

Study Guide

This Study Guide provides opportunities for reading, reflection, and dialogue.

Evangelization

“The Good News of Jesus Christ must be carried forth to every person and every nation so that it may penetrate the heart of every person and renew the human race.”
(*National Directory for Catechesis*, USCCB, 2005, p 46)

Read and Reflect:

[Make note of any unfamiliar words and any parts of the reading that particularly strike you.]

General Directory for Catechesis (GDC), Congregation for the Clergy, 1997; **No. 53**
[Go to <http://tinyurl.com/tgju> and scroll to paragraph 53; **OR** see following pages.]

GDC, **No. 46** [Use the link above and scroll to the paragraph 46; **OR** see following pages.]

National Directory for Catechesis (NDC), USCCB, 2005; p 52, if hard copy available

Go and Make Disciples: A National Plan and Strategy for Evangelization in the United States, USCCB, 2002; **No. 24-27**
[Go to <http://tinyurl.com/ys3azx> and scroll to paragraph 24; **OR** see following pages.]

Questions for Dialogue:

[Be prepared to share your understanding with the group.]

What does evangelization mean for Catholics?

How does adult catechesis help to accomplish this mission?

General Directory for Catechesis (GDC), Congregation for the Clergy, 1997; No. 53

Conversion and faith

53. In proclaiming the Good News of Revelation to the world, evangelization invites men and women to conversion and faith. The call of Jesus, "Repent and believe in the Gospel", (Mk 1:15) continues to resound today by means of the Church's work of evangelization. The Christian faith is, above all, conversion to Jesus Christ, full and sincere adherence to his person and the decision to walk in his footsteps. Faith is a personal encounter with Jesus Christ making, of oneself a disciple of him. This demands a permanent commitment to think like him, to judge like him and to live as he lived. In this way the believer unites himself to the community of disciples and appropriates the faith of the Church.

General Directory for Catechesis (GDC), Congregation for the Clergy, 1997; No. 46

Evangelization

46. The Church "exists in order to evangelize" that is "the carrying forth of the Good News to every sector of the human race so that by its strength it may enter into the hearts of men and renew the human race".

The missionary mandate of Jesus to evangelize has various aspects, all of which, however, are closely connected with each other: "proclaim", (Mk 16:15) "*make disciples and teach*", "*be my witnesses*", "*baptize*", "*do this in memory of me*", (Lk 22:19) "*love one another*" (Jn 15:12) Proclamation, witness, teaching, sacraments, love of neighbor: all of these aspects are the means by which the one Gospel is transmitted and they constitute the essential elements of evangelization itself.

Indeed they are so important that, at times, there is a tendency to identify them with the action of evangelization. However, "no such definition can be accepted for that complex, rich and dynamic reality which is called evangelization". There is the risk of impoverishing it or even of distorting it. Evangelization, on the contrary, must develop its "totality" and completely incorporate its intrinsic bipolarity: witness and proclamation, word and sacrament, interior change and social transformation. Those who evangelize have a "global vision" of evangelization and identify with the overall mission of the Church.

Go and Make Disciples: A National Plan and Strategy for Evangelization in the United States, USCCB, 2002; No. 24-27

24. We know that the word "evangelization" sometimes raises uncomfortable images for Catholics—especially in the culture of the United States, where evangelism has sometimes meant only an individual response to enthusiastic preaching, a style of mass religion, a contrived way to recruit new members, or, at its worst, a way to play on people's needs. Still, we use the word "evangelization" because its root meaning is "Gospel" (Good News) and because it calls us, even if it is uncomfortable, to live the faith of our baptism more openly and to share it more freely.

25. We want to make it clear that evangelization means something special for us as Catholics. We can see what it means by looking at what happens to evangelized people. Not only are they related to Jesus by accepting his Gospel and receiving his Spirit; even more, their lives are changed by becoming disciples, that is, participants in the Church, celebrating God's love in worship and serving others as Jesus did.

