

Archdiocese of Hartford
Christian Initiation Retreat ~ March 12, 2016

BAPTISM
celebrates the *gift* of life



CONFIRMATION
celebrates the *breath* of life



EUCCHARIST
celebrates the *nourishment* of life.



Opening Prayer

- Leader In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,
- All Amen
- Leader Let us pray for the gift of God's Spirit as we journey together today. Let us remember the symbols that we share in our Catholic tradition as we share our stories with the stories of Jesus.
- Leader Loving God, you gather us to give thanks for the breath of your Spirit in our lives. Bless us now and bless our prayer table as we prepare it for You. May this table be a sign that we are one family sharing our life.
- All Be with us today Loving God.
- Leader Loving God, may this candle remind us that Jesus, Our Light, shows the way to You, and may our hearts burn with the fire of Your love.
- All Be with us today Loving God.
- Leader Loving God, may this cross always be a sign to us of Your great love.
- All Be with us today Loving God.
- Leader Loving God, may the Word be rich food for our minds and hearts.
- All Be with us today Loving God.
- Leader Loving God, may the waters of Baptism cleanse our souls to follow in the footsteps of Your Son, Jesus Christ.
- All Be with us today Loving God.
- Leader Loving God, may this oil remind us that Your Holy Spirit is with us.
- All Be with us today Loving God.
- Leader Loving God, may these flowers represent new life, the new life of the elect and candidates as they complete their final phase to be initiated into Your church.
- All Be with us today Loving God.
- Leader Loving God, may this basket represent your Church, Your people of God. Each one of us has come here today to reflect on our journeys to become fully initiated Catholic Christians.
- All Be with us today Loving God, as we share our stories, our calling to be as one family--Your family. As we journey through Lent, let us be reminded of Your mercy and love; to empty ourselves and ask forgiveness in our straying off Your path of righteousness. Help us on this journey to the Easter Vigil, where we will experience your resurrection and receive your light.
- Leader Loving God, we make this prayer in Your name through Jesus, your Son, who lives with You and the Holy Spirit, forever and ever.
- All Amen.

CALLED BY NAME

SONG: **You Are Mine**

David Haas

I will come to you in the silence; I will lift you from all your fear.
You will hear my voice; I claim you as my choice, be still and know I am here.

I am hope for all who are hopeless; I am eyes for all who long to see.
In the shadows of the night, I will be your light, Come, and rest in me.

Refrain: *Do not be afraid, I am with you.
 I have called you each by name.
 Come and follow me, I will bring you home;
 I love you and you are mine.*

I am strength for all the despairing.
Healing for the ones who dwell in shame.
All the blind will see, the lame will all run free, and all will know my name. **R.**

I am the Word the leads all to freedom, I am the peace the world cannot give.
I will call your name, embracing all your pain, stand up, now walk and live! **R.**

PRESENTATION ON “CALLED BY NAME”

Candidates “Calling Forth”

Parish Coordinator: (Name).....I call you forth to follow Jesus.

Elect/Candidate Response: Here I am Lord Jesus.

Prayer (All) Loving God, You know each of us by name and You love us.
 We thank You for calling us by name to follow Jesus.
 May we continue to follow Him closely and may we grow
 in wisdom and grace.

PRESENTATION: YOUR CALLING and “YOU HAVE A STORY”



SONG

Marty Haugen

Refrain

Up from the waters, God has saved you,
Up from the waters, child of light.
Praise to the One Who called and named you
Up from the waters into life.

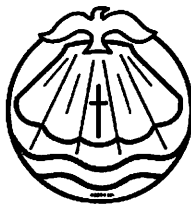
Now you have crossed the River of Jordan...up from the waters, child of light,
Now you behold God's mercy and pardon...up from the waters into life. *R*

No more shall sin have power to hold you...up from the waters, child of light,
Now let the grace of Jesus enfold you...up from the waters into Life. *R*

PRESENTATION ON BAPTISM

Blessing of the Elect

Recommitment of Baptismal Vows



CONFIRMATION Celebrates the *Breath* of Life

SONG Send Us Your Spirit

David Haas

Refrain Come, Lord Jesus, send us your Spirit,
Renew the face of the earth!
Come, Lord Jesus, send us your Spirit,
Renew the face of the earth!

Come to us, Spirit of God,
Breathe in us now, we sing together.
Spirit of hope and of light, fill our lives;
Come to us, Spirit of God! R.

Fill us with the fire of your love,
Burn in us now, bring us together.
Come to us, dwell in us, change our live, O Lord,
Come to us, Spirit of God! R.

