptized and uncatechized. This resource also includes bilingual catechumenate dismissal ques-

tions for use after the children and adolescents who are catechumens are dismissed from the Sunday assembly, as well as bilingual Family Sharing sheets, which offer a concrete way to continue the catechumenate journey at home during the days between sessions.

- *Spirit Alive* can be used as resource for catechumenate catechesis for older teens. Bilingual catechumenate dismissal questions are also included, as are bilingual discussion questions for use during the actual catechumenate sessions and Weekly Reflection and Action pages (WRAPs), which help continue the journey of growing in faith between sessions.
- *Justice and Mercy* is an excellent tool for catechumenate catechesis with adults because of its focus on the Lectionary readings and related Church teachings. Bilingual catechumenate dismissal questions are included for use after the adult catechumens are dismissed from the Sunday assembly to reflect on the Word. Bilingual discussion questions are included for use during the actual catechumenate sessions.

Liturgy Resources

- *Children's Liturgy of the Word* provides liturgy preparation pages and liturgy guides for each Sunday and Holy Day from September through August. The easy-to-use, step-by-step guides include a complete text for the homily/reflection that makes celebrating the Word with children effortless even for inexperienced prayer leaders.
- *The Word to Go/La palabra para llevar* challenges individuals and families to take the liturgy home and bring it to life in their actions throughout the week. The single-page bilingual handouts, one for each Sunday and Holy Day, include a list of the readings, a short reflection on them, suggestions for at-home activities, and questions to connect the message of the liturgy and its readings with everyday life. These handouts can also be used to encourage faith sharing with small groups and parish committees.

Supplemental Material for Directors

- *Director's Supplement* contains master copies of each of the preparation pages and session plans for *God with Us*, *Pray and Celebrate*, *Righteous Living*, *Covenant People*, *Spirit Alive*, *Justice and Mercy*, and *Christian Initiation of Children*, as well as the liturgy preparation pages and guides from *Children's Liturgy of the Word*. This supplement helps you to stay on top of what is happening in each session and makes advance planning more efficient.
- *Activity Sheet Masters* is an essential tool for any faith formation program. This resource contains reproducible copies of each of the activity sheets from every age-level packet and *Christian Initiation of Children*, covering the entire year from September 2009 through August 2010. This enables you to easily make copies for participants in the sessions at every level, and allows group leaders to pull ideas and worksheets from the entire range of CTL resources. This resource also offers a goldmine of supplementary activities that can be used by catechists or Catholic school teachers for years to come.
- *Catechetical Resource Books* offer faith formation leaders a wealth of creative ideas and activities for supplementing the materials found in the session plans. There are two different *Catechetical Resource Books*, #1 and #2, which include prayers, crafts, and activities appropriate for ages 3–11 and 12–adult, respectively. A copy of the appropriate resource book is included with each age-level resource and *Catechetical Resource Book #2* is included with *Christian Initiation of Children*. Additional copies can be ordered from Liturgy Training Publications at www.LTP.org.

Color Posters and Activity Pages

New this year, we have revamped our color posters and activity sheets so that they are of the highest quality and can be used by your parish or school for years to come. Order these brand new, beautifully designed color products at www.LTP.org!

- **Color Posters:** Color posters enhance the environment of the faith formation space, while subtly reinforcing vital doctrinal concepts, such as prayers and rituals. This year, we are pleased to offer two new color posters—a Bilingual Apostles' Creed poster and a Bilingual Our Father poster. Newly designed in a larger 22" × 28" size with rich, colorful artwork, these posters are excellent for the classroom or parish center, for use as bilingual teaching tools when memorizing prayers, or as take-home gifts for families who want to continue to reinforce these important liturgical prayers outside of the weekly sessions. With Spanish on one side and English on the other, these posters can easily be reversed for use in bilingual settings.
- **Color Activity Sheets:** Color activity sheets are a fun way for children to engage with the liturgy in Catholic schools, faith formation sessions, or at home. For the first time, these sheets are being sold individually in packs of 16, allowing you to select among our variety of color activity sheets and pick the ones that will best serve your individual program needs. Color activity sheets can be used within the weekly sessions or sent home to be used as family projects. The color activity sheets available this year are fill-in-the-blank Apostles' Creed and Our Father sheets, which coincide with the new color posters, and two sheets which focus on the seasons of Advent and Christmas: an Advent Calendar activity sheet and a Create Your Own Christmas Season Booklet activity sheet.

