

Gatherings

DIOCESE
of NEW ULM
Offices of
Religious Education &
Youth Ministry

Reflections

Dear PCLs (DREs) and Youth Ministers,

December 4, 2014

From the Religious Education Office

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The National Directory for Catechesis Those Who Catechize What Does It Say About Parents by Bryan Reising

The National Directory for Catechesis (NDC) is a great resource for parishes to understand the role of those who catechize: the pastor, the parish catechetical leader (PCL, formerly called the DRE or CRE), the parents, the catechists, and so on. I will take directly out of the NDC what it says about these various people and their role in catechizing and making sure catechetical formation is effective in the parish, in the Area Faith Community:

Parents are the most influential agents of catechesis for their children. They have a unique responsibility for the education of their children; they are the first educators, or catechists. They catechize primarily by the witness of their Christian lives and by their love for the faith. One way that parents communicate Christian values and attitudes to their children is by loving each other within the context of a Christian marriage and their love for Christ and His Church. Their participation in the life of the parish – above all in the Sunday Eucharist – their willingness to evangelize and serve others, and their dedication to daily prayer demonstrates the authenticity of their profession of faith.

When children are baptized, their parents accept the responsibility to bring up their children in the practice of the faith and to see to it that the divine life that God gives them is kept safe from the poison of sin, to grow always stronger in their hearts. At the same time, the Church promises to help parents foster their children's faith and assists the specifically in their role as catechists of their

children, whether they assume complete responsibility themselves or look to the parish school or religious education program for help and support.

Parish life itself is an aid to parents because it is here, at the Eucharistic banquet, that they are nourished by Christ himself. The vibrancy of the parish community and the example of generous love and service of parishioners strengthens parents in the faith.

Adult catechesis, designed especially for parents, also helps them nourish their own faith, as well as that of their children. Such programs help parents to understand important issues in their own lives and the lives of their children, such as the preparation for reception of the sacraments or the questions raised by particular moral concerns in the light of the Catholic faith. This enables them to practice the faith in their everyday lives. These programs that prepare parents whose children will be receiving the sacraments should encourage parents to ensure that their children receive formal catechetical instruction in programs sponsored by the parish.

Integrated throughout the NDC, there are other aspects that the parents need to be aware of like what does it say about homeschooling, Catholic schools, and prayer in the home. This important document helps all to understand their roles.

Preparing Spiritually for Christmas

Greetings in Christ Everyone and Blessed Advent as we await in blessed hope!

Advent, the first season of the liturgical year, helps us to prepare the way of the Lord, prepare for the commemoration of the birth of Christ, the Incarnation of God himself; to prepare for Christ coming into our lives here and now; and to prepare for Christ to come again at the end of time.

So yes – there are Christmas cards to send, Christmas presents to buy and ship, Christmas parties to attend, and of course, baking and cooking, decorating the home for Christmas during this season.

But how can we prepare spiritually?

Prayer each day is the best thing we can do in this very busy world. Liturgy of the Hours, the rosary, daily Mass, devotional prayer (many parishes offer a daily reflection Advent booklet), mealtime prayers focused on Advent themes, prayer around the Advent wreath, and



*For the grace of
God has appeared,
bringing salvation
for all people.*

Titus 2:11, ESV

special Advent retreats are possibilities for both individuals and families.

Acts of Charity are another means to prepare. There are a wide range of activities one can be involved with: from shoveling an elderly neighbor's snow to going to the Twin Cities to do some service like feeding the hungry. There can be activities where the whole family can be involved like delivering meals on wheels or activities that individuals can do like knitting hats and scarves for those who lack these items. Then there are things that we can do that have a global reach, like giving to Catholic Relief Service so that they can provide clean water to more people. Whether you are a Confirmation candidate or someone who is already confirmed, doing acts of charity is part of living the Christian life.

Blessed Advent & Merry Christmas from All of Us in the Offices of Religious Education, Adult Faith Formation, and Youth Ministry!!!



UPCOMING OPPORTUNITIES

January 12, 2015 Gather

9:30 gather; meeting 10 am – 2:30 pm

Presenter: Deacon Mike McKeown
Theme: Unbound Deliverance Ministry
Where: St. Aloysius Jubilee Center, Olivia
Please RSVP to Cindy Blickem (cblickem@dnu.org or 507-233-5325) by Friday morning, January 9, 2015.

