

THE TOOLS OF THE CATECHIST LESSON PLAN

I. Opening Prayer (5 minutes)

- a. Read together the prayer of Saint Teresa

II. Task of Catechesis (25 minutes)

- a. Present the Six Tasks of Catechesis on handout H-1.
- b. Point out that the content of the faith flows from Scripture and Tradition with the group.
- c. Facilitator summarizes and highlights key insights.

III. Look at the Bible (30 minutes)

- a. Lead a discussion for the different sections for the handout (H-2)
- b. Address Bible questions
- c. Practice using the Bible by assigning different passages for review.
- d. Facilitator summarizes and highlights key concepts

IV. A Look at the Catechism (30 minutes)

- a. Lead a discussion for the different sections for the handout (H-3)
- b. Address Catechism questions
- c. Practice using the Catechism by assigning different topics for review.
- d. Facilitator summarizes and highlights key concepts

V. Using the Resources (25 minutes)

- a. Review the Teachers Manual
- b. Assign Planning Worksheet Activity (Handout 4)
- c. Reactions, summary and closing prayer

THE TOOLS OF THE CATECHIST FACILITATOR'S NOTES AND HANDOUTS

I. Opening Prayer and Welcome (5 minutes).

Read together the Prayer of Saint Teresa of Jesus from the Catechism of the Catholic Church #227.

II. The Tasks of Catechesis (5 minutes).

A. The purpose of this section is to help catechists recognize the sources used in Catechesis.

B. Distribute handout H-1 and present the following.

The National Directory for Catechesis states that Christ's method of formation was accomplished by diverse yet interrelated tasks. His example is the most fruitful inspiration for effective catechesis today because it is integral to formation in the Christian faith. Catechesis must attend to each of these different dimensions of faith; each becomes a distinct yet complementary task. Faith must be known, celebrated, lived, and expressed in prayer. So catechesis comprises six fundamental tasks, each of which is related to an aspect of faith in Christ. All efforts in evangelization and catechesis should incorporate these tasks. (NDC 20)

1. Catechesis promote knowledge of the faith - Teach the "basics" of the faith as revealed in the signs of creation, Sacred Scripture, Catholic tradition and human experience.

2. Catechesis promotes knowledge of the meaning of liturgy - Teach about the form and meaning of the liturgy and the sacraments and help individuals prepare their minds and hearts to enter into these mysteries of our faith.

3. Catechesis promotes formation in Jesus Christ - Teach the moral teachings of the Catholic Church which are the fulfillment of the Commandments and the Beatitudes.

4. Catechesis teaches the Christian how to pray with Christ - Teach that a "climate of prayer" and participation in prayer invites individuals into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

5. Catechesis prepares the Christian to live in community and to participate actively in the life and mission of the Church. - Teach that the human person needs to live in society. Society is not optional, but a requirement of human nature.

6. Catechesis promotes a missionary spirit that prepares the faithful to be present as Christians in society. - Teach that all Christian service is an expression of love and is performed by Christians for the purpose of building up the Kingdom of God on earth.

Survey

Invite participants to reflect on how their teaching reflects these six tasks.

Point out that the content of our faith flows from Scripture and Tradition. Drawing a specific connection between Scripture as inspired Word of God, and Tradition which include the Dogmas, Teachings, and Practices found in the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

Sharing

Ask if anyone has any questions about how to use the Bible or the Catechism of the Catholic Church. Take a moment and write down any questions they have. Refer to these as the session progresses.

Summary

Facilitator prioritize the questions based on the content of this class and then proceed.

III. A Look at the Bible

- A. The purpose of this section is to develop a basic understanding of the books contained in the Bible and how to find and cite various passages. It will encourage catechists to use the Bible and all the references, footnotes, and cross-references available.

Sharing

Distribute handout H-2 "*A Look at the Bible*". Lead the discussion by asking the following questions. Be sure the basic understanding exists before moving to the next step.

Ask:

1. *How is the Bible organized?*

Explain that it consists of two major parts: the Old Testament and the New Testament.

2. *What does it contain?*

The Bible contains 73 books (46 in Old Testament and 27 in New Testament).

Take time to walk through the Bible or the index of books to see where various books are located in the edition they are using. Ask them to find several books in their Bible in order to become familiar with the placement of the various books.

3. *When was it written?*

Most books of the Bible were written from 1000 BC to 150 AD.

4. *When was it formally determined?*

The Canon of the Bible, the formal designation that a book was inspired by the Holy Spirit, was acknowledged at the Council of Hippo in 393 AD.

