

EASTERN CATHOLIC CATECHIST CERTIFICATE WORKSHOPS

GOD WITH US ECF & FRANCISCAN UNIVERSITY CATECHETICAL INSTITUTE

1. The Vocation of a Catechist

This workshop explores the most critical element in the graced work of passing on the faith — *you*. Because the content of the faith is a *Person* — the Person of Christ — the *person* of the catechist is pivotal for success. The vocation of the catechist is to be a *witness* of Christ’s goodness, of His zeal, of His ways, of Him — to be like the Master. “Whatever be the level of his responsibility in the Church, every catechist must constantly endeavor to transmit by his teaching and behavior the teaching and life of Jesus” (St. John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation "On Catechesis in Our Time," *Catechesi tradendae* (CT) 6). This calling is both joyfully *thrilling*, and jarringly *daunting*. It is a supernatural work, beyond our natural capacities. “Catechesis . . . is consequently a work of the Holy Spirit, a work that He alone can initiate and sustain in the Church” (CT 72). And sustain in *you*. This foundational workshop offers inspiration, insight, and guidance to encourage catechists as they strive to live out their privileged vocation.

By the end of this workshop, you’ll:

- Know more about the beautiful role of a catechist that you have been called to embrace.
- Recognize your own call and set goals to continue growing in your mission as a catechist.
- Sense more deeply the nobility of the role of a catechist.

Start Online Workshop: 10/20

Zoom Webinar: 11/17, 5-6pm PST

2. Introduction to the Old Testament

This workshop provides a “tour” through the Old Testament and through Salvation History. Dr. Bergsma provides a “mental map” of the Bible—the overview of how God has worked in human history to save us, through a series of covenants. This is a workshop where your notes will consist of drawn pictures. Get ready to sketch the story of God’s plan of bringing humanity into His divine life.

By the end of this workshop, you’ll:

- Know the overarching “map” of the Bible through the covenants that God made with the Israelites and the whole world.
- Have grown in the skills needed to relate the main themes and storyline of the Old Testament to learners in a catechetical session.
- Have deepened in appreciation for the way in which the Old and New Testaments interact and work together.

Start Online Workshop: 11/18

Zoom Webinar: 12/15, 5-6pm PST

3. Introduction to the New Testament

This workshop continues the “tour” of the Bible by engaging New Testament and its place in Salvation History. Dr. Bergsma continues treating his “mental map” of the Bible—the overview of how God has worked in human history to save us, through a series of covenants concluding with the New and Final Covenant in Jesus Christ. This is a workshop where your notes will consist of drawn pictures. Get ready to

sketch the story of God’s plan of bringing humanity into His divine life.

By the end of this workshop, you’ll:

- An outline grasp of the main themes, authors, and books of the New Testament.
- Developed a plan for continuing to grow in your understanding of the New Testament.
- A deepened appreciation of the immense spiritual riches contained in the New Testament.

Start Online Workshop: 12/16

Zoom Webinar: 1/19, 5-6pm PST

4. Jesus: The Christocentricity of Catechesis

Mother Church insists that catechesis that *truly* evangelizes hearts, and that meets souls in the place of *greatest* need, must be unshakably centered upon Him who is our beginning and our end — Jesus Christ. We teach Jesus, and *everything* we teach, we teach in reference to Him, thus teaching *Christo*-centricity. Come explore how to unfold the life-giving truths of our faith with Jesus placed clearly at the center of all things: our teaching content, our teaching methods, and our own personal witness to others whom God has called us to love.

By the end of this workshop, you’ll have:

- *Deepened in understanding* of the Church’s vision for a Christ-centered catechesis.
- *Gained further skills* in crafting catechetical sessions that center on Christ.
- A heightened *appreciation* of how the whole of the faith reveals Christ.

