



DIOCESAN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2007 - 2008

Vol III, Issue 1

ROLE OF THE CATECHIST

On Friday, February 8, Pope Benedict XVI told the bishops of Costa Rica that the secret to being a good catechist is to live what you preach. Speaking particularly to catechists, the Pontiff reminded them to "unite the transmission of right doctrine with personal testimony, with the firm commitment to live according to the commandments of the Lord and with the lived experience of being faithful and active members of the Church."

"This example of life," according to Benedict XVI, "is necessary so that your instruction does not stay in a mere transmission of theoretical knowledge about the mysteries of God, but that it leads to embracing a Christian way of life."

NCEA ACRE / DIOCESAN RELIGION TEST

A number of DREs and other administrators have asked recently about Diocesan policy with respect to evaluating the effectiveness of student learning, based on the religious education program. The policy is stated in full as follows:

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION ASSESSMENT DBS File #612.5

To ensure continued growth and high quality of school, religious education, and youth ministry programs, periodic assessment of students' knowledge, attitudes and practices is essential. A standardized inventory will allow administrators and catechists to assess the effectiveness of their own programs. In administering the assessment program, the following guidelines will be followed:

1. The instruments to be used for assessment are:

(a.)

Grade 5	ACRE 1
Grade 8 or 9	ACRE 2
Grade 11 or 12	ACRE 3

and / or:

(b.)

Grade 5	Diocesan Grade 5 Religion Test
Grade 8 or 9	Diocesan Grade 8/9 Religion Test

2. Each ACRE assessment is to be administered at a minimum of every three years. The period

for the administration of the assessment will be set in collaboration with the Department of Education and Catechesis.

3. The Diocesan Religion Tests may be used annually.

4. The assessment is to be administered to students in grades 5, 8 or 9, 11 or 12 enrolled in school, religious education, and youth ministry programs. This should include students involved in non-formal programs as well as classroom programs.

5. The cost of the assessment shall be borne by the school, religious education, or youth ministry program.

APPROVED: April 28, 1986

REVISED: August 1, 2001

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As a catechetical leader in charge of a religious education program in a Catholic school or parish program, you may obtain sample materials. To request sample assessments contact either NCEA or Computerized Assessments and Learning in Lawrence, Kansas (CAL), NCEA's outsourcer for filling orders, scoring and providing reports, at 1-866-406-3850 or <http://ncea.caltesting.org/>.

More information about the NCEA ACRE assessment is available online:

<http://www.ncea.org/Assessment/index.asp>

NCEA ACRE is available in Spanish.

The Diocesan Religion Test is currently under revision and will be available this Spring.

BUILDING OR ENHANCING YOUR CATECHIST FORMATION PROGRAM: INFORMATION FOR GROWTH (IFG) SURVEY

“Catechists are an invaluable element of every catechetical program. Their unselfish donation of time and effort allows the passing on of the faith to continue from generation to generation. Effective catechist formation therefore is of utmost importance to the integrity of religious education programs at all levels. Yet, it can be a challenge to know where to begin the formation of a group of catechists from diverse backgrounds with differing levels of education and at various stages of faith development...” (December 2007 *NPCD News*)

To assess the formation needs of your catechists in view of the six dimensions of adult faith

formation content: <http://www.ncea.org/UserFiles/File/ACRE->

[IFG/Building_or_Enhancing_Your_Catechist_Formation_Program_NPCD_News_Dec_2007.pdf](http://www.ncea.org/UserFiles/File/ACRE-IFG/Building_or_Enhancing_Your_Catechist_Formation_Program_NPCD_News_Dec_2007.pdf)

IFG is available in Spanish.

