

Scriptural Context

Genesis 18:16-33	Abraham boldly intercedes with God
Exodus 17:8-13	Israel prevails as long as Moses' arms are raised to God
Exodus 32:1-14	Moses questions God over the fate of his erring people
1 Samuel 1:9-19	Hannah's longing issues in a powerful prayer
1 Kings 3:3-15	Solomon pleases God by asking for a heart of wisdom
Luke 6:12-16	Jesus spends the night in prayer before choosing the Twelve
Luke 22:31-32	Jesus prays for Peter at his hour of testing
Luke 22:39-46	Jesus agonizes in the Garden in fervent prayer
John 14:12-14; 15:7	The Son of God's promise for those who pray
1 Thessalonians 5:18	Prayer as a constant way of life
Hebrews 5:7-10	Jesus too learned how to pray
James 5:16-18	Elijah's story shows the power of prayer

II: Ways of Prayer

Session Description

This session introduces the catechist to various forms of prayer and explains their relationship to other beliefs and expressions of the Christian life.

Themes

- ÿ Spontaneous, personal, communal, intercessory and other forms of prayer and devotions
- ÿ Relationships of personal prayer to public prayer in the liturgy and sacraments
- ÿ Connection of prayer to Christian moral living
- ÿ Popular cultural forms of religious devotion

Focusing the Session

All prayer is a response to the activity of the Spirit within us, who helps us to pray. The Liturgy of the Hours, paraliturgies or scriptural celebrations, personal devotions such as the rosary, and other forms of prayer, help people to pray individually, as a family, and as a community. Catechesis for prayer calls people to a strengthening of the covenant relationship with God in liturgy, sacramental celebrations and service to one another.

Instructional Objectives

In conducting this session the facilitator will:

- ÿ Introduce various forms of prayer.

Focusing the Session

The Christian path is a life-long journey of conversion to the mind of Christ (1 Cor. 2:16) as revealed by the Spirit and expressed in the morality flowing from our response to the gift of God's grace. God has formed us by first acting justly toward us. The Fourth through the Tenth Commandments specify the patterns of loving relationship we are to develop with fellow human beings. In their light we are called to attend to issues of social justice guided by the Scriptures and the Church's social teachings.

Instructional Objectives

In conducting this session, the facilitator will:

- ÿ Review the basic principles of the Church's social teachings.
- ÿ Distinguish between obedience determined by the "letter" or the "spirit," i.e. between "act-centered" and "life-centered" morality.
- ÿ Review the basic understanding of the morality of human acts in dealing with contemporary issues.
- ÿ Explain Christian moral living so as to correlate personal morality and social responsibility.
- ÿ Provide examples that may be used to teach others about caring for others' needs and to promote justice and peace in their homes (or families) and in the world.
- ÿ Use a variety of teaching methods in the teaching of contemporary issues which catechists can then use to facilitate the growth of moral consciousness in students.

Catechist Competencies

As a result of this session catechists will be able to:

- ÿ Discuss the basic principles of the Church's social teachings and apply them to circumstances today.
- ÿ Distinguish between an externally focused "act-centered" morality and a morality which focuses on attitudes.
- ÿ Provide examples that will encourage learners to practice becoming responsive to others' needs and so better able to promote justice and peace in the world.
- ÿ Trace the relationship between the Ten Commandments and the second of the two "Great Commands" to love God and neighbor.

Special Points from the Documents

- ÿ The social dimension of morality (*Sharing* #165; CCC #2234–2246)

III: Initiating Prayer with Others

Session Description

This session introduces the role of the catechist as a teacher and leader of prayer.

Themes

- Role of prayer in catechesis
- Basic skills for planning and leading prayer in groups

Focusing the Session

Building on a sense of wonder, catechists are called to lead their learning communities in prayer, to help them to meditate on God's word, and to provide opportunities for prayer. Catechesis for prayer calls the catechist to create environments in which learners may discover the inner place where God speaks intimately with them.

Instructional Objectives

In conducting this session the facilitator will:

- Express a basic understanding of the role of the catechist as a leader of prayer.
- Introduce at least two age-appropriate skills that catechists may use as leaders and planners of prayer.
- Provide examples of how catechists' personal commitment in prayer is the foundation of their role to lead others in prayer.
- Lead catechists in an exercise of constructing a prayer for a special feast of the Church.
- Demonstrate a variety of methods for teaching prayer and praying.

Catechist Competencies

As a result of this session, catechists will be able to:

- Articulate the relationship between personal prayer and catechetical ministry.
- Evidence an ability to fulfill the role of catechist as a leader of prayer.
- Demonstrate an ability to teach at least two age-appropriate skills for prayer.
- Model to others the importance and the benefits of being a prayerful person.
- Demonstrate an age-appropriate prayer for a seasonal feast.

Themes

- "Covenant" as the foundational image of the relationship between God and humanity
- Church's basic teachings on sin, grace, justification and sanctification
- Development of virtue by the cooperation of inner discipline and the power of the Holy Spirit
- Ten Commandments as the outline of the graced relationship with God

Focusing the Session

As God graciously saved Israel from Egypt before giving the Ten Commandments, so God's grace is the foundation for the moral life. Where "sin has abounded" in the rejection of the divine-human relationship based on creation, "grace has abounded even more" by recreating that relationship based on the gift of justification (Rom. 5:20). This grace enhances natural human virtues and empowers the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity. Only in the context of grace does the "keeping" of the Ten Commandments make sense.

