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**CATECHETICAL
LEADER**



Balancing the Pastoral Year

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*Planning for the Pastoral Year
Adolescent Catechesis and the NDC*

CATECHETICAL UPDATE:

Catechesis in an Age of Terrorism

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GETTING TO KNOW OUR NEW BEST FRIEND

Anne Comeaux



Those of us who had read at least two drafts of the *National Directory for Catechesis (NDC)* were delighted to hear in December 2004 that the Vatican had given it the *recognitio* it required. When the first copies started rolling off the presses in May of this year, we were eager to read and digest it so that we could begin implementation as soon as possible.

As our archdiocesan catechetical staff met to work on our own understanding and ownership of the document, it became clear that the document, while very readable, has depth, challenges and affirmations. We found that we had all read it with different “eyes” depending on what our particular experiences, responsibilities and interests have been. Those who have responsibility

aspect of ministry. The document speaks of the role of catechesis in youth ministry, in Catholic schools, in liturgical ministries, in ministries of social justice and every other aspect of church activity.

NCCL has for many years been a collaborator with other national organizations that are leaders in their fields: National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry (NFCYM), National Organization of Catechists for Hispanics (NOCH), National Association for Lay Ministry (NALM), National Association of Catholic Family Life Ministers (NACFLM), National Association of Catechetical Media Professionals (NACMP), Small Christian Communities (SCC) and other related groups. Representatives from many of these national groups have a voice and place at our Representative Council meetings. We have worked closely

Perhaps the most challenging aspect of the NDC is the charge to integrate the understanding and appreciation of catechesis into every aspect of ministry.

for catechist formation were affirmed in the work that they have been doing. We are a very multicultural archdiocese so the interweaving of references and understanding of that reality in the *NDC* was helpful and very much appreciated. The explicit areas of content for catechesis were something we all knew but it is helpful to have those things in print as a ready reference. The continued relationship to evangelization and to worship, which was stated and emphasized in the *General Directory for Catechesis*, is so much appreciated and valued by all of us. Numerous references to those being catechized who have special physical, mental and emotional needs are especially applauded. All in all this is such a valuable tool for our ministries at every level.

Perhaps the most interesting and valuable, and quite possibly the most challenging, aspect of the *NDC* is the charge to integrate the understanding and appreciation of catechesis into every



with the Bishops’ Conference Evangelization Office as well as the Department of Education and, most recently, the Committee on Catechesis. These are all ministries that we “bump into” on a regular basis while we are about our catechetical endeavors. Reading about these ministries in the *NDC* is a great affirmation of what we have done and we look forward to enriching those relationships in the time to come.

During the coming months, as we do intentional work to make everyone in our parishes and dioceses come to an understanding and appreciation of our newest catechetical document, we will come to have it as part of our “bones” as we did *Sharing the Light of Faith* in years past. This will be our guide and our reference. Let us embrace the *National Directory for Catechesis* as our new friend who will be around for a long time as our guide for the journey. ■

DEALING WITH HARD REALITIES

Neil A. Parent

Responding to violence in non-violent ways is not only our obligation as disciples of Jesus; it also makes eminent sense.



As I write these words, news of the second bombings in London on July 21 still echoes in the media. While, fortunately, no one was killed or seriously injured, the most recent blasts have produced a palpably unsettling effect. Living as I do in the shadow of the nation's capitol, I detect little seedlings of anxiety sprouting in some of my friends and colleagues. "It's going to happen here, you know," one said to me recently. "It is only a matter of time."

I wish I could dismiss their concerns as so much emotional overload from recent events, but I know better. I already lost a dear friend and neighbor on 9/11, and I know that Washington is too symbolic a hot spot for future terrorists to ignore.

Six to eight months ago, when we decided to do a feature on catechesis in an age of terrorism, we knew that the issue was important, but we didn't know that that terrorism would be back so emphatically in the front pages. Indeed, just this weekend there was a major terrorist strike in Egypt, killing over 80 people. And, of course, scores of innocent victims die daily of bombings in Iraq.

OUR RESPONSE TO TERRORISM

Terrorism is now a reality that we must learn to deal with in this country. And as Catholic ministers, we must learn to deal with it specifically as part of our catechetical responsibilities. In this issue we feature two writers particularly qualified to help us tackle the thorny issues we face in going about our ministry in these difficult times.

Rev. Robert Friday, author of *Adults Making Responsible Moral Decisions*, one of NCCL's most popular books used for adult catechesis in the '80s and '90s, examines the moral implications of catechesis in an era of terrorism. Dr. Joseph White, a psychologist and popular commentator on catechesis, explores the emotional and attitudinal dimensions of catechesis in an age of terrorism. Each author in his own way emphasizes the demands placed on us by a belief in the oneness of the human family and the overarching need for empathy, compassion, and forgiveness.

Views such as these were recently ridiculed in a public address by a high government official as being soft and ineffective in the face of terrorism. But in point of fact, responding to violence in non-violent ways is not only our obligation as disciples of Jesus; it also makes eminent sense. As Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., observed, "That old law about 'an eye for an eye' leaves everybody blind." There are no winners in an exchange of violence.

This is where good catechesis about terrorism begins. It starts with building an understanding that we are all God's children, and that God loves us all. There are no exceptions. This doesn't mean that there are not some of God's children who do terrible things and cause others great harm. But it does mean that we must never forget that they remain God's children and must be responded to accordingly, even in the most awful of circumstances.

MAKING PLANNING REAL

In this issue we also look at the challenges of planning for the pastoral year. Three authors, Bishop Sylvester Ryan of Monterey, Leland Nagel, diocesan director of Total Catholic Education in Green Bay, and Rev. David Loftus, consultant for adult education for the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, each casts a different light on the planning process. Bishop Ryan, who served for six years as NCCL's Episcopal Advisor, asserts that "the role of the diocesan bishop is to articulate a vision for faith formation and ministry and a call to accountability to those he entrust with its implementation."

This is one of the best statements I have read of the bishop's role as catechetical leader. It calls the bishop to be proactive in setting the direction for the diocese's catechetical ministry and to stay involved to see that his goals are being effectively implemented. This is what makes for a good diocesan team and for effective ministry.

REAL YOUNG PEOPLE

Finally, Dan Mulhall's article on adolescent catechesis and the *National Catechetical Directory* marks the first of a series of articles that will focus on the topic of adolescent catechesis. The article stems from a joint project on adolescent catechesis sponsored by NCCL, the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry (NFCYM) and the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA). Mulhall serves as a consultant to the project from the USCCB and kindly agreed to author the inaugural article. Each of the articles will appear simultaneously in *Catechetical Leader*, in NCEA's *Momentum*, and on NFCYM's electronic publication posted on its website.

I couldn't help but feel that Mulhall's children, as he describes them in the opening paragraph, reflect the spectrum of faith and religious involvement of today's Catholic adolescents and young adults. As the series progresses, we hope to shed light on how we can best approach young people in these situations. Stay tuned. ■

Diocesan Planning from the Foundation Up

by Sylvester D. Ryan, *Bishop of Monterey*

The role of the bishop is to articulate a vision for faith formation and ministry and a call to accountability.



All planning builds on an awareness and appreciation of the people and cultures of one's diocese. The two celebrations of the Rite of Election, held at the beginning of Lent in two locations in the Diocese of Monterey in California, will bring together in a ritual way the essential elements of our planning process for the entire pastoral year of 2005-2006. We anticipate that next year approximately three hundred catechumens and candidates, with their sponsors, will present themselves for acceptance. One critical element will be the bi-lingual celebration—in Spanish and English—of the Sunday vespers that serves as the context for our celebration of the elect.

KNOWING THE PLACE

The Diocese of Monterey consists of four counties comprising what we call Central California: San Luis Obispo, Monterey, San Benito and Santa Cruz counties. With the Pacific Ocean to the west, our borders touch those of four other dioceses: San Francisco, San Jose, Fresno, and Los Angeles. Interestingly enough, our total population is not yet a million people, while only an hour and fifteen minutes away from Monterey, the city of San Jose alone boasts more than a million people.

Our Catholic population stands at 198,000 in our latest census, with forty-six parishes, fifty-two active diocesan priests, twelve religious priests in pastoral ministry, 120 religious sisters including two contemplative communities, and four deacons. We have seven of the twenty-one California missions and a growing Hispanic population (primarily of Mexican origins) that comprises a solid third of our Catholic people.

BUILDING THE FOUNDATION

Our year's planning is based upon our previous history and our vision of faith formation. The role of the bishop is to articulate a vision for faith formation and ministry and a call to accountability to those he entrusts with its implementation. Approximately four years ago our diocese restructured and remodeled our faith formation processes into a model based explicitly on two documents, *The General Directory For Catechesis* and *Our Hearts Were Burning Within Us, A Pastoral Plan for Adult Faith Formation in the United States*.

