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# CATECHIST EXERCISE

## REFLECTION ON THE SYMBOLS OF THE EASTER VIGIL

**P**lace the symbols of water, oil, bread, and wine in the environment. Each symbol stands on its own. When addressing baptism, use the symbol of water exercise. When addressing confirmation, use the symbol of oil or the laying on of hands. The catechist affirms participants' responses by adding information regarding the four signs as each sign is addressed. Refer to this resource. These exercises can be spread over several sessions. The catechist may refer to information in the body of this resource to supplement their responses.

### WATER

#### Natural Sign of Water

*Invite participants to approach the parish font or provide a basin of water. Invite participants to experience the water liberally and playfully—put their hands in the water, touch their faces and other body parts with the water.*

How can you describe the natural properties of water?

In what way does your experience of water remind you of God?

Based on your experience of water, how would you describe Jesus, God the Father, and the Holy Spirit?

#### Biblical Sign of Water

Can you name any stories from the Bible where water plays an important role?

#### Liturgical Sign of Water

How do we use the symbol of water in ritual?

What does the symbol of water mean when used in liturgy?

#### Ecclesial Sign of Water

How do we use water in our church tradition?

What do we believe about the use of water?

What does it signify?

What does it have to do with your life, and with the life of your community?

What is the challenge inherent in the symbol of water?

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## Transformation: Decision for Discipleship

Considering the reflection everyone just shared, what do you think God is inviting you to do, or to become? What attitudes or behaviors need to change? To what are you willing to commit?

## OIL

### Natural Sign of Oil

*Invite participants to pour olive oil or a lotion of some sort on their hands. Invite them to experience the natural properties of oil.*

How can you describe the natural properties of oil?

How does your experience of oil remind you of God?

Based on your experience of oil, how would you describe the Holy Spirit?

### Biblical Sign of Oil

Can you name any stories from the Bible where oil plays an important role?

### Liturgical Sign of Oil

How do we use the symbol of oil in ritual?

What does the symbol of oil mean when used in liturgy?

### Ecclesial Sign of Oil

How do we use oil in our church tradition?

What do we believe about the use of oil?

What does it signify?

What does it have to do with your life, and with the life of your community?

What is the challenge inherent in the symbol of oil?

## Transformation: Decision for Discipleship

Considering the reflection everyone just shared, what do you think God is inviting you to do, or to become? What attitudes or behaviors need to change? To what are you willing to commit?

## LAYING ON OF HANDS

*Invite participants to lay hands on the shoulder or back of another participant and to remain prayerfully quiet as they invite the presence of the Holy Spirit.*

### Natural Sign of Laying On of Hands

Describe your feelings when hands were laid on your back.

In what way did that experience reflect the Holy Spirit?

Please share as you are willing an experience of touch that affected your life.

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## Biblical Sign of Laying On of Hands

Can you name any stories from the Bible where hands were laid upon someone? What did it mean?

## Liturgical Sign of Laying On of Hands

How do we use the symbol of imposition of hands in ritual?

What does the symbol mean when used in liturgy?

## Ecclesial Sign of Laying On of Hands

How do we use the imposition of hands in our church tradition?

What do we believe about the symbol?

What does it signify?

What does it have to do with your life, and with the life of your community?

What is the challenge inherent in the symbol of laying on of hands?

## Transformation: Decision for Discipleship

Considering the reflection everyone just shared, what do you think God is inviting you to do, or to become? What attitudes or behaviors need to change? To what are you willing to commit?

## GARMENT

*Place an alb or baptismal robe in the environment. Invite participants to touch the robe. Invite them to prayerfully consider how the garment in any way speaks to them of God, the church, the Christian life.*

## Natural Sign of Garment

Describe your feelings when you put on new clothes.

How does that experience relate to the use of a garment in liturgy?

## Biblical Sign of Garment

Can you name any stories from the Bible where clothing or garments were used?

*(Catechist may need to assist in this question by referring to the resource regarding garment.)*

## Liturgical Sign of Garment

How do we use the symbol of garment in ritual?

What does the symbol mean when used in liturgy?

## Ecclesial Sign of Laying On of Hands

How do we use the symbol of garment in our church tradition?

What do we believe about the symbol?

What does it signify?

What does it have to do with your life, and with the life of your community?

What is the challenge inherent in the symbol of garment?

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## Transformation: Decision for Discipleship

Considering the reflection everyone just shared, what do you think God is inviting you to do, or to become? What attitudes or behaviors need to change? To what are you willing to commit?

## BREAD AND WINE

*Place a loaf of bread and a carafe of wine in the environment. Invite participants to break the bread into pieces and to sip the wine. Invite them to prayerfully consider how bread and wine speak to them of God, the church, the Christian life.*

### Natural Sign of Bread and Wine

Describe your natural feelings when you break the bread and sip the wine.  
How does that experience relate to the use of bread and wine in liturgy?

### Biblical Sign of Bread and Wine

Can you name any stories from the Bible where bread and wine were used?

### Liturgical Sign of Bread and Wine

How do we use the symbol of bread and wine in ritual?  
What does the symbol mean when used in liturgy?

### Ecclesial Sign of Laying On of Hands

How do we use the symbol of bread and wine throughout church history?  
What do we believe about the symbol?  
What does it signify?  
What does it have to do with your life, and with the life of your community?  
What is the challenge inherent in the symbol of bread and wine?

## Transformation: Decision for Discipleship

Considering the reflection everyone just shared, what do you think God is inviting you to do, or to become? What attitudes or behaviors need to change? To what are you willing to commit?

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