Instructional Objectives

In conducting this session, the facilitator will:

- Provide a clear understanding of sin and grace within a covenantal relationship to God.
- Model methods of presenting Christian moral teaching according to developmental levels.
- Use various teaching methods which the catechists can in turn use with their students.

Catechist Competencies

As a result of this session, catechists will be able to:

- Define the meaning of the biblical concept of "covenant" and explain a passage in the Bible where it appears.
- Trace the relationship between the Ten Commandments and the first of the two "Great Commands" to love God and neighbor.
- Articulate the Church's teachings on sin, grace and justification.
- Describe real-life examples demonstrating the Christian's responsibility towards God, neighbor and self.
- State a definition of the "theological" virtues of faith, hope and charity.

Themes

- Ÿ Foundations of the Christian understanding of sacraments in the incarnation, life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ
- Ÿ Focus of sacraments in the personal encounter between the risen Christ and the believer within the Church
- Ÿ Sacraments as communications of the wisdom and power of God using word, rite and symbol
- Ÿ Role of sacraments in marking and promoting the stages of growth in the Christian life

Focusing the Session

The saving grace of God appeared in its fullness when the Word of God took flesh and gave new life to the world. Likewise God uses material means and human agency to bring the Paschal Mystery of Christ to all ages. This is the basis for the sacramental ministry of the Church. Sacraments are external, visible indications of the invisible Word; they both express and communicate grace through symbol, rite, and word. Through them God both signifies and creates relationships of grace between ourselves, God and neighbor.

Instructional Objectives

In conducting this session the facilitator will:

- Ÿ Emphasize how sacraments are essential to Catholic faith and to the faithful Christian life.
- Ÿ Articulate the role of symbol and the meaning of ritual actions in the sacramental celebration.
- Ÿ Review the Church's teaching on the meaning of Jesus' institution of the sacraments.
- Ÿ Trace the history of the development of selected sacraments as seen in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and other sources.
- Ÿ Discuss the relationship between the human word and the Word of God in the celebration of sacraments.
- Ÿ Demonstrate a variety of teaching methods for catechists to use.

Catechist Competencies

As a result of this session, catechists will be able to:

- Ÿ Express an understanding of the role of symbol in the Church's life, and the relationship between word and rite in its sacramental life.
- Ÿ Articulate the Church's understanding of how the sacraments bring the presence of Christ to the whole Church, present and celebrate

4. Moral Life

I: The Dignity of the Human Person

Session Description

This session shows that the basis of the moral life is the responsibility conferred on us by the freedom which derives from human likeness to God, and explores the sources for understanding our responsibility.

Themes

- Ÿ Creation in the image of God as the basis for human freedom
- Ÿ Human vocation to beatitude
- Ÿ Revelation of our responsibility in natural law, conscience, the teachings of Scripture and the Church
- Ÿ Discrimination between good and evil
- Ÿ Family as the primary source of virtue

Focusing the Session

The creation stories of Genesis place human dignity within the grandeur of creation and reflect on humanity's unique gift of freedom, while our Lord's Beatitudes reveal the ultimate blessedness to which we are called. Within this framework we are given the knowledge of our responsibility to choose the good in the face of the possibility of choosing evil.

Instructional Objectives

In conducting this session, the facilitator will:

- Ÿ Provide an awareness of the relationship between the image of God in humanity and human freedom.
- Ÿ Use a variety of teaching methods in the teaching of moral concerns which catechists can use to facilitate the growth of moral consciousness in learners.
- Ÿ Provide awareness of the close connection between the family and the dignity of the person.

Catechist Competencies

As a result of this session catechists will be able to:

- Ÿ Articulate the Church's teaching on genuine freedom as living in harmony with God's design for humankind.
- Ÿ List the sources which describe moral responsibility.

- ÿ Necessity of continual renewal of relationship with God and neighbor by the grace of Christ and the commitment of the heart
- ÿ Service as an essential expression of the graced life

Focusing the Session

The sacraments are symbolic actions which represent, effect and celebrate the salvation of Christ and the coming of the Spirit in the life of the Church and its members. Christian Initiation into the grace of Christ and the life of the Church is signified and effected through Baptism and Confirmation; this grace and life are continuously nourished through the Eucharist. The sacraments of Penance and Anointing of the Sick bring wholeness and healing to the brokenness of spirit caused by sin and the brokenness of body caused by sickness. God's calling to a life of committed service to others is heard and responded to in the sacraments of Matrimony and Holy Orders.

Instructional Objectives

In conducting this session the facilitator will:

- ÿ Explore the development of the theology of each sacrament.
- ÿ Provide examples that relate the Church's teaching on the meaning of the sacraments to moments of transition in life.
- ÿ Help catechists recall their experiences of grace through the exercise of "sacramental memory," and reflect on their meaning as it has developed over time.
- ÿ Explore the experience of sacraments celebrated at the age level of participants whom the catechist teaches, and ways their impact and meaning can be continually deepened, especially in a family context.
- ÿ Demonstrate age-appropriate activities that teach and celebrate the sacraments.

Catechist Competencies

As a result of this session, catechists will be able to:

- ÿ Articulate briefly the meaning of each sacrament.
- ÿ Provide examples that show how sacraments relate to moments of transition in life.
- ÿ Recall memories (using others' testimony, pictures, certificates, artifacts, etc., as well as one's own memory) of Baptism and First Communion, and express how the meaning of these moments has changed through the years.

Focusing the Session

The celebration of the Eucharist is at the heart of Christian life in the Church. In it the sacrifice of the Lord's passion and death is celebrated as a ritual action that is "a sacrament of love, sign of unity, a bond of charity" (Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy) that calls the Christian community to become a "eucharistic people," dedicated to healing and service. This session explains the main components of the Liturgy of the Eucharist, explores the meaning of the sacrament, and examines its implications for Christian living.

