



KATEKISTA

In Manus Tuas (In Your Hands):

A Handbook on Being, Becoming, & Belonging
to A Catechetical Ministry in the Philippines

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About the Cover

Concept by Clarence M. Batan and Vincent Reuben E. Valientes

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The Latin expression, *In Manus Tuas (In Your Hands)*, inspires the design of this handbook cover, which is the episcopal motto of the Most Rev. Roberto C. Mallari, DD, of the *Diocese of San Jose de Nueva Ecija*, and the Chair of the *Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) – Episcopal Commission on Catechesis and Catholic Education (ECCCE)* from 2016-2021. The green color against the white background and the handbook title, **Katekista**, underscores its deep connections to the findings and insights of the *National Catechetical Study (NCS) 2016-2021: Pastoral Action Research and Intervention (PARI) Project*. The symbolic hand reaching to *Katekista* symbolizes the book thrusts of *Being, Becoming, & Belonging to A Catechetical Ministry (CM) in the Philippines*. The *NCS 2021: PARI Project* logo at the upper-left corner of the cover, signifies the fulfillment of one of its visions to provide a working handbook for all the faith-driven servants of the Catholic Church in the Philippines.





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Published by University of Santo Tomas (UST)
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UST, España Boulevard, Sampaloc, Manila, Philippines, 1015
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First printing, 2021

Book and Layout Design by Jayson U. Dela Cruz and Vincent Reuben E. Valientes

Recommended Entry:

Katekista in manus tuas (in your hands) : a handbook on being, becoming, & belonging to a catechetical ministry in the Philippines / editors, Clarence M. Batan, Florence C. Natividad and Jaycar P. Espinosa. -- Manila, Philippines : UST Research Center for Social Sciences and Education (RCSSSED), c2021.
xxii; 162 pages; 22.86 cm.

ISBN 978-621-8269-03-3 (Softbound/Paperback)

ISBN 978-621-8269-34-7 (Hardbound)

ISBN 978-621-8269-04-0 (EPUB)

ISBN 978-621-8269-05-7 (PDF downloadable)

ISBN 978-621-8269-06-4 (PDF read only)

1. Catholic Church -- Catechisms.
 2. Catechisms.
 3. Catechetics – Philippines.
 4. Human Resources.
 6. Catholicism – Philippines.
 6. Religion and sociology.
 7. Social research .
 8. Philippines
- I. Batan, Clarence M., editor.
II. Natividad, Florence C., editor. III. Espinosa, Jaycar P., editor.

BX1959.9 .K156 2021

Printed by Raintree Trading & Publishing, Inc.
21 Matimtiman Street, U.P. Village, Quezon City
Telephone: 02 8921 8060
Email: raintree.publishing@gmail.com

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The **Porticus Asia, Ltd.** awarded an **international research grant** to conduct this study. This funding assistance is a generous help in the Catholic and spiritual formation of our catechetical ministry in the Philippines.





Vector Art by
Jayson Dela Cruz

This handbook is dedicated

to the calloused hands of all those
**who labor in the vineyard of
catechetical ministries** in the country,

to the caring hands of all those
who embrace the Catholic faith dearly,

to the sacrificing and loving hands of all those
who remain faithful in the teachings
and practices of the Catholic Church,

to the **Most Rev. Roberto C. Mallari, DD**,
whose episcopal motto, *In Manus Tuas*
(*In Your Hands*), inspired the writing of this handbook,

and to **Saint Joseph**, the Patron Saint of
Workers and Model of Silent yet Diligent Service.

May the insights of **being, becoming, & belonging
to a catechetical ministry** be held firmly
by the **Lord's loving hands**.



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List of Abbreviations

AM	Antiquum Ministerium
CBCP	Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines
CEP	Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples
CHR	Catechetical Human Resources
CM	Catechetical Ministry
ECCE	Episcopal Commission on Catechesis and Catholic Education
EP	Ecclesiastical Province
ET	Ecclesiastical Territory
NCDP	National Catechetical Directory of the Philippines
NCS	National Catechetical Study
PARI	Pastoral Action Research and Intervention
PCPNE	Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization
RSVCE	Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition
SC	Studying the Catechized
SCFP	Studying Catechetical Formation Programs
SCHR	Studying the Catechetical Human Resources
SCL	Studying Catechetical Leaders
SFC	Studying Filipino Catechists



Our Gratitude, Our Handbook Story

Florence C. Navidad & Clarence M. Batan

The celebration of the 500 Years of Christianity (YOC) in the Philippines in 2021 provided an opportunity to revisit the state of the Catechetical Ministry (CM) in the country. Examination of catechetical human resources (CHR) emphasize the vital role of the catechists and other volunteers in each catechetical center in delivering catechetical instructions to the young, adults, and elderly in our Catholic communities. It is essential to know the current system and areas of improvement of the CM's human resources.

Maraming salamat po sa lahat ng tulong, malasakit, at pagmamahal.

The completion of this project is inspired by the Apostolic Letter issued *motu proprio* by Pope Francis, entitled, *Antiquum Ministerium* (Instituting the Ministry of Catechist) released last May 10, 2021. At a Vatican press conference, Most Rev. Rino Fisichella expressed that “the institution of a ministry by the Church is confirmation that the person invested with that charism is performing an authentic ecclesial service to the community.”

Hence, this *Katekista In Manus Tuas (In Your Hands): A Handbook on Being, Becoming, & Belonging to A Catechetical Ministry in the Philippines* could be a concrete response to the *Directory for Catechesis* (Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization [PCPNE], 2020) and *Antiquum Ministerium* (Francis, 2021).



Our gratitude goes to all Filipino bishops, the *Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP)* led over the past nine years by Most Rev. Jose S. Palma, DD (2011-2013), Most Rev. Socrates B. Villegas, DD (2013-2017), Most Rev. Romulo G. Valles, DD (2017-2021), and Most Rev. Pablo Virgilio S. David, DD (2021-2023). The *CBCP*, through the 500 YOC Executive Committee entrusted the *CBCP-Episcopal Commission on Catechesis and Catholic Education (ECCCE)* to spearhead the preparation of the catechetical instruction materials (both in print and electronic forms) as formation tools for prayer, study, and reflection. Thank you to the *CBCP-ECCCE*'s leadership of Most Rev. Roberto C. Mallari, DD (Chair); Fr. Ernesto de Leon (Executive Secretary); and Sr. Ma. Jesusa Enginco, OP (Assistant Executive Secretary) who supported the *National Catechetical Study (NCS) 2016-2021* Research Team all throughout the completion of this handbook.

Our utmost gratitude to the *University of Santo Tomas' (UST)* leadership from the Office of the Rector, Fr. Herminio V. Dagohoy, OP who blessed the start of our *NCS Project* and our current Rector, Fr. Richard G. Ang, OP; the *Office of the Vice-Rector for Religious Affairs* led by Rev. Fr. Pablo T. Tiong, OP, who served as our pastoral consultant; the *Office of the Vice-Rector for Research and Innovation* led by Prof. Maribel G. Nonato, PhD; the *Research Center for Social Sciences and Education (RCSSSED)* led by Prof. Belinda de Castro, PhD, with our fellow researchers and administrative staff members, Ma. Carmelita Santos and Arabella San Agustin Mejorada; the *Faculty of Arts and Letters* led by Prof. Marilu R. Madrunio, PhD; to the faculty and students of the *Department of Sociology* who provided the excellent social research support in the conduct of this *NCS Project*.



The initial outputs of the pastoral action research, *Studying Catechetical Human Resources (SCHR)*, were gathered through a participatory and dialogic approach to ensure that the research processes provide voices of all CM stakeholders. Thus, we are thankful to the catechetical leaders and catechists from the following Ecclesiastical Provinces (EPs) and ETs who responded to our call for this study: EP Archdiocese of Lipa – ETs Calapan & Lucena; EP Archdiocese of Manila – ET Imus; EP Archdiocese of San Fernando de Pampanga – ETs Bataan & Zambales; EP Archdiocese of Tuguegarao – ET Nueva Vizcaya; EP Archdiocese of Capiz; EP Archdiocese of Cebu – ETs Dumaguete, Maasin, Tagbilaran & Talibon; EP Archdiocese of Jaro – ETs Antique, Bacolod, Kabankalan & San Carlos; EP Archdiocese of Cotabato – ETs Kidapawan & Marbel; EP Archdiocese of Zamboanga – ETs Basilan & Ipil.

Special gratitude to all our catechetical leaders and priest-catechists who, in one way or another, shared their time and experiences during the conduct of SCHR. Thank you, Most Rev. Gilbert A. Garcera, DD; Most Rev. Bartolome G. Santos, Jr., DD; Fr. Joselito C. Escote; Fr. Samuel John M. Tañoso; Sr. Evangeline F. Pabalate, MCST; Sr. Alice Original, OND; Fr. Hitchon S. Amahit; Fr. Giovanna Z. Luzon; Sr. Haide C. Arado; Sr. Estrella L. Cornito; Dr. Linda T. Tacorda; Fr. Henry G. Pineda; Fr. Joferson P. Garces; Sr. Wilhelmina Barcos, OSB; Fr. Virgilio S. Nadres, Jr.; Fr. William Monsalud; Fr. Lazaro B. Villafuerte; and Sr. Lucia S. Arana, OND.

Insights gathered from the SCHR serve as the basis in formulating strategies for the sustainability of CM in the country, specifically on its human resources dimension. This project evolved as a *Research-based Intervention Outcome (RIO)* activity of the *NCS 2016-2021: Pastoral Action Research and Intervention (PARI) Project*. This initiative



responds to one of the salient *NCS* findings that catechists in the ground are in dire need of fresh and relevant catechetical resources. Correspondingly, to ensure the quality of this handbook, the *NCS 2016-2021* Research Team solicited the assistance of catechists from the Diocese of Imus whose valuable insights led to the process of writing their experiences as basis of this handbook. We owe our deep thanks to Most Rev. Reynaldo G. Evangelista, DD and Fr. Alex R. Varias who served as consultants, and to Gloria S. Daradal, Victor C. dela Cruz, Suzette E. Medina, Elizabeth R. Palacol, and Maria Cristina V. Santos who served as contributors. The handbook content was also enhanced by *NCS 2016-2021: PARI Project* Project Assistants, Tisha Isabelle M. de Vergara, Keith Aaron T. Joven, Jaycar P. Espinosa, and Research Assistant, Jayson U. Dela Cruz; they, too, deserve our deepest gratitude.

Our contributors also recognize the assistance provided by the following: St. Paul Parish Ministry on Catechesis, Langkaan I, Dasmariñas, Cavite and their Parish Priest, Rev. Fr. Manuelito L. Villas; the Diocesan Ministry on Catechesis, Diocese of Imus; Mr. Marte H. Paras; Mary Kaye Reno; the Diocesan Ministry on Catechesis Staff & Vicariate of Our Lady of the Pillar Staff Diocese of Imus; Pearl Montemayor; Danielle Tonel; Missionaries of the Child Jesus, Mary Cause of our Joy Formation Center; and the Catechetical Ministry of St. Joseph Parish, Carmona, Cavite.

Despite the pandemic, our *NCS 2016-2021: PARI Project* Team took this RIO activity at heart. The updated handbook design was a byproduct of a series of consultations and assessments. The laborious technical assistance was provided by Jaycar P. Espinosa and Jayson U. Dela Cruz whose dedication and



patience are worthy of appreciation. Also, we recognize Vincent Reuben E. Valientes whose creative talent for design made our handbook visually appealing.



Thank you also to our language editor, Prof. Joan Christi S. Trocio-Bagaipo, PhD, for her patience and eye in identifying both content and technical errors that made this handbook clear and readable. Our gratitude also goes to Ma. Cecilia D. Lobo of the *UST Main Library* for assisting us in producing the library catalogue entry of this handbook; to Mr. Ciloy Melgar of *Raintree Trading* for the printing of this handbook; and to Ms. Ruth DL. Andaya, our *NCS 2016-2021 Project Assistant for Administration and Finance*, thank you for your untiring dedication to this project.

Special gratitude to *Porticus Asia Ltd.* for the trust in awarding us an international grant to conduct our research where this handbook was based.

May this handbook be easy-to-understand and be easy-to-use by all those making up all CM across the country and around the world. May this project encourage us to unceasingly beg for the Holy Spirit's guidance especially for the Filipino Catholics of today.

As we celebrate our Catholic Faith's fifth centenary in 2021, our penultimate gratitude to our Lord Jesus Christ, who guided us in the production of this handbook as a moment of His loving embrace and overflowing grace.



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***In Progress (InP)*





Message of Stewardship

 NCS 2016-2021: PARI Project

Greetings in the name of Saint Thomas Aquinas!

Despite the advances of digital communication that have resources for a private study of the faith readily accessible with literally one click, the ministry of catechists in the Church continues to be irreplaceable. As the Pope says in *Evangelii Gaudium*, an essential aspect of catechesis is personal accompaniment that “can make present the fragrance of Christ’s closeness and his personal gaze” (no. 169). Thus, catechists are called not only to instruct people about the faith but to accompany them in their journey of faith. But who accompanies the accompaniers?

It is in this light that we are heartily grateful for the publication of this highly anticipated and much needed volume, *Katekista In Manus Tuas (In Your Hands): A Handbook on Being, Becoming and Belonging to A Catechetical Ministry in the Philippines*. Like a true “handbook”, we hope that it will serve its purpose as a handy companion and practical guide for our catechists as they go about their journey. As one of the many fruits of the *National Catechetical Study (NCS) 2016-2021: Pastoral Action Research and Intervention (PARI) Project* conducted under the auspices of the *University of Santo Tomas’ (UST) Research Center for Social Sciences and*



Education (RCSSSED), this book is part of a wider and more comprehensive effort to accompany our companions with needful interventions that were identified along the course of the said research, which even antedates and as it were anticipates the renewed appreciation of the catechetical ministry inspired by the *motu proprio, Antiquum Ministerium* (Francis, 2021).

On behalf of *UST*, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate and thank the editors, Prof. Clarence M. Batan, PhD; Prof. Florence C. Navidad, EdD, MSMT, RMT, RN; and Mr. Jaycar P. Espinosa, MA; and all the contributors for this invaluable legacy to our catechists. In a special way, I would also like to express once again our gratitude to His Excellency, Most Rev. Roberto C. Mallari, DD, outgoing *Chairperson of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines' (CBCP) Episcopal Commission on Catechesis and Catholic Education (ECCCE)* for entrusting this project to *UST*, which humbly offers it as part of its contribution to the celebration of the Quincentennial of the Arrival of Christianity in the country.

In his homily during this year's Sunday of the Word of God, where he installed the very first instituted catechists in the history of the Church, Pope Francis reminded us of the "important work of serving the Gospel of Jesus, of proclaiming him, so that his consolation, his joy and his liberation can reach everyone."

May this handbook on the catechetical ministry, inasmuch as it deals with the technical and practical concerns of this vital apostolate, also remind us always of our mission "to be credible messengers, prophets of God's word in the world."

Rev. Fr. Pablo T. Tiong, OP

*Vice-Rector for Religious Affairs, University of Santo Tomas
Pastoral Consultant, NCS 2016-2021 PARI Project*





Foreword

 Veritas846

We are pleased to present this handbook, entitled, *Katekista In Manus Tuas (In Your Hands): A Handbook on Being, Becoming, and Belonging to A Catechetical Ministry in the Philippines* to various catechetical ministries as a gift to the celebration of the 500 Years of Christianity in the Philippines with the theme “Gifted to Give.” This is the product of the joint effort and hard work of the team led by the Most Rev. Roberto C. Mallari, DD, Chair of *Catholic Bishops’ Conference of the Philippines’ (CBCP) Episcopal Commission on Catechesis and Catholic Education (ECCCE)*, researchers from the *University of Santo Tomas’ (UST) Research Center for Social Sciences and Education (RCSSSED)*, and members of the *Diocesan Catechetical Ministry of the Diocese of Imus*.

The journey towards the conceptualization and writing of this handbook commenced when the *CBCP-ECCCE* commissioned the *UST-RCSSSED* in 2016 to undertake a survey on the state of the catechetical ministry in the Philippines. The *National Catechetical Study (NCS) 2016-2018* was participated by more than 26,000 catechists and about 300 catechetical leaders. The results of this study were presented during the *117th CBCP Plenary Assembly* and at the *18th Annual Meeting of Catechetical Ministers* in July 2018. Incongruences in the processes, management, and practices of catechetical ministries in various dioceses in the country were found.



The NCS 2016-2018 provided the springboard for the CBCP-ECCCE's NCS 2021: *Pastoral Action Research and Intervention (PARI) Project*, of which this handbook is a major undertaking. The CBCP-ECCCE and NCS 2016-2021: *PARI Project* Research Team requested catechists from the *Diocesan Catechetical Ministry* of the *Diocese of Imus* to head the committees and write the pertinent sections of the handbook. Rev. Fr. Alex “Boleck” R. Varias, Catechetical Ministry Head of Imus and I were honored to serve as project consultants.



Intended to provide standards and guide in the formulation of policies, as well as in implementing procedures, processes, and practices of catechetical ministries in all Ecclesiastical Territories (ETs) throughout the country, the handbook provides benchmarks and guidelines in areas of 1) Recruitment & Selection, 2) Formation, 3) Apostolic Monitoring, Assessment, & Feedback 4) Welfare & Wellness, 5) Relations & Concerns, and 6) Catechetical Planning, Documentation, & Research.

Online copies can be downloaded from www.ncs2021pariproject.com while printed copies of this handbook will be sent to catechetical ministries all over the country. It is our fervent hope that this will be fully utilized as a handy reference and guide by the bishops, priests, catechists, and catechetical leaders in fulfilling the mandate of the Lord Jesus Christ before He ascended to heaven to “teach them to carry out everything I have commanded you” (Mt. 28:20).

Most Rev. Reynaldo G. Evangelista, DD

Bishop of Imus





Preface

 University of Santo Tomas (UST)

In Manus Tuas, a Latin expression, which means *In Your Hands*, came to me as an apt symbolic expression of my response to God's invitation to be a servant bishop. I remembered fondly when I told our Archbishop Paciano B. Aniceto this motto, he was surprised and reminded me the basic truth about life. His immediate question was, "Why, are you going to die?"