26. Some might think of evangelization solely in terms of Jesus and our relationship with him. Yet our relationship with Jesus is found in our relationship with the community of Jesus—the Church. The way to Christ is through the community in which he lives. Did not Jesus say, "I am with you always" and "Whatever you did for one of these least [brothers and sisters of mine], you did for me"? Did not the Jesus who met Paul on the road to Damascus say that he lived in his persecuted followers, the Church? Jesus is present in and among his disciples, the People of God.

27. Evangelization, then, has different implications depending on our relationship to Jesus and his Church. For those of us who practice and live our Catholic faith, it is a call to ongoing growth and renewed conversion. For those who have accepted it only in name, it is a call to re-evangelization. For those who have stopped practicing their faith, it is a call to reconciliation. For children, it is a call to be formed into disciples through the family's faith life and religious education. For other Christians, it is an invitation to know the fullness of our message. For those who have no faith, it is a call to conversion to know Christ Jesus and thus experience a change to new life with Christ and his Church.

Inculturation

“Those who proclaim the Christian message must know and love the culture and the people to whom they bring the message in order for it to be able to transform the culture and the people and make them new in Christ.”
(*National Directory for Catechesis*, USCCB, 2005, p 46)

Read and Reflect:

[Make note of any unfamiliar words and any parts of the reading that particularly strike you.]

General Directory for Catechesis (GDC), Congregation for the Clergy, 1997; **No. 109**
[Go to <http://tinyurl.com/tgju> and scroll to paragraph 109; **OR** see next page.]

On Catechesis in Our Time, Pope John Paul II, 1979; **No. 53**
[Go to <http://tinyurl.com/74bmg> and scroll to paragraph 53; **OR** see next page.]

Our Hearts Were Burning Within Us (OHWB), USCCB, 1999; **No. 84-87**
[Go to <http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/how-we-teach/catechesis/adult-faith-formation/our-hearts.cfm> and scroll to paragraph 84; **OR** consult pp 27-28 in OHWB booklet.]

Questions for Dialogue:

[Be prepared to share your understanding with the group.]

What does it mean to inculturate the faith?

Describe the different cultures present in your parish.

What gift does each culture bring to the “mutual enrichment” called inculturation?

General Directory for Catechesis (GDC), Congregation for the Clergy, 1997; No. 109

Inculturation of the Gospel message

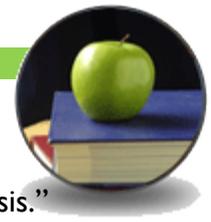
109. The Word of God became man, a concrete man, in space and time and rooted in a specific culture: "Christ by his incarnation committed himself to the particular social and cultural circumstances of the men among whom he lived". This is the original "inculturation" of the word of God and is the model of all evangelization by the Church, "called to bring the power of the Gospel into the very heart of culture and cultures".

'Inculturation' of the faith, whereby in a wonderful exchange are comprised, "all the riches of the nations which have been given to Christ as an inheritance", it is a profound and global process and a slow journey. It is not simply an external adaptation designed to make the Christian message more attractive or superficially decorative. On the contrary, it means the penetration of the deepest strata of persons and peoples by the Gospel which touches them deeply, "going to the very centre and roots" of their cultures.

In this work of inculturation, however, the Christian community must discern, on the one hand, which riches to "take" up as compatible with the faith; on the other, it must seek to "purify" and "transform" those criteria, modes of thought and lifestyles which are contrary to the Kingdom of God. Such discernment is governed by two basic principles: "compatibility with the Gospel and communion with the universal Church". All of the people of God must be involved in this process which "...needs to take place gradually, in such a way that it really is an expression of the community's Christian experience".

On Catechesis in Our Time, Pope John Paul II, 1979; No. 53

53. We can say of catechesis, as well as of evangelization in general, that it is called to bring the power of the Gospel into the very heart of culture and cultures. For this purpose, catechesis will seek to know these cultures and their essential components; it will learn their most significant expressions; it will respect their particular values and riches. In this manner it will be able to offer these cultures the knowledge of the hidden mystery and help them to bring forth from their own living tradition original expressions of Christian life, celebration and thought.