In an effort to model collaborative ministry, we formed the Office of Faith Formation that includes a director, and the directors and staffs of catechetical ministries, Hispanic ministry, migrant ministries, parish life, youth and young adult ministries, campus ministries, respect



*All of us who are invested in this planning task must maintain
the listening heart we so often pray for.*

life/family life, and an emerging department of the permanent deaconate. This planning was a collaborative project of various ministries of the diocese, called together to articulate a vision of evangelization and stewardship.

Evangelization is the heart and soul of this enterprise. We hoped to bring into sharper focus the challenge of Pope John Paul II in *Catechesis Tradendae*:

The Church has always considered catechesis one of her primary tasks, for before Christ ascended to his Father after the Resurrection; he gave the Apostles as his final command—to make disciples of all nations and to teach them to observe all he had commanded. (No.1)

We also combined our energies toward the critical importance of adult faith formation as expressed in the 1997 *General Directory for Catechesis*:

It is useful to remember that Catechesis for adults, since it deals with persons who are capable of adherence that is fully responsible, must be considered the chief form of catechesis. All the other forms which are indeed always necessary are in some way oriented to it. (No. 59)

The recently approved *National Directory for Catechesis* (2005) affirms this by saying:

The renewal of Catechesis in the United States has included the recovery of some of the evangelizing enthusiasm of the early Church, a revived interest in the writings and teachings of the Fathers of the Church, and the restoration of the Catechumenate.” (No. 2)

I am sure everyone agrees that the process of planning the pastoral year must start from and merge with the Church’s liturgical year. It is an essential way to acknowledge the Second Vatican Council’s *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*:

The Liturgy is the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed; at the same time it is the fountain from which all her power flows. (No. 10)

BUILDING ON A THEME

Appropriately, then, the planning for the pastoral year 2005-2006 began with the theme of our previous year, “The Year of the Eucharist.” We had set a goal for ourselves to work on ways to promote a greater fidelity of our people to Sunday Eucharist. We especially had in mind the families of our religious education students, our Catholic school students and our confirmation candidates. Throughout the entire past year, from the Feast of the Body and Blood of Christ to

the present, we intensified and diversified our catechetical efforts towards this goal.

As bishop of the diocese I had written a pastoral letter on the Eucharist, printed over a period of three months in our diocesan newspaper, on the meaning of Sunday Eucharist for the church and Catholic family life. The pastoral letter was reinforced by three complete study days on the theology and celebration of liturgy—for our Catholic High School religion teachers and for the entire faculties of our thirteen elementary schools. These and other approaches to the Eucharist were developed from dialogues initiated with a select group of teachers along with our faith formation directors, and were largely coordinated by them.

BUILDING UP, BUILDING OUT

We have continued our planning for the coming year with further conversations on a number of different fronts.

We have added confirmation preparation to our agenda for adults, continuing our previous two years’ practice of inviting adult baptized Catholics who have not been confirmed but have received the Eucharist. We will offer diocesan-wide instructions for confirmation in both English and Spanish in our four regions. The Office of Worship has coordinated the liturgies for these confirmations and will continue to do so this pastoral year.

The largest segment of our planning time and energy has been aimed at the training of teachers and ministers: liturgical ministers, especially lectors; Eucharistic ministers; confirmation and RCIA teams. We have given the highest priority to the training of religious education teachers through our basic and master catechist courses. *Echoes of Faith* remains a critical tool in our certification of catechists and Catholic school teachers.

Another important planning task deals with the sacrament of confirmation for our youth. We have a two-year program of preparation for our young people and the normal time for confirmation is the sophomore year in high school. Our plan includes meetings with the confirmation teams of all the parishes to assure consistency in content, expectations, and practices for our young people receiving the sacrament. Parish confirmation liturgies are coordinated with the Office of Worship and the majority of the confirmations are celebrated in the Easter and Pentecost season.

Members of our faith formation team have met personally with the pastors and education staffs in each of our parishes to ascertain their

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Tending the Vineyard— Attending to the Holiness

The vineyard of the Lord has to be tended in real time and in real space.

by David Loftus

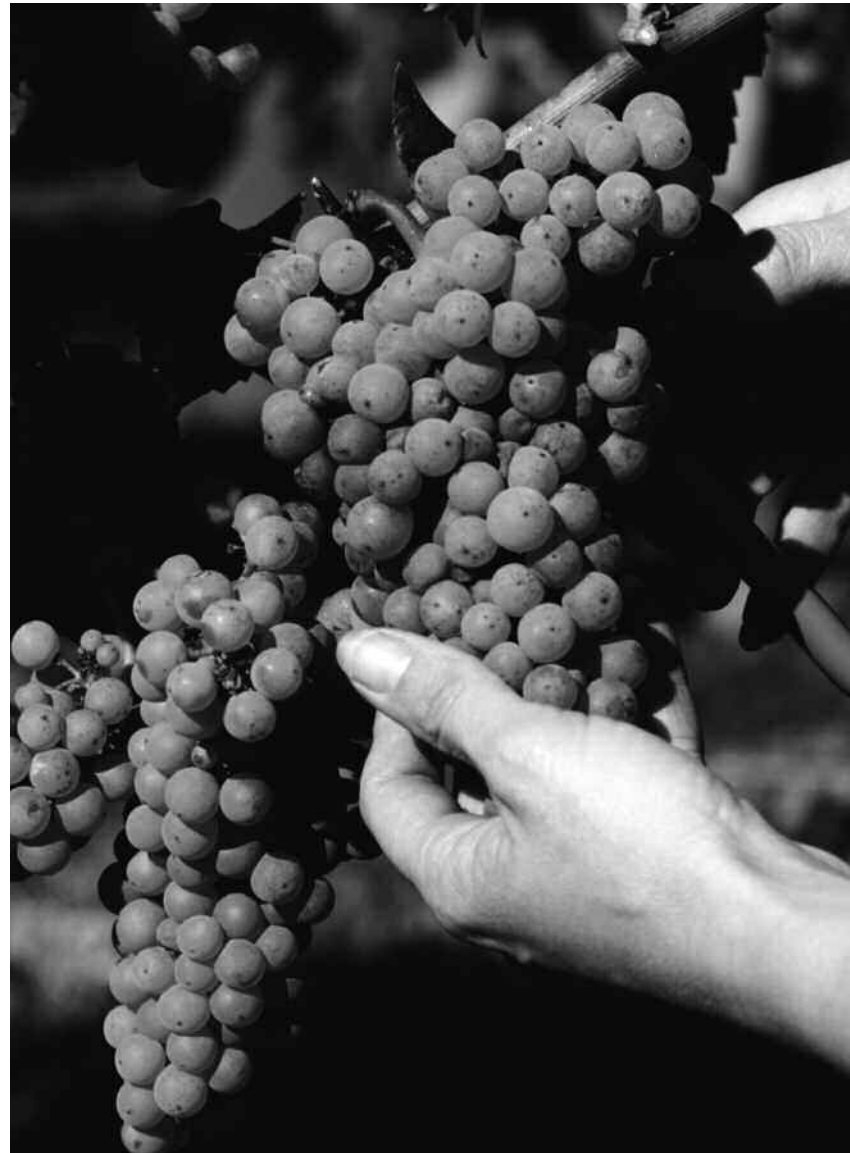


With oil still dripping from my hands, and basking in the glow of being newly ordained, I was invited by the pastor to be responsible for the annual calendaring meeting of the parish. I still remember the foolish flush of pride I felt. That meeting was an experience that I will probably never forget. It seemed as though demons dwelt beneath the skin of those who gathered around the table that evening, and this was their one night in the year where they could roam unfettered.

Ministries, ostensibly about building up the Reign of God, and ministers, all of whom are in service of the Kingdom of God, can transform themselves into aggressive competitors staking claim to territory and prominence on the calendar. Who gets to use the parish hall on a Thursday evening between 6:30 and 8:30? Can we squeeze a pre-baptismal catechesis for parents between the food-pantry (ending at 5 pm) and the parent-teacher meeting scheduled for 7 pm? In the course of a meeting to plan the parish calendar, gentle retirees who barely whisper in the course of normal conversation can be transformed into cunning and loudly vociferous forces with which there is no reckoning. Make no mistake that what is true of such parish experiences has parallels on the diocesan level—even if it is sometimes more subtle.

WHERE THE IDEAL MEETS THE REAL

When Saint Augustine contemplated the sacred mysteries of time, he would never have foreseen how complex an enterprise it is to develop (seemingly) simple parish calendars. An annual—and often dreaded—event in every church community in the country is the parish meeting during which the community negotiates its calendar for the year



ahead. And *negotiates* seems to be the operative word for many, as facilities (and people) are finite resources that cannot seem to keep up with the ever greater demands we place on them. We can be tempted to forget that God is present in time and in space, and keeps time and space holy.

In an ideal world we can all sit down at the table, all aware that we all participate in the one ministry of Jesus Christ, in service of the Kingdom of God. Consequently, in the ideal world, we are aware of how all the efforts of the various ministries interact and support, complement and build up each other. In the ideal world, there is little effort expended on negotiating the calendar for the year, because our energies are all in service of the Kingdom. Of course, what I dream of here is the calendar meeting that takes place in the heavenly kingdom! Between this moment and that of the eschaton, I must content myself with the realities of my day, and admit that there are accommodations that must be made. Values and principles present priorities between which I must choose.