Instructional Objectives

In conducting this session the facilitator will:

- ÿ Introduce the major components of the eucharistic celebration: words, music, postures and gestures, symbols.
- ÿ Clarify the meaning of Eucharist as sacrifice, meal, and memorial.
- ÿ Explore the Eucharistic Prayer as the prayer of the people, comparing the interaction of the words and actions of the presider with the words and actions of the assembly.
- ÿ Work out the implications of the Eucharist in the context of discussing the "fruits" of Holy Communion.
- ÿ Use a variety of teaching methods that the catechists can use in communicating the meaning of the Eucharist to their students.

Catechist Competencies

As a result of this session, catechists will be able to:

- ÿ Explain the main components of the Liturgy of the Eucharist.
- ÿ Articulate the theologies of the Eucharist as sacrifice, meal, memorial, and the implications for Christian life today.
- ÿ Provide examples of how participants in the Eucharist are called to mediate the presence of Christ to the world.

Special Points from the Documents

- ÿ As often as the sacrifice of the Cross is celebrated on the altar, the work of our redemption is carried out (*Constitution on the Church* #3)
- ÿ From the Eucharist grace is poured forth upon us as from a fountain (*Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* #10)
- ÿ Eucharist a sacrament of love, sign of unity, a bond of charity, a paschal banquet in which Christ is consumed, the mind is filled with grace, and a pledge of future glory is given (*Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* #47)

Baptism

John 3:1-6 We are born again through water and Spirit
Romans 6:1-4 Baptism joins us to Christ in his death

Confirmation

2 Corinthians 1:21-22 God seals us in Christ by the Spirit

Penance

Mark 2:1-12 Forgiveness of sins flows from Jesus' words
John 20:19-23 Jesus gives the disciples his power to forgive

Marriage

Genesis 2:18-25 God made us for relating to each other
Matthew 19:1-15 The vision of Eden is still God's desire
1 Corinthians 7:1-40 States of life and the calling of God

Orders

1 Timothy 1:18 Ministry signified by prophecy
2 Timothy 1:6-7 Kindling the gift given by laying on of hands

Anointing

James 5:13-18 Prayer and anointing for healing

III: Catechesis on the Sacraments

Session Description

This session considers the role of catechesis in appreciating the dynamics of word, rite and symbol which make up the valid and fruitful celebration of the sacraments.

Themes

- ÿ Church's requirements of the inner disposition and external means necessary for proper and fruitful sacramental celebration
- ÿ Place of the sacrament and the meaning of its imagery in light of the whole story of salvation
- ÿ Meaning of the various elements involved in the celebration of the sacrament: word, rite, symbol
- ÿ Effects proper to each sacrament

Focusing the Session

Catechesis prepares people for "full, conscious and active participation" in the liturgy, guides them into celebrating the sacraments fruitfully, and helps deepen their experience and understanding of the sacramental encounter with Christ. Catechesis for sacraments includes reflection on the elements of the rite, its connection with the other

framing of the Lectionary readings, the function of story in the celebration of the Mass, and the role of the homily. Jesus is present in his Word no less than in the sacrament of his body. The Liturgy of the Word gathers the people around the stories of the long relationship between God and God's People, bringing our Savior vividly into their midst, and inspiring their thanksgiving and praise. In the Liturgy of the Word, symbols, music, and ritual actions help us to savor the texts and to pray through them. The Lectionary provides a selection and arrangement of Scripture coordinated with the seasons of creation and of the Church.

Instructional Objectives

In conducting this session the facilitator will:

- ÿ Introduce the theological importance of the Liturgy of the Word.
- ÿ Emphasize the presence of Christ in the proclaimed word.
- ÿ Relate the Liturgy of the Word to the context of the eucharistic celebration.
- ÿ Introduce the Lectionary and help catechists to use it effectively.
- ÿ Use a variety of teaching methods which the catechists themselves can use.
- ÿ Model the importance of personal response to the Liturgy of the Word.

Catechist Competencies

As a result of this session, catechists will be able to:

- ÿ Describe and interpret the symbols and actions of the Liturgy of the Word.
- ÿ Demonstrate an understanding of Christ's presence in the proclaimed word.
- ÿ Articulate the importance of the Liturgy of the Word in the context of the eucharistic celebration.
- ÿ Explain the basic structure of the Lectionary.
- ÿ Demonstrate how the Lectionary might be used as a resource for catechesis.
- ÿ Explain the need for languages of proclamation other than English.

Special Points from the Documents

- ÿ Christ is present in his word since it is he himself who speaks when the Scriptures are read in the Church (*Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* #7)

- Ÿ Reconciliation requires three elements from the penitent: contrition, confession, and reparation (CCC #1450–1460)
- Ÿ Parents, as primary educators of their children, are to be intimately involved in their children's catechesis for sacraments (*Sharing* #119, 121, 126; *Code of Canon Law* #851, 890, 914)
- Ÿ In the sacrament of Matrimony a bride and groom confer the sacrament upon each other by the exchange of their consent to be bound to each other (CCC #1621, 1623, 1625–1627)

Documentary References

See Bibliography for secondary sources.

Catechism of the Catholic Church

Baptism #1229–1284

Confirmation #1297–1314

Eucharist #1345–1405

Reconciliation #1434–1484

Anointing of the Sick #1514–1525

Holy Orders #1572–1589

Matrimony #1621–1658

Sharing the Light of Faith

Baptism #117

Confirmation #119

Eucharist #121–122

Reconciliation #125–126

Anointing of the Sick #128

Matrimony #131

Holy Orders #133

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults

Policies and Procedures of the Archdiocese of Chicago, Book IV: The Sanctifying Office of the Church

Note: Use the Scripture Contexts from the previous two sessions.

