



# Journey toward the Future of Catechesis

## *The Journey Begins*

*People do not put new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise the skins burst, the wine spills out, and the skins are ruined. Rather, they pour new wine into fresh wineskins, and both are preserved. (Matthew 9:17)*

Building on the vision of the 1971 and 1997 Directories, the new *Directory for Catechesis* (June 2020) provides a fresh vision and blueprint for developing catechesis in the 2020s and beyond. This fresh vision describes catechesis as *accompaniment, education, and formation*.

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) [emphasis added]

The big question for catechetical leaders is how can the vision and practices of the *Directory for Catechesis* guide catechetical ministry in parishes across the United States. This is the focus of NCCL's "***Journey toward the Future of Catechesis***." Together we are going to explore how the catechetical vision of the *Directory* and the practices that flow from that vision can transform catechesis with all ages and generations in a parish community.

Over the next several months NCCL will explore how to apply the vision, major themes, and suggested practices of the *Directory for Catechesis* in parish catechetical ministry.

Weekly articles will present the *Directory's* vision with reflection-application activities. Each week you can read the short article and use the activities to apply the *Directory* to your parish community. Form a small group to "journey" with you, such as your parish staff or parish catechetical team or catechetical leaders from other parishes. Meet in person or on Zoom and share reflections on the article and application ideas.

Over the next twelve weeks we will explore questions that translate the vision into practice. For example:

1. What is the new context (social and cultural) for catechesis today? What are the new needs of parents, families, and people of all ages? What are the challenges and where are the opportunities?
2. What does the *Directory* mean by Catechesis and how is it connected to Evangelization?
3. How can the catechumenal vision – as a source of inspiration for all catechesis – be put into practice with all ages and generations?
4. How can the five interrelated tasks of catechesis guide the development of a holistic curriculum and programming with all ages and generations?
5. How do we draw upon the seven sources of catechesis in designing catechetical curriculum and programming, and in teaching all ages and generations?
6. What is the relationship between catechetical content and method?
7. What educational approaches and methods are most consistent with the pedagogical vision of the *Directory*?
8. How do we design catechesis for families and each stage of life (children, teens, young adults, adults, the elderly, and persons with disabilities) informed by the vision and practices suggested in the *Directory*?
9. How do we prepare and form today’s catechist as a *witness of faith* and *keeper of the memory of God*; as a *teacher and mystagogue*, and as an *accompanier and educator*?
10. What new models of catechist formation are needed to engage today’s catechist?

The weeks of reflection upon the *Directory for Catechesis* and its application to parish catechesis provide a foundation that leads to **NCCL’s seven regional Fall 2023 Convocations**. The Convocation draws upon the vision and practices in the *Directory* to imagine and design the future of catechesis in parishes.

All of the articles will be archived on NCCLCatholic.org. To access the articles, learn more about the seven convocations, and register go to: <https://www.ncclcatholic.org/future-of-catechesis.html>.

## Resource for the Journey

Be sure you have a copy of the *Directory for Catechesis*. You can purchase it from:

- Amazon.com: <https://www.amazon.com/Directory-Catechesis-Conference-Catholic-Bishops/dp/1601376693>
- OSV: <https://www.orderosv.com/product/directory-for-catechesis>
- The Pastoral Center: <https://pastoral.center/directory-for-catechesis-usccb>