

# CALLED, FORMED & SENT

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FROM THE  
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**Those We Catechize: Inspired by the National Directory  
for Catechesis.**

May each of you have a blessed Lent, inspiring  
Holy Week, and a Happy Easter!  
Encourage your students, their parents, and all  
adult parishioners to participate in the Triduum  
(Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and the Easter  
Vigil) at your parish!

## A Journey That Lasts a Lifetime

Catechesis for All Adults  
by Bryan Reising

Catechesis is not just for children and youth, but it is also for adults. **All adults.** Yes, catechesis is a lifelong journey, no matter how many years of experience we have and how much theology we studied. All who are baptized – lay, religious, or clergy – have a lifelong catechetical journey. We adults need to take advantage of the many opportunities to learn the faith. Some parishes have intergenerational gatherings; other parishes have opportunities for parents; and yet others have opportunities like retreats, small Christian communities and regular catechetical gatherings for adults. Adults are encouraged to do some self-study as well, like the study of the Scriptures and Church teachings, but adult learning should primarily be in communal settings.

In 1992, the US Bishops promulgated two important documents: *Go and Make Disciples* and *Stewardship: A Disciple's Response*. Both have a connection with adult faith formation. First, in *Go and Make Disciples*, the starting point is the *kerygma*: the proclamation of salvation in Jesus Christ, and the response in faith and conversion by the person who listens to God's Word. This can happen through the RCIA process, a process for returning

Catholics, and a renewal retreat or experience. But we cannot rely on these experiences alone. Follow-up is needed for a continuation of growth in the faith. Regarding the *Stewardship* document, it is the mentality that we indeed are blessed abundantly and we have a real need to share our gifts. This includes sharing the Gospel and sharing what we learn by both actions and words.

In 1999, the US Bishops published a plan for adult faith formation in the United States, *Our Hearts Were Burning Within Us* (OHWB). In this plan, the US Bishops determine three goals: Invite and enable ongoing conversion to Jesus in holiness of life, promote and support active membership in the Christian community, and call and prepare adults to act as disciples in mission to the world. It is interesting to see the similarities to *Go and Make Disciples*: renew, learn, and live your faith fully; invite and share your faith freely; and transform the world in Christ. In addition, there are six dimensions of adult faith formation: knowledge of the faith, liturgical life, moral formation, prayer, communal life, and missionary spirit. This book is extremely helpful in systematically planning adult faith formation in your parish. When a parish plans well, all people are impacted.

In 2003, the US Bishops promulgated the *National Directory of Catechesis* (NDC). In this directory, there are many things regarding adult faith formation like "The catechesis of adults is the principal form of catechesis, because it is addressed to persons who have the most responsibilities and the capacity to live the Christian message in its fully developed form" (from the NDC, p.187, *Catechesi Tradendae*, 43, and OHWB, 38).

A fifth resource is the *United States Catholic Catechism for Adults* (USCCA) promulgated in 2004 and published in 2006. It is a companion to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC). The CCC is a reference work. The USCCA is both a reference book and can be used as a curriculum for adults. It comprises of four parts, corresponding to the four pillars of the CCC: Creed, Sacraments, Christian Morality, and Prayer. These are divided into 36 chapters.

Each chapter is structured the following way: a Story or Lesson of the Faith, Teachings, Sidebars, Relationship of Catholic Teaching to Culture, Questions for Discussion, Doctrinal Statements, and Meditation and Prayer.

Now that we have a background on these documents, my focus in this article is to look at the priority of adult faith formation.

### The Priority of Adult Faith Formation

I will quote from the US Bishops document OHWB regarding the priority and *make some further comments (in italics)*:

38. "The challenge of responding to these many needs and opportunities creates a vast pastoral agenda for the Catholic Church. Disciples young and old are called by name to go into the vineyard. In responding to this call, adults 'have the greatest responsibilities and the capacity to live the Christian message in its fully developed form.' Their formation in faith is essential for the Church to carry out its mandate to proclaim the Good News of Jesus to the world. Effective adult formation is necessary to 'equip the holy ones for the work of ministry' (Eph 4:12).

*In other words, we need all adults to be equipped to do a variety of ministries and works of charity and justice, each according to their own gifts. Can you imagine what our parishes and the diocese would be like if all adults took this priority to heart?*

39. We are convinced that the energy and resources we devote to adult faith formation will strengthen and invigorate all the charisms that adults receive and the activities they undertake, in the Church and in society, to serve the Gospel of Christ and the people of today. Every Church ministry will be energized through a dynamic ministry of adult catechesis.

