

“So shall my Word be that goes forth from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and prosper in the thing for which I sent it.”

(Isaiah 55:11)

Using a Celebration of the Word of God in a Catechetical Setting

Celebrations of the Word in accord with the liturgical season and the topic to be presented can be held in a catechetical session so that it can take place in the context of liturgical prayer. (RCIA 81-89). These liturgies have as their main purpose:

1. To give listeners some of the Scriptural foundations of the truths of the faith
2. To give participants experience in different ways of prayer.
3. To make use of the signs, celebrations, prayers, and seasons of the liturgy

❖ Liturgies of the Word reflect the liturgical life of the Church. They should preserve all the gestures, language, and postures of the Church’s liturgy. These Celebrations of the Word should not be rushed or considered “extras” to a catechetical session as they are called for in the Rites for the Period of the Catechumenate. (See RCIA n.75.3, 81-89) They are proclamations of Sacred Scripture that prepare the hearts and minds of participants for the teachings they will receive.

The readers and any musicians participating in these Celebrations of the Word must be properly prepared. The structure should generally follow this pattern:

Opening Song (stand)

Song should be appropriate to the teaching to be imparted or liturgical feast celebrated.

First Reading (sit)

This can be taken from any part of Scripture except the Gospels.

Opening: “A reading from the book of...”

Closing: “The Word of the Lord”

All: “Thanks be to God”

Responsorial Psalm (sit)

This should be done as a dialogue and can be sung or recited.

Gospel Reading (stand) – (by priest or deacon if one is present)

Opening: “A reading from the holy Gospel according to...”

Response: “Glory to you, Oh Lord.” (Three-fold signing with the cross)

Closing: “The Gospel of the Lord”

All: “Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.”

Short Reflection – [optional] (sit)

Done by the person having read the Gospel

Concluding Prayer (sit or stand)

This may consist of a prayer, psalm, litany, song, or one of the other minor rites.