Baptismal Catechumenate

“The baptismal catechumenate is the source of inspiration for all catechesis.”
(*National Directory for Catechesis*, USCCB, 2005; p 115)

Read and Reflect:

[Make note of any unfamiliar words and any parts of the reading that particularly strike you.]

General Directory for Catechesis (GDC), Congregation for the Clergy, 1997; **No. 66, 68**

[This section, though theologically dense, includes some real gems!]

[Go to <http://tinyurl.com/tgju> and scroll to paragraph 66; **OR** see next page.]

National Directory for Catechesis (NDC), USCCB, 2005; p 115-118, if hard copy available
[See summary “Characteristics of the Baptismal Catechumenate” starting on next page.]

Our Hearts Were Burning Within Us (OHWB), USCCB, 1999; **No. 81** (or p 26:3a)

[Go to <http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/how-we-teach/catechesis/adult-faith-formation/our-hearts.cfm> and scroll to paragraph 81; or consult p 26 (3a) in OHWB booklet.]

Questions for Dialogue:

[Be prepared to share your understanding with the group.]

In what ways does it make sense to call the baptismal catechumenate “an inspiring model” for adult faith formation?

What are the implications for AFF of this statement from OHWB: *passive listening is never enough, the goal is always conversion?*



General Directory for Catechesis (GDC), Congregation for the Clergy, 1997; No. 66, 68

Catechesis, at the service of Christian initiation

66. The aim of catechetical activity consists in precisely this: to encourage a living, explicit and fruitful profession of faith. The Church, in order to achieve this, transmits to catechumens and those to be catechized, her living experience of the Gospel, her faith, so that they may appropriate and profess it. Hence, "authentic catechesis is always an orderly and systematic initiation into the revelation that God has given of himself to humanity in Christ Jesus, a revelation stored in the depths of the Church's memory and in Sacred Scripture, and constantly communicated from one generation to the next by a living active *traditio*."

68. In summary, initiatory catechesis, being comprehensive and systematic, cannot be reduced to the circumstantial or the occasional. As it is formation for the Christian life it comprises but surpasses mere instruction. Being essential, it looks to what is "common" for the Christian, without entering into disputed questions nor transforming itself into a form of theological investigation. Finally, being initiatory, it incorporates into the community, which lives, celebrates and bears witness to the faith. It fulfils, at once, initiatory, educational and instructional functions. This inherent richness in the Catechumenate of non-baptized adults should serve to inspire other forms of catechesis.

Characteristics of the Baptismal Catechumenate

1. **Conversion** – It is about forming an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ that calls for a commitment to follow him. This means changing ways of thinking, believing, and acting that are not aligned with what Jesus preached and lived.
2. **Gradual pace** – Forming a relationship and then undertaking the changes called for by that relationship take time. The Church says that time is not to be pre-determined for any individual. The pace is determined by the journey of faith of the individual, witnessed by outward signs. These changes are marked with liturgical rites.
3. **Based on Scripture, Tradition, and the Magisterium** – The Word as we understand it in the Catholic tradition includes all these components. St. Jerome said that ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ. To that aspect of the Word, we add the rich tradition that is Catholicism, and we hand on the teachings of our Church.
4. **Linked to Sunday liturgy** – The way in which the Word is presented is to be tied to the most formative event in our lives: the Sunday liturgy. Catechumens are nurtured during the Mass of Catechumens, or what we know as the Liturgy of the Word. They are then kindly dismissed for immediate and then extended catechesis on that word, where they are offered scriptural exegesis and doctrinal truths to illumine the word, leading to application to their daily lives and missioning to carry out this word in the world.



