

LEADER'S GUIDE

to the

DIRECTORY for CATECHESIS





Catechesis makes the proclamation
of the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ
continually resound in the heart of every person,
so that life may be transformed.

A dynamic and complex reality at the service of the Word of God,
catechesis is accompaniment, education and formation
in the faith and for the faith,
an introduction to the celebration of the Mystery,
illumination and interpretation of human life and history.

By harmoniously integrating these characteristics,
catechesis expresses the richness of its essence and offers its
specific contribution to the pastoral mission of the Church.

Directory for Catechesis, 55.



Committee on Evangelization and Catechesis United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

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*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 will renew the face of the earth.*

*Lord, by the light of the Holy Spirit
you have taught the hearts of your faithful.
In the same Spirit help us to relish what is right
and always rejoice in your consolation.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

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“HOW TO USE” THE LEADER’S GUIDE to the *DIRECTORY FOR CATECHESIS*:

- ❖ Thank you for your leadership role in your catechetical community. Your role as leader is indispensable as you break open the riches of the *Directory for Catechesis* for your diocesan or parish catechetical community. Prayer, study, and reflection will prepare you to select themes for each session, depending on prior formation and availability of participants.
- ❖ This Leader’s Guide is a companion to, and not a substitute for, your personal reading and group reflection on the *Directory for Catechesis*. You will get the most out of this companion resource as you set aside time to read and reflect on the text of the *Directory for Catechesis* and become familiar with its overall vision, its themes and emphases, and its distinct language.
- ❖ The Holy Spirit is the soul of the evangelizing Church, notes the *Directory for Catechesis*. As you lead group discussions begin each session with a Prayer to the Holy Spirit. Include moments of silent reflection on the Word of God and common prayers of intercession and suitable hymns at the beginning and end of each session. Conclude each session with the Word of God and prayers of thanksgiving and intercession for the catechetical needs of the community.
- ❖ In each unit of this Leader’s Guide, you will find the following:
 - ✓ **Objectives** and **Outcomes** to shape the focus of each session.
 - ✓ **Overview of Key Themes** to guide the content of a leaders’ presentation.
 - ✓ **Quotes** from key passages in the *Directory for Catechesis* that highlight its main teachings and vocabulary (*Learn from the Directory for Catechesis*).
 - ✓ **Discussion Questions** for use in small or large group discussions. Ensure that small groups have opportunities to share their discussions with the entire group.
 - ✓ **Journal Notes** provides space for leaders and participants to record responses to discussion questions and personal and group insights.
- ❖ In the weeks/days before each group session:
 - ✓ You may want to prepare a personal invitation to participants. This invitation communicates the practical details of the discussion sessions and includes the importance and value of reading and discussing the *Directory for Catechesis*. Your personal reflection as a catechetical leader on how the time of study and group discussion will enrich a participant’s catechetical ministry at the service of the community is essential to engaging participation. Your dedication to ongoing formation is a compelling witness to the importance of catechist formation as missionary disciples of Christ.

- ✓ Be sure to set aside time for your own personal prayer and reflection as you prepare to lead each session.
 - ✓ Prepare copies of handouts for each session.
 - ✓ To engage adults in active learning and discussion, a session may begin with a brief overview by the leader or start with time for discussion followed by a presentation. Based on your knowledge of the participants' background, level of engagement in catechetical ministry and available time, you could determine the best approach with each group.
 - ✓ Building community among the catechists in your diocese/parish is a key outcome encouraged by this Leader's Guide. Through common reading, reflection, and discussion, catechists discover their shared vocation and offer support to one another in the joys and challenges of their ministry.
 - ✓ As leader, your responsibilities for each session include the following:
 - Begin and conclude each session with prayer.
 - Explain the purpose, objectives, outcomes, and format of each session.
 - Present the key themes for the session. (Overview of Key Themes)
 - Invite questions during your presentation.
 - Encourage participants to make connections between themes in the Directory for Catechesis and ministry in the diocese, parish, or school.
 - Facilitate interactive adult learning through focused discussions in small groups with discussion questions from those provided in this guide.
 - Allow for small groups to share their discussions with the larger group.
 - Summarize the main points of your presentation and group discussions.
 - Invite final comments or questions on the session themes.
 - Assign readings for the next session with reminders of date/time/location of upcoming sessions.
 - Lead a brief evaluation of the session.
- ❖ Leader's checklist before each session:
- ✓ Inform or remind participants of the date/time/location of the session. You may want to include your personal witness on the value and benefits of ongoing catechist formation in all invitations and reminders.
 - ✓ Copy/scan handouts for distribution.
 - ✓ Prepare for prayer at the beginning and conclusion of each session.
 - ✓ Invite volunteers to assist with various practical needs and preparations for each session.
 - ✓ Most importantly, take time to pray and open your heart and mind to the guidance of the Holy Spirit as you learn from the *Directory for Catechesis* and prepare to lead participants in a renewed understanding of, commitment to, and enthusiasm for catechetical ministry.

UNIT 1 – INTRODUCTION

OPENING PRAYER - Prayer to the Holy Spirit

*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 will renew the face of the earth.*

*Lord, by the light of the Holy Spirit
you have taught the hearts of your faithful.
In the same Spirit help us to relish what is right
and always rejoice in your consolation.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

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Welcome to the Leader’s Guide to the *Directory for Catechesis*.

The Leader’s Guide you hold in your hand is a companion resource to the *Directory for Catechesis* published by the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization in June 2020. Like any guide, this resource is offered as a roadmap or a trusted tool. It is meant as an informative and instructive guide, not a substitute, for your own reading and prayerful reflection on the *Directory for Catechesis*. It aims to prepare you to lead others to discover the tremendous gift and responsibility of catechetical ministry in the Church. What a privilege it is to participate in the Church’s age-old ministry of catechesis centered on the invitation to accept the Good News of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection by which God reconciles us to Himself, enabling our friendship with Him in the power of the Holy Spirit.

This Leader’s Guide is more than a textbook or manual. The goal of this resource is to invigorate catechetical ministry by the light of the Holy Spirit, soul of the evangelizing Church, by preparing catechetical leaders who are

missionary disciples who form catechists to be missionary disciples who, in turn, invite others to a personal, living, and life-transforming encounter with Jesus Christ within the community of the Church.

A catechist is a lifelong Christian disciple who seeks to grow daily in knowledge and love of the Word of God with dedication to forming others through personal witness to Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit. This Leader’s Guide embodies the priority given to catechist formation in the *Directory for Catechesis*, which states: “Formation sets as its goal, in the first place, making catechists aware that as baptized persons they are true *missionary disciples*, meaning active participants in evangelization, and on this basis are enabled by the Church to communicate the Gospel and to *accompany* and *educate* believers in the faith” (DC 132).

The *Directory for Catechesis* notes that catechist formation involves *being* a catechist before *acting* as a catechist. Dimensions of catechist formation are identified as such: *being* and “*knowing-how to be with*” others, biblical-theological formation, understanding human beings and their social context, and pedagogical and methodological formation. This Leader’s Guide is one tool for the formation of catechetical leaders and catechists that reflects the priority given to initial and ongoing catechist formation in the *Directory for Catechesis*.

The renewal of catechesis in every age is entrusted to bishops, pastors, and lay men and women who answer the call to serve all members of the faith community through the various tasks, phases, and moments of catechesis. As a catechetical leader, you have answered the call to the privileged task of leading the dedicated catechists serving your community to a renewed understanding and living out of their vocation as catechists. The renewal of your faith

community depends on revitalized, vibrant ministries of evangelization and catechesis that build up and strengthen the community of the Church that “exists in a permanent state of mission.” With this in mind, this Leader’s Guide is offered to assist you in the vital task of leading your catechetical community in study, reflection, and group discussion on the *Directory for Catechesis*.

OBJECTIVES:

- Understand the history of the *Directory for Catechesis*;
- Understand the purpose of the *Directory for Catechesis*, as explored in the Preface and Introduction;
- Understand the overarching framework of the *Directory for Catechesis*; and
- Reflect on challenges particular to catechesis, as outlined in the presentation that accompanied the publication of the *Directory for Catechesis*.

OUTCOMES: By the end of this unit a participant will be able to:

- Understand and articulate the history and purpose of the *Directory for Catechesis*;
- Explain the *Directory*’s overall emphasis on locating catechesis within the evangelizing mission of the Church; and
- Reflect on pastoral mindsets that challenge catechetical ministry today and could be overcome in light of the vision of the *Directory for Catechesis*.

History of the Directory for Catechesis:

The Preface to the *Directory for Catechesis* outlines the history of this catechetical document that begins with the event of the Second Vatican Council. Saint Pope John Paul II noted that the event and the documents of the

Second Vatican Council are “a gift of the Spirit to His Church,” a “great grace bestowed on the Church in the 20th century,” and a “sure compass by which to take our bearings in the century now beginning.”

The genre of a catechetical directory in which the Church presents theological and pastoral principles regarding the nature, purpose, and tasks of catechesis emerged from the Second Vatican Council’s *Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops*. In that conciliar document, the Council Fathers expressed the desire that “general directories be prepared treating of the care of souls for the use of both bishops and pastors. Thus they will be provided with certain methods which will help them to discharge their own pastoral office with greater ease and effectiveness. There should be prepared also a particular directory concerning the pastoral care of special groups of the faithful as the different circumstances of individual nations or regions require” (*Christus Dominus*, 44).

The first document in response to this call of the Second Vatican Council was the *General Catechetical Directory*, approved by Saint Paul VI and published in March 1971. Following the publication of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* in 1992, a second document was presented in the *General Directory for Catechesis*, approved by Saint John Paul II and published in August 1997. The *2020 Directory for Catechesis*, the third of its kind, stands in dynamic continuity with the two catechetical directories that preceded it. Its vision and themes are framed by the 2012 Synod on *The New Evangelization for the Transmission of the Christian Faith*, and the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, of Pope Francis who approved the *Directory for Catechesis* on March 23, 2020, for subsequent publication on June 24, 2020, by the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization.

As you take time to read the history of the *Directory for Catechesis* in the Preface and Introduction, you will see that this catechetical document is written in dynamic continuity with the two catechetical directories that came before it. Catechetical leaders, catechists, and evangelists will discover in this third catechetical directory the entire wealth of the Church's teachings on evangelization and catechesis since the Second Vatican Council.

Purpose of the Directory for Catechesis:

The *Directory for Catechesis* from the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization arrived at a timely moment in June 2020 as Christians everywhere struggled through a pandemic-ridden world. Two papal phrases frame the text – “The Church exists to evangelize,” of Saint Paul VI, and “I am a mission,” of Pope Francis.

The central purpose of the *Directory for Catechesis* is to present fundamental theological-pastoral principles of the ministry of the Word, that is, catechesis, while responding to current historical contexts, social conditions, and the cultural forces that shape the Church's communication of the living mystery of God today (Introduction, 10). Addressed primarily to those engaged in catechetical ministry, namely, bishops, pastors, catechists, parents, and teachers, this catechetical document invites the faithful on a journey of reflection on the nature, tasks, sources, contexts, content, and methods of catechesis in the contemporary world. As a document of the universal Church, it encourages the drafting or revision of national directories that attend to local catechetical opportunities and challenges in particular churches.

In **three** major parts divided across **twelve** chapters, the *Directory for Catechesis* highlights key elements that permeate all catechetical activities: **witness, mercy, and dialogue**. The text affirms the age-old, perennial nature and purpose of catechesis and highlights the vocation and

formation of catechists. Several new emphases are also proposed: the primacy of the *kerygma* in all catechetical activities; the dynamic process of evangelization, and catechesis within it, as a spiritual action above all; the baptismal catechumenate as inspiration for all catechetical activities; the pedagogy of God that inspires the pedagogy of the Church in catechetical tasks of initiation, education, and ongoing formation in Christian discipleship; inculturation of catechesis; catechesis *in, with, and of* the family; catechesis in a digital culture, the globalization of culture; bioethical issues that impact catechesis; the “way of beauty” in catechesis; and catechesis that accompanies, with mercy, the poor, persons with disabilities, migrants, and prisoners.

The presentation of a new *Directory for Catechesis* on June 24, 2020, occurred three months after its approval on March 23, 2020, the liturgical memorial of 16th century Saint Turibius of Mogrovejo, bishop and model catechist. In the intervening months between its approval and its publication, Catholics across the universal Church endured the unprecedented and devastating effects of a global pandemic. As the Church seeks to meet the spiritual and temporal needs of a post-pandemic world, this *Directory for Catechesis* is a providential guide to a renewed proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ unfolding in the new evangelization and in that one remarkable dimension within it, that is the ministry of catechesis.

Overarching framework and major parts of the Directory for Catechesis:

In a perfect synthesis of old and new elements, the Directory confirms the close link between evangelization and catechesis that unites the Church's faithful and joyful witness to the Gospel core, the *kerygma*, to ongoing formation, education, and maturation of living faith within a community of believers.

As the Introduction notes, the criterion that guided the writing of the *Directory for Catechesis*

is “the desire to explore the role of catechesis in the dynamic of evangelization” (DC 5). The Preface and the Introduction highlight the evangelizing mission of the Church as the overarching framework for all forms and stages of an evangelizing catechesis. Following Pope Francis’ teaching in *Evangelii Gaudium* on the distinctive characteristics of catechesis set within a missionary perspective, the Directory connects catechesis more clearly and directly to the evangelizing proclamation of the Gospel to adults, youth and young adults, and children today.

In the words of Pope Francis: “we have rediscovered the fundamental role of the first announcement or *kerygma*, which needs to be the center of all evangelizing activities and all efforts at church renewal ... this first proclamation is called ‘first’ not because it exists at the beginning and can then be forgotten or replaced by other more important things. It is first in a *qualitative* sense because it is the principal proclamation, the one we must hear again and again in different ways, the one we must announce one way or another throughout the process of catechesis, at every level and moment ... All Christian formation consists of entering more deeply into the *kerygma*, which is reflected in and constantly illumines, the work of catechesis ... (I)t is the message capable of responding to the desire for the infinite which abides in every human heart” (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 164 – 165).

In the words of the *Directory for Catechesis*, “the primacy of the *kerygma*, to the point of leading us to propose a *kerygmatic catechesis*, does not distract at all from the value of mystagogy or from the witness of charity.... Proclaiming the Gospel is witnessing to an encounter that keeps the focus on Jesus Christ, the Son of God, incarnate in the history of humanity, in order to bring to fulfillment the revelation of the Father’s saving love” (Preface).

Kerygmatic catechesis, that is, the proclamation

and lived witness to the *kerygma* in all catechetical activities, is nothing less than the loving, joyful sharing of the Good News of the incarnation, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ as an invitation to live a transformed life of Christian faith within the community of the Church. As the Introduction notes, catechesis accompanies a dynamic process of internalization of the Gospel involving the whole person in his or her life experience in light of the mystery of God’s revelation in Jesus Christ, a spiritual action that is the original and necessary form of inculturation of the faith.

“At the heart of catechesis we find, in essence, a Person, the Person of Jesus of Nazareth,” wrote Saint John Paul II (*Catechesi Tradendae*, 5). At the center of the *Directory for Catechesis* stands the Person of Jesus Christ, whose incarnation, life, death, and resurrection grounds the context, the content, and the methods of a *kerygmatic catechesis* of children, youth, young adults, and adults in the midst of contemporary culture.

