

CALLED, FORMED & SENT

MAY 2018

FROM THE
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MAY EACH OF YOU HAVE A BLESSED AND HAPPY EASTER SEASON AND PENTECOST!

Pentecost: The Birth of the Church

This year, Pentecost falls on Sunday, May 20. What will you do for your parish to make this special day festive? After all, it is a birthday, celebrating the birth of our Church! Let's explore this solemnity and its history, and creative ways to celebrate it culturally!

Pentecost as Shavout, A Jewish Feast

Pentecost (pentikostó) is the Greek name for "fiftieth" which represents the fiftieth day after the feast of Pesach or Passover. Shavout is the Hebrew name, meaning "week," otherwise called the Feast of Weeks. The Feast of Weeks commemorates the gift of the Law, the *Torah*, at Mt. Sinai. It is called the Feast of Weeks because during the 50 days from the beginning of Passover, the Jewish faithful are counting the weeks to this celebration. It also celebrates the first harvest, the first fruits.



Pentecost in the New Testament

Jews from various places made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem on this feast, to offer their first fruits to God (fruits and grain). When the apostles and disciples of Jesus met in the upper room, many pilgrims from various parts of the known world came that day with their grain and first fruits to Jerusalem. Henceforth, after the apostles and followers received the Gift of the Holy Spirit, Peter had an audience of Jews from all over the known world. Thus, the seeds of Christianity were planted in various countries. These first Christians were Jewish Christians, and this Pentecost event became known as the birthday of the Church, and the Gift of the Holy Spirit became a sacrament. It is the second Sacrament of Initiation called Confirmation.

It is not known exactly when Pentecost began to be celebrated on a regular basis, but Luke, of course, mentions the first Pentecost in the Acts of the Apostles. Even before that writing, Paul mentions it in his first letter to the Corinthians:

“I shall come to you after I pass through Macedonia (for I am going to pass through Macedonia), and perhaps I shall stay or even spend the winter with you, so that you may send me on my way wherever I may go. For I do not wish to see you now just in passing, but I hope to spend some time with you, if the Lord permits. I shall stay in Ephesus until Pentecost, because a door has opened for me wide and productive for work, but there are many opponents.” (1 Corinthians 16: 5-9)

Pentecost in the Early Church

St. Irenaeus (130-202) wrote about this feast of Pentecost found on some fragments of his writings. It was mentioned in *Epistola Apostolorum* (a letter from the Ethiopian Orthodox Church) in the 2nd century. In the 3rd century it was mentioned by Origen (184/185 – 253/254), a theologian and leader of the catechetical school in Alexandria, and by Tertullian (160 – c. 225 AD), a priest and writer from Carthage. In Tertullian’s *On Baptism*, it seems to be a well-established feast. According to the Apostolic Constitutions (written between 375 and 380 AD), Pentecost lasted one week in the Eastern Church.

Pentecost in Various Cultures

In several places in Italy, rose pedals are dropped from the ceilings of churches to represent the tongues of fire during Pentecost.

In Germany, birch trees are decorated with large wreaths (*Pfingstbaumpflanzen*) in parts of the state of Lower Saxony. Birch trees are just coming into leaf at this time of year and symbolize the fertile spring and summer seasons. Wreaths (*Pfingstenkranz*) are erected in two squares in the town of Oelde in the state of North Rhine-Westphalia.

In Poland, Pentecost is also referred to as the “Green Holiday,” as some houses in Poland are decorated with green branches to symbolize God blessing these families and homes. Another tradition is a procession to farms and fields to bless newly planted crops.

In the United Kingdom, there is a tradition of wearing white because of its connection with Baptism. In the UK, it is called Whit Sunday.

In the United States and other places, many people wear red in commemoration of the tongues of fire.

Many Catholics pray a Pentecost novena in preparation of this solemnity. Many parishes honor the neophytes (newly Baptized) and those who were confirmed in the past year. In some dioceses, the bishop celebrates Pentecost Mass with the neophytes.

Pentecost Today

Invite your parishioners to renew their faith on this day, to rediscover some of their traditions, and to challenge all, from the newly confirmed to families to the elderly to live their faith and proclaim their faith explicitly every day! Make this day special! After all, it is the birthday of us, the Church!