7. Scripture

I: Scripture in Catechesis

Session Description

This session presents a Catholic understanding of the Bible, and addresses its practical implications for catechesis.

Themes

- Ÿ Catholic understanding of Scripture

- Ÿ Guide the catechists through a Sunday celebration, identifying the principle actions of the assembly.
- Ÿ Provide exercises to help catechists discover the meaning of the liturgical year.
- Ÿ Use a variety of teaching methods (including experiential and performative) which catechists themselves can use.
- Ÿ Sensitize catechists to the relationship between culture(s), symbols and liturgy.

Catechist Competencies

As a result of this session, catechists will be able to:

- Ÿ Articulate the relationship between liturgy and catechesis.
- Ÿ Distinguish types of liturgies.
- Ÿ Demonstrate sensitivity to the symbolic modes of expression in liturgy, and design a group experience to sensitize their audiences.
- Ÿ Identify places where Scripture is woven into the liturgy.
- Ÿ Summarize two major shifts in the Church's understanding of liturgy during its history.
- Ÿ Identify the major parts of the Mass.
- Ÿ Relate the cycles of the liturgical year to the Christian faith journey.

- Ÿ Demonstrate how the cycles of the liturgical year enrich catechesis.
- Ÿ Identify some liturgical signs and symbols used by people of other cultures and explain their meaning.

Special Points from the Documents

- Ÿ Liturgy and catechesis support each other (*Sharing* #36, 112–113; *On Catechesis in Our Time* #23; CCC #1074–1075)
- Ÿ The liturgy is the summit toward which the Church's activity is directed; at the same time it is the fount from which all the Church's power flows (*Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* #10)
- Ÿ The Church earnestly desires that all the faithful be led to that full, conscious, and active participation in liturgical celebrations (*Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* #14)
- Ÿ Liturgy is an action of "the whole Christ," i.e. Jesus Christ the head together with the Church his body, both those on earth and those in heaven (CCC #1136-39)
- Ÿ Celebrating the liturgical year exerts a special sacramental power and influence which strengthens Christian life (*Sharing* #144; CCC #1163–1167)

ÿ Incorporate effectively into their teaching the concepts of divine inspiration, revelation, and biblical notions of truth, authorship and history.

Special Points from the Documents

- ÿ Study of the Bible is the soul of theology (*Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation* #24)
- ÿ Scripture and Tradition have one source in God (CCC #80-82)
- ÿ Scripture teaches the truth "for the sake of our salvation" (CCC #105-110)
- ÿ To read Scripture rightly, one must be attentive to what the authors wanted to affirm and what God wanted to reveal through them (CCC #109-114)
- ÿ Proper understanding of the Word of God requires that we study the texts as human documents using historical and literary critical methods (*The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church* I,A)
- ÿ Responsible study flows into the interpretation of the Bible in the daily life of the Church (*The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church* IV,A-C)

Documentary References (see Bibliography for secondary sources)

Divino Afflante Spiritu ("By the Spirit's Divine Inspiration": Pius XII, 1943)
Vatican II, *Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation* #1-13, 21-25
On Catechesis in Our Time #27
Catechism of the Catholic Church #80-82, 105-114, 120, 131-133.
The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church (Pontifical Biblical Commission, 1993)

Scripture Contexts

Deuteronomy 31:9	Moses writes down Torah and entrusts it to the elders
2 Kings 22:8-23:3	Rediscovery of Torah in the temple gives new life to faith
Nehemiah 8:1-12	The people are profoundly moved by Ezra's reading of Torah
John 20:30-31	These things are written so that you will believe and have life
Acts 8:26-39	The reader of Scripture needs an interpreter to understand
2 Timothy 3:14-16	All Scripture brings spiritual profit

Suggested Participant Resource

Study Bible

II: The Old Testament

Session Description

This session surveys the Old Testament and its importance to Christian life and catechesis.

ÿ Use a variety of teaching methods which the catechists themselves can use.

Catechist Competencies

As a result of this session, catechists will be able to:

- ÿ Articulate the meaning of the Communion of Saints.
- ÿ Explain the special role of Mary in the Church from a scriptural and theological perspective.
- ÿ Relate the ministry of the saints to life in the Church today, including the witness of saints among differing cultures.

Special Points from the Documents

- ÿ The Mother of God is a type of the Church in the order of faith, charity, and perfect union with Christ (*Dogmatic Constitution on the Church* #63)
- ÿ Mary is Mother of Christ and Mother of the Church (*Sharing* #106; CCC #484-511, 963-975)
- ÿ We look for fellowship in the communion of saints and seek their intercession (*Sharing* #107; CCC #946-952)

Documentary References

(see Bibliography for secondary sources)
Vatican II, *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church* #52-69
General Catechetical Directory #68
On Catechesis in Our Time #73
Catechism of the Catholic Church #946-977, 491-492, 488-511
Sharing the Light of Faith #106-107

Scripture Contexts

Genesis 3:14-15	The serpent will bruise her heel but she will crush his head
Isaiah 7:10-14	God's own sign: a virgin will conceive
Luke 1:26-56	The annunciation to Mary; and her song, the Magnificat
Luke 2:19	Mary treasures up and ponders mystery of her Son
Luke 2:34-35	Simeon prophesies suffering for Jesus' mother
John 2:1-12	Mary beseeches Jesus to help her friends
John 19:25-27	The Blessed Mother becomes the mother of the disciples
Acts 1:13-14	Mary appears in the Upper Room awaiting the Spirit's descent
Hebrews 12:18-24	The vast assembly of the communion of saints.
Revelation 7:9-17	A multitude no one can number

- ÿ Present some Old Testament themes essential to the formation of the New Testament and the Christian life.
- ÿ Demonstrate how the Hebrew and Jewish people expressed the presence of God in their lives.