The **three** major parts of the **Directory for Catechesis** “develop the catechetical journey under the primacy of evangelization.” **Part One** frames catechesis within the Church’s mission of evangelization. **Part Two** focuses on the identity, tasks, sources, inculturation, and process of catechesis, the pedagogy of God which inspires the pedagogy of the Church, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, and catechesis in the lives of persons and groups such as the family, children, youth, young adults, adults, the elderly, persons with disabilities, migrants, and prisoners. **Part Three** reflects on catechesis in the concrete expressions of ecclesial life across cultures, ecclesial traditions, geographical settings, and the opportunities and challenges posed by a globalized digital culture and various current bioethical issues. The *Directory* concludes by presenting organizations at the service of catechesis (Introduction 7-10).

Pastoral mindsets that impede catechetical ministry today:

The *Directory for Catechesis* was presented to the universal Church at a press conference at the Vatican on June 24, 2020. During that press conference, Archbishop Rino Fisichella, President of the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization, presented an overview of the current needs of the Church that gave birth to an updated catechetical directory. He spoke of the globalization of culture, the phenomenon of digital culture, the “way of beauty” in catechesis, and other pastoral needs and opportunities for catechesis carried out within the evangelizing mission of the Church.

Archbishop Fisichella noted three pastoral mindsets that require a “pastoral conversion” to free catechesis from certain barriers that obstruct its effectiveness. First, the “school model” that reduces the ministry and tasks of catechesis to the school room, school calendar year, and school instruction by a teacher. Second, the tendency to reduce catechesis to a condition for reception of a particular sacrament of initiation without care for ongoing formation in a sacramental way of life once initiation is complete. Third, a mindset that overlooks a comprehensive and consistent liturgical catechesis on the sacraments of initiation for fear of losing youth who are required to participate in sacramental preparation programs for completion of sacramental initiation.

The publication of a new *Directory for Catechesis* is an opportunity to reflect on pastoral mindsets that call for a “pastoral conversion” and the particular challenges that impede catechetical ministry in your local catechetical setting. The full text of the Vatican press conference may be found at this link - <http://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/en/bollettino/pubblico/2020/06/25/200625c.html>

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Share one insight gained from your reading of the historical background of the *Directory for Catechesis* (Preface).
2. How might your catechetical ministry be renewed and shaped by the Directory’s presentation of the overarching framework of catechesis within the evangelizing mission of the Church?
3. What does it mean to engage in a *kerigmatic catechesis* in all forms and stages of catechetical activity? How might you become a better evangelizing catechist?
4. Based on your reading of the Introduction, article 4, share your insights on six perspectives that form a narrative thread throughout the *Directory for Catechesis*.
5. Based on the overview of themes in the parts and chapters of the *Directory for Catechesis*, share particular topics that are of interest and relevance to your catechetical ministry today.
6. In light of Archbishop Fisichella’s reflections at the presentation of the *Directory for Catechesis*, identify specific challenges to your catechetical ministry? How might this catechetical document help you overcome those challenges?

JOURNAL NOTES - space for participant to record responses/insights:

CLOSING PRAYER - Gospel reading of the day and spontaneous prayer guided by leader or participant.

UNIT 2: CHAPTERS I AND II

Revelation and Its Transmission; Identity of Catechesis

OPENING PRAYER - Prayer to the Holy Spirit

*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 will renew the face of the earth.*

*Lord, by the light of the Holy Spirit
you have taught the hearts of your faithful.
In the same Spirit help us to relish what is right
and always rejoice in your consolation.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

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OBJECTIVES:

- ❖ Understand the nature of Revelation and its transmission in Tradition and Sacred Scripture;
- ❖ Understand the phases of the ecclesial process of evangelization and its stages and phases as the work of the Holy Spirit in our time;
- ❖ Understand the baptismal catechumenate as a source of inspiration for all catechetical activities;
- ❖ Understand *kerygmatic catechesis* as an essential dimension of every moment of catechesis, as act and content of proclamation; and
- ❖ Understand the identity, tasks, and sources of the ecclesial act of catechesis within the evangelizing mission of the Church.

OUTCOMES: By the end of this unit a participant will be able to:

- Articulate key theological principles presented in Chapters I and II of the Directory for Catechesis;
- Reflect on and share pastoral applications of the theological principles regarding Revelation and its transmission, the ecclesial process of evangelization, and the identity, tasks, and sources of catechesis.

OVERVIEW OF KEY THEMES FOR A LEADERS' PRESENTATION:

Revelation and its transmission in the life of the Church (Chapter I)

- Divine **Revelation** is the initiative of God's loving plan of salvation to reconcile humanity to friendship with God. (11 - 14)
- **Jesus Christ**, the Son of God, brings revelation to completion by fulfilling it through the **Paschal Mystery** of his life, death, and glorious resurrection. (15 - 16)
- Christian **faith** is the human response to divine revelation. Two dimensions of faith as the human response to God's love revealed in Jesus Christ - trustful abandonment to God (*fides qua*) and assent to all God has revealed (*fides quae*). (17 - 21)
- Four dimensions of the Christian proclamation that communicates the divine plan of revelation - a mystery of love, the revelation of God as **Trinity**, the offer of salvation to all people through the **Paschal mystery** of Jesus Christ, and the definitive call to reunite scattered humanity into the Church. (14)

- The living transmission of divine revelation unfolds in **Tradition and Sacred Scripture**. (22 - 27)
- Evangelization is the “grace and vocation proper to the Church, her deepest identity. She exists in order to evangelize” (Pope Paul VI, *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 14). (28 - 30)
- Evangelization makes the encounter with Jesus Christ concrete in the lives of persons in their personal, cultural, and social contexts. The ultimate aim of evangelization is the fulfillment of human life - the *salvation* or *divinization* of humanity. (DC 29 - 30)
- The ecclesial process of **evangelization** unfolds in overlapping aspects and phases that correspond to the catechumenal process: a first stage is missionary activity *ad gentes*, embodied in witness, first proclamation, and a time of inquiry and maturation. Then a period of catechesis of Christian initiation that offers a *basic, essential, organic, systematic, and integral* formation in faith. Followed by pastoral action and ongoing formation in the Christian life through knowledge of Sacred Scripture, liturgical catechesis and the experience of the sacraments, and charitable witness. Each stage of evangelization corresponds to stages and periods of the catechumenate that carry out the ministry of the word of God, to which all are invited and engaged. (31 - 37)
- The Holy Spirit is the soul of the evangelizing Church that exists “in a permanent state of mission.” Catechesis is shaped by a spirituality of the **new evangelization** that takes shape in the Church’s life in three areas: ordinary pastoral care in Christian communities, the baptized whose lives are not shaped by the demands of Baptism, and those who do

not know or have rejected Jesus Christ. (38 - 41)

- The relationship of Gospel and culture as a perennial challenge for the Church. The imperative of the evangelization of cultures and the **inculturation** of faith in evangelization and catechesis. (42 - 47)
- Three “accents” in catechesis at the service of the new evangelization: catechesis “in a missionary going forth,” catechesis under the sign of mercy, and catechesis as a “laboratory of dialogue.” (48 - 54)

Identity of Catechesis (Chapter II)

- Catechesis, as an ecclesial act, arises from Jesus’ missionary mandate (Matthew 28: 19 -20) and unfolds as a dynamic and complex reality at the service of the Word of God. Catechesis is a privileged stage in the process of evangelization. (55 - 56)
- **Kerygmatic catechesis** responds to the needs of the present time as an essential dimension of every moment of catechesis. At the center of the **kerygma** is the Lord Jesus, who manifests God’s loving mercy and reconciles us to God by saving death and resurrection, enabling communion with the Father in the power of the Holy Spirit. **Kerygma** is both the act of proclamation and the content of the proclamation itself, with a personal and social content. (57 - 60)
- The **baptismal catechumenate** is a source of inspiration for catechesis in three aspects: a catechumenate in the strict sense for the unbaptized child, young adult or adult, a catechumenate for those seeking full sacramental initiation, and a catechesis of *catechumenal inspiration* that takes on its style and formative dynamism. Such a catechesis is characterized as Paschal, initiatory, liturgical, ritual, symbolic, communal, and marked by

ongoing conversion and witness and the progression of a formative experience of faith. (61 - 65)

- The center of all catechetical activity is the invitation and deepening of the living encounter of the whole person with the person of Jesus Christ. The goals of catechesis are marked by a **Trinitarian-Christocentricity** rooted in the baptismal confession of faith. (75 - 78)
- The **five tasks of catechesis** are identified as: leading to knowledge of the faith, initiating into the celebration of the Mystery, forming for life in Christ, teaching prayer, and introduction to community life. Formation in missionary discipleship permeates all five tasks of catechesis. (79 - 89)
- The seven **sources of catechesis** are the Word of God in Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition, the Magisterium, the liturgy, the testimony of the saint and martyrs, theology, Christian culture, and the “way of beauty,” or the *via pulchritudinis*. (90 - 109)

LEARN FROM THE DIRECTORY FOR CATECHESIS:

- “All that the Church is, all that the Church does, finds its ultimate foundation in the fact that God, in his goodness and wisdom, wanted to reveal the mystery of his will by communicating himself to human beings.” (11)
- “God has shown himself. In person. And now the way to him is open. The novelty of the Christian message does not consist in an idea but in a fact: God has revealed himself.” (13, cf. Pope Benedict XVI)
- “The forgiveness of sins, justice, sanctification, redemption, adoption as children of God, the inheritance of heaven,

kinship with the son of God. What news is more beautiful than this? God on earth and man in heaven.” (13, cf. John Chrysostom)

- Jesus Christ, with his life, is the fullness of Revelation: “he is the complete manifestation of God’s mercy, and at the same time of the call to love that is in the heart of humanity ... Entering into communion with Him and following him confers fullness and truth upon human life.” (15)
- Evangelization is therefore a reality that is “rich, complex, and dynamic,” and in its development incorporates various possibilities: witness and proclamation, word and sacrament, inner change and social transformation. All of these actions are complementary and enrich one another. The Church continues to carry out this task with an immense variety of experiences of proclamation, continually urged on by the Holy Spirit. (16)
- Faith implies a profound existential transformation wrought by the Spirit, a *metanoia* that “manifests itself at all levels of the Christian’s existence: in his interior life of adoration and acceptance of the divine will, in his active participation in the mission of the Church, in his married and family life; in his professional life; in fulfilling economic and social responsibilities. Believers, in accepting the gift of faith, ‘become a new creation; they receive a new being; as God’s children, they are now ‘sons in the Son.’” (20)
- “Tradition and Sacred Scripture are firmly united and interconnected, and they stem from the same source, the Revelation of Jesus Christ ... Tradition is not primarily a collection of doctrines, but is a life of faith that is renewed every day ... The Magisterium performs the ministry of safeguarding the integrity of Revelation,

- the word of God contained in Tradition and in Sacred Scripture, and its continual transmission.” (25 - 26)
- “Evangelizing is not, in the first place, the delivery of a doctrine, but rather, making present and announcing Jesus Christ.” (29)
 - “The Church finds herself facing a new stage of evangelization ... our times are complex, pervaded by profound changes, and in the Churches of ancient tradition are often marked by phenomena of detachment from a lived ecclesial and faith experience ... And yet the Holy Spirit continues to arouse the thirst for God within people, and within the Church a new fervor, new methods, and new expressions for the proclamation of the good news of Jesus Christ.” (38)
 - The Holy Spirit is the soul of the evangelizing church. For this reason the call for a *new evangelization* has less to do with the dimension of time as with making all moments of the process of evangelization ever more open to the renewing action of the Spirit of the Risen One ... The Holy Spirit knows well what is needed in every time and place. (39)
 - The relationship between Gospel and culture has always posed a challenge to the life of the Church. Her task is to guard faithfully the deposit of faith, but at the same time “it is necessary that this sure and immutable doctrine, which must be given the assent of faith, be explored and presented according to the needs of our time. In the current situation, marked by a great distance between faith and culture, it is urgent to rethink the work of evangelization with new categories and new languages that may serve to emphasize its missionary dimension.” (44)
 - “This demand to which the Church must respond at the present time brings into focus the need for a catechesis that in a consistent way can be called *kerygmatic*, meaning a catechesis that is an entering more deeply into the *kerygma*...(this) proclamation can therefore no longer be considered simply the first stage of faith, preliminary to catechesis, but rather the essential dimension of every moment of catechesis.” (57) The consistent and recurring witness of a catechist to the *kerygma* invites a person into a radically new way of life centered on the Good News that Jesus loves us, died, and rose from the dead so we may be reconciled to friendship with God
 - The *catechumenal inspiration of catechesis* does not mean reproducing the catechuminate in a servile manner, but taking on its style and its formative dynamism, responding also to the “need for a mystical renewal, one which would assume very different forms based on each educational community’s discernment.” (64)
 - “Being Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a person, which gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction.” (68, cf. Pope Benedict XVI)
 - At the center of every process of catechesis is the living encounter with Christ ... Communion with Christ is the center of the Christian life, and as a result the center of catechetical action. Catechesis is oriented towards forming persons who get to know Jesus Christ and his Gospel of liberating salvation ever better; who live a profound encounter with him and who chose his own way of life and his very sentiments, striving to realize, in the historical situations in which they live, the

mission of Christ, which is the proclamation of the Kingdom of God. (75)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. The *Directory for Catechesis* makes clear that the proclamation of the *kerygma*, at the core of all evangelizing and catechetical activity, is rooted in the fact of Revelation and its transmission in Tradition and Sacred Scripture. Why is Revelation a foundational starting point for the Church's evangelizing mission, and catechesis within it? How is Revelation a starting point for your catechetical ministry?
2. Discuss three elements of the nature of Christian faith, as presented in the *Directory for Catechesis* (17 - 21). Identify three challenges to Christian faith that impact the Church's ministries of evangelization and catechesis today?
3. The three major parts of the *Directory for Catechesis* develop the catechetical journey under the primacy of evangelization. What is the relationship between evangelization and catechesis, as presented in Chapter I of the *Directory for Catechesis*? How is evangelization and catechesis related in your pastoral ministry in service of the Church?
4. Discuss the three accents of catechesis in service of the new evangelization presented in the *Directory for Catechesis* (nos. 48 - 54): catechesis in a "missionary going forth," catechesis under the sign of mercy, and catechesis as a "laboratory of dialogue." How does your catechetical ministry serve the new evangelization under these three accents?
5. What is *kerygmatic catechesis*, according to the *Directory for Catechesis*? Discuss New Testament formulations of the *kerygma* (article 58, footnote 5). Then, share examples of catechetical moments when the *kerygma* is presented over and over again. What are obstacles to an evangelizing catechesis in your ministry and how might these challenges be overcome?
6. How is the baptismal catechumenate a source of inspiration for all forms of catechesis? (61 - 65) Identify one catechetical moment (e.g., Confirmation preparation) and reflect on how catechesis may be inspired by the style, the formative dynamism of conversion, and the emphasis on liturgical symbols in the baptismal catechumenate.
7. The Holy Spirit is the soul of the evangelizing Church, notes the Directory. How is the Holy Spirit the soul of your evangelizing and catechetical ministry.
8. What are some challenges to the inculturation of the Gospel today? Identify some "new categories and new languages" that the *Directory for Catechesis* calls for in the inculturation of the Gospel today.
9. Discuss each of the **five tasks of catechesis** presented in the *Directory for Catechesis* (79 - 89). Discuss how the five tasks of catechesis are closely related and inter-dependent in the Church, in your parish, and in your catechetical ministry?
10. The *Directory for Catechesis* notes that, "at the center of every process of catechesis is the living encounter with Christ ...Communion with Christ is the center of the Christian life, and as a result the center of catechetical action" (75). How is the essential Trinitarian Christocentricity of catechesis expressed in your catechetical ministry?
11. Discuss each of the **seven sources of catechesis** presented in the *Directory for Catechesis* (90 - 109). How do these sources inspire and shape your catechetical ministry? What sources of catechesis remain to be integrated into your catechetical activities?

