

Office of Lifelong Faith Formation

Highlights from LFFA: Digital Catechesis



"Only catechesis that proceeds from religious information to accompaniment and to the experience of God will be capable of offering meaning (DFC, 371)."

The possibilities for creating meaning for our learners are endless when we open ourselves up to the world of technology, claimed Andrea Slaven at the October LFFA meeting. We have been given the tools and resources to not only enhance, but also to transform our lessons which in turn can transform hearts.

Our disposition to technology matters, so first we must ask ourselves questions like "am I a digital native or a digital immigrant" or "do I tend to avoid technology at all costs, use it only when necessary,

embrace it with enthusiasm, or do I seek to enhance the experience of technology for myself and others? This assessment isn't to say that those who are digital immigrants and use technology only when necessary can't learn how to integrate technology in their lessons. On the contrary, assessing your disposition gives you a starting point at which you can begin to grow and improve your technology skills.

Technology can be used to either enhance or transform our lessons. To see how this is possible I will introduce you to the SAMR model for technology integration, said Slaven.

Substitution--A process of enhancement in which we ask ourselves "what will I gain by replacing old technology with new technology?" The technology acts as a direct substitute of the tool but with no functional change. For example switching from writing with pen and paper to using a Word processor.

Augmentation--A process of enhancement in which we find ourselves asking "does the new technology add new features to improve the task?" For example the use of Ebooks or note taking apps can enhance the quantity of information available to your learners. Also, a note taking app can enhance the quality of your learner's notes.

Modification--A process of transformation which allows tech to be more open in order to experience learning and more authentic faith formation. For example having your learners set up a fake Facebook page for Jesus or one of the apostles.

Redefinition--A process of transformation in which the technology allows for the creation of new tasks. Learners play a game of Kahoot to review content before an exam.

As Pope Francis said in his 2014 message for World Communications Day "the internet, in particular, offers immense possibilities for encounter and solidarity. [It is] something truly good, a gift from God." Therefore, it is important that we learn to make use of this gift of technology that we have been given and use it to spread the Gospel far and wide.

Digital Resources

- [AnswerGarden](#)
- [Canvas](#)
- [Edupuzzle](#)
- [FlipGrid](#)
- [Flipsnack](#)
- [Google Classroom](#)

- [Google Docs](#)
- [Google Slides](#)
- [Hyperdocs](#)
- [Kahoot](#)
- [Mentimeter](#)
- [Padlet](#)
- [QR Codes](#)
- [Quizzizz](#)



Please continue to pray for the 75+ individuals who are participating in the Echoes of Faith Emmaus online learning program. They have just begun the module entitled "Getting Started As a Catechist."

Want to Join?

For the remainder of the year the OLFF team will be onboarding new participants at the beginning of each module. If you or someone you know is interested in joining us on this journey of faith they may register at any one of these entrypoints. Accounts for new participants will be created about a week before the start of the next module. An email welcoming the participant and the participant handbook will be sent to the participant shortly after their account has been created. Those wanting to be certified must enroll in the catechist certification track and those who are doing it as part of their own professional development will register in the community track.

For more information on Echoes of Faith click [here](#) or email echoingfaith@portlanddiocese.org and one of the OLFF staff will contact you as soon as possible.

Updates to the program from OLFF

The OLFF team has decided to make some changes to the way that the program will run. Here is what you will need to know:

- We are shifting the program schedule to spend one month on non-theology modules and continuing with two months for theology. [Click](#) for the new calendar.
- We updated the [Participant Handbook](#), including the updated calendar and a tech troubleshooting guide.
- In November participants will receive a survey to provide feedback on your program experience so far and tell us where and when you would be willing to meet for in-person gatherings of the community.
- Starting in January 2022 we will start using Microsoft Teams as the video conferencing platform instead of Lifesize. It is a simple click and join program that will also allow us to have small group conversations during the community gatherings. Training will be provided in December to make the transition smooth.

Vocations Awareness Week



The Diocese of Portland will join with Catholics around the country in celebrating National Vocation Awareness Week on November 7-13. A special section has been created on the diocesan website with prayers, a variety of resources, a listing of Maine events, and much more. To access the section or utilize the resources, visit www.portlanddiocese.org/vocation-awareness-week.

Also Fr. Gregory Dube, director of vocations and seminarians for the diocese, will preside at three Holy Hours to pray for those discerning a vocation to ordained ministry and consecrated life as well as foster an understanding and appreciation for all vocations in life. The Holy Hours, at which all are welcome, are scheduled for:

Tuesday, November 9 from 7-8pm.

St. Mary's Church in Bangor

Wednesday, November 10 from 6:30-7:30pm

Holy Rosary Church in Caribou

Friday, November 12 from 6:30-7:30pm

Most Holy Trinity Church in Saco

Walking With Families Across the Diocese



Young Adults/Adolescents (Ages 18-39)

Ponder

- *In the stages of adulthood, in fact the faith itself is called to take different shapes to evolve and mature so that it may be an authentic and continual response to the challenges of life. Therefore, every possible journey of faith with adults requires that the experiences of life be not only taken into consideration but reinterpreted in the light of faith as opportunities, and so integrated into the formative trajectory itself. (Directory for Catechesis #257)*

- *The relationship of adults with the question of faith is highly varied, and it is right that every person should be welcomed and listened to in his/her uniqueness (DFC, 258)*

Springtide Research Institute, an organization that has done several studies on millennials and Gen Z, found that what young adults crave is a sense of belonging. Springtide asserts that the first level to build that increased belonging is noticing young adults where and for who they are. This goes beyond just knowing their name. It includes acknowledging first their identity as a child of God and also the identity that they have created for themselves. It means listening to their different experiences and welcoming them with a non-judgmental spirit. The questions we must ask ourselves is ***"how is our parish welcoming and embracing young adults? Are we open to hearing what they have to say with an open and non-judgmental attitude?"***