UNDERSTANDING THE CONTENTS OF THE PROGRAM GUIDE

The *Program Guide* contains the following components:

Year Overview These two pages help you to view at a glance the calendar date and theme of each Sunday and Holy Day throughout the liturgical year. The Year Overview is divided by the four sections of the year: Ordinary Time in fall; Advent, Christmas, and Ordinary Time in winter; Lent and Easter; and Ordinary Time in summer.

Scope and Sequence The Scope and Sequence chart shows the Lectionary readings and the themes and focus statements which are common across the CTL resources. For each resource, it also lists the two or three age-appropriate main points being covered in the sessions. The readings from the *Lectionary for Masses with Children* are also included for *Children's Liturgy of the Word*.

Scripture Backgrounds A copy of each Scripture Background, one for each Sunday and Holy Day from September 6, 2009, through August 29, 2010, is included in the *Program Guide*. These Scripture Backgrounds are the heart of the *Celebrating the Lectionary* program and its individual resources.

Written by highly acclaimed Scripture scholars, pastors, pastoral ministers, and religious educators, these backgrounds provide commentaries on all of the Lectionary readings for a given Sunday or Holy Day, including the Responsorial Psalm. The content is accessible to inexperienced catechists and prayer leaders of the Liturgy of the Word with children and provides new insights for those who are more versed in the Lectionary readings. Filled with a pastoral tone, these commentaries offer historical-critical background on the readings and connections to daily life.

The short theme offered at the top of the Scripture Background page is the primary component which integrates the resources in CTL. These themes unite the liturgy and Lectionary readings and, along with the commentaries and connections to Church teaching, served as the starting point for the authors of the age-appropriate resources, *Christian Initiation of Children*, *Children's Liturgy of the Word*, and *The Word to Go/La palabra para llevar*.

The sidebar on each Scripture Background includes connections to Church teaching from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, the documents of the Second Vatican Council, papal encyclicals, and other

See the end of the Introduction for concise list of the documents and their abbreviations.

For the first time this year, we are offering four Seasonal Catechist Formation Sessions!

New this year: Prayer Services related to each Sunday and Holy Day for use with multi-age groups at the beginning and/or end of faith formation sessions.

significant Church documents. Each age-appropriate session then explains one or more of these Church teachings and helps participants connect it to their daily lives as Catholics.

Encourage your catechists to take time to read the Scripture Background first, before preparing the session. Doing so will give them a deeper understanding of the material in the session, how it was developed, and how the different reflections, activities, and doctrinal components are related to each other.

Catechist Formation Sessions Four catechist formation sessions are included. These sessions coincide with the four sections of CTL in each resource. Use the sessions to prepare your catechists for the ministry at various points during the year. The first session is twice the length of the other three and is intended as both an overview of *Celebrating the Lectionary* and an introduction to Ordinary Time in fall. The session can easily be adapted and used as two separate sessions depending on the needs of your program and the availability of your catechists.

The other three sessions provide formation for your catechists for leading sessions during the seasons of Advent and Christmas, Lent and Easter, and Ordinary Time in summer. Designed to last about an hour and a half, these sessions are attentive to the spiritual growth of the catechists, their ongoing formation in faith, and their various levels of understanding of the liturgy and liturgical year. Prayer is always an essential component of these sessions. Time is also allowed for you to discuss practical issues and questions related to your parish's or school's program with your catechists.

Intergenerational Seasonal Sessions There are two intergenerational sessions in this year's *Program Guide*. The sessions, *Living Advent and Christmas* and *Living Lent and Easter*, are meant for use by multi-generational, parish-wide groups who gather to learn and grow in their spirituality during the most important seasons of the liturgical year. The sessions are written to accommodate an evening or afternoon time frame of approximately an hour and a half, and include the components of prayer, teaching, reflection, and activities. By offering these sessions seasonally, you can bring your parish together as a unified group and can get all parish members involved.

