Email not displaying correctly? View it in your browser

In This Issue...

Office of Catechesis & Youth Ministry News
Happy Catechetical Sunday!
Who taught you to pray?

Upcoming Events & Training
Catechetical Calendar
Forming the Catechetical Spirit - Basic Program
Forming the Catechetical Spirit - Advanced Program
Gigs, Geeks & God

Resources
Archdiocese of Milwaukee
Catechesis in an Election Year

Success Stories/Classroom Ideas
Name Tents
Don’t Be Afraid To Use Technology

Focus Points
Year of Mercy: Visit the Sick
Prayer: Catholic Prayers

Office of Catechesis & Youth Ministry

Happy Catechetical Sunday!
Those whom the community has designated to serve as catechists will be called forth to be commissioned for their ministry. Catechetical Sunday is a wonderful opportunity to reflect on the role that each person plays, by virtue of Baptism, in handing on the faith and being a witness to the Gospel. Catechetical Sunday is an opportunity for all to rededicate themselves to this mission as a community of faith.

To help support you along the way, we in the Office of Catechesis & Youth Ministry offer this e-newsletter. We’ll send it to you about every other month with resources & training opportunities.

Blessing on your year,
Gary Pokorny & Jennifer Murphy

A Catechist’s Prayer

Parcher of all families, you have called me to serve the family in truth and love as a catechist. May I be faithful to this call, rooted in my Word, and open to the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

May I use these gifts, especially the gifts of faith, hope, and love, to serve the family as a witness to you, who are love and life and the source and destiny of all families.

Let your Spirit enlighten my mind and strengthen my heart so that I can be a path of Christ’s love to families, especially those in need, the homebound and aged, the disabled and disadvantaged.

Through the intercession of Mary and Joseph, I pray for the Church, the Bride of Christ, whose mission to build a civilization of love passes through the family.

Amen.

Copyright © 2016, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, D.C. All rights reserved. Permission is hereby granted to duplicate this work without adaptation for non-commercial use.
**Who taught you to pray?**

From my parents I learned ‘Angel of God’ and ‘Bless us O Lord.’ When school-age I learned the Our Father, Hail Mary, the rosary and other devotions. As a little boy one Christmas after midnight I quietly said ‘Happy Birthday, Jesus” and felt he was right there, as real as talking to a friend. As a young teen, I recall a teacher leading us in guided meditation, and the gift of a book that explained praying as conversation with Christ. So it continued through the years, through powerful experiences and in dry routine. I’ve had many teachers, and of course, the Lord teaching in solitary moments and through these human teachers.

You too have likely had many teachers. That teaching did not happen by chance. People in our lives knew that we need help to learn to pray and to go more deeply.

This year’s Catechetical Sunday theme is ‘Prayer: the Faith Prayed’ reminding us that it is not enough to teach people about God, but we must help them to encounter God personally in prayer. Let’s allow this awareness to permeate the year ahead. Be more attentive to your own role in guiding people in prayer; remind other catechists of this privileged calling; and throughout the year let us continue to pray, to learn, and to ask “Lord, teach us to pray.”

~Gary Pokorny

---

**Upcoming Events & Trainings**

Download the Catechesis & Youth Ministry Office Calendar to stay up to date on events.

**Forming the Catechetical Spirit - Basic Certification**

**September - May**

St. Anthony on the Lake Parish

The Forming the Catechetical Spirit Basic program will begin on September 10, 2016. This 9 session program will meet from 8:30am - Noon and will feature a variety of topics. The objectives of the program are to: nurture the spirituality of the catechist; acquire foundational knowledge of Catholic teachings and beliefs; and incorporate what is learned into catechetical ministry. There is no cost. [Click here](#) for more information.

**Forming the Catechetical Spirit - Advanced Certification**

**September - May**

St. Mary Catholic Church

The Forming the Catechetical Spirit Advanced program will begin on September 17, 2016. This 9 session program will meet from 8:30am - Noon and will feature a variety of topics. The objectives of the program are to: support ongoing spiritual maturity; expand theological knowledge and understandings; and develop creative and effective catechetical methods. The program fee is $75. [Click here](#) for more information.
Gigs, Geeks & God
January 19, 2017
Our Lady of Lourdes

This conference on technology, faith formation and parish ministries will feature a keynote speaker, workshops, a “quick fire” session, exhibitors, and ample time for sharing ideas with experts and colleagues.

