

Lesson 34 – Extreme Unction and Holy Orders

Grades 6-8

Lesson Preparation:

Read Lesson 34 in the Baltimore Catechism. You will need to have a Bible for this session. You may want to review the section about vocations in Lesson 15.

Opening Prayer:

Scripture: “Keep watch over yourselves and over the whole flock of which the Holy Spirit has appointed you overseers, in which you tend the church of God that he acquired with his own blood.” Acts 20:28

Leader: Lord, as we study the sacraments of the anointing of the sick and holy orders, may we be inspired with extreme gratitude and profound respect for your gifts. Amen.

Together: Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created, and You shall renew the face of the earth. O God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit, we may be truly wise and ever rejoice in His consolations, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Opening:

This lesson is about two sacraments: the anointing of the sick and holy orders. The Scripture in the opening prayer referred to the sacrament of holy orders; in the lesson opening, we will focus on some Scripture about the anointing of the sick.

Read James 5:13-15, and ask the students what it teaches us about the anointing of the sick. One key thing to notice is that although in the sacrament we do pray for physical healing, the spiritual healing is more profound. James says the Lord will “raise up” the sick person. We pray for recovery of health, but if it is time to pass from this life, the sacrament provides strength for the journey. Also, notice at the end that it includes the forgiveness of sins, which is one reason why this sacrament must be administered by a priest.

Watch the Lesson 34 Video on Catholic Brain

Comprehension Questions: *Note: These questions are asked after the video, just to check student comprehension. They are not discussion questions, but be sure students understand the answers to these questions before moving on*

1) What is the Anointing of the Sick?

A sacrament with grace to strengthen our bodies for recovery of health, and our soul for death, if it is time.

2) Who can administer the sacrament?

A priest

3) Does it include the forgiveness of sins?

Yes; if a person is conscious, he or she will probably receive penance first, especially if there is mortal sin

4) What is holy orders?

The sacrament by which a man is ordained a minister of the Church as a deacon, priest, or bishop

5) Who can administer holy orders?

Only a bishop (Note: a bishop remains a priest, he has just attained a higher level of the sacrament of holy orders. A bishop can perform all the functions of a priest, but there are some things, like ordain people, that a bishop can do, which other priests can not.)

Discussion Questions: *Note: These questions are for student discussion. The students should consider these questions and comment on them. There are some key points included in this lesson, after each question, that you can use to help guide their discussion toward truth. It's important that the students think about and discuss these things, but that they don't leave the discussion with false impressions about what is true.*

1) How can one know if he or she has a religious vocation?

This topic was discussed in the "Go Deeper" section of Lesson 15. Review that. People should pray to know their vocation, seek the advice of a spiritual director, perhaps make vocations retreats.

2) Should everyone discern a vocation?

A vocation is a call from God. The question is not, “What do I want to do?”, but rather, “What does God want me to do?” Everyone should sincerely ask that question. That is the heart of what discernment is.

3) Why is it important to call a priest if someone is in danger of death?

This life is a journey to heaven, and God has given us grace through the Church to get there. Although the anointing of the sick isn't only for those in imminent danger of death, the grace of that sacrament strengthens us for the challenges we face at death. It is essential to try to receive it. We should all pray to have a priest present when we die.

Go Deeper:

We will revisit the Fathers of the Church, regarding the priesthood. Specifically, discuss what they have to say about how the priest acts in the Person of Christ.

St. Cyprian of Carthage – Letter 63 – A.D. 253

If Christ Jesus, our Lord and God, is himself the high priest of God the Father; and if he offered himself as a sacrifice to the Father; and if he commanded that this be done in commemoration of himself, then certainly the priest, who imitates that which Christ did, truly functions in place of Christ

St. Ambrose – On the Mysteries – circa A.D. 387

Do not consider the merits of individuals, but the office of the priests....Believe, then, that the Lord Jesus is present at the invocation of the priest, Who said: "Where two or three are, there am I also." How much where the Church is, and where His Mysteries are, does He vouchsafe to impart His presence!

Activity:

It is important that each person asks the question, “God, what do You want me to do?” It is especially important when it comes to our vocation, what we do with our lives – a priest, a sister, marriage, the single life, etc. We must believe that God’s plan is the best plan.

Compose a prayer asking God what He wants you to do, to help you know your vocation. Pray the prayer often.

Closing Prayer:

Leader: God, today we have explored two more beautiful sacraments. They give us comfort. We thank You for life, but do not let us be afraid of death, the door to eternal life. And do not let us be afraid to follow whatever vocation You call us to. Amen.

Together: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.