COMPLEX TRADEOFFS

In my limited experience in catechetical ministry, I have come to appreciate the incredible sacrifices of time and energy that people make. Time spent at church is often time taken from family or the work which supports the family. The bishops of the United States Catholic Conference, in the recently published *National Directory for Catechesis*, recognize this reality as a principle challenge to the ministry of catechesis:

The frantic pace of life caused by economic and social expectations leads to serious time constraints for many people's participation in catechetical programs and the life of the Church. Since so much time is programmed for other activities, there is often little or no time left for participation in Church-related activities. The way people, including Catholic people, choose to live their lives today simply does not allow them the same free time that they once had. Family and other social commitments are often arranged so that attendance at Mass or participation in catechetical programs becomes very difficult.

I would suggest that it is a foolish catechetical leader who would not be attentive to this challenge playing out in their own lives and in the lives of those dear to them.

In 2001, as I prepared to join the staff at the archdiocesan office of religious education, the coordinating team at a first meeting calendared dates for the program through 2004. At another meeting that same month, I was with a group planning dates through 2008. I invested in an electronic calendar that would help me plan up to eight years into my future, fully aware that I could actually be dead within the week (and secretly wondering if perhaps it mightn't be preferable).

Those of us involved in catechetical ministry live with much of our lives calendared for us. We assent to this because we trust that the ministry we do is in service of the church whose mission is the mission of Jesus Christ, and we commit ourselves to laboring in the vineyard of the Lord.

But the vineyard of the Lord has to be tended in real time and in real space. There are very practical considerations involved. In Los Angeles I have come to a deeper appreciation for July 1, as it marks a new fiscal year for us, meaning a fresh budget and access to funds that on June 30 didn't exist. Depleted office supplies can be replenished and required resources for the coming year's programs can be ordered and paid for. For good and for ill, our calendaring tends to revolve around certain dates in the year. Just as taxpayers we reference April 15, so as liturgists we acknowledge the first Sunday of Advent, so as catechists we acknowledge September as the beginning of the new "pastoral" year.

I often hear stories told by the ancients of my people. They tell of a time long past, when parishes, schools and catechetical programs would go into a time of minimal activity for two months of the year, from mid-June through mid-August—yet another reason to yearn for the 'good old days'! The reality is that the pastoral year runs from September through August, and this brings both blessings and challenges (which may also be blessings, albeit of a different kind).

THE MOTHER OF ALL CALENDARS

A colleague of mine, whom I admire as the office time-management guru, insists that it is insane for a person to keep more than one calendar. (It makes sense to me. If I try to keep multiple calendars it leads to chaos rather than order.) Another friend keeps what I have come to understand to be the only calendar of meaning in many people's lives—the refrigerator-door calendar on which calendars of the various members of the household are consolidated. If it's not on my friend's refrigerator door calendar, it simply is not happening in the universe of that particular household. Both friends have some insights to offer when it comes to the "pastoral calendar."

The "pastoral calendar," it seems to me, arises from the amalgamation of a number of different calendars. Calendars for the academic year, the liturgical year and the civic year are all blended together, and indeed there may be other calendars in the mix. The blending, however, is often far from smooth and we often struggle to preserve the values and principles which are enshrined in each of these sometimes disparate calendars. It should not come as a surprise to us that our stress levels might vary as the blending of the calendars challenge us. However, by being attentive to the competing interests, we might be able to mitigate the stress somewhat.

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Catechesis Is Not a Field of Dreams

Planning and the Pastoral Year

by Leland Nagel



Look at a calendar. When does a pastoral year begin? It's clear that it is not with the fiscal year, which is determined in light of budgets. Nor with the liturgical year in late November; that's too late. Despite the fact that year-round schooling exists, the traditional agrarian model is operative in marking the beginning of the pastoral year. The following ideas shed some light on how to start it and how to end it before you start again.

Catechesis really never ends. In the summer there are camps, service projects, mission trips and vacation Bible school and Sunday Eucharist is celebrated. All these activities are "...enriched when the word of God shines forth in the light of the Church, especially in the lives of the saints and in the Christian witness of the faithful" (*NDC*, page 54). These catechetical opportunities should be available all year so that "on the practical level, we have the witness of American Catholics serving those most in need, educationally, socially, materially, and spiritually" (*Go and Make Disciples*, No. 59).



Your plan should be completed before summer begins. If not, air conditioning is a must.

In reality, catechesis begins before the previous pastoral year ends. Again and again we are reminded, “Catechesis is a responsibility of the entire Christian community” (*GDC*, No. 220). You will need to address the following steps in the course of the pastoral year:

KNOW YOUR GOALS

In making the sign of the cross, (touching our head, our heart, and reaching out from shoulder to shoulder) we are reminded of the old catechism definition of why God made us, “To know Him (head), to love Him (heart), and to serve Him (reaching out from shoulder to shoulder). Again and again the *National Directory* reminds us that we need...” to bring others to know Christ, his message, and his way of life” (*NDC*, page 17). The *NDC* states,

Catechesis aims to bring about in the believer an ever more mature faith in Jesus Christ, a deeper knowledge and love of his person and message, and a firm commitment to follow him. In many situations, however, catechesis must also be concerned with arousing initial faith and sustaining the gradual conversion to complete adherence to Jesus Christ for those who are on the threshold of faith. With God’s grace, catechesis develops initial faith, nourishes the Christian life and continually unfolds the mystery of Christ until the believer willingly becomes his disciple (*NDC*, pp. 54-55).

The object of catechesis is to be one with Jesus Christ. At the heart is the person of Christ. We want everyone to fall intimately in love with Jesus, so that “Jesus Christ himself is always the first and last point of reference in catechesis...” (*NDC*, page 56).

The goals of the parish, which take into account the diversity in age and ability, and the cultural, racial, ethnic, social, and economic conditions present in the parish (*NDC*, page 256), should be consistent with the ideals of the pastor, the thoughts of the pastoral team, and the goals proclaimed by the bishop and his staff. Just as the mission of the parish flows from the mission of the diocese, and the diocese from the mission of the church, catechesis in the parish needs to flow from the diocesan mission, from the *National Directory*, and from the *General Directory*. One must never forget that “...more and more, adult catechesis is understood to be the chief form of catechesis and is given priority in catechetical planning” (*NDC*, page 11).

Establish goals (no more than five) that are simple and clear. Then set objectives: Ask, “If there were only one thing we did and did it consistently so well that it would make a difference in reaching our goals, what would that be?” You may ask that question five times—once for each goal.

PASTORAL YEAR STEPS

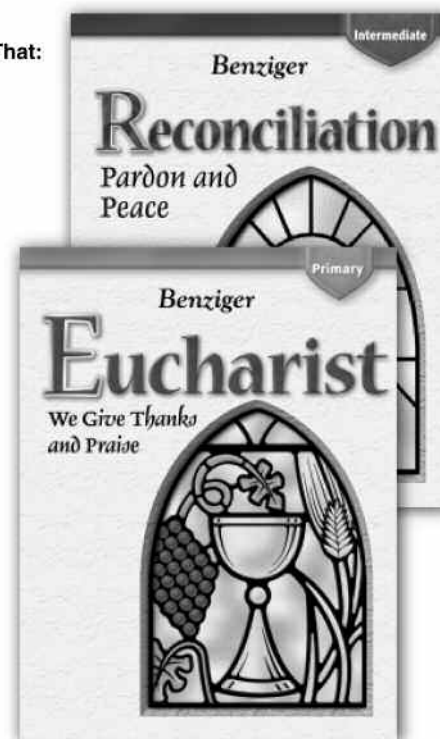
1. Know your goals
2. Create a plan
3. Call forth catechists
4. TRAIN catechists
5. Invite all to continue to grow in their faith
6. Catechize all ages within the whole community
7. Involve the whole church
8. Utilize sacramental moments
9. Evaluate
10. Begin again with number one

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Adolescent Catechesis and the *NDC*: It's about Discipleship

by Daniel S. Mulhall

The NDC takes what has been said in other church documents and puts it together in such a way that a new picture emerges.



I'm fortunate enough to be the father of three children: two young adults and one in his early teens. My oldest, a daughter, actively participates in parish life, attends Mass, and serves as a catechist for eighth graders in our parish. My second child, a boy, is my "atheist in training." He has been "allergic" to anything to do with church since he was a very small child. We get small glimmers of faith from time to time, but nothing sustainable yet. Our youngest attends Mass willingly, catechetical sessions/youth group unwillingly, and is basically not into churchy things. I don't know if he's just in that "not interested in anything" stage, if he has been corrupted by his older brother, or if he just hasn't been touched by the Spirit yet.

