

# 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**


## REFLECTIVE PROCESS OF ANNUAL MINISTERIAL FORMATION PLANNING FOR BASIC AND ADVANCED CATECHETICAL LEADERS

Christian disciples, especially those who are leaders, continue their formation and development. The Diocese of Portland expects those with delegated responsibilities of leading parish catechesis and evangelization to model lifelong learning by doing the following each year:

- a) establish a goal for her/his ministerial formation and development,
- b) strive toward accomplishing that goal through completing 20 or more hours of approved and verified formation that shapes one's being, knowing, and artistry as a catechist, and
- c) reflect on his/her efforts to celebrate accomplishments and inform discernment of future goals and needs for ongoing formation and development.

Each leader is responsible for sending documentation of the above to the Office of Lifelong Faith Formation by the end of each fiscal year (June 30).

See a sample planning and report form below. An editable Word document with directions for the process and annual reporting is available on the OLFF website.


**Catechetical Leader Ongoing Formation and Development Annual Report**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

From July \_\_\_\_\_ to June \_\_\_\_\_, the primary goal(s) for my ministerial formation and development is:

Record of Activities (minimum of 20 hours)

| Catechetical Hours | Activity | Site/Sponsor | Primary Formation Area<br>(check one for each activity) |         |          |
|--------------------|----------|--------------|---|---------|----------|
|                    |          |              | Being   | Knowing | Artistry |
|                    |          |              |   |         |          |
|                    |          |              |   |         |          |
|                    |          |              |   |         |          |
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|                    |          |              |   |         |          |
|                    |          |              |   |         |          |

**Ministerial Reflection on Past Year (to be completed before submitting report to OLFF)**

Something I want to celebrate in my service is:

One thing discovered about myself as a person of faith serving in a ministry role is:

An activity listed above that significantly impacted my knowledge and understanding Catholic teaching was \_\_\_\_\_ because:

One skill in the art of handling on the Catholic faith that I added or sharpened through my ongoing development over this last year was \_\_\_\_\_ by:

A weakness or area of growth that I want to focus on in the coming year is:

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Roman Catholic Diocese of Portland      July 2021