JOURNAL NOTES – space for participant to record responses/insights:

CLOSING PRAYER - Gospel reading of the day and spontaneous prayer guided by leader or participant.

UNIT 3: CHAPTERS III AND IV THE VOCATION AND FORMATION OF CATECHISTS

OPENING PRAYER - Prayer to the Holy Spirit

*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 will renew the face of the earth.*

*Lord, by the light of the Holy Spirit
you have taught the hearts of your faithful.
In the same Spirit help us to relish what is right
and always rejoice in your consolation.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

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OBJECTIVES:

- Understand the call and vocation of the catechist within the call and vocation of all the baptized to proclaim the Gospel in word and deed, rooted in a personal experience of God and a living relationship with Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit;
- Reflect on the catechists' call to serve the Church in catechetical ministry and to collaborate, support, and extend the catechetical ministry of Bishops, priests, pastors, deacons, and consecrated religious;
- Reflect on the importance of, the criteria for, and centers for catechist formation and the need for ongoing evangelization and formation of catechists at all stages of ministry; and
- Discuss three key interrelated dimensions of catechist formation and apply that understanding to one's own catechetical formation and ministry.

OUTCOMES: By the end of this unit a participant will be able to:

- Reflect on one's call to catechetical ministry in light of the Directory for Catechesis' reflections on the identity and vocation of catechists;
- Articulate an understanding of the three key dimensions of catechist formation with personal application; and
- Identify concrete ways to grow in the attitudes and skills of a catechist through participation in ongoing programs of catechist formation at the parish or diocesan levels and avenues of personal growth in the spiritual life.

OVERVIEW OF KEY THEMES FOR A LEADERS' PRESENTATION:

Vocation of a catechist (Chapter III)

- The *Directory for Catechesis* gives priority to the vocation and formation of catechists in its third and fourth chapters. Reflection on the vocation and formation of catechists begins with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, who gives a variety of gifts for the building of the community of faith. (110)
- Baptism and Confirmation incorporate a Christian into the mystery of Christ's life, death, and resurrection, establishing a participation in his office as priest, prophet, and king. All the faithful are called to witness to the Gospel, proclaiming it by word and deed in the Christian life. (110)
- Some within the community of faith are called by God to cooperate with bishops and priests in carrying out the ministry of the Word. The "ministry of catechesis" is

indispensable for initiation and growth in faith and occupies a significant place in the multiplicity of ministries by which the Church realizes her evangelizing mission. (110)

- The specific vocation of the catechist is grounded in the common vocation of all the faithful, that is, the entire community of the people of God. The whole Christian community bears responsibility for the ministry of catechesis. The catechist belongs to the Christian community and his or her service is lived within the community of faith that offers accompaniment in the faith to all. (111)
- God calls people to his service to extend his providential care for the members of the community. There are many reasons why catechists receive the call to serve the word of God. It is the Holy Spirit who moves the heart and mind to respond to God's call to serve in catechetical ministry by which a person participates in Jesus' mission of inviting his disciples into his filial relationship with the Father. (112)
- By virtue of Baptism every catechist is: **a witness of faith and keeper of the memory of God; a teacher and a mystagogue; an accompanier and educator.** (113)
- A catechist is formed to be an expert in the *art of accompaniment*, in being a traveling companion who journeys with others in the process of formation and maturity in the Christian life in constant openness and docility to the Holy Spirit. (113, c)
- The bishop has primary responsibility for catechesis in the diocese and for preaching, promoting, and providing for various forms of catechesis. The *Directory for Catechesis* outlines six expressions of the bishop's concern for catechetical ministry in his diocese. (114)
- The priest, as the bishop's first co-worker and by his priestly mandate, has the responsibility for enlivening, coordinating, and directing all catechetical activities in the community. The *Directory for Catechesis* outlines six tasks of catechesis proper to a pastor, and to priests in general. (116)
- A deacon serves a variety of catechetical ministries through instruction and through ministries of charity in the family, for the sick, elderly, immigrants, and prisoners. Permanent deacons who live the married state are witnesses to the beauty of the sacrament of marriage and serve catechesis of all families within the community. (117 - 118)
- The apostolate of consecrated persons who are dedicated to catechetical ministries contributes to the vitality of catechesis with its religious, social, and pedagogical riches. (119 - 120)
- Lay catechists serve the word of God primarily through the witness of their lives. The vocation to the ministry of catechesis flows from Baptism and Confirmation and one's personal relationship with Jesus Christ lived within the community of believers. The Church encourages and confers the mission of catechesis in those who respond to God's call to serve the community. (121-123)
- As "primary educators in the faith" of their children, parents are active participants in catechesis. In their catechetical role parents are supported by godfathers, godmothers, and grandparents, whose faithful witness to the Christian life is an invaluable part of family catechesis. (126)
- In imitation of Mary, the Blessed Mother of God, and faithful women in the Gospels, the Church's ministry of catechesis has been enriched by the women

who offer their service as wives, mothers, catechists, and as professionals. (127 - 129)

Formation of catechists (Chapter IV)

- The formation of catechists is a process that serves the *transformation* of a Christian who internalizes the message of the Gospel under the guidance of the Holy Spirit within the community of the Church. (130 - 131)
- Catechist formation is a deeply *transformative* process that goes beyond instruction, moral exhortation, and updating of pastoral techniques and methods. Catechist formation is an ongoing work of openness to the Holy Spirit who conforms the baptized to Jesus Christ and sends them to proclaim the Gospel and to witness to its transforming power in their lives. (131)
- The goal of all forms of catechist formation is to prepare missionary disciples as active participants in evangelization who communicate the riches and beauty of the Gospel by accompanying and educating believers in the faith. (132)
- The group of catechists in a parish and diocese have a particular role in the formation of catechists. Groups of catechists share the journey of faith and pastoral experiences with priests and mature together in their identity as catechists. The group of catechists is the setting in which they are continually evangelized and experience new formative opportunities. (134)
- Criteria for catechist formation includes: a spirituality of mission and evangelization, integral formation, formation in the art of accompaniment, consistency among formative styles, cultivation of the attitude of *docibilitas* and ongoing self-formation and growth in the Christian life, and the “dynamic of the laboratory” or “learning

by doing” guided by mentors in formation. (135)

- The *Directory for Catechesis* identifies three key interrelated dimensions of the formation of a catechist: formation in “being a catechist” and “*knowing-how to be with*” others; formation in knowledge that includes biblical-theological formation and understanding of human beings and social contexts; and pedagogical and methodological formation that forms a catechist as an educator and communicator. (136 - 150)
- Formation in knowledge of faith includes knowledge of salvation history, the essential core of the Christian message summarized in the four pillars of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, and principal teachings of the Magisterium on the proclamation of the Gospel and catechesis. Awareness of ecumenical and inter-faith contexts should be included in the formation of catechists. (144)
- Instruction on evangelization and catechesis is an important part of the catechetical formation of candidates for Holy Orders, who are constituted, by the sacrament of Orders, to be ministers of the Word of God. (151 - 153)
- Centers for the formation of catechists at the parish, inter-parish, or diocesan levels offer basic, systematic, and high-quality formation as well as opportunities to build ecclesial communion among communities of catechists. Higher institutes for experts in catechetics are to be encouraged as well. (154 - 156)

LEARN FROM THE DIRECTORY FOR CATECHESIS:

- The specific vocation of the catechist has its root in the common vocation of the people of God, called to serve God’s plan of salvation on behalf of humanity. (110)

- The whole Christian community is responsible for the ministry of catechesis, but each one according to his particular condition in the church: ordained ministers, consecrated persons, lay faithful. (111)
- The true protagonist of all authentic catechesis is the Holy Spirit, who by means of the profound union with Jesus Christ, which is nurtured by every catechist, gives efficacy to human efforts in catechetical activity. This activity is carried out in the bosom of the Church ~ the catechist is a witness to her living Tradition and a mediator who facilitates the incorporation of new disciples of Christ into his ecclesial Body. (112)
- The vocation to the ministry of catechesis flows from the sacrament of Baptism and is strengthened by Confirmation, both sacraments through which the layperson participates in the priestly, prophetic, and kingly office of Christ ... This personal call of Jesus Christ and the relationship with him are the true engines of the catechist's activity: "from this loving knowledge of Christ springs the desire to proclaim him, to 'evangelize' and to lead others to the 'yes' of faith in Jesus Christ." The Church fosters and discerns this divine vocation and confers the mission of catechizing. (122)
- Formation is an ongoing process that, under the guidance of the Spirit and in the living womb of the Christian community, helps the baptized person to *take shape*, which means unveiling his deepest identity which is that of being a son of God in profound communion with his brothers. (131)
- The work of formation acts as a *transformation* of the person, who internalizes the evangelical message existentially in such a way that it may be light and guidance for their ecclesial life and mission. It is a process that, taking place deep within the catechist, profoundly touches their freedom and cannot be reduced simply to instruction, to moral exhortation, or to an updating of pastoral techniques. (131)
- Formation sets as its goal making catechists aware that as baptized persons they are true *missionary disciples*, meaning active participants in evangelization, and on this basis are enabled by the Church to communicate the Gospel and to *accompany* and *educate* believers in the faith. (132)
- The Christocentric goal of catechesis shapes the entire formation of catechists and asks that they be able to conduct the catechetical journey in such a way as to bring out the centrality of Jesus Christ in salvation history. (132)
- "The Christian community is the origin, locus, and goal of catechesis. Proclamation of the Gospel always begins with the Christian community and invites man to conversion and the following of Christ. It is the same community that welcomes those who wish to know the Lord better and permeate themselves with a new life." The consummate place of formation for the catechist is therefore the Christian community, in the variety of its charisms and ministries, as the ordinary environment in which one learns and lives the life of faith. (133)
- Listening to the needs of persons, pastoral discernment, concrete preparation, implementation, and evaluation of the pathways of faith constitute the moments of a process of ongoing formation for individual catechists. The group of catechists is the real context in which each one can be continually evangelized and remain open to new formative contributions. (134)

- The formation of the catechist includes various dimensions. The deepest one has to do with *being* a catechist, even before *acting* as a catechist. Formation, in fact, helps them to mature as a person, as a believer, and as an Apostle. This dimension is also viewed today in the sense of “knowing-how to be with,” which highlights the extent to which personal identity is always a relational identity. (136)
- Formation will also be attentive to the dimension of knowledge, which implies a twofold fidelity to the message and to the person in the context in which they live. Finally, since catechesis is a communicative and educational act, formation will not neglect the dimension of practical *savoir-faire* ... These dimensions of the formation of catechists are profoundly correlated, being aspects of the indivisible unity of the person. (136 - 137)
- Centers for the basic formation of catechists, whether parochial, interparochial, or diocesan, have the task of presenting a systematic fundamental formation ... This formation, which has the value of being *systematic* because it conveys a general overview, should be of *high quality* and guaranteed by the use of specialist formators with a good pastoral experience and sensibility. Since formation also provides opportunities to get to know and to exchange ideas with other catechists, it nourishes ecclesial communion. (154)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Reflect on your first experiences of God, as a child, a youth, an adult. How have these experiences of personal encounter and relationship with God shaped your catechetical ministry?
2. How did you receive the call to serve the community as a catechist? Name, with gratitude, those who helped you to hear God’s call and to respond with generosity in service to catechetical ministry.
3. How does your ministry as a lay catechist support and extend the catechetical ministry of the bishop, pastors, priests, deacons, and consecrated religious in your diocese and parish? Why is it important for catechists to experience their ministry as a collaboration with the entire Christian community, and not feel isolated in catechetical ministry?
4. The *Directory for Catechesis* gives priority to “being a catechist” and being formed in “knowing-how to be with” others in the *art of accompaniment*. What does this priority in catechist formation mean and why is this focus important for your ministry as a catechist?
5. What forms of catechist formation have you participated in since beginning your catechetical ministry? What areas of catechist formation do you need the most today? How do you continue to grow in your living relationship with God, in knowledge of the faith, and in the skills of catechetical pedagogy, communication, and teaching methods?
6. How are you connected to the group of catechists in your parish, surrounding parishes, and diocese? What are concrete ways to grow in supporting and being supported by other catechists in your local and diocesan community of faith?
7. How can you invite and encourage others to consider service to the people of God by answering God’s call to catechetical ministry?

JOURNAL NOTES - space for participant to record responses/insights:

CLOSING PRAYER - Gospel reading of the day and spontaneous prayer guided by leader or participant.

UNIT 4: CHAPTERS V, VI, AND VII PEDAGOGY OF FAITH; *THE CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH*; CATECHETICAL METHODOLOGY

OPENING PRAYER - Prayer to the Holy Spirit

*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 will renew the face of the earth.*

*Lord, by the light of the Holy Spirit
you have taught the hearts of your faithful.
In the same Spirit help us to relish what is right
and always rejoice in your consolation.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

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OBJECTIVES:

- Understand the process of catechesis as it relates to the pedagogy of the faith, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, and methodology in catechesis;
- Understand how the pedagogy of God, the pedagogy of Jesus Christ, and the pedagogy of the Holy Spirit shape the pedagogy of the Church and the “how-to” of the ministry of catechesis;
- Understand the criteria for the proclamation of the Gospel inspired by the pedagogy of God that is rooted in the Word of God;
- Understand the history, identity, aim, and audience of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, and its sources and structure. Reflect on the theological- catechetical significance of the *Catechism*;

- Understand the relationship between catechetical content and method and the role of human experience, memory, narrative, and artistic languages; and
- Reflect on the intersection of digital languages and tools with catechesis. Reflect on the role of the Christian community as the primary agent of catechesis.

OUTCOMES: By the end of this unit a participant will be able to:

- Articulate the meaning and pastoral implications of the divine pedagogy in the pedagogy of God, the pedagogy of Jesus Christ, and the pedagogy of the Holy Spirit that inspires the pedagogy of the Church;
- Articulate criteria for the proclamation of the Gospel in catechesis shaped by the pedagogy of God and rooted in the Word of God;
- Reflect on the content of catechesis as summarized in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*;
- Discuss the relationship between catechetical content and method, the role of human experience, memory, narrative, and artistic languages, and the role of the Christian community; and
- Reflect on the catechetical use of digital languages and tools at the service of the new evangelization.

