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The Catechist as an Imatatio Christi, an Imitation of Christ

by Rolando Moreno

Jesus says, "Take my yoke upon you and learn from me; for I am gentle and lowly in heart (Mt. 11:29)". Evangelization and catechesis bear the most fruit when the catechist takes seriously his call to follow Christ, to imitate Him.

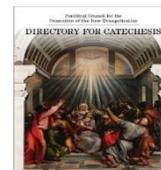
When our love for Christ radiates through the broken, finite earthen vessels of our humanity, what is communicated is the living Christ. To echo the sentiment of St. John the Baptist, "I must decrease so that He may increase", is the true disposition of the catechist. Furthermore, the disposition of the Catechist is a Marian one: "God has exulted those of low degree and filled the hungry with good things" (Lk. 1:52-53). Mary's perfect humility allowed her to receive Christ, be the new Ark of the Covenant and bring Christ to the world. The catechist's disposition is similar, they must know God, answer his call, and receive His Word; all of which can come through a humble and contrite heart. The proud cannot receive God. St. Thomas Moore said, "Humility, that low sweet root, from which all heavenly virtues shoot" (Love of the Angels). Humility is the gateway to following Christ and the necessary virtue to proclaim him.

The authentic formation of catechists begins with the way of humility. It begins at the foot of the cross, by sitting at the feet of Jesus. "When I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men to myself" (Jn. 12:32). Only through an intimate relationship with Christ can one proclaim him with confidence and certainty. This requires the recognition of our own inadequacies, our own unworthiness. From here, the Lord can begin to fill us. To imitate Christ, is to empty ourselves (kenosis) like Mary, who is the perfect model of the humility needed to receive the living Word of God. The same living Word that catechists are called to proclaim!

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What's Coming Up

May 27 at 1pm - 2:15: Rolando continues with the last virtual study series on the New Catechetical Directory. This workshop will take place both virtually and in-person at Queen of Peace parish in Salem. To register either for in-person or virtually click [here](#). A copy of the new Directory is recommended but not required. To order a copy click [HERE](#).



June 9th, 2021 - 7pm *Why Make A Concentration to St. Joseph* by Deacon James Thurman
For the Year of St. Joseph, the Archdiocese is offering a once-a-month virtual speaker series on St. Joseph. Each talk will highlight a theme, virtue or title of St. Joseph and will be live on the [Archdiocese Facebook Page](#). The archdiocese has created a website in honor of St. Joseph to concentrate [more resources](#) for you like prayers, litanies, and prayer cards. All our encouraged to tune in!



June 1-4, 2021: There is still space available at the [Sacred Liturgy Conference](#) in Spokane, Washington. This year's theme "The Incarnation in the Holy Eucharist" will illuminate the Incarnation as inseparable from the Cross, Resurrection, and the Holy Eucharist. The lectures will take place in the conference center of the Ruby River Hotel and four beautiful Gregorian liturgies including one in the ancient Dominican Rite will be celebrated at St Aloysius and the Cathedral of Our Lady of Lourdes.



On June 17th at 1pm we will be hosting a webinar from The Catechetical Institute (CI) of Franciscan University. This event will provide practical best practices and specifically answer the most commonly asked questions about successfully and effectively implementing www.FranciscanAtHome.com (online catechist formation platform) in parishes and schools. There are now over 130 outstanding ministry formation workshops available online. The webinar will be a good opportunity to learn more about the CI and register your parish if you are new. It will be a helpful refresher for those whose parishes already have a subscription. The webinar is free, registration will begin soon, stay tuned. Also, a similar webinar is being planned in Spanish, details are forth coming.



