

# Pathways for Formation and Certification of Catechists and Catechetical Leaders

serving Diocese of Portland Catholic parishes and schools

## THREE KEY AREAS IN MINISTERIAL FORMATION AND DEVELOPMENT

- A. BEING — Maturing as a person of faith (Human and Spiritual Formation)
- B. KNOWING — Knowledge of the message, of those to whom the message is transmitted, and of the social context in which they are living (Intellectual Formation)
- C. SAVOIR-FAIRE — Art of how to transmit the message effectively (Pastoral and Pedagogical Formation)

All levels assume recognized proficiency and or certification in prior level(s). Comprehensive, systematic catechesis is best delivered by certified catechists/religion teachers with support from certified parish and Catholic school catechetical leaders.

## LEVEL 1: BASIC CATECHIST

Who: **Any fully initiated Catholic adult (over 18 years old)**

Outcomes: **Grow as a person of faith; understand foundational Catholic beliefs; develop effective teaching/facilitating skills; and recognize need for own ongoing training and development for ministry**

Paths: a) *Echoes of Faith Emmaus Edition* catechist formation program [11 modules, community-track with Office of Lifelong Faith Formation for certification]

OR b) Non-Catholic faculty in Catholic schools: St Joseph College  
The Catechism for Catechists course [online]

Practices: **1) Participation in parish sacramental life, especially Sunday Mass**  
**2) At least 5 hours of ongoing ministerial development each year**

## LEVEL 2: ADVANCED CATECHIST

Who: **Certified catechists interested in taking on more leadership in evangelization and catechesis**

Outcomes: **Establish practices for ongoing spiritual growth; develop skills for theological reflection; enhance skills for evangelization and catechesis with a variety of people; and a plan for own ongoing training and development for ministry**

Paths: a) St Joseph College Certificate in Catholic Catechesis [six undergraduate credits]

OR b) University of Dayton Virtual Learning Community for Faith Formation (VLCFF)  
Level 1 Certificate in Catechesis [six courses]

OR c) University of Notre Dame STEP Certificate in Theology in area of Catechesis  
[six courses]

Practices: **1) Participation in parish sacramental life, especially Sunday Mass**  
**2) At least 10 hours of ongoing ministerial development each year**

### LEVEL 3: BASIC LEADER

Who: **Experienced catechists who are ready to deepen their involvement in the catechetical ministry of the Church and called to provide catechetical training for others in parishes and Catholic schools as a master catechist**

Outcomes: **Develop the core competencies described in the professional standards for lay ecclesial ministers**

Paths: a) Bachelors in Theology, Education or related field  
 OR b) University of Dayton Virtual Learning Community for Faith Formation (VLCFF) Certificate in Youth Ministry or Level 2 Certificate in Catechesis

Practices: **1) Participation in parish sacramental life, especially Sunday Mass  
 2) At least 20 hours of ongoing ministerial development each year  
 3) Engage in reflective process of annual ministerial formation planning  
 4) Membership in state and/or national catechetical or Catholic education ministry organization**

### LEVEL 4: ADVANCED LEADER

Who: **Catechetical leaders with 5 or more years of experience called to serve as peer coaches to others in ministry. Experienced mentors may also be formed as potential candidates for diocesan staff**

Outcomes: **Synthesize experience and learning in relation to national standards for lay ecclesial ministry and apply it in local and regional settings**

Paths: a) Masters in Theology, Education, Pastoral Ministry or related field  
 OR b) National certification as a Lay Ecclesial Minister with specialization appropriate to leadership role (evangelization, catechesis, pastoral ministry)  
 OR c) University of Dayton Virtual Learning Community for Faith Formation (VLCFF) certificate in pastoral ministry focus (adult formation leadership, special needs, ...)

Practices: **1) Participation in parish sacramental life, especially Sunday Mass.  
 2) At least 20 hours of ongoing ministerial development each year  
 3) Mentor in reflective process of annual ministerial formation planning  
 4) Membership in state and/or national catechetical or Catholic education ministry organization**