*There will be more people equipped to do the various ministries of the Church and activities in service to the world. We would see a major difference in the life of our parishes and the Church in general. And others who are not Catholic would see a significant difference that Catholics make in the world. Perhaps each adult parishioner can commit themselves with 1 parish ministry and 1 act of charity/justice. This can be doable for most adults.*

40. Adult faith formation also benefits children and youth. An adult community whose faith is well-formed and lively will more effectively pass that faith on to the next generation. Moreover, the witness of adults actively continuing their own formation shows children and youth that growth in faith is lifelong and does not end upon reaching adulthood.

*Parents are key to faith formation of the young. Can you imagine if parents and all adults took the time to learn about their faith on a regular basis and the impact it would have upon children and youth? And parents and godparents would be more equipped to pass down the faith in their everyday family life.*

41. In addition, adult faith formation should serve as the point of reference for catechesis for other age groups. It ought to be "the organizing principle, which gives coherence to the various catechetical programs offered by a particular Church." Maturity of faith is the intent of all catechesis from the earliest years. Thus, all catechesis is geared to a lifelong deepening of faith in Christ. How necessary, then, that the catechetical ministry with adults set an example of the highest quality and vitality.

*Yes, if more energy is given to evangelization and catechetical formation of adults, children would see a lived example of lifelong catechesis. It would be important and relevant to living our everyday life.*

42. For reasons such as these, the Church wisely and repeatedly insists that adult faith formation is "essential to who we are and what we do as Church" and must be "situated not at the periphery of the Church's educational mission but at its center."

*So, the Church is calling forth that when we develop plans of evangelization and catechesis, we do need to focus on adult evangelization and adult faith formation in those plans and do it very well.*

43. Yet despite the consistency and clarity of this message, the Catholic community has not yet fully heard and embraced it. While most Catholic parishes place a high priority on the faith formation of children and youth, far fewer treat adult faith formation as a priority. This choice is made in parish staffing decisions, job descriptions, budgets, and parishioner expectations.

*Can you imagine if more of our place a high priority of adult faith formation? I believe pastoral and catechetical leaders need to see this as a priority and make it happen. And imagine the benefits! They will have more workers in the vineyard!*

44. Once again, we praise the outstanding efforts that have been made for so many years to provide quality faith formation for children. This task is a sacred trust and a serious responsibility that we must always fulfill with utmost care and dedication. We do not wish to weaken our commitment to this essential ministry in any way. But to teach as Jesus did means calling and equipping all Christians of every age and stage of life to fulfill their baptismal call to holiness in family, Church, and society—their mission to evangelize and transform the world into a more caring and just society. Ongoing faith formation is essential to accomplish this mission; it does not end at Confirmation or graduation but continues until one's death. Accordingly, we strongly reaffirm that, "without neglecting its commitment to children, catechesis needs to give more attention to adults than it has been accustomed to do." Catholic schools and religious education programs will play a vital role in this plan through the quality faith formation they provide to the parents and families of the children they teach."

*Those parishes that do adult evangelization and adult faith formation and do it well, they already know that*

children and youth benefit. It makes catechesis for children and youth that much better because the faith is taught and lived in the homes. Catechists in parishes and religion teachers in Catholic schools have ready-to-go collaborators with the parents. Catechesis does not end when they leave the parish or school, it is being learned, lived, and shared in the home and beyond. And like OHWB states, catechesis does not end with Confirmation or graduation. It lasts a lifetime!



**Virtual Learning Community**  
**For Faith Formation**

Cycle 3: April 28 - May 18, 2019(Registration: Opens Mar 13; Closes Apr 24) – **3-week seminars**

## UPCOMING OPPORTUNITIES

### PCL Gatherings

Thursday, April 25 (Curriculum Day) Diocesan Pastoral Center, Beaumont  
Other Upcoming PCL Gatherings: May 16

**PCL Gatherings for Next Catechetical Year 2019:**  
August 22, September 26, October 17, November 21  
**2020:**  
January 9, February 20, March 26, April 23, and May 14

### Parish Visits

Bryan has been on the road for some parish visits. He can visit on the day of your Faith Formation. 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. In addition, Twyla (North, West Vicariates), Sr. Misty (East, South, and Central Vicariates), and Paul are available for parish visits as well.