As you might guess, I am very concerned about whether or not my children will have faith. So, for me, the question about adolescent catechesis and the *National Directory for Catechesis (NDC)* is more than a professional exercise. In this article I will provide a look at what the *NDC* says about adolescent catechesis, and offer comments on

how the *Directory's* guidelines affect the current practice of adolescent catechesis. Before moving to the section of the *NDC* that addresses the topic of adolescent catechesis, I first will address the broader context in which adolescent catechesis operates.

THE CONTEXT

The *NDC* is organized into ten chapters, along with an introduction and conclusion. Most of what pertains directly to adolescent catechesis appears in chapter 7, "Catechizing the People of God in Diverse Settings," in section 48 D. What is said specifically about those who catechize adolescents is found in chapter 8, "Those Who Catechize." However, what is said in these two chapters about adolescent catechesis can only be understood by what has been written in the intro and previous six chapters. So, before we focus on adolescents and those who catechize them, I'll offer a brief overview of the content of those previous chapters.

Quoting *Catechesi Tradendae*, the *NDC* notes that catechesis is:

“the totality of the Church’s efforts to make disciples, to help men believe that Jesus is the Son of God so that believing they might have life in his name, and to educate and instruct them in this life, thus building up the body of Christ. (CT 1-2, see *NDC* page 6)

Adolescent catechesis, then, describes our efforts to make American teenagers into disciples who believe in Jesus, who know what he taught, and who have been integrated into the faith life of the parish community and that of the wider church. The rest of the *NDC* explains how we should go about creating these young disciples.

- **Chapter 1** helps us to understand that we must understand the culture of teens and how they are influenced by the wider American and global cultures.
- **Chapter 2** establishes the meaning and context of catechesis: our challenge is to proclaim the Good News of Christ to young people so that they will hear and understand it, and that they will come to believe and live what it says. The *NDC* calls these processes “evangelization” and “inculturation.”
- **Chapter 3** describes the elements of the Christian message that are to be presented to young people in such a way that they come to know and love the Lord Jesus.
- **Chapter 4** looks at the ways in which the Christian message can be presented. Special attention is given to God’s self-revelation in Christ through the Holy Spirit as the norm by which all catechetical methods should be judged. No one method is recommended over any other. We are to use the one that works best at any given time to bring young people to Christ.
- **Chapter 5** describes the relationship between catechesis and liturgy. This raises the question: How can we, through catechesis, help young people understand the church’s prayer and worship and become active participants in it?
- **Chapter 6** presents almost a primer on the challenges that young people, living in modern American culture, must overcome if they are to live out the Christian message. What must we do through catechesis to prepare them to overcome these challenges?

Now that we have a brief understanding of how the *NDC* applies to adolescent catechesis, we can examine in greater detail what the *Directory* says specifically about catechizing adolescents and the responsibilities and training needed by those who catechize them.

ADOLESCENT CATECHESIS

Chapter 7 gives principles, guidelines, and criteria for presenting the Gospel to different groups in diverse settings. The chapter begins with guidance about catechizing adults, elderly adults, and young adults before it gets to adolescents in section 48D (see page 199).

Much of the material that appears in this section is taken (either as a direct citation or in reference) from the 1997 U.S. Bishops document *Renewing the Vision (RTV)*. This is significant for several reasons. For one, the *NDC* reaffirms the direction for working with youth as expressed in *RTV*. For another, the *NDC* makes clear that youth ministry is an essential aspect of the parish’s catechetical process and (as detailed in chapter 8) names youth ministers as catechists and catechetical leaders. Both of these results will affect how adolescent catechesis is carried out both in schools and in parish programs.

Here’s what chapter 7 says about catechizing adolescents:

1. Every individual has the responsibility both to grow personally in faith and to contribute to others’ growth in faith.
2. Catechesis takes into account the circumstances and cultures of those being catechized; there is but “one saving Word—Jesus Christ—but that word can be spoken in many different ways” (*NDC* 186).
3. Growth in faith is related to human development and passes through many stages; everyone develops in different ways.
4. Growing in faith means growing in communion with the Trinity through active participation in the sacraments, prayer, and generous service to others.
5. Catechesis must take into consideration all the human factors in order to present the Gospel message in vital and compelling ways; catechesis is a permanent school of the faith that follows major stages in life.
6. Adolescent Catechesis
 - Catechesis for adolescents should
 - take into account their physical, social and psychological development
 - present the words and example of Jesus and the saints in ways that appeal to young people
 - present Jesus as the Son of God, friend, guide, and model to be admired and imitated
 - present the basic content of Jesus’ revelation
 - present the rational bases for faith, the coherent truth of the faith, and the relationship between the two
 - help young people to articulate the beliefs and teachings of the church and to apply them to their lives
 - present other areas of Catholic belief including Scripture, the church, worship and sacraments, and the principles of Christian morality
 - help young people experience a deeper relationship with God through prayer and service



- include active participation in worship and community life with adult believers
- include ongoing formation and regular reception of the sacraments of Eucharist and penance
- include catechesis for the sacrament of confirmation (depending on when the sacrament is celebrated in each diocese)
- vocation discernment
- Effective approaches for adolescent catechesis include catechesis on special themes, group projects and activities, membership in youth associations and groups, retreat, and spiritual direction.
- Young people, fully initiated into the church, are to be given adequate opportunities to serve the church through its liturgical ministries.
- Adolescent catechesis is most effective when integrated into a comprehensive program of pastoral ministry for youth that includes formation in community life, evangelization, learning about and active participation in justice and service, leadership development, pastoral care, and prayer and worship.
- Adolescent catechesis is to help young people become disciples of Christ in the world, draw young people into responsible participation in the life, mission, and work of the church, and to foster total personal and spiritual growth.
- Catechesis for adolescents should include
 - the study of the Catholic faith and how faith develops
 - liturgy and prayer experiences
 - practical skills for living the Catholic faith today
 - a shared dialogue between the life of the adolescent and the wisdom of the Catholic Church
 - learning methods and activities (including the arts and music) that engage and help young people explore religious concepts and ideas
 - group participation (warm, trust-building, accepting, caring)
 - real-life applications of learning
 - programs that promote family values and encourage family participation
 - activities that promote a Christian attitude toward human sexuality
 - the recognition and celebration of the church's unity and diversity
 - a personal invitation to young people to consider a vocation to the priesthood or religious life

- instruction on ecumenism and the church's relationship with other religions

The *NDC* also offers a few suggestions aimed specifically at youths in middle school and junior high school

- Catechesis for middle and junior high school children should help them to
 - observe, explore, interpret, and evaluate their experiences in the light of faith
 - think of themselves as Christians and to act like a disciple of Christ according to the norms of faith and love
 - interiorize authentic Christian values and to make Christian decisions in today's society
 - develop a desire to grow in faith through study, prayer, and living as a Catholic

YOUTH MINISTRY

In chapter 8, the *NDC* addresses those who are responsible for providing adolescent catechesis. Ultimately, in the parish, this responsibility resides with the pastor and his designated catechetical leader. But the youth minister is also included in this section. For young people in Catholic schools, the responsibility rests with the principal, teachers, and the campus minister. Here is a brief summary of what the *Directory* says about the youth minister and campus minister's responsibility for catechesis.

PARISH YOUTH MINISTERS

- Because a comprehensive youth ministry program includes a dimension of structured or formal catechesis, the coordinator of youth ministry should have theological formation, along with competence and experience in catechesis.
- Coordinators of youth ministry should be able to lead and guide young people to grow in the knowledge of the Catholic faith, in the practice of Christian morality and social justice, in the celebration of the sacraments, and in personal spiritual development.
- The youth minister's specific catechetical responsibilities are to be fulfilled in collaboration with pastors and other parish catechetical leaders.
 - Coordinators of youth ministry are to
 - be models of Christian virtue and courageous witnesses to the Catholic faith
 - have the ability to speak credibly about their personal experience of faith
 - be adequately prepared to implement the church's evangelical and catechetical mission
 - be experienced in working in catechesis with adults and youths

CAMPUS MINISTERS

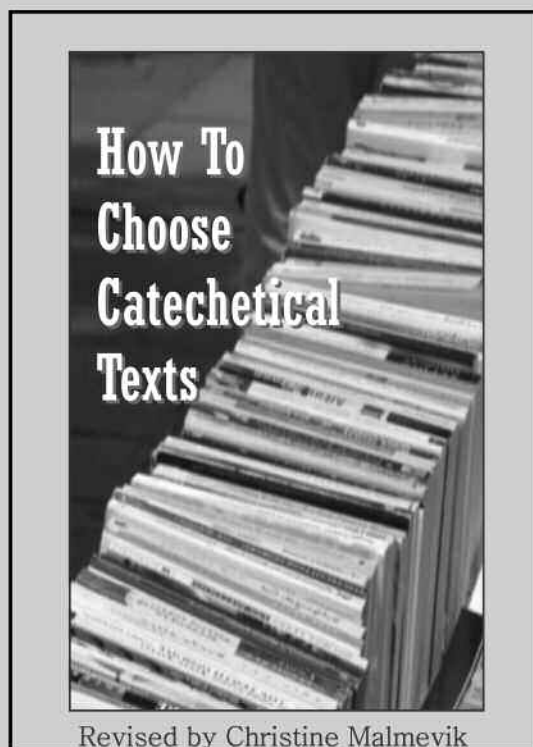
- Campus ministers are to be professionally trained for their ministry
- They are to
 - form vibrant communities of faith
 - help students discern their vocations
 - ensure the availability of the sacraments to students and faculty
 - provide opportunities for educating for service and ministry within the church and world
 - call forth and coordinate the gifts of the Spirit within the campus faith community
 - attend to their own personal, professional, and spiritual development

– develop and maintaining close relationships with neighboring parishes and around the diocese

- Courses of study are to be provided through campus ministry to provide theological education, spiritual formation, and practical experience to prepare students to serve as catechists.