Pray

- *Recognition must be given to the value of the creative and co-responsible contribution that young people themselves make to catechesis (DFC, 255)*
- *Adults must not be considered as recipients of catechesis, but as participants together with the catechists themselves (DFC, 262)*

The second level to building increased belonging is being named. This level of being named asks us to remember the dignity of the human person. This being named entails more than just knowing what to call the person, it goes deeper as we recognize that the person has a significant presence and as we entrust them with sacred responsibility. Do we realize that without them we are missing an essential part of the Body of Christ? As we recognize the significant presence and the unique gifts and talents that each person brings to the table we invite the person to a more conscious participation in the life of the parish community as a member of the Body of Christ. **Do you know three young adults in your parish? Pray for these young adults, and ask the Holy Spirit to help you identify their gifts and where they can be used around the parish.**

Practice

- *In the final analysis, catechesis with adults reaches its goal when it makes the adults themselves capable of taking their own experience of faith in hand and desirous of continuing to journey onward and to grow (DFC, 260).*

The final stage to building increased belonging is being known. Being known means having the knowledge that you have had an impact on the company, parish, world etc. This sense of being known is a very Catholic notion as it calls us to answer the Great Commission. Being known is about forming, equipping and empowering young adults to take what has impacted them so deeply and to share it with others so as to form more disciples. In more millennial terms being known calls one to be an influencer. The best way we can do this is through modeling. **Share with some young adults about your own faith journey and how Catholicism has impacted your life. Share about how your own gifts and talents have been used for the glory of God. Let them know that they too can be the instrument that God chooses to do His work if they're open to it.**

A Healing Presence from National Catholic Partnership on Disability



The National Catholic Partnership on Disability is offering parish leaders, catechists, and adults a free download to a [Mental Health Literacy Guide](#). The guide is full of useful information such as identifying mental illness symptoms, knowing how and when to refer someone for professional help, resources on mental illness, and how to accompany someone who is experiencing mental illness.

The link will take you to a form. You will need to fill out the form in order to receive the mental health literacy guide. The guide is 8 pages long and includes both English and Spanish text.

Seasonal Blessings for Catholic Family Homes



Are you looking for a way to infuse your Catholic faith in the holiday celebrations that are quickly approaching? If so, we have just the resource for you. The Office of Lifelong Faith Formation has produced a Seasonal Blessings booklet which includes blessings for Thanksgiving, Advent, Christmas and Epiphany. These blessings can help you to celebrate the holidays with a deeper understanding of the significance of these holidays. To view the booklet click [here](#).

Christmas Card Contest



The Office of Development is hosting its annual Christmas Card contest. Students are encouraged to create and submit artwork based on one of the following Scriptural themes:

- *She wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger (Lk 2:7).*
- *The angel said to them, "I proclaim to you good news of great joy (Lk 2:10)."*
- *For today in the city of David, a savior has been born (Lk 2:11).*
- *You will find an infant wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger (Lk 2:12).*
- *Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace (Lk 2:14).*

All pieces of art must be on 8 1/2 x 11 paper and must be hand-drawn by the student. Artwork should be turned in or mailed to **Diocese of Portland, 510 Ocean Ave, Portland, ME 04103** by 4:30pm on October 29, 2021. A winner for each grade level will be determined the week of November 1st and winners will be notified by December 3rd, 2021.

Inspiration



I (Hannah) was talking with my co-worker Georgette about art and how creativity can awaken us to the Gospel in us. And as I think about that I can't help but think of the myriad of saints who left us with their writings, poems, music, pictures and even websites--their individual expression of creativity. I am inspired by the creativity that inspired Michelangelo to sculpt the Pieta, the creativity that lead Henri Nouwen to pen some of the most authentic words that I have read, the creativity that inspired C.S. Lewis to create the characters in the Narnia series, the creativity which has lead to traditional church hymns and the creativity that has lead to contemporary Christian music. I am captivated by the expressions of the faithful who use their gifts and talents to share the Gospel each day. And finally I am deeply inspired and moved by the writings of St. John Paul II in his letter to artists in which he appealed to artists saying **"It is with this in mind that I appeal to you, artists of the written and spoken word, of theatre and music, of the plastic arts and the most recent technologies in the field of communication. I appeal especially to you, Christian artists: I wish to remind each of you that beyond functional considerations, the close alliance that has always existed between the Gospel and art means that you**

are invited to use your creative intuition to enter into the heart of the mystery of the Incarnate God and at the same time into the mystery of man (14)."

So to you who consider yourself artists, keep creating! The world needs it.

Prayer



O Glorious Guardian Angel of the United States, to whom God has entrusted the care of our beloved country, we honor you and thank you for the care and protection you have given to this great nation from the first moment of its inception.

O Powerful Angel Guardian, whose watchful glance encompasses this vast land from shore to shore, we know that our sins have grieved our Lord and God and marred the beauty of our heritage. Lead us to a deep conversion, so that we may return to the embrace of His merciful love!

O Holy Angel, obtain for us through the intercession of the Queen of Heaven before the throne of God the graces we need to overcome the forces of evil so rampant in our beloved land. Help us, our God-

given protector and friend, to respond wholeheartedly to the urgent pleas of the Mother of God at Fatima. Assist us to offer the prayers and sacrifices necessary to bring peace and goodness to our nation.

We want to make you known and loved throughout our land, so that docile to your inspirations we may know, love, and serve our Lord more faithfully and so become once more "one Nation under God."

Amen.

Taken from: [Prayer to Guardian Angel of the United States](#)

(St. Stephen the Martyr Church in Renton, WA)