Special Points from the Documents

- ÿ Christians venerate the Hebrew Scriptures as the true Word of God (CCC #121-123; *Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation* #14-16)
- ÿ Jewish faith as an authentic response to God's revelation (CCC #839-840)
- ÿ Church condemnation of anti-Semitism (*Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions* #5)

Documentary References

(see Bibliography for secondary sources)

Vatican II, *Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation* #14–16
 Vatican II, *Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions*
Catechism of the Catholic Church #120–124, 128–130, 134
The New American Bible with Revised New Testament
The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church

Scripture Contexts

Deuteronomy 6:1-9	Essence of the Old Testament is loving and obeying the one God
Psalms 19:8-12	The law of God brings strength, wisdom, justice and joy
Psalms 119	A meditation on the law as the place where we meet God
Matthew 5:17-18	Jesus came not to abolish the law and prophets, but fulfill
Luke 1:67-79	Salvation dawning with John the Baptist fulfills ancient hopes
Luke 24:25-32, 44-47	Jesus explains to bewildered disciples how he fulfills Scripture
Romans 11:25-29	Though not accepting the Gospel Jews are God's eternal beloved
Romans 15:4	Whatever was written long ago was for our instruction and hope

Suggested Participant Resource

Study Bible

III: The New Testament

Session Description

This session surveys the New Testament and its importance to Christian life and catechesis.

Focusing the Session

Any understanding of the teaching of the Church is enhanced by a study of the development of the Church through time. The Church has had both great success and many failures. Becoming more aware of Church history helps catechists to see how the story of the Church is the result of decisions made by people over centuries, and to gain a larger view of God's direction of the Church through time.

Instructional Objectives

In conducting this session the facilitator will:

- ÿ Introduce participants to the main outline of Church history, especially in the West.
- ÿ Provide examples that illustrate reasons for the Church's success and failures.
- ÿ Discuss the period of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation (16th and 17th centuries) as the source of major divisions within Christianity today.
- ÿ Convey the ongoing ecumenical efforts in the Church since Vatican II.

Catechist Competencies

As a result of this session, catechists will be able to:

- ÿ Embrace a historical perspective of the Church.
- ÿ Provide examples of Christians in history who have influenced the faith they share.
- ÿ Demonstrate the ability to share what they have learned by devising a time line marked by the major events in Church history.
- ÿ Articulate some of the reasons why divisions exist in Christian churches today.

Special Points from the Documents

- ÿ The Church fully supports the modern movement to restore Christian unity (*Decree on Ecumenism* #1-2)
- ÿ Even those outside its borders, if they believe in Christ and are properly baptized, are in some, though imperfect, communion with the Catholic Church (*Decree on Ecumenism* #3)
- ÿ Many gifts and graces of Christ exist outside the borders of the Catholic Church (*Decree on Ecumenism* #3)
- ÿ The Catholic Church rejects nothing of what is true and holy in the religions of the world (*Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions* #2)

- ÿ Draw a connection between one important theme of the New Testament and their personal faith lives.
- ÿ Use interactive and age-appropriate methods of Scripture study.

Special Points from the Documents

- ÿ The center of the New Testament is the Paschal Mystery of our Lord (*Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation #17*)
- ÿ Three stages in the formation of the Gospels can be distinguished (CCC #121-124; *Instruction on the Historical Truth of the Gospels*)
- ÿ The Church intentionally canonized the four Gospels with all their diversity (*Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation #18*)
- ÿ The Synoptic Gospels share a common tradition but view it from different angles (*Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation #19*)

Documentary References

(see Bibliography for secondary sources)

- Vatican II, *Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation #17-20*
Instruction on the Historical Truth of the Gospels (Pontifical Biblical Commission, 1964)
Catechism of the Catholic Church #121-124
The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church (Pontifical Biblical Commission, 1993)

Scripture Contexts

Isaiah 40:1-5	God's sorrowing people are comforted with news of salvation
Isaiah 43:14-21	The Creator and King of Israel is doing something utterly new
Jeremiah 31:31-34	God promises a new covenant whose law is written on hearts
Matthew 24:35	Heaven and earth may pass away, but Jesus' words will not
Mark 1:1	Jesus' good news creates a unique Christian word: "Gospel"
Luke 1:1-4	The evangelist searched out all the traditions about Jesus
John 14:26	The Holy Spirit comes to remind us of everything Jesus taught
Romans 1:1-7	Paul announces his "Gospel of the Son of God and Son of David"
2 Corinthians 1:19-20	However many promises God has made, they are "Yes" in Jesus
2 Corinthians 3:1-6	The new covenant flows from the Spirit who gives life
Hebrews 9:1-15	Jesus' blood is not an image but the reality of the new covenant

Suggested Participant Resource

Study Bible

consciences of its members as citizens. The laity are called by Baptism and Confirmation to be witnesses to Christ in the world.