Gaudete et Exultate On the Call to Holiness in Today’s World

Read Pope Francis’ Latest Apostolic Exhortation! It is a great document for all Catholics, especially those involved with evangelization and catechesis!

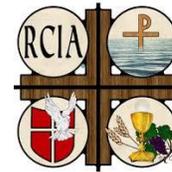
http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20180319_gaudete-et-exultate.html



UPCOMING OPPORTUNITIES

PCL Gatherings

Thur, May 3 sponsored by Loyola Press at the Diocesan Pastoral Center, Bmt: **9:00 gather; 9:30 am – 2 pm**



Lay Missionary Disciples: Diocesan Formation for Lay Leaders

Starting next fall, there will be an opportunity for catechists, parish catechetical leaders, youth ministers, Catholic school teachers, RCIA Team members, those involved with adult faith formation, those involved with stewardship, those involved with evangelization, those involved with liturgy, those involved with social outreach and justice, and other interested adults. It will be called **Lay Missionary Disciples** and it will form the laity, especially those involved with leadership and ministry. It will take place one Saturday a month. It will begin with prayer at 9:00 am and go through about 3:45 pm. It will begin with a retreat experience.

The following is a schedule for our sessions in the Fall:

Kerygma Retreat (September 20-22, 2018)

Introduction to the Jewish Scriptures (October 20, 2018)

Torah: Covenant and Law, Prophets

Introduction to the Christian Scriptures (November 17, 2018)



Revelation and the study of Scripture, Gospels, Letters

Introduction to Catholic Theology (December 15, 2018)

The Mystery of God, The Trinity, Creation, Jesus Christ, The Holy Spirit

The other sessions for the Winter/Spring 2019 are forthcoming.

To register for Lay Missionary Disciples, please contact Anna Stone at astone@dioceseofbmt.org or 409-924-4324.

Parish Visits

Bryan has been on the road starting in July for some parish visits. He can visit on the day of your Faith Formation. Or he can also do visits with pastors and catechetical leaders. Please arrange a time that you can invite him to your parish by contacting him via email: breising@dioceseofbmt.org or calling his office at 409-924-4323. He will not get to all places during the catechetical year, but he would like to get to all regions of the diocese.

What will happen with these visits? The following are some possibilities: an observation of your faith formation during the time of instruction, perhaps an in-service with your catechists, or even a catechetical presentation – guest catechist for adults, youth, or children.



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

Cycle 4: May 27 - June 30, 2018 (Registration: Open Now and Closes May 23)

- [A Vision for Catholic Youth Ministry](#)
- [Bible Basics](#)
- [Catholic Beliefs](#)
- [Church History 1](#)
- [Creative Methodologies: ADHD in Parish Life - Pastoral Implications \(SN 3\)](#)
- [Designing and Implementing Adult Learning and Faith Formation \(AFL 7\)](#)
- [Ecclesiology: Beginnings of the Church](#)
- [Faith and Human Development](#)
- [Foundations and Vision for Adult Learning and Faith Formation \(AFL 1\)](#)

- [Images of Jesus](#)
- [Introduction to Catechesis](#)
- [Introduction to Christian Morality](#)
- [Introduction to Paul's Life and Letters](#)
- [Introduction to Practical Morality](#)
- [Introduction to Prayer](#)
- [Introduction to Scripture](#)
- [New Testament](#)
- [Old Testament](#)
- [Planning Youth Ministry Events](#)
- [Poverty in the U.S. and Around the World](#)
- [Prayer and Worship with Adolescents](#)
- [Sacraments](#)
- [Survey of Catholic Doctrine](#)
- [Survey of Catholic Social Teaching](#)
- [Vocation to Ministry](#)



Adult Faith Formation

Word on Fire: Bishop Robert Barron adult faith formation series - <https://www.wordonfire.org/>
And check out the new resource of Word on Fire Engage: <https://engage.wordonfire.org/about>

Formed.org is a subscription service by parish that includes adult faith formation offerings, movies, and podcasts, and ebooks: <https://formed.org/>

ACTS



Adoration • Community • Theology • Service

To find out about upcoming ACTS Retreat and Activities: <https://beaumontacts.org/>

Religious Education Safe Environment Compliance Reminders

Any DRE, youth minister, catechist, adult(s) helping with youth ministry, or anyone who may be in a ministry where minors are present is **required** to be in total compliance with safe environment protocol.

