



**MOST PRECIOUS BLOOD  
CATHOLIC CHURCH**

www.oviedocatholic.org

*Discipleship & Faith Formation*

*Catechist Handbook*

2018-2019

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*Discipleship and Faith Formation*

*helps our community to hear and respond to Jesus' call*

*to "Come, Follow Me" as his disciples.*

## **What is a catechist?**

A baptized man or woman who has responded to God's call (vocation) to build up His kingdom specifically through catechesis. By the witness of his/her life, he/she leads others to encounter the Person of Jesus Christ and invites them to become His disciple.

*Pope Francis' Address to Catechists on September 27, 2013*

“Catechesis is a vocation: “being a catechist”, this is the vocation, not working as a catechist. ...It means leading people to encounter Christ by our words and our lives, by giving witness. Remember what Benedict XVI said: “The Church does not grow by proselytizing; she grows by attracting others’ And what attracts is our witness. Being a catechist means witnessing to the faith, being consistent in our personal life.”

## **What is catechesis?**

The stage of evangelization that brings initial faith in Jesus Christ to maturity. It is an ongoing formation in the life of discipleship, an apprenticeship in Christian living.

*Catechism of the Catholic Church, 4*

“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.”

*General Directory for Catechesis, 82*

“Catechesis is that particular form of the ministry of the word which matures initial conversion to take it into a living, explicit and fruitful confession of faith...”

*On Catechesis in Our Time, 20*

“...within the whole process of evangelization, the aim of catechesis is to be the teaching and maturation stage, that is to say, the period in which the Christian, having accepted by faith the person of Jesus Christ as the one Lord and having given Him complete adherence by sincere conversion of heart, endeavors to know better this Jesus to whom he has entrusted himself...”

## **Fundamental tasks of catechesis**

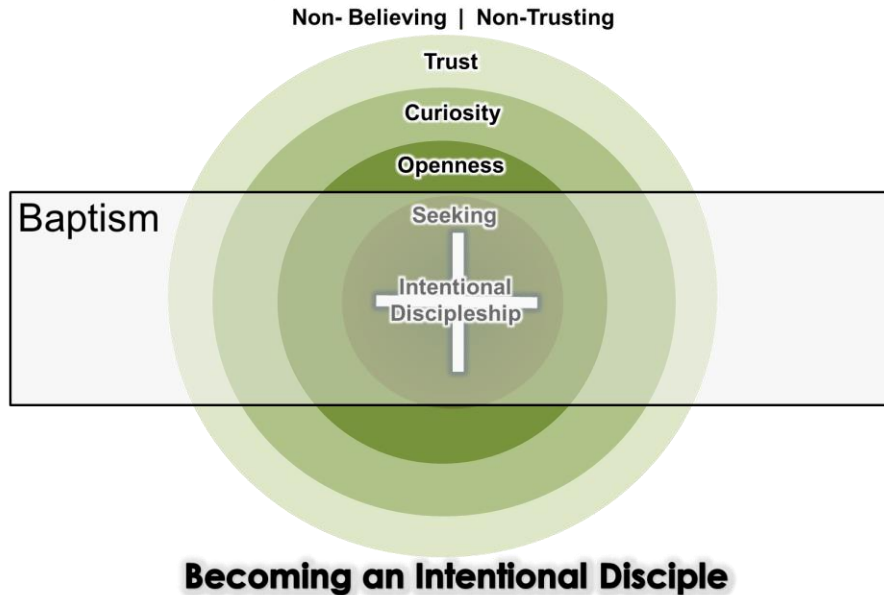
There are six interrelated tasks of catechesis through which disciples are brought to spiritual maturity:

1. Promote knowledge of the faith
2. Liturgical education and formation
3. Moral formation in Jesus Christ
4. Teaching to pray
5. Formation in active community life and mission
6. Missionary initiation

*National Directory for Catechesis, 20*

“These six tasks of catechesis constitute a unified whole by which catechesis seeks to achieve its objective: the formation of disciples of Jesus Christ.”

## Moving to the Lord - Thresholds



### Becoming a catechist at Most Precious Blood

- ◆ Fill out the Catechist Application Form and return to John Molloy (jmolloy@oviedocatholic.org).
- ◆ John will contact you to set up an interview time.
- ◆ Contact Lillian Izaguirre (lizaguirre@oviedocatholic.org) to begin the Safe Environment process.
- ◆ Attend a Catechist Orientation.
- ◆ Participate in ongoing formation throughout the year.

## Practical points for Most Precious Blood Catechists

### I. Maintain a healthy spiritual life

- ◆ Your fruitfulness as a catechist depends on your attachment to the Vine (see John 15:5).
- ◆ Participate in weekly Sunday Eucharist, daily prayer and Scripture meditation, and regular Reconciliation.
- ◆ Participate in an Adult Formation study offered by the parish.

