

EVANGELIZATION AND CATECHESIS WEBSITE

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. CATECHETICAL SUNDAY

- **What is “Catechetical Sunday?”** Catechetical Sunday is an opportunity to reflect upon the role that each person plays, by virtue of Baptism, in handing on the faith and being a witness to the Gospel. All the members of the community of faith are called to rededicate themselves to this mission.
- **When is “Catechetical Sunday” usually celebrated in the United States?** Catechetical Sunday is on the 3rd Sunday in September.
- **How might I have access to the resources developed for this year’s “Catechetical Sunday” theme?** Information and materials (both in English and Spanish) are available here: <http://www.usccb.org/catecheticalsunday/>. Materials include promotional posters and bulletin inserts, prayer cards, teaching materials, articles, retreat materials, Liturgy materials, and prayers.

2. CONFORMITY LISTING OF CATECHETICAL TEXTS:

- **What does it mean that a text is on the Conformity List?** A text or series on the Conformity List has been reviewed by the Subcommittee on the Catechism and has received a declaration of conformity. This declaration states that the text or series conforms to the teaching of the Church as found in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. The review process is primarily intended for a complete series of catechetical materials which encompass, for example, grades K-8, grades 9-12, or a Catechumenate program. The review process, however, can be adapted for a single work or portions of a complete catechetical series.
- **What does it mean if a text is not on the Conformity List?** A text not on the Conformity List may not yet have been reviewed by the Subcommittee on the Catechism. It may also be that the publisher has not submitted the text for review. In addition, a text that is not listed on the Conformity List may be outside the purview and mandate of the Subcommittee on the Catechism.
- **As a catechist, or catechetical leader, where do I turn to find a list of catechetical text series which the U.S. Bishops recognize as ‘in conformity’ with the Catechism of the Catholic Church?** The list is available online: <http://www.usccb.org/catechism/document/Currentlist.pdf>. Additionally, the Protocol that guides the review process is available online: <http://www.usccb.org/catechism/document/protocol.shtml>.
- **Who makes the decision as to which texts may be used in the (arch)diocese?** The local Ordinary in his role as chief catechist determines which texts may be used. If you have questions about catechetical materials used in your diocese, please contact your Diocesan Religious Education Office.

- **For Publishers:** For clarifications on the Conformity Review Process, please refer to the *Clarification of Conformity of Catechetical Materials*, which is available online.

3. LINKS TO THE CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

- **Is there an authoritative Catechism that can guide me in learning and teaching about the Catholic faith?**

Yes, there are several comprehensive and authoritative catechetical resources available:

- 1) The *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, that was promulgated in 1992 (available online at <http://www.usccb.org/catechism/>) and about which more information is available here: <http://www.usccb.org/catechism/general/q&a.shtml>;
- 2) The *Compendium to the Catechism of the Catholic Church*, which became available in 2005 (available online at http://www.vatican.va/archive/compendium_ccc/documents/archive_2005_compendium-ccc_en.html); and
- 3) The *United States Catholic Catechism for Adults*, which is available for purchase through the USCCB at <http://www.usccbpublishing.org/productdetails.cfm?sku=5-450>.

- **Is there a search engine for the *Catechism* on the USCCB website?** Yes, this search engine exists, and it can help locate words or phrases in the *Catechism*. First, type in the word or phrase you are looking for in the “search” space. Next, check off “Catechism” (only) where you see the boxes for options of where to search on the website. If you skip this step, you may find more than a thousand results. Finally, click on the link for the search result(s). Your search results will appear in order of relevance. If there are multiple results, you will have to click your browser's back button to return to the original results.

4. RESOURCES FOR (ARCH)DIOCESAN CATECHETICAL LEADERS AND PARISH DRE’S

- **Can you provide some basic guidelines for forming or serving on a parish evangelization team?**

Christ calls all the faithful to proclaim the Good News everywhere, and to hand his message on through the generations by professing, living, and celebrating the Faith in Liturgy and prayer. Evangelization and catechesis are among the principle means by which the Church hands on the Faith. To evangelize is to share Jesus Christ with the world, and catechesis is an indispensable stage in the dynamic reality of evangelization. (Adapted from the *National Directory for Catechesis*)

There are three essential goals in evangelization: 1) growing in enthusiasm for living and sharing with others the Catholic faith, 2) inviting all people in the United States to hear the message of Christ and his Church, and 3) fostering Gospel values in our society based on respect for the dignity of each human person and the importance of the family. These

can be found in greater detail in *Go and Make Disciples*, which is available online at <http://www.usccb.org/evangelization/goandmake/index.shtml>.