This seemingly paradoxical view of life and death that initially renders my entry to the mission of episcopate - of my first steps of being a bishop - engendered a more lucid spiritual realization. Yes, *In Manus Tuas*, always reminded about the reality of dying but more so about the true purpose of becoming a bishop and a real servant. That is, to die to one's self and for all the things that one seeks, with an end view of fulfilling God's will. But, most of all, I take *In Your Hands* as an expression of absolute trust in God who first loved me. *In Manus Tuas*, when everyone learns to trust God, everything will be overcome. If God is with us, everything can happen. There is nothing impossible in God because we belong to Him, in his warm and loving embrace.

Thus, *Katekista In Manus Tuas (In Your Hands): A Handbook on Being, Becoming, and Belonging to A Catechetical Ministry in the Philippines* captures the underlying spiritual meaning of my



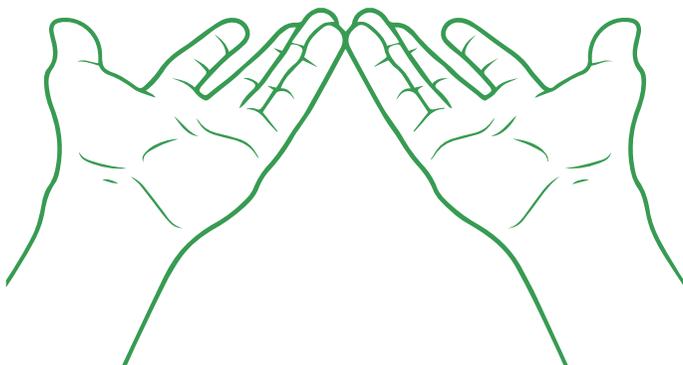
episcopate motto, *In Your Hands*. As a byproduct of a social research on catechetical human resources led by Drs. Clarence M. Batan and Florence C. Navidad with the *National Catechetical Study 2016-2021* Research Team from the *University of Santo Tomas' (UST) Research Center for Social Sciences and Education (RCSSED)*, I encourage our catechists to fully declare their willingness to die for Jesus and his Good News. I believe that all bishops, priests and catechists will always receive God's help and guidance in the power of the Holy Spirit. *In Manus Tuas* means through the hands of God our Church's mission to evangelize and nourish the faith would flourish, a thousandfold.

In Manus Tuas, is letting God shape us according to His will.

In Manus Tuas, is letting our fears and doubts be replaced with enthusiasm and joy in fulfilling our mission.

Most Rev. Roberto B. Mallari, DD

*Bishop, Diocese of San Jose de Nueva Ecija
CBCP-ECCCE Chair (2016-2021)*







CHAPTER 1

An Introduction

**Clarence M. Batan
Florence C. Navidad
Jaycar P. Espinosa**



Context

This handbook demonstrates how the “Catechetical Ministry” (CM) exists to support the Church in accomplishing her mission to make disciples of all nations and strengthen the faith of her people. The catechists, through their selfless endeavors to teach and proclaim the Word of God, serve as the pillar of CM. Without the catechists, the “churches that are flourishing today would not have been built up” (Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples [CEP], 1993, no. 23).

In this light, engagements of catechists in the ministry along the parlance of human resources and organization become instructive. This means recognizing the catechists’ formation and training, teaching and learning skills, commitment, and motivations (Batan et al., 2021a). As Messina (2007) suggests, Church human resources management should evolve in the concepts of communion, conversion, and mission to be seen as the conscience of the Church and a catalyst for the transformation of both staff and ministry.

The *National Catechetical Directory of the Philippines (NCDP)* indicates that “the urgent need for more catechists must be balanced with the equal necessity to plan their training and formation, with competent instructors, with allowance for continued formation, and follow-up, and practical measures for evaluation and revisions” (Catholic Bishops’ Conference of the Philippines [CBCP], 2017, no. 428). Moreover, the same directory highlights the key value of collaboration in the Ministry, that is, “despite all the excellent catechetical work being done all over the Philippines, there



remains the urgent need for more and closer cooperation and collaboration among the major catechetical institutes and groups” (CBCP, 2017, no. 424). These issues emphasizes the need of giving attention to the Catechetical Human Resources (CHR) of CM, as a salient pastoral insight emerging from the findings of the *National Catechetical Study (NCS) 2016-2021: Pastoral Action Research and Intervention (PARI) Project* (Navidad et al., 2021).

Thus, this handbook responds to the NCS insights on some identified CHR issues that merit attention. Correspondingly, this handbook aims at aiding CM in sustainably maximizing its most valuable resources – the catechists and all those involved in doing catechesis in the Philippines.

As such, the creation of this handbook utilizes what best ideas and insights could be learned from **human resources** as a field of study combined with our research’s **pastoral** intent towards a more meaningful, sustainable, effective, and engaging CM in our Philippine Catholic Church.



Methods

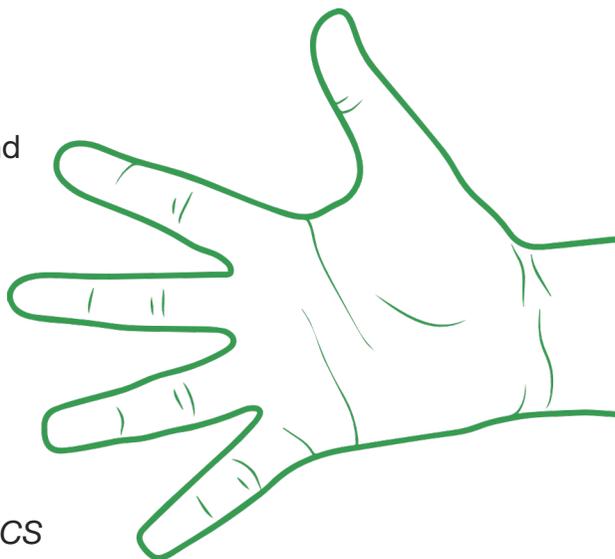
The handbook is a *Research-based Intervention Outcome (RIO)* based on the findings and insights of the pastoral action research, *Studying the Catechetical Human Resources* (SCHR) (Navidad et al. 2021). SCHR examined the state of CHR in the context of CM in the Philippines.

Catechetical church documents such as *Guide for Catechists [GC]* (CEP, 1993), *General Directory for Catechesis [GDC]* (Congregation for the Clergy [CC], 1997), the *New National Catechetical Directory of the Philippines (NNCDP)* (CBCP, 2017), and the recently released *Directory for Catechesis* (Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization [PCPNE], 2020) provided working ideas on CHR guidelines considered in the production of this handbook. Alongside with relevant HR literatures (Koontz and O'Donnell, 1955; McLagan, 1989), the handbook envisaged a CHR process reflecting the core vision, value and tasks of catechesis; its catechists with all those engaged in CM as an apostolate and a pastoral mission towards new evangelization.

Methodologically, the SCHR employed both qualitative and creative approaches in examining the state of CHR in the Philippine Catholic Church (Batan et al., 2021b). The qualitative approach employed (a) interviews with key informants (catechetical directors, coordinators, and leaders from selected catechetical centers); (b) field observation, and (c) archival data analysis. While the creative approach included visual data analyses of drawings, photos, and videos.

The entire research process involved a series of consultation and workshop from reviewing relevant literatures, design and development of research tools (for interviews and visual data);

pilot-testing; data gathering; and analyses to the validation of findings and insights. Participatory and dialogic approach guided the entire research process to ensure the inclusion of varied voices and representations of all those involved in CM.



The SCHR, as part of the *NCS 2016-2021: PARI Project*, secured ethical clearance approval from the Ethics Review Committee of the *Graduate School of the University of Santo Tomas*. The ethical considerations included obtaining informed consent from the respondents; observing voluntary participation; securing permission for audio or video recording and to be quoted or paraphrased; making sure that the information shared during the interview would only be used for research purposes; and informing the participants that the results would be publicized in 2021.

The estimated population for the face-to-face interview was based on the various Ecclesiastical Provinces (EPs) and Ecclesiastical Territories (ETs) of the Catholic Church mapping. Overall, there are 17 EPs and 86 ETs in the Philippines. Considering this, the sample size should be at least one-to-three key respondents per EP with a minimum of 17 (20 percent of the total) ETs to a maximum of 54 (65 percent of the total) ETs. Using this cluster sampling distribution, 30 interviews (from eight EPs) were conducted, and available photos and archival documents were elicited during scheduled field visits (Batan et al., 2021b).



The recorded interviews were transcribed for data analysis. The analytical technique of thematic coding was employed for both the interview transcripts and archival documents using MaxQDA version 2020, a qualitative data analysis software. MaxQDA was also utilized in generating data visualization outputs such as code relations, lexical search, word cloud, and MaxMaps.

As an interview data sample, the word cloud in *Figure 1.1* interestingly demonstrates salient dimensions of CHR as vividly spoken about by selected catechists and catechetical leader respondents. The words frequently mentioned by the respondents are (1) catechists, (2) parish, (3) Father (which refer to the parish priest), and (4) formation. In a sense, this word cloud preliminarily demonstrates the centrality of catechists, catechetical leaders, and formation in CHR from those who are actively engaged in CM. Those voices inspire the writing of this handbook.

For the full SCHR report, please see Navidad et al. (2021) as part of *Katekista Findings & Insights from the National Catechetical Study (NCS) 2016-2021: Pastoral Action Research and Intervention (PARI) Project Research Monograph*.

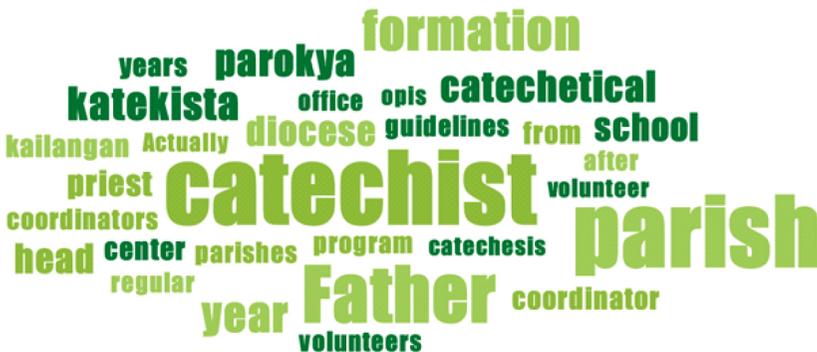


Figure 1.1 Word Cloud of Studying Catechetical Human Resources (SCHR) Interview Data

Framework and Organization

Informed by the *NCS* research findings and insights (Navidad et al., 2021), this handbook identifies the six salient dimensions of CHR as guide to CM engagement. As summarized in *Table 1.1*, these dimensions are 1) Recruitment & Selection; 2) Formation; 3) Apostolic Monitoring, Assessment, & Feedback; 4) Welfare & Wellness; 5) Relations & Concerns; and, 6) Catechetical Planning, Documentation, & Research.

Table 1.1 The Handbook’s Framework

CHR Dimension	Bible Story	Hand Gesture	CHR Process
Recruitment & Selection	The Parable of the Mustard Seed	Volunteering Hands	Being
Formation	The Parable of the Yeast	Helping Hands	Becoming
Apostolate Monitoring, Assessment, & Feedback	The Parable of Talents	Offering hands	Becoming
Welfare & Wellness	The Parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard	Loving Hands	Becoming
Relations & Concerns	The Parable of the Lost Sheep	Communal Hands	Belonging
Catechetical Planning, Documentation, & Research	Accounts of the Two Censuses of Israel	Communicating Hands	Belonging

To symbolically introduce each dimension, Bible stories and hand gestures first frame the CHR discussion woven into the empirical situationer provided by the *NCS*. Each dimension represents metaphorical form of engagements encapsulated in the sociological concepts of “being, becoming, and belonging”, which were first used by Tilleczek (2011) in youth studies. This second level of conceptual adaptation frames a specific type of



CHR that are inclusive, participatory, and pastoral, promoting a sense of synodality in experiencing CM.

Being a catechist covers the first process of CHR – *Recruitment & Selection*. It involves identification of catechist aspirants and the selection process of qualified candidate catechists. It includes description of the people involved in CM and those part of the recruitment and selection process. Also, it identifies the criteria and requirements for *being a catechist* and describes what it truly entails to be a servant catechist.

Becoming a catechist includes the next three dimensions where selected new catechists are prepared, formed, and trained for their mission to be physically, mentally, and spiritually prepared to catechize and evangelize. *Formation* includes seminars and workshops as well as skills assessment of aspiring catechists. Also, this dimension gives attention to the sustenance of the catechists' formation through programs, spiritual activities, short courses, and the like. Likewise, *Apostolate Monitoring, Assessment, & Feedback* describe the responsibilities, duties, and functions of the catechists; their provisions for monitoring their apostolate; and, assessment of their apostolate tasks as catechists. Moreover, the dimension on *Welfare & Wellness* discusses the means to protect and secure the well-being of *becoming catechists*.

Belonging to CM reflects two of the remaining CHR dimensions in this handbook. On the one hand, *Relations & Concerns* cover an array of CHR matters such as commitment and commendation as well as



suggestions on how to responsibly handle catechetical concerns. On the other hand, *Catechetical Planning, Documentation, & Research* introduces mechanisms for utilizing well-planned, documented, and research-based approaches in CM. To better contextualize the six CHR dimensions in this handbook, each chapter is presented using four guideposts namely, (1) Pastoral Aim; (2) Situationer; (3) CHR Strategies; and (4) Response. (See *Table 1.2* for reference)

Table 1.2 Chapter Guideposts

Section	Content
Pastoral Aim	Describes the chapter’s objective
Situationer	Contextualizes the specific CHR dimension using a parable in the Bible, symbolic hand gesture, and the state of CM from the <i>NCS 2016-2021: PARI Project</i> .
CHR Strategies	Presents sample strategies and approaches
Response	Reflects on the significance of a CHR process through a symbolic hand gesture, a prayer, and guide questions

In so doing, this handbook intends to encourage active catechetical engagements in various areas of CHR towards a more meaningful process of being, becoming, and belonging to a CM in a country whose Catholic faith journey moves forward beyond her 500 years of foundation.



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2. Paggamit ng lakas

Lalaki

Babae

Concentrated sa
loob lamang ng
halking
anahon

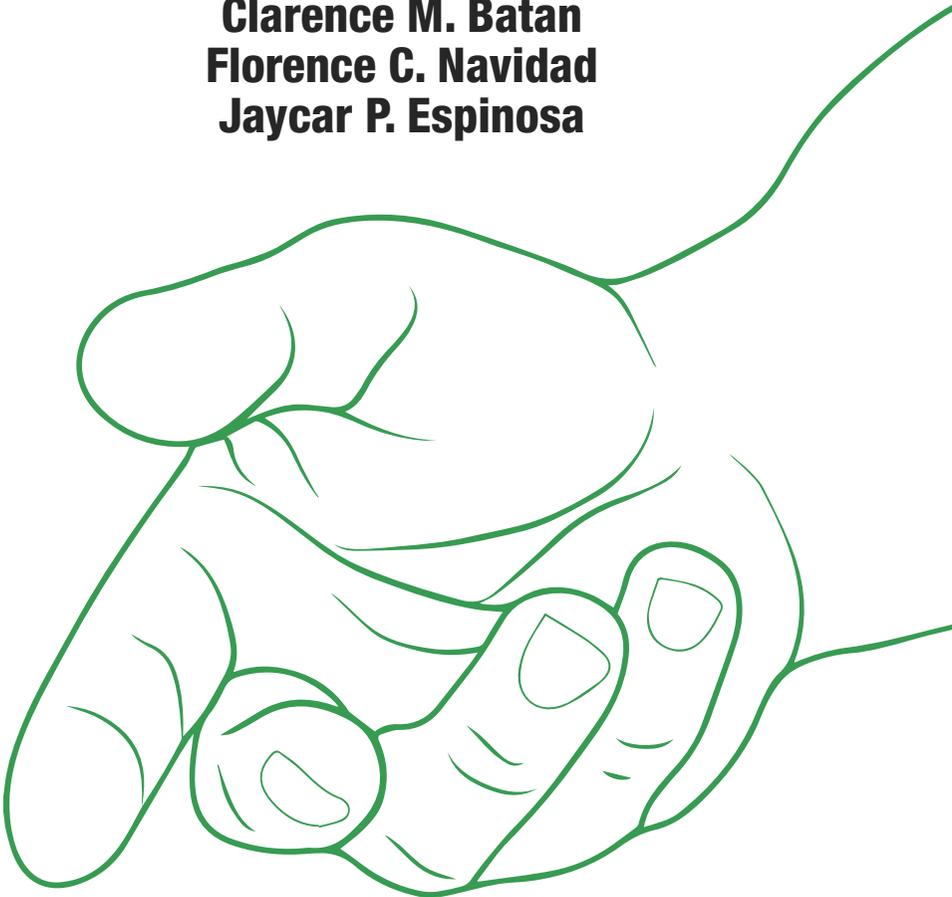
Dispersed o
laganap sa
buong katawan
at ginagamit
nang dahan-
dahan



CHAPTER 2

Being a Catechist: Recruitment & Selection

**Gloria S. Daradal
Clarence M. Batan
Florence C. Navidad
Jaycar P. Espinosa**



Pastoral Aim

This chapter focuses on the process of recruitment and selection of catechists that are inclusive and context-based relative to the needs of each Ecclesiastical Territory (ET). It describes the missionary value of “being a catechist” as an engaging process of volunteering and offering one’s time, effort, talent, and skills in Catechetical Ministry (CM).



A catechist’s work is not a job.

“To ‘be’ catechists! Not to ‘work’ as catechists... Catechesis is a vocation; ‘being a catechist’, this is the vocation, not ‘working’ as a catechist... To ‘be’ a catechist requires love, an ever stronger love for Christ, a love for his holy people” (Francis, 2013).