The *National Directory for Catechesis* takes what has been said in other church documents and puts it together in such a way that a new picture emerges. It is now up to those who labor in the vineyard of adolescent catechesis to examine their programs and approaches to see what can be done to make their local picture resemble the one painted by the *NDC*. How are you with puzzles? ■

Daniel S. Mulhall is Assistant Secretary for Catechesis & Inculturation at the USCCB Department of Education, Washington, DC. He can be reached at dmulhall@usccb.org.



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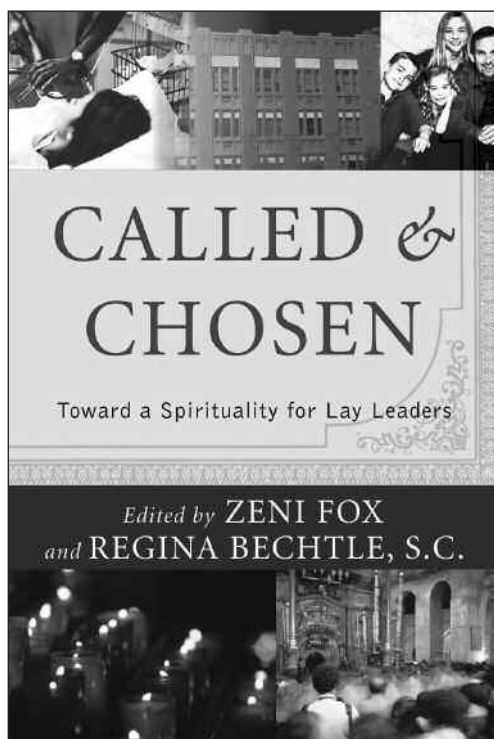
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Called and Chosen: Toward a Spirituality for Lay Leaders by Zeni Fox and Regina Bechtle, SC. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2005. 216 pp, paper, \$21.95.

Reviewed by Joyce Donahue

Over the last quarter century, many works have sought to “break open” the vision of lay ministry which emerged from the Second Vatican Council. *Called and Chosen: Toward a Spirituality for Lay Leaders*, a collection of essays, is a unique addition to this repertoire. It addresses lay ministry at a crucial moment in the church unforeseen by the pioneers of Vatican II: a time where the American church stands “on the verge of irreversible decline or thoroughgoing transformation”, notes Peter Steinfelds in his book, *A People Adrift*. It also addresses lay leadership in Catholic educational, health and social service institutions once led by clergy and religious, called to be true to their unique mission and identity in the public arena.

Fox and Bechtle proclaim at the outset that the purpose of their book is to impel leaders in the direction of transformation, not decline, convinced that Catholic institutions can maintain their identity and be true to their mission when they are lay-led. The purpose of these thirteen essays is to give lay leaders a “language” with which to articulate their call, experience, and mission, as well as to ground them in a spirituality of lay leadership. This grounding is essential in face of a temptation to attend only to the practical tasks and skills of leadership.

Called and Chosen is organized into four parts. The essays in Part One examine the *leader as person*, his or her spirituality, vocation and core values. Those in Part Two explore the *mission of the church and the emergence of institutional ministries* that are rooted in the mission of Jesus and the reign of God. Authors in Part Three observe that *institutions themselves embody their own spirituality and highlights the leader’s role in nurturing that spirit*, which often comes from its founding spirit, in a particular cultural reality. Selections in Part Four explore the *spiritual dimensions of the roles of the leader*, particularly administration, community building, the use of power and authority, and the work of forming and mentoring others.

continued on page 25

Digital Tools for Pastoral Settings

by Caroline Cerveney, SSJ



We find ourselves—along with our students, families, and friends—immersed in cyberspace, a digital world of computers, cell phones, DVDs, and more. The landscape seems to have changed so quickly around us from analog tools to digital tools that when we awake in the morning we may feel like Rip Van Winkle and wonder—where am I?

Today websites are one of the key tools we can use to introduce ourselves, our mission, and what we are about in our classes. Most of us are aware that it is time to learn how to do a website for our classes. But where do we find the time to learn HTML, Front Page, Dreamweaver, Photoshop, or other software needed to create a webpage? Time may theoretically be endless, but our own time is finite!

Instead of taking time to learn all the programs that are needed to create a personal web page and other web activities, I would suggest that we use intuitive, user-friendly web-based template tools to create fun and interesting activities for our students.

Although a number of websites, such as MySchoolOnline and Teachnology make user-friendly digital tools readily available (for a small monthly fee), they are specific tools for a school environment, not necessarily a pastoral religious education program. One of my favorite services is Quia (www.Quia.com), which can be very useful in a pastoral setting. You will find that this technology resource provides a wide variety of helpful educational services, including:

- A collection of shared online activities and quizzes in more than 150 categories (with *religion* being one of the categories)
- Templates for creating sixteen types of online activities, such as flashcards, word search, cloze exercises, trivia games and scavenger hunts
- Tools for creating online quizzes with up to eight question types
- Quiz administration and reporting tools
- Class web pages
- Online roster and grade book
- Calendars and schedules
- Online surveys

One of my favorites is the feature that allows you to create a web page for the use of your classes. Junior and senior high participants in the Digital Catechesis course that I facilitate online in the University of Dayton Virtual

Here are several easy ways to stay on top of the digital world (where our students are):

- Send a spiritual reflection to your students via a group email message.
- Offer students electronic drawing tools instead of crayons and paper to reflect on God's creation.
- Direct students to quality websites to learn more about their Catholic faith.

Learning Community for Faith Formation recently completed a “scavenger hunt” activity in which they searched websites (URLs provided) for answers to questions on sacraments, Old Testament heroes, and *just war* theory. The class page also had links for Grade 1–6 activities created for Sadlier’s *Coming To Faith* website. (You can see the page at www.quia.com/pages/digitalc.html.) These examples give you some idea of the types of activities that you are able to create or utilize in your class without a lot of technology background. All your students need is a URL.

Two of my recent students shared the following comments in an online class for teachers:

“Being creative in the digital world can help spread the message of the Gospel to those that we teach. Our students live in this digital world where they are bombarded with every type of image and sound. They are products of the society we live in and demand much of us as their teachers and mentors. None of my students seem particularly interested in listening to a never-ending string of “pearls” falling from my lips. But when I show up with a movie clip or a song or allow them to prepare a PowerPoint or video presentation they actually get enthusiastic.” —Timothy Boyle

“Being creative with using the Internet reaches our students where they are. They enjoy the immediate feedback an internet activity provides. The Internet presents information to them in a way in which they can have their faith at their fingertips when they need it. It also provides an avenue for discussion with them regarding their faith.” —Susan Pavlus

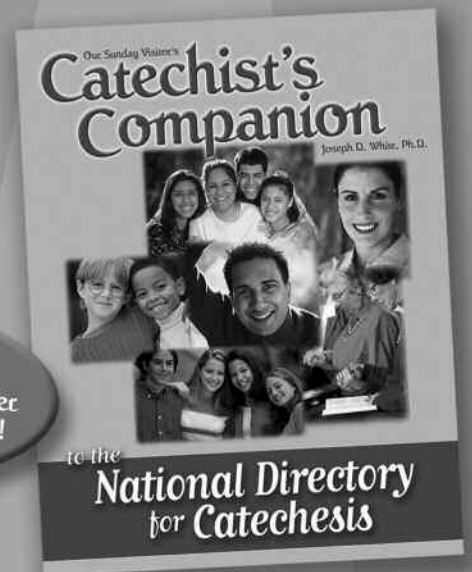
I hope that this introduction to intuitive user-friendly web-based template tools will encourage you to create fun and interesting digital activities for students who are searching to learn more about their faith tradition. Be wonderfully creative with this tool in order to deepen the faith experience of your students.

Caroline Cervený, SSJ D. Min., is the associate director of university ministry at Saint Leo University, where she teaches Cyberculture: New Challenges for Pastoral Ministers. Cervený, who is a national speaker in the area of technology and its use in the catechetical field, was the recipient of NCCL’s Technology Award in 2004. If you would like to share a story about your use of technology in your teaching ministry, you may email her at caroline.cervený@saintleo.edu.

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Easter can really signal what seems like the arrival of the end times.