5. **Systematic** – The system used to present Jesus Christ and the truths of the faith completely is the Paschal Mystery as prayed, proclaimed and preached in the Sunday Liturgy of the Word. This means paying ample attention to the liturgical year in all its communal manifestations. It means helping catechumens see the different emphases of the Gospel writers in each liturgical year. It means joining the community as it births, lives, dies and rises with Christ.
6. **Utilizes Catholic prayer and rituals, and culminates with sacraments** – The apprenticeship of faith that is the catechumenal process helps catechumens appropriate Catholic ways of praying, Catholic rituals and practices, and hands on our understanding of Christ, really present in our sacramental system. It helps reveal the meaning of our symbols through their use and then by reflection upon their power, thus revealing them as mystery: never fully understood.
7. **Sees people as unique** – God knows us all as individuals and loves us individually. The catechumenate echoes that part of the nature of God by not programming a faith journey for catechumens. There are no fixed timetables. Each person takes an individual journey of faith within the community's living of the Paschal Mystery and the community companions them while they come to know Christ.
8. **Respects baptism** – Those who come seeking full communion with the Roman Catholic Church are already members of the household of Christ by virtue of their baptism. The catechumenal journey helps them discover their unique dignity and sons and daughters of the living God, and helps them fully embrace that dignity within the Roman Catholic community. They are not treated the same way as catechumens, for they already have rights and responsibilities by virtue of their baptism.
9. **Happens in community** – While the journey of each catechumen is unique, he or she takes that journey in the company of others: the baptized; other unbaptized people, those with a deep spirituality and those just developing it. They journey with catechumens from all over the diocesan church and indeed, the universal church. They come to understand the call to unity, the demands of communal living, and the wisdom of the community. They learn to reconcile, to carry out acts of charity and justice and to participate in the corporal and spiritual works of mercy in community.
10. **Leads to mission—a discipleship evident to the entire world** – The baptismal catechumenate seeks to form disciples of Jesus Christ, committed to carrying out, in a very public and outward way, the life of Jesus Christ today. It seeks outward signs of conversion in word and deed. It seeks to see catechumens embrace lives of service. It seeks followers of Christ, committed to action for charity and justice, committed to transforming the world into the kingdom of God as Jesus enfleshed it.

Debbie Stollery, used and adapted with permission.



Primacy of Adult Catechesis

“This is the principle form of catechesis, because it is addressed to persons who have the greatest responsibilities and the capacity to live the Christian message in its fully developed form.”
(On Catechesis in our Time, Pope John Paul II, 1979; No.43)

Read and Reflect:

[Make note of any unfamiliar words and any parts of the reading that particularly strike you.]

Our Hearts Were Burning Within Us (OHWB), USCCB, 1999; **No. 38-44**

[Go to <http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/how-we-teach/catechesis/adult-faith-formation/our-hearts.cfm> and scroll to paragraph 38; **OR** consult pp 12-14 of OHWB booklet.]

OHWB, **No. 45-63**

[Go to <http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/how-we-teach/catechesis/adult-faith-formation/our-hearts.cfm> and scroll to paragraph 45; **OR** consult pp 15-20 of OHWB booklet.]

OHWB; **No. 67-73**

[Go to <http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/how-we-teach/catechesis/adult-faith-formation/our-hearts.cfm> and scroll to paragraph 67; **OR** consult pp 22-24 of OHWB booklet.]

Questions for Dialogue:

[Be prepared to share your understanding with the group.]

How does adult faith formation benefit children and youth?

What are the implications for AFF of this statement from OHWB: *Adults need to **question, probe and critically reflect** on the meaning of God’s revelation in their unique lives in order to grow closer to God?* (OHWB No. 52, p 17)



Six Tasks of Catechesis

“As the vitality of the human body depends on the proper function of all its organs, so also the maturation of the Christian life requires that it be cultivated in all its dimensions: knowledge of the faith, liturgical life, moral formation, prayer, belonging to community, missionary spirit. When catechesis omits any of these elements, the Christian faith does not attain full development.”
(*General Directory for Catechesis*, Congregation for the Clergy, 1997, No. 87)

Read and Reflect:

[Make note of anything that strikes you from the reading.]