### II. Prepare your lesson well

- ◆ Pray for each student to encounter Jesus Christ through you and in your lesson.
- ◆ Study and plan in prayer. Allow the Holy Spirit to guide your preparation and the lesson.
- ◆ Be prepared to share what God has done and is doing in your life as you move closer to Him (see 1 Peter 3:15).
- ◆ Follow the provided lesson schedule.
- ◆ Utilize the catechist guide and online resources as found on: [aliveinchrist.osv.com](http://aliveinchrist.osv.com). (grades 1-7).
- ◆ Incorporate activities for multiple learning styles.

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### III. Know your class

- ◆ Understand the thresholds of conversion and how to help someone progress in their interior spiritual journey with Jesus Christ.
- ◆ “Read” where a child/youth is in their relationship with Jesus.
- ◆ Understand the “spiritual climate” of your group, meet them there, and move them toward the Lord.
- ◆ Students with special needs are welcome to participate in our classes. If there is a child/youth with special needs in your class, you will be notified and given any specific instructions to meet their unique needs.

### IV. Communicate with the parents on a regular basis

- ◆ Send home the “Faith + Family” pages at the end of each session.
- ◆ Available modes of communication: email, Remind101, etc.
- ◆ Blind copy all email recipients (Diocese of Orlando privacy policy).
- ◆ Copy John Molloy ([jmolloy@oviedocatholic.org](mailto:jmolloy@oviedocatholic.org)) on all communications to the families.

### V. Coordinate any needs with the office

- ◆ Copies—You may come into the office and use the copier or email them to Chris by 5:00pm on the Monday prior to class with any specifications (number of copies, paper color, etc.).
- ◆ Special craft supplies— please submit at least 1 week before the class that you will require them.

- ◆ Substitutes—As soon as you know that you are unable to teach on a given week, please notify John or Chris as soon as you can so that a substitute may be found.

#### VI. Arrive early

- ◆ Pick up your catechist folder from the Narthex. It has the attendance sheet, sign out sheet, and anything that may need to be distributed to the class.
- ◆ Greet all children/youth in your designated sitting area in the Parish Life Center. Sit with them and monitor them during the general session.
- ◆ Classes will be dismissed one-by-one at the end of the general session. Escort your group to your assigned classroom and begin your lesson.
- ◆ The rooms will be locked for the duration of the Faith Formation period. Do not open the door for anyone, even if someone is knocking. Faith Formation helpers will have keys.
- ◆ If there are any late arrivals, they need to check in at the Narthex and be escorted to your room. Do not open the door.

#### VII. Maintain order

- ◆ Distribute and use the student books during your session. At the end of the session, gather them and put them away.
- ◆ Note attendance **legibly and accurately** on the provided sheet in your catechist folder. (P or √ = Present; A or X = Absent)
- ◆ If there are any discipline issues, give a warning to the child/youth.
- ◆ If the issue persists, the child/youth should be handed over to John who will address the issue and notify parents of the behavior, if needed.
- ◆ If the issue still continues, John will meet with the parents to arrive at a solution. The child may be dismissed from the weekly Faith Formation sessions.

#### VIII. Dismiss on time

- ◆ Be conscious of the ending time and open your door at the designated ending time.
- ◆ All children (grades 1-8) must be signed out by an adult. Sign out sheets are provided.
- ◆ Children may not be signed out by siblings, unless it is an older sibling who is driving. You may check an ID if you are unsure.
- ◆ You will be notified if there are any children who will be walking or biking home. Parents must have already cleared it with John prior to the class period. We **STRONGLY** discourage it.
- ◆ If there are any children/youth still waiting to be picked up when you are ready to leave, escort them to the Narthex where they can continue to wait until their parent arrives to sign them out.

## Emergency Procedures

### General Emergency

All families will have an emergency contact card on file. In the event of sickness, behavior, or other issues, John or Chris will reach out to the emergency contact.

If there is an on-campus emergency during Faith Formation, we will notify the classrooms and issue instructions. Classes in the five portables will be notified via the phone located on the back wall of each room. Specific instructions are given below.

If an issue arises in a PLC classroom, an assistant or helper can be sent to the Narthex for assistance.

If an issue arises in a portable classroom, **call 134** from the room phone for assistance.

During the year, there may be emergency procedure drills. Catechists will be notified and given instructions ahead of the drill. Families will be notified in advance of the day and type of drill to be performed.

### Fire Emergency

#### ***When fire is discovered:***

- ◆ Activate the nearest fire alarm (if installed)
- ◆ Notify the local Fire Department by calling 911
- ◆ If the fire alarm is not available, notify site personnel about the fire emergency by the following means:

Phone paging: From any Parish phone dial 600, press send and say  
**“Please evacuate immediately to the assembly area”**

(Repeat 3 times)

#### ***Fight the fire ONLY if:***

- ◆ The Fire Department has been notified.
- ◆ The fire is small and is not spreading to other areas.
- ◆ Escaping the area is possible by backing up to the nearest exit.
- ◆ The fire extinguisher is in working condition and personnel are trained to use it.

#### ***Upon being notified about the fire emergency, occupants must:***

- ◆ Leave the building using the designated escape routes.
- ◆ Assemble in the overflow parking area across the property’s main road.
- ◆ Remain outside until the competent authority (Pastor, Director of Operations, or Director of Ministry on site at the time) announces that it is safe to reenter.