Instructional Objectives

In conducting this session the facilitator will:

- ÿ Articulate a vision of the Church as the continuation of Christ's life in the world.
- ÿ Provide an in-depth understanding of the Church in terms of each of its characteristics as one, holy, catholic and apostolic.
- ÿ Relate the characteristics of the Church to its social mission.
- ÿ Provide current examples of the Church's involvement in the political sphere.
- ÿ Clarify the duties of Christians to family and social life.
- ÿ Use various teaching methods which the catechists in turn can use with their students.

Catechist Competencies

As a result of this session, catechists will be able to:

- ÿ Demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between Christ and Church.
- ÿ Articulate the meaning of the Church as one, holy, catholic and apostolic.
- ÿ Provide examples that show an appreciation of the various roles of the mission of the laity in the Church.
- ÿ Provide examples that relate the social mission of the Church to their daily lives and activities.
- ÿ Show examples that demonstrate the relationship of the Church to the political world.

Special Points from the Documents

- ÿ The Church, in Christ is in the nature of a sacrament, a sign and instrument, that is, of communion with God and of unity among people (*Dogmatic Constitution on the Church #1*)
- ÿ Marks of the Church as one, holy, catholic and apostolic (*Dogmatic Constitution on the Church #8*; *Sharing #72*; CCC #811–870)
- ÿ The Church is at once holy and always in need of purification (*Dogmatic Constitution on the Church #8*)
- ÿ Biblical basis of Church's social ministry (*Sharing #151–154*)
- ÿ The laity are called to participate in the mission of the Church (CCC #897–913)

Catechist Competencies

As a result of this session catechists will be able to:

- ÿ Sketch the background and structure of the Apostle's Creed and the Nicene Creed.
- ÿ Compose a prayer that recognizes the central focus of the Christian revelation of God as Trinity.
- ÿ Reflect on personal experiences of the goodness of creation.
- ÿ Express an understanding of why no one image, description or name of God can encompass the reality of God.

Special Points from the Documents

- ÿ The Church's creeds are one of the "ecclesial signs" which serve as sources of catechesis (*Sharing* #45)
- ÿ The "integral, vital substance" handed down through the creed provides "the fundamental nucleus of the mystery of the One and Triune God" (*Sharing* #45)
- ÿ The whole content of catechesis should be both Christ-centered ("christocentric") and God-centered ("theocentric"); therefore it must be "trinitarian" (*General Catechetical Directory* #40-41; *Sharing* #47)
- ÿ The living God is revealed as merciful and gracious, and as the source of truth and love (*CCC* #199-227)
- ÿ The reality of God transcends all language or formulas (*CCC* #239)

- ÿ The work of salvation is the common work of the Trinity (*CCC* #257-260)
- ÿ As God upholds all creation, so God can call to life those dead through sin (*CCC* #296-298; *Sharing* #83-86)

Documentary References

(see Bibliography for secondary sources)

General Catechetical Directory #41-43, 47-49

On Catechesis in Our Time #28, 59-61

Sharing the Light of Faith #49-52, 83-86

Catechism of the Catholic Church #199-324

Scripture Contexts

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| Exodus 3:1-17 | God intimately reveals the divine name I AM at burning bush |
| Exodus 33:18-34:9 | Moses presses to see God's glory, but "no one sees me and lives" |
| Job 40:1-42:6 | Against God's greatness and creation's panorama, we are small |

Instructional Objectives

In conducting this session the facilitator will:

- ÿ Introduce various biblical images and models of the Church.
- ÿ Provide examples that demonstrate the Catholic understanding of the teaching office of the Church.
- ÿ Sketch the structure of the universal Church and the Archdiocese of Chicago.
- ÿ Use various teaching methods which the catechists in turn can use with their students.

Catechist Competencies

As a result of this session, catechists will be able to:

- ÿ Articulate how ecclesiological images and models help us to explore and appreciate the mystery of the Church.
- ÿ Provide examples of how these images and models relate to their own lives and concerns.
- ÿ Describe the function of the teaching office of the Church in catechesis.
- ÿ Show how Rome relates to the local Church, and declare their parish's relationship to the archdiocese, i.e. who the local bishop is, what deanery the parish is in, etc.

Special Points from the Documents

- ÿ Images of the Church as mystery, people of God, body of Christ, servant, sign of the kingdom, etc. (*Dogmatic Constitution on the Church* #1-17; *Sharing* #66-69; *CCC* #753-757)
- ÿ The function of the teaching office of the Church (*Dogmatic Constitution on the Church* #18-38; *Sharing* #47, 69, 74, 104; *CCC* #871-896)
- ÿ The family as the first church, the "domestic church," or the church of the home (*Dogmatic Constitution on the Church* #11; *Familiaris Consortio* #21; *Letter to Families* #15; *Sharing* #226)
- ÿ Role of the Christian family (*CCC* #2204-2231)

Documentary References

See Bibliography for secondary sources.

Vatican II, *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church* #1-38

General Catechetical Directory #65-67

Catechism of the Catholic Church #770-797, 874-913

Sharing the Light of Faith #63-71, 93-96

Focusing the Session

The Church's message, indeed its very existence, is rooted in the incarnation, life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ. All Christians in general and catechists in particular should understand Jesus as the Messiah who fulfilled the law and prophets, the Lord who calls us to become disciples, the Word of God who reveals God on earth, and the King who will judge the living and dead. The only adequate response to such a revelation is whole-hearted faith and discipleship, which forms the foundation of the Christian life.