The academic year traditionally begins around the celebration of the civic holiday of Labor Day (the first Monday in September). Students return to class in our schools—public and parochial—after their summer break. Teachers have already been showing up for work, planning ahead and putting in place plans to ease the year ahead. Religious education programs get into full swing at this time also. Catechists and coordinators have likewise been meeting and planning for weeks. Registrations that have gone on for the last couple of months have created the usual awareness of insufficient numbers of catechists for the number of learners. Back-to-school nights, parent-teacher conferences, sacrament preparation meetings, and innumerable other notations fill our calendars with alarming alacrity, and parents become amazingly adept (or not) at negotiating the numerous traffic patterns designed to keep people safe in our church parking lots.

FEASTS AND FALLOUT

What unfolds in the course of this pastoral year? I've discovered that Easter—that wonderful feast and celebration of our salvation history, can really signal what seems like the arrival of the end times. A recent conversation with an accomplished and imaginative parish director of religious education got me to thinking. She was sharing some of her difficulties in planning for the year:

Easter falls 'late' this coming year, April 16—that's far too close to the time of the year when traditionally the parish celebrates first Eucharist. Lent and spring break are going to present problems—families will have time off and our schedules will be impacted. Also, because our local church celebrates confirmation primarily during the Easter Season, the confirmation program is going to run later than it normally does, further crowding the calendar at that time of



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the year. Pentecost—the great feast of the church—falls right in the middle of graduations, end-of-school and end-of-program activities and events. So celebrating Pentecost is going to fall way down the list of parish priorities.

Other great solemnities of the liturgical year haven't a hope! They may even be cancelled! Trinity Sunday and *Corpus Christi* will just have to get by this year without too much attention—catechetically speaking, of course!

Because the month of May is so full already, any effort to focus attention on the Blessed Mother is going to be greatly diluted, and so a conscious effort will be made to celebrate Mary and her pride of place within the church during the month of October. All Saints Day falls on a Tuesday and that will impact how well it can be celebrated and used catechetically because of the RE program schedule. Christmas falls on a Sunday, and that changes the look of the traditional Christmas break. Maybe we can do some catechesis on the liturgical year and the changing of colors. Another year I remember was difficult because Christmas fell on a Monday. We were purple on Sunday morning and white and gold on Sunday evening. The pastor was barely human following the final liturgy on Christmas day (his seventh major liturgy in the space of two days).

The challenges of the pastoral year are not negligible. They demand creativity and dexterity on the part of **all** who are involved in catechetical ministry—parents, principals, teachers, DREs and coordinators, catechists, liturgists, pastoral associates, women and men in consecrated life, deacons, parochial vicars, pastors, bishops, and all who serve the Word.

SACRED TIME

I must confess that when I glanced at the table of contents for the recently published *National Directory for Catechesis* and saw a section on Sacred Time (37A), I was excited. But it was unrealistic of me to expect that this resource could put an end to the challenges of the pastoral year. What the section does accomplish for us is a succinct affirmation and summary of the particularly Christian way of marking and celebrating time.

We are reminded that “because of God’s presence in time in the person of Jesus Christ, time is sacred,” and that “the economy or history of salvation unfolds throughout the liturgical year.” The *NDC* rightly highlights the place of the Lord’s Day to which all other days are oriented. It also draws our attention to the highlights of the seasons of the church year. We are also encouraged to draw on the rich resources of the “religious customs and traditions of the diverse cultural and ethnic heritages of the many peoples who make up the Catholic Church” in our communities. In fact, we are explicitly reminded that the “celebration of these religious

*The pastoral year may be the frame...
but it must be the servant of our efforts.*

customs and traditions provide genuine opportunities to evangelize the culture and cultures of the United States.”

An anecdote may serve to further illustrate this last point. During the recent Summer Bible Institute that we co-sponsor annually with a local university in Los Angeles, we were focused on reading the scriptures through the lens of various cultures. We were joined by a number of distinguished biblical scholars from across the country as each day we explored the scriptures from a particular perspective. Monday provided us with an introduction to approaching the scriptures from cultural perspectives and each subsequent day took a particular cultural stance as our point of exploration. We engaged an African-American perspective on Tuesday, a Native-American



perspective on Wednesday, a Hispanic-American perspective on Thursday and an Asian-American perspective on Friday. On each of these days we incorporated a prayer experience which was largely rooted in the “culture of the day.”

Through conversation with participants, and upon review of the evaluations at the end of the week, we noticed how many of the participants were evangelized by the overall experience. An adapted celebration of *Las Posadas* brought about a complete transformation of one person’s understanding of a people’s search for freedom and dignity in adopted lands, a freedom and dignity that can be elusive in their homeland. He confessed to being very antagonistic toward immigrants—illegal or not—but the experience of the prayer

continued on page 25

CREATE A PLAN

With definitive goals, the pastoral team is able to create a systematic and structured approach to catechesis. The plan must address the ongoing faith formation of the Catholic community within the parish boundaries. One of the gifts of the organization of the Catholic Church is that a parish becomes responsible for all those who live within its boundaries. This arrangement does not prohibit people from outside those boundaries from attending, participating, or belonging to the parish, but it does hold the pastor responsible for the faith life of all those who dwell within those boundaries. In addressing their goals the group needs to keep this idea in the forefront of its planning. The *NDC* states,

...every parish needs to develop a coherent catechetical plan that integrates the various components of the overall program and provides opportunities for all parishioners to hear the Gospel message, celebrate it in prayer and Liturgy, and live it in their daily



Do not ask for volunteers. ... not everyone has received an interior call to be a catechist.

lives. That plan should reflect the priority of adult catechesis, take into account the needs of everyone in the parish, and provide special accommodation for cultural, racial, and ethnic groups, persons with disabilities, the neglected, and those unable to represent their own rights and interests. (*NDC*, no. 60A, page 255).

In creating the plan it is important to make accommodations for all in the parish community, including those who are simply registered and may not attend and those who have never even registered. The plan should include goals and objectives as well as a schedule that encourages participation but does not conflict with local events, including events on local public and parochial school calendars. This plan should be completed before summer begins. If not, air conditioning is a must.

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CALL FORTH CATECHISTS

Do not ask for volunteers. Anyone can be a volunteer. While “all members of the community share the duty to bear witness to the faith” (*NDC*, page 218), not everyone has received an interior call to be a catechist. If catechetical ministry is to be effective, a variety of other roles need to be filled. Hall monitors, secretaries, playground supervisors, faith witnesses, hospitality ministers, media technicians, storytellers, facilitators, refreshment providers, babysitters, musicians, receptionists, and people who pray are all needed. All help a program run effectively. Recognize the talents needed for each of these roles and invite—or better yet, call people by name—to use their God-given gifts in service of the church.

So throw away the posters proclaiming anybody can be a catechist. Remove the bulletin announcements saying if you love kids, you can be a catechist. Though all are called by baptism to catechize, the manner in which the faith is presented is critical. Carefully call forth those people who are in love with Christ, who live lives of prayer and desire to share the difference Jesus has made in their lives. Catechists are people of the head and the heart, not just one or the other.

Without opportunities for growth, the community is stuck with an immature understanding of the sacraments.

TRAIN CATECHISTS

In speaking of effective catechesis the *NDC* states “...catechists must be fully committed to Jesus Christ. They must firmly believe in his Gospel and its power to transform lives” (*NDC*, page 101). The first task is to provide opportunities for catechists to grow in their belief in the Gospel and to deepen their relationship with Jesus Christ. Recognition on Catechetical Sunday is valuable because the community’s blessing and support of these individuals is a powerful sign that they are to hand on the teachings of Christ.

Catechists are often given a pin, certificate, or small gift on these occasions. Choosing an appropriate sign will help support the catechists’ commitment to Christ and confirm their belief in the power of the Gospel to change lives. NCCL’s faith journal, *Stepping Stones to God: Walking One Day At a Time*, is an excellent choice as it invites a response to the word of God. Truly this food for the journey can nourish the hearts and minds of catechists.

Everyone knows that “All catechesis includes more than instruction, ...” (*NDC*, page 104). Similarly, good teaching demands more than a call to holiness. The *National Directory for Catechesis*, on pages 237-241, provides a list of training topics for the initial formation of catechists as well as the ongoing formation of catechists. “Under no circumstances should the initial formation of new catechists ‘be improvised or left to the initiative of the candidates themselves’” (*NDC*, page 237).

