

Set up for an **IN PERSON EUCHARISTIC CELEBRATION** for Catechetical Sunday

This document presents different ways to arrange a Eucharistic celebration highlighting the dynamic relationship between word and listening, at the heart of the Christian faith. Among these suggestions, choices will have to be made according to the place and space available, the number of people in the animation team, material resources, etc.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

Wherever possible, arrange the space in such a way as to encourage the sharing of the word or to bring the members of the assembly closer to the Word, for example :

- moving or installing the ambo in the nave;
- procession of the Book of the Word
- invitation to draw closer to the Word, etc.

The presence of catechists will be highlighted in various ways, for example :

- encourage the participation of catechists in the various gestures and words to be taken according to the chosen suggestions;
- have them collaborate on one or the other of the proposed animation suggestions according to their charisms and wishes.

Note : The term *catechist* refers to any person who intervenes in different situations of formation for the Christian life with people of various ages or in intergenerational groups.

WELCOME AND OPENING

Begin by welcoming participants outside

If the place and the temperature allow it, why not organize the reception outside? You can decorate the chosen place, arrange a few chairs, play music, etc. In short, create a welcoming environment and a friendly atmosphere. This arrangement would set the tone for the celebration, while informing that new elements will take place during the liturgy.

Build a “graffiti wall”

Inside, if the place allows it, we could make a “graffiti wall”, a wall covered with large strips of paper, above which is written : “**For me, listening is ...**” When entering the place of worship, people would be invited to write a few words before taking their place.

Greeting each other

Members of the assembly may be invited to greet one another .

Make the Poster of Catechesis Sunday “Speak” <https://officedecatechese.qc.ca/productions/dimanche/index.html>

A brief animation around the poster proposed for this Sunday of catechesis can serve as an “icebreaker” activity: we can ask the members of the assembly what the image evokes for them, what touches them in this poster. The presider of the assembly or a person who animates may complete or conclude with one or the other expression as necessary: listen, hear the Word, be prepared to listen. Thus the link with the next moment of celebration, the time of the proclamation of the Word, is clearly identified.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Without taking anything away from the solemnity of this part of the liturgy, ways are proposed to allow the members of the assembly to better perceive the dynamic between speaking and listening at the heart of the Christian faith.

Listening

The priest or the person who animates this time can ask the congregation to remember an occasion when true listening was experienced: **what were the effects (positive or negative)?** To break the ice, the pastoral team or the animation team participate in the process.

We can also evoke the call to listen present in the Bible. There is, for example, the Shema Israel in the book of Deuteronomy (*Dt* 6:4), which the pious Jews say every morning, or many excerpts from the book of Isaiah (*Is* 50:4; *Is* 51:4; *Is* 55:3). Some spontaneous feedback or comments from the assembly on this matter could be collected.

The Bible also testifies to the Lord’s listening to His people. Thus, in the book of Exodus, the Lord told Moses that he heard the cries of his people (*Ex* 3:7). Several psalms also mention it (e.g. *Ps* 6:10; *Ps* 27, 6, etc.). We can also evoke this listening to God and collect some comments from the assembly on this subject.

Proclaiming the Word

Biblical texts can be read in two or more voices, paying particular attention to the quality of proclamation.

If someone in the community is known for their storytelling skills, that person could be called upon to tell an excerpt from a biblical account, or even the entire passage.

The proclamation of a text by one person could be accompanied by another voice, which repeats or evokes a rephrasing of certain words, as in echo.

Particular attention will be paid to the children present, by embellishing the reading or telling, if necessary, of objects, decorative elements or gestures to be carried out by the assembly that is associated with one word or another of the story.

Presenting the Word

At the time of the homily, and if conditions permit, the priest can get closer to the congregation.

To encourage some interaction with the members of the congregation during the homily, here are some suggestions:

- invite a few people to ask questions that may have arisen from the Bible readings heard;
- ask questions of the assembly in order to establish a dialogue;
- install a sign or attach large sheets to a wall and invite assembly members to write questions, words, or reactions related to Bible readings. Some of these inscriptions could be mentioned during the homily;
- if conditions permit, invite people to gather by three or four and share around the Word heard;
- invite people to meditate in silence, then to share (with a loved one or aloud) a prayer inspired by the Word received: “**Lord, you call on me to listen ...**”.

Proclaiming the profession of faith

The profession of faith may be proclaimed by two persons alternately or by the assembly in dialogue with the presider. After each stanza, you can sing a chorus.

Participating in Universal Prayer

After reading the suggested universal prayer intentions for this Sunday, a few people can be invited to formulate personal prayers; if necessary, one or two people may be invited to prepare in advance, in order to familiarize the congregation with this type of prayer.

EUCCHARISTIC LITURGY

Praying to the Lord's Prayer

If conditions permit, people can be invited to open their hands or join hands in reciting the *Lord's Prayer*. It can also be sung, with or without gestures.

Highlighting the contribution of the ministers of communion

People render the service of giving communion, during the celebration or with the sick. Their commitment can be highlighted in a number of ways:

- acknowledge their presence and thank them;
- invite them to rise so that the assembly can identify and thank them;

- give the floor to one of these ministers, who could briefly express the meaning of their commitment;
- to recall that the Christian community goes beyond the Sunday assembly alone and that all its members are in communion thanks to reciprocal prayers and to those ministers who bring communion to those prevented by illness from participating in the celebration.

Prolonging Thanksgiving

After communion, the time for thanksgiving can be extended a little in various ways :

- to play soft music, while people are invited to a personal prayer time of thanksgiving;
- invite a few people to say a spontaneous prayer of thanks aloud, or to write it on a panel or wall covered with large strips of paper;
- introduce this time of personal or shared thanksgiving with this: “ **Lord, thank you for your Bread of Life that has nourished me...**”.

A song of thanksgiving could end this moment of communion quite well.

CONCLUSION

Continue giving thanks

Provide a word of thanks and a gesture of sending on a special mission for ministers carrying communion to the sick.

Say one last prayer

Invite catechists to get up (or come forward) to read the Prayer of the Catechists proposed by the Office de catechèse du Québec, a way of signifying the gratitude that the community gives them.

At the exit, one can distribute the bookmark of the Sunday of Catechesis suggested by the Office de catechèse du Québec.

Extend the celebration throughout the week

If members of the assembly are not in a hurry to leave, we could animate a time of exchange from one or the other of the following suggestions :

- name places where God is present, where one can listen to the Word and be nourished by faith;
- identify some possible actions or a gesture to be taken in connection with the Word heard, shared, celebrated;
- reflect on a personal commitment, a concrete gesture, an attitude to be developed, as an extension of communion;
- list catechetical places and proposals for all ages offered nearby.

If necessary, one could comment on the ringing of bells that accompanies the exit of the church; for example, bells indicate to the world that Christians come out and spread the Word.