Send us the wings of new birth,
Fill all the earth with the love you have taught us.
Let all creation now be shaken with love.
Come to us, Spirit of God. R.

PRESENTATION ON *OUR LIFE IN THE SPIRIT*



Virtues

Faith	Empowers us to receive and accept God's revelation
Hope	Empowers us to trust that God's plan for us will be realized
Charity (Love)	Empowers us to love God above all else and our neighbor as ourselves.

Gifts Of The Holy Spirit

Wisdom	The gift of wisdom helps us look upon life as a great and remarkable gift from God. It helps us judge all the events in our lives according to our belief in God.
Understanding	The gift of understanding leads us beyond just knowing the beliefs of the Church. It helps us grasp the meaning of what we believe so that our Christian faith makes a difference in the way we live.
Knowledge	The gift of knowledge helps us to be certain in our minds and hearts that God calls us to live a life of goodness and love wherever we are—at home, at work, with friends.
Counsel <i>(Right Judgment)</i>	The gift of right judgment helps us see the right and good things to do among the many choices we have to make every day. It helps us choose the right way to act when we have to decide.
Courage <i>(Fortitude)</i>	The gift of courage helps us to be strong in our beliefs as Christians. It helps us choose what is right in spite of the hardship we might suffer for having chosen what is good.
Reverence <i>(Piety)</i>	The gift of reverence helps us see God as a most loving Father and all people as our brothers and sisters. It encourages us to praise God freely and to respect all people.
Awe and Wonder <i>(Fear of the Lord)</i>	The gift of awe and wonder in God's presence helps us respect the goodness and majesty of God. It helps us value God's plan for the world and desire to build up the kingdom of God on earth.

Fruits of the Holy Spirit

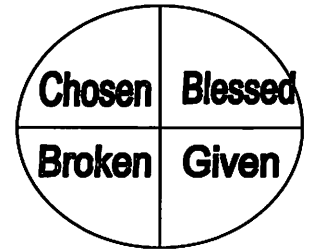
Love	God is love. God give us life	Joy	Love sings in the heart
Peace	Love trusts in God	Patience	Love is willing to wait
Kindness	Love smiles and invites	Generosity	Love gives itself away
Faithfulness	Love never tires	Gentleness	Love melts hearts
Self-Control		Love stays in shape	

1. During your RCIA process, which gifts of the Spirit have made an impact in your journey?
2. Which Fruit(s) do you seek in your life as a Catholic Christian?
3. As a fully-initiated Catholic Christian, I need to make time and space to listen to the Holy Spirit in my life. What are some of the ways I am able to communicate and listen to what God is saying to me through the Holy Spirit?

EUCHARIST Celebrates the *Nourishment* of Life

PRESENTATION ON EUCHARIST

Blessing of the Bread: *"God, help me to BE bread for the world."*



Reflection: In identification with Christ's being chosen, blessed, broken and given

.....How are you chosen as Jesus was?

....How are you blessed as Jesus was?

....How are you broken as Jesus was?

...How are you given as Jesus was?

....Do you understand how you are identified with Christ in receiving Eucharist and becoming Eucharist for others?

....Amen

A JOURNEY THROUGH HOLY WEEK

Meditation: Jesus Christ is in You

Archbishop Khajag Barsamian

CLOSING SONG Many Times: I Say "Yes" Lord

Marty Haugen

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) Many times we seem to lose our way—
to our sisters and our brothers;
Down the roads of anger we may stray—
building walls between each other. | 2) Still the God of peace and mercy—
calls us from the night;
Gives us all the strength to follow—
from darkness into light. |
| 3) When our hearts are filled with hate and greed—
thinking only of our own gain;
Never open to the ones in need—
ever quick to pass the blame. | 4) Still the God of truth and justice—
calls us to return,
To seek the path to one another—
the way of love to learn. |

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. To the God Who cannot die | 3. To the God of the oppressed | } I say "Yes," O Lord |
| 2. To the One Who hears me cry | 4. To the God of all justice | |

Refrain: I say "Yes," my Lord, in all the good times, through all the bad times.
I say "Yes," my Lord, to every word You speak.

Soy un serviente del Señor: <i>Digo "Si," Señor</i>	(I am a servant of the Lord: I say "Yes," O Lord)
y trabajo en los campos.	(I am a worker in the fields)
soy un prisionero de su guerras:	(I'm a prisoner of their wars)
Como un político, inevitable:	(Like a politician, inevitably)

Refrain: Digo, "Si," Señor, en tiempos malos, en tiempos buenos:
Digo "Si," Señor, a todo lo que hablas.