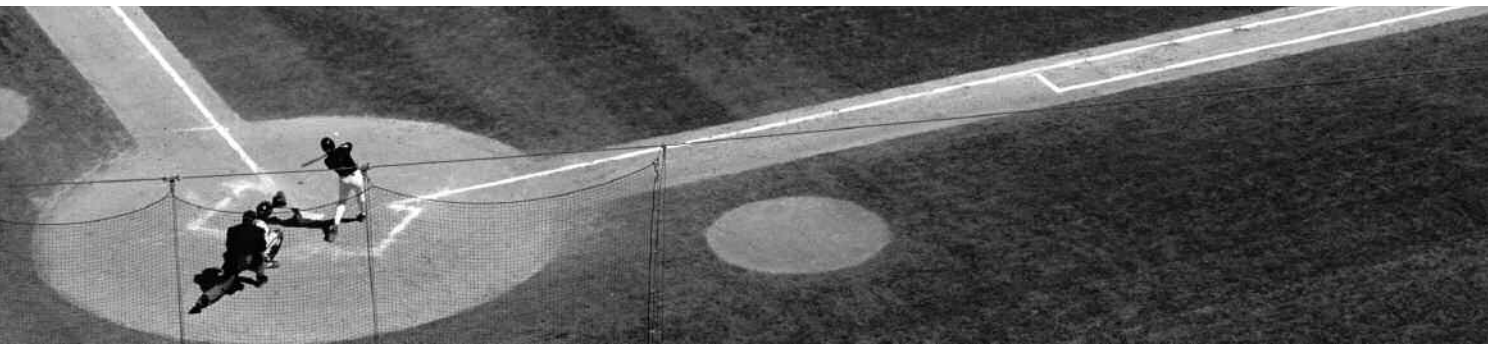
The responsibility for the ongoing formation of catechists must be a parish priority. Ongoing formation needs to happen on the human level, the spiritual level, the intellectual level, and the witness level. The *General Directory for Catechesis* states it best here:

No methodology, no matter how well tested, can dispense with the person of the catechist in every phase of the catechetical process. The charism given to him by the Spirit, a solid spirituality and transparent witness of life, constitutes the soul of every method (*GDC*, No. 156).



TRAIN becomes an appropriate acronym for the elements that form effective catechists during the course of the year:

- T**heological updates and enrichments
- R**eligious opportunities to deepen one’s spirituality
- A**ctivities that incorporate a variety of prayer forms
- I**deas for classroom ritual, discipline and ways of forming community
- N**ew strategies for engaging persons in sharing their faith



INVITE ALL TO GROW IN THEIR FAITH

Catechesis is not a field of dreams. Just because classes are held, small Christian communities offered, discussion groups made available, does not mean people will come. It is important that everyone be invited to deepen their faith, to grow spiritually and to learn more about Jesus. If “the baptismal catechumenate... should be the cornerstone of the parish catechetical plan” (*NDC*, page 265), then people need to be reminded that their spiritual journey is ongoing. There may be rest stops, but the only exit is death.

Bulletin announcements, emails and letters through the postal system are not “...enthusiastic evangelization and recruitment efforts...” (*NDC*, page 261). Be creative with invitations. One invitation is never enough; follow the advice of the persistent widow. The printed word is never as good as face-to-face communication. The more time you spend inviting, the less time you will spend following up, adjusting class sizes, finding new catechists, creating another discussion group.

CATECHIZE ALL AGES WITHIN THE COMMUNITY

Catechesis should be on the agenda of every committee or board that meets in the parish. If the beginning prayer is based on the Word of God and includes faith sharing, you’re on the right track. If the annual evaluation of every committee includes a question about how the person’s faith grew because of their service on this committee or board, you’ve taken a second step. If the Sunday homily makes a connection to the same scriptural reference being used in grade six, or by the Worship Committee, or in the Small Christian Community, or in the adult discussion group, then you’ve broadened the understanding of catechesis from children’s religious education to all of the church community continuing to grow.

Put a faith question and answer in the bulletin every week. Invite people to submit questions. Use the seasons of Advent, Lent and Easter time to challenge people to deepen their faith. Expand a morning prayer group to include adults and teenagers, not forever, but just for those four or six weeks.

UTILIZE SACRAMENTAL MOMENTS

The reception of first penance and reconciliation and first Eucharist should not center on children in second grade. While it is commendable to invite people to take a particular student and pray for them, it is important to remember that this is an opportunity for the entire parish to renew its understanding of reconciliation and to deepen its appreciation for the Eucharist. One of the general principles in the *NDC* states that sacramental catechesis “is intended for all members of the Christian community, takes place within the community, and involves the whole community of faith” (*NDC*, page 114).

Take a piece of paper and fold it as many times as you can. What remains facing up is one’s understanding after the first reception of the sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation and the sacrament of the Eucharist. Each person needs to increase that understanding. Just as the paper can be unfolded, one’s knowledge can be expanded. Each year with the presentation of the first reception of these sacraments the whole community can continue to unfold its understanding. Without opportunities for growth, the community is stuck with an immature understanding of the sacraments, subsisting on pabulum, and the Eucharist especially will never be for them the “... source and summit of the Christian life” (*Lumen Gentium*, No. 11).

EVALUATE

Based on the goals and plan, evaluate what worked well and should be continued, what needs improvement and how it can be changed, and what should be discontinued. Look at the various constituencies to see who was missing. Consider a variety of avenues for evaluating: Try written surveys, phone surveys, focus groups, and interviews. It is better to evaluate after every session rather than to do one comprehensive evaluation at the end of the year; adjustments can be made throughout the year rather than waiting for the next pastoral year. Insights gained from these evaluations will assist you as you move to step ten: Begin again with number one—know your goals. ■

Leland Nagel is director of Total Catholic Education for the Diocese of Green Bay. He can be reached at lnagel@gbdio.org.

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catechetical and ministerial needs. One of the advantages of a small diocese of forty-six parishes is greater ease of personal conversations and dialogue with those in the field. As a result of conversations conducted last spring and this summer, we will offer three new programs: an RCIA leadership certification from Sr. Miriam Malone, SNJM; an introduction and instruction for lifelong faith formation, offered through the Center for Ministry Development, that will help parish leaders institute intergenerational catechesis; and a certification program from the Loyola Pastoral Life Center, Loyola University New Orleans, to train lay and religious parish administrators.

Certainly one of the great resources planned into our pastoral year is the Religious Education Congress in Los Angeles in 2006. Our participation in the Religious Education Congress involves more than sending parish representatives. Sometimes we have opportunities to bring larger groups of our teams and teachers together during the Congress. This past year we gathered attendees together for lunch with guest speaker Mary Jo Pederson. This was a wonderful opportunity to come together as a diocese to promote shared vision through common experience and dialogue. We are now planning a similar event for 2006.

BEING THERE IN PERSON

In our diocese we have also found it invaluable to bring together on a monthly basis all of our departments' directors, not just those who work under the umbrella of faith formation. Our administrators attend as well. We invite each of our departments to make a presentation of their programs, ministries and services to promote a shared ecclesiology of ministry and evangelization. I am present at most of these meetings and they provide me with both an opportunity to reinforce our common goals and to appreciate the progress and challenges facing our various departments. These gatherings also feed into regional gatherings and days of prayer for parish ministers conducted by the directors and teams.

Here are, I believe, a few ways my presence and participation are important for an effective pastoral year. By this I mean my presence among the people of the diocese and with those who minister to them. I personally try to teach at least one of our workshops for teachers

each year. I take an active role in our bi-annual Catechetical Day. Inevitably I focus a number of my monthly pastoral letters in our diocesan newspaper on aspects of faith formation. I make the effort to show up for different sessions of our basic and master catechist courses.

These times give me an opportunity to engage in dialogue with people. That dialogue includes both listening to the stories of their lives and sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ as it impacts on their lives. As the chief catechist of the diocese, I can encourage people to take responsibility for their own growth and constantly be alert for new avenues of learning and service to emerge.

MAINTAINING THE LISTENING HEART

The final note of our planning of the pastoral year ought also to be the first as well: namely, that nothing enduring will come from our planning unless we approach this work as a prayerful and Eucharistic people. Certainly the dominant purpose of all catechetical ministry is to draw the people of God more deeply into intimacy with our lord and savior, Jesus Christ, and the Trinitarian life of grace God shares with us in the church. So, as in the past, we will include retreat days during the year on as many levels as possible, a practice that seeks to develop a more effective spirituality of mission in the diocese. All of us who are invested in this planning task must maintain the listening heart we so often pray for in Psalm 95: "If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts."

The effectiveness of these efforts lies with the discipleship of our directors and staffs. My attempt to sketch ways in which we plan for our pastoral goals is actually a reporting of the work that our faith formation team and other directors attempt and accomplish. I hope that some of what I have presented here will be both helpful and encouraging to those who share a passion for evangelization and catechetics. ■

Bishop Sylvester D. Ryan leads the Diocese of Monterey in California. He is a past episcopal advisor for NCCL.

transformed his heart and brought about the beginnings of a conversion. Attending to such religious customs, beautiful cultural expressions of the experience of faith of a diverse people, can enrich and transform the whole people for the good of the community of believers, the church. At most, such celebrations transform our hearts. At least, they deepen our understanding and appreciation for our neighbors, our brothers and sisters in faith.