Situationer: The Vocation of Being Volunteer Catechists

This handbook introduces the role, function, and value of catechists by echoing the spiritual wisdom of Pope Francis (2013) where he describes the truest essence of being a catechist, that a catechist’s work is not a job. He describes that “Catechesis is a vocation; ‘being a catechist’, this is the vocation, not ‘working’ as a catechist (Francis, 2013).

Research findings from our *National Catechetical Study (NCS) 2016-2021: Pastoral Action Research and Intervention (PARI) Project* unravel multifaceted stories of commitment, dedication and deep sense of volunteerism among catechist respondents all over the country (Batan et al., 2021). Most of them reported entering the CM as volunteers to serve as teachers of our Catholic faith. As volunteers, they undergo a series of formation and training; learn some pedagogies of teaching and Church-related and catechetical documents, which they utilized to facilitate the learning process of those needing some form of catechesis.



This demonstrates “being a catechist” as a meaningful process of discovering one’s vocation in CM. Starting with the good intent to volunteer, such disposition grows like the “mustard seed” described in Jesus’ parable (Mark 4:30-32, RSVCE) from the smallest in size to having the immense desire of serving God as catechists. Similar to the wisdom of the *Parable of the Mustard Seed*, catechists start with having only their willingness with no or less experience in doing catechesis. Yet through adequate formation and training, they become adept with the teachings of our Catholic Church, and their service as catechists grew widely as living testimonies of our Catholic faith.



The Parable of the Mustard Seed

Mark 4:30-32 (RSVCE)

And he said, “With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable shall we use for it? It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs, and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade.”



Thus, the vocation of volunteering as a catechist inspires on the one hand, the mission of partaking in the teaching and learning our Catholic faith, and on the other, the service that the catechetical spirituality brings forth to whoever embraces such role. Utilizing the perspective in human resources, this mission-service dynamic of “being a catechist” is best captured in the process of “recruitment and selection”. To further contextualize this point, this handbook first draws insights from the *NCS 2016-2021: PARI Project*, reporting here selected data relevant on the state of CM and catechetical practices shaping the current recruitment and selection procedures in various ETs. Our aim is to give an empirical glimpse of the recruitment and selection practices observed during fieldwork and in the data in order to encourage discussions on how best to invite the Catholic faithful into embracing the mission and service of “being catechists” in our contemporary Church.

Our pastoral action research, the *Studying Filipino Catechists (SFC)* (Batan et al., 2021), directs attention to CM being a relatively “aging ministry”. That is, CM is being carried-out mostly by older lay educated female volunteer catechists. As creatively captured in the research poem, *Hapunan* (Batan, 2020), this narrative poetry tells the story of a retired school teacher, who during supper with her family, shared her intention to “teach again”, this time as a “catechist”. As a caring mother to her family, she sought permission from them with an assurance that she will remain cognizant of her household responsibilities. Her family approved and they welcomed her decision to be a new catechist. This is just one of many fascinating stories on how one becomes part of CM.



Some observed CM practices along the recruitment and selection process involving aspiring catechists shared by various catechetical leaders in our *Studying Catechetical Human Resources (SCHR)* (Navidad et al., 2020) project that are worth noting are the following:

- ✦ On *recruitment approaches*, inviting aspiring catechists usually involves announcements during Mass, posting of invitations within the vicinity of their parishes and billboards, and tapping the current catechists to invite their friends, relatives, neighbors, and acquaintances to be a catechist.
- ✦ On the *frequency of recruitment*, some ETs invite aspirants once a year, twice a year, or open throughout the year.

Hapunan

Isinulat ni Clarence M. Batan

Nagulat ang lahat nang
Sa gitna ng hapunang
Kanyang hinanda,
Nagsabi si Nanay -
Nakangiti, nananabik
Sa desisyong magturo
Muli, tulad noon.
Na muling gawin
Ang mahal na propesyon -
Malaking pananagutan
Misyong sa Simbahan,
Ang maging katekista.
Di naman nagulat
Si Tatay at mga anak
Dahil palagi siyang
Nasa Simbahan.
Bilin ni Tatay,
“Huwag mo lang kaming
Kalilimutan, isasantabi”.
Tugon ni Nanay,
“Hindi naman Mahal,
Kayo pa rin, una
Kong pananagutan”.
Ngumiti ang lahat
Sa hapunang masarap
At matapos kumain,
Si Nanay pa rin
Nagmismis, naghugas.
Ito ang unang
Krus sa daan
Ng katekistang-lingkod,
Sakripisyong makahulugan.

Supper

*Translated to English by
Luciana L. Urquiola*

All were surprised that
In the middle of the supper
That she prepared,
Mother blurted -
Smiling and excited
Her decision to teach
Again, just like before.
To pursue again
The profession she loved -
Great is responsibility
In that mission in the church,
To become a catechist.
This did not surprise
Father and his children
Since she was often
In the church.
Father reminded:
“Do not forget us though,
Nor set aside us.”
Mother answered,
“Not at all, Dear,
All of you are still my
First obligation.”
Everybody smiled
During a delicious dinner
And after eating,
Mother as usual
Clears and washes the dishes.
This is the first
Way of the Cross
of a servant-catechist,
For a meaningful servitude.

- ✦ On *selecting aspiring catechists*, ETs depend on the discretion of their leaders. One catechetical leader respondent mentioned that since catechists are volunteers, they should not be “very selective” in terms of choosing from the aspiring catechists.
- ✦ On *qualifications*, some ETs accept aspirants using the following criteria: (a) can read and write; (b) have no moral impediments; (c) are physically healthy; (d) married in the Catholic Church; and, (e) are willing to teach voluntarily.
- ✦ On *age requirement*, some ETs limit admission of aspiring catechists between 20 and 75 years old (with medical certificates). In some ETs, whose catechists are mostly older, retired catechists who are still willing to be part of the ministry serve as the *Katekistas Oradores* or prayer warriors.
- ✦ On *screening aspirants*, only few ETs execute psychological tests or conduct an entrance examination on basic prayers during the selection process.
- ✦ Further, two types of catechists emerged according based on recruitment and selection practices of selected ETs, namely the school-based catechists and the community-based catechists. The school-based catechists are those who do catechesis in school. On the other hand, the community-based catechists are those who do catechesis in the parish and communities. An example of community-based catechists are students, known as summer catechists, who do catechesis with children during May flower Marian devotions.



Our study's findings both in SFC (Batan et al., 2021) and SCHR (Navidad et al., 2021) reveal the varying policies and guidelines on recruiting and selecting aspiring catechists across ETs. Correspondingly, one key SFC insight encourages our Catholic Church to find more efficient ways of recruiting catechists involving youth and male Catholics as a proactive response to an aging CM. Yet this has to be combined with a screening process that highlights the role of spirituality and volunteerism as key criteria in the recruitment and selection of aspiring catechists. As narrated by one catechetical leader when asked if they have a screening process, he explains:

“Meron po. Ang screening committee po nila, ang ginagawa po nila, nagpapatawag sila ng mga active, ‘tapos siyempre pala simba din lang ganun. Mahirap namang magpadala ng ‘di pala simba. ‘Tapos, sasalain po sila ng mga katekista po doon sa parish na ‘yun. Titingnan nila kung paano ‘yung lifestyle niya. Ang pinaka-unang hinahanap namin is yung willing to sacrifice.”

“We have screening committee. They call for candidates who are active and of course, frequent churchgoers for it will be inappropriate to appoint catechists who do not usually participate in Church activities. Then, they will be screened by the current catechists in the parish. Their lifestyle will be scrutinized. What we are actually looking is their willingness to sacrifice”

(Catechetical Leader, Archdiocese of Cebu)

Indeed, the journey of being a catechist starts with responding to the call of CM, and as described by Pope Francis, not as a job nor work but a “vocation”. As one catechetical director emphasizes, “Being a catechist is a vocation that is driven by one’s willingness to sacrifice time, effort, and resources, no matter how limited these maybe, to being a catechist worthy of mission and service.”



Strategies on Recruiting and Selecting Aspiring Catechists

Here are sample strategies on recruitment and selection of aspiring catechists based on the combined sources from selected catechetical documents, some insights from the *NCS 2016-2021: PARI Project*, and observed catechetical human resources (CHR) practices. The strategies presented here serve as sample approaches in managing CHR. Each ET is different and thus, the approach to recruitment and selection to “being a catechist” as a process is expectedly variable. Correspondingly, this section provides a working glimpse on how recruitment and selection of aspiring catechists may take place hoping that these ideas encourage each ET design their own set of guidelines. To wit:

Recruitment starts after the invitation for aspiring catechists, followed by the selection process. Then, a catechetical leader conducts the initial interview of the aspirants. If these aspirants pass the interview, they undergo a final interview that maybe facilitated by a catechetical leader. Once approved, orientation follows leading to formation. See *Figure 2.1* for reference.



The strategies explained in this section only serve as sample approaches in catechetical human resource engagements.



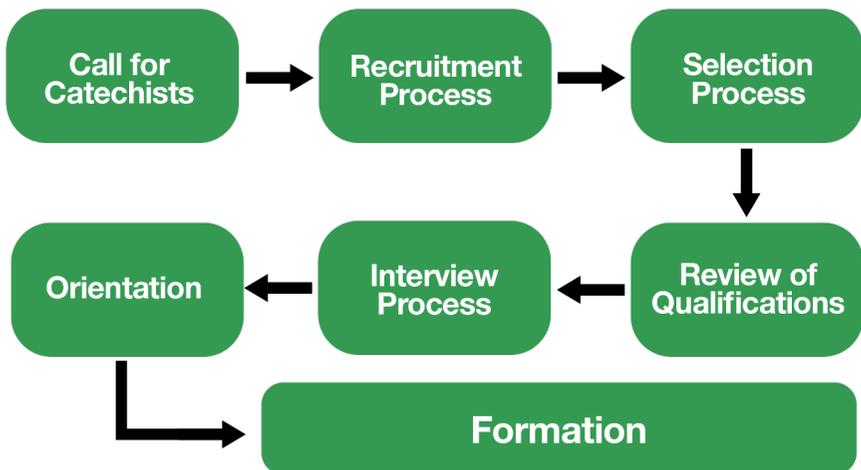


Figure 2.1 Process of Recruitment & Selection of Aspiring Catechists

Qualifications and Criteria for a Catechist

According to *Guide for Catechists [GC]*, the “basic rule is that no one should be accepted as a candidate [to be a catechist] unless he or she is positively motivated and is not seeking the post simply because another suitable job is not available” (CEP, 1993, no. 18). This positive motivation relates the following qualities expected from being catechists:

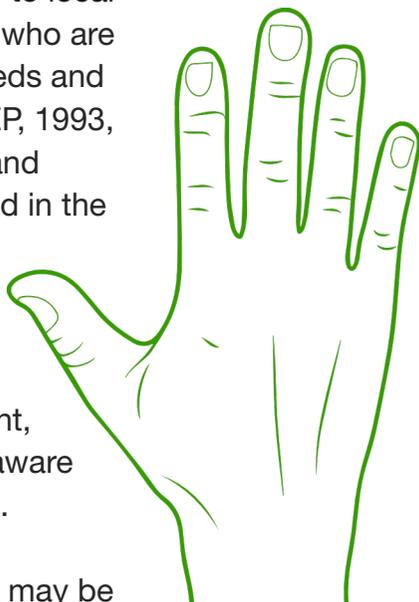
- a. Faith that manifests itself in their piety and daily life;
- b. Love for the Church and communion with its pastors;
- c. Apostolic spirit and missionary zeal;
- d. Love for their brothers and sisters and a willingness to give generous service;
- e. Sufficient education;
- f. Respect of the community; and
- g. Human, moral, and technical qualities necessary for the work of a catechist, such as dynamism, good relations with others, etc. (CEP, 1993, no. 18).

The GC reminds that the criteria and qualifications employed in the recruitment and selection process of aspiring catechists may be understood in two ways. First, “some criteria should be considered essential while others might be optional,” and second, all criteria “should be sufficient, precise, realistic and controllable, could be adapted to local conditions by the local authorities, who are the ones best able to judge the needs and possibilities of the community” (CEP, 1993, no. 18). This reflects the inclusive and context-based approach embedded in the beginning of CM engagement.

Ideally, the aspiring catechists possess good qualities, such as being committed, generous, resilient, faithful, prayerful as well as being aware and active in Church engagements.

Accordingly, some documents that may be requested from aspiring catechists are the following:

- ✦ copies of baptismal, confirmation, and marriage certificates;
- ✦ resume or curriculum vitae (CV) providing the aspirant’s personal information, educational history, work experience, suitability, Church engagements, and references (see *Appendix 2.1* for a sample CV template); and
- ✦ supporting documents related to literacy, training, and good moral character.



Another important dimension in the recruitment and selection process is understanding how Filipino catechists may be categorized into four types (Batan et al., 2021) based on the following: (a) training and formation; (b) duration of service in CM; (c) locus of catechesis; and (d) disbursement of allowance. *Figure 2.2* demonstrates how these types of catechists may shape or influence the recruitment and selection process for aspiring catechists. While this research-based typification of Filipino catechists directs attention to the actual observed CM practices on the ground, the new catechetical documents, such as the *New Directory for Catechesis* (Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization [PCPNE], 2019) and *Antiquum Ministerium* (Francis, 2021), offer novel ideas and insights in facilitating CM engagements. Catechetical leaders are then encouraged to be mindful of this development.



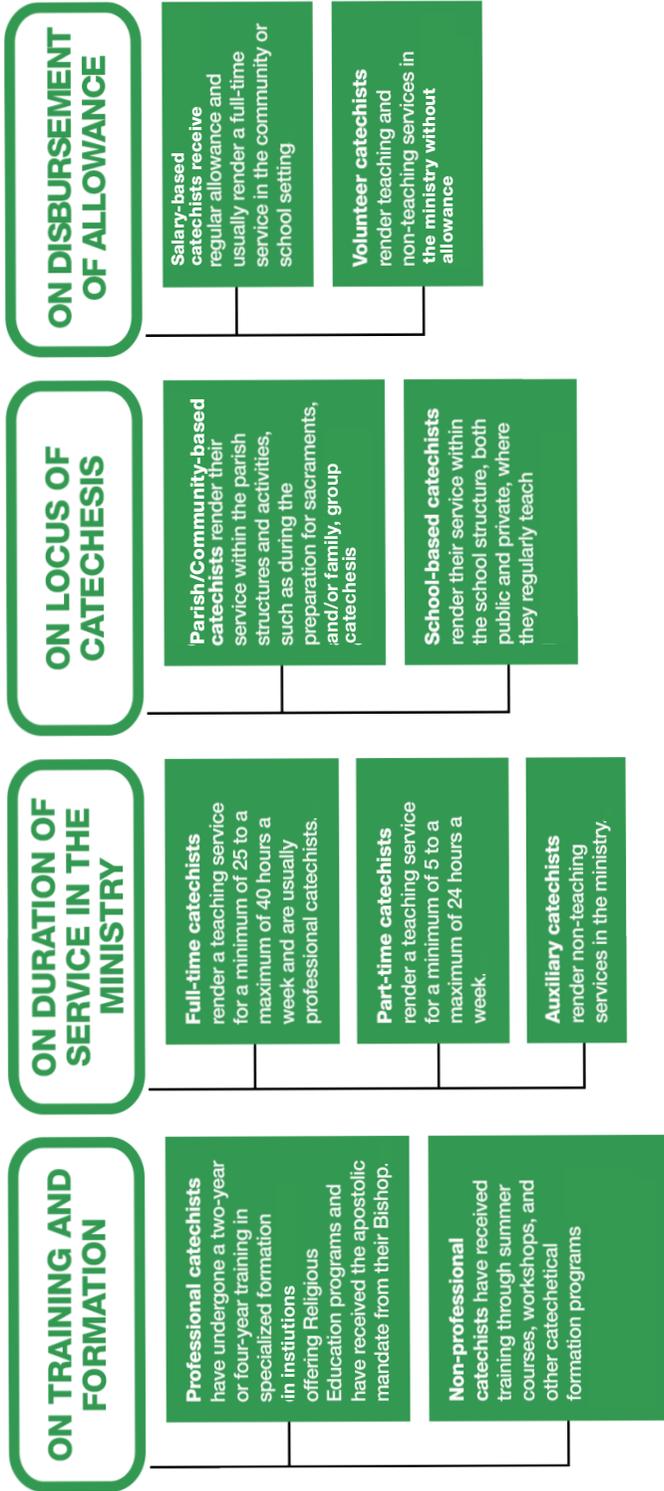


Figure 2.2 Types of Filipino Catechists Based on the NCS 2016-2021: PARI Project



Recruitment of Aspiring Catechists

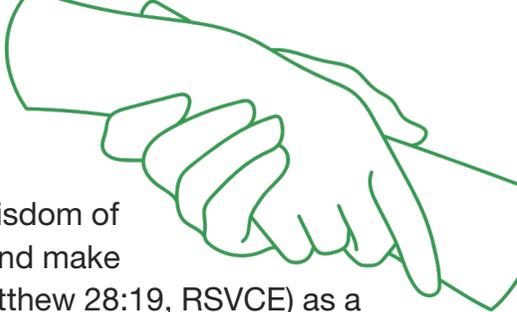
Laying the groundwork for inviting aspiring catechists depends on the initiatives of catechetical leaders. For example, at the parish level, catechetical leaders may do the following:



- ✦ Share the parish's vision, goal, and objectives through oral or virtual presentation to various religious groups;
- ✦ Inform the parish of the programs and events through the parish bulletin, newsletter, pulpit announcements, or social media; and,
- ✦ Engage parishioners in various religious activities, specifically in CM.

Other approaches for consideration that may be used in recruiting aspiring catechists are the following:

- a. *Use a personal approach.* Personally invite fellow Catholics who show willingness in serving the Church through CM. Using a combined sharing and listening technique, describe the value of catechesis to prospective catechists.
- b. *Utilize the network of catechists.* Having the experience of catechetical vocation, current catechists may identify who in their network share passion and interests in being a catechist. They may draw on their roles as catechists in inviting prospective catechists to be part of the CM.