Upcoming Gatherings:

9:30 gather; meeting 10 am – 2:30 pm

Mon, Feb 9 – St. Aloysius Jubilee Center, Olivia
Dr. Matthew Tsakanikas - The Interpretation of Sacred Scripture and *Verbum Domini* - Principles for dealing with the interpretation of Scripture in difficult and dark passages. It will also try to answer: *What does it mean to read the Scriptures 'in the same Spirit by whom it was written' (DV #12; CCC #111) in light of historical-critical exegesis?*

Mon, March 16 – St. Aloysius Jubilee Center, Olivia
S. Candace Fier – Meeting of the Family

Mon, April 13 – Curriculum Day, Pastoral Center, New Ulm

Mon, May 11 – Spring Fling - TBA

Advent Prayer Service

This is a diocesan tradition! Our Advent Prayer Service this year will be Sunday, December 14 at the Church of the Holy Trinity in Winsted at 2:00 p.m. Bring your baby Jesus from your Christmas crèche – from your parish and from your home. Most Rev. John LeVoir will give a blessing to each baby Jesus figure. Also bring baby clothes, layettes, and other baby items for local charities and for our mission at San Lucas Toliman. Also, First Choice Pregnancy Services will accept monetary donations. Checks can be made to First Choice Pregnancy Services.



Parish Visits

Bryan will continue his parish visits for next year. Contact Bryan Reising to arrange a date and time - reising@dnu.org or

call the Office for Religious Education and Adult Faith Formation, 507-233-5324. So far he has lined up visits with:

- September - Renville
- October - Litchfield, Milroy and Tracy (pilgrimage to New Ulm), and Lamberton
- November – Morgan, Franklin, Morton
- January - Christ the King AFC (Tyler, Lake Benton, Ivanhoe, Wilno)

Catechetical Planning

For those who are catechetical leaders, Bryan Reising can provide a closed course on "Designing a Parish Catechetical Plan." Other catechetical leaders who have taken this three-week seminar found it very helpful in looking at all aspects of planning for catechesis for their AFC or parish. Please contact Bryan at breising@dnu.org if you are interested.

Riverbend TEC

Together Encountering Christ retreats for adults and youth:
January 17-19, 2015 – New Ulm
March 21-23, 2015 – Bird Island
June 27-29, 2015 – Winsted
To sign up, contact: riverbendtec@gmail.com to receive an application.

University of Dayton's Virtual Learning - Community for Faith Formation (VLCFF)

Be a part of these online learning opportunities! They have certificates for Catechesis, Youth Ministry, Leadership, Adult Faith Formation, Marianist Studies, and Social Justice!
Join Bryan Reising for Study of the Joy of the Gospel or choose from the others!

Cycle 1: January 18 - February 21, 2015

(Registration: Opens Oct. 29, 2014; Closes Jan. 14)

- [A Vision for Catholic Youth Ministry](#)
- [Advanced Catholic Social Teaching](#)
- [Bible Basics](#)
- [Catechetical Methodologies: Archdiocese for Military Services Only](#)
- [Catholic Beliefs](#)
- [Catholic Teaching on Chastity, Family Life, and Human Sexuality Education](#)
- [Church History 1](#)
- [Collaboration and Community](#)
- [Conscience](#)
- [Designing and Implementing Adult Learning and Faith Formation \(AFL 7\)](#)
- [Ecclesiology: Beginnings of the Church](#)
- [Ecclesiology: Reframing Church](#)
- [Ecumenism and Parish Life](#)
- [Faith and Human Development](#)
- [Images of Jesus](#)
- [Introduction to Catechesis](#)
- [Introduction to Christian Morality](#)
- [Introduction to Liturgy](#)
- [Introduction to Paul's Life and Letters](#)
- [Introduction to Practical Morality](#)
- [Introduction to Prayer](#)
- [Introduction to Scripture](#)
- [Introduction to the Sacraments of Initiation](#)

- [Leadership Roles and Skills for Adult Learning and Faith Formation \(AFL 5\)](#)
- [Marianist Studies: Community](#)
- [Marianist Studies: Mary, Holy Possibility](#)
- [New Testament](#)
- [Old Testament](#)
- [Our Hearts Were Burning](#)
- [Pastoral Approach to Culture](#)
- [Prophets](#)
- [RCIA](#)
- [Sacrament of Marriage: A Holy Calling](#)
- [Sacraments](#)
- [Spirituality and Inclusive Faith Communities](#)
- [Study of the Joy of the Gospel \(Evangelii Gaudium\)](#)
- [Survey of Catholic Doctrine](#)
- [Survey of Catholic Social Teaching](#)
- [The Second Vatican Council: An Overview](#)
- [Theological Reflection: Key to Connecting Faith and Life](#)
- [Vocation, Spirituality and Discipleship of Catechists](#)

Religious Education Safe Environment Compliance Reminders

Any DRE, youth minister, catechist, adults helping with youth ministry, or anyone who may be in a ministry with minors is required to be in total compliance with safe environment requirements.