5. *How are the Catholic editions of the Bible different from the Protestant editions?*

Seven books and parts of two others are not recognized by the Protestants as inspired. These books were originally written in Greek. Catholics call these books the Deuterocanonical books. Protestant editions of the Bible refer to these books as the Apocrypha. (They are marked with * or ** on the handout.)

6. *What types of literature does the Bible contain?*

The Bible contains many different kinds of literature. In it, we find histories, fables, codes of law, orations, reflective literature, poetry, lists, parables, allegories, stories of Jesus, stories of the early Church and apocalyptic literature.

7. *How can Catechists read the Bible most meaningfully?*

To use the Bible well, Catechists need to do more than simply look up the chapter and verse. Deeper understanding of the Biblical text comes with reading introductions, commentaries, cross references, and footnotes.

Take time to go over the handout (H-2) "*A Look at the Bible*" and look at the information it contains.

Sharing

Break into groups and practice using the Bible by finding James 5:13-15 together. Follow the footnotes, cross references and introductory information to further understand this selection.

Ask:

What else did you find when you looked at more than the citation? Invite participants to share how their learning and understanding were enhanced by going further in the study.

Give participants another opportunity to practice by looking up Tobit 2:1-2 with a partner or small group. Remind them to follow the footnotes, cross references and introductory information to further understand the selection.

Summary

Facilitator summarizes and highlights main ideas from the above sharing.

IV. A Look at the Catechism

A. The purpose of this section is to acquaint catechists with the Catechism of the Catholic Church and give them an overview of what is in the Catechism and where and how to find it.

B. Distribute the handout H-3, "*The Catechism of the Catholic Church*" to find out how the Catechism is organized. Note that it is made up of the Prologue and four parts.

1. Ask: What are the major Parts of the Catechism?

The four major parts are: Our beliefs, How we celebrate, How we live, and How we pray.

2. Invite them to turn to Paragraph 27. Note the various elements seen on that page (Part, Chapter, Section, Article and Paragraphs). Follow the cross references in Paragraph 27.

3. Ask them to find Paragraph 44. Explain that an "In Brief" section is found at the end of every Chapter. It summarizes the basic teachings in that chapter. It is a good source for concise understandings.

4. Ask them to turn to Paragraph 2865. Invite them to take a quick look at the Index of Citations and imagine how these may be helpful in their research and preparation. (Note: These lists are not found in the small white and blue catechisms.)

5. Ask them to find the subject index. Explain that the subject index in the first edition and the small white edition are thematic. You may have to look for a related word in order to find the reference.

Survey

Practice finding information in the Catechism by looking up "healing." (This word is not listed in the subject index of the brown or white Catechisms, so you will have to look up related words such as "anointing" or "sacraments.") Follow the paragraph references, cross references and footnotes to further understand the topic.

Give them another opportunity to use the Catechism by asking them to look up "almsgiving" with a partner or small group. Remind them to follow the paragraph references, cross references and footnotes to further understand the topic.

Ask the group what they learned from this exercise.

Summary

Facilitator summarizes and highlights main ideas from the above sharing.

V. Using the Resources

A. The purpose of this section is to learn how the Teacher Manual and Textbook can be used, along with the Bible and Catechism, to develop a lesson plan.

B. Distribute handout H-4

Survey

Gather into grade level groups. Look at the Teacher's Manual and Textbook. Review their organization. Point out important features and aids to planning provided in these books.

Ask each group to work on Lesson One in the textbook using the resources of text, Bible and Catechism. Remind them to go through the Planning Worksheet step by step in order to fully prepare.

Walk around as the groups work on the Planning Worksheet, offering any help that is needed and answering questions.

Sharing

Review by asking the following question from the Planning Worksheet. Accept whatever answers they have and encourage them to find others as they use this process in planning

A. Reactions, Summary, and Closing Prayer

If time permits invite participants to offer feedback. If there is no time summarize by asking the participants the following questions.

How has this research and preparation enhanced my personal understanding of the topic?

How has this research and preparation clarified the doctrines and practices taught in this lesson?

How will I involve the children in the Bible, the Catechism and this lesson?

Distribute the Catechist Learning Assessment form and encourage catechists to complete the form as soon as possible and return to their catechetical leader.

