The Practice of Catechesis with All Ages & Generations
NCCL National Catholic Certificate Program for Parish Catechetical Leaders

Archdiocese of Hartford: 2024-2025 Certificate Program

Course 1. Vision and Practices of Catechesis for Today's Church
(May – July 2024)

Course 1 presents the catechetical vision and practices of the Catholic Church from the *Directory for Catechesis* (Vatican, 2020), and guides leaders in envisioning catechesis with families and every stage of life informed by the *Directory's* vision and practices. Leaders will create a parish-wide vision of lifelong maturing in faith, and translate the vision into specific goals for growth in faith at every stage of life. They will learn the principle and practices for nurturing faith and discipleship in the whole community (all ages/intergenerational), in families, and in every season of life from childhood through older adulthood. The course blends vision and principles with practices and skills to inform leaders with the newest approaches to catechesis today.

Instructor
> **Catherine LaVecchia** is the Director of Lifelong Learning at Church of the Presentation, Upper Saddle River, NJ. She has served in various ministry capacities for the past 31 years, including youth ministry, family faith formation, and lifelong faith formation. She has also taught theology and spirituality to college students and adult learners for many years. She has Masters Degrees in Pastoral Ministry and Religious Education, a Certificate in Church Management from Villanova's Center for Church Management, and a Certificate in Youth Ministry from the Center for Ministry Development. She serves as the vice-chart of the NCCL Board of Directors.

Course Structure
> **May 2024:** In-Person Session: Saturday May 18, 2024 (9 am to 5 pm)
> > *Location*: To be determined
> > Online Independent Learning (using the NCCL Learning Platform)
>
> **June 2024:** One monthly 90-minute Cohort Meeting (led by the NCCL Mentor on Zoom)
> > Online Independent Learning (using the NCCL Learning Platform)
>
> **July 2024:** One monthly 90-minute Cohort Meeting (led by the NCCL Mentor on Zoom)
> > Online Independent Learning (using the NCCL Learning Platform)
>
> **Conclusion:** Application Project

Course 2. Design for Catechesis with Families and the Seasons of Life
(September - November 2024)

Course 2 guides leaders in utilizing the vision and practices from the *Directory for Catechesis* to design and implement catechesis for each stage of life, for families, and for the whole community (intergenerational). Leaders will use the online learning modules to learn how to 1) design intergenerational / whole community catechesis for all ages to learn together; 2) design family faith formation for the home and family catechetical experiences in the parish; 3) design catechesis for forming the faith of parents and equipping parents as faith formers of their children and teens; 4) design catechesis each season of life utilizing a variety of life-stage appropriate faith-forming content and experiences in physical, online, and hybrid settings using on your own, mentored, small group, large group, family, and whole church models of learning.

Instructor
>   To be named later

Course Structure
>   **Sept 2024:**   In-Person Session: Saturday September 14, 2024 (9 am to 5 pm)
>   >   *Location*: To be determined
>   >   Online Independent Learning (using the NCCL Learning Platform)
>
>   **Oct 2024:**   One monthly 90-minute Cohort Meeting (led by the NCCL Mentor on Zoom)
>   >   Online Independent Learning (using the NCCL Learning Platform)
>
>   **Nov 2024:**   One monthly 90-minute Cohort Meeting (led by the NCCL Mentor on Zoom)
>   >   Online Independent Learning (using the NCCL Learning Platform)
>
>   **Conclusion:**   Application Project

Course 3. Leadership for Catechetical Ministry (January – March 2025)

Course #3 guides leaders in recognizing their calling to catechetical leadership and leading out of a clear set of core values and personal principles informed by the life, ministry, and teachings of Jesus. Leaders will be equipped to practice effective leadership by modeling the way through personal values and example, inspiring a shared vision, trying innovative ways to grow and improve, enabling others to act by fostering collaboration and sharing responsibilities, and recognizing contributions and celebrating values and accomplishments. Leaders will develop and enhance their skills for building relationships, communication, working collaboratively and co-responsibly with teams, and leading innovation in catechetical ministry to address challenges and needs. Leaders will learn the processes and tools for building the capacity of the parish—people and material resources—for implementing and sustaining lifelong catechesis; and for discovering and utilizing the gifts of the community for catechetical ministry; equipping leaders with knowledge and skills for catechesis; and supporting and encouraging leaders.