Acts XXIX

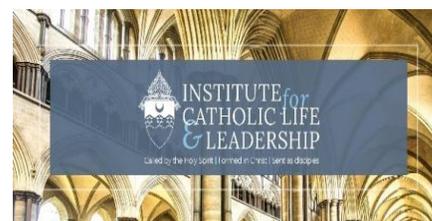
As we head into summer, many parishes are looking forward to the fall and are thinking about new directions in which your mission can respond to the parishioners in your pews. [ACTS XXIX](#) is an apostolate dedicated to helping priests and lay parish workers rediscover and reimagine the parish and provide a way unleash the gospel. Its mission to rally around and support parishes and priests with new methods is much needed when the "apostolic" era in which we live leads to moments that range from discouraging to threatening. Fr. John Ricardo who is at the center of this movement, has written [an essay](#) detailing a plan for the diocese, but he can be found on several platforms but here is his [YouTube](#) videos and click [here for his podcast](#).

Vatican News

Pope Francis draws our attention to the critical importance of lay discipleship and the formation of catechists in our time. In the last week, he has issued a new Motu Proprio, [Antiquum Ministerium](#) To find out more about this document, Rolando was asked by [Catholic World Report](#) for his assessment. In [Discipleship Vocation Formation: On Antiquum Ministerium Instituting the Ministry of Catechist](#), the role of the catechist in the new Catechetical Directory (see above for the last informational session) is examined through the lens of this newly elevated vocation.

The Institute for Catholic Life and Leadership

The Institute will offer a new cohort of students this fall in our **Foundational Certificate in Theology and Pastoral Ministry!!** The new cohort will take place in the Portland or Mid-Valley area (location TBA). Registration will open on **June 11th**, Feast of the Sacred Heart. Other details are forth coming. If you are interested in learning your faith more in-depth or know of others who would like formation, please refer them to the Institute. To learn more, go to the [Institute](#)



Catechetical Institute

The Franciscan Institute is an easy way to grow your understanding of both your mission and your duty to your Church community. Available in English and Spanish, and with multiple tracts of study the Catechetical Institute offers an easy way to formulate a discipling plan from your home. Workshops such as [Discipling Adults](#) or (for youth ministers) [Forming Disciples for the New Evangelization](#) are available. Franciscan University offers every year an amazing opportunity for growth at the [St. John Bosco Conference](#) which is happening this year on July 12 -15. There are well over 50 different speakers and many different tracks to individualize your learning. For more information and ways to enroll with the support of your archdiocese contact rmoreno@archdpx.org



Articles on Discipleship

The [Catechetical Review](#) is a great resource for all who teach the faith in parish catechetical ministry. The article [Discipleship? Catechesis? Sacred Liturgy? Yes.](#) Is a great way to start a conversation about how to shift your parish or community into rethinking how forming discipleship can happen. Having the same article in Spanish will allow all of the community to be engaged, click here to access [¿Discipulado? ¿Catequesis? ¿Liturgia sagrada? Sí.](#) To subscribe to the *Catechetical Review*, click [HERE](#)



Online Resources for Summer Reading

The Eucharist is the source and summit of all Catholic life, but sometimes it is hard to recommend that someone start a relationship with God with going to Mass. In fact, the early Christian church began with small core groups. A great place to begin helping to challenge yourself or your staff is [Forming Intentional Disciples](#) by Sherry Weddell. (Also, in [Spanish](#)). Considered to be a *must read* for anyone working in a parish, Weddell leads readers through steps that will help Catholics enter more deeply into a relationship with God and the river of apostolic creativity, charisms, and vocation that flow from that relationship. Also, helpful are the many small group apostolates like [Endow](#) and [Exodus 90](#). Not sure if you should start another thing? Listen to Fr. George Elliott's short video on [The Need for Discipleship](#).





Speaker Spotlight

Our Lady of Peace Institute

I recently had the opportunity to speak with Sr. Anne Marie Warren regarding the Our Lady of Peace Institute, held every summer.

Sister, tell me about what is going on this summer at the retreat house?