PASTORAL RESPONSE TO PORNOGRAPHY

Bishop Mengeling has appointed a committee to address the pastoral challenges of pornography in our society. This committee is currently developing a variety of pastoral resources for adults, parents, young adults, middle school and high school teens, and children. As each resource is completed, it will be added to the diocesan website. A letter from Bishop Mengeling, announcing the appointment of this committee can be viewed at:

http://www.dioceseoflansing.org/news_information/bishop_porn_committee_01_08.pdf

REGIONAL MEETINGS

- **Livingston and Washtenaw Regions** (February 20) -- St Mary, Chelsea, 9:30 - Lunch
- **Genesee / Owasso Region** (February 21) -- St John, Davison, 9:00 - Lunch
- **Lansing Region** (March 4) -- St Mary, Charlotte 9:30 - Lunch
- **Jackson, Lenawee / Hillsdale Regions** (March 5) -- St Elizabeth, Tecumseh 9:30 - Lunch

DAY OF REFLECTION

“LISTEN TO HIS VOICE”

A Day of Reflection for Ministers and Administrators – including principals, directors of religious education, youth ministers, RCIA directors, evangelization directors, directors of adult faith formation, liturgy directors, and pastoral musicians – will be held at Bethany House, Dewitt, Michigan on Thursday, February 28, 2008 from 8:00 am to 3:00 pm.

The day will be led by Dr. Mary Dumm, pastoral associate, St Blase Parish, Sterling Heights, Michigan. She has ministered in the Archdiocese of Detroit for twenty years. First as a high school teacher, then as a director of religious formation and pastoral associate. Mary is committed to lay ministry in the Church. Mary's background is in scripture, liturgy and sacraments. She was educated at St Mary's College, Notre Dame, and Sacred Heart Major Seminary and recently (2006) completed her Doctorate in Ministry at the Ecumenical Theological Seminary in Detroit.

The cost for the retreat is \$35.00, which includes morning refreshments and lunch. Contact person: Claudia Kaloz (517) 342-2482 or ckaloz@dioceseoflansing.org

SPRING INTO PRAISE CONFERENCE

Enlighten your spirit and strengthen your faith at the *Spring into Praise Conference 2*. Join high school chaplains and popular speakers Fr. Joe Krupp and Fr. Geoff Rose, OSFS, as they explore "*The Winds of Change*."

This one-day conference is for the young, the old, and everyone in between. Make plans to be at Mt. Zion Catholic Pastoral Center, in Flushing, on March 8th, from 8:00 AM registration to 4:30 PM, for this rejuvenating experience just in time to prepare your heart for Easter. Attendees will have the opportunity to celebrate the Sacrament of Penance. \$15.00 per person. Call 810-639-7175 or email mtzion@centurytel.net for more information

PROFILE IN HOLINESS

A 6-year-old Italian girl may one day become the youngest canonized non-martyr saint.

Born in 1930, the Servant of God, Antonietta Meo (nicknamed "Nennolina") formed the habit of leaving a letter at the foot of a crucifix every night. At first, she dictated these notes to her mother; later she wrote them herself. The more than 100 letters and her diary reveal an intense mysticism and a surprising level of theological reflection, albeit hidden in simple phrases.

Antonietta was diagnosed with bone cancer at age 5 after a fall caused by a knee injury would not

heal. She serenely accepted the amputation of her leg and offered it in union with the sacrifices of Christ. She died July 3, 1937, five months before her 7th birthday.

Antonietta Meo is an example to be taken to heart by catechetical leaders. In her simple but profound way, she was a child who at a very tender age came to grasp fully the joy of being a witness to Christ in ordinary life. May her example and prayers keep the call to holiness at the forefront of our lives and endeavors!

For more information on her life:

http://www.nennolina.it/bio_index_EN.htm



A SPECIAL INITIATIVE IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE PAPAL VISIT

Civic engagement and promoting justice are among the hallmarks of U.S. Catholic education at all levels. The National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA) will launch a campaign similar in scope to the Child-to-Child endeavor that responded to Hurricane Katrina – but this time seeking service hours in honor of the Holy Father’s birthday (April 16), which he will celebrate during his U.S. visit.

Students in schools, religious education programs, seminaries and colleges will be asked to complete or pledge (for completion by May 31) community service time in the name of the Pope. Activities could include programs in which students are already involved – or they could seek out other distinct areas to contribute that reflect the Holy Father’s interests.

NCEA will be the conduit for collecting these community service commitments; posting the initiative and updates on their Web site and generally promoting and publicizing the project.

Details are still being finalized. Please watch your e-mail for a special announcement on how you may participate. Information also will be posted on the NCEA Web site www.ncea.org.