General Directory for Catechesis (GDC), Congregation for the Clergy, 1997; **No. 85-86**
Go to <http://tinyurl.com/tgiu> and scroll to paragraph 85; **OR** see following pages.]

National Directory for Catechesis (NDC), USCCB, 2005; p 60-63, if hard copy available

Our Hearts Were Burning Within Us (OHWB), USCCB, 1999; **No. 88-96**
[Go to <http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/how-we-teach/catechesis/adult-faith-formation/our-hearts.cfm> and scroll to paragraph 88; **OR** consult pp 28-33 in OHWB booklet.]

Questions for Dialogue:

[Be prepared to share your understanding with the group.]

In your experience of AFF, which of the six tasks have gotten the most attention? Which tasks have gotten the least? Why?

How do you envision the six tasks working as a guide for parish AFF?



General Directory for Catechesis (GDC), Congregation for the Clergy, 1997; No. 85-86

Fundamental tasks of catechesis: helping to know, to celebrate and to contemplate the mystery of Christ

85. The fundamental tasks of catechesis are:

– Promoting knowledge of the faith

Who has encountered Christ desires to know him as much as possible, as well as to know the plan of the Father which he revealed. Knowledge of the faith (*fides quae*) is required by adherence to the faith (*fides qua*). Even in the human order the love which one person has for another causes that person to wish to know the other all the more. Catechesis, must, therefore, lead to "the gradual grasping of the whole truth about the divine plan", by introducing the disciples of Jesus to a knowledge of Tradition and of Scripture, which is "*the sublime science of Christ*". By deepening knowledge of the faith, catechesis nourishes not only the life of faith but equips it to explain itself to the world. The meaning of the Creed, which is a compendium of Scripture and of the faith of the Church, is the realization of this task.

– Liturgical education

Christ is always present in his Church, especially in "liturgical celebrations". Communion with Jesus Christ leads to the celebration of his salvific presence in the sacraments, especially in the Eucharist. The Church ardently desires that all the Christian faithful be brought to that full, conscious and active participation which is required by the very nature of the liturgy and the dignity of the baptismal priesthood. For this reason, catechesis, along with promoting a knowledge of the meaning of the liturgy and the sacraments, must also educate the disciples of Jesus Christ "for prayer, for thanksgiving, for repentance, for praying with confidence, for community spirit, for understanding correctly the meaning of the creeds...", as all of this is necessary for a true liturgical life.

– Moral formation

Conversion to Jesus Christ implies walking in his footsteps. Catechesis must, therefore, transmit to the disciples the attitudes of the Master himself. The disciples thus undertake a journey of interior transformation, in which, by participating in the paschal mystery of the Lord, "they pass from the old man to the new man who has been made perfect in Christ". The Sermon on the Mount, in which Jesus takes up the Decalogue, and impresses upon it the spirit of the beatitudes, is an indispensable point of reference for the moral formation which is most necessary today. Evangelization which "involves the proclamation and presentation of morality", displays all the force of its appeal where it offers not only the proclaimed word but the lived word too. This moral testimony, which is prepared for by catechesis, must always demonstrate the social consequences of the demands of the Gospel.



– *Teaching to pray*

Communion with Jesus Christ leads the disciples to assume the attitude of prayer and contemplation which the Master himself had. To learn to pray with Jesus is to pray with the same sentiments with which he turned to the Father: adoration, praise, thanksgiving, filial confidence, supplication and awe for his glory. All of these sentiments are reflected in the *Our Father*, the prayer which Jesus taught his disciples and which is the model of all Christian prayer. The "*handing on of the Our Father*" is a summary of the entire Gospel and is therefore a true act of catechesis. When catechesis is permeated by a climate of prayer, the assimilation of the entire Christian life reaches its summit. This climate is especially necessary when the catechumen and those to be catechized are confronted with the more demanding aspects of the Gospel and when they feel weak or when they discover the mysterious action of God in their lives.