OVERVIEW OF KEY THEMES FOR A LEADERS' PRESENTATION:

Divine and human pedagogy (Chapter V)

- The themes in this unit focus on the **process of catechesis** covered under three main topics: the pedagogy of the faith, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, and issues relating to methodology in catechesis.
- Divine revelation shapes the content *and* the methods of catechesis. Revelation unfolds in salvation history as a pedagogy, or method of instruction with distinctive features. (157 - 159)
- In the divine pedagogy, God's loving communication unfolds in a divine-human dialogue that instructs in the ways of God. The methods of catechesis are shaped by the divine pedagogy. (157 - 159)
- The distinctive features of the pedagogy of God include: the divine initiative of love and mercy; the dialogue between God and Israel; meeting humanity in the concrete circumstances of their human condition to free them from sin; patient, progressive instruction that engages listening and fosters maturity in faith; and the teaching of wisdom adapted to the times and situations of the people. (158)
- The divine pedagogy is manifested in the mystery of the incarnation, when the Archangel Gabriel announces to Mary that she will be the Mother of God. Mary's response in her *fiat* is the model of Christian faith. (159)
- The pedagogy of Jesus is seen throughout the Gospels as Jesus the Teacher speaks and instructs his disciples and followers. The distinctive features of the pedagogy of Jesus in the Gospels include: outreach and welcome of the poor, sinners, and the simple; proclamation of God's kingdom as good news that liberates from sin; and the dialogue of salvation in parable, metaphors, and images that reveal the mystery of God's love fulfilled in the Paschal Mystery of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. (160-161)
- The pedagogy of the Holy Spirit includes: the call to the community of the Church rooted in the communion of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; the call to respond in faith to God who reveals and sustains with providential interventions that make the divine action real and present; the giving of the spirit of charity that permeates the Christian life; and the giving of courage to proclaim the Gospel with boldness in every time and place, even in the face of opposition and rejection. (162 - 163)
- Catechesis inspired by the divine pedagogy expresses the following characteristics in presenting: God's initiative of gratuitous love as the reason for all things; the universality of salvation; the centrality of Jesus Christ in a catechesis as a *pedagogy of the incarnation*; the call to conversion of faith; the progressive nature of Revelation inculturated in human cultures; the transcendence of the Word of God; the community experience of faith; and a pedagogy of signs in words and deeds with an inner unity. (165)
- Catechesis draws on the following criteria to ensure that proclamation of the Gospel is inspired by the pedagogy of God: Trinitarian and Christological centrality of the message, salvation history, the primacy of grace and beauty, ecclesiality, and the unity and integrity of faith. (167 - 178)
- *Evangelizing by educating* and *educating by evangelizing* requires a synthesis of theological and anthropological, divine, and human dimensions of life and faith. As

an educational act, catechesis is shaped by the human and social sciences, the fields of education, psychology, and the science and practice of human communication. (179 - 181)

The Catechism of the Catholic Church **(Chapter VI)**

- Since the New Testament, the Church has offered summaries of formulas of faith for professing, celebrating, and witnessing to faith. (182)
- The *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, promulgated by Saint John Paul II on October 11, 1992, is a fruit of the Second Vatican Council and the outcome of extensive collaboration and worldwide consultation. The *Catechism* was written in response to calls for a compendium of faith and morals expressed at the 1985 Extraordinary Synod of Bishops marking the twentieth anniversary of the conclusion of the Second Vatican Council. (183)
- The identity, aim, and audience of the *Catechism* highlight this catechetical text as a standard and unifying “point of reference” and “sure norm for teaching the faith” that provides an account of the Catholic faith as believed, celebrated, lived, and prayed. (184 - 186)
- The four “pillars” or parts of the *Catechism* offer a harmonious and symphonic synthesis of faith in the essential content of catechesis grounded in Sacred Scripture and Tradition. (187 - 189)
- The theological-catechetical significance of the teachings of the *Catechism* is to make present the encounter with the living mystery of God revealed in Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit within the community of the Church. (190 - 192)

Methodology in Catechesis (Chapter VII)

- In the unity of faith catechesis employs a plurality of methods, shaped by the divine and human pedagogy. The variety of catechetical methods is a sign of the richness and dynamic vitality of faith. Among the factors that guide the selection of catechetical methods are: age and intellectual development, ecclesial and spiritual maturity, cultural and social conditions, and personal circumstances. (194 - 196)
- Catechists discern and interpret catechetical methods in light of the message of the Gospel and the realities of life. (194 - 196)
- Reflection on and transformation of human experience in the light of the Gospel is an essential path of catechetical methods. Catechesis, following the example of Jesus, illuminates and interprets the experiences of life in the light of the Gospel to renew and transform it with the sanctifying presence of the Holy Spirit. (197 -200)
- Sacred Scripture, Tradition, and the liturgy are rooted in the memory of the Church of God’s words and deeds in human history. From early Christian times, catechesis engaged the practice of memorization of the common heritage of believers after presenting the meaning and relevance of the profession of faith and texts from Sacred Scripture, the liturgy, and popular piety. (201 - 203)
- Catechesis values the common language of faith that expresses and reinforces faith and that seeks the inculturation of the common language of faith in the diverse languages of peoples’ cultures and ecclesial communities. (204 - 206)
- Catechesis values narrative language expressed and conveyed in biblical stories and the living traditions of the Church.

Stories engage the whole human person in the unfolding of God's revelation in human history and the response of faith in our personal histories. (207 – 208)

- The language of art and beauty is a particularly effective method of catechesis in the visual, digital culture of today. The Church's artistic heritage over two millennia witnesses to the power of images to invite, form, and transform believers through the "way of beauty." (209 – 212)
- Today the Church is presented with new opportunities to share the Gospel through the discerning use of digital languages and tools that dominate the contemporary globalized digital culture. The interactive nature of digital technologies and platforms opens new avenues for catechesis while maintaining interpersonal dialogue within the community of believers. (213 – 217)
- The Christian community is the primary agent of catechesis. All catechetical methods flow from and lead to participation in the life of the community of faith. In formational processes, all the members of the faithful are invited into and socialized into the one Body of Christ, leading to the celebration of the Eucharist. Spaces that form catechetical settings are to be welcoming and well maintained, adapted to the particular identity and tasks of catechesis beyond the school classroom setting. (218 – 223)

LEARN FROM THE *DIRECTORY FOR CATECHESIS*:

- Revelation is the great educational work of God...in it we find the distinctive elements that can help lead us to recognize the *divine pedagogy*, one which is capable of profoundly influencing the Church's educational activity. Catechesis also follows in

the footsteps of God's pedagogy. (157)

- The goal of revelation is the salvation of every person, which is realized through an original and efficacious pedagogy of God throughout history. (158)
- This divine pedagogy is also made visible in the mystery of the incarnation when the Angel Gabriel asks a young woman of Nazareth for her active participation in the power of the Holy Spirit: Mary's *fiat* is the full response of faith. (cf. Luke 1: 26 – 38) (159)
- Jesus paid careful attention to the formation of his disciples in preparation for evangelization. He presented himself to them as their only teacher and, at the same time, as a patient and faithful friend. He taught them the truth through his whole life. (160)
- The Holy Spirit proclaimed by the Son before his death and resurrection, and promised to all the disciples, is both gift and giver of all gifts. (162)
- The gospel accounts present the features of Jesus's educational approach and inspire the pedagogical action of the church...the Christian community is herself living catechesis. Thus, she proclaims, celebrates, works, and remains always a vital, indispensable, and primary *locus* of catechesis. Throughout the centuries the Church has produced an incomparable treasure of pedagogy in the faith: above all the witness of saints and catechists, a variety of ways of life and original forms of religious communication such as the catechumenate, catechisms, and itineraries of Christian life. (164)
- Catechesis thus presents itself as a process that allows the maturation of the faith through respect for the journey of each individual believer. Catechesis is therefore

the *pedagogy of faith in action*, together with *initiation, education, and teaching*, always having clear the unity between content and the way in which it is transmitted. The Church is aware that in catechesis the Holy Spirit is at work: this presence makes catechesis an original pedagogy of the faith. (166)

- ...In order that the work of proclaiming the Gospel may be inspired by the pedagogy of God, it is good for catechesis to consider several criteria that are closely interconnected, in that all of them come from the word of God. (167)
- Catechesis is necessarily **Trinitarian and Christological**. The mystery of the most **Holy Trinity** is the central mystery of Christian faith and life. It is the mystery of God in himself. It is therefore the source of all the other mysteries of faith, the light that enlightens them...The revelation of God as Trinity is vital for the comprehension not only of the unique originality of Christianity and of the Church, but also of the concept of person as relational being and communion. A catechesis without a clear Trinitarian evangelical message, through Christ to the Father in the Holy Spirit, would be betraying its uniqueness. (168)
- Christocentricity is what essentially characterizes the message transmitted by catechesis. This means that at the center of all catechesis is the person of Jesus Christ, living, present, and active. The proclamation of the Gospel means presenting Christ, then everything else in reference to him. (169)
- Moreover, since Christ is “the key, the focal point, and the goal of...all human history,” catechesis helps the believer to take an active part in this history, showing how Christ is its fulfillment and ultimate

meaning. Finally, Christocentricity means that catechesis strives to transmit what Jesus teaches about God, man, happiness, the moral life, and death since the evangelical message does not come from men but is the word of God. Emphasizing the Christocentric character of the message encourages the following of Christ and communion with him. (169)

- In the journey of catechesis, the principle of *evangelizing by educating* and *educating by evangelizing* recalls that the work of the catechist consists in finding and drawing attention to the signs of God’s action already present in the lives of persons and, by using these as an example, present the Gospel as a transformative power for the whole of existence, to which it will give full meaning. The accompaniment of a person on a journey of growth and conversion is necessarily marked by gradualness, in that the act of believing implies a progressive discovery of the mystery of God and an openness and entrustment to him that grows overtime. (179)
- Catechesis is an essentially educational action. It is always carried out in fidelity to the Word of God and in attention to and interaction with the educational practices of the culture. (180)
- The *Catechism* is offered to the whole church for a catechesis renewed at the living sources of the faith...Sacred Scripture and Tradition. (187)
- The *Catechism* does not itself propose a catechetical method: it gives no guidelines in this regard, nor is it to be confused with the process of catechesis, which always requires mediation...On page after page, we find that what is presented here is no theory, but an encounter with a Person who lives within the Church. The *Catechism*, in making reference to the

Christian life as a whole, supports the process of conversion and maturation. It fulfills its task when the understanding of the words leads to the opening of the heart, but also when, conversely, the grace of openness of the heart brings forth the desire to get to know better him in whom the believer has placed his trust. (190)

- The content of the *Catechism* is presented in such a way as to manifest the pedagogy of God. The exposition of doctrine fully respects God's ways with humanity and embodies the healthy tendencies of the 20th century renewal of catechesis. (192)
- Catechesis does not have a single method, but is open to evaluating different methods, engaging in pedagogy and didactics, and allowing itself to be guided by the Gospel necessary for recognizing the truth of human nature. (195)
- Since the Church does not have a method of her own for proclaiming the Gospel, an effort of discernment is needed so as to test everything and keep what is good (cf. 1 Thess 5:21). Catechesis can evaluate, as it has done repeatedly throughout history, methodological approaches centered more on the realities of life or based more on the message of faith. (196)
- Human experience is integral to catechesis, in its identity and process and also in contents and method, because it is not only the place in which the word of God is proclaimed but also the space in which God speaks. The experience of individuals or of society as a whole must be approached with an attitude of love, acceptance, and respect. God acts in every person's life and in history, and the catechist imitates Jesus in being open to this presence. This sets him free from thinking of the person and of history solely as recipients of the initiative and establishes

a relationship of reciprocity and dialogue, in listening to what the Holy Spirit is already silently accomplishing. (197)

- In his proclamation of the Kingdom, Jesus *seeks, encounters, and welcomes* people in their concrete life situations. In his teaching he begins from the observation of events in life and history, which he reinterprets from a sapiential perspective. There is something spontaneous about how Jesus assumes lived experience which shines through in the parables especially. (198)
- Catechesis, following the example of Jesus, helps to *illuminate* and *interpret* the experiences of life in the light of the Gospel. Contemporary people struggle to make sense of the fragmented situations they encounter...The reinterpretation of existence with the eyes of faith fosters a sapiential and integral view of it. If catechesis neglects to correlate human experiences with the revealed message, it falls into the danger of artificial juxtapositions or misunderstandings of the truth. (199)
- Memory, therefore, has constituted an integral aspect of the pedagogy of the faith from the beginning of Christianity...to prevent memorization from being sterile or seen as an end in itself, it is well to consider it in relationship with the other elements of a catechetical process, like relationship, dialogue, reflection, silence, and accompaniment. (201 - 203)
- Catechesis creatively adopts the languages of peoples' cultures, through which the faith is expressed in a characteristic way, and helps ecclesial communities to find new ones adapted to the hearers...This is crucial both in order to be understood by our contemporaries, and so that the Catholic Tradition may speak to the cultures in the world today and help them to

be open to the internal fruitfulness of the message of Christ. (206)

- The employment of images in catechesis hearkens back to an ancient insight of the Church. Amongst other things, they help believers to get to know and to memorize the events of salvation history in a more rapid and immediate way ...When works of art are selected carefully, they can contribute to displaying in an immediate way multiple aspects of the truths of the faith, touching hearts and assisting in the internalization of the message. (210)
- Within the Church, there is often a habit of one-directional communication: preaching, teaching, and the presentation of dogmatic summaries. Moreover, the written word alone struggles to speak to the young, who are used to a language consisting of the combination of written word, sound, and images. Digital forms of communication instead offer greater possibilities, in that they are open to interaction. This is why, along with technological knowledge, it is necessary to learn effective approaches to communication and to guarantee a *presence on the Internet* that bears witness to evangelical values. (214)
- The Christian community is the primary agent of catechesis. For this reason, catechetical pedagogy must make every effort to convey the importance of the community as a fundamental space for personal growth...Paying attention to group relationships has a pedagogical significance: it develops the sense of belonging to the Church and assists growth in faith. (218)
- Catechists are called to awaken within the group the experience of community as the most coherent expression of the church is community life, which finds its most visible form in the celebration of the

Eucharist...Alongside the proclamation of the Gospel in community form, the communication of the faith also requires person-to-person contact. (219)

- The spaces for catechesis are settings in which the community expresses its own way of evangelizing. It is therefore necessary that such environments be welcoming and well-kept, that there can be a climate of familiarity that fosters serene involvement in community activities. The very widespread environments that are patterned after school buildings do not constitute the best places for the unfolding of catechetical activities. It would therefore be good to proceed with an adaptation of these spaces to the actual meaning of catechesis. (222)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. How does your catechetical ministry reflect the distinctive features of the pedagogy of God? (DC 158)
2. In what ways does your catechetical ministry extend the distinctive features of the pedagogy of Jesus? (DC 160 - 161)
3. What are concrete ways that a catechist can grow in openness to the Holy Spirit and imitate the distinctive features of the pedagogy of the Holy Spirit?
4. Discuss each criterion in catechesis that ensures that the proclamation of the Gospel is inspired by the pedagogy of God and its application to your catechetical ministry. (167 - 178)
5. How does the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* support and guide your catechetical ministry? Do you consider the *Catechism* an essential “point of reference” and “a sure norm” for your catechetical ministry?

6. What does it mean to say that catechesis is essentially Trinitarian and Christological? Is your catechetical ministry shaped by the Trinitarian and Christological nature of catechesis? (168)

7. How do you find and draw attention to the signs of God’s action already present in the lives of those you catechize so that they may encounter the Gospel as a transformative power for the whole of life? (179)

8. Share one example from the Gospels when Jesus seeks, encounters, and welcomes a person in their concrete life situation and leads him or her to illuminate and interpret his or her life experiences in the light of His Kingdom. (198-199)

9. The Christian community is the primary agent of catechesis, notes the *Directory for Catechesis*. How might the community as a form of living catechesis support and shape your catechetical ministry?