Instructional Objectives

In conducting this session the facilitator will:

- ÿ Articulate the importance of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ for the faith of the Church and of each Christian.
- ÿ Discuss the Church's understanding of the humanity and divinity of Jesus.
- ÿ Demonstrate the diversity of images of Jesus by reference to the "titles" ascribed to him in the New Testament, e.g., Son of God, Son of Man, Lord, Christ, etc.
- ÿ Clarify "faith" as theological concept, experience of the heart, and way of acting and being.
- ÿ Provide age-appropriate interactive methods for teaching about Jesus as the model for Christian life.
- ÿ Express his/her personal perspective on the conviction that the living Jesus Christ is the heart of catechesis.

Catechist Competencies

As a result of this session, catechists will be able to:

- ÿ Articulate an understanding of the term "Paschal Mystery."
- ÿ Cite and explain Catholic teaching on the humanity and divinity of Jesus in the Catechism and other sources.
- ÿ Explain the meaning of at least three of the titles ascribed to Jesus in the New Testament.
- ÿ Describe the implications of Jesus as the model for Christian life.
- ÿ Trace the connection between Jesus' person and work on the one hand, and the life of faith on the other. (For instance, answer the question, "What practical difference does it make to you that Jesus rose from the dead?")
- ÿ Explain from the Bible and from personal experience the meaning of the concept of "faith."

Focusing the Session

Personal development, personality type and environment profoundly influence a person's faith development. Understanding the process of development is an essential skill for catechesis. Catechists can work more effectively when they have a clear perception of the life situation in which catechesis takes place.

Instructional Objectives

In conducting this session the facilitator will:

- ÿ Explore various stages of human development and personality types, and their implications for the growth of faith.
- ÿ Offer catechists the opportunity to reflect on the experience of their own faith development in its various stages.
- ÿ Examine practical ways to communicate the Good News which are appropriate to students in their various stages of development.
- ÿ Use a variety of materials and techniques to engage the participants in the learning process.

Catechist Competencies

As a result of this session, catechists will be able to:

- ÿ Identify the various stages and characteristics of personal development and personality types, and how faith development is related to them.
- ÿ Discern areas for further reflection in their own faith development.
- ÿ Articulate the implications for teaching methods based on the characteristics of various stages of development.

Special Points from the Documents

- ÿ Catechists should possess a theoretical and practical knowledge of the laws of psychology and of educational method (Vatican II, *Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church* #14)
- ÿ Stages of human development (*Sharing* #177–189)
- ÿ The relationship of growth in faith to human development (*Sharing* #173–175; *On Catechesis in Our Time* #35–45)
- ÿ Methodology of catechizing according to human development (*Sharing* #176)
- ÿ Catechesis in sexuality is needed in the context of religious values (*Sharing* #191)

Philippians 2:5-11	Ancient Christian hymn declaring every knee will bend to Jesus
Colossians 1:15-20	Christ as co-creator of the universe, in whom all holds together
Hebrews 1:1-4	Son of God as redeemer, heir of creation, image of God's glory
Revelation 1:4-20	Blazing vision of Christ "the first and last, the one who lives"

III: The Holy Spirit, Lord and Giver of Life

Session Description

This session introduces the branch of theology called pneumatology (Greek *pneuma*, "spirit"), which examines the person and the work of the Holy Spirit as the presence and power of God active in creation, in the world and in the Church.

Themes

- The Church's fundamental beliefs about the Holy Spirit as the Third Person of the Trinity
- Imagery of the Holy Spirit as the Lord and Giver of life in creation and history, as well as in the Scriptures and the traditions of the Church
- The Holy Spirit's role in the life of the Church and in realizing the salvation of Christ in each person
- Love (charity) as an essential characteristic of the Christian life

Focusing the Session

The Holy Spirit is God intimately present in the world and the revealer of Christ to the world. Central to our Catholic faith is an awareness of the work of the Holy Spirit as the active presence of God. This session will give an overview of the work of the Holy Spirit in the world, in the Church, and in the individual.

Instructional Objectives

In conducting this session the facilitator will:

- Read and discuss the teachings of the Church regarding the work of the Holy Spirit in individuals' lives and in relationship with the Church.
- Express the conviction that the nature of the Church is formed and continually inspired by the Holy Spirit.
- Present the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit.

II: Communication Skills

Session Description

This session familiarizes catechists with basic leadership, group, and facilitation skills for catechesis.

Themes

- Introduction to group leadership and facilitation skills
- Use of audio-visual materials in catechesis

Focusing the Session

Along with a grasp of Catholic doctrine and worship, and familiarity with Scripture, catechists need communication skills, an ability to use various interactive methodologies of group learning, and basic techniques for managing group process. From the beginning catechists have used art and media to communicate Christ's message; the use of contemporary media and technology offers the same opportunity today.

Instructional Objectives

In conducting this session the facilitator will:

- Present and demonstrate basic techniques of group formation.
- Model various methods of group study including discussion, guided reflection, role playing and situation games.
- Provide examples of effective audio-visuals that can be used in the context of a lesson, and model the method of their presentation.
- Offer effective criteria for selecting, previewing, preparing students and following up the use of audio-visuals.
- Model ways in which catechists can help develop a sense of community within a group.
- Demonstrate disciplinary techniques which promote self-esteem and build community, exploring approaches the catechist can use to help correct inappropriate behaviors.

Catechist Competencies

As a result of this session, catechists will be able to:

- Use basic techniques of group formation.
- Employ various methods of group study, including discussion, guided reflection, role playing and situation games.
- Access a set of norms that guides the selection, preview, use and evaluation of audio-visuals in catechesis.