- **Where do I turn to find practical Church guidelines for serving as a catechist or a Catholic school teacher?** Guidelines can be found in the *General Directory for Catechesis* (available online at http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/ccclergy/documents/rc_con_ccatheduc_doc_17041998_directory-for-catechesis_en.html) and the *National Directory for Catechesis* (available for purchase through the USCCB at <http://www.usccbpublishing.org/productdetails.cfm?PC=317>). Both of these were written to provide the pastoral and theological guidelines for the authentic presentation of the Catholic faith. Your parish and Diocesan Catechetical or Catholic School Offices are the primary resources to help you with any related questions. They can also assist you in pursuing diocesan Catechist Certification.
- **Where do I turn to become better informed about adult faith formation?** There are several resources available for growing in understanding of the Faith. These include the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (available in print through the USCCB at <http://www.usccbpublishing.org/searchproducts.cfm> or online at <http://www.usccb.org/catechism/text/index.shtml>), the *United States Catholic Catechism for Adults* (available in print through the USCCB at <http://www.usccbpublishing.org/searchproducts.cfm?step=3>), and *Our Hearts Were Burning Within Us* (available in print through the USCCB at <http://www.usccbpublishing.org/productdetails.cfm?PC=1244>). Once again, your pastor, parish and Diocesan Catechetical leaders are your primary resources in helping with any other related questions.
- **Are there any Doctrinal Guidelines for Adolescent Catechesis?** The document *Doctrinal Elements of a Curriculum Framework* is designed to guide catechetical instruction for young people of high-school age in any setting (school, parish, homeschool, etc.). It contains the basic guidelines and doctrinal elements for publishers and other catechetical leaders to create formational material. It is available online: <http://www.usccb.org/education/framework.pdf>.

5. DIOCESAN EDUCATIONAL/CATECHETICAL LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

- **What is the Diocesan Educational/Catechetical Leadership Institute and what is its primary goal?** The Diocesan Educational/Catechetical Leadership Institute is designed as an orientation for new or nearly new diocesan leaders. In its new format of 11 one-hour online presentations, each including the opportunity for a live discussion with the presenter, participants are assisted in developing knowledge, skills and competencies necessary to be an effective diocesan Educational/Catechetical Leader.
- **Who is the intended audience for the Diocesan Educational/Catechetical Leadership Institute?** It is specifically designed for those leaders who serve the Bishops in *Diocesan*

level roles as Vicar, Secretary of Education, Superintendent of Schools, and Directors/Staffs of Diocesan Office of Religious Education. Diocesan leadership formation and catechist certification programs are offered in most dioceses for those serving as parish Directors of Religious Education and their parish catechists and teachers.

- **Who sponsors the Diocesan Educational/Catechetical Leadership Institute?** It is sponsored by the National Catholic Educational Association Departments of Religious Education and Chief Administrators of Catholic Education, National Conference for Catechetical Leadership, the Secretariat of Catholic Education and the Secretariat of Evangelization and Catechesis (USCCB).
- **What is the format for taking the Diocesan Educational/Catechetical Leadership Institute?** Starting in 2010, it will be available online. Please visit our web site for forthcoming information.

6. RESOURCES FOR PARENTS

- **What is meant by the phrase “Parents are the primary catechists of their children”?** God’s love is first communicated in the home, through the witness and example of parents. By virtue of their call to show God’s love in the home, parents also receive the duty to nourish their children’s faith in three specific ways: by their prayerfulness, their moral values and attitude toward others, and their unwavering trust in God’s loving goodness.” (From the *National Directory for Catechesis*, Ch. 7)
- **What resources are there for parents who provide for their children’s formal religious education in the home?** The parish is the primary community for parents who wish to give their children formal religious education. In addition to actively seeking reception of the Sacraments, parents should have ongoing contact with their pastor, parish catechetical leader, and parish community. Furthermore, parents should seek formation through the Diocesan Catechist Certification process, and should contact their diocesan catechetical leaders for more information about diocesan policies. The *National Directory for Catechesis* states, “Parents who choose to be not only the primary educators of their children but also their catechists must adhere to all guidelines for catechists as outlined by the diocesan bishop...[mothers and fathers] who would like to provide catechesis at home should make themselves known to the local pastor and consult with him or his delegate to ensure that the catechesis provided in the home is the catechesis of the Church. Dialogue between the pastor and the parents is essential...” (pgs. 259-260)
- **Are there any recent USCCB publications on chastity?** All are called to cultivate the virtue of chastity, which allows us to imitate Christ in doing what is right, good, and truly loving in the areas of relationships and sexual morality. The *Catechetical Formation in Chaste Living* puts forth the framework for curriculum design and publication on the virtue of chastity. It is designed to guide parents, catechists, Catholic school teachers, publishers and curriculum developers in their role in this crucial area of catechesis. It is

divided into two main sections: the first on the Church's teachings on chastity, and the second on formation about the Church's teaching. It can be found online at <http://www.usccb.org/education/chasteliving.pdf>

7. USCCB GENERAL INFORMATION

- I understand that the Bishops of the U.S. have chosen 5 priorities which they wish to focus on between 2009 and 2011. Could you explain a little about the process used to identify these 5 priorities and the implementation plans for these priorities? The bishops choose priority goals for each planning cycle. The proposed priority goals for the 2008-2011 planning cycle are as follows:
 - 1) Implementation of the pastoral initiative on marriage
 - 2) Faith formation focused on sacramental practice
 - 3) Priestly and religious vocations
 - 4) Life and dignity of the human person
 - 5) Recognition of cultural diversity with a special emphasis on Hispanic ministry in the spirit of Encuentro 2000

More information, including a short video, is available on the main website:

<http://www.usccb.org/priorities/>