Other fundamental tasks of catechesis: initiation and education in community life and to mission

86. Catechesis prepares the Christian to live in community and to participate actively in the life and mission of the Church. The Second Vatican Council indicates the necessity for pastors "to form genuine Christian communities" and for catechumens "[to] learn to co-operate actively in building up the Church and its work of evangelization".

– *Education for Community Life*

a) Christian community life is not realized spontaneously. It is necessary to educate it carefully. In this apprenticeship, the teaching of Christ on community life, recounted in the Gospel of St Matthew, calls for attitudes which it is for catechesis to inculcate: the spirit of simplicity and humility ("*unless you turn and become like little children...*" Mt 18:3); solicitude for the least among the brethren ("*but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin...*" Mt 18:6); particular care for those who are alienated ("*Go and search of the one that went astray...*" Mt 18:12); fraternal correction ("*Go and tell him his fault...*" Mt 18:15); common prayer ("*if two of you agree on earth to ask about anything...*" Mt 18:19); mutual forgiveness ("*but seventy times seven...*" Mt 18:22). Fraternal love embraces all these attitudes ("*love one another; even as I have loved you...*" Jn 13:34).

b) In developing this community sense, catechesis takes special note of the ecumenical dimension and encourages fraternal attitudes toward members of other Christian churches and ecclesial communities. Thus catechesis in pursuing this objective should give a clear exposition of all the Church's doctrine and avoid formulations or expressions that might give rise to error. It also implies "a suitable knowledge of other confessions", with which there are shared elements of faith: "the written word of God, the life of grace, faith, hope and charity, and the other interior gifts of the Holy Spirit". Catechesis will possess an ecumenical dimension in the measure in which it arouses and nourishes "a true desire for unity", not easy irenicism, but perfect unity, when the Lord himself wills it and by those means by which he wishes that it should be brought about.



– *Missionary initiation*

a) Catechesis is also open to the missionary dimension. This seeks to equip the disciples of Jesus to be present as Christians in society through their professional, cultural and social lives. It also prepares them to lend their cooperation to the different ecclesial services, according to their proper vocation. This task of evangelization originates, for the lay faithful, in the sacraments of Christian initiation and in the secular character of their vocation. It is also important that every means should be used to encourage vocations to the Priesthood, and to the different forms of consecration to God in religious and apostolic life and to awaken special missionary vocations. The evangelical attitudes which Jesus taught his disciples when he sent them on mission are precisely those which catechesis must nourish: to seek out the lost sheep, proclaim and heal at the same time, to be poor, without money or knapsack; to know how to accept rejection and persecution; to place one's trust in the Father and in the support of the Holy Spirit; to expect no other reward than the joy of working for the Kingdom.

b) In educating for this missionary sense, catechesis is also necessary for interreligious dialogue, if it renders the faithful capable of meaningful communication with men and women of other religions. Catechesis shows that the link between the Church and non-Christian religions is, in the first place, the common origin and end of the human race, as well as the "many seeds of the word which God has sown in these religions". Catechesis too helps to reconcile and, at the same time, to distinguish between "the proclamation of Christ" and "inter-religious dialogue". These two elements, while closely connected, must not be confused or identified. Indeed, "dialogue does not dispense from evangelization".

B. Revisit and Amend your Core Values in Light of New Learning.

C. Write a Mission Statement for your Parish AFF Ministry Team.

See Duggan p17 and incorporate the following:

Why do we exist? (purpose)

What will we do? (task)

What principles guide us? (values)

[See Appendix 2 for examples from AFF Ministry Teams around our diocese.]

D. Display your Mission Statement at Group Meetings.

Share your vision statement with your pastor. Let the energy of the AFF Team energize him!