Instructor
>   To be named later

Course Structure
>   **January 2025:**   In-Person Session: Saturday January 25 (9 am to 5 pm daily)
>   >   *Location*: To be determined

February 2025:   One monthly 90-minute Cohort Meeting (led by the NCCL Mentor on Zoom)
Online Independent Learning (using the NCCL Learning Platform)

March 2025:   One monthly 90-minute Cohort Meeting (led by the NCCL Mentor on Zoom)
Online Independent Learning (using the NCCL Learning Platform)

Conclusion: Application Project

Overnight Retreat: The Spiritual Life of the Catechetical Leader (April 2025)

The Retreat provides time and space for catechetical leaders to reflect on their calling and vocation through prayer, Scripture, presentations, group sharing, and individual silent time. The Retreat explores the identity of the catechetical leader as a witness of faith and keeper of the memory of God, as a teacher and a mystagogue, and as an accompanier and educator. The Retreat presents a contemporary theology and spirituality of ministry for today's leaders, and provides experiences of spiritual practices that nurture and sustain life as a ministry leader.

Retreat Leader
    To be named later

Structure
    May 2025:   In-Person, Two-Day Overnight Retreat Experience
        Location: To be determined

Curriculum

Course #1. Foundations of Catechesis with All Ages and Generations

Course Competencies
This course will guide learners in developing the knowledge, attitudes, values, skills, and/or behaviors to:

1. Cultivate a deeper sense of God's calling to catechetical ministry as a leader.
2. Understand the catechetical vision of the Catholic Church as expressed in the *Directory for Catechesis* and integrate that vision into parish catechetical ministry.
3. Understanding catechesis within the Church's mission of evangelization and making disciples.
4. Develop a shared vision of lifelong catechesis in the parish community.
5. Create a lifelong vision of maturing in faith and translate the vision into specific goals that can guide the design of catechesis at every stage of life.
6. Understand the research on the principles and methods for learning today and how it can be applied to catechesis with all ages.
7. Understand the contemporary family and the research on family faith transmission and practice and how it can be applied to family catechesis and parent formation.
8. Understand the life tasks and religious needs of life stages (children, adolescents, young adults, midlife adults, mature adults, and older adults) and how it can inform catechesis with each life stage.
9. Understand the variations in the spiritual-religious practices and engagements of Catholics today and how it can inform catechesis with families and life stages.
10. Understand the religious traditions and values of ethnic cultures in the Catholic Church and the principles of culturally-appropriate catechesis.

Course Texts
- *Directory for Catechesis*. Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization, 2020.
- Online readings and videos

Course Topics
1. The vocation and personal call to catechetical ministry
2. The catechetical vision of the Church presented in the *Directory for Catechesis* and development of a shared vision of catechesis in the parish community
3. Goals for faith maturing to guide catechesis with all ages and generations
4. The social, cultural, and religious context of catechesis in the U.S.
5. The diverse spiritual and religious practices and engagements of Catholics today
6. Contemporary principles and methods for learning today
7. Family faith transmission and practice; and application to parent and family catechesis
8. The life tasks and religious needs of each stage of life—childhood, adolescents, young adults, midlife adults, mature adults, and older adults—and application to catechesis with life stages

Online Learning Modules
1. Vision and practice of catechesis
2. The social, cultural, and religious context of catechesis today
3. Principles and methods for learning today
4. Faith formation with families
5. Faith formation through the life cycle: children through young adults
6. Faith formation through the life cycle: adults (40+)

Course #2. Catechesis with All Ages and Generations

Course Competencies
This course will guide learners in developing the knowledge, attitudes, values, skills, and/or behaviors to:

