

“What about the Mystagogy Period”

The Period of Post baptismal Catechesis or Mystagogy

The period of post-baptismal catechesis or mystagogy refers to the fifty days of the Easter season, concluding at Pentecost (RCIA 249), and also to the first year of the neophyte's life as a baptized Christian (NCCB Statutes no. 24), concluding on the anniversary of the neophyte's initiation (RCIA 250). The mystagogy that takes place during this first year is also called "extended mystagogy." Extended mystagogy includes monthly meetings (NCCB Statutes no. 24). Seasonal gatherings may also be appropriate.

The neophytes and their godparents should participate as a group in the Sunday masses of the Easter season, and special places in the assembly should be reserved for them (RCIA 248). They may wear their baptismal garments at these celebrations, so as to make their presence more visible to the assembly. These "neophytes' masses," are the main setting of the mystagogy. (RCIA 247).

Candidates whose initiation was completed in the catechumenate participate in this period in the same way as the newly baptized. Their sponsors should support them and participate in the neophytes' masses with them.

Catechesis during the Period of Mystagogy .. ONGOING FORMATION

Mystagogical catechesis is different from the catechesis of the preceding periods because in mystagogy the neophytes' new experience of the sacraments is engaged and deepened. This period is centered on the sacraments and on living a sacramental life. The role of the catechist during this time is exercised under four headings (cf. RCIA 244):

a. meditation on the Gospel

The catechist helps the neophytes and the newly confirmed to explore the meaning of the Easter lectionary, especially the Gospel readings, to discover how the Sunday Word illuminates the new life of baptism.

b. the experience of the sacraments

The catechist guides the neophytes and the newly confirmed in reflecting on their actual experience of the sacraments they have received, and leads them to gain insight into their meaning.

c. the works of charity

The catechist continues to encourage the neophytes and the newly confirmed to join the community in its works of charity, and to connect these experiences with the Eucharist.

d. the role of the community

The catechist works with the community, preparing them to receive the neophytes and the newly confirmed in a spirit of joyful welcome and to establish ongoing relationships with them.

The catechumenate team and the whole community of faith have an important role to play in this stage of the process. The catechist works together with them and with the clergy who preside and preach at the Masses for neophytes.