NATIONAL DIRECTORY FOR CATECHESIS

THE SIX TASKS OF CATECHESIS

1. *Catechesis promotes knowledge of the faith.* The initial proclamation of the Gospel introduces the hearers to Christ for the first time and invites conversion to him. By the action of the Holy Spirit, such an encounter engenders in the hearers a desire to know about Christ, his life, and the content of his message. Catechesis responds to this desire by giving the believers a knowledge of the content of God's self-revelation, which is found in Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition, and by introducing them to the meaning of the Creed. Creeds and doctrinal formulas that state the Church's belief are expressions of the Church's living tradition, which from the time of the apostles has developed "in the Church with the help of the Holy Spirit."
2. *Catechesis promotes a knowledge of the meaning of the Liturgy and the sacraments.* Since Christ is present in the sacraments, the believer comes to know Christ in the liturgical celebrations of the Church and is drawn into communion with him. Christ's saving action in the Paschal Mystery is celebrated in the sacraments, especially the Eucharist, where the closest communion with Jesus on earth is possible as Catholics are able to receive his living Flesh and his Precious Blood in Holy Communion. Catechesis should promote "an active, conscious genuine participation in the liturgy of the Church, not merely by explaining the meaning of the ceremonies, but also by forming the minds of the faithful for prayer, for thanksgiving, for repentance, for praying with confidence, for a community spirit, and for understanding correctly the meaning of the creeds. "Sacramental catechesis prepares for the initial celebration of the sacraments and provides enrichment following their reception.
3. *Catechesis promotes moral formation in Jesus Christ.* Jesus' moral teaching is an integral part of his message. Catechesis must transmit both the content of Christ's moral teachings as well as their implications for Christian living. Moral catechesis aims to conform the believer to Christ—to bring about personal transformation and conversion. It should encourage the faithful to give witness—both in their private lives and in the public arena—to Christ's teaching in everyday life. Such testimony demonstrates the social consequences of the demands of the Gospel.
4. *Catechesis teaches the Christian how to pray with Christ.* Conversion to Christ and communion with him lead the faithful to adopt his disposition of prayer and reflection. Jesus' entire life, death, and Resurrection were an offering to his Father. His prayer was always directed toward his Father. Catechesis should invite the believer to join Christ in the Our Father. Prayer should be the ordinary environment for all catechesis so that the knowledge and practice of the Christian life may be understood and celebrated in its proper context.

5. *Catechesis prepares the Christian to live in community and to participate actively in the life and mission of the Church.* Jesus said to his disciples, "Love one another. As I have loved you. . . ." This command provides the basis for the disciples' life in community. Catechesis encourages an apprenticeship in Christian living that is based on Christ's teachings about community life. It should encourage a spirit of simplicity and humility, a special concern for the poor, particular care for the alienated, a sense of fraternal correction, common prayer, mutual forgiveness, and a fraternal love that embraces all these attitudes. Catechesis encourages the disciples of Jesus to make their daily conduct a shining and convincing testimony to the Gospel. "He also distributes special graces among the faithful of every rank. By these gifts he makes them fit and ready to undertake various tasks and offices for the renewal and building up of the Church, as it is written, 'the manifestation of the Spirit is given to everyone for profit' (1 Cor 12:7). " Preparation for community life has an ecumenical dimension as well: "In developing this community sense, catechesis takes special note of the ecumenical dimension and encourages fraternal attitudes toward members of other Christian churches and ecclesial communities." It should always provide a clear exposition of all that the Church teaches and at the same time should foster a "true desire for unity" and inculcate a zeal for the promotion of unity among Christians. Catechesis will have an ecumenical dimension as it prepares the faithful to live in contact with persons of other Christian traditions, "affirming their Catholic identity while respecting the faith of others."

6. *Catechesis promotes a missionary spirit that prepares the faithful to be present as Christians in society.* "The 'world' thus becomes the place and the means for the lay faithful to fulfill their Christian vocation." Catechesis seeks to help the disciples of Christ to be present in society precisely as believing Christians who are able and willing to bear witness to their faith in words and deeds. In fostering this spirit of evangelization, catechesis nourishes the evangelical attitudes of Jesus Christ in the faithful: to be poor in spirit, to be compassionate, to be meek, to hear the cry of injustice, to be merciful, to be pure of heart, to make peace, and to accept rejection and persecution. Catechesis recognizes that other religious traditions reflect the "seeds of the Word" that can constitute a true "preparation for the Gospel." It encourages adherents of the world's religions to share what they hold in common, never minimizing the real differences between and among them. "Dialogue is not in opposition to the mission *ad gentes*."

A LOOK AT THE BIBLE

OLD TESTAMENT

(Jewish Scriptures)

Written in Hebrew, Greek and Aramaic over a period of 1000 years.

