

**PART 1. PRE-SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION.**

**"WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW".**

**Notes for the Catechist: -**

1. Booklet with Basic Prayers.
2. Distribute folders to store work.
3. Get to know the class and find out what they know about coming to Church.
4. Always start and end the class with the Sign of the Cross and a prayer.

**Introduction.**

Teach the children the Sign of the Cross. Explain the Hail Mary and the Our Father. Ask them to look out for these prayers during the Mass and when they appear. Explain why we pray. Ask the children what they think about praying. Ask what prayers they know. We come to pray to God who loves us and, one day, to receive him in Holy Communion. Before we do that, we have to learn about ourselves, about our Church and about the people who come to our Church.

Ask if they know the name of their Church, who brings them to Church and the name of their Parish Priest.

**PART TWO.**

**IN THE BEGINNING.**

**Notes for the Catechist: -**

1. God is Our Father who loves us.
2. He created the World.
3. He made Adam and Eve.
4. They disobeyed Him.

**How He made the World.**

In the Bible, we learn that God made the World. He created Light and Darkness, then the Land and the Sea. He then made the Sun and the Moon. After that, He created Fish, Birds and other Animals and, finally, Adam and Eve. This took Him six days and on the seventh day, he rested. Children's Bibles have many pictures of these events. Get the children to look at pictures of Creation.

God loved Adam and Eve. He gave them a beautiful garden called "The Garden of Eden" and they lived happily there. There was no pain or sorrow in this Garden. God asked them not to eat fruit from one particular tree – the Tree of Knowledge. Eve was tempted by an evil serpent who was called the Devil. He persuaded her to eat some of this forbidden fruit. She ate it and encouraged Adam to do the same. He also took it. God found out and expelled them from the Garden.

Ask the children to explain temptation. This ought to generate discussion.

### **PART THREE.**

### **WHAT HAPPENED NEXT: -**

#### **Notes for the Catechist: -**

1. God was angry.
2. He punished Adam and Eve.
3. Consequences.
4. How we have to try to become close to God again.

#### **Difficulties for Adam and Eve.**

Adam and Eve had to leave the Garden of Eden and life became difficult for them. They felt pain and sorrow, they experienced extreme heat and cold and they had to work hard to grow food. By disobeying God, they had committed what we call Original Sin. When we are born, this Sin is within us. Remember, however, that God loved Adam and Eve, just as He loves us. He made it possible for us to renew our relationship with God. Firstly, we can be Baptised.

All of you have been Baptised. Ask the children where they were baptised. Ask how old they were. Who are your Godparents? Have you any photographs of your Baptism? What names were chosen for you at Baptism? What did your Parents and Godparents promise to do? Discuss what happens at Baptism, what the Priest does and how we become part of God's family.

## **PART FOUR**

## **FAMILIES**

### **Notes for the Catechist: -**

1. Ask the children about their baptismal name(s).
2. Encourage them to research their name(s) and meaning.
3. Do they know why their parents chose their particular name?

### **Why I am special**

Ask the children to draw a picture of themselves. Ask them what they think they are good at and what they like to do. Who are their friends and what makes a good friend?

Usually, we live in a house with family members. Some of us have brothers and sisters. Who looks after the family? They love us and forgive us when we do something wrong. It is the same with God. He loves us even when we make the wrong choices. He wants to help us and bring us back to him.

**PART FIVE**

**BECOMING PART OF GOD'S FAMILY.**

**Notes for the Catechist: -**

1. We have our own family.
2. We become part of God's family in Baptism.
3. How do we make this link stronger?

**Set some time aside for God.**

We know that the people in our family love us. We love them and want to be with them. By praying, by going to Mass and by learning about God, we get to know him. We celebrate with him in Holy Mass. When it is your birthday, you have a party with your family and friends. At Mass, we celebrate with members of God's family, including the Priest and other people from our Parish.

Draw a picture of yourself and your friends at a party. Then draw a picture of yourself at Mass, including the Priest and those around you in the Church. At Children's Liturgy, we listen to stories from the Bible, we start to learn about God and His Son, Jesus. To change the world, to make things better, God sent His only Son, His most precious gift, to save us.

## **PART SIX**

## **JESUS COMES INTO THE WORLD – CHRISTMAS**

### **Notes for the Catechist: -**

1. Explain what happens in Advent.
2. Tell the Christmas story.

### **The Incarnation.**

Years before Jesus was born, Holy Men or Prophets wrote about the coming of Jesus and told how He would come to help the people, to save them. He would be our Saviour. God asked Mary to be the Mother of Jesus and she agreed. Just as Mary prepared to be the Mother of Jesus, so we prepare for Christmas during the Advent Season. For these four weeks, we learn about Mary and her husband, Joseph. We mark each week by lighting a new candle in our Advent wreath. It is a time of expectation.

Talk to the children about their preparations and expectations, about Nativity plays at school and learning Christmas Carols. Tell the Christmas story and listen to what the children have to say.

### **Quiz.**

1. What did we light each Sunday in Advent?
2. Who was born on Christmas Day?
3. Who was His Mother?
4. Who was her husband?
5. In which town was He born?
6. Where was He born?
7. Where did Mary put Him?
8. Who were the first people to visit Jesus?
9. How did they find the stable?
10. Who else came to visit Him?
11. How did they find the stable?
12. Who was the wicked King who wanted to find Jesus?

### **Some Thoughts for New Catechists**

Once you have been encouraged to become a Catechist, you will be given a programme to follow. It is helpful to read around the subject and draw from your own experience. Children's bibles are helpful and often have useful pictures which can be used to illustrate a point. Try to make the sessions fun. For example, I often take pictures and candles and other items from home to share my own experiences with the children. They may regard this as their free time so it should be different from school in some ways. The children surprise me at times with their ideas. Through time, you will get to know what works, especially as the children start to work together and begin to enjoy the experience. Last year, I was touched because the children seemed genuinely disappointed when the classes came to an end. They said, "Will you not be here next week?" I felt that was a result! And I felt they had learned something about our Faith in the process!

Anne Lamond.