- 
- c. *Spread the Good News.* Reach out to prospective catechists by sharing the wisdom of the Gospel, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28:19, RSVCE) as a way to inviting them to serve as volunteer catechists.
- d. *Make a creative announcement.* Using various creative means and techniques, create, construct, and post announcements about CM, particularly on being a catechist as a way to invite prospective catechists.
- e. *Consider online recruitment.* With the current advancement in information and communication technologies, various social media platforms such as websites, emails, messaging applications, e-news, etc., may be utilized to invite aspiring catechists.

Selection of Aspiring Catechists

This process involves the careful review of the qualifications of the aspiring catechists. Some points to consider are the following:

- ✦ The key role of catechetical leaders in the selection process who initially review the application of aspiring catechists;
- ✦ The completeness of relevant documents submitted by the aspiring catechists for review;
- ✦ The informed deliberation of catechetical leaders who reviewed the application documents; and,



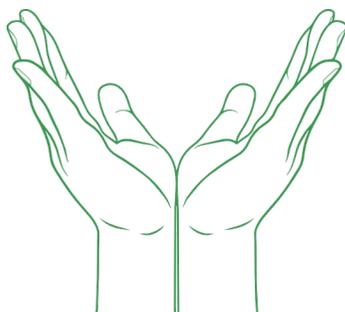
- ✦ The mindful documentation of the records and proceedings of the selection process. For more details, see *Chapter 7: Catechetical Planning, Documentation, & Research*.

On the Interview Process of Aspiring Catechists

Interviewing aspiring catechists allows the catechetical leaders to know more about the attitudes, motivations, and dispositions of aspiring catechists. Also, the interview process serves as a venue for sharing and exchange of CM experiences. Some points for consideration in the interview process are the following:

- ✦ Discussion of the roles and responsibilities of being a catechist;
- ✦ Description of catechetical formation and training activities;
- ✦ Conversation about the willingness and commitment to serve a catechist; and
- ✦ Identification of the aspiring catechists' skills such as communication; organizational; teaching and learning; and information and communication technologies.

For a sample list of interview questions, see *Appendix 2.2*.



Response: Volunteering Hands of Catechists

This handbook begins with the story of aspiring catechists who are willing to serve the Catholic Church as volunteers in the mission and service of teaching our Catholic faith. Metaphorically, this mission-service dynamic symbolizes the volunteering hands of catechists.

The journey of volunteer catechists may be likened to the beginning of the missionary duty of Paul and Barnabas in which the elders in the church of Antioch laid their hands on them and prayed (Acts 13:3, RSVCE). The laying on of hands signifies the invocation of God’s blessing upon someone (Santa, 2001), as a gesture of trust and mission to those desiring to be catechist servants.

These aspiring catechists labor with their volunteering hands in their spiritual journey to become humble teachers of our Catholic faith. To continuously decipher the meaning of “being a catechist” is thus, a start of offering one’s self to the mission and service of the Catholic Church.



Guide Questions

- ✦ What does being a catechist mean to you?
- ✦ What are the expectations of/for being a catechist?





 Diocese of Tandag



A Prayer for Catechists

Loving God, Creator of all things,
you call us to be in relationship with you and others.

Thank you for calling me to be a catechist,
for the opportunity to share with others
what you have given to me.

May all those with whom I share the gift of faith
discover how you are present in all things.

May they come to know you, the one true God,
and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.
May the grace of the Holy Spirit guide my heart and lips,
so that I may remain constant in loving and praising you.

May I be a witness to the Gospel and a minister of your truth.
May all my words and actions reflect your love.

Amen.

(Loyola Press, 2013)

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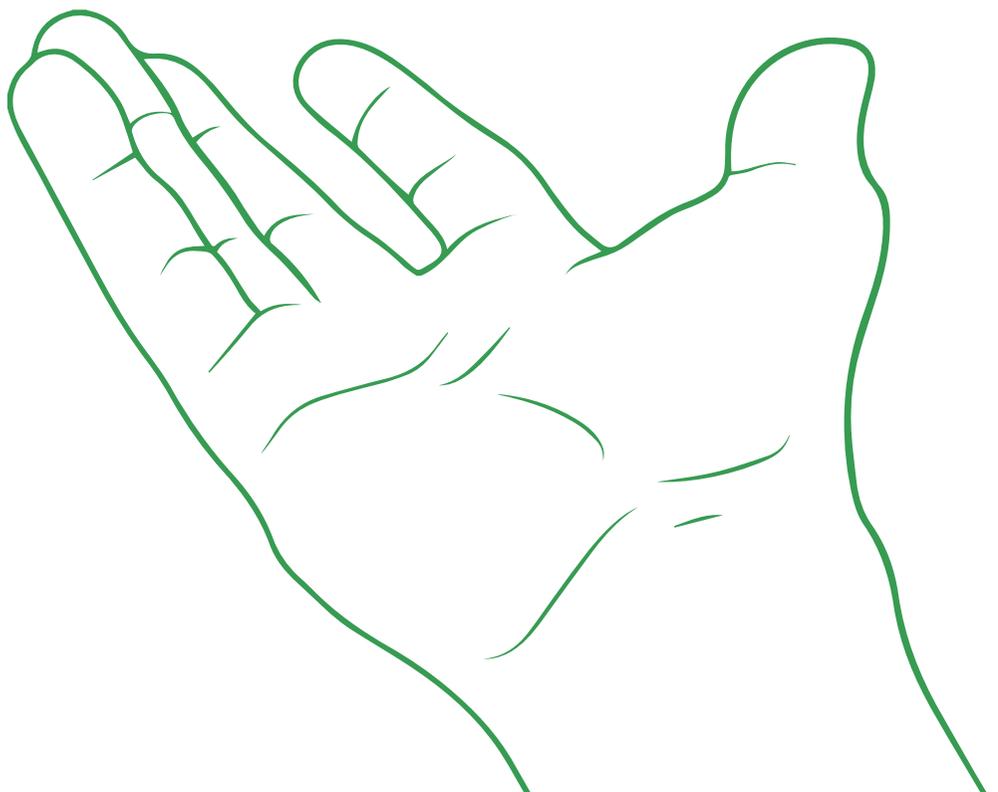




CHAPTER 3

Becoming a Catechist: Formation

**Victor C. dela Cruz
Clarence M. Batan
Florence C. Navidad
Jaycar P. Espinosa**



Pastoral Aim

This chapter highlights the core formation process in “becoming a catechist”. It describes various catechetical formation strategies including criteria, dimensions, types, topics, resources, methods, and pedagogies, for consideration.



Situationer: Christ at the Center of Catechists' Formation

As mostly volunteers in both disposition and action, the catechists' unconditional service to the Catholic Church is nourished by learning opportunities for them to grow as teachers, communicators, and witnesses of the Word of God (Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization [PCPNE], 2020). These combined educative and pedagogical roles encapsulate the fulfillment of their mission whose center is Jesus Christ - the Teacher of Wisdom.

This catechetical mission nurtures the core process in “becoming a catechist” through formation opportunities in experience meaningful catechesis. The key goal is embracing and imitating the life of Jesus Christ as central in the education of faith process. All catechists then undergo a formation process as a necessary step in fulfilling the mission and service as teachers of our Catholic faith.

As understanding of our faith inspires elements of discovery, belief, reflection, knowing, and experience, catechists' formation may find wisdom in the *Parable of the Yeast* where our Lord Jesus Christ compared the Kingdom of God to a yeast

The Parable of the Yeast

Matthew 13:33 (RSVCE)

He told them another parable. “The Kingdom of heaven is like leaven which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till it was all leavened.”



(or leaven) mixed into dough. According to Him, “the Kingdom is like leaven that a woman took and hid in three measures of flour, till it was all leavened.” The expansion of flour and yeast is a metaphor of transformation, which Pope Francis (2016) symbolically alludes to as “the seed does not remain a seed” and that “the yeast and the seed are on the path to ‘making something’ despite its smallness” (par. 4). Thus, just like the “yeast”, the formation of catechists stimulates a faith growth process that takes place deep within them, transforming their understanding into becoming humble facilitators of catechesis.

This formation process among Filipino catechists was one central concern of the *National Catechetical Study (NCS) 2016-2021: Pastoral Action Research and Intervention (PARI) Project*. Selected findings and insights from this study direct attention to the multifaceted formation practices, which this handbook finds useful, particularly in designing a more contextualized catechetical formation programs and projects across Ecclesiastical Territories (ETs). Notable among these observations are:



- ✦ In *Studying Filipino Catechists (SFC)*, most catechist respondents (65 percent) reported having undergone formal catechetical formation who also considered the formation they received as “very important” (Batan et al., 2021).
- ✦ In the research poem entitled, *Getsemani* (Batan, 2020) narrates the formation experience of catechists likened to the prayerful meditation of Jesus at Gethsemane. This points to the relative difficult process of formation. Yet, as long as the volunteer catechists willingly embrace and cross this process, their journey to become catechists unravels gift of teaching our Catholic faith.
- ✦ *Studying Catechetical Formation Programs (SFCP)* (de Vergara et al., 2021) paints a more detailed picture of the formation and training experiences of Filipino catechist respondents. To wit:
 - ✦ As reported by the selected catechist respondents, the primary formation providers are from the parish, vicariate and diocesan levels.
 - ✦ Majority of the catechist respondents testified having received various forms of support (emotional, financial, etc.) in their catechetical formation program supported by their friends, parish priests, and fellow catechists.
 - ✦ Catechetical formations are concentrated in the center than periphery parishes.
 - ✦ The usual forms of catechetical formation program include orientation, basic, and certification programs.

Getsemani

Isinulat ni Clarence M. Batan

Bago sumabak
Sa hamon ng katekesis,
Si Nanay dumalo
Sa lingguhang pagsasanay
Tungkol sa bibliya,
Mga dokumentong-katesismo
Ng Katolikong Kristiyano
At Katolikong Pilipino.
Hindi naging madali
Ang muling pakikinig
Sa paring katekista
At catechetical directors
Dahil mas mahirap
Palang maayos na ituro
Ang turo ng Simbahan.
Na tulad ng pananalangin
Ni Hesus sa Getsemani,
May hapis sa pagsasanay
Para wagas ang kaalamang

Maibabahaging-tunay
Ito ang ikalawang
Krus sa daan
Ng katekistang-lingkod,
Sakripisyong makahulugan.

Gethsemani

*Translated to English by
Jeanette P. Grajo*

Before plunging into
The challenge of catechism,
Mother has attended
The weekly trainings
About the bible,
Some catechism-documents
Of Christian Catholics
Of Filipino Catholics.
It never came easy
Listening again
To the priest while preaching
And catechetical directors
For it is more difficult
To teach precisely
The teachings of the Church.
Similar to the meditation
Of Jesus at Gethsemani,
There is sorrow in the training
Such that only profound
knowledge
May be truly shared.
This is the second
Way of the Cross
of a servant-catechist,
For a meaningful servitude.

- ✦ The most common teaching styles reported by the catechist respondents they learned through formation were lecture and ‘question and answer’ (oral recitation) techniques.
 - ✦ Updated, relevant and context-based catechetical resources are wanting.
- ✦ Meanwhile, *Studying Catechetical Human Resources (SCHR)* (Navidad et al., 2021) corroborates with the earlier observation about the varying practices of catechetical formation and training across ETs. Some notable findings are the following:
- ✦ On the *duration of basic formation program*, some ETs conducts training only for two to three days while other areas take a week or more.
 - ✦ On the *approaches to basic catechetical formation*, there are some ETs that only provides an orientation seminar while others require the aspiring catechists to undergo basic formation for several weeks before given any teaching assignments.
 - ✦ On *certification and/or academic degree-based formation*, some catechists under sponsorships and scholarship grants undergo formal catechetical formation programs and/or a bachelor's degree in Religious Education.
 - ✦ On the financial support for catechetical formation, some ETs provide basic formation and orientation free of charge. However, most



catechist respondents report that there are ETs, which cannot provide free formation programs due to lack of financial resources. In this scenario, the catechists themselves shoulder the formation expenses. Although some report about being supported by sponsors and conduct fundraising activities, catechist respondents observe that the parish priest's generosity, sensitivity, openness, and love for Catechetical Ministry (CM) are key to formation opportunities.

- ✦ On the *inclusion and engagement of Catholic youth*, catechist respondents from several ETs report forming student catechists who serve the Church by teaching catechesis to children and fellow youth during summer in time for May flower devotion.
- ✦ *Several ETs facilitate monthly meetings among catechists*, which also serve as on-going formation program opportunities.
- ✦ On the *production of catechetical modules*, catechist respondents report that selected ETs formulate their own modules using their local languages. These catechetical resources are shared across ETs.





📷 Apostolic Vicariate of Bontoc-Lagawa

Formation Strategies

For catechesis to be effective, appropriate formation of catechists is vital. Our Church highlights that every apostolic activity "which is not supported by properly trained persons is condemned to failure" (Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples [CEP], 1993, no. 19), and as stated in the *Acts and Decrees of the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines (PCP-II)*, "priority should be given to the calling, training, and formation of professional and volunteer catechists," (55, 1) and "catechists should be provided pastoral exposure and in-service training, especially those working with Basic Ecclesial Communities (BECs)" (55, 3). For centuries, our Church has never neglected to give priority to the formation of catechists. Correspondingly, catechetical formation requires particular attention as the quality of pastoral initiatives such as those willfully shared by volunteer catechists, is necessarily connected to their missionary persons who bring them into being. Such is the spiritual value of becoming a catechist.



The strategies explained in this section only serve as sample approaches in catechetical human resource engagements.

Criteria for Catechetical Formation

The new *Directory for Catechesis* (PCPNE, 2020, no. 135; pp. 87-89) provides criteria for catechetical formation programs. These thematic criteria are enumerated here with short overview descriptions based and/or culled from the directory (See the directory for full descriptions).

- a. *Spirituality of mission and evangelization.* “This missionary spirituality is understood as an encounter with others. An effort in the world (and a passion for evangelization) nourishes the life of the catechist and saves him from individualism, self-absorption crisis of identity, and collapse of fervor” (no. 135, p. 87-88).
- b. *Catechesis as integral formation.* To become a catechist is to be a teacher, and educator, and a witness of faith all at the same time (no. 135, p. 88).
- c. *Style of accompaniment.* “The Church feels the duty of forming its catechists in the art of personal accompaniment through proposing to them the experience of being accompanied to grow in discipleship and enabling and sending them to attend to his/her fellows” (no. 135, p. 88-89).
- d. *Consistency among formative styles.* “As a general criterion, it is necessary to underline the need for coherence between the general pedagogy of formation of catechists and the pedagogy proper to the catechetical process. It would be challenging for the catechist to improvise style and sensibility to which he had not been introduced during his formation” (no. 135, p. 89).



- e. *An attitude of docibilitas and self-formation.* All catechist needs to attain *docibilitas* or “the willingness to be touched by grace, by life, by persons in calm and positive attitude toward reality to learn how to learn. Moreover, the willingness of self-formation is what enables the catechists to make a method of formation their own and to be able to apply it to themselves and their ecclesial service” (no. 135, p. 89).

- f. “The dynamic of the laboratory in the context of the group serves as a formative practice in which *faith is learned by doing*, which means valuing the experience, contributions, and reformulations of each one given transformative learning” (no. 135, p. 89).

These criteria are useful in the design and development of formation programs in various CMs across ETs.



 Diocese of Iligan

Dimensions of Formation

Another significant aspect directs attention to the substantive dimensions of catechetical formation. Again, the *Directory for Catechesis* (PCPNE, 2020, nos. 136-150, pp. 90-96) offer the following insights:



- a. In the dimension of *being*, the catechist is formed to become a faithful witness and God's keeper. Formation helps the catechist to reconsider his catechetical action as an opportunity for human and Christian growth (no. 139, p. 91).
- b. In the dimension of *knowledge*, the catechist is formed to become a teacher who instructs in the faith. Formation allows them to explore the message to be transmitted about the hearer's cultural, ecclesial, and existential context. The process of integrating the content of the faith takes place through familiarity with Sacred Scripture, with the study of Catechism of the Catholic Church, of the catechisms of the Church, of magisterial documents" (no. 143, pp. 92-93).
- c. In the dimension *savoir-faire*, the catechist is formed to become an educator and communicator. Recognizing that his hearer is an active participant in whom the grace of God is dynamically at work, the catechists serves as a respectful facilitator of an experience of faith of which he is not in charge." As an educator, the catechist is also to have the function of mediating membership in the community and living out catechetical service with an attitude of communion." (no. 148-150, pp. 95-96).



This handbook asserts that in creating and facilitating formation programs, knowing the various levels of catechetical formation and other formation options for the catechists are salient and inevitable.

Thus, the succeeding sections offer some ideas on formation types (see *Table 3.1*); selected list of catechetical resources; and pedagogies and methods (see *Table 3.2*) that may be used in designing and developing formation programs.

Types of Formation Programs

As an example, *Table 3.1* identifies five types of catechetical formation programs for consideration of various ETs. These are the following:

- ✦ *Orientation Program* serves as the introductory part of the catechetical formation program aimed at helping the aspiring catechists to be accustomed to their apostolate and have a sense of community among catechists. This introductory orientation gives an overview of CM as pastoral space for mission and service.
- ✦ *Catechists' Basic Formation Program-I (CBFP-I)* serves as the initial formation program of catechists. This focuses on Catholic being and spiritual development, and introduction to basic catechetical resources. This may also include activities such as individual demonstration and practice catechetical teaching. This is usually done in the parish and/or vicariate levels.