105th ANNUAL NCEA CONVENTION AND EXPOSITION – INDIANAPOLIS

The National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA) and the National Association of Parish Catechetical Directors (NAPCD) will hold their annual convention/convocation at the Indiana Convention Center, Indianapolis, March 25-28. The conference theme is “Crossroads – Where Challenge Meets Opportunity.” Major speakers include Daniel S. Mulhall, 2008 Emmaus Awardee, who will deliver a keynote “The Single Most Critical Factor: Celebrating Professional Catechetical Leaders.” For information: <http://www.ncea.org/events/ConventionExposition.asp>

NCCL – HOUSTON

The National Conference for Catechetical Leadership (NCCL) will hold its annual convention and exposition in Houston, Texas, April 6-10. The conference theme is “Transforming Catechesis.” Among the five major speakers will be Bishop Daniel Flores, the Archdiocese of Detroit’s newest auxiliary bishop, and Sister Donna Markham, OP, Prioress General of the Dominican Sisters of Adrian, Michigan. For information: <http://www.nccl.us/>

SAINT JOHN BOSCO CONFERENCE FOR CATECHISTS AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATORS

The Franciscan University of Steubenville will host the annual St John Bosco Conference for Catechists and Religious Educators from July 16-20. The option for a three-day conference is also

offered from July 18-20. The conference theme is "Inherit the Father's Kingdom." Speakers include Bishop Daniel Conlon, Msgr. Stuart Swetland, and Dr Petroc Willey. For information: <http://www.franciscanconferences.com/conferences/confdetails.asp?ConferenceID=123>

CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES ECO-PALMS

The Catholic Relief Services Fair Trade Program is once again endorsing Eco-palms as a way to promote economic justice Palm Sunday. Deadline for ordering is February 20. To learn more please visit: <http://fairtrade.crs-blog.org/sustainability/order-soon-to-add-justice-and-joy-to-palm-Sunday/>

Catechist Training Opportunities

REGISTRATION FORMS:

http://www.dioceseoflansing.org/catechesis_k12/index.html

JACKSON REGION CATECHIST FORMATION

Jackson Catholic Middle School

Saturday, February 23:

http://www.dioceseoflansing.org/catechesis_k12/JacksonRegionBrochure.pdf

Topic 13 – The Sacraments

Presented by Todd Gale, DRE, Queens

Topic 14 – Prayer

Presenter TBA

Topic 15 – Overview of the Bible

Presented by Carl Falter,
Theology Teacher, LCHS

Enrichment:

How to Create PowerPoint Programs for the Catechist

Presented by Mark Smith,
DRE, St. Mary, Jackson

Topic 1 – Ministry of the Catechist

Presented by Alicia McEllis,
DRE, Our Lady of Fatima, Michigan Center

Topic 2 – Learning Process and Faith Development

Presenter TBA

Topic 4 – Some Effective Catechetical Techniques

Presented by Tony Shaughnessy,
Principal, JCMS

Enrichment:

Using the U.S. Adult Catechism for RCIA

& Adult Formation

Presented by Todd Gale,
DRE, Queens

LANSING REGION CATECHIST FORMATION

March 7, 2007

7-9 pm

Hosted by

Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, Lansing
393-3033

Topic 22 – Catechesis and Social Justice

HILLSDALE-LENEWEE REGION CATECHIST FORMATION

St. Mary on the Lake, Manitou Beach will offer Catechist Formation June 22-25 as part of the Vacation Bible School program. For information, contact Jean Schaub at (517) 547-7496.

WASHTENAW REGION CATECHIST FORMATION

None reported

LIVINGSTON REGION CATECHIST FORMATION

None reported

GENESEE / OWOSSO REGION CATECHIST FORMATION

Saint Pius X, Flint

Thursday Feb 21, **Topic 19 – New Testament Acts and Letters**

Thursday Feb 28 rescheduled **Topic 16 – Old Testament Themes**

Starts at 7 p.m. in the school library.

Call 810-235-8573 to register.