To be in compliance, one must have attended in person a Protecting God's Children (PGC) session. After 5 years from the initial training participation, a rectification is required. This can be done either through the diocesan website online module, or by attending another in person PGC session.



Safe Environment

Circle of Care By Paul Ashton, Psy.D., D.Min.

Sometimes, when we are faced with a difficult decision or choices, we find ourselves in a dilemma that we never imagined we would face. We think that we are prepared, that we are certain that we will be able to follow our values, hearts and have clarity of thought, but when faced with an important issue or crisis, we find ourselves adrift, even lost. And so it is with the most important thing we can do in the prevention of child sexual abuse—reporting our concerns. Every state has mandated reporting laws, and those of us who are mandated reporters know what our responsibilities are. What about those who are not mandated by the law to report their suspicions and concerns of child sexual abuse?

Many people can recognize the warning signs of abusers, and many know by their own intuition when something is just not right between an adult and child, yet many still are very resistant to making the call to the child protective services within the state to report what they know. Some reasons that I have heard for this resistance are that people don't want to hurt the reputation of another person, or upset a child's family or parents. People don't want to get involved, preferring to leave these kinds of things to those above their pay grade. Or they just are fearful of any number of things that they imagine could happen to them.

Whatever the fear, or reason, or excuse—there is still this fact: delaying or refusing to report suspicions or concerns of someone who has inappropriate contact with a child or children allows possible abuse to continue.

When you spell it all out, everyone readily agrees that to delay, ignore or refuse to report is inexcusable and

irresponsible behavior. But everyone also agrees about the great difficulty that is faced when there is a need to call and report to the authorities.

There is a simple template and exercise that I teach that is most effective in figuring out a plan of action when it comes to important decisions like reporting. I call it the "Circle of Care". I inform the group that I am going to present a case study of a particular situation and I ask them to plot out the case using a circle/donut/bagel. For example, I ask everyone to draw a large circle on a piece of paper and then draw inside that larger circle a smaller one, so that what you see looks like a bagel or donut. Then I ask folks to draw lines from the inner circle to the outer, forming wedges or pie slices. Can you picture it? A big bagel with lines forming wedges all pointing to the center. The center is left blank as are the wedges.

They must use the circle and do the following: Brainstorm about the person, place or thing that is most important in solving or figuring out this problem. Place the person who is most directly impacted by the actions in the center circle. Then, filling in the wedges (adding more if you need them), I ask them to list the things and resources that will help in figuring out the problem. Finally, I ask them to report their findings and the answer they have come up with. "What should you do and how should you address this?", is their assignment.

What if this were a question about a child being sexually abused—what would you do then? Who would be in the center of the circle and what would your plan be? Would it be the devastated parents? Would it be the person whose reputation could potentially be affected? Would you insert yourself into the center with your reservations? Or someone, or something else?

The center circle must hold the most vulnerable person in the dilemma, and if you put anyone other than the child in the center, then you are headed in the absolute wrong direction. Placing the child in the center vividly shows us that we can waste no time in delaying a report to child protective services. If we place ourselves there, we are delaying the call. If we place the child parent's there, we are losing focus. Placing the child in the center reminds us vividly who we are protecting and why.

When you make a call to child protective authorities and report your suspicions, it is all handled by professionals who know what they are doing and have a great amount of experience in handling such information. Your call may be the first about a particular child, or it may be the third or fourth about the case which could propel officials to make swift interventions.

I use this circle exercise with a lot of folks in various circumstances and for different problems. It never fails to provide clarity and direction. Convenience, kindness, charity, thoughtfulness—there are no good reasons to put anyone else in the center of the circle except a child or vulnerable person. No matter what.



Upcoming PGC Sessions

Tuesday May 15, 2018 9:00am
St. Anne, Beaumont

Facilitated by Paul Thomas
To Register-Joseph 409-924-4309

Wednesday May 16, 2018 6:00pm
St Jude, Beaumont

Facilitated by Jeanne Fennel
To Register- Jeanne 409-866-9595 ext. 2

Tuesday June 5, 2018 6:00pm
Catholic Pastoral Center, Beaumont

Facilitated by Paul Thomas
To Register-Joseph 409-924-4309

Monday June 11, 2018 6:00pm
Infant Jesus, Lumberton

Facilitated by Stacy Keen
To Register-Stacy 409-755-1734 ext. 114

Interested in a Bachelors or Masters in Theology St. Thomas University in Houston:

<https://www.stthom.edu/Academics/School-of-Arts-and-Sciences/Undergraduate/Theology/Index.aqf>.

