



Diocese of Covington
Office of Catechesis & Evangelization

Catechist Formation and Certification Program

In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus commissioned His disciples to, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.” The Great Commission continues to be the mission of our church today.

In the Diocese of Covington, catechists are persons of faith called to assist in carrying out our Church’s mission by handing on the living tradition and teachings of Jesus Christ. They are called to live, love, and teach as Jesus did. By their teaching and witness, they invite children and adults into a relationship with Jesus to know, love, and serve God.

By the nature of their ministry, catechists are called to continue deepening their knowledge of the faith and to grow closer to Jesus in their personal lives. The Catechist Formation and Certification Program is designed to help catechists on their spiritual journey by supporting their personal faith life while also strengthening their knowledge and ability to teach those entrusted to their care.

Types of Catechists

In the Diocese of Covington, catechists are those who are involved in teaching ministries. These include:

- Catholic school principals, faculty, and staff
- Directors of Religious Education (DRE) & Coordinators of Religious Education (CRE)
- CCD/PSR teachers
- Directors/Coordinators of the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults (OCIA) and their teams
- Youth Ministers (YM) and their volunteer teams
- Young Adult Ministers (YAM)
- Adult Faith Formation Ministers (AFFM)
- Family Life Ministers (FLM)
- College Campus Ministers
- Worship Music Ministers (WMM)
- Home School Ministers (HSM)

- Sacramental Prep Teams (Baptism, Penance, Eucharist, Confirmation, Matrimony)
- Adult Bible Study
- Retreat Volunteer Teams
- Other volunteers leading faith formation programs

Qualities of a Catechist

All catechists in the Diocese of Covington should be striving to meet the following qualities:

- A strong awareness of the working of God's grace in his/her life and a growing faith life in response to that grace.
- A personal commitment to Jesus Christ who is the center of the message.
- A strong understanding of love for the Church, evidenced by personal commitment.
- A person who can nurture the development of a Christian community.
- An ability to appreciate different types and stages of individual growth and development.
- An ability to communicate effectively with people to be catechized.
- A willingness to continue his/her own religious formation.
- A person who integrates a vision of justice in his/her formation and catechetical ministry.

Introduction to Catechetical Formation and Certification

The purpose of the catechetical formation and certification program is to help the whole community of faith in the Diocese of Covington come to a basic knowledge of Jesus Christ and the teachings of His Church, and to prepare future generations to answer the call to holiness. The Diocese of Covington's Catechetical Formation and Certification Program was developed to engage the community of the Diocese in the ongoing formation of the Catholic faith and to provide the best possible training for all the faithful involved in catechesis.

Catechetical Leaders

Directors/Coordinators of Religious Education and Catholic School Principals must make it a priority to equip their catechists with the training to effectively teach and share the faith with their learners. Catechist formation and certification training will nurture the faith of the catechist and teach them to impart this faith to their students effectively. With a solid foundation in Church teaching, catechists may teach beyond the classroom materials and more confidently engage students.

There are many benefits to catechetical formation and certification training, the foremost being better-formed Catholics. Where catechist training occurs universally and systematically, cohesion in the catechetical program and unity among teachers and catechists

is evident. Furthermore, teachers and catechists who commit to ongoing training bring stability to school and parish religious education programs and long-term service to Jesus' ministry.

To support catechists, Catholic school principals will provide **a minimum of 3-hours** of faith formation training to their faculty/staff each school year. The faith formation training will count toward the annual professional development hours required of the faculty. Catholic school leaders are encouraged to use the course offerings of Franciscan University's Catechetical Institute to lead their staff but may use other programs that meet the needs of the school staff as well. It is highly recommended that the school principal collaborates with the pastor, pastoral administrator, or diocesan officials to determine the faith formation course offered each year.

The Role of a Director/Coordinator of Religious Education Program

A Director/Coordinator of Religious Education Program should meet semi-regularly with his or her parish catechists and encourage and guide them through the certification process each year. While it is understood that most catechists are volunteers, they are often eager to learn more about the Catholic faith and classroom management, as well as grow in their relationship with Christ. Therefore, parish catechists should be made aware of all that Franciscan University's Catechetical Institute has to offer and invited and welcomed to any diocesan faith formation events. It is primarily the responsibility of the DRE/CRE to ensure that catechists are aware of and encouraged to avail themselves of these opportunities.

Catechists: Catholic School Teachers

Catechists who teach content areas other than religion or theology are models of the faith to their students. As Catholic school teachers, they are called to bring the teachings of Christ and our Church into their classrooms through prayer, their living witness, and the curriculum. To do this effectively, teachers must have a general knowledge and understanding of Catholic Church teaching so they can be strong witnesses of the faith in all aspects of their ministry.

Catholic schoolteachers must complete a minimum of one faith formation workshop per year from Franciscan University's Catechetical Institute. The workshop offerings are provided under the Catholic Schools track on the [Franciscanathome.com](https://www.franciscanathome.com) dashboard. The workshop(s) taken will count towards the professional development hours required of all teachers and should be submitted to the school principal at the conclusion of each school year. These workshops may be taken virtually by the individual teacher, in small groups, or at the summer in-person training hosted by the Office of Catechesis and Evangelization.