## ***Evacuation Team Roles: During Faith Formation***

### Teachers and assistants:

- Immediately lead students single file from their classrooms to the designated assembly area, with one adult at the front of the line and the other adult at the end of the line.
- Bring class attendance list for roll call when evacuating.
- Keep class in a single line in the evacuation area.
- Conduct a roll call by name and report any missing persons to Director of Discipleship.
- Stay with class throughout evacuation.

### Director of Discipleship or designee:

- Shutoff gas main for the facility if it can be done without being put at risk.
- Bring a full class list to the evacuation area.
- Verify presence of all students with each teacher.
- Report any missing students to the Fire Commander.
- Call Pastor or Director of Operations to report the fire.
- Verify with Fire Commander when and if it is clear to enter the facility.

## Severe Weather and Natural Disaster Emergency

### ***Tornado:***

- ◆ When a warning is issued by sirens or other means, seek inside shelter, per plan.
- ◆ Find the nearest phone and broadcast warning with Phone Paging (dial 600, press send). Say:  
**“Tornado alert, seek shelter immediately.”**  
(Repeat 3 times)
- ◆ If tornado is imminent, all should use arms to cover head and neck until the threat is passed.
- ◆ Remain sheltered until the tornado threat is announced to be over.
- ◆ After the threat is passed all buildings may be evacuated while assessed for damage. No building is to be reentered until cleared.

### ***Team Roles:***

#### Teachers and assistants:

- Proceed to the designated shelter area listed below.
- Keep class in single file line in the shelter area.
- Conduct roll call and report any missing children to the Director of Discipleship.
- Stay with class throughout event.

#### ***Modular classrooms***

- Immediately lead students single file from their classrooms to the hallway of the PLC between the sacristy and the main gathering space, with one adult at the front of the line and the other adult at the end of the line.
- Bring class attendance list for roll call when evacuating.

#### ***PLC classrooms—choir side***

- Lead kids single file into the WOMEN’s bathroom off the narthex.
- Bring class attendance list for roll call when evacuating.

### ***PLC classrooms—chapel side***

- Lead kids single file into the MEN's bathroom off the narthex.
- Bring class attendance list for roll call when evacuating.

### ***Chapel classroom***

- Move into the hallway of the PLC between the sacristy and the main gathering space.

### **Director of Discipleship:**

- Bring a full class list to the shelter area.
- Verify presence of all students with each teacher and note any missing persons.
- After the threat, call Pastor or Director of Operations to report the incident. Director of Operations and Facilities Supervisor will inspect buildings for damage, as necessary.

## **Other important notes**

### **Creating a Safe Environment**

All volunteers 15 years and older who have access to children MUST go through the Diocesan-mandated *Safe Environment* process. Therefore, only authorized adults may enter the classrooms during Faith Formation sessions. In addition, the Diocese of Orlando mandates that the "Learning about L.I.F.E" program be presented to all children and families during the year. All catechists should go through the online training in preparation to assist in the presentation to their class. If there are any issues, please contact John. The date of Most Precious Blood's lesson will be provided on the lesson schedule.

### **Cancellations**

If there are any cancellations due to serious weather conditions or any other concerns, the parish website ([www.oviedocatholic.org](http://www.oviedocatholic.org)) will be updated with a cancellation notice and catechists and families will be informed.

### **Overall Communications**

General communication for Faith Formation will be done electronically through email. Some exceptions will be made and placed in the catechist folders for distribution.

Email blasts will be sent out to all catechists when and if there is any important information of which to be aware.

Families will receive an electronic newsletter with relevant information and important dates.

### **Snacks/parties**

As a general rule, please do not have snacks during the Faith Formation sessions. In addition to the limited time that we have for each session, there are some of the children/youth who have life-threatening food allergies. At the end of the year there will be an opportunity for a celebration, which should be moderate.



Enrollment to prepare for Sacraments

Parents have the God-given responsibility to present their children for preparation to receive Confirmation and/or Eucharist. In an effort to assist parents discern whether their child/youth is ready to enter a time of preparation, there will be an enrollment form that must be submitted in order to join the preparation process. No child is automatically enrolled due to age, grade, or length of time in the Faith Formation program.

Preparation for the sacraments of Confirmation and/or Eucharist is done separately from ongoing formation, and is grounded in it.

*Catechists of all grades must not presume that their entire class has received or is preparing to receive a sacrament.*

**Important Dates for Catechists**

August 28/29	Faith Formation begins
December 1	Reconciliation Retreat
December 8	Advent Day of Reflection
December 13	Advent Family Night
January 13	Mid-Year Catechist meeting
January 22/23	Learning about L.I.F.E. Lesson
February 16	Diocesan Ministry Formation Conference
February 18/March 2	Confirmation Retreat
March 29 & 30	Lenten Mission
May 4	Eucharist Retreat
May 7/8	End of Year Mass
May 14/15	Last Day of Class