

CATECHETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR LIFELONG FAITH FORMATION FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



Vision

1. Q: Is this Catechetical Framework the same as or part of the Archdiocesan Pastoral Plan?

A: Beginning work on the development of the Catechetical Framework preceded the beginning of the pastoral planning process. The pastoral plan is clear that catechesis across the lifecycle is an important objective in realizing the pathways articulated in the plan. Work to implement the Catechetical Framework will certainly be consonant with work to realize the pastoral plan.

2. Q: What is the purpose or vision of the Catechetical Framework?

A: The Catechetical Framework serves the definitive aim of catechesis which is to put people not only in touch with, but also in communion and intimacy, with Jesus Christ.

Structure

3. Q: What is the structure of the Catechetical Framework?

A: The basic organizing structure is the six tasks/dimensions of catechesis articulated in the *GDC* and repeated and developed in *OHWB* and the *NDC*.

4. Q: What catechetical approach does the Catechetical Framework envision?

A: The Catechetical Framework utilizes an approach that calls forth conversion of life to Christian discipleship with a living, explicit, and fruitful faith characterized by comprehensiveness and integrity of formation, a gradual character expressed in definitive stages, and constant references to the Christian community.

5. Q: The Catechetical Framework uses specialized terminology ‘tasks’, ‘strands’ & ‘learning targets’, what do those terms mean?

1. The *tasks* are the six *tasks*/dimensions of catechesis articulated in the *GDC*.
2. *Strands* are major topics or *subcategories* that flow from that *task*.
3. *Learning Targets* identified at each developmental level articulate a critical element of a *strand* that is to be a focus of catechesis.

6. Q: What documents of the Church were employed in the creation of this Catechetical Framework to ensure sound doctrine?

A: Constant reference has been made to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* to ensure doctrinal soundness. Completeness is assured by its reference to the *Protocol for Assessing the Conformity of Catechetical Materials with the Catechism of the Catholic Church*, *Doctrinal Elements of A Curriculum Framework for the Development of Catechetical Materials for Young People of High School Age*, and *Guidelines for the Preparation and Review of Pre-School Materials*.

7. Q: What is the relationship between a Catechetical Framework and Curriculum Resources?

A: The Catechetical Framework provides a basis for unity of the tenets of the Catholic faith out of which curriculum resources are developed (e.g., exemplary lessons, evaluative projects) and/or identified in *USCCB Conformity List* publications.

Implementation

8. Q: What are some benefits for using this Catechetical Framework?

A: First and foremost, the Catechetical Framework will help Catholics experience connections between what they believe and how they live as disciples of Jesus Christ. Using it will help parishes and Catholic schools identify its areas of strengths and areas where it can grow in Christian discipleship. It will also help to foster an appropriation of the practice of stewardship as well as a growing awareness of and stronger commitment to formation in ministries.

9. Q: How can a parish catechetical leader or Catholic school administrator/staff use this Catechetical Framework?

A:The Catechetical Framework is designed to provide an intentional approach for all baptized Catholics to live fully as disciples of Jesus Christ *“Quite early on, the name catechesis was given to the totality of the Church's efforts to make disciples, to help men believe that Jesus is the Son of God so that believing they might have life in his name, and to educate and instruct them in this life, thus building up the body of Christ, (CCC: 4).* The Catechetical Framework is intended to guide the development of catechesis within and beyond formal catechetical settings into the very fabric of the parish/Catholic school community and family life.

10. Q: For what catechetical contexts is the Catechetical Framework intended?

A: All catechetical efforts and programming is to be done with reference to and in support of the goals outlined in this document. This is true in all catechetical contexts, be they archdiocesan programs, Catholic schools, parish formation programs, early childhood centers, university campus ministries, catechetical efforts in detention facilities, or home-based catechetical efforts. Because the Catechetical Framework serves to light an intentional path for the totality of Christian discipleship, parish formal catechetical opportunities and Catholic school religion or theology courses are but one way to realize this. Other contexts which can help Catholics make intentional connections between what they believe and how they live as disciples of Jesus Christ include:

- the home (domestic) church
- Archdiocesan, parish or Catholic school events (i.e., retreats, missions, conferences, celebrations, community gatherings, service)
- non-gathered opportunities (i.e. Internet resources such as formation courses, prayer, and blogs)
- engagement in civic events

11. Q: Who is responsible for the Implementation of this Catechetical Framework at the parish and/or Catholic School?

A: First and foremost it is the responsibility of the pastor to see to it that all of the faithful entrusted to him receive appropriate catechesis. This is best accomplished when the parish itself, and all of its members, becomes not only the locus but the agent of catechesis. That being said, DREs, CYMs, Catholic school Principals or Catholic school religion coordinators may assume the primary responsibility for overseeing the implementation of the Catechetical Framework in regards to more formal systematic catechesis. All catechetical leaders, Catholic school staff, parish ministers and organizations are to apply the Catechetical Framework to their ministries. This collaboration helps to foster a more intentional and coherent catechesis within the parish.