10. How do you discern appropriate catechetical methods in your ministry? Why does memorization remain an important dimension of faith formation in the language and traditions of faith today?

11. How are the language of narrative and the language of art integrated in your catechetical formation activities?

12. In what ways are your communication methods in catechetical activities one-directional? How will you discern and use digital forms of communication at the service of catechesis?

JOURNAL NOTES – space for participant to record responses/insights:

CLOSING PRAYER - Gospel reading of the day and spontaneous prayer guided by leader or participant.

UNIT 5: CHAPTERS VIII AND IX

CATECHESIS IN THE LIVES OF PERSONS; CATECHESIS IN THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

OPENING PRAYER - Prayer to the Holy Spirit

*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 will renew the face of the earth.*

*Lord, by the light of the Holy Spirit
you have taught the hearts of your faithful.
In the same Spirit help us to relish what is right
and always rejoice in your consolation.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

The English translation of the Prayer to the Holy Spirit from *A Book of Prayers* © 1982, International Committee on English in the Liturgy, Inc. (ICEL). All rights reserved.

OBJECTIVES:

- Understand the principles of inculturation and adaptation of catechesis in the concrete reality of the lives of persons and groups in the Christian community as a reflection of the pedagogy of God, the pedagogy of Jesus, and the pedagogy of the Holy Spirit within the community of the Church;
- Understand the tasks of catechesis *in, with, and of* the family as the basic cell of society and the *domestic church*;
- Understand the particular tasks, opportunities, and challenges of catechesis with children, teenagers, young adults, adults, and the elderly;
- Understand the principles of catechesis with disabled persons who are to be accompanied in faith and invited into the fullness of the sacramental life;
- Understand the Church's particular concern for catechesis that provides pastoral care of migrants, emigrants, the marginalized, and prisoners as a catechesis of mercy and compassion; and
- Understand the primacy of the Word of God in the life and mission of the Church, the diocese, the parish, the Catholic school, and various groups of the faithful. Appreciate the catechetical traditions of Eastern Catholic Churches with their rich theological, spiritual, and liturgical expressions.

OUTCOMES: By the end of this unit a participant will be able to:

- Articulate principles of inculturation and adaptation of catechesis in the concrete reality of the lives of persons and groups in the Christian community;
- Reflect on the tasks of catechesis *in, with, and of* the family as the basic cell of society and the *domestic church* and the particular tasks of catechesis with children, teenagers, young adults, adults, and the elderly;
- Articulate principles of catechesis with disabled persons and the elements of the Church's pastoral care of migrants, emigrants, the marginalized, and prisoners as a catechesis of mercy and compassion; and
- Reflect on how evangelization and catechesis is rooted in the primacy of the Word of God in the life and mission of the Church in the diocese, parish, Catholic school, and particular groups of the faithful.

OVERVIEW OF KEY THEMES FOR A LEADERS' PRESENTATION:

Catechesis in the Lives of Persons (Chapter VIII)

- Human beings are rooted in real, concrete, historical, and particular situations and are marked by psychological, social, cultural, and religious dynamics. The Gospel is intended for human beings in the concrete and particular circumstances and phases of their lives. (224 - 225)
- The Gospel is not addressed in the abstract but in the concrete lived experiences of people. Every one of the baptized has the right to adequate catechesis provided by the Church. (224 - 225)
- A complex of interpersonal relationships ~ married life, fatherhood and motherhood, filiation and fraternity ~ make up the family as a community of love and of life through which each person is introduced into the human family and into the family of God which is the Church. (226)
- The Church reveres the family as the basic cell of society. The future of humanity and the Church depends to a large extent on the well-being of the family. (226)
- The Church is a *family of families* in which the family as a domestic Church plays vital formative, catechetical, and evangelizing roles. (226)
- Areas of family catechesis include: catechesis **in** the family, catechesis **with** the family, and catechesis **of** the family. (227 - 231)
- The Church accompanies her children through all the stages of life. This accompaniment is supported by evangelization and catechesis on the journey of faith.
- Special moments of accompaniment include: catechesis of young people and adults who are preparing for marriage, catechesis of young married couples after marriage in a *mystagogic* form that reflects on the gift and vocation to marriage rooted in experience of the sacrament of marriage, catechesis of parents seeking Baptism for their children, catechesis of parents whose children are making the journey of Christian initiation, intergenerational catechesis shared among different generations within a family or community, catechesis in groups of spouses and in groups of families carried out by married couples themselves. (232)
- Changing cultural processes have given rise to new forms of family situations. The church seeks to offer a catechesis of mercy that is unmerited, unconditional, and gratuitous. Catechesis of persons in such family situations are to be accompanied in the faith with the invitation to accept and respond to the love of God within the Christian community. (233 - 235)
- Catechesis with children draws on the social and psychological sciences to attend to the developmental stages and levels of maturity of children while engaging parents in their active formation. Children have the capacity to pose meaningful questions about creation, the existence of God, good and evil, and the mystery of love, justice, and peace. Today the Church seeks to attend to the global phenomenon of digital culture that shapes children, who are *digital natives* in their experience of faith, and their cognitive and relational development. (236 - 237)
- The Church wishes to accompany teenagers and young adults who are deeply affected by the social crises affecting the family, including the distressing conditions of poverty, war, and violence. (238)

- The period of early childhood is a foundational stage for development of the language and the mysteries of faith and for socialization into the Christian community. The first evangelization and proclamation of the faith in an educational context helps young children develop the seeds of trust and selflessness and to respond to God who reveals in faith. (239)
- Middle childhood (ages 6 - 10) is a time for sacramental initiation that introduces a child into the life of the Christian community and the responsibilities of the Christian life. (240)
- The process of sacramental initiation of children and teenagers is to be inspired by the baptismal catechumenate with criteria, contents, and methods adapted to their particular needs and concrete lived situations. (242)
- Catechesis of young people accompanies them, modeled on the image of Jesus walking with two disciples on the road to Emmaus. Catechesis of young people is marked by the pastoral and relational dynamics of listening, reciprocity, co-responsibility, and recognition of youthful initiatives. The Church seeks to attend to the particular challenges of social media in which the young participate. Relationships among the young are mediated by technology that shapes their conception of God, the world, of reality, and interpersonal relationships. Catechists face the challenge of translating the message of the Gospel into the language of the young and the digital cultures that shape them in profound ways. (245)
- Catechesis with pre-adolescents and adolescents takes into consideration the particular challenges of their journeys of faith within the cultural and social forces that dominate their young lives. Catechesis of these age groups emphasizes a strong educational and vocational focus within the family of the Church and their life environments and cultures. (246 - 249)
- Catechesis with young people takes into account their search for meaning, solidarity, and social engagement, as well as their possible indifference or distrust towards the Church. The pastoral style suitable to catechesis with youth is a humanizing and missionary outreach, capable of seeing the signs of God's love and God's call in human experience in the search for truth and freedom and in the desire to love and be loved. Catechesis of young people is shaped by the *kerygma*, the foundational experience of encounter with God's love through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, and the vocational dimension that reaches into a young person's search for identity and mission. (250 - 256)
- Catechesis of adults has particular tasks, goals, and criteria. There are a multiplicity of forms and emphases depending on cultural and social contexts and the formative life experiences of adults. (257 - 265)
- Catechesis of the elderly recognizes them as a gift from God and invites the sharing of their wisdom and life experience in service to the community of faith. (266 - 268)
- Catechesis with persons with disabilities expresses and extends the pedagogy of God's love and compassion for the weakest and most vulnerable members of the Christian community. Catechists recognize the presence of Jesus who in a special way reveals himself in persons with disabilities whose lives radiate joy in the midst of difficulties, trust in God, and the yearning for faith. Catechists attend with careful attention to the spiritual needs of persons with disabilities who are called to

the fullness of the sacramental life, even among those with severe disabilities. (269 - 272)

- Migration is a worldwide phenomenon that impacts individuals, children, women, the elderly, and families in profound ways. The Church seeks to journey with migrants, accompanying them with spiritual nourishment and pastoral care that attends to their particular challenges and needs. (273 - 274)
- The Church has a specific form of pastoral care for migrants and emigrants which takes into account their cultural and religious characteristics. Migrants become evangelizers in the receiving countries when they live their Christian faith vibrantly and contribute to the evangelizing mission of the Church with their own cultural and religious traditions. (275 - 278)
- Catechesis of marginal persons seeks to overcome the lack of spiritual care of those who are on the margins of society, such as the homeless, refugees, nomadic peoples, drug addicts, prisoners, and those enslaved in prostitution. The Church's preferential option for the poor seeks to accompany marginal persons in the faith in mostly informal settings and with casual methods. (279 - 280)
- Catechesis with prisoners and their families focuses on the *kerygma* of salvation in Jesus Christ, experienced as divine forgiveness and liberation. (281 - 282)

The Christian Community as Participant in Catechesis (Chapter IX)

- The living Word of God is spiritual food, *daily bread*, that renews and nourishes the journey of faith of the people of God. (283)

- Evangelization is rooted in the primacy of the Word of God in the life and mission of the Church. Before the Word of God, the Church grows continually in the attitudes of listening, prayerful meditation, living, celebrating, and witnessing to the Word of God. The sacred Scriptures are the living source of evangelization. (283)
- Mary, the Blessed Mother of God and Virgin of listening, is for the Church the model *par excellence* of listening, pondering, and living the Word of God. For Mary "kept all these things, pondering them in her heart" (Luke 2:19). In imitation of Mary, the Church professes, "let it be done to me according to your word" (Luke 1:38). Mary places herself at the service of proclaiming God's word as she is its faithful guardian (283 - 284).
- The Church is entrusted with a task of mediation of the Word of God. This task of mediation includes: proclaiming with fidelity and trust, safeguarding, transmitting it unchanged, interpreting, and uniting believers through acceptance of the Word and through Baptism. (Acts 2:41) (285)
- All the baptized, who are the people of God, are called to be agents of evangelization. The Second Vatican Council spoke of the people of God as a *messianic people* redeemed and sent on mission to all people as light of the world and salt of the earth (*Lumen Gentium* 9). Evangelization and catechesis are the responsibility of the whole Church. (287 - 288)
- Through the practice of synods - universal, regional, and local - the Church listens in order to proclaim the Gospel with fresh vigor and enthusiasm. A synodal Church is a Church that listens in the way of mutual listening where all the faithful, the bishops, and the pope listen to one

another and listen to the Holy Spirit. (289)

- Eastern Catholic Churches offer rich and venerable traditions expressed in their institutions, liturgical rites, ecclesial traditions, and iconography and in the close integration of liturgy and catechesis in the catechetical formation of the faithful. (290 - 292)
- The proclamation, transmission, and lived experience of the Gospel is expressed in the life of particular churches, or dioceses, as well as in local churches made up of particular churches or groups of churches that share a common identity or region. (293 - 297)
- The parish as a *Eucharistic community* is united in the bond of charity, care for the poor, and all activities of evangelization and catechesis. The renewal of parish catechesis involves several dimensions: parish as a community of missionary disciples, missionary mentality, and formative offerings inspired by the catechumenate. (298 - 303)
- Associations of the faithful, basic ecclesial movements, and groups of the faithful remain fruitful through close contact with the local parish and contribute actively to the evangelizing and catechetical efforts of the particular Church or diocese. (304 - 308)
- A Catholic school is a community of faith where educational goals are imbued with the values and living traditions of the Gospel. Catholic schools are privileged environments where Christian education takes place in a way that extends the evangelizing mission of the Church. (309 - 312)
- The teaching of the Catholic faith in Catholic schools is a form of the ministry

of the Word that makes the Gospel present within the overall formation – intellectual, human, and spiritual – of the whole student. In the school context, religious education is often the only opportunity for students to encounter the Gospel and the lived witness to faith. The same systematic and rigorous attention given to various school disciplines is to be given to the teaching of religion and the invitation to live the Christian life. (313 - 318)

LEARN FROM THE *DIRECTORY FOR CATECHESIS*:

- The Gospel is not intended for humanity in the abstract, but for each human being, real, concrete, historical, rooted in a particular situation and marked by psychological, social, cultural, and religious dynamics, because “each one is included in the mystery of the Redemption.” (224)
- It is therefore reasonable to offer pathways of catechesis that vary based on the participants’ different needs, ages, and states of life. It is indispensable to respect anthropological-developmental and theological-pastoral realities, taking into account the educational sciences. (225)
- The future of persons and of the human and ecclesial communities depends to a large extent on the family, the basic cell of society. Thanks to the family, the Church becomes a *family of families* and is enriched with the life of these domestic churches ... for they bear witness, in a credible way to the beauty of marriage as indissoluble and perpetually faithful. (226)
- The family is a *proclamation of faith* in that it is the natural place in which faith can be lived in a simple and spontaneous manner. It has a unique privilege: transmitting the Gospel by rooting it in the context of profound human values. (227)

- On this human base, Christian initiation is more profound: the awakening of the sense of God; the first steps in prayer; education of the moral conscience; formation in the Christian sense of human love, understood as a reflection of the love of God the Father, the Creator. It is indeed a Christian education more witnessed to than taught, more occasional than systematic, more ongoing and daily than structured into periods. (227)
- “At the present time, catechesis with families is permeated by the *kerygma*, because even in and among families, the Gospel message should always resound: the core of that message, the *kerygma*, is what is most beautiful, most excellent, most appealing and at the same time most necessary. This message has to occupy the center of all evangelizing activity. (230)
- *The family proclaims the Gospel.* As a domestic church founded on the sacrament of marriage that also has a missionary dimension, the Christian family takes part in the Church’s mission of evangelization and is therefore an agent of catechesis. (231)
- With concern, respect, and pastoral solicitude the Church wants to accompany those children who are marked by a wounded love, who find themselves in the most fragile condition, restoring their trust and hope...It is important that every Christian community take a realistic view of the heterogeneous family realities, with their ups and downs, for the sake of *accompanying them* in an adequate way and discerning the complexity of the situations, without giving into forms of idealism and pessimism. (234)
- The Church’s solicitude for persons with disabilities springs from God’s way of acting. Following the principle of the incarnation of the Son of God, who makes himself present in every human situation, the Church recognizes in persons with disabilities the call to faith and to a life that is good and full of meaning. The theme of disability is of great importance for evangelization and Christian formation. Communities are called not only to take care of the most fragile, but to recognize the presence of Jesus who in a special way manifests himself in them. (269)
- The Church has a specific form of pastoral care for migrants, which takes into account their cultural and religious characteristics...Moreover Christian migrants living their faith become proclaimers of the Gospel in the receiving countries, thus enriching the spiritual fabric of the local church and strengthening its mission with their own cultural and religious traditions. (275)
- “The Church must always be vigilant and ready to identify new works of mercy and to practice them with generosity and enthusiasm,” because she is aware that the credibility of her message depends greatly upon the testimony of works. The word of Jesus supports and motivates the efforts of those who work for the Lord in the service of “the least of these.” (279)
- “The Church recognizes that “the worst discrimination which the poor suffer is the lack of spiritual care”: therefore “our preferential option for the poor must mainly translate into a privileged and preferential religious care... The proclamation of faith to marginal persons most always takes place in informal contexts and environments with casual methods, on account of which a decisive role is played by the capacity to meet people in the situations in which they find themselves, the willingness for unconditional acceptance, and the capacity to relate to them with realism and mercy.” (280)