OFFICE OF YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY

MASS AND BRUNCH WITH THE BISHOP

This annual event is February 24 at St. Thomas Aquinas in East Lansing. Please go to the young adult website for registration material:

<http://www.dioceseoflansing.org/youngadult/brunchwithbishop.pdf>

OFFICE OF YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY

WORLD YOUTH DAY

MIDDLE SCHOOL RALLY

For information on World Youth Day (Sydney, Australia), See You in Sydney (Sydney, Ohio), Middle School Rally and other youth events, see:

<http://www.dioceseoflansing.org/youthministry/index.html>

OFFICE OF LAY ECCLESIAL MINISTRY

FORMATION OF A NEW GRADUATE LEVEL LEARNING COHORT, FALL, 2008

The Loyola Institute for Ministry Extension (LIMEX) is offering a part-time program designed for working adults. With its emphasis on practical theology, students learn to reflect critically on both course content and their actual experience.

Information Sessions are scheduled for the following dates at the Diocesan Center in Lansing from 7:00-8:30 pm:

- Wednesday February 27, 2008
- Monday March 10, 2008
- Thursday April 3, 2008

Entrance Interviews for admission into the 2008 Lansing LIMEX cohort are with Nancy Joseph, the Director of the Office of Lay Ecclesial Ministry and the LIMEX Liaison for the Diocese of Lansing.

It is important to attend an Information Session *before* scheduling this interview. Nancy will be available for interview scheduling at the end of each Information Session.

For further Information: Nancy Joseph, (517) 432-2512, njoseph@dioceseoflansing.org

ETERNAL REST

Kindly remember in your prayers:

✠ **Ginny Guarnaccia** (December 17), formerly Director of Religious Education at St James, Mason; later, Pastoral Associate, St James, Mason; commissioned Lay Ecclesial Minister; retired as administrative assistant in the Diocesan Office of Pastoral Planning; wife of Deacon Vince Guarnaccia.

PRAYER INTENTIONS FOR MARCH 2008

1. All Religious Educators in the Diocese of Lansing
2. Sister Dorita Wotiska, OP (Superintendent of Catholic Schools)
3. Kit White (St Mary School, Williamston)
4. Loretta Budzyn (St Joseph, Adrian)
5. Paul Davis (St Joseph, Adrian)
6. Mary Quick (St Mary of Good Counsel, Adrian)
7. Becky Benjamin (Christ the King, Ann Arbor)
8. Ellen Ward (St Francis of Assisi, Ann Arbor)
9. Sister Dorothy Ederer, OP (St Mary Student Parish, Ann Arbor)
10. Sister Catherine Morgan, OP (St Mary Student Parish, Ann Arbor)
11. Philip Campbell (St Patrick, Ann Arbor)
12. Tim Carpenter (St Thomas, Ann Arbor)
13. Msgr. Raymond Goehring (St Ann, Bellevue)
14. Kathleen Briggs (St Peter, Blissfield)
15. Mary Mahar (St Mary Magdalene, Brighton)
16. All Children in the Diocese
17. Religious Educators
18. Catholic Schools
19. All Penitents
20. All First Communicants
21. All Confirmandi and Sponsors
22. Bishop Carl Mengeling
23. Pope Benedict XVI
24. Sister Theresa Fifer, OSF (St Patrick, Brighton)
25. Marcia Strausbaugh (St Patrick, Brighton)

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| 26. Diane Dover | (St Joseph Shrine, Brooklyn) |
| 27. Heidi Dexter | (Blessed Sacrament, Burton) |
| 28. Jacki Popadich | (Holy Redeemer, Burton) |
| 29. Tanya Adalco | (St Mary, Charlotte) |
| 30. Catherine Guinan | (St Mary, Chelsea) |
| 31. Louanne Alber | (St Rita, Clarklake) |

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE OF LIFE

This year's Easter (March 23) will be the earliest it's been since 1856.

The earliest date Easter can possibly occur is March 22
which has not happened since 1818 and will not do so again until 2285.

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Better a diamond with a flaw than a pebble without. (Confucius)

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Life on earth is expensive –
but it does include a free trip around the sun every year.

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DUE DATE

Submissions for the next e-Newsletter are due MARCH 12th.

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