Table 3.1 Types of Formation Programs and Suggested Topics

Formation Level	Content
Orientation Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Brief History, Vision and Mission, and the Organization Structure of the Catechetical Ministry ✦ The Directory for Catechesis
Catechists' Basic Formation Program-I (CBFP-I)	<p>The Catholic Being and Spirituality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Introduction ✦ Revelation and Faith ✦ Sacred Scriptures ✦ Christian Doctrines ✦ Christian Morality ✦ Christian Worship ✦ Catechetics
Catechists' Basic Formation Program-II (CBFP-II)	<p>Deepening of CBFP-I topics</p> <p><i>CBFP-II contents may be designed by local catechetical leaders relative to the identified course topics and expertise in ETs</i></p>
Catechists' Ongoing Formation Program (COFP)	<p>The topics may include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Catechetical Research and Documentation ✦ Socio-psychological-spiritual Formation ✦ Pedagogies and Methods of teaching ✦ Leadership Training ✦ Pastoral Planning & Management ✦ Ethics and catechesis ✦ Digital Catechesis
Catechists' Advanced Formation Program (CAFP)	<p>Catechetical, pastoral, theological, or Catholic religious education courses leading to certification, undergraduate and/or graduate degrees offered in catechetical centers and/institutes; colleges and universities</p>



- ✦ *Catechists' Basic Formation Program-II (CBFP-II)* is a follow-up program after the CBFP-I, which includes more catechetical topics aimed to deepen catechetical knowledge. This type of formation is usually conducted in the diocesan and/or catechetical center. CBFP-I certificate of completion is usually required. Some activities that may be implemented are parish catechetical project; immersion and exposure; recollections and retreats.
- ✦ *Catechists' Ongoing Formation Program (COFP)* involves attending to various catechetical conferences, symposiums, training, and workshops to deepen the catechists' knowledge and skills. This formation type is offered in various spaces from the parish to diocesan levels.



📷 Prelature of Infanta

Key to any meaningful catechetical formation program is access to basic catechetical resources that may be provided ideally in each parish. These may include, but not limited to the following:

- a. Sacred Scriptures
- b. Encyclicals
- c. Apostolic Letters such as *Antiquum Ministerium* (Francis, 2021)
- d. Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC)
- e. Directory for Catechesis (DC)
- f. National Catechetical Directory of the Philippines (NCDP) 2007
- g. Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCCC)
- h. Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church
- i. Catechism for Filipino Catholics (CFC)
- j. YOUCAT - Youth Catechism of the Catholic Church
- k. DOCAT - Social Doctrine of the Catholic Church
- l. National Catechetical Study (NCS) 2016-2021 (research monographs, books, & modules)



Catechists who seek to deeply understand the teaching of our Catholic faith may benefit from reading, re-reading, and undergoing training on these resources.

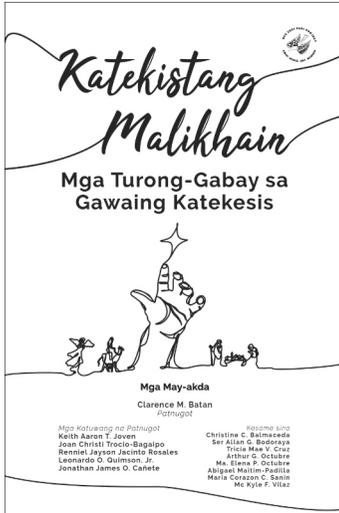
Equally important in the formation of catechists is their training in pedagogies and methods. The *Catholic Bishops’ Conference of the Philippines – Episcopal Commission on Catechesis and Catholic Education* (CBCP-ECCCE, 1992) in *Table 3.2* lists down some these methods for consideration.

Table 3.2 Suggested Methods for Catechetical Formation Programs (CBCP-ECCCE, 1992)

Some General Approaches	Sample Creative Approaches
✦ Seminar (Stay-in/Live-out)	✦ Group Dynamics
✦ Community Life	✦ Games and Socialization
✦ Classroom Instructions/Lecture	✦ Creative Drama
✦ Workshop	✦ Art and Music Appreciation
✦ Practicum/Demonstration	✦ Group Media and Mass Media (Social Media)
✦ Exposure/Immersion Programs	✦ Song Analysis
✦ Monthly In-service Training/Echo seminars/Updating course	✦ Poster making and topic visualization
✦ Home and Center Visitations	✦ Retreats and Recollections
	✦ Spiritual Direction/ Counselling
	✦ Creative Liturgy and Paraliturgy

In line with catechetical pedagogies, our *National Catechetical Study (NCS) 2016-2021: Pastoral Action Research and Intervention (PARI) Project* produced a guidebook, *Katekistang Malikhain: Mga Turong Gabay sa Gawaing Katekesis (Creative Catechists: A Guidebook to Catechetical Teaching)*, that explores and describes various creative ways and strategies in learning and teaching catechesis. These pedagogies include the following: parable; prayer; lecture; story-telling; poem; song;

dance; theater and film; pictures and photos; ecology, silence, and life histories. In so doing, the formation of catechists can now consider creative approaches that make catechetical learning and teaching experiences grounded, relevant, meaningful and fun.



 Diocese of Kalibo

Response: Helping Hands of Catechists

As volunteer catechists, the process of formation leads to many discoveries about the knowledge, depth, and wisdom of our Catholic faith. The emphasis of missionary and service-orientation in catechetical formation creates a culture of catechetical knowledge-sharing symbolically embodied by the catechists' helping hands.

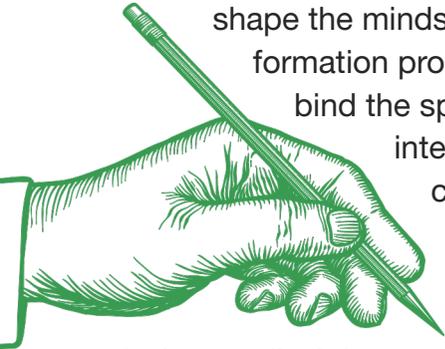
In the entire process of catechetical formation, the aspiring catechists are formed with the support and help of fellow catechists, journeying together with hands tightly held in





 *Diocese of Dumaguete*

learning all about our Catholic faith. These hands that help shape the minds of each aspiring catechists in the formation process are the same helping hands that bind the spirit of community that purifies their intention in becoming well-formed catechists.



It is through the helping hands of catechists that they become missionary disciples, teachers, educators, and witnesses of faith (PCPNE, 2020) whose formation processes bestow on them the integrity to teach our Catholic faith.

Guide Questions for Reflection

- ✦ In what way does the catechetical formation process led catechists to becoming a missionary disciple? A teacher? An educator and communicator? A witness of faith?



Prayer of St. Thomas Aquinas

Ineffable Creator, Who, from the treasures of Your wisdom, have established three hierarchies of angels, have arrayed them in marvelous order above the fiery heavens, and have marshaled the regions of the universe with such artful skill, You are proclaimed the true font of light and wisdom, and the primal origin raised high beyond all things. Pour forth a ray of Your brightness into the darkened places of my mind; disperse from my soul the twofold darkness into which I was born: sin and ignorance. You make eloquent the tongues of infants, refine my speech and pour forth upon my lips the goodness of Your blessing. Grant to me keenness of mind, capacity to remember, skill in learning, subtlety to interpret, and eloquence in speech. May You guide the beginning of my work, direct its progress, and bring it to completion. You Who are true God and true Man, who live and reign, world without end. Amen.

(St. Thomas Aquinas in St. John, 1910)



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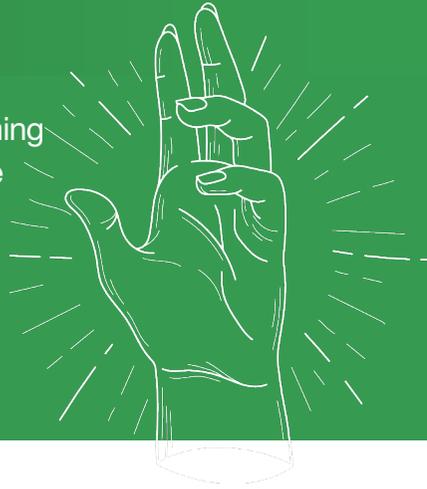
CHAPTER 4
**Becoming a
Catechist:
Apostolate
Monitoring,
Assessment, &
Feedback**

**Maria Cristina V. Santos
Clarence M. Batan
Florence C. Navidad
Jaycar P. Espinosa**



Pastoral Aim

This chapter describes the process of “becoming a catechist” relative to the mission and service of catechetical engagements. Specifically, it offers sample approaches in the monitoring, assessment, and feedback of catechists’ apostolate, including strategies on functions, decorum, and other considerations.



Situationer: The Hidden Gems of the Church

One of the important insights drawn from our *National Catechetical Study (NCS) 2016-2021: Pastoral Action Research and Intervention (PARI) Project* is that catechists may be considered as the “hidden gems” of our Catholic Church (Batan et al., 2021). This observation unravels the positive dispositions of the catechist respondents toward the Catechetical Ministry (CM), specifically on their apostolate as “catechists”. They reported being happy, committed, and satisfied as catechists, and their willingness to render unconditional service to the Church ensues. This makes the catechists an essential resource of CM.

Accordingly, achieving a fruitful ministry entails the need for sustainable approaches to help the mission and service of catechesis become effective and meaningful. As the *National Catechetical Directory of the Philippines (NCDP)* affirms, “a better planned, better organized, better coordinated catechesis will better maximize meager resources” (Catholic Bishops’ Conference of the Philippines [CBCP], 2017, no. 423).

The Parable of Talents

Matthew 25:14-30 (RSVCE)

“For it will be as when a man going on a journey called his servants and entrusted to them his property; to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them; and he made five talents more. So also, he who had the two talents made two talents more. But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master’s money. Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying, ‘Master, you delivered to me five talents; here I have made five talents more.’ His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a little, I will set you over much; enter into the joy of your master.’ And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying, ‘Master, you delivered to me two talents; here I have made two talents more.’ His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a little, I will set you over much; enter into the joy of your master.’ He also who had received the one talent came forward, saying, ‘Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not winnow; so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.’ But his master answered him, ‘You wicked and slothful servant! You knew that I reap where I have not sowed, and gather where I have not winnowed? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him, and give it to him who has the ten talents. For to every one who has will more be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who has not, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness; there men will weep and gnash their teeth.’”



As the *Parable of Talents* (Matthew 25:14-30, RSVCE) emphasizes the significance of giving attention to the “talents of gold” handed by the rich man to his slaves, the process of becoming a catechist entails recognition of the blessings of time and wealth that God bestowed in all those engaged in CM. These blessings come with the responsibility of care and nurturance for God’s greater glory.

The catechists who respond with full voluntary commitment and happiness may be regarded as hidden gems whose luster magnify God’s given resources in CM practices. Thus, this handbook offers a myriad of sample approaches relative to the apostolate engagements of our catechists in line with monitoring, assessment, and feedback of their respective tasks.

To provide contexts of these approaches, below are the findings and insights from the selected pastoral action researches of the *NCS 2016-2021: PARI Project*, which capture the everyday lives and concerns of selected catechist respondents. To wit:

In *Studying Filipino Catechists (SFC)* (Batan et al., 2021), the research narrates a glimpse in the life of catechists teaching in elementary public schools. Most of them teach part-time and in a weekly basis where they render one to ten hours doing their CM apostolate. One of the struggles that these catechists report was the schedule and limited time slots given to doing catechesis.

In the research poem, *Sanhedrin* (Batan, 2020), this observation was creatively captured reflecting how the process and dynamics of becoming a catechist encompasses some structural impediments such as in access and schedules of catechetical lessons in public schools.

Sanhedrin

Isinulat ni Clarence M. Batan

Nang masayang matanggap
Ni Nanay-teacher –
Ang bagong katekista,
Ang kanyang assignment
Sa pampublikong paaralan,
Pinaghandaan niya ang araw
Pagdalaw sa school
Pagharap sa principal
Upang kunin - schedule.
Apat lang pagpipilian:
Umagang-umaga,
Sa pagitan ng recess,
Matapos ang tanghalian,
O bago mag-uwian.
Tulad ni Hesus
Sa harap ng Sanhedrin,
Ang mapagkumbabang-tangan
Sa harap ng makapangyarihan,
Waring di pagtutol
Para misyon matuloy,
Kahit anong oras,
Katekesis matupad.
Ito ang ikatlong
Krus sa daan
Ng katekistang-lingkod,
Sakrispisyong makahulugan.

Sanhedrin

*Translated to English by
Jeanette P. Grajo*

When Mother gladly received
Her teaching assignment –
As a new catechist
In a public school,
She prepared for the day
Of her visit to the school
Of her meeting with the principal
To get - the schedule.
Only four time slots to choose from:
Earliest in the morning,
In between breaks,
After lunch,
Or just before dismissal.
Like Jesus
Standing before the Sanhedrin
She bowed in humble submission
Before the mighty
She held no objection
For her mission to set in motion,
At any given time,
For catechesis to finally begin.
This is the third
Way of the Cross
Of a servant-catechist,
For a meaningful servitude.

On the other hand, the pastoral action research, *Studying Catechetical Human Resources (SCHR)* (Navidad et al., 2021), identified the variety of approaches in the ‘ practices in selected Ecclesiastical Territories (ETs). Some of these experiences were shared by the catechetical leader respondents. These are:

- ✦ On the *catechists’ awareness of their roles and responsibilities*, most ETs inform aspiring catechists of their responsibilities, do’s, and don’t’s in becoming a catechist during their orientation, while some ETs create and provide a catechists’ guide module.
- ✦ On *monitoring and evaluating catechists*, parishes, particularly the parish catechetical leaders, are the ones responsible of supervising the catechists in some dioceses. In other ETs, the catechists designated to schools are monitored by the school teachers or administrators through the implementation of daily time record.
- ✦ On the *frequency of monitoring and evaluating catechists*, some ETs maximize their time by simultaneously accomplishing it either during the parishes’ monthly meeting, the vicariates’ quarterly meeting, the end of school year, or the catechists’ annual general assembly.



These foregoing findings indicate variations in catechists' engagements relative to monitoring, assessment, and feedback observed in various ETs. But despite encountering structural impediments such as being given limited schedules and undesirable time slots in catechetical teaching, both catechetical leaders and catechist respondents make the best out of these limited resources by being creative and resourceful including the monitoring and assessment of catechetical engagements.

Strategies on Apostolate Monitoring, Assessment, & Feedback

In this section, a working set of approaches on the catechists' apostolate monitoring, assessment, and feedback as a product of combined sources of catechetical documents, research findings and insights of *NCS 2016-2021: PARI Project*, and actual practices from the ground are offered. The approaches provided are merely sample strategies in monitoring, assessing, and giving feedback to our catechists' engagement to their apostolate, which may serve as a blueprint for the creation of related programs of every ET in the country based on their catechetical needs.

In general, the apostolate monitoring, assessment, and giving of feedback in CM involve a careful consideration of the catechists' ability to align their motives with the



The strategies explained in this section only serve as sample approaches in catechetical human resource engagements.





 Diocese of Cabanatuan

holistic goals and objectives of the ministry. The catechist's missionary spirit and willingness to become and grow as teachers, educators, witnesses of faith, and communitors of the Word of God, which is initially enhanced by formation, may be further intensified by inclusive, context-based, and objective assessment feedback done regularly. As underscored by McKeating (2010), guiding catechists to become effective communicators decreases the threat of perfectionism by setting achievable and realistic goals, rather than becoming discouraged in attempt to achieve catechesis based on unattainable standards.

Functions, Duties, and Responsibilities of Catechists

The process of monitoring, assessing, and giving feedback to catechists begins with clearly specifying the functions, duties, and responsibilities of catechists in the ministry. These sample functions and specific tasks of each catechetical position clarify the roles of catechists in terms of accountability and authority. *Table 4.1* enumerates sample functions of each catechetical position that may be adapted by ETs.



Table 4.1. Sample List of Functions of Each Catechetical Position

Catechetical Position	Function
Parish catechist	Catechists serve the specific function of catechizing, including the education of the youth and adults in the Catholic faith, forming the candidates and their families for the sacraments, and conducting retreats and meetings connected with catechesis. Their other function is the collaboration with ordained ministers in whatever form of apostolate, such as organizing parish charitable activities, training, and guiding other catechists even outside the parish vicinity (Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples [CEP], 1993).
Parish catechetical coordinator	The parish catechetical coordinator serves as the direct link of the parish catechetical team to the parish priest.
Parish catechetical secretary	The parish catechetical secretary is accountable for the catechists' records, formation modules, library books, and all Parish Catechetical Ministry documents. He/she plays a crucial role in making a write-up for the Diocesan Catechetical Ministry publication whenever there is a need for updates about the parish catechetical activities. It is also his/her function to communicate sudden changes in pre-arranged activities to his/her teammates.
Parish catechetical treasurer	The parish catechetical treasurer serves as the financial officer of the parish catechetical ministry. This position requires prudence, accuracy, and unquestionable integrity in handling the funds of the ministry.
Vicariate catechetical coordinator	The vicariate catechetical coordinator is the direct link to the vicariate catechetical director and is a Diocesan Catechetical Ministry staff member (Diocesan Ministry on Catechesis of the Diocese of Imus [DMC-DOI], 2016). He/she represents all the parish catechetical coordinators in the vicariate during the Diocesan Catechetical Ministry meetings.
Vicariate catechetical secretary	The vicariate catechetical secretary is the records custodian of the Vicariate Catechetical Ministry. He/she is responsible for disseminating information and announcements to the parish catechetical coordinators (DMC-DOI, 2016).
Vicariate catechetical treasurer	The vicariate catechetical treasurer is the finance officer of the Vicariate Catechetical Ministry. He/she is the funds' custodian and is accountable for all the monetary transactions of the Vicariate Catechetical Ministry.
Diocesan catechetical coordinator	The diocesan catechetical coordinator is the direct link to the diocesan catechetical director and is responsible for planning, organizing, and managing the Diocesan Catechetical Ministry (DMC-DOI, 2016). He/she also represents the Diocesan Catechetical Ministry at the national level.
Diocesan catechetical secretary	The diocesan catechetical secretary acts as the documents and property custodian of the Diocesan Catechetical Ministry (DMC-DOI, 2016). He/she leads the ministry publication and serves as the Research and Communications officer of the Diocesan Catechetical Ministry.
Diocesan catechetical treasurer	The diocesan catechetical treasurer is the finance officer of the Diocesan Catechetical Ministry. He/she is the funds' custodian and acts as the accountant of the Diocesan Catechetical Ministry.