Acts 2:1-41	The Spirit poured out upon Peter and the disciples at Pentecost
Romans 8:9-27	Spirit is the new principle of life within us, always leading us
1 Corinthians 2:6-16	Spirit knows God's depths, and gives us the mind of Christ
1 Corinthians 12:1-13	We've all drunk of the Spirit, who animates the body of Christ
Galatians 5:13-26	Spirit works within us to help put to death the sins of the flesh

IV: The Last Things

Session Description

This session introduces eschatology, which examines the Church's teaching on the ultimate destiny of individuals, the world, and all creation in God's plan for salvation.

Themes

- Distinction between the signs and presence of the kingdom, the "already" and the "not yet"
- Images of the "last things" in the Scriptures and in the traditions of the Church
- Church's fundamental beliefs about the death, judgment, the resurrection of the body, heaven and hell, and the new creation
- Hope as an essential characteristic of the Christian life

Focusing the Session

By his appearance Jesus "destroyed death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" (2 Tim. 1:10). In so doing he conquered the fear of death and infused hope deep within the spirit of faith. Jesus' resurrection is the sign of our own, and the beginning of the final resurrection. It is the duty of Christians to persevere in hope and steadfast loving service in anticipation of the renewal of all creation. In this way they gain confidence for the day of judgment and a greater longing for both the vision of God in heaven and a renewal of all the earth.

Instructional Objectives

In conducting this session the facilitator will:

- Discuss the teachings of the Church regarding death, judgment the resurrection of the body, heaven and hell.
- Outline the teaching on Christian hope.

students and their parents to help them relate to one another as persons, and to prepare and use a plan for learning.

Instructional Objectives

In conducting this session the facilitator will:

- Discuss the history and meaning of the word "catechesis."
- Set the context for catechesis in the Church's ministry of the Word.
- Present a long range planning method and explore the structure of the manuals.
- Present a sample format for a session plan, and give practice in using it.
- Evaluate practice session plans in terms of stated objectives.
- Present a sample format for a culturally inclusive catechetical session.
- Model a variety of teaching methods which catechists can use.
- Present basic legal and health concerns affecting the catechetical ministry.

Catechist Competencies

As a result of this session, catechists will be able to:

- Define the meaning of the word "catechesis."
- Explain catechesis as a form of the Church's ministry of the Word.
- Create a tentative, long-range plan for the year which includes parental involvement for those who teach children.
- Use their teacher manuals to prepare a session through study, prayer, and the identification of learning objectives.
- Structure a session to accomplish these objectives.
- Describe several different types of methodologies for instruction/practice.
- Structure a catechetical session which is culturally inclusive.
- Articulate the basic legal and health concerns which the catechist must know.

Special points from the Documents

- Catechesis is intended to make people's faith living, conscious and active through the light of instruction (Vatican II, *Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church* #14; *General Catechetical Directory* #17)
- As a form of the ministry of the Word, the goal of catechesis is not communication of abstract ideas but the proclamation of the Gospel for the strengthening of faith (*General Catechetical Directory* #16)

Catechist Competencies

This list proposes the basic "ends" in the area of the catechist's practical understanding or "know-how" for which the presenter will strive in constructing the session. Again the stress is on the verbs which describe the skills rather than the content of catechesis: "As a result of this session, the catechist will be able to ¼ articulate the importance ... discuss the major points ... trace the connection ... describe the implications ...," etc.

Special Points from the Documents

This section lists a few major points of interest in the documentary tradition from which we draw apostolic guidance and support for catechetical ministry. Primary focus is on the documents of Vatican II, the encyclicals of Popes Paul VI and John Paul II, the *General Catechetical Directory* issued from Rome in 1971, the U.S. Bishops' 1978 document on catechesis, *Sharing the Light of Faith: National Catechetical Directory* (shortened in the references to *Sharing*) and the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (abbreviated in the references as CCC). The list is suggestive rather than exhaustive and should be supplemented by the presenter's own discoveries in reading the documents.

Documentary References

This part gives wider contexts for researching the topic among the documents just mentioned. These longer passages give the framework within which formation is given and should be part of the presenter's long range preparation for the session. In passing it should be noted that in order to ensure the soundness and depth of the formation its catechists receive, parishes should make a priority of providing its leaders with access to the Church's catechetical documents, which are readily and inexpensively available. (See the updated bibliography in the Resources section of *Fostering Faith*.)

Scripture Contexts

These references offer a resource for grounding the session in the images and teachings of the Bible. Pope John Paul and the U.S. Bishops have called for catechists who are thoroughly familiar with Scripture. These references offer a means for formation to model a way of catechesis which is "impregnated and penetrated by the thought, spirit and outlook of the Bible." Use the texts for pre-assigned readings, for

Fostering Faith

Curriculum Guide for Catechist Certification

Office for Religious Education, Archdiocese of Chicago, 1997

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An Introduction to the Curriculum Guide

The Office for Religious Education of the Archdiocese of Chicago is pleased to offer catechetical leaders this greatly expanded *Curriculum Guide* to *Fostering Faith*. Several words about using the Guide are in order.

The material presented under each topic of *Fostering Faith* is intended to be what its name declares, that is, a *guide*. Presenters should see the material less as a prescription for each session than as a resource for constructing formation sessions which both meet the specific needs of catechists and root them in the "hierarchy of truths," the essentials of Catholic teaching. The more important aspects demand greater time and attention; other aspects may become important because of issues arising within your particular catechetical program; some supporting themes within the topic may be given lighter treatment or even only mentioned. The *Guide* plays the role of "cookbook" in your preparation, with each session's material supplying an ideal but adaptable recipe for creating presentations which are both foundational and suited to your catechists' actual needs.

Chances are that no two-hour presentation will use all the material given for a session. The amount of material is intended to allow a