

Parish Catechist Formation

(The goal is to complete one trimester per school year.)

Who should take part in Parish Catechist Formation?

- Parish catechists who are new to the ministry.
- Parish catechists who have more experience but want or need an update.
- Members of the catechumenate team.
- Youth ministers and their volunteer core group.
- Those who are working in adult catechesis.
- Others in the parish who are interested.

Options for Parish Catechist Formation

- **Saturday morning**
 - 9 AM to noon, with a light breakfast
 - once a month
 - ten months of the year (skip July and August)
- **One evening during the week**
 - from 6 PM to 9 PM, with a light supper
 - once per month
 - ten months of the year
- **August institute**
 - for those who can be present during the day
 - 5 days to complete one trimester

Getting started with Parish Catechist Formation

- **Much of the work for organizing catechist formation falls to the parish director along with the pastor.**
- **At first, it seems as though more work will be on your desk, but in the end, with better prepared catechists, your work will be reduced significantly.**
 - They will feel more confident.
 - Retention from year to year will increase.
 - You can count on trained catechists for more help.
 - They become a key part of your team.
 - They encourage others to obtain more formation.
 - The overall quality of your program increases.

■ **Step one: make the commitment!**

■ **Step two: call on us at 23rd to help you!**

■ **Step three: schedule formation in your calendar.**

- Choose the meeting schedule that works best in your parish. Most parish leaders will invite catechists to one three-hour meeting per month, ten months in the year (skipping July and August).
- We tend to ask for too little.
- Many catechists dearly want training.
- You won't have everyone involved, but if you wait until everyone is ready, you'll never accomplish this.
- Invite youth ministers, catechumenate team members, marriage prep folks, baptism preparation folks, and others working in catechetical ministries to take part, too.
- Work closely with the school in your parish if you have one. Why not include all the teachers and catechists in one formation process?
- Keep your pastor informed as you go!

■ **Step four: recruit your catechists one by one for this formation.**

- In fact, one three-hour training session per month is not asking very much.
- Budget to pay for the materials as a parish.
- But ask the catechists or others to pay for the CEUs from Loyola University New Orleans. For more on this, visit www.intothefields.org.
- Remember, YOU must be the first one to believe in this!

■ **Step five: order your materials.**

- For more on how to do this, visit the website.
- Be sure to order one textbook for each learner, plus a facilitator's guide for yourself.
- Other resources you may need can also be found on the website.

■ **Step six: get started!**

- And enter a new, more vigorous period of catechesis for all ages and all stages in your parish!