Forty-eight years ago, our community recognized a need for more education in our diocese, so we developed an Institute that brought together catechesis and a retreat styled week that would answer that call. The Institute has changed over the years, trying to respond to the ever-evolving needs of the Archdiocese and this year is no different. We will be hosting an array of speakers designed to provide an educational retreat. [Our schedule](#) runs Monday through Friday and is filled with liturgies, prayer, adoration and times for confession. With two presentations in the morning, Eucharistic adoration, another presentation in the afternoon and then an evening session for those who cannot come during the day, provides a wonderful opportunity for reflection and retreat. It will also be live streamed for those who cannot attend in person.

The theme this year will be the Mysterious Wisdom of God?

Yes, we are very excited to have Dr. Anthony Lillis, who is a bit of a specialist on the mystic saints. Julie Onderko will be returning as well as Dina Marie Hale. And we will have Fr. John Marshall as our spiritual director and he will be presenting as well.

Please share who attends this kind of retreat?

We have regular people that come back every year. But we are really trying to work with parish staffs, including DRE's and catechists. We are allowed 25 people in person this year but, last year, our livestreaming attracted participants from as far away as Australia and The Phillipines. We had over 200 people from all over the world. We considered that very successful and had a lot of positive feedback.

What do you want people to go home with after they attend your retreats?

Our aim is to convey the importance of a quiet place to reflect and refresh themselves from the busy world. Our theme of the Institute this year grows from the scripture verse found in 1st Corinthians 2:7 which invites us to pause and wonder at God's wisdom. It can be indredibly fruitful to cut the noise down and I think we successfully do that



here at the retreat house. I encourage people to turn their cell phones off and if they can't they can always give it me!! We want DRE's, faith formation coordinators and catachists to know that they are doing work that is important and that requires space to think. Our gardens, the *Resurrection Garden* (pictured right) the *St. Joseph Garden*, our [Marian Garden](#) and our new garden called *In through the Narrow Gate* are part of our places for prayer throughout our grounds. When we have our silent retreats, participants will sometimes want to stay longer because in the silence we can hear God speak. We do offer scholarships because we firmly believe these kind of reflections should be open to all, especially those who have economic concerns.

Tell us about your community.

Fransican spirituality is always at the heart of anything we do and St. Francis was focused on the attributes of Jesus. He wanted know Jesus by exploring poverty and simplicity, humility, graciousness and obedience. We are always welcoming those who are discerning a consecrated life and we have several levels of study and participation. In Oregon, we are a small community and serve primarily in our retreat house and an infirmary here as well as a retreat house in California. But we also have missionary work Hong Kong, United States and Canada, a parish mission in British Columbia and a hostel in Taiwan for women. We are welcome to all women who want to give themselves to God and hope to model an authentic consecrated life abides together in community.

[Register here](#) for our Summer Institute or call Sr. Benedicta at 503-649-7127 or email her at: srbenedicta@fmsolp.org

Our 2021 Summer Institute Presenters:

Join Our Lady of Peace Retreat
July 12-16, 2021 for:

- 3 Classes Daily
- Daily Mass & Adoration
- Meals, private room
- Evening Lecture Series
- Register as a Resident, Day Student, Evening Lecture only or Virtual Option

Our Theme:
The Mysterious Wisdom of God

Dr. Anthony Lillis, S.T.D. Fr. John Marshall

Julie Onderko Dina Marie Hale

Registration Required: www.olpretreat.org
or call Sr. Maria Benedicta at: 503-649-7127



A Disciple's Prayer to the Holy Spirit

Holy Spirit, Fire of Love,
Open our hearts and minds
to the blessings
of life and faith

Come, Holy Spirit!
Guide us as we walk the ways of discipleship:
Come, Holy Spirit!

Make us faithful stewards
of all we are, have, and will be:
Come, Holy Spirit!

Give us courage
to serve boldly and with compassion:
Come, Holy Spirit!

Strengthen our faith
as we grow more deeply in relationship
with Christ and one another:
Come, Holy Spirit!

Enliven us in your presence:
Come, Holy Spirit!

For you are God with the Father and the Son,
now and forever.
Come, Holy Spirit, Come! Amen.