

Certification

A catechist is certified upon earning sixteen (16) credits (8 required, 8 elective) approved by the Office for Catechetical Formation (OCF).

Required Credits (8) are earned through successful completion of each of the following core courses offered by the Catechetical Institute:

- Overview of the Old Testament
- Overview of the New Testament
- The Person of Jesus
- Foundations of the Church
- Sacraments of Initiation
- Sacraments of Healing and Vocation
- Christian Anthropology
- Catholic Moral Teaching

Elective Credits (8) are earned through the successful completion of the requirements associated with a variety of programs, seminars and workshops that are offered through the OCF.

Upon review by the OCF, credits in theology that have been earned at a Catholic university or college can be applied toward the fulfillment of requirements for certification.

Records of completed courses and earned credits should be verified and kept on file in the local school/religious education office. Updated information is sent by the principal/DRE to the OCF in June.

Revised 2006

After 16 credits have been earned, college transcripts, copies of course cards, the completed application and principal's/DRE's verification form should be forwarded to the OCF. A formal certificate is awarded in recognition of the completion of all requirements.

Catholic School Teachers

All Catholic school teachers must complete the *Practical Applications* Course during their first year of teaching. This requirement fulfills one (1) elective credit.

All Catholic school teachers must earn at least one (1) credit each year and complete certification within the first eight (8) years of teaching. Compliance with the certification policy is required in order to teach in a Catholic School within the Archdiocese.

Parish Catechists

Parish catechists must complete Basic Catechist Courses (I, II) within the first two (2) years of teaching. This requirement fulfills two (2) elective credits.

Professional Update

To maintain certification, Catechists must earn one (1) credit each year. Verification of this should be kept on file in the local school or parish office. Updated information is sent by the principal/DRE to the OCF in June.

"GO TEACH ALL NATIONS..."

CATECHETICAL CERTIFICATION POLICY



**Archdiocese
of
Philadelphia**



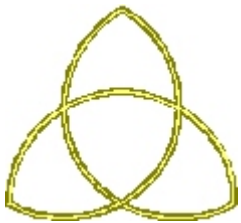
OFFICE
FOR
CATECHETICAL FORMATION

Catechesis

Catechesis is sharing the teachings of Jesus Christ in such a way that a person comes to know about God, to believe in him and his teachings, to enter into a relationship with God, and to be transformed by him. Catechesis involves teaching about doctrine as well as about the living practice of the faith. Catechizing and being catechized are lifelong responsibilities for every Catholic.

Catechesis aims to bring about in the believer an ever more mature faith in Jesus Christ, a deeper knowledge and love of his person and message, and a firm commitment to follow him.

Catechesis seeks to: promote knowledge of the faith; promote knowledge of the meaning of the Liturgy and Sacraments; promote moral formation in Jesus Christ; teach Christians how to pray with Christ; prepare Christians to live in community and participate actively in the life and mission of the Church; promote a missionary spirit that prepares the faithful to be present as Christians in society.



Called to be a Catechist

The ministry of catechist is a vocation, an interior call of the Holy Spirit. It springs from the Sacrament of Baptism and is strengthened by the Sacrament of Confirmation. Catechists need to be practicing Catholics who participate fully in the communal worship and life of the Church, and who have been prepared for their apostolate by appropriate catechetical training. Commissioned by the Church, they participate in the divine calling to teach as Jesus did.

All believers participate in the Church's catechetical mission. Parents and guardians are the most influential agents of catechesis for their children.

Some are called to more specific catechetical roles. Bishops are primarily responsible for catechesis. Priests share the teaching role of the Bishop and are his immediate collaborators. Catechists assist bishops and priests in the catechetical mission. Catechists include: Deacons, Catholic school principals and faculty, parish religious education personnel, youth ministers and campus ministers.

A personal relationship with Jesus energizes the catechist and provides the continuing motivation, vitality and force of their catechetical activity. Christ invites all catechists to follow him as a teacher of the faith and a witness to the truth of the faith.

Catechetical Formation

In order to present the Catholic faith in its fullness and in a way that is attractive, those who catechize need preparation and ongoing formation. Catechist formation must ensure that catechists receive assistance in developing their knowledge of the faith and the Gospel message as well as the ability to transmit it.

Catechetical Formation involves intellectual, spiritual, pastoral and human dimensions. It promotes: an understanding of the nature and goals of catechesis; knowledge and understanding of Catholic faith and practice; familiarity with resources; awareness of methodologies associated with the social, cultural, ethnic, demographic and religious circumstances of people who are served; ongoing study of scripture and theology; growth in human, spiritual and pastoral qualities necessary for the work of a catechist; unity with pastors and the Church where all authentic religious education occurs.

Catechists are called to holiness. A catechist should be characterized by: love for God; a life of faith, hope and love that manifests itself in daily piety and life; apostolic spirit and missionary zeal; love for their brothers and sisters and a willingness to give generous service; personal prayer; participation in parish life; devotion to the Eucharist and Mary.