What will happen with these visits? The following are some possibilities: an evaluation of your evangelization efforts and adult catechetical formation, 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.

### Heart of Faith

These are 2 hour learning sessions that can be presented right in your parish. Contact our office to arrange this opportunity. Topics include Evangelization, Home Visitation Training, Christian Morality, the Sacraments, Catholic Social Teaching, the Catechism of the Catholic Church, and Sacred Scripture.

**University of Dayton (VLCFF)**

- [Basic Catechist Formation: Seminar 1.1 \(Catechesis Is...\)](#)
- [Basic Catechist Formation: Seminar 1.2 \(Vocation of a Catechist\)](#)
- [Catholic Identity and Culture](#)
- [Catholic Teaching on Chastity, Family Life, and Human Sexuality Education](#)
- [Designing a Parish Catechetical Plan \(Bryan Reising will be facilitating this seminar and he encourages PCLs – DREs to take this seminar\)](#)
- [Mercy](#)
- [On Bended Knee](#)
- [Our Hearts Were Burning](#)
- [Overview of the GDC and NDC](#)
- [Pastoral Letter: Blessed are the Merciful](#)
- [Pastoral Letter: Go Forth! I am with You Always](#)
- [Romero: Pastor, Prophet, Martyr and Saint](#)
- [Theological Reflection: Key to Connecting Faith and Life](#)

## Evangelization and Adult Faith Formation

**Word on Fire:** Bishop Robert Barron adult faith formation series - <https://www.wordonfire.org/>  
**And check out this resource from Word on Fire Engage** (parishes can try this resource for free during Lent):  
<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/>

**JustFaith** is a small group process to learn about Catholic Social Teaching: <https://justfaith.org/>

**RENEW International** has a host of resources for renewal and adult catechetical formation:  
<http://www.renewintl.org/>

**SINE (Systematic Integral New Evangelization)** is a plan for the new evangelization for parishes that offer renewal experiences, small Christian communities, neighborhood based ministries, and home visitation:  
<https://sinecentral.org/>

**Paulist Evangelization Ministries** offers many resources for small groups, parish renewal, a process for returning Catholics, and outreach: <https://www.pemdc.org/>

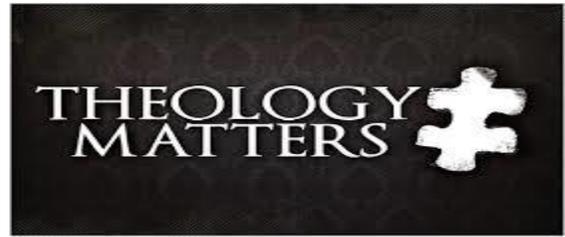
**Catholic Returning Home** is a process for returning Catholics: <http://www.catholicsreturninghome.org/>



Adoration • Community • Theology • Service

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

## 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](http://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! For information on the national conference (Orange County, CA: May 19-May 23, 2019), go to [www.nccl.org](http://www.nccl.org)

## Safe Environment Compliance Reminders



Any PCL, 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.

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 recertification is required. This can be done either through the diocesan website online module, or by attending another in person PGC session.

If you have any questions regarding Safe Environment Training, you may contact the diocesan Safe Environment Coordinator through the following information:

Paul J Thomas  
[pthomas@dioceseofbmt.org](mailto:pthomas@dioceseofbmt.org)  
409-924-4315

## Upcoming Protecting God's Children sessions

### Protecting God's Children: 2018 - 2019 Schedule of Sessions

Date	Time	Location	Facilitator	Contact
Mon. April 15, 2019	6:00 pm	Immaculate Conception-St. Peter, Rose Room, Groves	Mary Simon	Mary: 409-720-8816
Fri. April 26, 2019	6:00 pm	St. Mary, Parish Hall, Cleveland	Flavia Avalos	Yuri: 281-592-2985
Tue. April 30, 2019	6:00 pm	Sacred Heart, St. Katharine Drexel Building, Port Arthur	Sheryl Channel	Sheryl: 409-985-5104

**Remember to abide by all the deadlines for Safe Environment. Thank you!**

The photos on the next page are from the Two Feet of Love conference held at St. Jude Thaddeus Parish in Beaumont on March 29-30. Participants learned about Catholic Social Teaching and how it is important for all Catholics to learn these teachings as they focus on the life and dignity of the human person, family, community, the common good, peace, work and workers, the environment, and so on. It is important for catechists to incorporate these teachings into their lesson plans since they are important teachings of the Church.