Monitoring of Catechists' Apostolate



The procedure of monitoring catechists' apostolate may involve requiring the catechists to complete apostolate monitoring forms such as time schedule, time sheet, and attendance sheet, which may be regularly validated and reviewed by a catechetical leader. Some approaches for consideration in monitoring the catechetical apostolate are the following:

- a. *Flexible schedule arrangements.* Flexibility in schedule is encouraged especially if the catechist renders service in a voluntary basis.
- b. *Bases for Support and Assistance Disbursement.* Properly validated and reviewed apostolate monitoring forms may be used as bases for the disbursement of catechetical support and assistance and/or commendation for further catechetical formation. More details on the provision of catechetical support and assistance are discussed in *Chapter 5* and the forms of commendation in *Chapter 6*.



 Military Ordinariate



Proper Decorum

“Proper decorum” is another salient dimension in the monitoring and assessment of catechists. They function as living visual aids in doing catechesis in schools and communities and as they are witnesses of the faith, they always radiate the joy of the faith that serves as the door to announce the Good News and a consequence of living in faith (Francis, 2016). The model catechists then spread the Joy of the Gospel to everyone that he or she encounters (Francis, 2013). Hence, proper decorum governing the physical appearance of catechists may be regarded as the outward manifestation of their personality. In this regard, the following points may be considered:



- a. *Virtues.* Overall, we may define catechetical decorum as upholding and practicing the virtues of fidelity, obedience, truthfulness, courtesy, modesty, piety, unity, and harmony (CEP, 1993).
- b. *Grooming.* All catechists should exhibit the virtue of Christian modesty and the professional manner of dressing up to set the example of discipline and commitment (Diocese of Lafayette-In-Indiana, 2016). In so doing, parishes may provide guidelines on what their catechists may wear in doing catechesis.
- c. *Speech.* As communicators of the Word of God, catechists are expected to uphold the truth and refrain from gossiping and unnecessary talks, especially during catechetical activities.



- d. *Care for the Environment*. Christians cooperate as instruments of God to care for creation and realize that their duty toward ecology and the Creator is an essential part of their faith (Francis, 2015). Catechists, therefore, could serve as proponents of environmental care and safety around parishes, classrooms and schools, and communities.

Apostolate Assessment & Feedback

To reiterate, the monitoring, assessment, and feedback approaches offered in this handbook aims to serve as the catechists' "call to growth" intending to develop the catechists' fullest potentials. That is, skillfully using their talents of gold in serving through CM. These engagement mechanisms aside from becoming bases for the provision of allowances and other forms of assistance, these may also serve as bases for resolving particular CM issues and concerns involving the multifaceted catechetical engagements. Here is an example of how a catechist's apostolate assessment may be conducted.

The process may begin with a self-assessment of catechetical engagements. Catechetical leaders will then objectively assess these inputs with a trusted committee of catechists. Then, this committee may discuss the assessment results and give feedback to the concerned catechist taking into consideration the following aspects of catechetical engagements:

- ✦ *Catechetical competencies*. Each CM may define a set of competencies to consider in conducting catechetical assessments. Sample of these competencies are provided by the Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth (2019). *Table 4.2* enumerates these sample Catechetical

competencies that may guide the apostolate assessment process of catechetical engagements.

Table 4.2 Sample Catechetical Competencies and Description
(Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth, 2019)

Catechetical Competencies	Description
A Solid Grasp of Catholic Doctrine and Worship	The individual should have a mature understanding of the basic teachings of the Catholic faith as contained in The Catechism of the Catholic Church and understand the sacramental nature of the Christian life.
Familiarity with Scripture	The individual should be familiar with the sacred scriptures and be able to use scripture for teaching, prayer, and reflection.
Communication Skills	The individual should be able to effectively utilize a variety of communication skills, creative activity skills and group skills. Thus he/she will be able to select suitable activities for desired learning environments.
Ability to Use Various Methodologies	The individual recognizes the unique needs of the participants and is able to adapt and plan a class to meet these needs.
Understanding of the Stages of Development	The individual understands and is able to apply the basic elements of the psychology of learning. He/she will know the stages of moral development and be able to integrate these into teaching. The catechist will understand the stages of faith and be able to orient religious content to the level of the participant's readiness.

✦ *Levels of Catechetical Engagement.* Based on these catechetical goals, each catechist may be assessed according to the levels of engagements, namely basic, consistent, and substantive as described in *Table 4.3*.



Table 4.3. Sample Rubric on the Levels of Catechetical Engagement

Substantive Engagement (SE)	Consistent Engagement (CE)	Basic Engagement (BE)
Consistently and exceedingly engages and meets the catechetical goals expected.	Consistently engages and meets the catechetical goals.	Sometimes engages and meets essential catechetical goals.

✦ *Sample assessment form.* Combining the catechetical competencies in *Table 4.2* and the levels of catechetical engagements in *Table 4.3*, *Appendix 4.1* provides a sample assessment form, which could help all those involved in the CM process measure apostolate engagements.

These mechanisms of monitoring, assessment, and giving feedback on catechetical engagements ensure the quality and integrity of doing catechesis amidst the varying contexts of ETs. In so doing, the process of becoming a catechist continues to be substantially engaging and spiritually meaningful.

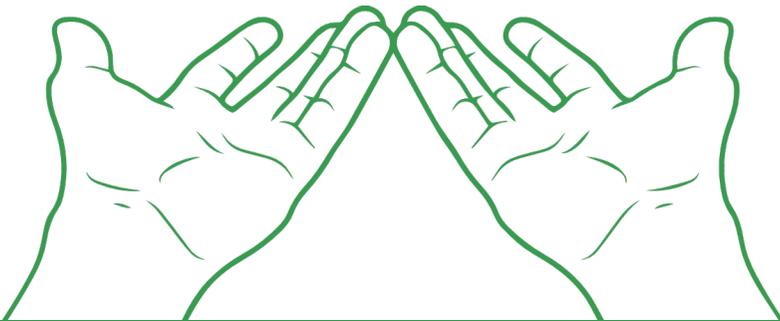
Response: Offering Hands of Catechists

As described in this chapter, the suggested approaches on apostolate monitoring, assessment, and feedback may serve as useful tools for the catechists' continuous spiritual growth in the ministry. Just as how the good stewards were able to multiply the talents given to them, CM is expected to cultivate their gifts to be good and faithful servants and wise about what has been given (Mt. 25:26, RSVCE). In such manner, catechists



 Diocese of San Jose de Nueva Ecija

who willingly accept the mission and service in CM cultivate their gifts by symbolically “offering their hands” to this apostolic work. Thus, catechists, who are at the forefront of evangelization lead others to pray and lift their hands in prayer (1 Tim 2:8, RSVCE) as a faithful expression of both love of God and neighbor. Catechists’ offering hands are then called to a holy exercise of work; the paragon of whom is Saint Joseph, patron saint of workers, and model of silent yet diligent service to God.



Guide Questions for Reflection

- ✦ In what ways, do your engagements as a catechist deepen your relationship with God?
- ✦ Drawing from your catechetical engagements, what do you consider as important traits in becoming a good catechist?





St. Pius X: Prayer to St. Joseph for Success in Work

Glorious St. Joseph,
model of all those who are devoted to labour,
obtain for me the grace to work conscientiously,
putting the call of duty above my many sins;
to work with thankfulness and joy,
considering it an honour to employ and develop,
by means of labour,
the gifts received from God;
to work with order,
peace, prudence and patience,
never surrendering to weariness or difficulties;
to work, above all,
with purity of intention,
and with detachment from self,
having always death before my eyes
and the account which I must render of time lost,
of talents wasted,
of good omitted,
of vain complacency in success
so fatal to the work of God.
All for Jesus,
all for Mary,
all after thy example,
O Patriarch Joseph.
Such shall be my motto in life and death.

Amen.

(St. Pius X in Archdiocese of Saint Paul & Minneapolis, 2012)

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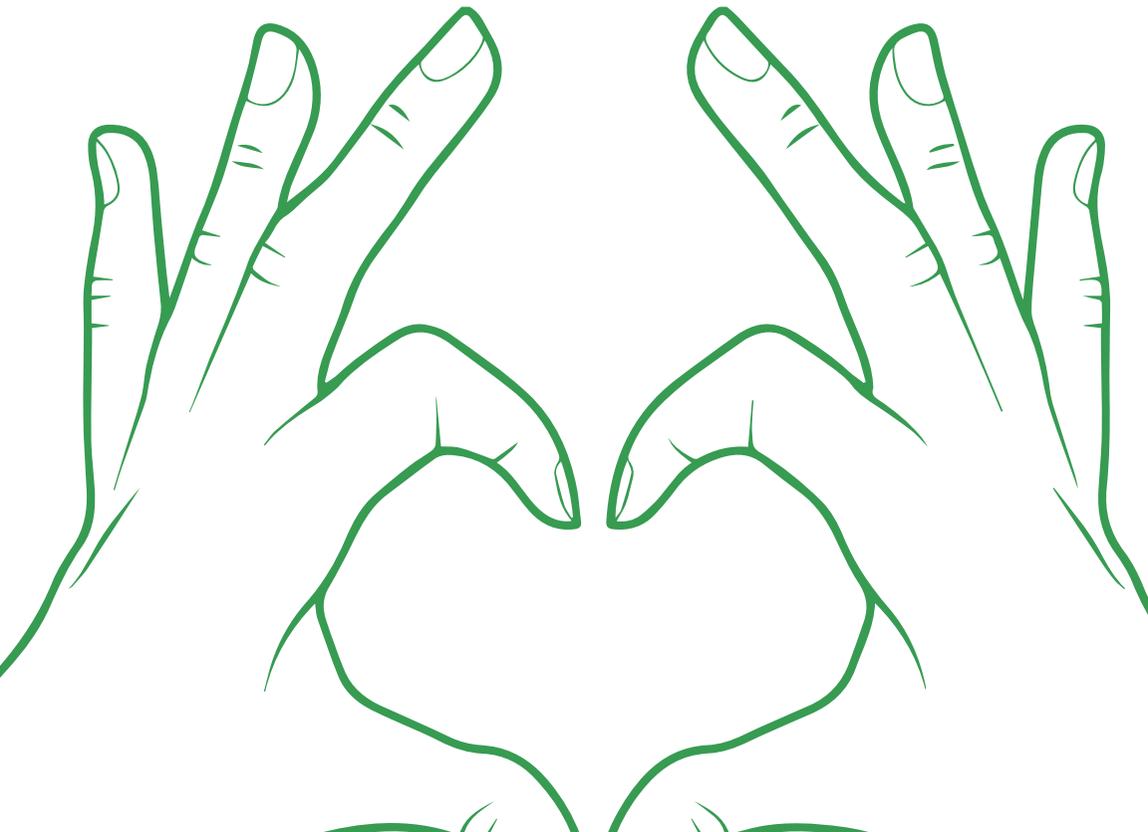
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CHAPTER 5
Becoming
a Catechist:
Welfare &
Wellness

Suzette E. Medina
Clarence M. Batan
Florence C. Navidad
Jaycar P. Espinosa



Pastoral Aim

This chapter continues describing the process of “becoming a catechist” as a missionary vocation grounded on the concept of volunteerism in relation to the general welfare and well-being of catechists. It presents various strategies on how catechetical engagements may be made more meaningful through sample provisions on various forms of support and assistance.



Situationer: Caring for the Catechists

In the process of becoming a catechist, “volunteerism” plays a pivotal role. Its etymological definition from the Latin word, *voluntas*, means “will” (Paley, 2020) aptly captures the mission and service of catechists as an apostolate because they choose to do it for the Lord. On the same hand, they willingly (or more fittingly, voluntarily) partake in a special way in the Church’s mission of the new evangelization.

As volunteers, the apostolate of Filipino catechists is naturally unconditional. Yet in the execution of their catechetical mission, taking good care of their welfare and wellness through the various forms of support and assistance such as financial or in other forms like transportation, food, and/or uniforms, recognizes the salience of human needs requiring nurturance. Accordingly, the *Code of Canon Law 231* gives provisions that ministers of the Church, such as catechists, may be given a “decent remuneration appropriate to their condition so that

they are able to provide decently for their own needs and those of their family” (Beal et al., 2000). This kind of support to our catechists, who do their apostolates wholeheartedly, may enable the faith, of which they are its messengers, to be transmitted more effectively in the country.

This finding was identified by the *National Catechetical Study (NCS) 2016-2021: Pastoral Action Research and Intervention (PARI) Project* as an observed reality in becoming a catechist, which was symbolically narrated in the research poem, *Krus* (Batan, 2020). This poem shows the struggles of the Filipino catechists in shouldering the monetary costs of doing catechesis, such as the costs of transportation and teaching materials. Despite this, they willingly face these challenges as part of their catechetical mission.

Thus, in the interest of the welfare and wellness of catechists, the giving of support and assistance is a just way of supporting them and, by extension, the sustenance of the faith in the country, which they do voluntarily and wholeheartedly. In no way is this considered “payment” for catechists’ work or expertise but rather as a support to take care of them for the sake of our Catholic faith’s sustenance.

Correspondingly, in the endeavor of Jesus Christ to describe the kingdom of God as the laborers in the vineyard, He points out that, despite how much efforts exerted, everyone deserves to receive rewards (ultimately the eternal life) equally. As “becoming a catechist” involves the willingness to contribute to the mission of the Church, this parable demonstrates how to provide support and assistance to our catechists based on justice or without any form prejudices (which is as well emphasized by the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples [CEP], 1993, no. 32). Providentially, the research



findings and insights of the *NCS 2016-2021: PARI Project* recognize that giving catechetical assistance has already been practiced on the ground.

The Parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard

Matthew 20:1-16 (RSVCE)

“For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. After agreeing with the laborers for a denarius[a] a day, he sent them into his vineyard. And going out about the third hour he saw others standing idle in the market place; and to them he said, ‘You go into the vineyard too, and whatever is right I will give you.’ So they went. Going out again about the sixth hour and the ninth hour, he did the same. And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing; and he said to them, ‘Why do you stand here idle all day?’ They said to him, ‘Because no one has hired us.’ He said to them, ‘You go into the vineyard too.’ And when evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his steward, ‘Call the laborers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last, up to the first.’ And when those hired about the eleventh hour came, each of them received a denarius. Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received a denarius. And on receiving it they grumbled at the landowner, saying, ‘These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.’ But he replied to one of them, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for a denarius? Take what belongs to you, and go; I choose to give to this last as I give to you. Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or do you begrudge my generosity?’ So the last will be first, and the first last.”



Krus

Isinulat ni Clarence M. Batan

Sa araw-araw may krus
Na tangan ang katekistang
Lingkod ng Simbahan.
Mula sa bahay, unang
Pananagutan ginagampanan
Saka dali-daling magpapaalam
Upang agad mapuntahan
Ang mga batang naghihintay
Doon sa paaralan.
Makakarating naman
Kahit pamasaha kulang,
Nakakagawa naman ng paraan

Kahit ang pambili ng chalk

At papel na gagamitin
Katekista ang tutoring.
Kahit anong halaga,

Kahit sabihing kalokohan,
At walang lohika.
May hrap mang taglay
Sakripisyo at pasakit
Pagtanggap sa krus
Misyong katekesis.

Ito ang ikalimang
Krus sa daan
Ng katekistang-lingkod,
Sakripisyong makahulugan.

Cross

*Translated to English by
Luciana L. Urquiola*

Every day, she clasped a cross
In her palm, being the catechist
Servant of the church.
From the house, she would first
Carry out her duties
She would then hastily leave
To get promptly at school
Where the children are waiting.

Though she lacked money for
the fare,
She would find a way to
get there

Even the money needed
for the chalk

She would find means
For the paper they use
The catechist would shoulder
The expense.

Whatever the price,
Even when it appeared
Foolish and illogical.
Difficult it may seem
To bear sacrifice and suffering
Since acceptance of the cross
Adheres to the
catechetical mission.

This is the fifth
Way of the Cross
Of a servant-catechist,
For a meaningful servitude.

Although some ETs of the Philippine Catholic Church happen to provide allowances or any forms of assistance to their catechists, the pastoral research action *Studying Filipino Catechists (SFC)* (Batan et al., 2021) found out that only less than half of the Filipino catechist respondents received some form of support and assistance. Only a small percentage of them (8.9 percent) receives regular salary, usually for full time catechists, while the rest receive assistance in the form of transportation allowance, uniform clothing support, honorarium, etc.

On the organizational perspective, the research findings and insights from the *Studying Catechetical Human Resources (SCHR)* (Navidad et al., 2021) imply how the CM of various ETs in the country aim at taking good care of their catechists. As shared by selected catechetical leader respondents, some of these empirical observations are the following:

- ✦ On the *provision of allowances or honoraria*, most ETs depend on the financial capabilities of their parish and the discretion of their parish priest.
- ✦ On the *provision of other forms of assistance*, some ETs report providing transportation and clothing allowances, or benefits from free Church services.
- ✦ Some ETs allow their catechists to voluntarily contribute a specific amount (in the form of monthly dues or “damayan”) as a form of financial assistance.
- ✦ On the *provision of uniform clothing support*, the involved ETs vary in practice. Some ETs provide uniform for free. There are some that practice the 50-50 basis wherein the ET provides the textile (cloth), while the

catechists are the ones who shoulder the cost of sewing the uniform. Several ETs prepare catechists' uniform through sponsorship or fundraising. Others do not prescribe uniform at all.

- ✦ On the *payment for full-time catechists and other CM staff*, ET uses as basis the provincial salary rate and the Department of Labor regulations for the benefits and leave privileges.
- ✦ On *sources of catechetical funds*, the most common practice is contribution such as the second mass collection, although there are some ETs with more established funding sources such as specific percentage allocation from mass collections to the needs of CM.



Diocese of Tagbilaran

The foregoing findings from the *NCS 2016-2021: PARI Project* show a glimpse on some CM practices that manifest a sense of care for the protection of catechists' welfare and wellness. In case of the lack or limited catechetical funds, it is fascinating to learn that some ETs come up with a variety of approaches to



protect the wellbeing of catechists. Fortunately, as the *Guide for Catechists [GC]* (CEP, 1993) upholds, any portion of the Church's funds allocated to the catechists will never go to waste for this translates to the improvement of our catechists' welfare and wellness and thus, indirectly improves their engagement to their apostolate geared towards the fulfillment of the Church's mission.