- With the eyes of faith, it is possible to get a glimpse of God at work among prisoners, even in situations that in human terms are desperate...The fundamental content of catechesis among prisoners, which often has a casual an experiential character, is the *kerygma* of salvation in Jesus Christ, understood as forgiveness and liberation. The direct encounter with Sacred Scripture is the setting for the proclamation of the faith, which if accepted can console and heal even the life most devastated by sin, in addition to opening spaces for re-education and rehabilitation. (282)
- The primacy of this Word places the whole Church in an attitude of “hearing the word of God with reverence.” (DV, 1) The model of the people of God is Mary, Virgin of listening, who kept all these things, pondering them in her heart. (Luke 2: 19). The *ministry of the Word*, therefore, is born from listening and educates believers in the art of listening, because only those who listen can also proclaim. (283)
- “All evangelization is based on that Word, listened to, meditated upon, lived, celebrated and witnessed to. The sacred Scriptures are the very source of evangelization.” (283)
- All the baptized, whatever their position in the Church or their level of instruction in the faith, are agents of evangelization, and it would be insufficient to envisage a plan of evangelization to be carried out by professionals while the rest of the faithful would simply be passive recipients. The new evangelization calls for personal involvement on the part of each of the baptized. If all are responsible, all are not so, however in the same way. The responsibility is differentiated in the gifts of charisms and ministries, which are both co-essential for the Church’s life and mission. Everyone contributes according to their state of life and the grace they have received from Christ. (cf. Ephesians 4:11-12) (288)
- “The Catholic Church holds in high esteem the institutions, liturgical rites, ecclesiastical traditions, and the established standards of the Christian life of the Eastern Churches, for in them, distinguished as they are for their venerable antiquity, there remains conspicuous the tradition that has been handed down from the Apostles through the Fathers and that forms part of the divinely revealed and undivided heritage of the universal Church.” (OE 1)...These treasures have always contributed to evangelization ...in this commitment to the protection and transmission of the faith in their own ecclesial tradition, “catechesis has a privileged role.” (290)
- “Plainly and simply, the parish is founded on a theological reality, because it is a *Eucharistic community*. The Eucharist, bond of charity, urges solicitude for the poorest , and their evangelization is mentioned as a sign of messianic activity (PO 6)... the parish founded on the pillars of the word of God, the sacraments, and charity, which in turn presuppose a network of services, ministries, and charisms, offers an obvious example of the apostolate on the community level in as much as it brings together the many human differences within its boundaries and merges them into the universality of the Church. Parishes manifest the face of the people of God who opens himself to all, without preference of persons.” (298, 299)
- Ecclesial associations, movements, and groups, for the sake of cultivating all the fundamental dimensions of the Christian life, give particular importance to the time of formation...The formative programs, which explore...the specific charism of each of these realities, cannot be an alternative

to catechesis, which remains essential in Christian formation. It is therefore crucial that the associations, movements, or groups should ordinarily set aside time dedicated to catechesis. (307)

- In order for the teaching of the Catholic religion to be fruitful, it is fundamental that the teachers be capable of presenting the relationship between faith and culture, human and religious components, science and religion, school and other educational agencies. The task of the teacher is purely educational, oriented toward the human maturation of the students. At the same time, it is required that the teachers be believers committed to personal growth in the faith, incorporated into a Christian community, desirous of giving the reason for their faith through their professional expertise as well. (318)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. How does your catechetical ministry reach persons in your faith community – children, teenagers, youth, adults, and the elderly – in the concrete lived circumstances of their daily lives?
2. How does your ministry as a catechist support, engage and encourage a kerygmatic catechesis *in, with* and *of* the family? Identify one challenge in family catechesis in your parish community and share possible solutions to overcome that challenge.
3. Depending on the age group – children, youth, young adults, adults, elderly - that your catechetical ministry engages, share one new insight you have gained from your reading of the *Directory for Catechesis*. How will you implement that new insight in your pastoral work?

4. How does your parish respond to and care for the catechetical needs of disabled persons in your community? Identify opportunities and challenges for increased awareness and pastoral care of disabled persons in the community.
5. List ways in which your parish community extends a catechesis of mercy as it engages in the pastoral care of migrants, emigrants, the marginalized, and prisoners.
6. How can you invite and encourage others to do their part in the evangelizing mission of the Church that is the responsibility, not of a few, but of all the baptized in the Christian community?
7. How do you grow daily in the attitudes of listening, prayerful meditation, living, celebrating, and witnessing to the Word of God, in imitation of Mary, Mother of God? How is the Word of God a living source for your ministry as an evangelist and catechist?
8. How is your parish a community of missionary disciples who offer a *living catechesis* to the faithful and the wider community? What are concrete expressions of unity and community in the way your parish supports and extends the evangelizing mission of the diocese?
9. How do lay associations and groups of the faithful support and collaborate in the pastoral mission of the parish?
10. How does your catechetical ministry support and collaborate with the mission of Catholic education in the parish or local Catholic school?

UNIT 6: CHAPTERS X, XI, AND XII

CATECHESIS IN CONTEMPORARY CULTURAL SCENARIOS; INCULTURATION OF FAITH; THOSE IN THE CHURCH WHO SERVE CATECHESIS

OPENING PRAYER - Prayer to the Holy Spirit

*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 will renew the face of the earth.*

*Lord, by the light of the Holy Spirit
you have taught the hearts of your faithful.
In the same Spirit help us to relish what is right
and always rejoice in your consolation.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

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OBJECTIVES:

- Understand the tasks of catechesis in the face of contemporary cultural scenarios that require inculturation of the Gospel in urban, rural, and local indigenous cultures, and in the context of ecumenical and inter-religious traditions, religious pluralism, and new religious movements;
- Understand the opportunities and challenges for catechesis in the context of the scientific mentality, the dominant digital culture, bioethical issues, popular piety, environmental concerns, and the preferential option for the poor;
- Understand the principles of catechetical methods for the inculturation of the Gospel in the concrete lived expressions of cultures; and
- Reflect on participation and contribution

to diocesan catechetical initiatives and programs of catechist formation and the building of a community of catechists.

OUTCOMES: By the end of this unit a participant will be able to:

- Articulate the catechetical tasks and demands of inculturation of the Gospel in a variety of cultural scenarios and contemporary contexts;
- Reflect on catechetical ministry as it responds to the challenges of contemporary digital world, bioethical issues, environmental concerns, and the Church's preferential option for the poor; and
- Reflect on and increase participation in diocesan catechetical initiatives and programs of catechist formation.

OVERVIEW OF KEY THEMES FOR A LEADERS' PRESENTATION:

Catechesis in the Face of Contemporary Cultural Scenarios (Chapter X)

- The cultural and social dimensions of catechesis are intrinsic to pastoral ministry. A catechist reads the "signs of the times" as an essential concern of catechesis at the service of the inculturation of the faith. (319)
- In sharing the beauty and riches of the faith to all people, the Church seeks to understand contemporary culture as a complex reality of globalization of culture and the widespread use of media. The *synodal perspective* as a methodology allows the Church to journey in a participatory

manner with all people who are shaped by the complex issues of contemporary culture. Ecumenical and inter-religious environments in which a parish finds itself calls for openness and a spirit of dialogue. (320 - 322)

- The information-driven society and globalization of mass communication creates opportunities and challenges for the proclamation of the Gospel. Catechesis discerns those “*junctures of existence, anthropological environments, and modern areopagi*” where contemporary cultural attitudes are created and shape all dimensions of daily life. (324)
- The urban, rural, and traditional local cultures are specific contexts that shape the forms and tasks of “kerygmatic catechesis.” (326 - 335)
- Catechesis takes seriously the theological, spiritual, and social significance of popular piety. Catechesis seeks to support the evangelizing power of popular piety as it celebrates the mysteries of the life of Jesus Christ in his Paschal Mystery, venerates Mary, the Mother of God, the saints, and martyrs, and encourages pilgrimages to shrines, processions, and traditions of prayer such as the Rosary and devotions associated with sacramentals. (338)
- While encouraging various expressions of popular piety rooted in local cultures, catechesis also purifies them by grounding them in the Gospel and tracing them back to Trinitarian, Christological, and ecclesial roots. A catechist draws connections between popular piety and Scripture and the liturgy, especially the Sunday Eucharist. (339 - 340)
- Shrines and the experience of pilgrimage are opportune moments for proclamation and catechesis that draw on the theological and anthropological meaning of the journey of faith. (341 - 342)
- Catechesis in ecumenical contexts takes care to affirm that division is a wound to the Body of Christ, to expound clearly and with charity the Catholic faith, and to present accurately the faith of other Churches and ecclesial communities, by exploring both what unites and divides Christians in the past and in the present. Catechesis looks for areas of common proclamation of the Gospel, Christian service, and witness to Christian values in society. (343 - 346)
- Catechesis in relation to Judaism recognizes the Jewish roots of the Church anchored in salvation history and rejects all forms of anti-Semitism while pursuing the paths of dialogue and shared commitment to peace, justice, and witness to religious values. The special attention that catechesis gives to the Jewish religion includes care to present the unique relationship of Christianity to Judaism; the unity of God’s word and action in salvation history, which takes concrete form in each respective historical context and is fulfilled in Jesus Christ; the unity of both Testaments; the validity of the first Covenant, which has never been revoked (cf. Rom. 11: 28 - 29) and which finds complete fulfillment in Jesus; and care to avoid the presentation of the Church and Judaism as two ways of salvation. (348)
- Catechesis with Christians who live in the context of religious pluralism should: strengthen the identity of believers with a thorough inculturation of the faith; form believers in discernment of other religions, recognizing in them the seeds of the Gospel and leaving behind those elements that are incompatible with the Christian faith; and encourage a missionary impulse

rooted in a spirit of dialogue and, where possible, of loving proclamation of the Gospel. (349 - 350)

- In places where Christians live in relationship with believers in Islam, catechesis prepares the faithful to encounter and dialogue in respect and peace. (353)
- Catechesis in the context of new religious movements emphasizes these elements: proclamation of the *kerygma* of Jesus as the Wisdom of God; witness to the Church as a community of life and faith; sharing knowledge of Sacred Scripture and doctrine; and liturgical catechesis on the symbols, gestures, and ceremonies of the liturgy that engages the heart. (352 - 353)
- The Church views as positive the scientific endeavor as an activity by which humanity participates in God's plan for creation and contributes to the progress of humanity. The scientific mentality with its ideological tendency to naturalistic reductionism and scientism, distinct from scientific endeavor, calls for the inculturation of the faith rooted in the Scriptures and Tradition. (354 - 358)
- The widespread digital culture of today poses many new opportunities and challenges for catechesis. Internet and social media networks are pastoral fields for engaging in formation and dialogue, especially among the young. The digital world is also a place of loneliness, isolation, manipulation, violence, and the denigration of human sexuality in pornography. Digital spaces can create a distorted vision of reality to the neglect of the interior spiritual life and a gradual dehumanizing of persons. (359 - 361)
- The widespread phenomenon of digital culture has led to an anthropological transformation of both "digital natives" and "digital immigrants." Images and storytelling that engage the intuitive, rather than analytic, are increasingly favored by "digital natives." Widespread engagement in social media platforms is experienced as a dominant mode of socialization to the point, at times, of replacing family, Church, and school. (362 - 369)
- Catechesis seeks the inculturation of the Gospel in the digital continent. Catechists are to become an evangelizing presence on the digital continent by moving from providing religious information to accompaniment that offers a personal and true experience of God within the community of believers. (370 - 372)
- Catechesis assists the faithful in responding to ethical questions of today that refer to the beginning of life, end of life, health and human experimentation, and gender identity as a social construct. Catechesis on creation is of fundamental importance in responding with evangelical clarity and charity to contemporary bioethical issues. Fundamental elements in catechesis that responds to contemporary bioethical issues are: God is the ultimate foundation and point of reference for human life from conception to natural death; the human person is always a unity of spirit and body; science serves the dignity and integrity of the human person; and the inestimable value of all human life redeemed by the Paschal mystery of Jesus Christ. (373 - 380)
- Catechesis accompanies believers in their commitment to environmental concerns as an integral part of the Christian life. Catechists offer theological and spiritual foundations for environmental conversion and support concrete avenues for the care of our common home. The biblical vision of creation and activity of human beings

within it shapes an environmental spirituality founded on the wisdom of biblical accounts and the Church's social teachings. (381 - 384)

- The Church's preferential option for the poor is primarily a *theological* category rather than a cultural, sociological, political, or philosophical one. The Church's love for the poor and its journey with the poor is rooted in God's love for the exiled and alienated as witnessed to in Sacred Scripture. Catechists raise awareness of the poor in the midst of the community and support concrete initiatives of compassionate care for the poor and marginalized. Catechesis supports reflection on the dignity of work, the defense of the rights of the weak, and Christian witness in the workplace. (385 - 393)

Catechesis at the Service of the Inculturation of the Faith (Chapter XI)

- Inculturation of the faith is not to be reduced to adaptation to culture. Inculturation is a comprehensive, profound, and unfolding journey by which the Gospel penetrates into the depths of persons and communities to create a new synthesis with a particular culture. Catechesis has a great responsibility for the inculturation of the faith that brings the transformative power of the Gospel into the very heart of culture and cultures. Catechesis contributes in a specific and distinct way to the evangelizing mission of the Church by entering into relationship with the experience of persons in their ways of living and in their concrete lived experience of personal and community growth. (394 - 396)
- The inculturation of faith through catechesis is shaped by these methodological considerations: knowledge of the culture of persons; recognition of the cultural

dimensions of Gospel processes; inviting true conversion of life that the Gospel effects within every culture; recognition of the seeds of the Gospel present in all cultures that transcend and, at times, purify culture; and ensure that new expressions of the Gospel are in harmony with the content of faith so as to foster ecclesial communion. (397 - 400)

- Local catechisms may have a national, regional, or diocesan character. As catechisms, they have an official character and present an organic and comprehensive summary of Christian faith. Local catechisms reflect on and incorporate local expressions of Christian life, celebration, and thought, and are an important part of the process of inculturation of the faith. (401 - 406)

The Organisms at the Service of Catechesis (Chapter XII)

- The proclamation and transmission of the Gospel is the fundamental task of the pope and the offices of the Holy See with the competency for evangelization and catechesis, such as the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization. This task is carried out in collaboration with the synod of bishops or councils of the hierarchies of Eastern Catholic Churches and various episcopal conferences of the universal Church. (409 - 415)
- The particular church, or diocese, under the leadership of its bishop, is the primary agent of evangelization in the local Church. Diocesan catechetical offices have the following tasks shaped by the kerygmatic character of all catechetical activities: analysis of the catechetical situation in the diocese; coordination with other forms of pastoral care within the diocese; integration of various catechetical programs within a diocese; oversight of

practical programs of implementation for diocesan catechetical activities; and the formation of catechists, which is its particular responsibility. (416 - 425)

LEARN FROM THE *DIRECTORY FOR CATECHESIS*:

- Catechesis has an intrinsic cultural and social dimension, in that it is situated within a Church that is incorporated into the human community...the task of reading the signs of the times is still alive, above all in these times, perceived as an epochal watershed and marked by contradictions and at the same time by the longing for peace in justice, for encounter and solidarity. (319)
- Contemporary culture is a very complex reality, since on account of the phenomena of globalization and of the massive use of the media there has been an increase in the connections and interdependence between questions and sectors that in the past could be considered as distinct and today instead require an integrated approach...In these condition of great complexity, human beings take up very different stances toward life and faith, giving rise to a cultural and religious pluralism that is particularly accentuated and difficult to catalog. (320)
- The ecclesial community is called to look with the spirit of faith at the society in which it lives, to seek to uncover the foundation of cultures, which at their deepest core are always open and thirsting for God, to interpret the meanings of the cultural changes underway in order to bring to them the Gospel of joy that renews and enlightens everything. (324)
- An urban catechesis of catechumenal inspiration can transform the parish into a *community of communities* that, by providing an experience of real fraternal closeness, reveals the Church's motherhood and offers a concrete witness of mercy and tenderness that produces a sense of direction and meaning for the very life of the city. (328)
- Popular piety celebrates the mysteries of the life of Jesus Christ, above all his passion, venerates with tenderness the Mother of God, the martyrs and saints and prays for the deceased. It is expressed through the veneration of relics, visits to shrines, pilgrimages, processions, the *via crucis*, religious dances, the Rosary, medals, and other exercises of individual, family, and community piety...In this sense, popular piety, "a true expression of the spontaneous missionary activity of the people of God" in which "the Holy Spirit is the principle agent," is a *locus theologicus* which demands our attention, especially at a time when we are looking to the new evangelization. (338)
- Catechesis is to take care, above all, to enhance the evangelizing power of the expressions of popular piety, integrating them into and promoting them in its process of formation and allowing itself to be inspired by the ceremonies and symbols of the people in terms of the keeping of their faith and its transmission from one generation to another. In this sense, many practices of popular piety are a trail already blazed for catechesis. Moreover, catechesis is to seek to trace some of the manifestations of popular piety back to their evangelical, Trinitarian, Christological, and ecclesiological roots, purifying them of deformations or erroneous attitudes and turning them into opportunities for a new dedication to the Christian life. (340)
- Because of its educational significance, catechesis has the task of eliciting a desire

for unity within those being catechized, helping them to live in contact with persons of other confessions while cultivating their Catholic identity in respect for the faith of others. (345)

- Catechesis should therefore elicit questions and introduce participants to themes of particular significance, like the complexity of the universe, creation as a sign of the Creator, the origin and the end of humanity and of the cosmos...Catechists need to know about the main documents of the Magisterium that deal with the relationship between faith and reason, between theology and science. (357)
- The Church is called to reflect on the unique approach to the search for faith among digital young people, and as a result to bring its own approach to proclaiming the Gospel up to date with the language of the new generations, inviting them to create a new sense of community belonging that includes and is not exhausted by that which they experience online...The pastoral challenge is that of accompanying the young person in the search for autonomy, which refers to the discovery of inner freedom and of God's call, setting them apart from the social crowd to which they belong. (370)
- In the process of proclaiming the Gospel, the real question is not how to use the new technologies to evangelize, but how to become *an evangelizing presence on the digital continent*. Catechesis which cannot simply become digitalized, certainly needs to understand the power of this medium and to use all its potentiality and positive aspects, while still realizing that catechesis cannot be carried out solely by using digital tools, but by offering spaces for experiences of faith. This is the only way to avoid a virtualization of catechesis that

threatens to make catechetical action weak and ineffectual. (371)

- Only a catechesis that proceeds from religious information to accompaniment and to the experience of God will be capable of offering meaning. The transmission of the faith is based on authentic experiences, which must not be confused with experiments: experience transforms life and provides keys for its interpretation, while the experiment is reproduced only in an identical manner. (371)
- A catechesis sensitive to the protection of creation promotes a culture of concern that is directed both to the environment and to the people who inhabit it ... Catechesis is to take care in the first place to help believers become aware that commitment to the environmental question is an integral part of the Christian life. In the second place, it is to proclaim the truths of the faith underlying the subject of environmentalism: God the Father as almighty creator: the mystery of creation as a gift that precedes the human being who is its pinnacle and guardian, the correlation and harmony of all created realities, the redemption worked by Christ, the first born of the new creation. (383 - 384)
- The preferential option or love for the poor is a special form of primacy in the exercise of charity that touches on the life of every Christian, as an imitator of Christ. The Church's love for the poor and for all those who live in situations of poverty belongs to her constant tradition. For the Church, the option for the poor is primarily a theological category rather than a cultural, sociological, political, or philosophical one...For the disciples of Christ, poverty is in the first place the vocation to follow the poor Jesus; it is an attitude of the heart that prevents

thinking about contingent realities as the goal of life and the condition of happiness. The Church is also called to live poverty as total abandonment to God, without confiding in worldly means. (385 - 386)

- By laboring with his own hands in Nazareth, the Lord confirmed the highest dignity upon labor. In offering his labor to God, the human being therefore associates himself with the very redemptive work of Christ...In dealing with human work, catechesis is to: illustrate the noble significance of human engagement in the world; support Christian witness in the workplace; help the faithful to be leaven of reconciliation in situations of conflict; encourage efforts for the humanization of work; and urge the defense of the rights of the weakest. (392 - 393)
- Catechesis “is called to bring the power of the Gospel into the very heart of culture and cultures,” and has a great responsibility in the process of the inculturation of the faith. Understanding culture as a hermeneutic setting for the faith offers catechesis greater possibilities for significantly reaching its goals of being an education *for* the faith and *in* the faith. The specific contribution of catechesis to evangelization is the attempt to enter into relationship with the experience of persons, with their ways of living and the processes of personal and community growth. Inculturation, is at its heart, aimed at the process of internalization of the experience of faith. (396)
- In this time of the new evangelization, the Holy Spirit is calling Christians to have the boldness to “discover new signs and new symbols, new flesh to embody and communicate the Word,” in this serene awareness that “Christ is the ‘eternal gospel’ (Rev. 14:6); he ‘is the same yesterday

and today and forever’ (Heb 13:8), yet his riches and beauty are inexhaustible. He is forever young and a constant source of newness ... Whenever we make the effort to return to the source and to recover the original freshness of the Gospel, new avenues arise, new paths of creativity open up, with different forms of expression, more eloquent signs and words with new meaning for today’s world.” (406)

- The diocesan catechetical office is to pay particular attention to the formation of catechists, knowing well that the Holy Spirit uses their valuable and expert collaboration so that the Gospel may be welcomed by all. Evaluating first of all the real needs of catechists and with a style suited to these times and to a contemporary sensibility, the office seeks to provide a formative offering that responds to the dimensions of *being*, of *being-with*, of *knowledge*, of *savoir-faire*, avoiding undue emphasis on one dimension at the expense of the others. (425)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. How does your catechetical ministry contribute to the inculturation of the Gospel in your particular catechetical setting - urban, rural, or local indigenous culture?
2. Name forms of popular piety in your faith community. How does your catechetical ministry support and encourage popular piety in the form of Eucharistic and Marian devotions, pilgrimages to shrines, and cultural expressions of faith?
3. How does your catechetical ministry support and form others for witness to the faith in ecumenical, inter-religious, and religiously pluralistic contexts?

UNIT 7: SUMMARY OF MAJOR THEMES/REFLECTION

OPENING PRAYER - Prayer to the Holy Spirit

*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 will renew the face of the earth.*

*Lord, by the light of the Holy Spirit
you have taught the hearts of your faithful.
In the same Spirit help us to relish what is right
and always rejoice in your consolation.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

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OBJECTIVES:

- Reflect on major themes in the *Directory for Catechesis*;
- Explore catechetical opportunities and challenges posed by the *Directory for Catechesis*; and
- Renew commitment to ongoing catechist formation in light of reading and reflection on the *Directory for Catechesis*.

OUTCOMES: By the end of this unit a participant will be able to:

- Articulate key themes of the *Directory for Catechesis*;
- Reflect on catechetical opportunities and challenges posed by the major themes of the *Directory for Catechesis*; and
- Commit to ongoing catechist formation in light of reading and reflection on the *Directory for Catechesis*.

OVERVIEW OF KEY THEMES FOR A LEADERS' PRESENTATION:

- The *Directory for Catechesis* presents fundamental theological and pastoral principles to guide catechesis that serves the ministry of the Word within the evangelizing mission of the Church. Two papal phrases frame the themes of the *Directory for Catechesis*: “The Church exists to evangelize,” of Saint Paul VI, and “I am a mission,” of Pope Francis.
- The three major parts of the *Directory for Catechesis* are divided across twelve chapters permeated by three accents for catechesis in the new evangelization: witness, mercy, and dialogue.
- Within the dynamic process of evangelization, “the grace and vocation proper to the Church, her deepest identity” (EN, 14), the *Directory for Catechesis* proposes the primacy of the *kerygma*, the proclamation of the core Gospel message of the saving incarnation, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ that is to permeate all stages and forms of catechesis.
- Catechesis makes the proclamation of the passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ continually resound in the heart of every person, so that his or her life may be transformed. A dynamic and complex reality at the service of the Word of God, catechesis is accompaniment, education, and formation in the faith and for the faith, an introduction to the celebration of the Mystery, illumination and interpretation of human life and history.
- Two distinct features of the *Directory for Catechesis* are: the recovery of *kerygmatic catechesis* at the center of all catechesis,

understood as one privileged moment within the evangelizing mission of the Church that seeks to accompany, initiate, educate, and form missionary disciples of Jesus Christ; and the emphasis on catechesis as *mystagogic initiation* into the living experience of the Christian community in a dynamic formative experience rich in signs and expressions of faith inspired by the baptismal catechumenate. (2)

Revelation and its transmission in evangelization and catechesis:

- **Jesus Christ**, the Son of God, brings divine revelation to completion by fulfilling it through the **Paschal Mystery** of his life, death, and glorious resurrection.
- Christian **faith** is the human response to divine revelation. Two dimensions of faith as the human response to God's love revealed in Jesus Christ – trustful abandonment to God (*fides qua*) and assent to all God has revealed (*fides quae*).
- Four dimensions of the Christian proclamation that communicates the divine plan of revelation – a mystery of love, the revelation of God as **Trinity**, the offer of salvation to all people through the **Paschal mystery** of Jesus Christ, and the definitive call to reunite scattered humanity into the Church.
- The living transmission of divine revelation unfolds in **Tradition** and **Sacred Scripture**.

Evangelization and the identity of catechesis:

- Evangelization makes the encounter with Jesus Christ concrete in the lives of persons in their personal, cultural, and social contexts. The ultimate aim of evangelization is the fulfillment of human life – the *salvation* or *divinization* of humanity.

- The ecclesial process of **evangelization** unfolds in overlapping aspects and phases that correspond to the catechumenal process: a first stage is missionary activity *ad gentes*, embodied in witness, first proclamation, and a time of inquiry and maturation. Then a period of catechesis of Christian initiation that offers a *basic, essential, organic, systematic, and integral* formation in faith. Followed by pastoral action and ongoing formation in the Christian life through knowledge of Sacred Scripture, liturgical catechesis and the experience of the sacraments, and charitable witness. Each stage of evangelization corresponds to stages and periods of the catechumenate that carry out the ministry of the word of God, to which all are invited and engaged.
- The Holy Spirit is the soul of the evangelizing Church that exists “in a permanent state of mission.” Catechesis is shaped by a spirituality of the **new evangelization** that takes shapes in the Church's life in three areas: ordinary pastoral care in Christian communities; the baptized whose lives are not shaped by the demands of Baptism; and those who do not know or have rejected Jesus Christ.
- The relationship of the Gospel and culture is a perennial challenge for the Church. The **inculturation** of faith in evangelization and catechesis is imperative for the evangelization of cultures.

Kerygmatic catechesis, the tasks, and sources of catechesis:

- Catechesis, as an ecclesial act, arises from Jesus' missionary mandate (Matthew 28: 19 -20) and unfolds as a dynamic and complex reality at the service of the Word of God. Catechesis is a privileged stage in the process of evangelization.

- **Kerygmatic catechesis** responds to the needs of the present time as an essential dimension of every moment of catechesis. At the center of the *kerygma* is the Lord Jesus, who manifests God’s loving mercy and reconciles us by his saving death and resurrection, enabling our communion with the Father in the power of the Holy Spirit.
- **Kerygma** is both the act of proclamation and the content of the proclamation itself with a personal and social content.
- The **baptismal catechumenate** is a source of inspiration for catechesis in three aspects: a catechumenate in the strict sense, for the unbaptized child, young adult, or adult; a catechumenate for those seeking full sacramental initiation; and a catechesis of *catechumenal inspiration*, that takes on its style and formative dynamism. Such a catechesis is characterized as Paschal, initiatory, liturgical, ritual, symbolic, communal, and marked by ongoing conversion and witness and the progression of a formative experience of faith.
- The center of all catechetical activity is the invitation and deepening of the living encounter of the whole person with the person of Jesus Christ. The goals of catechesis are marked by a **Trinitarian-Christocentricity** rooted in the baptismal confession of faith.
- The **five tasks of catechesis** are identified as: leading to knowledge of the faith, initiating into the celebration of the Mystery, forming for life in Christ, teaching prayer, and introducing to community life. Formation in missionary discipleship permeates all five tasks of catechesis.
- The **seven sources of catechesis** are the Word of God in Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition, the Magisterium, the

liturgy, the testimony of the saint and martyrs, theology, Christian culture, and the “way of beauty,” or the *via pulchritudinis*.

Formation of catechists:

- By virtue of Baptism, every catechist is a: **witness of faith and keeper of the memory of God; a teacher and a mystagogue; an accompanier and educator.**
- A catechist is formed to be an expert in the **art of accompaniment**, in being a traveling companion who journeys with others in the process of formation and maturity in the Christian life in constant openness and docility to the Holy Spirit.
- The formation of catechists is a process that serves the *transformation* of a Christian, who internalizes the message of the Gospel under the guidance of the Holy Spirit within the community of the Church. Catechist formation is a deeply *transformative* process that goes beyond instruction, moral exhortation, and updating of pastoral techniques and methods. Catechist formation is an ongoing work of openness to the Holy Spirit who conforms the baptized to Jesus Christ and sends them to proclaim the Gospel and witness to its transforming power in their lives.
- Criteria for catechist formation include: a spirituality of mission and evangelization; integral formation; formation in the art of accompaniment; consistency among formative styles; cultivating the attitude of *docibilitas* and ongoing self-formation and growth in the Christian life; and the “dynamic of the laboratory” or “learning by doing” guided by mentors in formation.
- The *Directory for Catechesis* identifies three key interrelated dimensions of the formation of a catechist: formation in “being a catechist” and “*knowing-how to be*

with” others; formation in knowledge that includes biblical-theological formation and understanding of human beings and social contexts; and pedagogical and methodological formation that forms a catechist as an educator and communicator.

