

into THE fields



Frequently Asked Questions

In a nutshell, what is it?

Into the Fields is a parish catechist and school teacher formation process. It takes place in the local parish or school in order to make it useable for almost every teacher or catechist. Users can earn Continuing Education Units (CEUs) from Loyola University of New Orleans. Users experience 30 powerful spiritual exercises, learn more than 24 skills that work in real teaching situations, and receive a complete review of the content of the Catholic faith.

What if we already have a formation process in our diocese?

Most dioceses do! *Into the Fields* is not meant to replace that but to augment it. Well-tested materials, carefully and beautifully prepared, designed with busy teachers and catechists in mind—for some dioceses this will be the perfect fit.

Of course, *Into the Fields* doesn't deal with "certification," which is solely the domain of the local Ordinary and the diocesan staff. But it can contribute substantially to the quality of the certification process in any diocese.

What help is available for the person(s) responsible for facilitating the program? What preparation do they need?

The facilitator should be someone with a solid knowledge of Scripture and the *Catechism*, as well as several years of experience in catechesis. For example, it could be a parish priest, the DRE, the school principal, a catechist or teacher with good qualifications, or a professor from a local Catholic college.

A comprehensive and easy-to-use *Facilitator's Guide* is part of the *Into the Fields* program. The guide provides a complete wrap-around teaching path for each session that helps emphasize the principal thrust and ideas of the session.

In addition, the *Into the Fields* Web site (www.intothefields.org) will provide further material and links for both the participants and the facilitator.

We also provide a specialist to help you, and this service is free to users. To reach Anna Humaydan or Stephanie Baker, write to Resources@PastoralPlanning.com.

Do we have to follow the order of the lessons as they are set up, or can we cover the topics in a different order?

While a certain order was established in preparing the program, it is flexible and can be adapted to your needs and choices.

Why does *Into the Fields* include spirituality and content and skills? How do these work together?

In the section on the formation of catechists, both the *General Directory for Catechesis* and the *National Directory for Catechesis* stress the need for formation of spiritual development on the three levels—

- human,
- Christian, and
- apostolic.

This leads us to an approach to formation which includes

- the so-called “savoir faire” or spirituality of the catechist him or herself,
- doctrinal content, both biblical and theological, and
- methodology, including skills, techniques, and instructional strategies.

By providing formation in these dimensions, the *Into the Fields* program follows a solid and up-to-date learning pathway that helps catechists and teachers integrate these dimensions of their life and ministry. In each session, both in personal study and in the large group sessions, the participants experience

- a powerful spiritual exercise,
- a comprehensive, Catechism-based review of an aspect of Catholic teaching, and
- practical skills and teaching methods to apply in faith formation lessons.

In addition, these three components are linked by an overriding theme.

If an individual wants to use this program on their own, can they do so?

Yes, an individual can use *Into the Fields* as a program for personal formation as a catechist or teacher. Reader-friendly rubrics are provided in each component to guide the user through his or her study.

Do all the components of *Into the Fields* have an Imprimatur?

All the components of the *Into the Fields* program have an Imprimatur. The *Growing Faith Project* received the Imprimatur from Bishop Dennis Schnurr of the Diocese of Duluth, Minnesota. The three texts for the catechist will receive the Imprimatur from Bishop Michael Cote of the Diocese of Norwich, Connecticut.

OK, I’m sold! Who do I contact?

Contact our specialists, Anna Humaydan & Stephanie Baker, by writing to them at Resources@PastoralPlanning.com or calling 612-220-6943 Monday thru Friday, 8 AM to 6 PM CST. Or visit the Web site: www.PastoralPlanning.com/ITFHome.html.