

Catechetical Plan Guidelines

*These Guidelines provide a fuller description of the type of information expected for each of the categories listed on the **Catechetical Plan Template**. The Catechetical Plan is written using the structure and headings of the Template, but not copying the explanatory directions. It is single-spaced, font Times New Roman 12. Double space between numbered headings.*

1. **Topic** – In a single phrase, name a topic or purpose of a program for adults.
For example: Baptism Preparation Program for parents and sponsors; Lector Training
2. **Intended Adult Audience** – Who do you anticipate will attend? Parents? New Volunteers?
Think about the “Background” portion used in a *Process Note*. What should your readers know about the participants?
3. **Overall Plan** – This should be detailed enough that another qualified catechist could come in at the last minute and execute the plan in almost the exact way you had in mind.

Offer a sentence or two for each of the following:

- a. *General goal for the entire program* – This is what you hope the participants will have a better understanding of by the end of all your sessions. For example, I want the parents and sponsors to understand what baptism means for their child and their responsibilities in asking for baptism.
- b. *Number, time, and length of sessions* -- There should be between three to five sessions, on a specified schedule, and with a specified length for the session -- e.g. 1½ hours on three successive Wednesday evenings for three weeks
- c. *Location* – Where will the sessions be held and in what space – e.g., St. Brendan Parish, Kalamazoo, Michigan, in the parish hall
- d. *Collaborators* – Who will collaborate with you in the preparation and presentation of the sessions. What is their experience? What will they offer the participants? What will they do?
- e. *Adult learning principles* – What are the adult learning principles that you need to take into account? How will you incorporate them into your sessions?

4. Program Outline

Session goals and outcomes

What is the specific *goal* for each session, that is, what is the main idea you want the participants to understand/appreciate/be knowledgeable about? What is the specific information that you want to convey to the group in this session?

What are the expected *outcomes* in light of the goal? What do you hope the participants will be able to do, to show (observable behavior) during the session that lets you know that you have accomplished what you intended? What are the learnings they will demonstrate during the session, and how they will demonstrate them – e.g., “They will be able to explain / role play / ...”

Format for this section:

- a. Session 1 goal (in one sentence)
 - o Session 1 outcomes
- b. Session 2 goal
 - o Session 2 outcomes
- c. Session 3 goal
 - o Session 3 outcomes

5. **Session Plan: Session _____** (give the session number)

- a. *Goal* -- Repeat the goal of this session. (Use the same exact words.)
- b. *Outcomes* -- Repeat the outcomes for this session. (Use the same exact words.)
- c. *Theology* -- Write a paragraph (no more than fifteen lines) that succinctly states the principal theological points or insights that need to be understood in this session. Reference your theological resources, drawing upon more explanatory material than the Catechism statements, in footnotes following the OST Writing Guide and giving specific page numbers. If you use direct quotations from your resources, indicate that properly.
- d. *Scripture* -- Identify at least one Scripture passage, a pericope not just a single verse, that will be used in this session. Transcribe the passage of Scripture fully. Indicate the bible version in parentheses. Offer a sentence or two about how the passage relates to your session goal, demonstrating that by citing, directly or indirectly, an appropriate Scripture commentary (for each Scripture passage if more than one). Reference the commentary in a footnote, giving specific page numbers. Be attentive to the six-point guideline found in the "Rubric to Inform the Use of Scripture." (You do not have to address each of those points, just bear them in mind.)
- e. *Learning environment* -- Explain how you will prepare the space for the session. For example, seating style, equipment needed, visual and sound effects (photos, images, music, etc.), hospitality.
- f. *Prayer environment* -- How will prayer be an integral component for this session? How will you create a place of focus? Describe it.

6. **Detailed Session Outline** from Greeting to Closing Prayer

Outline the session, starting with greeting the participants, the opening prayer, and each step through to the concluding prayer. Give the main point or points to be made at each step, and the teaching techniques that you will use (for example, handout, song, video, PowerPoint, individual reflection, group activity, role play, etc.) out of awareness of good pedagogy including people's learning preferences. Include specific questions you will ask. Give the approximate number of minutes that will be dedicated to each step. How will you use the PowerPoint?

- a. *Gathering, welcome* -- How will you begin? Will participants be seated at tables, assembled around a prayer space that you describe, or some other arrangement?

- b. *Opening prayer* -- How will it be done in a participative manner? Insert the song title/prayer/scripture/meditative text here.
- c. *Life to Faith to Life Process*
 - i. Help them connect to their experience. Ask the participants to name or recall a personal life experience that you think relates to the teaching/catechizing you plan to do. What question will you ask to get them thinking?
 - ii. Have them reflect on the experience. Name one or two questions you will ask that relate to the topic you plan to discuss.
 - iii. Catechize. What points will be discussed? This is where you explain and “hand on” the faith. Think of the main points you want to make. Present them in outline form. How will you actually teach the session?
 - iv. Integration activity. The participants now take what they have seen and heard and *relate it* to their life. The integration activity needs to relate directly to the outcomes – what you were hoping would be learned. Create questions/directions to see if they learned what you intended. State the questions/directions here.
 - v. Participant “take away” – So what? This is an opportunity for the adults to hear each other’s ideas and learn from them, for you to find out what was most significant for them, and what they completely missed. How will you structure this sharing?
- d. *Closing prayer* – How will it be done in a participative manner? Insert the song title/prayer/scripture/meditative text here.
- e. *Evaluation by the catechists* – Comment on how this catechetical session helped the participants to encounter Christ. Mentally review the outcomes you were hoping for. How would you and your collaborators determine what went well and what needs to be changed, improved, or eliminated? Remembering that “The definitive aim of catechesis is to put people not only in touch, but also in communion and intimacy with Jesus Christ.” (*GDC* no. 80) and “Catechesis leads people to enter the mystery of Christ, to encounter him, and to discover themselves and the meaning of their lives in him.” (*NDC* no. 19B, p. 55)

7. **Appendix** with handouts and printout of PowerPoint

revised April 18, 2024