

The Six Tasks of Catechesis **The National Directory for Catechesis**

Christ's method of formation was accomplished by diverse yet interrelated tasks. His example is the most fruitful inspiration for effective catechesis today because it is integral to formation in the Christian faith. Catechesis must attend to each of these different dimensions of faith; each becomes a distinct yet complementary task. Faith must be known, celebrated, lived, and expressed in prayer. So catechesis comprises six fundamental tasks, each of which is related to an aspect of faith in Christ. All efforts in evangelization and catechesis should incorporate these tasks. (NDC 20)

1. Promote knowledge of the faith – Teach the “basics” of the faith as revealed in the signs of creation, Sacred Scripture, Catholic tradition and human experience.

Since the very beginning, the Church has understood Sacred Scripture as the word of God. “In the sacred books, the Father who is in heaven comes lovingly to meet His children and talks with them, and the force and power in the word of God is so great that it remains the support and energy of the Church, the strength of faith..., the food of the soul, the pure and perennial source of spiritual life.” (*Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, 21*)

God continues to speak to His people today through the authentic teaching of the Church, which reflects on God's word, interprets it authoritatively and expresses it truthfully in doctrine and dogma. Through Tradition, “the Church, in her doctrine, life and worship perpetuates and transmits to every generation all that she herself is, all that she believes.” (*Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, 8*)

2. Liturgical Education – Teach about the form and meaning of the liturgy and the sacraments and help individuals prepare their minds and hearts to enter into these mysteries of our faith.

The Church teaches that the sacraments are necessary for salvation. In each sacrament, the grace of the Holy Spirit unites us with Jesus our Savior and enables us to partake in the divine nature of God. (*cf. Catechism of the Catholic Church, 7129*)

Sacraments, especially the Eucharist, lead us to holiness, build up the Body of Christ and give praise to God. Sacraments “not only presuppose faith, but by word and objects they also nourish, strengthen, and express it.” (*Constitution on Sacred Liturgy, 59*)

3. Moral Formation – Teach the moral teachings of the Church which are the fulfillment of the Commandments.

As members of the Body of Christ, our actions (both good and bad) have an effect on the Christian community. It is together, as Church – the Body of Christ – that we grow to maturity in faith and become true disciples of Christ.

4. Teaching to Pray – Teach that a “climate of prayer” and participation in prayer invites individuals into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Prayer has been described in many different ways through the centuries; at its most basic level, prayer is talking with God. According to Scripture, it is the heart that prays. (*Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2562*)

In experiencing different forms of prayer, we discover how best to talk with God. Our spirituality is our way of being in relationship with God. Each person is unique and has a unique relationship with God. The desire for God is written in the human heart because we are created by God and for God and God never ceases to draw us to Himself. Only in God will we find the truth and happiness for which we search. (*cf. Catechism of the Catholic Church, 27*)

5. Education for Community Life – Teach that the human person needs to live in society. Society is not optional, but a requirement of human nature.

Love of God cannot be separated from love of neighbor. (*cf. 1 John, 4:20*) Baptized into the Church, the Christian becomes a member of the one Body of Christ. As members of the Body of Christ, we no longer belong to ourselves, but to Jesus who suffered, died and rose for our salvation. (*cf. 1 Cor. 6:19; 2 Cor.5:15*)

Through exchange with others, mutual service and dialogue, we develop our potential and respond to our vocations. (*cf. Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1879*)

6. Missionary Initiative – Teach that all Christian service is an expression of love and is performed by Christians for the purpose of building up the Kingdom of God on earth.

The church “exists to evangelize” that is, “to carry forth 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.” (*GDC, #46, EN, #18*) All are called to live in such a way that they serve as witnesses of the faith to those around them.

Our Diocesan Religion Curriculum

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