Pedagogy of the faith:

- Understanding the **process of catechesis** includes reflection on the pedagogy of the faith, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, and issues relating to methodology in catechesis.
- Divine revelation shapes the content and the methods of catechesis. Revelation unfolds in salvation history as a pedagogy, or method of instruction with distinctive features.
- The distinctive features of the pedagogy of God include: the divine initiative of love and mercy; the dialogue between God and Israel; meeting humanity in the concrete circumstances of their human condition to free them from sin; patient, progressive instruction that engages listening and fosters maturity in faith; and the teaching of wisdom adapted to the times and situations of the people.
- The divine pedagogy is manifested in the mystery of the Incarnation when the Archangel Gabriel announces to Mary that she will be the Mother of God. Mary’s response in her *fiat* is the model of Christian faith.
- The pedagogy of Jesus is seen throughout the Gospels as Jesus the Teacher speaks and instructs his disciples and followers. The distinctive features of the pedagogy of Jesus in the Gospels include: outreach and welcome of the poor, sinners, and the simple; proclamation of God’s kingdom as good news that liberates from sin; and the dialogue of salvation in parable, metaphors, and images that reveal the mystery of God’s love fulfilled in the Paschal Mystery of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection.
- The pedagogy of the Holy Spirit includes: the call to the community of the Church rooted in the communion of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; the call to respond in faith to God, who reveals and sustains with providential interventions that make the divine action real and present; the giving of the spirit of charity that permeates the Christian life; and the giving of courage to proclaim the Gospel with boldness in every time and place, even in the face of opposition and rejection.
- Catechesis inspired by the divine pedagogy expresses the following characteristics in presenting: God’s initiative of gratuitous love as the reason for all things; the universality of salvation; the centrality of Jesus Christ in a catechesis as a *pedagogy of the incarnation*; the call to conversion of faith; the progressive nature of Revelation inculturated in human cultures; the transcendence of the Word of God; the community experience of faith; and a pedagogy of signs in words and deeds with an inner unity.
- Catechesis draws on the following criteria to ensure that proclamation of the Gospel is inspired by the pedagogy of God: Trinitarian and Christological centrality of the message, salvation history, the primacy of grace and beauty, ecclesiality, and the unity and integrity of faith.
- *Evangelizing by educating* and *educating by evangelizing* requires a synthesis of theological and anthropological, divine, and human dimensions of life and faith. As an educational act, catechesis is shaped by the human and social sciences, the fields

of education, psychology, and the science and practice of human communication.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church*:

- The four “pillars” or parts of the *Catechism* offer a harmonious and symphonic synthesis of faith in the essential content of catechesis grounded in Sacred Scripture and Tradition.
- The theological-catechetical significance of the teachings of the *Catechism* is to make present the encounter with the living mystery of God revealed in Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit within the community of the Church.

Catechetical methodologies:

- In the unity of faith, catechesis employs a plurality of methods, shaped by the divine and human pedagogy. The variety of catechetical methods is a sign of the richness and dynamic vitality of faith. Among the factors that guide the selection of catechetical methods are: age and intellectual development; ecclesial and spiritual maturity; cultural and social conditions; and personal circumstances.
- Reflection on and transformation of human experience in the light of the Gospel is an essential path of catechetical methods. Catechesis, following the example of Jesus, illuminates and interprets the experiences of life in the light of the Gospel to renew and transform it with the sanctifying presence of the Holy Spirit.
- The language of art and beauty is a particularly effective method of catechesis in the visual, digital culture of today. The Church’s artistic heritage over two millennia provides witness to the power of images to invite, form, and transform believers through the “way of beauty.”

- The Christian community is the primary agent of catechesis.

Catechesis in the lives of persons:

- The Church is a *family of families* in which the family as a domestic Church plays vital formative, catechetical, and evangelizing roles. Areas of family catechesis include: catechesis *in* the family, catechesis *with* the family, and catechesis *of* the family.
- The Church accompanies her children through all the stages of life – childhood, adolescence, young adulthood, adulthood, old age – with adaptations to age, spiritual capacity, psychological maturity, social and cultural contexts, and lived experiences.
- Catechesis with disabled persons and the pastoral care of migrants, emigrants, the marginalized, and prisoners is a catechesis of mercy and compassion.
- Evangelization and catechesis are rooted in the primacy of the Word of God in the life and mission of the Church in the diocese, parish, Catholic school, and particular groups of the faithful.
- Mary, the Blessed Mother of God and Virgin of listening, is for the Church the model *par excellence* of listening, pondering, and living the Word of God. For Mary “kept all these things, pondering them in her heart.” (Luke 2:19) In imitation of Mary, the Church professes, “let it be done to me according to your word” (Luke 1:38). Mary places herself at the service of proclaiming God’s word, as she is its faithful guardian.

Catechesis in contemporary cultural contexts:

- The cultural and social dimensions of catechesis are intrinsic to pastoral ministry. A catechist reads the “signs of the times” as an essential concern of catechesis at

the service of the inculturation of the faith. The urban, rural, and traditional local cultures are specific contexts that shape the forms and tasks of “kerygmatic catechesis.”

- Catechesis takes seriously the theological, spiritual, and social significance of popular piety. Catechesis seeks to support the evangelizing power of popular piety as it celebrates the mysteries of the life of Jesus Christ in his Paschal Mystery, venerates Mary, the Mother of God, the saints, and the martyrs, and encourages pilgrimages to shrines, processions, and traditions of prayer such as the Rosary and devotions associated with sacramentals.
- The inculturation of catechesis takes place in ecumenical, inter-religious, and religiously pluralistic contexts and with new religious movements.
- Catechesis seeks to respond to the challenges and opportunities posed by the scientific mindset, the dominant digital culture in the context of the phenomenon of globalization, and bioethical issues of today.
- Catechesis seeks the inculturation of the Gospel in the digital continent. Catechists are to become an evangelizing presence on the digital continent by moving from providing religious information to accompaniment that offers a personal and true experience of God within the community of believers.
- Catechesis encourages popular piety as a living expression of faith and forms believers in care for our common home in an environmental spirituality.
- The Church’s preferential option for the poor is primarily a *theological* category rather than a cultural, sociological, political, or philosophical one. The Church’s

love for the poor and its journey with the poor is rooted in God’s love for the exiled and alienated and in Jesus’ constant love for the poor, as witnessed to in Sacred Scripture.

Inculturation of the Gospel:

- Inculturation of the faith is not to be reduced to adaptation to culture. Inculturation is a comprehensive, profound, and unfolding journey by which the Gospel penetrates into the depths of persons and communities to create a new synthesis with a particular culture. Catechesis has a great responsibility for the inculturation of the faith that brings the transformative power of the Gospel into the very heart of culture and cultures. Catechesis contributes in a specific and distinct way to the evangelizing mission of the Church by entering into relationship with the experience of persons in their ways of living and in their concrete lived experience of personal and community growth.
- The inculturation of faith through catechesis is shaped by these methodological considerations: knowledge of the culture of persons; recognition of the cultural dimensions of Gospel processes; invitation to true conversion of life that the Gospel effects within every culture; recognition of the seeds of the Gospel present in all cultures that transcend and, at times, purify culture; and care to ensure that new expressions of the Gospel are in harmony with the content of faith so as to foster ecclesial communion.

LEARN FROM THE DIRECTORY FOR CATECHESIS:

- Communion with Jesus Christ, who died and rose again, who is living and always present, is the ultimate end of all ecclesial

action and therefore of catechesis as well... Catechesis, an echo of Easter within the heart of humanity incessantly invites him to come out of himself in order to encounter the Living One, the one who gives life in its fullness. (426)

- Jesus Christ, Alpha and Omega, is the key of all history. He accompanies every person in order to reveal the love of God... From the pierced side of Jesus crucified, the Holy Spirit is poured out upon the world and the Church is born. (427)
- Evangelization, sustained by the Paraclete, aims at making all human beings participants in this great and life-giving mystery, without any discrimination whatsoever. Catechesis, an essential moment in this process, leads to the more conscious and intimate encounter with the Redeemer of humanity. (427)
- Always shining upon the Church's joyful task of evangelization is Mary, the Mother of the Lord, who in complete docility to the action of the Holy Spirit was able to listen to and welcome into herself the word of God, becoming "the purest realization of faith"...On the morning of Pentecost, the Mother of the Church presided with her prayer over the beginning of evangelization, under the action of the Holy Spirit, and today she continues to intercede so that the people of the present time may encounter Jesus Christ and, through faith in Him, be saved by receiving in fullness the life of the children of God. (428)
- Mary, Most Holy, shines as exemplary catechesis, pedagogue of evangelization and ecclesial model for the transmission of the faith. (428)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Share particular themes in the Directory for Catechesis that have relevance and impact on your catechetical ministry?
2. How has the reading and discussion of the twelve chapters of the Directory for Catechesis renewed your catechetical ministry? What areas of your ministry have been challenged through this study and group discussion?
3. Identify **one** theme or topic of which you have gained a deeper and renewed understanding through reading, reflecting on, and discussing the *Directory for Catechesis*?
4. What are concrete, consistent, and ongoing ways you will grow in daily reliance on the Holy Spirit, the soul of the evangelizing Church, and in closer communion with Jesus Christ, who stands at the heart of your catechetical ministry?
5. How does Mary, Mother of God and Mother of the Church, model teacher and catechist, guide your catechetical ministry?

GLOSSARY OF SELECT TERMS

Accompaniment

The art of journeying in faith with another in order to make present the Person of Jesus Christ and the saving Paschal Mystery of his life, death, and resurrection as the answer to his or her yearnings, questions, and concrete lived experience in the search for God.

Act of Faith

The human and personal response to God and His revelation, born from the love that desires an increase of knowledge of the Lord Jesus and initiation into the Christian life in one's particular human, social, and cultural context. The yes to Jesus Christ contains two dimensions: trusting personal abandonment to God (*fides qua*) and loving assent to all that God reveals (*fides quae*).

Apologetics

The theological discipline that presents the intelligibility or rationality of faith by offering, in the form of systematic arguments, the rational basis for the truths of revelation transmitted in Sacred Scripture and Tradition.

Catechesis

The ecclesial act arising from the missionary mandate of Jesus (cf. Matthew 28: 19 – 20) that aims to make the proclamation of Jesus' passion, death, and resurrection continually resound in the heart of every person, so that life may be transformed by God in the power of the Holy Spirit. A dynamic and complex reality at the service of the Word of God, catechesis is accompaniment, education, and formation in the faith and for the faith, an introduction to the celebration of the Mystery, illumination, and interpretation of human life and history.

Catechumenate

The formative process by which a person is formed, educated, and initiated into the Church's sacramental life, made up of liturgical rites and stages by which a person is conformed to Jesus Christ as a member of the Christian community.

Christocentricity

The center of the Church's belief, life and pastoral ministry is the Person of Jesus Christ, who reveals the love of the Father in the power of the Holy Spirit and who continues his saving work in the sacraments of the Church. Christocentricity in catechesis means that at "the heart of catechesis we find, in essence, a Person, the Person of Jesus of Nazareth" (*Catechesi Tradendae*, 5).

Creed

Concise summary of beliefs in the form of a profession of faith rooted in the Trinitarian and Christological foundations of Christian faith.

Dialogue

In catechesis, dialogue is a conversation of openness, respect, and mutuality rooted in the dialogue of salvation that is divine Revelation. God's free and gratuitous initiative of love calls forth an intimate relationship with humanity in the incarnation of his Son, Jesus Christ, who reconciles us to friendship with God.

Digital culture

The web of human relationships, information, and values that exist in digital forms of mass communication and social media.

Ecumenism

The movement toward greater unity among Christians in the areas of common faith, witness, and charity.

Eucharist

From the Greek word *eucharistein*, meaning act of thanksgiving. The sacrament of the Eucharist completes Christian initiation. Jesus instituted the Eucharistic sacrifice at the Last Supper to perpetuate the sacrifice of his cross for all ages, entrusting to the Church a memorial of his death and resurrection as a sacrament of love, a sign of unity, and bond of charity, a Paschal banquet that nourishes the faithful now and for eternal life. The Eucharist is the "source and summit of the Church's life."

Evangelization

Making present and announcing Jesus Christ and the saving events of his life, death, and resurrection as the revelation of God's love in the power of the Holy Spirit. A rich, dynamic, and complex process that is the "grace and vocation proper to the Church, her deepest identity. The Church exists in order to evangelize" (*Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 14).

First proclamation

Kerygmatic catechesis or *first proclamation* is the announcement of the Gospel to elicit conversion. In the context of the mission *ad gentes*, the first proclamation is understood in a chronological sense as the stage of pre-evangelization. In a second meaning, the *first proclamation* is understood in a qualitative, not chronological sense, as the principal proclamation that must be heard over and over again, announced one way or another throughout the process of catechesis, at every level and moment. The first proclamation is the sharing of life that comes from God and communicating in word and personal witness the joy of meeting and living as a disciple of Jesus.

Grace

The free and undeserved gift that God gives to all to help and strengthen us to respond to our vocation to become children of God.

Incarnation

The historical fact that the Son of God, the second divine Person of the Blessed Trinity, assumed human nature and became man for the salvation of humanity. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is both true God and true man.

Inculturation

A comprehensive, gradual, and profound journey in which the light of the Gospel permeates the depths of persons, peoples, and cultures. Catechesis serves inculturation by entering into relationship with persons, with their ways of living and language, and with their processes of personal and community growth so as to bring the power of the Gospel into the heart of culture.

Kerygmatic catechesis

A catechesis that is an entering more deeply into the *kerygma*, the core Gospel message at the center of which is the active figure of Jesus Christ and his Paschal Mystery. It is simultaneously an act of proclamation and the content of the proclamation itself.

Liturgy

From the Greek word for a "public work" or service done in the name of or on behalf of the people. In the liturgy, Jesus Christ, High Priest, continues the work of our redemption through the Church's celebration of His Paschal Mystery by which we are saved.

Magisterium

The teaching office of the Church that gives authentic interpretation of the word of God in its written form (Sacred Scripture) or in the form of Tradition. The living Magisterium ensures fidelity to the teaching of the Apostles in faith and morals and ensures the unity of faith.

Mystagogy

Liturgical catechesis that aims to initiate a person into the Mystery of Jesus Christ by moving from the visible to the invisible, from the sign to the reality signified, from the sacraments to the mysteries. In the context of the baptismal catechumenate, *mystagogy* is the period of reflection on the experience of the sacraments after the reception of the Sacraments of Initiation by adults.

Paschal Mystery

The work of Jesus Christ for our redemption accomplished in his Passion, death, Resurrection, and Ascension. The paschal mystery is celebrated in the liturgy of the Church and its saving effects are communicated in the sacraments.

Pedagogy of God

The manner in which God teaches humanity through the history of salvation and is revealed as a merciful father, a teacher, and wise guide. Catechetical methodologies are shaped by the pedagogy of God, the pedagogy of Jesus, and the pedagogy of the Holy Spirit experienced in the pedagogy of the Church.

Popular piety

Popular expressions of faith and devotion to God that express and reflect the inculturation of the Gospel in a particular time and place.

Religious pluralism

The religious, social, and cultural contexts in which people exist within a plurality of religious traditions.

Synod

A meeting of bishops to discuss the doctrinal and pastoral needs of the Church. Synods may be universal, regional, or local.

Tradition

The living transmission of the message of the Gospel in the Church that continues the preaching of the Apostles and the written word of God in Sacred Scripture. The theological, liturgical, disciplinary, and devotional traditions of local communities of faith both contain and may be distinguished from the apostolic Tradition.

Via pulchritudinis

The “way of beauty” in which the truths of faith take the form of the beautiful in the Church’s rich artistic heritage of sacred art, sacred music, sacred architecture, and other forms of artistic expressions. The “way of beauty” is a path and a source for catechesis in the contemporary globalized digital culture.

Witness

A personal and lived sharing of faith, in word and deed, that reveals the Gospel as an encounter with Jesus Christ and a way of life lived in the mystery of His life, death, and resurrection by which we are reconciled to God in the power of the Holy Spirit. Witness is a fundamental dimension of all catechetical activities.