Start Online Workshop: 1/20

Zoom Webinar: 2/16, 5-6pm PST

5. The Deposit of Faith: An Introduction to the Catechism

Throughout the generations, the Word of God has been handed on as a precious jewel. The Church has guarded this Deposit of Faith so that the saving message of hope might shine out for all to see. Now it is up to *us*. It is our turn to hand on this jewel, unscathed. It is up to us to catechize, continuing the unbroken chain of passing on the faith throughout the ages. The term *catechesis* comes from two Greek words meaning, “to echo down,” reflecting the call to us to “echo down,” to hand on, the *whole of the faith* in its saving fullness. This Deposit of Faith is summed up for our times in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. We will look at this important teaching tool for catechesis in this workshop, to discover how we, too, can effectively pass on the precious deposit of Christian teaching. And in learning how to do this, we are able to insert our own name into St. Paul’s exhortation, “O *catechist*, guard what has been entrusted to you.”

By the end of this workshop, you’ll:

- Know more about the Deposit of Faith, as it is expressed and summarized in the *Catechism*.
- Have the skills to navigate the *Catechism* more efficiently, in order to share and help others enjoy the Deposit of Faith.
- Gain a deepened appreciation of the treasure we have in the Deposit of Faith.

Start Online Workshop: 2/17

Zoom Webinar: 3/16, 5-6pm PST

6. Essential Link Between Liturgy and Catechesis

This workshop will explore the necessary connection of catechesis to the sacramental and liturgical life of the Church in our work as catechists. The liturgy comes from the “living memory” of the Church, that is, the Holy Spirit (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, CCC, 1099). Through the Holy Spirit working in the liturgy, the truths of the faith are passed on like a special family memory, from generation to generation, down to the present day. Each time we participate in the liturgy, we receive the *treasure* of the Deposit of Faith. But the liturgy is more than a family heirloom – it is *reality*. It is the place in which “Christ Jesus works in fullness for the transformation of human beings” (*Catechesi Tradendae*, CT, 23). As catechists, we have a call: *the privilege* of ensuring that those we catechize understand and grow in appreciation for this encounter with God. We bring others into God’s saving work in the liturgy so they too can be *transformed* by the One Who loves us fully. We teach about the liturgy to pass on the magnificent inheritance of faith to the next generation, echoing the action of catechists from the centuries before us.

By the end of this workshop, you’ll:

- Know that the liturgy is the enablement of the Gospel message and the means to Heaven established by Christ.
- Be able to show how the liturgy relates to the Christian life, how it is the reason why we do and believe what we do, and how the liturgy protects what we believe in.
- Arrive at a place where the liturgy is no longer just a part of faith, but is *the* thing we need most deeply in the faith and thus in our daily life.

Start Online Workshop: 3/17

Zoom Webinar: 4/20, 5-6pm PST

7. The Trinity

The Blessed Trinity is the greatest of all mysteries: the One and Only God is a unity of Three Persons. The Trinity is also our final home, the goal of our life. This mystery, revealed in Jesus, sheds light on all other Christian mysteries. And it is the revelation that sheds light on all other Christian mysteries. Knowing that God, the Creator of Heaven and Earth, is a unity of loving Persons, changes our understanding of everything. Many religions believe in gods, some believe in one God, but nothing compares to the Christian belief in one God as a communion of Persons, named for us by Jesus as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Many curriculums include the Trinity as only one doctrine among many. This workshop will help to show how to teach the centrality of the Trinity effectively, as the goal and fulfillment of the life of each Christian.

By the end of this workshop, you’ll:

- Understand the major doctrinal points in the Church’s teaching on the Blessed Trinity.
- Have a growing confidence in your ability to speak or teach in a way that flows from the centrality of the Trinity into all aspects of the Christian faith.
- Have a deepened appreciation of the one God as three loving Persons: your loving Father, revealed by His Beloved Son, Jesus, Whose love is strengthened in us by His gift of the Holy Spirit.

