

PARTICIPANT MANUAL

on 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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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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“HOW TO USE” THE PARTICIPANT MANUAL to the *DIRECTORY FOR CATECHESIS*:

- ❖ Thank you for responding to the call to catechetical ministry. Your vocation as a catechist will be enriched and strengthened as you break open the riches of the *Directory for Catechesis*. Prayer, study, and group discussion will deepen your understanding of the identity, nature, tasks, and sources of catechesis as it comes to life in your catechetical ministry in service of the community of faith.
- ❖ This Participant Manual is a companion to, and not a substitute for, your personal reading and group discussion 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 to 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*. Every discussion session begins with a Prayer to the Holy Spirit and includes moments of silent reflection on the Word of God, common prayers of intercession and suitable hymns. Each session concludes with the Word of God and prayers of thanksgiving and intercession for the needs of the community.
- ❖ In each unit of this Participant Manual, you will find the following:
 - ✓ **Objectives** that highlight the focus of each session.
 - ✓ **Overview of Key Themes** to guide your reading and discussion.
 - ✓ **Discussion Questions** for use in small or large group discussions.
 - ✓ **Journal Notes** provides space for you to record your reflections and responses to discussion questions.

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

UNIT 1 – INTRODUCTION

OPENING PRAYER - Prayer to the Holy Spirit

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Welcome to the Participant Manual to the *Directory for Catechesis*

The Participant Manual 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 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 Participant Manual 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 *Participant Manual* 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 Participant Manual 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 Participant Manual is offered to assist you 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*.

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 ... (It 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 to the *Directory for Catechesis* (Preface).
2. What does it mean to engage in *kerygmatic catechesis* in all forms and at all stages of catechetical activity? Share particular topics that are of interest and relevance to your catechetical ministry in light of the overview of themes in the parts and chapters of the *Directory for Catechesis*.
3. In light of Archbishop Rino Fisichella’s reflections during the presentation of the *Directory for Catechesis*, identify specific challenges to your catechetical ministry? How might this catechetical document help you overcome those challenges?

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.
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Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created.
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*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;
- Reflect on the phases of the ecclesial process of evangelization as the work of the Holy Spirit in our time;
- Understand the baptismal catechumenate as a source of inspiration for all catechetical activities;
- Reflect on *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.

OVERVIEW OF KEY THEMES:

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)
- 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

maturity. 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 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. (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 to 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)

HIGHLIGHT QUOTE:

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 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?
2. What is *kerygmatic catechesis*, according to the *Directory for Catechesis*? 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?
3. 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.
4. The Holy Spirit is the soul of the evangelizing Church, notes the Directory. How is the Holy Spirit the soul of my evangelizing and catechetical ministry? Reflect on 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?
5. 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?

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.

OVERVIEW OF KEY THEMES:

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 ... Some within the community of faith are called by God to cooperate with Bishops and priests in carrying out the ministry of the Word. (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)
- 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. (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. (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. (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)
- 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)

HIGHLIGHT QUOTE:

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 Christian community is the origin, locus, and goal of catechesis. (133)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Reflect on the call you received to serve 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.
2. 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?
3. 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?
4. 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?

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 catechesis in relationship 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 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*; and
- Reflect on the intersection of digital culture, and digital languages and tools with catechesis. Reflect on the Christian community as the primary agent of catechesis.

OVERVIEW OF KEY THEMES:

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. 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; 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. (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)

HIGHLIGHT QUOTE:

In the journey of catechesis, the principle of *evangelizing by educating* and *educating by evangelizing* recalls, among other things, 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 an entrustment to him that grows overtime. (179)

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.*

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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; catechesis that offers pastoral care of migrants, emigrants, the marginalized, and prisoners; 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.

OVERVIEW OF KEY THEMES:

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)
- 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)

- Changing cultural processes have given rise to new forms of family situations. The church seeks to offer a catechesis of mercy. (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. 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)
- 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. 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 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, even among those with severe disabilities. (269 - 272)

- The Church has a specific form of pastoral care for migrants and emigrants that 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). 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)

- All the baptized, who are the people of God, are agents of evangelization. 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, iconography, and the close integration of liturgy and catechesis in the catechetical formation of the faithful. (290 – 292)
- 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 Church’s 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. (313 – 318)

HIGHLIGHT QUOTE:

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. 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)

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 contexts 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.

OVERVIEW OF KEY THEMES:

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. Ecumenical and inter-religious environments in which a parish finds itself call 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. The urban, rural, and traditional local cultures are specific contexts that shape the forms and tasks of “kerygmatic catechesis.” (324 – 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 prayer traditions such as the Rosary and devotions linked to 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)
- 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. (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)
- 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. 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)

HIGHLIGHT QUOTES:

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)

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. (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)

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)

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*.

OVERVIEW OF KEY THEMES:

- 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 catechuminate. (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*).
- 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 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.
- 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 to God 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 to 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.

- 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.”

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.
- 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 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.

HIGHLIGHT QUOTES:

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 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. Which themes in the *Directory for Catechesis* that have particular 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, reflection, and discussion of the *Directory for Catechesis*?
4. What are concrete, consistent, and ongoing ways you intend to 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 catechetical ministry?
5. How is Mary, Mother of God and Mother of the Church, model teacher and catechist, present with you in 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 God, enabling our 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.