



Handing On the Faith with Excellence
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Catechist Formation Course List: Levels One and Two

There are two levels in the Catechist Formation Program. Level one courses present the basic essentials of each topic while Level Two courses expand and deepen the content presented in Level One. All catechist formation courses are available in English and Spanish, on site or online.

Level One: Must take these courses

- **PRAYER AND SPIRITUALITY:** presents the mission and vocation of the parish catechist, the norms and history of catechesis, an understanding of prayer and the ways of Catholic Christian prayer, the meaning and practice of faith, the stages of faith growth and the distinction between faith, belief, doctrine and theology.
- **METHODOLOGY:** one of the following, depending upon what level the catechist teaches:
 - **METHODOLOGY FOR ELEMENTARY CATECHESIS:** presents the archdiocesan Guidelines for Catechesis, Grades Kindergarten to Six, the effects of culture on catechesis, the creation of an effective teaching environment, methods for positive discipline, effective lesson planning, stages of moral, intellectual, social and faith development, ways of meeting the needs of the special child, the effects of media on catechesis and the use of media in teaching.
 - **METHODOLOGY FOR ADOLESCENT CATECHESIS:** presents the characteristics of the adolescent learner; prayer for adolescents; the Archdiocesan Guidelines for Catechesis, Grades Seven and Eight, creative approaches for adolescent catechesis, the role of parents in adolescent catechesis, sacramental catechesis for adolescents, and effective approaches in teaching human sexuality.
 - **METHODOLOGY FOR SPECIAL RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:** provides the parish catechist with the tools necessary to work with children with disabilities including autism. The areas covered include an overview of disabilities, an introduction to several models of inclusion in the parish religious education program, practical implications, sacramental considerations, and a review of available resources.
- **AN INTRODUCTION TO CATHOLICISM:** This course will introduce students to the multifaceted nature of Catholicism in a historical framework. Students will be introduced to key concepts such as the meaning of faith, the nature of revelation, the analogy of faith, the concept of social salvation, and an awareness of the Church as a "mystery." In short, the course will help

students to see the connection between their lives as Catholics and a God who uses history as a form of communication, who becomes incarnate, and who forms a sacramental community of faith.

- **UNDERSTANDING THE CREED:** Students will be briefly introduced to the historical context behind the creeds before turning to consider the articles of the creed. The lectures will follow the Catechism's treatment of the 12 articles of the Nicene Creed, with some particular care in addressing the issue of the final judgment.
 - **UNDERSTANDING THE HOLY SCRIPTURE:** This course will introduce students to basic concepts that are necessary for reading Holy Scripture. The students will learn how the books of scripture were comprised, the various types of scripture, and how the early Church chose books for inclusion in the Bible. The relationship between Holy Scripture and the Holy Spirit in the life of the Church and in the life of the individual believer will be treated in the latter part of the course.
 - **UNVEILING THE SACRAMENTS:** This course will explain the meaning of a sacramental worldview and its significance for human happiness. Students will receive a brief history as to the development of the seven sacraments and particular instruction on the history and spiritual significance of each sacrament. Particular attention will be paid to baptism and Eucharist.
 - **MORAL AND SOCIAL TEACHING:** Students will be introduced to a Catholic understanding of what it means to be human and how to reach fulfillment or happiness in life, which the Catechism sometimes refers to as beatitude. The course will cover how the Church understands conscience, sin, virtue, and the common good. Students will learn key distinctions such as the difference between an act being immoral and being sinful.
 - **TRINITY AND CHRISTOLOGY:** Trinity and Christology are fundamental aspects of the Catholic faith, but they can be difficult for modern people to grasp. This course will explain why these doctrines developed as they did and will point to their spiritual significance. While part of the course will cover the major councils that developed these doctrines, it will also show how our understanding of Christ and the incarnation has adapted to cultural conditions in the past. Students will learn the difference between high and low Christology and how they are both legitimate ways of understanding Jesus Christ, which can be useful for both evangelization and catechesis.
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Level Two: Must take five courses, two required and three elective

Required:

- **INTRODUCTION TO THE OLD TESTAMENT:** presents the Catholic understanding of Divine Revelation history of the Jewish people, the Pentateuch and its sources, the composition and purpose of the Historical Books, the literary books, the Prophets, the Wisdom Literature, the Psalms and biblical literary genres.
- **INTRODUCTION TO THE NEW TESTAMENT:** presents a review of the books of the New Testament, the development of the Canon, an introduction to the Four Gospels, the content, interpretation and liturgical use of the Gospel accounts, the composition and purpose of the Acts of the Apostles, Epistles and the Book of Revelation.

Elective Courses: (choose three)

- **CATHOLIC MORAL PRINCIPLES AND CONTEMPORARY ISSUES:** presents a review of basic Catholic moral principles, Catholic teaching on the nature of human sexuality, bioethics and life issues.
- **THE CHURCH IN THE WORLD:** presents an overview of the nature, mission, and history of the Catholic Church, the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (Lumen Gentium), and the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World (Gaudium ET Spes).
- **PRAYER AND WORSHIP:** presents the nature, source, and expressions of Catholic Christian prayer, the liturgical celebration of the Eucharist and the other sacraments, sacramentals, devotions, liturgical ministries and liturgical planning.
- **CHRISTOLOGY:** presents the Church's understanding of the person and nature of Jesus Christ based on the New Testament, the early Church Fathers and Councils.
- **UNDERSTANDING THE APOSTLES' CREED:** course examines the Apostle's creed as presented in the new Catechism of the Catholic Church.
- **MULTI-CULTURAL CATECHESIS:** presents the relationship between culture, society and Church, the history of the relationship of Christianity to culture, the introduction of the Gospel into culture, and the importance of adapting catechesis to the diverse ethnicities in the parish community.
- **SPECIAL RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:** presents the rationale and need for Special Religious Education, the skills of the effective special religious education catechist, an overview of emotional, behavioral, developmental and physical challenges requiring special education.
- **THE SOCIAL MISSION OF THE CHURCH:** presents the history, biblical roots, and seven main principles of Catholic social teaching.

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