Some catechist lists received have included individuals who have not yet completed any diocesan Safe Environment requirements. Please double-check with your local SEC to make sure everyone in your programs is fully up-to-date.

The four areas of compliance [a condition of employment or volunteer service] are:

- 1) Have a background check before beginning employment or volunteer service.
- 2) Sign forms A & B of the 2007 diocesan sexual misconduct policy before beginning employment or volunteer service.
- 3) Attend a VIRTUS training session before beginning employment or volunteer service. If there is a serious reason that prevents attendance prior to employment or volunteer service, a grace period of 60 days is allowed, but this only pertains to long term ministries lasting a school or catechetical year.
- 4) Each individual is to complete online training as assigned. Regarding the online training, it is to be completed within 30 days of being posted to the VIRTUS account. Communicate with your volunteers to complete the online training as soon as possible. It takes approximately 10 minutes (or less) to do the training and answer the questions at the end.

MakeUp Sessions for the Students' Training need to be completed by the end of February and turned in by March 1, 2015. The results are to be incorporated on the absentee form.

Absentee rates need to be at 5% or below. Student Training forms should all be turned in by now to the Safe Environment Office.

Remember to use only diocesan forms. And thank you for keeping our children and youth safe!

VIRTUS Trainings

...Protecting God's Children for Adults

Tues, Dec. 9, 6:30 p.m. - Church of St. Joseph, Montevideo
More training may be scheduled soon...

Mohr Catechist Formation Fund...A Gift for You, Catechists, Youth Team Members, Teachers of the Religion

This scholarship fund is a great gift for your catechists, teachers, youth ministry team, and many of you! You can receive scholarships for Faith Formation Day and other catechist formation opportunities, opportunities outside the diocese, online courses through the University of Dayton's VLCFF (Virtual Learning Community of Faith Formation), and even some college courses on faith formation. Please submit your applications soon! An application is on our Web site: <http://www.dnu.org/word/documents/MohrScholarship-CatechistFormationFund-Application.pdf>

Interested in a Bachelors or Masters

in Theology, Religious Education, Pastoral Ministry, Parish Administration, or Canon Law?

St. Mary's University of Minnesota:

<http://www.smumn.edu/undergraduate-home/areas-ofstudy/theology/theology>. (They offer BA in Theology, Religious Education, Pastoral and Youth Ministry; they also offer a Graduate Certificate in Canon Law)

St. Paul Seminary Graduate Program for Lay People:

www.saintpaulseminary.org (this includes an optional online distance learning degree Their degrees include an MA in Theology, Pastoral Ministry, and Religious Education).

National Conference for Catechetical Leadership (NCCL) Membership -

This is For All Catechetical Leaders

Join NCCL and receive *CL (Catechetical Leader) Magazine*, CL Weekly every Monday, discounts on resources, and information on the national conference and regional workshops! The cost of an individual membership to NCCL is only \$60.00. This is only \$5.00 a month. *Use the Mohr Scholarship Fund for this opportunity!* For further information about membership, check out the Web site: www.nccl.org.

Parish Catechesis Question

According to the NDC, parents are crucial to the faith formation to their children. What type of encouragement, training, and activities do you provide parents?

2014-15 Dates for Parish Catechetical Leaders and Youth Ministers

Mon, Jan 12	DRE/YM Gathering – Dcn Mike McKeown – Unbound Deliverance Ministry	9:30 gather; mtg 10 am – 2:30 pm	Jubilee Center, Olivia
Mon, Feb 9	DRE/YM Gathering – Dr. Matthew Tsakanikas - The Interpretation of Sacred Scripture and <i>Verbum Domini</i>	9:30 gather; mtg 10 am – 2:30 pm	Jubilee Center, Olivia
Mon, March 16	DRE/YM Gathering – S. Candace Fier – Meeting of the Family	9:30 gather; mtg 10 am – 2:30 pm	Jubilee Center, Olivia
Mon, April 13	DRE/YM Gathering – Curriculum Day	9:30 gather; mtg 10 am – 2:30 pm	Pastoral Center, New Ulm
Sun, Apr 26	Jr High Festival	1:00-7:00 p.m.	TBA
Mon, May 11	DRE/YM Gathering - Spring Fling	Noon-4:00 pm (11:30 gather)	TBA
Check out Riverbend TEC! For more details and an application check out the Web site: http://riverbendtec.org/			
Jan 17-19, 2015 – New Ulm March 21-23, 2015 – Bird Island June 27-29, 2015 – Winsted			