Resources

The Archdiocese of Milwaukee has many resources for Catechists. Click here to visit our page to get Catechist Formation and Training Opportunities, Resource Websites, Creative ideas, Books for Catechists as well as Standards for Teachers and Catechists.

Catechesis in an Election Year

Elections are a time for debate and decisions about the leaders, policies, and values that will guide our nation. It should be no surprise to catechists that politics come up in youth ministry groups and Religious Education classes. Catechists should be active citizens but should always exercise care not to politicize their class or group discussion. That’s not time to campaign for candidates, but it may be a teachable moment to talk about Catholic principles and to help form consciences.

The U.S. bishop’s Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship, a teaching document, integrates new policy developments in the U.S. as well as new papal teachings, including those of Pope Benedict XVI and Pope Francis. Faithful Citizenship is not a voter’s guide or a scorecard of issues. It doesn’t tell Catholics who to vote for, or offer guidance on which candidate or party best reflects the Church’s moral framework. Instead, it shares Church teaching to help assess political platforms, campaigns, and some of the important issues that face our communities and world today. Click here to learn more about faithful citizenship or to attend the Faithful Citizenship sessions here in the Archdiocese.

Success Stories/Classroom Ideas

Name Tents
At the first session of the year, give each student a piece of cardstock. Ask them to fold it in half (long way). On one side, have them write their name they would like to be called. On the other side, ask them to write a scripture verse or a prayer that is it important to them. The name side faces out, which allows you and all the other students to see their name. Having the verse or prayer facing them, helps to keep them grounded and encouraged.

Be Not Afraid To Use Technology
If you are nervous about using technology in your ministry, you are not alone. Technology can seem intimidating at times, especially when you haven’t grown up with it.

Start with what’s easy and fits your needs. Then take time to learn about other forms of technology. Whether you take workshops or online courses or learn on the fly, go with what you’re drawn to. You and your students have a tremendous amount of information at your fingertips. Use what you know and allow your students to use what they know.

Just remember that technology is a tool, not the focus. Technology helps us convey the Message in our efforts to
help students learn. Ultimately, it is important that students learn something about their faith and how it applies to their lives. As catechists, we are important mentors and partners to parents and peers in the spiritual formation of young lives. We have experience, insight, and background from which our students can learn and grow. With family dynamics today, students need many caring adults to guide them and talk openly about life and faith concerns.

In a presentation to the USCCB, Bishop Ronald Herzog of Alexandria, LA, pointed out that evangelizing in this new culture of technology and social media is more than just learning how to use it; it is also about learning how to “think, live and embrace life on the Digital Continent.”

Technology is not going away and, as catechists, we are called to meet people where they are. We are missionaries to the “Digital Continent,” and we are called to evangelize to real-world communities as well as virtual communities. It is our task to help teach how to live in this new world in a Christian way.

Excerpt from I can Use Technology in My Ministry by Dave Baudry and Marc Puechner, members of the Technology in Faith Formation committee.

*** If you have a success story or an useful classroom ideas that you would be willing to share, please send your story to: murphyjc@archmil.org

Focus Points:

Year of Mercy Focus for October 2016: Visit the Sick
Pope Francis has declared a Jubilee Year of Mercy to begin on December 8, 2015 and continue through November 20, 2016. Catholics throughout the archdiocese are invited to practice the Works of Mercy throughout this Jubilee Year. For October we focus on the Corporal Work of Mercy: “Visit the Sick.” Take these Mercy Actions throughout the month: Volunteer at a hospital/care center and visit a sick/infirm relative or friend.

Focus On Prayer: Catholic Prayers
Prayer is the act we use to enter into loving, conscious communion with God. A "prayer" might be an entreaty, supplication, and/or petition to the infinitely powerful God. Click here to view some of the most common Catholics prayers are listed to aid you in your communication with God.

Contact Us

Gary Pokorny
Director
414-758-2242
pokornyg@archmil.org

Jennifer Murphy
Administrative Assistant
414-758-2240
murphyjc@archmil.org

Do you have an article/resource, success story or training you would like included in the newsletter???
Please send information to: murphyjc@archmil.org

https://629896.content.nlgrid.com/wf/webmail?r=p=ZTIlbGQzTrNaWF1vWIhKZmFXUTZNVlEtIkN4MWMvVnlYmwxrT2pJMU5qYTBMUWV5SrVaWGR6Y...