GETTING BEYOND THE CALENDAR

Crowded though our calendars may be, they are pregnant with possibility for the ongoing evangelization of our communities. Recent developments in catechesis around the country are exploring possibilities beyond the confines of traditional calendaring models. Parishes that are developing models of catechesis involving the whole community, or the total parish, are attentive to the catechetical power of everything that takes place in the life of the community. Just as the community does not cease to exist for any time in the year, so neither does catechesis cease to take place at any time in the year. There is an implicit acknowledgement that the tyranny of a calendar cannot effectively drive the catechetical agenda. There is simply too much of wonderful value in our church's tradition than can be made to 'fit' into a single calendar year, irrespective of when it begins or ends.

As we grow in awareness of and appreciation for the principle of catechesis as a life-long process for *every* child, youth, young adult, adult and senior, so we free ourselves from having to 'fit' it all into a 'yearly calendar'. We commit ourselves, rather, to a comprehensive model of catechesis which can legitimately claim to echo the divine word "faithfully and completely" in the communal life of God's people. The pastoral year may be the frame within which we choose to exercise our catechetical ministry, but it must be the servant of our efforts, not its master. God is present in time, and makes it holy. Blessed be God, forever! ■

Fr. David Loftus is coordinator/consultant for adult education and catechist formation for the Office of Religious Education in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. He can be contacted at frdloftus@la-archdiocese.org.

The editors introduce each essay, setting it in the context of its section. Following each essay is a series of reflection questions, which capture the essence of the essay and challenge the leader (or group of leaders) to theological reflection. I found the questions excellent. Any one essay or triad of essays in a section could set the stage for a day's leadership retreat or evening of recollection.

Each essay is short, yet packed with scholarly insight and practical wisdom, stories of real people and/or historical trends. One can savor each, underline the "pearls" and spend time with the reflection questions.

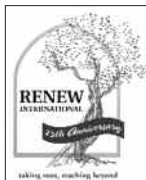
My own leadership role is that of a diocesan catechetical leader who works with lay leaders in parish catechetical ministry. Is there something in this book for me? I was particularly drawn to parts one and four as helpful in forming and sustaining diocesan and parish lay ecclesial leaders. The essays of Part One hold a mirror up to the individual leaders assisting them to articulate why they do what they do, their work as vocational call, and the source of their lived habits and values. Part Four sets the individual leaders at the core of their community and invites them to be attentive to God's activity in the tasks of leadership, in the contradictions, questions and tensions of leadership, and in the joys of seeking truth and calling forth others.

The essay by Mary Daniel Turner, SNDdeN, entitled "Power and Authority: Rooted in and Fashioned by the Spirit," is alone worth the price of the book! In the face of the questions of abuse of power, Turner challenges leaders to see power as a positive spiritual energy and sacred trust, and suggests ways to use power and authority in partnership with the Spirit in the service of mission. This is a worthy reflection topic for all leaders, ordained and lay!

Our thanks go to Zeni Fox and Regina Bechtle for their commitment to lay leadership in the vision of the Second Vatican Council and for their conviction that the church is moving toward transformation amidst the current turmoil. Their book offers us a reflective tool to help us continue to lead with hope! ■

Joyce Solimini is associate director of the Office of Evangelization and Catechesis in the Diocese of Albany.

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A NEW PLACE IN THE NORTHERN LIGHTS

DOROTHY GILOLEY, SSJ

She's come a long way from Philadelphia. Sister of St. Joseph Dorothy Giloley is the new Director of Religious Education for the Diocese of Fairbanks. Prior to this appointment she served in Mountain Village and Pilot Station, which are two Yupik Eskimo villages on the Yukon River in Western Alaska.

The Fairbanks Diocese is the only entirely missionary diocese in the United States and covers 409,849 square miles. "I have visited the five parishes in the Fairbanks area, the four on the road system, and two parishes on the Northwest coast: Nome and Kotzebue," Giloley reports. "I will visit Barrow on the Arctic Ocean in the fall." In addition to assuming the DRE role in Fairbanks, she will be a resource person to the catechetical centers on the Western Yukon River and in Interior Alaska. There are thirty-three bush missions (the only way in is by plane and boat in the summer.)

Prior to coming to Alaska she had been a youth minister, DRE, campus minister, pastoral associate, grade school teacher, catechist trainer and RCIA director in various parishes in the Philadelphia area, North Jersey, Maryland and West Virginia. Before coming to the Fairbanks diocese, she was the director of religious education at Our Lady of Guadalupe in Anchorage.

"We have only a small number of priests and religious but wonderful lay people who keep the faith alive and well in Northern Alaska. You can read about our diocese at www.cbna.info. Alaska is a wonderful place to live and minister!"

KAREN MARIE PESEK

Karen Marie Pesek is the new Diocesan Director for the Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau. She began her work in catechetics as a volunteer catechist while in high school in Corpus Christi, Texas. She has worked for the last twenty-one years in the Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau as a parish DRE. Pesek is a graduate from the University of Texas at Austin (BSW) and the University of St. Thomas in Houston (MRE). She and her husband, Ken Pesek, Director of Music and Liturgy at St. Agnes Cathedral in Springfield, Missouri, have served the church as lay ministers since they were married, choosing to work in a home mission diocese. Together they raise four children, ages 9 to 18.



Sr. Dorothy Giloley



Karen Marie Pesek

TIME WITHIN TIME by Megan Anechiarico

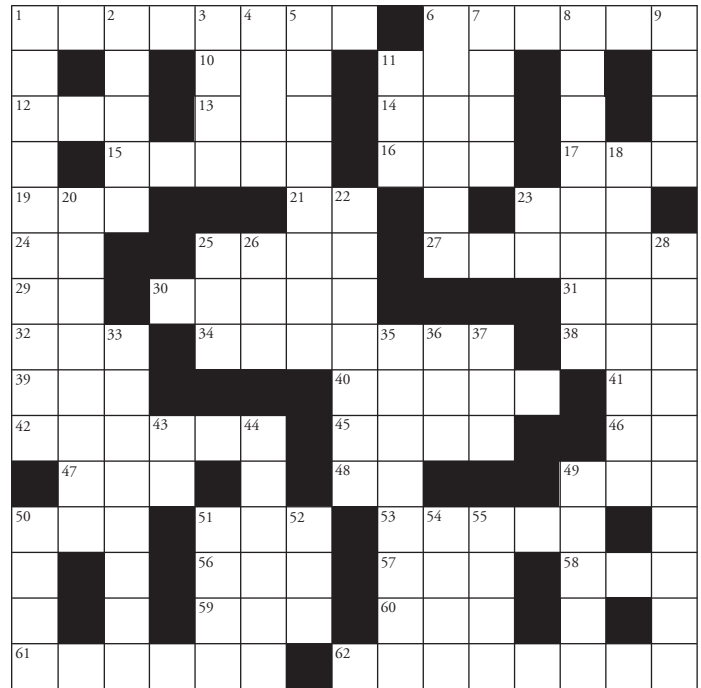
ACROSS

- 1 Year from January to December
- 6 Season for 61A
- 10 Prompt, backwards
- 11 Animation frame
- 12 Mo. to end 28D's yr.
- 13 Resort
- 14 Plane's landing time, approx.
- 15 Small child's "ate"
- 16 Division of geological time
- 17 Original
- 19 Charged particle
- 21 Footwear co.
- 23 ROY G. ____
- 24 MD or PhD
- 25 Papa's mate
- 27 Year for business managers and CPAs
- 29 Yr. in the Christian era
- 30 Start
- 31 Boxer Clay
- 32 "____ the season to be jolly"
- 34 Worldly time, as opposed to
- 38 Tulsa, OK airport code, in reverse
- 39 Abbr. for East North Up
- 40 Sound—*pre.*
- 41 Golden symbol
- 42 Holy time
- 45 Process that culminates at the beginning of 61A
- 46 Monogram for 26th U.S. president

- 47 Electronics co.
- 48 1A, 27A, 62A, or 28D—*abbr.*
- 49 Measurement of brain wave activity—*abbr.*
- 50 Marble bread
- 51 Meeting pt.
- 53 Artist's tripod
- 56 A Midwestern Native American people
- 57 Finish even
- 58 Mo. to end 1A's yr. and begin
- 28 D's yr.
- 59 Not—*pre.*
- 60 Urchin
- 61 Resurrection season
- 62 Year for catechetical, youth, and campus ministers

DOWN

- 1 Those preparing for confirmation
- 2 Animate
- 3 Bird's home
- 4 Deceive
- 5 Year for school teachers and students
- 6 Separate
- 7 Activity to begin a year
- 8 Satirical
- 9 Mature
- 11 Average grade
- 18 Activity to end a year
- 20 28D's time between seasons
- 22 Month to begin 1A's year



- 23 College deg.
- 25 Division of 5D's yr., in reverse
- 26 Measure of a life's time
- 28 Year for lectors and preachers
- 33 Accomplishes a goal
- 35 Women's rights pioneer Mott
- 36 Electronics co.
- 37 Atmosphere, going up
- 43 Radioactive element's symbol
- 44 Therese of Lisieux is the most recent one of the church
- 49 Senior member
- 50 Religious ceremony
- 51 Month in middle of 1A's year and at end of 27A's year
- 52 Number of Commandments
- 54 Directs toward
- 55 Mo. to begin 62A's yr.

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