Catechists: Teachers of Religion and Theology

Jesus Christ calls catechists to teach the faith in our Catholic schools or parish religious education programs. Catechists in the Diocese of Covington represent the teaching office of the Bishop.

In addition to providing religious education, the catechist nurtures the seeds of faith imparted at Baptism so the Christian may bear great fruit. Catechesis forms the whole person, so they may know God and how to respond to His great love with faith, hope, and charity. From first evangelization, through initiation, to lifelong discipleship, catechesis provides a sure foundation for the Christian life. Catechists accompany their students, helping them to live and bear witness to the faith in the world, preparing them for their eternal reward.

Catechists who are responsible for teaching religion or theology classes must be “practicing Catholics with a thorough knowledge of the Christian message and the ability to communicate it completely, faithfully, and enthusiastically; they should also meet diocesan standards for certification as a catechist (or a teacher)” (NDC 54, Ch. 8, p. 232).

All Catechists who teach religion or theology must be:

- Practicing Catholics in good standing with the Catholic Church,
- **21 years or older**,
- In full compliance with the Safe Environment Policies,
- Committed to present and witness to the authentic teachings of the Catholic Church,
- Willing to continue their ministry training, and work towards Certification.

Catechists who teach religion and theology must strive to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to communicate faith effectively. They must have a solid understanding of Catholic *Doctrine, Scripture and Tradition, and Church History*. They must have the necessary communication skills and ability to use various methodologies with their students; they must understand how people grow and mature, and how people of different ages and circumstances learn.

The *three levels* of Catechist Certification are ***Foundational, Intermediate, and Master***. Catechists who teach religion or theology in Catholic schools must take ***a minimum of 2 workshops per year*** until ***the Master Catechist Certification*** is complete. The courses taken will count towards the professional development hours required of all teachers and should be submitted to the school principal at the conclusion of each school year. These courses may be taken virtually by the individual teacher, in small groups, or at the summer in-person training hosted by the Office of Catechesis and Evangelization.

Parish catechists are strongly encouraged to take ***a minimum of 2 workshops per year*** until they reach ***Master Catechist Certification***.

Catechist Certification

Catechists must complete the workshops below to earn the Diocese of Covington's Catechetical Certification. The workshops may be completed in any order but must be successfully completed and documented to be valid for the purpose of certification. They must be taken through Franciscan University's Catechetical Institute.

Upon completion of all workshops in a certification track, a certificate will be issued automatically by the Franciscan University's Catechetical Institute and emailed to the individual's current email address.

Foundational Certification

Core Workshops (6 Workshops Required for Foundational Certification)

- 1) **Jesus** – Jesus: The Christocentricity of Catechetics
- 2) **Basic Beliefs** – Deposit of Faith: An Introduction to the Catechism
- 3) **Introduction to Old and New Testaments** – Choose one elective
 - a) Introduction to Old Testament
 - b) Introduction to New Testament
 - c) Scripture: The Heart of Catechesis
- 4) **The Vocation of the Catechist**
- 5) **Introduction to Catholic Spirituality** – Choose one elective
 - a) Prayer: Introduction to the Spiritual Life of the Catechist
 - b) Praying with Scripture
- 6) **Catechetical Process** – Choose one elective
 - a) The Ecclesial Method
 - b) The Evangelizing Classroom
 - c) Preventive System of St. John Bosco
 - d) Child Catechetical Methodologies and Learning Styles
 - e) Adult Catechetical Methodologies and Learning Styles

Intermediate Certification

Core Workshops (5 Workshops Required for Intermediate Certification)

- 1) **Old and New Testaments** – Choose one elective
 - a) Scripture: The Heart of Catechesis
 - b) Sacred Scripture: The Big Picture
 - c) Scripture: The Driving Force of Doctrine
- 2) **Christian Morality** – Choose two electives
 - a) Our Life in Christ: The Basics of Catholic Morality
 - b) Ten Commandments and Beatitudes
 - c) Teaching Your Children about God's Plan for Sexuality
 - d) A Foundational Vision: Theology of the Body
 - e) Faith and Moral Development: Ages 3 – 6

- f) Faith and Moral Development: Ages 6 – 12
- g) Faith and Moral Development: Ages 12 – 18
- 3) **Sacraments** – Choose one elective
 - a) The Sacramental Economy
 - b) The Sacrament of Baptism
 - c) The Sacrament of Reconciliation
 - d) The Sacrament of Eucharist
 - e) First Penance and First Eucharist Preparations
 - f) The Sacrament of Confirmation
 - g) Confirmation Preparation
- 4) **Liturgy and Rites** – Choose one elective
 - a) Introducing Liturgy to Children
 - b) Liturgy and Catechetical Methodology
 - c) Essential Link between Liturgy and Catechesis
 - d) The Purpose of Sacred Liturgy