1. Utilize the vision and practices from the *Directory for Catechesis* in designing catechesis with all ages, families, and the whole community.
2. Utilize contemporary learning practices and methods in designing and teaching catechetical programs for all ages.
3. Design intergenerational / whole community catechesis for all ages to learn together.
4. Design family faith formation for the home and family catechetical experiences in the parish.
5. Design catechesis for forming the faith of parents and equipping parents as faith formers of their children and teens.
6. Design catechesis for the first third of life (children, adolescents, and young adults in their 20s) utilizing a variety of life-stage appropriate faith-forming content and experiences in physical, online, and hybrid settings using on your own, mentored, small group, large group, family, and whole church models of learning.
7. Design catechesis for children and youth with disabilities.
8. Design catechesis for adults – young adults (30s), midlife adults (40s-50s), mature adults (60s-70s, and older adults (80+) – utilizing a variety of life-stage appropriate faith-forming content and experiences in physical, online, and hybrid settings using on your own, mentored, small group, large group, family, and whole church models of learning.
9. Design culturally appropriate catechesis for families and people of all ages in multi-cultural parishes.
10. Design hybrid models of catechetical programming using a variety of digital tools, methods, media, and learning platforms.
11. Create a multi-year plan for lifelong catechesis in the parish incorporating intergenerational, family, and life stage catechesis.

Course Texts
- One course text to be determined
- Online readings and videos

Online Learning Modules
Leaders will use a competency tool to assess their learning needs and then select the modules they need for their growth and development.

1. Catechetical approaches and learning methods
2. Designing intergenerational faith formation
3. Designing family faith formation
4. Designing parent formation and education
5. Designing catechesis for children
6. Designing catechesis for young people
7. Designing catechesis for children and youth with disabilities
8. Designing catechesis for young adults (20s-30s)
9. Designing catechesis for Adults (40+)
10. Designing catechesis for cultural communities
11. Creating a plan for lifelong catechesis

Course #3. Leadership for Catechetical Ministry

Competencies Developed in the Course
This course will guide learners in developing the knowledge, attitudes, values, skills, and/or behaviors to:

1. Recognize the calling by God to catechetical leadership and model the transforming presence of God in their lives as catechetical leaders.
2. Lead out of a clear set of core values and personal principles.
3. Practice effective leadership by modeling the way through personal values and example, inspiring a shared vision, trying innovative ways to grow and improve, enabling others to act by fostering collaboration and sharing responsibilities, and recognizing contributions and celebrating values and accomplishments.
4. Cast a vision of catechesis in today's Church and mobilize and empower people to work toward it—influencing people in ways that will help them achieve their goals.
5. Practice relational and communication skills in ministry.
6. Develop and work collaboratively and co-responsibly with teams.
7. Develop adaptability and the ability to lead innovation in catechetical ministry to address challenges and needs.
8. Facilitate change that leads to the implementation of new projects and initiatives.
9. Build the capacity of the parish—people and material resources—for implementing and sustaining lifelong catechesis.
10. Discover and utilize the gifts of the community for catechetical ministry; equip volunteer leaders with knowledge and skills for catechesis; and support, encourage, and mentor volunteer leaders.

Course Texts
- One course text to be determined
- Online readings and videos

Topics
1. Biblical and theological perspectives and practices for Christian leadership
2. Personal strengths for leadership
3. Practices for effective leadership: model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart
4. Relational skills: listening, communicating, and responding pastorally
5. Intercultural intelligence: knowledge and skills
6. Adaptability and innovation: skills, practices, and processes for adaptability; and designing and implementing innovations
7. Facilitating change and managing conflict: skills and processes
8. Working with teams: skills and processes for situational leadership and working effective with teams
9. Building capacity for catechetical ministry: people, tools, technologies, and resources
10. Leadership development: discovering and utilizing the gifts of leaders; equipping leaders with knowledge and skills for catechesis; and supporting, encouraging, and mentoring leaders
11. Management skills and tools for catechetical ministry

Online Learning Modules
1. Five practices of leadership
2. Relational skills
3. Working with teams
4. Intercultural communication

5. Developing leaders
6. Facilitating change and managing conflict
7. Management skills and processes

Retreat Experience: The Spiritual Life of the Catechetical Leader

Topics
1. Spirituality of ministry for today's leaders
2. Theology of ministry for today's leaders
3. Calling and vocation as a parish catechetical leader
4. Living the mission of Jesus Christ and being a witness to the kerygma
5. Spiritual practices for maturing as a parish catechetical leader