Start Online Workshop: 4/21

Zoom Webinar: 5/18, 5-6pm PST

8. Christ: His Person and Works

He is the Alpha and the Omega. He is in all, before all, through all. The primary and essential object of catechesis is, to use an expression dear to St. Paul, “the mystery of Christ.” (CT 5) Therefore everyone who teaches the Catholic faith must be *immersed* in this mystery. Using Scripture and the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, as well as recent ecclesial documents, this workshop will present the key doctrines that must be taught concerning Jesus Christ. By examining Jesus’ actions in Scripture, His relationships, and His ways of teaching, we will help catechists unlock the mysteries of Christ, His Incarnation, Redemption, and Second Coming.

By the end of this workshop, you’ll:

- Recognize the essential elements all catechists need to teach about Christ (as Professor Bolster will say, the “Big 3, Plus 1”).
- Teach these essentials about Christ more effectively and creatively.
- Have a deeper appreciation of our Savior’s love and how to enter into the Mystery of Christ.

Start Online Workshop: 5/19

Zoom Webinar: 6/15, 5-6pm PST

9. The Ecclesial Method

“The content of catechesis cannot be indifferently subjected to any method” (*General Directory for Catechesis* 149). Every good catechist seeks in some organized fashion to give growth to the seed of *faith*, to nourish *hope*, and to develop a deeper desire to *love* God and neighbor. In this workshop, we will explore a method that is highly suited to the goals of catechesis, and flows from a study of

how the Church’s many catechetical saints sought to pass on the beauty, truth, and goodness of Christ’s saving revelation.

By the end of this workshop, you’ll:

- Know a trusted method for guiding a Gospel-centered catechetical session.
- Have the skills to incorporate the five steps of the Ecclesial Method (preparation, proclamation, explanation, application, celebration) into lesson plans.
- Enjoy a deepening appreciation for the beauty of a coherent teaching method.

Start Online Workshop: 6/16

Zoom Webinar: 7/20, 5-6pm PST

CHOOSE ONE:

10a. Child Catechetical Methods and Learning Styles

The goal of catechesis is participation in God’s life. It is critical that catechists learn how to *effectively* engage the young mind and heart of each child, encourage each child to respect and love the things of the faith, and help each child discover the wonderful love of a gentle Father. This very basic workshop focuses on the most fundamental catechetical methodologies that will enable the catechist of children to facilitate *intimacy with God* and *fidelity to the Church*. Methods and techniques will be demonstrated that encourage children to grow in wonder and awe, as they deepen their love for God and His truths.

By the end of this workshop you’ll:

- Have deepened in knowledge of what children need to enjoy a safe,

welcoming, encouraging catechetical environment.

- Have planned and prepared activities and set up plans to foster a faith-filled learning environment.
- Understand the critical role of your actions as a catechist in forming a welcoming environment at the catechetical session.

Start Online Workshop: 7/21

Zoom Webinar: 8/17, 5-6pm PST

10b. Adult Catechetical Methods and Learning Styles

The General Directory of Catechesis says that, "Catechesis for adults, since it deals with persons who are capable of an adherence that is fully responsible, must be considered the chief form of catechesis" (GDC 59). Is this what most adult Catholics understand? Do most parishes orient sufficient resources to this endeavor? Do the methods employed in parishes reflect the best possible principles for adult learning, which differ from methodology employed for children and adolescents? This workshop will explore techniques to evangelize, catechize, and form faith in adults most effectively, given that the principle places of adult formation are in the *family* and in the *parish*.

By the end of this workshop, you'll have:

- Gained further understanding of the critical importance of adult formation and the key principles for catechizing adults.

- Developed ways to incorporate dialogue as a teaching tool to invite adults into deeper spiritual openness through the use of well-framed questions.
- Deepened in appreciation of the diversity of means by which adults reach points of conversion and consistency in growing in faith.

Start Online Workshop: 7/21

Zoom Webinar: 8/17, 5-6pm PST