

## 3 - Minute Catechesis

### Where Are They Going?

Once upon a time, some people claim, a Parish Church during Mass was a quiet and orderly place. People arrived before Mass began and stayed until it was over. Once in the pews, few people left them until it was time for Communion, unless they had a medical emergency.

Those days, if they ever existed, are long gone. Some Sundays, our church seems nearly as busy as Grand Central Station. Some people arrive five or ten minutes after Mass has begun. Some leave as soon as they've received Communion, and many others bolt for the doors when they hear the first note of the recessional hymn.

We might raise some questions about the disrespect for the Eucharist that such behavior expresses, but our focus today is on those people who are told to leave before Mass is over.

There are three such groups in our Parish. The first is composed of children ages six to 12 who leave the assembly after the opening prayer at our Sunday 9:30 and 11:00 AM Masses. They go to another room for the Liturgy of the Word presented at their level. They return during the Presentation of the Gifts and stay for the rest of Mass.

Another group is dismissed after the homily. They are the catechumens, those adults who are preparing for baptism, and those who are preparing for full communion with the Catholic Church. The *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* calls for them to be dismissed from the assembly every week until they are baptized or received into the Church. Here at Risen Savior, the catechumens normally attend the 9:30 AM Sunday Mass.

Sometimes people wonder why we are so inhospitable to these folks. Why can't they stay for the whole Mass? There are two ways to answer that question. Those who are not yet baptized or received into communion are not able to join us at the table for Eucharist. That necessary exclusion could seem inhospitable if they were to stay. The more important reason they are dismissed, however, is so that they can reflect upon the Scriptures and homily and share their thoughts about what they've heard.

The third group that is dismissed from the Mass are the Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion who are taking Communion to the homebound. In a tradition that goes back to the very early Church, they are taking the Body of Christ to those who could not attend our worship: taking Christ not only in the Host, but also in their own presence. They are dismissed prior to the rest of us so that they can begin their journey and their ministry.

So, much like Grand Central Station, there are always people coming and going, but all of us are really moving in the same direction... moving closer to Jesus and His kingdom.

## Catechism Connection

**Paragraph 1248:** The catechumenate, or formation of catechumens, aims at bringing their conversion and faith to maturity, in response to the divine initiative and in union with an ecclesial community. The catechumenate is to be “a formation in the whole Christian life ... during which the disciples will be joined to Christ their teacher. The catechumens should be properly initiated into the mystery of salvation and the practice of the evangelical virtues, and they should be introduced into the life of faith, liturgy, and charity of the People of God by successive sacred rites.”



### Liturgy & Scripture

Open communion is the practice of Christian Churches that allow individuals other than members of that church to receive Communion. Open communion is the opposite of *closed communion*, where the

Eucharist is reserved for members of the particular church or denomination. In the Catholic Church, closed communion is practiced because Catholic theology regarding Eucharist – belief in the Real Presence – differs from the prevalent Christian theology that it is symbolic.

### Where Can I Learn More?

Read the inside cover of Today’s Missal! Here’s an excerpt: “Because Catholics believe that the celebration of the Eucharist is a sign of the reality of the oneness of faith, life, and worship, members of those churches with whom we are not yet fully united are ordinarily not admitted to Holy Communion.”

### Your Catholic I.Q. Words You Should Know

#### CATECHUMEN:

A person preparing in a program of instruction and spiritual formation for Baptism and reception into the Church.

#### DISMISSAL:

Catechumen are dismissed after the Liturgy of the Word to further explore and discuss the readings. This is to make the process feel more like it was in the early church, when Christian converts were dismissed before communion before their baptism, which often took years to prepare for, largely to make the Communion more meaningful.

#### RCIA (The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults):

The process, instituted by Pope Paul VI on January 6, 1972, by which adults are received into full communion with the Catholic Church. There are four stages, culminating in the Final Initiation, when the catechumens receive Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Eucharist at the Easter Vigil.

### Liturgy Readings for the Week

<b>Monday</b>	Genesis 4:1-15, 25 // Mark 8:11-13
<b>Tuesday</b>	Genesis 6:5-8, 7:1-5, 10 // Mark 8:14-21
<b>Wednesday</b>	Genesis 8:6-13, 20-22 // Mark 8:22-26
<b>Thursday</b>	Genesis 9:1-13 // Mark 8:27-33
<b>Friday</b>	Genesis 11:1-9 // Mark 8:34-9:1
<b>Saturday</b>	Hebrews 11:1-7 // Mark 9:2-13
<b>Sunday</b>	Isaiah 43:18-19, 21-22, 24b-25 // 2 Corinthians 1:18-22 // Mark 2:1-12

### Question of the Week

**Theme:** Jesus wants to make us whole.

**Question for Children:** What do you want to ask Jesus to do for you?

**Question for Youth:** How has Jesus touched your life? How are you changed because of that touch?

**Question for Adults:** Name a time when you experienced Jesus’ healing touch.

