

ITM Culture – COVID 19 Version

Louise Johnson

This version of the Culture session is to be approached in a “workbook” fashion. For brainstorming questions: think of how you might answer the question. Then, when you have given the question a reasonable amount of thought, turn to the bottom of page 3 to see answers that you may not have considered. Several subjects that are introduced here can be further explicated online with simple searches (e.g. “iceberg analogy of culture”).

What is culture?

Think about what you think is the definition of culture for a couple minutes.

It is more than that:

Webster’s: **4.** the sum total of ways of living built up by a group of human beings & transmitted from one generation to another
 6. the behaviors and beliefs characteristic of a particular social, ethnic, or age group

Modern Catholic Dictionary by John A. Hardon S.J., p.140:

Culture. The personality of a society. As understood in Catholic social philosophy, it is the totality of a people’s traditions, attitudes, customs and institutions. A culture has roots that go back even centuries and may be far removed from where persons now live. Cultures differ even as individuals differ, since culture is nothing else than the divinely intended distinctiveness of a people, even as individuality is the divinely intended uniqueness of each person. But like individuals, societies have not only their own inherent characteristics but their own separate history of decisions and experiences, which further distinguish one culture from another so that no two are fully the same.

Traditions (what they believe)
 Attitudes (what they desire)
 Customs (what they do)
 Institutions (how they live)

The Iceberg Analogy of Culture (in this packet) shows how objective culture and subjective culture differ. Please look at it carefully and notice the differences and the fact that subjective culture is enormous compared to objective culture and much harder to change. Consider examples of each in your own culture and in those of the people to whom you minister.

What are several cultures in which your ministry takes place?

List these cultures, and then look to the bottom of page 3 for more ideas. How many of these cultures can be found in your own family?

Why have a whole session on culture?

Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) 1204 (on page 4 of “Many Faces, One Church”)

Documents of Vatican II: second chapter of Part 2 of *Gaudium et Spes* (Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World): “Proper Development of Culture” (A whole chapter!!! especially starting with section 58) (This can be found on the Vatican website.)

Pope Saint John Paul II: “The synthesis between culture and faith is not just a demand of culture, but also of faith. A faith which does not become culture is a faith which has not been fully received, not thoroughly thought through, not fully lived out.”

Chapter 1 of the **National Directory for Catechesis** (2005): Cultural factors that affect catechesis in the U.S. today. “The circumstances in which the catechetical process takes place condition both the reception of the Gospel and the response to it”. (This document is not available online, but your DRE should have a copy if you would like to see it.)

Some General Characteristics of U.S. culture: (NDC22)

Freedom

Read **Declaration of Independence**

+ Rights come from God

-- Right to liberty – unconditional right to individual freedom of choice and exaggerated right to privacy (NO responsibilities to others)

Religious Freedom

+ According to Catholic teaching is a fundamental moral right

-- Treat religious beliefs & values as private concerns, no place in public life

Religion separate from government, but never separate from society

Faithful Citizenship USCCB: “Participation in the political process is a moral obligation.”

Interest in Science and Technology

+ remarkable developments = genuine advancement of the human family

-- new moral dilemmas

+ communications media = fundamental arena in which Christ’s message must be conveyed to the world

Diversity within the Catholic Church

Ethnic diversity (CCC814), (Cath. Update; Many Faces in God’s House)

Autonomous Churches (Catholic but not Roman Catholic – Deacon Jim’s session)

Spiritual diversity

Music preferences

CCC1679: practices of popular piety (OLG, religious dances, etc.)

Family and Home in the U.S.

In the 1950s, strict obedience was expected of children.

Today children are encouraged to think for themselves.

We have our work cut out for us!

Important differences to know:

Assimilation: One takes on the entire lifeway of the new – thorough, all encompassing, and longer.

Acculturation: A slower adoption of the cultural traits or social patterns of another group.

Enculturation: Begins before birth and continues until death: both a conscious and unconscious conditioning process to achieve competence in one's culture.

Inculturation: The adaptation of the Good News in liturgy and catechesis for a different culture than the predominant one of the Church or catechist while maintaining the integral content of the faith.

Read “page 5” **Catechetical Tasks in Inculturation** and then use the worksheet on “page 4” to further understand the importance of inculturation in ministry.

Sum up with “**Faith and Inculturation**” as a calling in your ministry.

Encuentro & Mission Process

1. Remembering the Past with Gratitude

Recognize and understand the past as a gift (helped us be who we are)

2. Living the Present with Enthusiasm

Realistically understand current situations and celebrate changes

“‘Signs of the times’ call for refocusing our efforts in ministry.”

3. Looking Forward to the Future with Confidence

Plan for effective ways to deal with the challenges of future change

Example: non-English Religious Ed

Theological reflection helps in working through this process.

Fill out the **Cultural Web** and ponder some of the questions on the back. Share any insights with someone else (Maybe make a copy for them.)

Integrating Activity: **What in my Culture Web is negatively affecting my ability to grow in my faith? Can I do something about it?**

Closing prayer: Most of last paragraph of section 58 of the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World – on back of “Iceberg”

Cultures in which your ministry might take place:

Various ethnic

Various age

Immigrants (documented and undocumented)

Migrant workers

Commuters

Handicapped