Strategies on Securing Catechists' General Welfare & Wellness

This section offers some strategies on securing the general welfare and wellness of catechists, which may be considered by various ETs relative to their contexts and available resources.

In the process of formulating general welfare and wellness strategies for our catechists, the initial step is to revisit the types of catechists in *Chapter 2* on recruitment & selection. A good understanding of these types directs attention as to what provisions of support and assistance may be needed by specific catechist type. Moreover, identifying the possible sources of catechetical funds may contribute to having a sustainable plan for securing the catechists' welfare.

Forms of Support and Assistance for Catechists

Based on the SCHR findings, there are various ways to secure the welfare and wellness of our catechists as reported by the catechetical leader respondents. In line with this, a list of

optional forms of support and assistance is presented below for consideration of various ETs depending on their resources. These are the following:

Table 5.1 Sample List of Possible Forms of Support and Assistance Based on the Disbursement of Allowance

Type of Catechist	Forms of Support and Assistance
Volunteer	✦ Transportation allowance
Catechists	✦ Clothing allowance
	✦ Food allowance
	✦ Provision for teaching materials and resources
	✦ Participation support for formation, conference, recollection & retreat
	✦ Mobile load or Internet allowance
	✦ Medical support in times of need
	✦ Honorarium based on tasks and outputs
Salary-based	✦ Salary based on amount of service rendered
Catechists	✦ Overtime/substitute allowance
	✦ Leave benefits (sick, vacation, emergency)
	✦ Statutory benefits (SSS, Philhealth, 13 th month, PAG-IBIG, retirement)

Cognizant of the variations in contexts and resources of parishes across the Philippine Catholic Church, this handbook highly recommends the crafting of a local-based catechetical resources plan to determine which among the various forms of support and assistance could be provided by each ET.



The strategies explained in this section only serve as sample approaches in catechetical human resource engagements.





Diocese of Kidapawan

Some Considerations on Building Catechetical Resources

- ✦ Catechetical resources in terms of funds may be generated from various means such as tithing practices; collections from mass with specific intent of allocation for CM; sponsorship and grants, and fund-raising activities.
- ✦ Accordingly, a good grasp of resource management strategies and proper documentation procedures including budget proposal preparations, disbursements, liquidation and auditing provisions may help establish sustainable resource plans for future CM engagements.
- ✦ Utilization of technologies such as disbursement platforms may provide the CM a convenient, efficient, and fast mode of conducting transactions digitally. This provides an opportunity to cut overhead costs and other operating expenses.

Response:

The Loving Hands of Catechists

As emphasized in the preceding chapters, the main goal of the catechists is to fulfill their mission unconditionally and solely for the Catholic Church. They try to meet this goal by working with their own loving hands. The support and assistance they receive in the process are considered added blessings for serving as volunteer catechists.



The willingness of catechists to serve the Church is accompanied by their dedication to catechetical endeavors that their loving hands nourish. These efforts reflect the care they give to their vocation as missionary servant catechists.



 Diocese of Cubao

Guide Questions for Reflection

- ✦ As a catechist, in what way did you experience the care, support, and assistance of your catechetical leaders?
- ✦ Was your vocation to become a servant catechist nurtured by these forms of support and assistance?





 Diocese of Alaminos



Prayer for Catechists

Loving Father, we pray today for our catechists. We thank you for their gift of ministry in your Church.

Grant them your wisdom that they may grow in the understanding and teaching of your Word. Grant them also your love that they may be fruitful heralds of your Word and lead others to love you.

Pour forth your Holy Spirit upon them to grant them wisdom about what is important; knowledge of the truths of faith; understanding of their meaning; right judgement about how to apply them in life; courage to persevere even in the face of adversity; reverence before all that is sacred and holy; and that loving zeal which leads others to a transforming encounter with your Son.

We pray this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

(United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2021)

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CHAPTER 6
**Belonging to
a Catechetical
Ministry:
Relations &
Concerns**

**Elizabeth R. Palacol
Clarence M. Batan
Florence C. Navidad
Jaycar P. Espinosa
Maria Cristina V. Santos**



Pastoral Aim

This chapter highlights how the sense of belongingness enriched the catechetical vocation in terms of two dimensions, relations and concerns. It presents inclusive and context-based strategies for enhancing Catechetical Ministry (CM) engagements by strengthening relations through commitment and commendation as well as by offering suggestions on how to responsibly handle catechetical concerns.



Situationer: Strengthening a Community of Catechists

Having a “sense of belongingness” to the Catholic Church is one of the important criteria to being a catechist. This emphasizes the salience of community in doing the mission and service of catechesis. It strengthens CM in a way that engages all catechists in their shared apostolate of teaching the Catholic faith. It embraces the process of building an inclusive and harmonious ministry of volunteer servant catechists.

The *Parable of the Lost Sheep* best exemplifies this sense of belongingness where Jesus teaches the wisdom of inclusion in our treatment of fellow persons no matter what their weaknesses and sinfulness are. This may also be understood as an implicit



call for building a community of volunteer servants in our Catholic Church. Such disposition enriches one's vocation, in this case, for being a catechist, whose formation enhances his/her educative skills for teaching about our Catholic faith, and whose spiritual commitment to serve CM stimulates a deep sense of solidarity with the Church.

The Parable of the Lost Sheep

Luke 15:4-7 (RSVCE)

“So he told them this parable:

“What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and go after the one which is lost, until he finds it? And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost.’ Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.”



The research poem, Simon Sireneo (Batan, 2020), from our *National Catechetical Study (NCS) 2016-2021: Pastoral Action Research and Intervention (PARI) Project* demonstrates how a caring system of support and assistance magnifies the vocation of catechists to commit their time and resources to CM without expecting anything in return.





**“Being a
Catechist
is a
Vocation.”**

Pope Francis



**“Being
Catechist
is a
Vocation.”**

Pope Francis

Simon Sireneo

Isinulat ni Clarence M. Batan

Sa panahon ng
pangangailangan
Sa mga gawaing-katekesis
Maraming Simon Sinereo –
Mga mabubuting taong
Sa katekista’y tumutulong.

Mula sa mga Tatay
At maraming kasama
Sa abalang bahay,
Para libreng ihatid
Ang Nanay na katekista
Sa anumang pagtitipon,
At libre ding sunduin
Pagkatapos ng pulong.
Hanggang sa kasamang
Kapwa-katekistang
Kumadre’t kaibigan,
Handang magpautang
Kahit bayaran, matagal.

Itong misteryong-misyon
Kung bakit di maiwan
Ang pagiging katekista
Ang teacher na Nanay.
Ito ang ikapitong
Krus sa daan
Ng katekistang-lingkod,
Sakrispisyong makahulugan.

Simon of Cyrene

*Translated to English by
Luciana L. Urquiola*

In time of need
For some catechetical duties
Many are like Simon of Cyrene –
They are morally upright
Who lend a hand to the
catechist.

From the dependable Fathers
And many other companions
In our busy household,
To give free ride to
Mother who is a catechist
To whatever gathering,
Likewise she will be fetched
After the session.
Even extending help
To fellow catechists
Peers and friends,
Willing to help them with
Long term loans.
Why she won’t leave her
vocation

Remains the mystery in
Her mission as a catechist,
A teacher who is a Mother.
This is the seventh
Way of the Cross
Of a servant-catechist,
For a meaningful servitude.

The findings of the pastoral action research, *Studying the Filipino Catechists (SFC)* (Batan et al., 2021) corroborate this narrative observation. When selected catechist respondents were asked who motivate them to serve as catechists, they identified family members, priests, co-catechists, and catechetical leaders as supportive conduits to doing meaningful catechesis. On the other hand, *Studying Catechetical Human Resources (SCHR)* (Navidad et al., 2021) reveals that catechetical leaders and catechist respondents experience a sense belongingness to CM as shown in their observed happiness, commitment and satisfaction in their apostolate as catechists. Thus, this handbook offers some ideas on (a) strengthening CM relations through commitment and commendation, and (b) handling of catechetical concerns. In this way, CM becomes a spiritual space of a community of catechists held together by their committed communal hands.

Strategies on Catechetical Ministry (CM) Relations & Concerns

In this handbook, the CM relations and concerns refer to two particular areas of Catechetical Human Resources (CHR), which the *NCS 2021: PARI Project* identified as salient starting points in enhancing CM engagements among catechists and those involved in the ministry (whether directly or indirectly). The first area is on CM “relations”, which is operationalized here as referring to “commitment” and “commendation”. The second area is on the broad notion of “catechetical concerns”, which denote situations or contexts needing attention or resolution to ensure smooth CM relations.



The strategies explained in this section only serve as sample approaches in catechetical human resource engagements.





 NCS 2016-2021: PARI Project

Strengthening Catechists' Commitment

“There is a catechist in all of us” is one powerful insight that emerged from the findings of the *NCS 2016-2021: PARI Project*. It was a reminder of a fundamental catechesis that is “Every baptized Catholic is personally called by the Holy Spirit to make his or her contribution to the coming of God’s kingdom” (Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples [CEP], 1993, no. 2). Whatever state in life a person chose, by virtue of baptism, they are sharers of Christ’s priestly, prophetic, and kingly mission. Catechists choose to use their charism in the service of evangelization, and as they commit to this task, their vocation may be regarded in the spiritual sense as lifelong. In that regard, a catechist is a lifelong worker in the vineyard of the Lord.

Such catechetical commitment first grows in one’s personal spiritual transformation but grows profoundly with catechetical leaders, co-catechists, the catechized and all those in CM that they interact with. These interactions build and bridge shared relations in the mission and service of catechesis. However,



such relations also bring forth challenges and obstacles to the core of catechetical commitment. Thus, this handbook presents a discussion of the “tasks of catechesis” (see *Figure 6.1*) intended to serve as inclusive and context-based guideposts in enhancing CM engagements. In effect, these tasks of catechesis re/constitute the catechists’ commitment reflecting the conceptual faith premises of varying levels of catechetical engagements. Taking into serious consideration these tasks in CM relations defines the quality of commitments that catechists engage into.

Figure 6.1, “Tasks of Catechesis”, depicted like the rays of the sun, symbolizes a new beginning for a renewed evangelization leading to conversion (Second Plenary Council of the Philippines [PCP-II], 156). Here, the tasks of catechesis radiate powerful rays of light as catechists’ missionary share to the new evangelization. Below presents each task with a brief description that may help deepen the commitment of catechists towards a more caring CM.

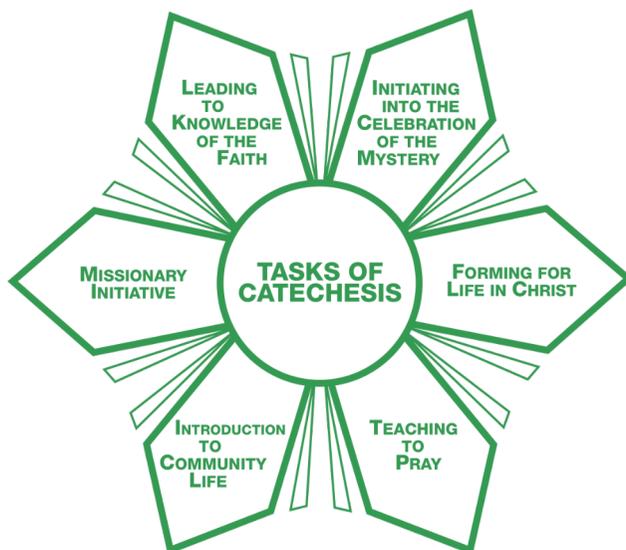
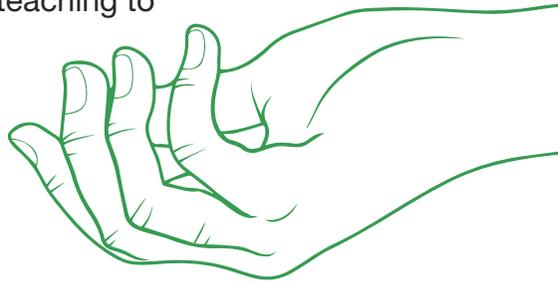


Figure 6.1 Tasks of Catechesis

(Adapted from the design by Edilberto B. Dionio, “CBCP releases logo”, 2019)



- ✦ The process of catechesis involves the teaching of minds leading to the knowledge of the faith. This process works when catechists willingly accept the multifaceted tasks of becoming teachers, educators, witnesses of the faith, and effective communicators of the Good News (Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization [PCPNE], 2020) through formation.
- ✦ Catechists engage in initiating into the celebration of the mystery through meaningful celebrations of liturgies, sacraments, and religious rituals with full understanding of Catholic doctrines.
- ✦ Forming for life in Christ means believing and following Gospel values and allowing the catechetical process to discover one's mission and role in the Catholic Church.
- ✦ Catechesis develops in the believers a prayerful life and practices of piety. Thus, teaching to pray is a task that allows the catechists an opportunity to communicate our Catholic faith with our Lord's Holy presence.
- ✦ An introduction to community life is a catechetical task that encourages catechist to experience a deep sense of belongingness or community in the Church through engaging to various Church activities as catechesis introduces community life to the believers aiming at building the same sense of belongingness and ecclesial co-responsibility (PCPNE, 2020).





- ✦ Missionary initiative in catechesis teaches "that the Church exists to evangelize, that is, to carry forth the Good News to every sector of the human race" (Congregation for the Clergy [CC], 1997, no. 46). This missionary seal builds disciples, one of whom are the catechists whose fruits of sacrifices start with taking the first step to journeying and joining the roads to catechesis.

Taking these rays of catechetical tasks together leads to an understanding of the totality of catechesis as the sun representing the entirety of catechists' commitment to the mission and service of catechesis. It is the warmth of this commitment that strengthens catechetical engagements.

Catechists' Commendation

To commend one's catechetical good work is to demonstrate appreciation, recognition, and respect. Thus, the practice of giving commendation to deserving catechists nurtures the interactions and relations among catechists towards a more caring CM.

Commendation can take many forms. Below are some working suggestions that may assist Ecclesiastical Territories (ETs) in recognizing their hardworking and committed catechists (see *Table 6.1*).



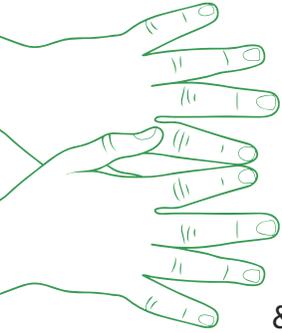
Table 6.1 Commendation Matrix for Catechetical Engagement Recognition

Catechetical Domain	Sample Type of Commendation
Service-rendered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Years of Service ✦ Leadership and Volunteer Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ As Catechetical Leader ✦ As Servant Volunteer ✦ Attendance in catechetical teaching ✦ Development of new and creative catechetical resources ✦ Writing of catechetical modules
Formation	<p>Completion of Catechetical Formation Programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ <i>Catechists' Basic Formation Program-I (CBFP-I)</i> ✦ <i>Catechists' Basic Formation Program-II (CBFP-II)</i> ✦ <i>Catechists' Ongoing Formation Program (COFP)</i> ✦ <i>Catechists' Advanced Formation Program (CAFP)</i>
Other Commendable Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Participation in missionary catechetical works ✦ Engagements in Other Church Ministries ✦ Civic engagement and participation aligned with Catechetical Ministry (CM) goals

The process of commendation in CM is a celebration of the catechists' missionary seal to serve our Catholic Church. This serves as an occasion to recognize the fruits of catechetical hard work that catechists endured and accomplished over the years of being and becoming committed catechists. Such celebration brings into the forefront the shared mission of belonging to CM.



Handling Catechists' Concerns



In situations where issues emerge as salient catechetical concerns, CM engagements may draw tensions in the community of catechists that could affect or influence the completion of catechetical tasks. When this occurs, communication is key to coordination (O'Reiley & Pondy, as cited in Hoy & Miskel, 1987), and the development of communication channels is vital to resolving these concerns in a proper forum (Lewis, as cited in Hoy & Miskel, 1987).

As this chapter continues to establish the process of belonging to CM rooted from the missionary commitment of catechists, this handbook also recognizes situations, contexts and possibilities making up various catechetical concerns that may need attention and resolution.

In this regard, the following preliminary suggestions in handling catechetical concerns are presented for consideration:

- ✦ Concerns, which may include complaints, may be presented in writing, signed, and kept on the CM's filing system. All matters are to remain confidential.
- ✦ Ideally, the assigned catechetical leader handles catechetical concerns with dignity and full resolve especially when it comes to issues between and/or among catechists.
- ✦ The role to establish an open communication channel to know and resolve specific catechetical concerns may



rest with catechetical leaders and catechists with good reputation and enjoys the highest respect in the CM.

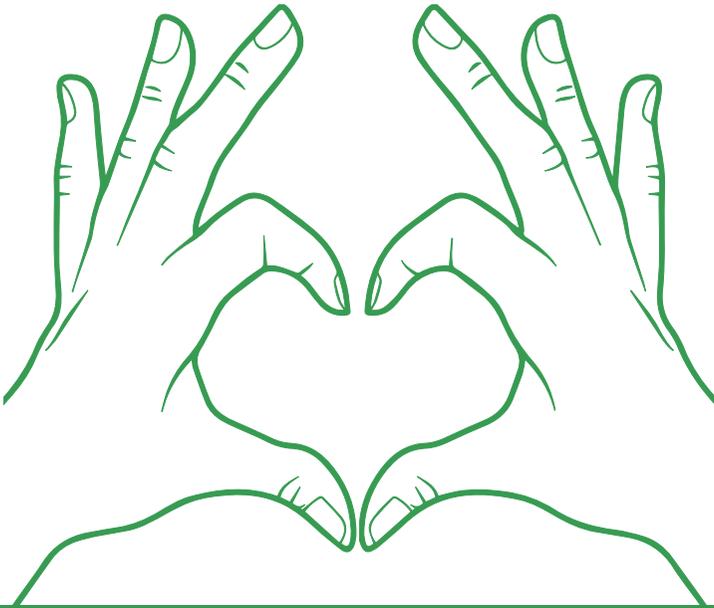
- ✦ As any catechetical concern is a Church's concern, whenever allowable, the involvement of any in the hierarchy of the Church (lay leader, parish priest, bishop) need to be determined relative to the identified concern at hand.
- ✦ Ultimately, in ETs, depending on the gravity of the issue or situation, the concern may be brought to the bishop's attention.