Master Certification

Core Workshops (4 Workshops Required for Advanced Certification)

- 1) **Doctrine of God** – Choose one elective
 - a) The Trinity
 - b) The Father: Origin and Desire of All Souls
 - c) Christ: His Person and Works
 - d) Holy Spirit: Converter of Hearts
- 2) **Ecclesiology (Church: Vision Mission, Ministry)** – Choose one elective
 - a) The Church: Dispenser of the Mysteries and Guardian of the Deposit of Faith
 - b) Magisterial, Conciliar, and Catechetical Documents I
 - c) Magisterial, Conciliar, and Catechetical Documents II
 - d) Family: Domestic Church and School of Holiness
- 3) **Church History** – No CI Equivalency for this Module (must be taken in-person)
- 4) **Justice and Peace** – Catholic Social Teaching

Ongoing Faith Formation

Catechists who teach religion/theology and have earned Master Catechist Level of Certification must continue growing in their relationship with Jesus and in their knowledge of the faith. They will participate in ***a minimum of 10 hours of Ongoing Faith Formation programming annually***. Ongoing faith formation can include workshops from the Catechetical Institute, retreats, seminars or other faith formation workshops. Catholic schoolteachers of religion/theology must submit these hours to their principal at the conclusion of each school year. The faith formation hours will be ***counted toward professional development requirements***.

Recommended workshops for ongoing faith formation can be found **on the Office of Catechesis and Evangelization's website** or by contacting the office directly.

Requesting Equivalency Credits

Catechists who have **completed advanced theology degrees** or those who participated in previous certification programs may be issued equivalency credits for their coursework. Approved equivalency credits will exempt the catechist from taking additional certification coursework in the respective area.

The Certification Equivalency Form, located on the Office of Catechesis & Evangelization's website, should be completed and submitted to request equivalencies. Once received, the Office of Catechesis & Evangelization will review the past coursework and grant equivalencies for the appropriate courses/workshops. If applicable, individuals should also submit a copy of their college/commissioned ministry transcripts documenting appropriate coursework to the Office of Catechesis & Evangelization. If equivalency to any **Foundational, Intermediate**, or **Master Catechist Level of Certification** is granted, a certificate/letter will be issued by the Office of Catechesis & Evangelization and mailed/emailed to the individual's parish or school.

Annual Workshop Requirements Overview

Catechist	Annual Requirements	Platform
<i>Catholic School Teachers</i>	<i>1 Workshop</i>	<i>Catechetical Institute</i>
<i>*Catholic School Teachers of Religion/Theology</i>	<i>2 Workshops</i>	<i>Catechetical Institute</i>
<i>*Catechetical Leaders (Principals, DRE, CRE)</i>	<i>1 Workshop (Individual) Lead 1 Workshop for staff</i>	<i>Catechetical Institute</i>
<i>Parish Catechists</i>	<i>2 Workshops Encouraged</i>	<i>Catechetical Institute</i>
<i>Master Catechists</i>	<i>10 hours of ongoing faith formation programming</i>	<i>Catechetical Institute, retreats, other workshops</i>

****Must be working toward Catechetical Certification***

Diocese of Covington's Partnership with the Franciscan University of Steubenville Catechetical Institute

The Diocese of Covington entered a partnership with the Franciscan University of Steubenville Catechetical Institute in 2024. Therefore, workshop offerings towards Foundational, Intermediate, and Master Catechist Level of Certification should be taken from the [Franciscan@home.com](https://franciscan@home.com) website. Ongoing faith formation trainings may also be taken through the Catechetical Institute.

Catechists should follow the steps below to set up their free online account with Franciscan University to begin the Catechetical Institute workshops:

- 1) **Step One** – Create A FREE INDIVIDUAL ACCOUNT by going to <https://franciscan@home.com/diocese-covington>. This will take you to our Diocesan **Landing Page**. On our Landing Page, there are Learning Tracks set up specifically for our Diocese. These Learning Tracks are available on each Learner's Dashboard. Once you have signed up under the Institution, you will have FULL ACCESS to them.

On the right side, you will see Register Online, Click on the Second Blue Button – Your Parish or School is already Registered. And now, you can set up your Individual Free Account under your Parish/School or High School.

- Be Certain to:

- a) Enter your full name. This is how it will appear on your Certificate.
 - b) If possible, use your School or Parish email address.
- 2) **Step Two** – type in your full name and email address, preferably your institutional email address, create a unique password, set your time zone, upload a profile picture, and enter your phone number and mailing address.
 - 3) **Step Three** – enter your ministry area as it applies to you and click on the “Create an Account” box at the bottom.

This will bring you to the “**Sign Up for Free through Your Institution**” page. It will Auto-Fill the Country: **United States and the Diocese of Covington**, and then you must Select your Parish School or High School and Click the “**Sign Up**” box at the bottom.

- 4) **Step Four** – You will be directed to your **Dashboard** or **personal page** where you can start your first workshop by searching by **Track**, **Course**, or **Workshop** title.