Prayer Services The prayer services, based on the liturgy and Lectionary readings for each Sunday and Holy Day, coincide with the theme and focus statements in all the CTL resources. The prayer services include an introduction, music suggestions for the opening and closing, opening and closing prayers, reflection questions intended for a very brief time of sharing with children and adults seated nearby, an occasional ritual experience, sample prayers of the faithful, and a closing blessing.

The prayer services can be used before or after sessions to gather all age groups in prayer. Or, choose components of the prayer services to use so as to meet the time frame of your program. Each prayer service can also be divided such that the first half of the service is used at the beginning of your faith formation time and the second half is used at the conclusion. See the notes in the prayer services for more detailed information on how they might be used.

Director and Catechist Resources Meant to offer practical assistance to the director of faith formation and catechists, among these resources you will find: a Catechist's Basic Supply List, a Catechist Ongoing Evaluation Form, Sample Letters to Send Home, and a Sample Certificate of Participation in Faith Formation.

As adults who work with children and other members of the community who are vulnerable, and who care for their spiritual, emotional, and physical needs for the time in which they are with us, we are morally obligated to provide a safe and nurturing environment for them. As the director of a program, obtain copies of all regulations and forms relating to protecting children and vulnerable adults. Convey to catechists and other volunteers the importance of following all procedures. Gently assure catechists that the regulations are for their own protection as well as for that of the participants. Some basic guide-

**KEEPING
GOD'S CHILDREN
SAFE**

lines to follow are listed below. Following them will help ensure the sessions run smoothly and, most importantly, that all God's children can develop their relationship with Christ in a safe environment.

- Every child must be registered before attending a session. As part of the registration, make sure and obtain information about whom to contact in an emergency, who is or is not allowed to pick up the child, special medical information, and names, addresses, phone numbers, and emails of parents or guardians.
- Children should be supervised at all times. Children must never be in a room or on the grounds without adult supervision.
- A parent or visitor should always check in at the office and follow established procedures before visiting any session.
- Catechists or other volunteers should not be alone with individual children. Precautions must be taken against any touching that could be misconstrued. At least two adults should always be present with children.
- All children must be picked up by a parent or guardian. Any exception should only be with prior written permission.
- Follow diocesan guidelines and local regulations regarding background checks, fingerprinting, CPR and first-aid certification, tuberculosis testing, and other requirements for adults who work with children and vulnerable adults.
- Have an emergency evacuation plan, and have a practice drill at the beginning of each year. Post a copy of the evacuation plan in each meeting room. Have first-aid kits, complete with protective gloves, readily available at all times.
- If field trips are allowed, all drivers must provide copies of drivers' licenses and insurance. The director should keep a driver's file and ensure that all drivers are of legal age to drive minors. Abide by diocesan policy and complete appropriate diocesan forms for all events.
- Minors should not bring any objects to sessions unless requested by a catechist for that particular session. This helps guard against lost or stolen items and anything unsafe. The catechist should inspect any secular music or magazines for messages, pictures, articles, and advertisements contrary to Catholic values.
- Especially for middle school adolescents, high school teens, and adults, develop a policy on the use of cell phones, iPods, BlackBerrys, and other handheld technology. Convey your policy clearly at the start of the program and offer occasional reminders when necessary.

LIVING THE LITURGY TOGETHER

Leading others in faith formation gives you the opportunity to serve God and his people in an important way. Remember, Jesus taught us that anyone who does good works in his name is serving as his disciple (Mark 9:38–43, 45, 47–48). By virtue of our Baptism, we are called to embrace our service in the Church according to the gifts and talents God has given us. Love and serve the Lord in your faith formation ministry without feeling you need to be perfect in all you say and do. Just as you grow in your relationship with God each day, so can you build upon your successes and learn from your failures as you lead your parish program.

As you approach the task ahead, remember that you are not alone. Among the many resources available to you are other catechists, members of the clergy, fellow parish members, and your friends and family. Rely on these people to help you to explore your faith, serve the participants in your faith formation

program, and brainstorm activities. You may want to invite the catechists to set aside a time before each session to meet briefly with you to share challenges and successes and to pray as a group.