It includes:

1. **Histories** of heroes and events
2. **Codes of Laws**
3. **Orations**
4. **Reflective Literature**
5. **Poetry**

There are 46 books in the Catholic Old Testament.
(39 books in the Protestant Old Testament)

5 Books	16 Books	18 Books
Pentateuch	History	Prophets
Genesis	Joshua	Isaiah
Exodus	Judges	Jeremiah
Leviticus	Ruth	Lamentations
Numbers	1 Samuel	Baruch*
Deuteronomy	2 Samuel	Ezekiel
	1 Kings	Daniel**
	2 Kings	Hosea
	1 Chronicles	Joel
7 Books	2 Chronicles	Amos
Wisdom	Ezra	Obadiah
	Nehemiah	Jonah
Job	Tobit*	Micah
Psalms	Judith*	Nahum
Proverbs	Esther**	Habakkuk
Ecclesiastes	1 Maccabees*	Zephaniah
Song of Songs	2 Maccabees*	Haggai
Wisdom*		Zechariah
Sirach*		Malachi

* Books only in Catholic Bibles.

** Parts of these books are only found in Catholic Bibles.

NEW TESTAMENT

(Christian Scriptures)

Written in colloquial Greek over a period of 150 years.

It includes:

1. **Stories and Teachings** of Jesus
2. **History** of early Church
3. **Teachings** of the Apostles
4. **Encouragement** for persecuted Christians

There are 27 books in the New Testament.

4 Books of	13 Letters	8 Letters
Gospels	Paul	Others
Matthew	Romans	Hebrews
Mark	1 Corinthians	James
Luke	2 Corinthians	1 Peter
John	Galatians	2 Peter
	Ephesians	1 John
	Philippians	2 John
1 Book	Colossians	3 John
Acts of	1 Thessalonians	Jude
Peter and	2 Thessalonians	
Paul	1 Timothy	
	2 Timothy	1 Book
Acts of	Titus	Visions
the Apostles	Philemon	Revelation

All these Books were accepted as the "Canon" of the Bible at the Council of Hippo in 393 and redefined at later councils. They are all considered as inspired by the Holy Spirit and containing the essentials of our Catholic faith.

THE CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

The Catechism is divided into a Prologue and Four Parts.

It is beneficial for all catechists to read the Prologue (#1–25).

Part 1. The Profession of Faith (#26–1065)

Addresses the relationship of God to humanity, Scripture and the Nicene and Apostles Creeds.

Section One: I Believe –We Believe

Section Two: The Profession of the Catholic Faith–The Creed

Part 2. The Celebration of Christian Mystery (#1066–1690)

Deals with Liturgy, Sacraments and Sacramentals.

Section One: The Sacramental Economy

Section Two: The Seven Sacraments of the Church

Part 3. Life in Christ (#1691–2557)

Covers the topics of Vocation, Morality, Virtue, Sin, and Social Justice.

Section One: Man’s Vocation: Life in the Spirit

Section Two: The Ten Commandments

Part 4. Christian Prayer (#2558–2865)

Deals with Prayer Traditions, Expressions of Prayer and specifically the Lord’s Prayer.

Section One: Prayer and the Christian Life

Section Two: The Lord’s Prayer

Each Part is divided into Sections, Chapters, Articles and Paragraphs.

Each Paragraph is numbered in sequence from #1 through #2865.

At the end of each Chapter there is a section entitled “**In Brief**” which is a synopsis of the material covered in the chapter.

Italicized Cross Reference numbers appear in the margins and direct the reader to other parts of the Catechism for further information on that specific topic.

Some paragraphs contain selections from various documents from Catholic tradition which are footnoted at the bottom of the page. A helpful list of **abbreviations** appears after the Index near the end of the Catechism.

The **Index** presents major topics in boldface type that are addressed in the text. More specific teachings are listed beneath the major topics followed by paragraph references.

All references to Scripture and Church documents can be found in the **Index of Citations**.

A **Glossary** of important doctrinal terms concludes the Catechism, but is found only in the second edition.

PLANNING WORKSHEET

1. Find the first lesson in the Teacher's Manual.
 - List the topic and objectives below.
 - List all the Scripture and Catechism references given.
2. Look up each reference.
 - Read it and note the main idea.
 - Read through the footnotes, cross references and background information.
 - Add any new insights.
3. Highlight specific Scriptures and Catechism references you wish to use for this lesson.
4. Plan your lesson.

Topic: _____

Objectives: _____

Scripture References: _____

Catechism References: _____

5. We are all called to a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. As you are working on your lesson plan to bring the children into this relationship, ask yourself these questions:
 - Is my lesson centered on Christ?
 - Is my lesson driven by Scripture?
 - Is my lesson supported by the Catechism?
 - Does my lesson include other resources?
 - Is there a CD, DVD, or other downloadable material I can use?
 - Can I invite Father, Deacon, or the C/DRE to be a guest speaker?
6. How will I actively involve the children in this lesson?
 - Who will read Scripture? Which bible will it be read from?
 - Grades 4 and up – Who will read from the CCC? Which version?
7. How has this research and preparation enhanced my personal understanding of the topic?