

Catechesis in the Catechumenate

The Catechist

As Catechists we are missionary servants to God's people. We model and teach a solid foundation of understanding God's message.

We share His Love and must be an inspiration to those we are instructing.

We must always remember this is a process of a faith encounter for all involved.

We have moved from memory (memorizing) our faith (head experience) to learning our faith and living the faith. (heart experience)

Catechists must be living testimony of the faith they are teaching to others.

Catechesis

Re- Echoing or echoing down of that which has been received

Developing "in women and men a living, explicit, and active faith, enlightened by doctrine"

Concerning itself not only with nourishing and teaching the faith, but also with arousing it unceasingly with the help of grace

Opening, converting, and preparing the heart to total adherence to Jesus Christ on the part of those who are still on the threshold of faith.

Five steps to Catechesis

Preparation
Proclamation
Explanation
Application
Celebration

Preparation

Your arrangement of the class environment to be hospitable and attractive.

Your readiness for them when they arrive- know their names- don't be distracted.

A sacred space ready as a focal point for prayer and attention.

Your sincere love of teaching them.

Your carefully prepared opening prayer

Proclamation

Short, concise, easy to remember

Not read but proclaimed from the heart with confidence and joy

Age appropriate and group appropriate

Visually present i.e, on a board, on hand outs, etc.

Constantly reinforced throughout the catechesis.

An example of proclamation

A proclamation about Mary might sound like this:
Tonight our topic is Mary, the Mother of Jesus. From all eternity God intended to employ the help of a human being to accomplish the Incarnation, that woman was Mary of Nazareth. By her agreement with the divine plan and the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit she became the Mother of God.

Explanation

What we are prepared to do in the class

Present topic

Break into small groups to discuss

Development of the subject

Tell stories from scripture

Do some apologetics

Use the Catechism of the Catholic Church

Application

This is where you link the subject with life today

Needs to involve a call to a deepened commitment

Creating the opportunities for Christian conversion

Various ways to accomplish this

Carefully led small group discussions or whole group discussions

Times of silence / meditations

Chapel visits

Writing in journals

Praying alone or in group; making resolutions for growth in holiness and virtue

Planning good works

Celebration

Cultivates a spirit of praise and gratitude in the presence of God's Word.

Give to the students a prayer, song, or ceremony about what they learned

Change each celebration with the uniqueness of each class

The aim is for the student to end the class in a place of peace and joy, and prepared for the challenges outside of the classroom.

Examples

Liturgical prayer: focus on a season in the liturgical year

Music: listening or singing

Movement / gestures: move into the Chapel to pray; processions; Stations of the cross, devotions.

Scope of content

Complete in its coverage

Biblical

Scripturally based.

Dogmatic

Catechism of the Catholic Church.

Liturgical

Centered around our celebration of the Mass.

Faith filled

Our relationships with God and each other through the practicing of the faith.

Accommodated to the liturgical year

Advent to Ordinary time

Solidly supported by celebrations of the word

Understanding liturgical prayers

Participation in Mass on a regular basis.

The Catechesis leads the catechumens [and candidates] not only to an appropriate acquaintance with dogmas and precepts, but also to a profound sense of the mystery of salvation in which they desire to participate.

The instruction that participants receive during this period should:

Present Catholic teaching in its entirety

Enlighten faith

Direct the heart toward God

Foster participation in the liturgy

Inspire apostolic activity

Nurture a life completely in accord with the spirit of Christ