12. Q: How do catechetical texts support the implementation of the Catechetical Framework?

A: Catechetical textbooks and other curriculum resources are at the service of the Catechetical Framework and do not replace it. In formal catechetical settings from pre-school through the 12th grade, programs are to use as a primary resource textbooks found in conformity with the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* by the USCCB Subcommittee on the Catechism. Primary materials used with adults should either contain a declaration that they are free of doctrinal error or have been reviewed by the pastor to ensure conformity with Church teaching. Other curriculum resources, regardless of age level, without such official Church reviews may be used insofar that they reinforce these primary curriculum resources while maintaining the integrity and comprehensive nature of the Catechetical Framework.

13. Q: How can a parish catechetical leader or Catholic school staff begin to use the Catechetical Framework?

A: The most likely entry point for using the Catechetical Framework is to establish connections between the Catechetical Framework and one's existing formal catechetical or religious education/theology formation. The next step is to enlist other catechetical leaders or staff to identify connections between the Catechetical Framework and existing programs, events, or services. This process will begin to provide an assessment of one's catechetical strengths. It can also help to provide a picture of those catechetical areas in which the parish or school can begin to focus their efforts to enhance, enrich, or continue to grow as Christian disciples.

14. Q: What are some practical things that one can do as a priest?

A: Some practical things that priests can do are

- to make connections between the Catechetical Framework and one's homilies
- to encourage parish catechetical leaders as well as other ministers and leaders of organizations to plan gatherings and events with connections made with the Catechetical Framework

15. Q: What are markers of a successful implementation of the Catechetical Framework?

A: When all leadership at all levels in the parish community is involved in catechizing and evangelizing, when catechesis for adults is the principal form of catechesis, when all the faithful see faith formation and growing in discipleship as life-long journeys in which they are actively engaged, and when all the faithful are growing in intimacy and communion with the person of Jesus Christ, one can be assured that the Catechetical Framework is being implemented successfully.

16. Q: Does the Catechetical Framework replace existing guidelines for preparation for sacraments?

A: The Catechetical Framework centers on systematic catechesis. The existing Archdiocesan sacramental guidelines continue to serve as the current standard for immediate sacramental preparation.

17. Q: Is this Catechetical Framework intended to be lesson plans?

A: No, the Catechetical Framework serves as the "skeleton" or foundation resource from which lessons are to be designed. It alone categorizes by *task* age-appropriate, sequential lists of *learning targets*, or the "what to be taught" into their lives as Christian disciples. Lesson plans suggest the "how to be taught" and "how to discern if learners have grown in their faith".

18. Q: Is there a standard of time allocated to the implementation for formal catechesis?

A: For those parishes using a traditional school-year model, an annual range consisting of 26 to 30 sessions with 60 to 90 minutes allocated per session is considered a moderate amount of time for formal catechesis. Other models, especially for youth ministry and adult faith formation, may include opportunities with varied and extended time for reflection and discussion. Because formal catechesis is to be viewed as an extension and support of discipleship that originates in the home, intentional efforts are to be made to foster catechesis within the domestic church.

19. Q: Is there a time by which the Catechetical Framework is to be completed?

A: The substance of the Catechetical Framework suggests that implementation is an ongoing endeavor. As parish and Catholic school leaders and staff themselves grow in their understanding and application of the Catechetical Framework for parish/school ministry, there can be an intentional extension to invite parish and school organizations into developing their ministries in alignment with the Catechetical Framework. In this way the parish and Catholic school can foster intentional paths and opportunities in Christian discipleship.

Support

20. Q: How will the Archdiocesan catechetical offices provide support to make this Catechetical Framework operational in parishes and Catholic schools?

A: Staff of the Offices of Evangelization and Catechesis, Adolescent Catechesis and Evangelization, and the Secretariat for Catholic Schools are available to assist pastoral staffs in the implementation of the document.

21. Q: What resources for implementation are available?

A: In addition to a variety of resources made available through the Archdiocesan catechetical offices, as parishes and Catholic schools become more adept in the implementation of the Catechetical Framework, shared forums at the Archdiocesan and deanery levels will be convened to share best practices.