- | | | |
|--|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Like that of Job, unceasingly | 3. Like that of David, in a song | } I say "Yes," O Lord |
| 2. Like that of Maria, whole-heartedly | 4. Like Israel for you I long | |

PRAYER As We Go Forth

Leader Let us pray. Father, we go forth from this gathering renewed by Your love and Your word. We have been blessed by Your presence in this assembly of Your people in the Archdiocese of Hartford as we journey to the Easter Vigil. Be with us as we continue to ask for your forgiveness and mercy during these Lenten days. Be our strength, our hope, our love and our life. We ask this through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Amen.

All Lord, let our lives be rich with Your love and the love of Your people as we return to our parishes. Let us be content in our affection for you. May our understanding of you always grow as we sing Your glory and praise.

Leader As a celebrating people of our God, let us join together saying,

All Our Father ...

Leader May He Who is Lord give us continued peace in the days to come, especially as we journey through Holy Week to the Easter Vigil.

All Amen

Leader May the grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ be with you all

All And with your Spirit.

Leader Let us go forth back to our parishes to love and serve the Lord and each other.

All Thanks be to God.

HOLY WEEK REFLECTION

For Elect and Candidates in their Journey to the Easter Vigil

✝ What is becoming clearer to me about having a relationship with Jesus Christ is...

✝ My relationship with Jesus involves . . .

✝ What is becoming clearer to me about the meaning of *discipleship*?
The ways in which I have already begun to embrace discipleship are . . .

✝ The greatest challenge to my ever-deepening relationship with Christ will be . . .

✠ As I approach the time of my baptism or renewal of my baptism, for what do I pray?

✠ My prayer is . . . (Open your heart to God and write whatever comes to mind)



THE PASCHAL TRIDUUM

The Paschal Triduum, or “three days,” commemorates Jesus’ passage from death to life. Unique in the public worship of the Church, these solemn days stand apart from Lent and from the Easter season. Following the tradition of the ancient world, each “day” begins at sundown and ends at sundown the following day.

DAY ONE: The Mass of the Lord’s Supper

The *Mass of the Lord’s Supper* begins the Sacred Triduum. In the Eucharist, Jesus gave himself to us, just as he would in the sacrifice of the Calvary.

The Celebration of the Lord’s Passion

The *Celebration of the Lord’s Passion*, including the Veneration of the Cross, usually takes place on the afternoon of Good Friday, still the first day of the Triduum. As Scripture tells us, they wanted to remove the bodies of Jesus and the two crucified with him before sundown because then it would be the Sabbath.

Challenge I Reflection: The First Day of the Triduum poses a dual challenge: will you give yourself as Jesus did? Perhaps in suffering, perhaps in service, like the washing of the feet, we are given the opportunity through baptism to **serve** others I love.

Challenge II Reflection: To **accept** the service of others, particularly Jesus himself. Will you let Jesus suffer for you? Will you accept suffering and death as a part of the mystery of salvation? Finally, will you avail yourself of his grace of the Eucharist to strengthen your own life of sacrifice and service?



DAY TWO: In the Tomb

The Celebration of the Lord’s Passion ends in the silence of the tomb where Jesus was laid. We have the advantage of knowing He will rise the next day, but His disciples did not. In their grief and sorrow they were like all of us who experience the grief of loss, defeat and prayers that seem to go unanswered. With no liturgy on Holy Saturday, the Church pauses in unity with the grief of the ages. As we wait in hope, our love of God depends not on what God can do for us, but rather on **whom God is**.

Challenge Reflection: To **trust** God in the face of apparent failure. In the silence and inactivity of the tomb, we have the opportunity to love Jesus for who He is rather than for what he can do for us. We know Jesus would rise from the grave, but in our own lives, we are often suspended in uncertainty, not knowing how crises will turn out. At such times, we can only trust in God.



DAY THREE: The Easter Vigil

The Vigil of Hope, Day of Joy. The early Christians believed Christ would return at night. We join with the hopes of all believers as we celebrate the Easter Vigil. In this liturgy the entire Church Year culminates in worship and praise. From the *Liturgy of Light* to the *Scriptural account of salvation history* to *baptism* to the *renewal of our baptismal vows* and finally to the *Eucharist*, this night celebrates Christ’s triumph over sin and death. The Sacred Triduum concludes at sundown on Easter Sunday.

Reflection: The Third Day is a triumph for Christ and for the Church, not because we have earned it, as Saint Paul reminds us, but because God is gracious. The Easter Vigil liturgy crowns the Church’s liturgical year as it celebrates our participation in the triumph of *life over death* through Jesus’ resurrection. Each individual, newly baptized or long-time Catholic, has an opportunity to do what no one else can: to accept the great love God has for us and be saved.