National Conference for Catechetical Leadership (NCCL) Membership

All PCLs are now members of NCCL! Check out the Web site: www.nccl.org. Contact our office to learn how you can be a member of NCCL compliments of the Diocese

of Beaumont if you are not a member yet! As you are registering to be a member, if you have problems, contact the NCCL office and ask for Gina 202-756-5512. For information on the national conference (Chicago: May 30-June 2, 2018), go to www.nccl.us.

Year-end Evaluations

By: Twyla Satterthwaite

Our programs are winding down, we have celebrated sacraments, and we have thanked our catechists: the end of the year is here. Now is the time to stop, say a prayer of gratitude, and evaluate our programs. Evaluating our programs takes a little time but it helps us to remember how much good we have accomplished and also helps us to improve for next year.

There are many evaluation tools to use but I like to keep it simple. I just ask myself the following questions. What went well? What could I have done better? What will I **NEVER** do again? What new things would I like to do next year?

In my classes for new catechists, I recommend that they ask themselves these four simple questions after each lesson. I like using an example of the time I made Baptismal candles to teach about the sacrament of Baptism. The craft consisted of a plain white candle in which the child would scratch designs and then we filled the scratches with melted crayon wax. I had plenty of adults to help and no child were allowed near the hot wax. Unfortunately, the wax melted in lumps and did not stick to the white candles. No one was hurt but there were many tears (the students and mine). After the class was finished and I completed my evaluation I vowed to test all crafts before doing them in class and to NEVER do that particular activity again. A short evaluation when you finish teaching helps to give yourself information in real time. You can keep that evaluation until next year and improve your session.

A year-end evaluation is a little more complex. Catechists can ask themselves: "How well did my class go this year? What were my successes? What do I need to improve? Did I accomplish everything I wanted to accomplish?" It is a good idea to meet with your PCL and share these reflections. Your PCL may be able to offer you help on how be more successful. Perhaps your PCL can suggest some training or a tool that can help you.

The questions for PCLs are a little more detailed. You can start with the basic four questions from above but you also need to consider if your program is following the guidelines of the Church. The National Directory of Catechesis given to us by the American Bishops outline the six fundamental tasks of catechesis.

1. Promoting Knowledge of the Faith
2. Promoting Liturgical Education
3. Moral Formation
4. Teaching to Pray
5. Education for Community Life
6. Missionary Initiation

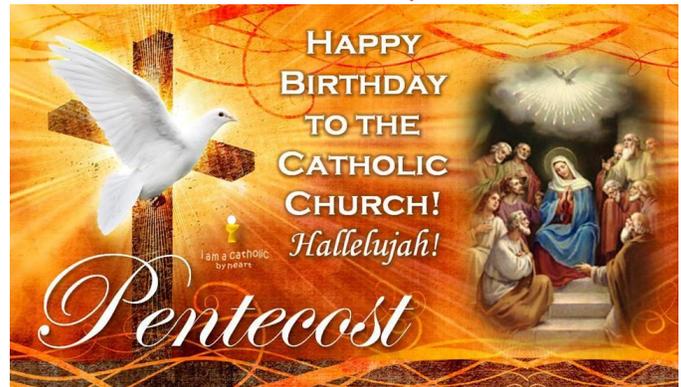
These tasks form the questions you should ask yourself to evaluate your program.

As a PCL you are also responsible for several groups of people. You should evaluate your interactions with these groups in light of these six tasks. Your first group, of course, is the students. You also work with the parents of your students, the sacramental parents, your catechists, and other parish groups.

It is also wise to discuss your conclusions with your Pastor. He will be able to give you valuable advice and feedback. He will also see that you are committed to having a viable program.

Whether you are a Catechist or a PCL, take the time to do a reflective year-end evaluation. You will be gratified to see how your ministry skills improve and over time, your efforts will be more fruitful.

Parish Catechesis Question:



How will your parish celebrate the Church's Birthday at Pentecost?