

# Gatherings

DIOCESE  
of NEW ULM  
Offices of  
Religious Education &  
Youth Ministry

# Reflections

Dear PCLs (DREs) and Youth Ministers,

January 8, 2015

## From the Religious Education Office

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**The National Directory for Catechesis  
Those Who Catechize**

**What Does It Say About Catechists**  
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 to aid catechetical formation as effective in the parish, in the Area Faith Community:*

The apostolic work of the catechist springs from the Sacrament of Baptism through which all believers come to share in the prophetic ministry of Christ and the evangelizing mission of the Church. It is strengthened by the Sacrament of Confirmation. The call to the ministry of catechist is a vocation, an interior call, the voice of the Holy Spirit. Catechists need to be practicing Catholics who participate fully in the communal worship and life of the Church and who have been prepared for their apostolate by appropriate catechetical training. Their commissioning by the Church is a participation in the divine calling to teach as Jesus did. Their commissioning by the Church is a participation in the divine calling to teach as Jesus did. Their personal relationship with Jesus Christ energizes their service to the Church and provides the continuing motivation, vitality, and force of their catechetical activity. Christ invites all catechists to follow him as a teacher of the faith and a witness to the truth of the faith.

Like all the faithful, catechists are called to holiness. Because of their ministry and mission; however, the call to holiness has a particular urgency. The spiritual life of a catechist should be characterized by:

- A love of God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – and of Christ’s Church, our Holy Father, and God’s holy people
- A coherence and authenticity of life that is characterized by their faithful practice of the faith in a spirit of faith, charity, hope, courage, and joy
- Personal prayer and dedication to the evangelizing mission of the Church
- A missionary zeal by which they are fully convinced of the truth of the Catholic faith and enthusiastically proclaim it
- Active participation in their local parish community, especially by attendance at Sunday Eucharist
- A devotion to Mary, the first disciple and the model of catechists, and to the Most Holy Eucharist, the source of nourishment for catechists

Lay catechists have a special solidarity with those whom they serve. They live in the same world as those they catechize, and share the same demands of living in that world. Their proclamation of the Gospel, their personal testimony, and their living witness to the transcendent values of the Christian life can be particularly effective because they know the ordinary experiences of everyday life so well and are able to incarnate the Gospel in those ordinary circumstances.

Catechists must be attentive to adapt their method of catechesis to the needs of the particular groups they serve. *Catechists serve a wide variety* of persons, and the message of the Gospel must be proclaimed in such a way that they can understand it, and that it is applied to their life situation. *Those who are in need of catechesis* include those who do not have the constant presence of a priest; families; adults, young adults, children, and adolescents; those preparing *those with special needs*; immigrants, migrants, refugees, and people *on the move*; *those in campus ministry* programs; Catholic school children; members of movements and associations; those in hospitals and the military; those in prisons. The Church has a serious responsibility to identify

the groups in need of specialized catechesis and to provide training and formation for those who respond to the Holy Spirit's call to be a catechist to these groups.

Catechists are to identify and create suitable conditions which are necessary for the Christian message to be sought, accepted, and more profoundly investigated for each of the various groups they serve. It is clear that, in order to present the Catholic faith in its fullness and in a way that is attractive to each group, those who catechize need preparation and ongoing formation specific to the conditions of those to whom they proclaim the Gospel message. To this end, catechist formation programs cooperatively developed by parishes and dioceses must ensure that catechists receive assistance in developing their knowledge of the faith and the Gospel message as well as the dimension of *savoir-faire*, of knowing how to transmit the message, so that it is an act of communication. Faith is the result of the initiative of God's grace and the cooperation of human freedom. Catechists should humbly acknowledge, with St. Paul, "I planted, Apollos watered, but God caused the growth."

*So, with this excerpt from the National Directory of Catechesis, the NDC, we can see how important the role of the catechist is. We need to form and train them adequately, we need to foster a relationship of collaboration with the parents for those catechists who catechize children and youth, and we need to give them all the support and help they need to be effective evangelizers and catechists.*

*Catechists can be catalysts for evangelization. We know many families who either send their children/youth to religious education or even Catholic schools, yet they are not to be seen at the Sunday Eucharist. We need to be developing relationships with parents and helping them understand the importance of the Sunday liturgy as well as practicing the faith in the home. Hopefully with a new emphasis on evangelization in our Church today, we can reach out and invite more, and catechists can be instrumental in this mission.*



*Blessings upon each of you during the great feast of Epiphany!!!*

## 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

### Bishop Lucker Lecture

Monday, March 9, 2015 at 7:00 p.m.

Church of St. Catherine, Redwood Falls

The Future of Religious Liberty in America

with Fr. Raymond De Souza

Father Raymond J. de Souza is a Roman Catholic priest of the Archdiocese of Kingston, Ont., where he serves as chaplain for Newman House, the Catholic chaplaincy at Queen's University. Before entering the seminary, he studied economics at Queen's and the University of Cambridge, England, including a year abroad doing research in economic development in the Philippines. In addition to his priestly duties, Fr. de Souza teaches at Queen's, is frequently invited to be a guest speaker, and writes for several publications, both religious and secular.



### 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 Lambertton
- November – Morgan, Franklin, Morton
- January - Christ the King AFC – Tyler/Lake Benton/Ivanhoe/Wilno
- March – Springfield

## 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 (Diocesan forms) should all be turned in by now to the Safe Environment Office.**

**IMPORTANT REMINDER: Please remind your catechists and volunteers to complete their online training. We have a significant number who have not completed this. This needs to be a priority to have this done as soon as possible.**

And thank you for keeping our children and youth safe!



## VIRTUS Trainings

### ...Protecting God's Children for Adults

More training may be scheduled soon...

### Mohr Catechist Formation Fund...A Gift for You, Catechists, Youth Team Members, Teachers of 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](http://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](http://www.nccl.org).



### Parish Catechesis Question

What do you do for your catechists regarding their formation and training?

### 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 – Keynotes: Trevor Thomson & Leah Darrow	TBA	GFW Middle School, Fairfax
Mon, May 11	DRE/YM Gathering - Spring Fling	Noon-4:00 pm (11:30 gather)	TBA
July 26-30	Young Women's Discipleship Camp	Sun 6 pm – Thurs noon	Schoenstatt on the Lake, Sleepy Eye
August 3-7	Young Men's Discipleship Camp	Sun 6 pm – Fri (TBD)	Schoenstatt on the Lake, Sleepy Eye

**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

### From the Office of Youth Ministry

[breising@dnu.org](mailto:breising@dnu.org)  
507-233-5324

[cblickem@dnu.org](mailto:cblickem@dnu.org)  
507-233-5325

### Junior High Youth Festival 2015

The Junior High Youth Festival will be Sunday, April 26, 2015 (time yet to be determined). It will be at GFW Middle School in Fairfax. Featured Speakers include Leah Darrow, former fashion model and Catholic speaker on modesty in dress and chastity, and Trevor Thomson, singer and composer of liturgical music for OCP. Please save the date! More information is forthcoming!

### Diocesan Summer Camps 2015

Young Women's Discipleship Camp:  
July 26-30, 2015

Young Men's Discipleship Camp:  
August 3-7, 2015

Please save these dates!

