

The Catechist: A Sharer of the Gift of Faith Ministry Description



The Role of a Catechist

The role of a catechist is one who is called to nurture a living, conscious and active faith in the youth he/she teaches. A Catechist is one who witnesses to the faith by sharing his/her faith commitment through word, experience, prayer and liturgy.

The Catechist is responsible for planning and leading catechetical sessions. The time commitment is for one school year. The sessions are one hour and fifteen minutes each week.

The commitment involves ongoing personal faith formation. It is vital that as a sharer of the faith that the catechist continues to grow in his/her own faith. That is why catechist formation is highly encouraged because it provides a teaching context in which the catechist can develop a deep understanding and love for the Catholic faith which he/she shares.

Qualifications

1. To have a desire to share your faith with children and young people
2. To be able to relate comfortably with children and young people
3. To be committed to quality Catholic education
4. To take part in the sacramental life of the Church
5. To be a Confirmed Catholic
6. To begin/continue working towards catechist formation

Specific Responsibilities

- I. To be committed to sharing your faith, by using the lessons provided for class periods beginning in mid to late September and continuing through the first week in May. The sessions are one hour and fifteen minutes.
 - a. If you are unable to teach your class, it is your responsibility to find a substitute. A good place to begin is with the parents of your students. In the beginning of the academic year, make contact with parents and keep a list of those who are willing to teach the class if necessary and are confirmed Catholics who have also attended the Safe Environment (or VIRTUS) training, including any updates and/or refreshers. Please notify the Coordinator of any substitutes in class, including their name and date of your absence. If you are unable to secure a substitute on your own, notify the Coordinator as *soon as possible* so that a substitute catechist may be found.

- b. Attend required meetings and in-services as needed to stay informed of policies and to stay connected with the program.
2. To share your Catholic faith with a group of 12 to 15 (Elementary) or 10 to 12 (Preschool) students in a particular grade level using the information provided to you by the St. Laurence Religious Education staff.
 - a. Share your faith by presenting the weekly lessons using the resources provided and *covering the chapter content* noted on the Lesson Schedule provided and referenced by the weekly Essential Question (Elementary only). If you wish to deviate from the material scheduled or supplement the lesson with other content or activities, please check with the Coordinator for approval of the material you wish to use *prior* to its introduction in class. Please also have any videos brought in from home preapproved before presenting it to your class.
 - b. Review your upcoming lessons at least one (1) week in advance so that you can adequately prepare for class. If there are any arts and crafts supplies or any other materials that are needed for your lesson, you can contact the Religious Education staff in advance for ordering. Additionally, you can request from the Religious Education staff copies of any relevant activity worksheets and handouts at this time. **Please do so at least one week in advance for Elementary CCE classes.**
 - c. ALL Catechists should arrive weekly by **no later than 20 minutes** before class begins. Always pick up your class bin from the shelves in the RE Workroom. Please note that the copier in the RE Workroom is to be used by RE Staff ONLY. Thanks for your cooperation and understanding in this.

Elementary CCE Catechists: Please note that there will NOT be any photo copying available right before class. We ask that you request copies *at least one (1) week in advance.* Email copy requests will be honored, so long as they are submitted and will be made with 24-hour notice.

- d. **Elementary CCE Catechists:** Once your classroom is set up, please come to the *Guardian Angels Hall* to greet your students. After we are all gathered, all catechists and students will be dismissed to class with you leading them through the AMC building. First grade catechists and students will exit out the Guardian Angels Hall rear hallway directly into the WCP classroom wing on the first floor. Catechists and students in Grades 2 & 3 will take Stairwell B (on the Guardian Angels Hall side of the lobby), while catechists and students in Grades 4 & 5 will take Stairwell A (across the reception lobby behind the coffee bar area), to get to their classrooms upstairs. Elevator use should be reserved only for those catechists and/or students with physical limitations in climbing the stairs. **Students should never be sent up the stairwells without adult supervision and should be instructed to walk quietly and safely through the hallways, as there may be other activities going on in the building.** Any parents arriving with children after dismissal from the Guardian Angels Hall will be directed to escort their students directly to their classrooms for check-in with the Catechist.

Dismissal at the end of CCE will be from the classrooms. Parents will proceed to their children's classes and are the only authorized persons to pick up and sign out the child, unless you have a written note from the parents giving you permission to release the student to another adult.

Sunday Preschool/Kindergarten and Wednesday Kindergarten Catechists:

Be sure to be in your classroom to *greet the students/parents as they arrive*. Note that the children may be dropped off up to 15 minutes before class starts on Sunday mornings. In all sessions, Parents will be bringing the child directly to the class and picking them up from the classroom. Parents are the only authorized person to pick up and sign out the child, unless you have a written note from the parents giving you permission to release the student to another adult. Supplies and bins are in the workroom for you to access before class. Copies that you may need for the day's lesson should be requested in advance.

- e. Strive to create an atmosphere of mutual respect and dignity. Communicate this expectation to your students on the first day of class in an age appropriate way. If you have a student whose behavior is disruptive to the class, first remind him/her of the expectations of classroom behavior. If behavior continues, contact Joan or Molly (CCE) or Cindy (Preschool) so that they can take the child out of the class and speak with them. **PLEASE DO NOT KEEP A DISRUPTIVE STUDENT IN THE CLASSROOM.**
- f. Before the end of class, have students help pick up trash, return supplies and return any moved furniture to its original position if necessary. When you arrive each week, be sure to make note of the room set-up, so that it can be returned to the same condition it was in when you arrived.
- g. Dismiss students to parents or authorized adults **ONLY**. Parents (or another designated adult) **MUST SIGN OUT** each child before they can be dismissed from the classroom. Children are **NOT** allowed to leave the classroom or go outside to meet their parents without an accompanying catechist or assistant. If a child is not picked up from the classroom within a reasonable period of time (approx. 15 minutes) after class dismissal, please bring that student to Joan or Molly (CCE) or Cindy (Preschool) and we will remain with that child until he/she has been picked up by an authorized adult.