By taking on this ministry, you are embarking on a journey of faith along with the group that you will be leading. This is a tremendous opportunity for you to actively explore your beliefs and celebrate Catholic traditions as you take on the role of a faith formation guide using Jesus Christ as your model. By attending Sunday Mass, praying the liturgy, actively participating in it, absorbing the depths of its meaning, and then approaching each day with a prayerful mindset, you will be given the opportunity to truly live your faith more deeply.

We at Liturgy Training Publications invite you to share your successes and concerns with us. We welcome your feedback on *Celebrating the Lectionary* or any of the individual program components, and hope that you will take the time to help us make the program and its resources even better. Please email us at ctl@LTP.org.

Doctrinal Connections Key The following is a list of documents that are referenced in the connections to Church teaching and tradition section on the Scripture Background pages and in the coinciding sessions in each resource associated with *Celebrating the Lectionary*. Full texts of the following documents can be found in *Vatican Council II, The Basic Sixteen Documents* (Flannery, ed.), on the Vatican Web site (www.vatican.va), on the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Web site (www.usccb.org), or online by typing the English or Latin title into a search engine.

- AA: Second Vatican Council, *Apostolicam Actuositatem*.
- AG: Second Vatican Council, *Ad Gentes Divinitus*.
- BLS: United States Catholic Conference of Bishops, *Built of Living Stones*.
- CGTM: United States Catholic Conference of Bishops, *Called and Gifted for the Third Millennium*.
- CCR: United States Catholic Conference of Bishops, *Called to Compassion and Responsibility*.
- CCC: Interdicasterial Commission for the Catechism of the Catholic Church, *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.
- CL: Pope John Paul II, *Christifideles Laici*.
- CKS: United States Lutheran-Roman Catholic Dialogue, *The Church as Koinonia of Salvation: Its Structures and Ministries*.
- CSDC: Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of Social Doctrine of the Church*.
- CU: Synod of Bishops, *Convenientes ex Universo*.
- DCE: Pope Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas Est*.
- DH: Second Vatican Council, *Dignitatis Humanae*.
- DPPL: Congregation for Divine Worship and Discipline of the Sacraments, *Directory on Popular Piety and the Liturgy*.
- DM: Pope John Paul II, *Dives et Misericordia*.
- DV: Pope John Paul II, *Dominum et Vivificantem*.
- EM: United States Catholic Conference of Bishops, *Encuentro and Mission*.
- EN: Pope Paul VI, *Evangelii Nuntiandi*.
- GS: Second Vatican Council, *Gaudium et Spes*.
- GMD: United States Catholic Conference of Bishops, *Go Make Disciples*.
- JPSS: Pontifical Biblical Commission, *The Jewish People and Their Sacred Scriptures in the Christian Bible*.
- LG: Second Vatican Council, *Lumen Gentium*.
- MC: Pope Paul VI, *Marialis Cultus*.
- NDC: United States Catholic Conference of Bishops, *National Directory for Catechesis*.
- NA: Second Vatican Council, *Nostra Aetate*.
- NMI: Pope John Paul II, *Novo Millennio Inuente*.
- OHWB: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Our Hearts Were Burning*.
- RP: Pope John Paul II, *Reconciliatio et Paenitentia*.
- RH: Pope John Paul II, *Redemptoris Hominis*.
- RM: Pope John Paul II, *Redemptoris Mater*.

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RMi: Pope John Paul II, Redemptoris Missio.

RCIA: Congregation for Divine Worship and Discipline of the Sacraments, Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults.

SCST: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Sharing Catholic Social Teaching.

SRS: Pope John Paul II, Sollicitudo Rei Socialis.

SS: Pope Benedict XVI, Spe Salvi.

SNL: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Strangers No Longer.

TMA: Pope John Paul II, Tertio Millenio Adveniente.

EE: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, To the Ends of the Earth.

USCCA: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, United States Catholic Catechism for Adults.

UUS: Pope John Paul II, Ut Unum Sint.

VS: Pope John Paul II, Veritatis Splendor.

No abbreviation: Pope John Paul II, Day of Pardon Homily.

No abbreviation: Pope Paul VI, Message for the 1976 World Day of Peace.

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