



What to do during the Period of Purification and Enlightenment?

I. Introduction

- This period “*is given to a more intense preparation of spirit and heart, which has the character of recollection rather than of catechesis, and is intended to purify hearts and minds by examination of conscience and penitence.*” (OCIA 139)
- Catechetical sessions in this period shift from a systematic presentation of the faith to a more reflective approach that is centered on:
 1. The Gospel readings of Lent *and*
 2. Helping catechumens and candidates to encounter Christ more deeply

II. Content of Sessions in this Period

- The Sunday readings of the Lenten season (Cycle A) and the liturgical rites provide the basic structure and catechetical themes during purification and enlightenment.
- Catechesis takes on the character of *lectio divina*—a prayerful reading and catechetical reflection upon the Sunday readings which assists the elect in coming to a deeper knowledge of their own sin, the need for Christ the Savior, and a deeper knowledge of Christ and increased reliance on Christ’s strength and grace.

III. Structure of Catechetical Sessions

- Sessions follow the steps of Lectio Divina (the prayerful reading of Sacred Scripture).

1. Celebration of the Word of God (Lectio)

- Proclaim Sunday Reading (Year A)

2. Catechetical Reflection on the Gospel reading (Meditatio):

- Take some time to meditate quietly on the Gospel. Allow the Holy Spirit to guide the group.
- Catechists should then:
 - Identify and explain catechetical themes
 - Lead small group discussion which emphasizes personal application.
 - Share relevant witness / testimony

The next three steps can be carried out through group discussion or through quiet personal prayer, meditation, and journaling.



3. Prayer (Oratio):

- A time to bring our meditative thoughts to God in prayer. Talk with God about how the connections and implications of your meditation on the Scripture affect your life and the lives of those around you.

4. Contemplation (Contemplatio):

- A time of quiet and rest, when we become the receiver as listen to God's voice. This step takes patience as we strive to be receptive to God speaking into our lives.

5. Resolution (Operatio):

- A call for action and deeper conversion. We are invited to respond to the things we have read in Scripture and have prayed about and to put them into practice.

Conclusion: Celebration (Closing Prayer):

- Adoration
- Prayer/Devotion (connected to catechetical themes)
- Blessing, Minor Exorcism, Anointing of the Catechumens