The above suggestions are only preliminary list from the myriad of strategies in resolving catechetical concerns. This handbook encourages the design and development of a viable communication channel led by trusted catechetical leaders and catechists that will gather and resolve these concerns in an objective, just, and Catholic Christian manner. This process promises to encourage more meaningful CM engagement where catechists are being listened to and being cared for.



Response: Communal Hands of Catechists

The CM vocation stimulates the communal hands of catechists to be of assistance to all those journeying in knowing our Catholic faith. What continuously energizes this catechetical vocation is the commitment to mission and service such as what the book of *Deuteronomy* talks about action of charity: “You shall open wide your hand to your brother, to the needy and to the poor, in the land” (Dt. 15:11, RSVCE). Indeed, the sense of belongingness to CM manifests a shared missionary goal that the communal hands of catechists’ nurture through their utmost commitment.



Guide Questions for Reflection

- ✦ Do you feel a sense of belongingness in your Catechetical Ministry (CM)?
- ✦ In what way can you help in enriching the sense of belongingness in your CM?



Peace Prayer

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.

Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
and where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek
to be consoled as to console;
to be understood as to understand;
to be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive;
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.
Amen.

(St. Francis of Assisi, as cited in Renoux in Ladra, 2007)



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ADYUNG (PARENTS' PARTICIPATION)
 An essential part of the process of planning and implementing the program is the active participation of the parents. The parents should be involved in the following ways:

- They should be consulted in the planning stage.
- They should be consulted in the implementation stage.
- They should be consulted in the evaluation stage.
- They should be consulted in the monitoring stage.
- They should be consulted in the reporting stage.
- They should be consulted in the feedback stage.
- They should be consulted in the improvement stage.
- They should be consulted in the sustainability stage.
- They should be consulted in the dissemination stage.
- They should be consulted in the institutionalization stage.

PARENTAL CONCEPT

Parental concept refers to the parents' understanding of their role in the education of their children. It is a concept that is based on the parents' beliefs, attitudes, and expectations regarding their children's education. The parents' concept of their role in their children's education is a key factor in determining the success of their children's education. The parents' concept of their role in their children's education is a key factor in determining the success of their children's education.

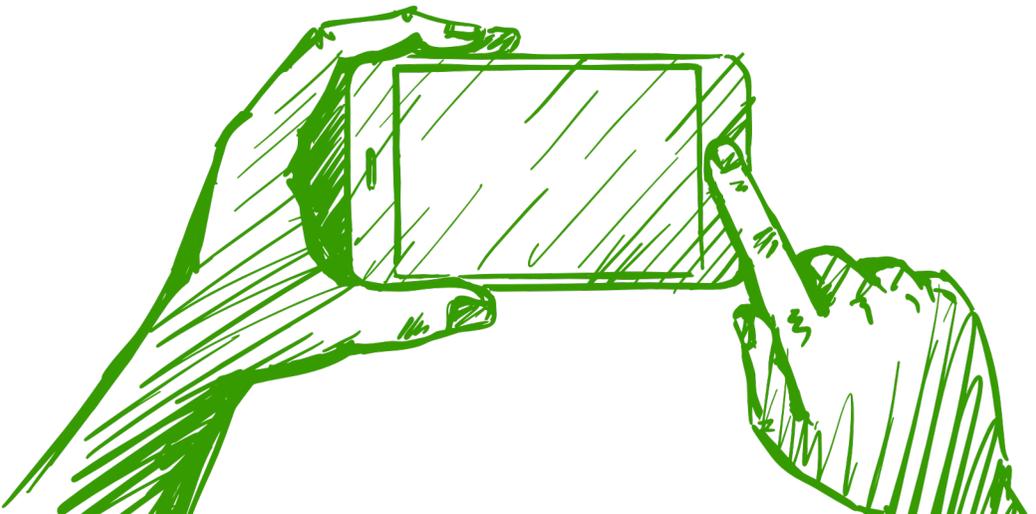
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CHAPTER 7

Belonging to a Catechetical Ministry: Catechetical Planning, Documentation, & Research

**Florence C. Navidad
Clarence M. Batan
Jaycar P. Espinosa**



Pastoral Aim

This chapter introduces the process and significance of catechetical planning, documentation, and research in Catechetical Ministry (CM). It intends to enhance catechetical engagements utilizing well-planned, documented, and research-based approaches and thus, warranting a more informed and meaningful sense of belongingness among the catechists in CM.



Situationer

The Significance of Documentation System in Catechetical Ministry (CM)

This handbook recognizes the process and significance of catechetical planning, documentation, and research in Catechetical Ministry (CM). As our Catholic Church longs to touch as many hearts as possible through catechesis, CM needs to strategically plan, document, and research so that catechetical leaders and catechists will have better grasps of the ever-changing life and dynamics of our Catholic Church. The biblical stories on two censuses are vivid examples of documentation strategies in gathering systematic information, in this case, on the congregation of the people of Israel during Moses' time as they journey to the Promise Land. These biblical instances recognize the salience of having information systems, which may inform substantially, in the case of this handbook, the state and contexts of CM in various Ecclesiastical Territories (ETs).



Accounts of Two Censuses in Israel

Numbers 1:1-3; 26:1-4 (RSVCE)

The Lord spoke to Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, in the tent of meeting, on the first day of the second month, in the second year after they had come out of the land of Egypt, saying, “Take a census of all the congregation of the people of Israel, by families, by fathers’ houses, according to the number of names, every male, head by head; from twenty years old and upward, all in Israel who are able to go forth to war, you and Aaron shall number them, company by company. After the plague the Lord said to Moses and to Eleazar the son of Aaron, the priest, “Take a census of all the congregation of the people of Israel, from twenty years old and upward, by their fathers’ houses, all in Israel who are able to go forth to war.” And Moses and Eleazar the priest spoke with them in the plains of Moab by the Jordan at Jericho, saying, “Take a census of the people, from twenty years old and upward,” as the Lord commanded Moses.”





📷 Archdiocese of Malolos

A pragmatic example of the salience of information gathering and documentation can be gleaned from the research poem, *Pagsalubong* (Batan, 2020). This narrative poetry highlights the multifaceted obligations of the catechists beyond CM. Serving as informal leaders of our Church, the catechists seem to be obligated to know details of parish activities like mass schedules and sacramental services and even the priest's whereabouts. All of these direct attention to the need for CM to establish a working documentation system.

Pagsalubong

Isinulat ni Clarence M. Batan

Ang pagiging katekista,
Kahit puno ng sakripisyo'y
May dulot na galak
Dahil sa misyong-pagtahak.
Maraming makakasalubong

Na palaging magtatanong,
Kaya't tamang sagot
Dapat laging tangan.
Kailan ang binyag?
Kailan ang kasal?
Sino ang magpapakumpisal?
Ang kumpilan kelan?

Saan ang daan ng prusisyon?
Bakit wala si Father?
Nasaan si Father?
May kasal ba si Father?

Pwede bang magpa-bless
Kahit nagsi-siesta si Father?
Lahat ito'y impormasyon
Na waring pananagutan
Ng katekistang laging
Laman ng Simbahan.
Ito ang ikawalong
Krus sa daan
Ng katekistang-lingkod,
Sakripisyonang makahulugan.

The Encounter

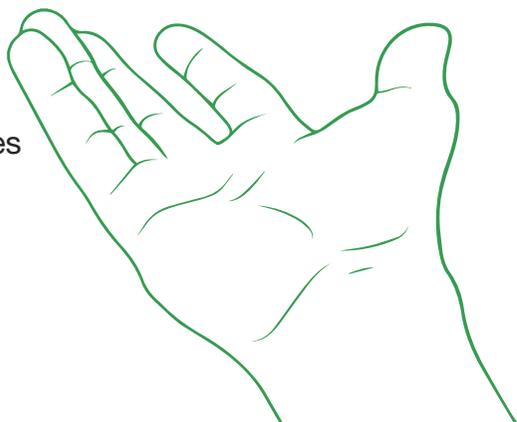
*Translated to English by
Luciana L. Urquiola &
Jeanette P. Grajo*

Being a catechist
Despite the sacrifices,
Brings glad tidings
Brought by mission's noble path.
There are many people to
chance upon
Who would always ask
questions,
The right answers
Must always be at hand.
When is the baptism?
When is the wedding?
Who is the confessor?
How about the confirmation, when?
Where is the route of the
procession?
Why is the Priest missing?
Where is the Priest?
Does the Priest have a wedding to
officiate?
Could I request for a blessing
Even if the Priest is having a siesta?
All these information
Are seemingly obligations
To the catechist who is
Always present in the Church.
This is the eighth
Way of the Cross
Of a servant-catechist,
For a meaningful servitude.

Furthermore, some findings and insights from our *National Catechetical Study (NCS) 2016-2021: Pastoral Action Research and Intervention (PARI) Project* shed light on the significance of documentation system in CM as well as some emerging structural issues that need attention. These are:

- ✦ In the pastoral action research, *Studying Catechetical Leaders (SCL)* (Batan et al., 2021), selected catechetical leader respondents report implementing some form of documentation system that gather the sociodemographic profile of catechists. However, the systematic filing, organization and analyses of these data for proper documentation purposes are wanting.
- ✦ The findings of *Studying Catechetical Human Resources (SCHR)* (Navidad et al., 2021) on CM documentation system indicate the lack of organizational structure and coordination among catechetical leaders across ETs in the planning, design, and development of a shared documentation system about all those involved in CM and related practices. This indicates the need to give attention to catechetical planning, documentation, and research.

“As the organizational and logistic situation in the parish level is ‘not equal’ (Catholic Bishops’ Conference of the Philippines [CBCP], 2017, no. 420)” across ETs, the development of a good documentation system might serve as a catechetical opportunity to better respond to the needs and concerns of catechists. In so doing, belonging to an informed CM becomes more engaging and meaningful.



Strategies on Catechetical Planning, Documentation, & Research

This section provides sample approaches to catechetical planning, documentation and research. This serves as a working guide for ETs to consider. As an overview, *Table 7.1* presents some components of planning, documentation, and research in CM.

Table 7.1 Sample Components of Catechetical Planning, Documentation, & Research

Catechetical Domain	Contents
Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ General of Catechetical Ministry (CM) ✦ CM Vision and Mission; goals and values ✦ Implementing strategies
Documentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of CM information system <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Data gathering of CM data ✦ Filing and storing CM data ✦ CM data analysis
Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Use of social research to analyze multiple of sets of CM data ✦ Request assistance from social science experts and researchers from the various institutions of learning. ✦ Conduct actual CM research ✦ Prepare for research dissemination of findings and insights ✦ Implement of research-based intervention projects ✦ Utilize of findings and insights in the planning process

For CM to be more substantive, the planning process is encouraged to be inclusive, context-based, participatory, research-based, and pastoral in nature.



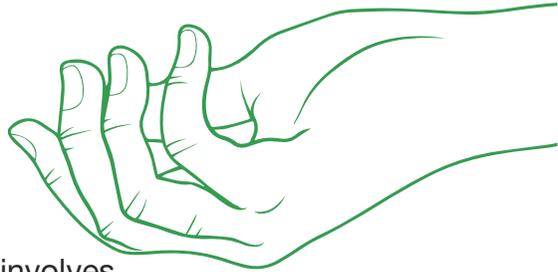


The strategies explained in this section only serve as sample approaches in catechetical human resource engagements.

Suggested Approaches in Catechetical Planning

Catechetical planning starts with the process of understanding the current situation of CM, its vision-mission translated into engagements that nourish the experience of catechesis. It aims at developing a CM plan for the sustenance of Catholic faith, which may involve the catechetical activities, gatherings, formation, and projects. In the planning process, the following guide questions may set the tone for an engaging discussion about CM life and dynamics:

- ✦ *What is the general state of your CM?* This involves understanding the current situation of CM in various ETs.
- ✦ *How does the vision-mission of your CM enhance your mission as catechists?* This focuses on the CM's vision, mission, goals or purpose, values, and implementing strategies.
- ✦ *What strategies do your CM employ in building a community of catechists?* It involves developing a holistic approach strategy to implement activities/projects and/or change in CM, which may consider diversification, existing growth, and practical matters.



Accordingly, here are some approaches to strategic planning that may be considered for implementation in various ETs:

- a. *Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle*, or also known as the Deming wheel or cycle, is a systematic process for continuous improvement of service, process, product. (Edwards Deming Institute, 2021)

Plan: Identify purpose, improvement strategy, action plan preparation

Do: Implementation, conduct training

Check: Performance analysis, management review

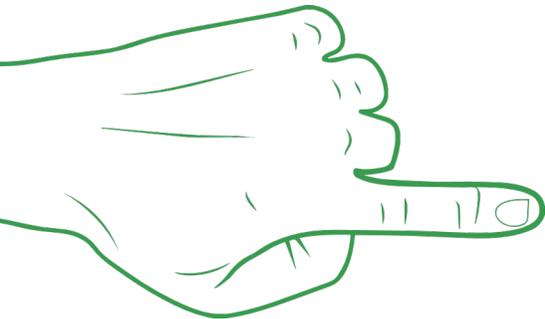
Act: Corrective and preventive measures, continual improvement initiatives

- b. *Situation-Target-Proposal (STP) model* facilitates decision-making through brainstorming and organizes complex information, analyzes problems, and creates solutions to problems in diverse experiences. (Sells, 2020).

Situation: Illustrate and evaluate background information on the current situation.

Target: Define the preferred goal, means, generate multiple solutions, create a vision to inspire change.

Proposal: Detail plan to move towards a goal, recommend actions and their impacts, outcome desired.



These models are presented in this handbook only as bases to generate ideas. For CM to be more substantive, the planning process is encouraged to be inclusive, context-based, participatory, research-based, and pastoral in nature. In this way, CM planning engenders a sense of belongingness inspiring more catechists' engagements.

Documentation Process

Key to enhancing CM life rests in the skills set of catechetical leaders and catechists in conducting proper documentation process. This involves developing (a) an information system to gather CM related data such as the catechists' sociodemographic information, formation experiences, disposition and beliefs towards the Church doctrines and issues, etc.; (b) filing and storing data; and (c) data analysis, which involves a good grasp of doing social science research.



Building a CM Information System: Data Gathering, Filing, and Storing

To establish a working CM information system, the catechetical leaders and catechists may first consider developing data-gathering tools and templates such as basic information sheet, survey, or interview guide questions. These instruments may be employed in self-administered mode or through the assistance of fellow catechists. Both personal face-to-face and online approaches (using data gather software programs) are time-tested ways in gathering salient information. Note that ethical clearance in securing this information should have been taken in consideration in the entire documentation process.

After the data-gathering process, data filing and storing are necessary steps to ensure the establishment of a working CM information system. Depending on the available resources in ETs, particularly in parishes, a secured online database or physical filing system may be established. Accordingly, this database stores all pertinent information about every catechist, which could be accessed for easy reference.

The power of the documentation process rests in its capacity to use the information database for planning and assessment purposes. While the data may come in various format such as in texts, audio, visual (photos or videos), and virtual, such as those posted in website and open social media platforms, this information system may be used as a tool for the monitoring, assessment and feedback purposes of the growth and improvement of CM.





The following are some additional ideas for proper documentation:

- ✦ Documenting minutes of catechetical meetings;
- ✦ Recording (either thru audio or video) catechetical gatherings and programs;
- ✦ Taking photos of catechetical gatherings and programs;
- ✦ Gathering feedback from participants of catechetical activities through assessment forms;
- ✦ Securing soft and hard copies of important documents (responses from forms, reports, modules, support and assistance slips, etc.); and,
- ✦ Establishing a practice of data sharing including modules and other catechetical resources among ETs.

Researching Catechetical Ministry (CM)

This handbook brings forth the significance of findings and insights in understanding the state of our CM in the Philippine Catholic Church, particularly, the responding to some issues and concerns in the realm of Catechetical Human Resources (CHR). Our *NCS 2016-2021: PARI Project* informed and shaped the pastoral insights presented in this handbook. This highlights the use of significance of social research in making sense of the multiple sets of CM data that were subjected to analyses. Such scientific process is necessary in ensuring a grounded understanding of CM life and dynamics.

Thus, in researching CM, ETs may request assistance from social science experts and researchers from the various institutions of learning. The assistance may be in the following forms:

- ✦ Writing the research or grant proposal;
- ✦ Conceptualization of research focus;
- ✦ Gathering of related literatures;
- ✦ Identification of conceptual and or theoretical frameworks;
- ✦ Determination of appropriate research design and strategies
- ✦ Development of research tools and templates
- ✦ Analyses of various types of data
- ✦ Preparation for research dissemination of findings and insights
- ✦ Implementation of research-based intervention projects
- ✦ Utilization of findings and insights in the planning process

If there is one persisting lesson that the *NCS 2016-2021: PARI Project* Research Team learned from conducting CM studies over the past five years, it was the rediscovery of the catechetical wisdom – *The Catechists in All of Us*. Such spiritual realization demonstrates the need to establish communication lines among those involved in CM with the many like us in the academe and other institutions, to provide, in this instance, research support and assistance that would establish an information system borne out of a credible, reliable, and systematic CM documentation process.



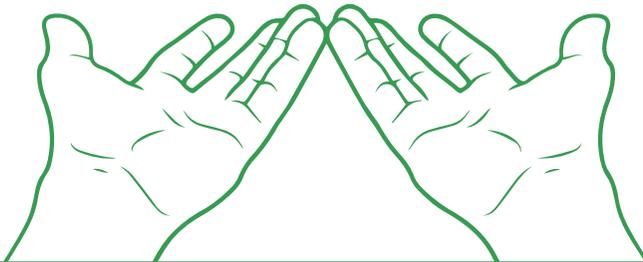
Response

Communicating Hands of Catechists

Catechists who serve as teachers, educators, and witnesses of faith (Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization [PCPNE], 2020), benefit well from a CM that gives utmost significance to catechetical planning, documentation and research. Through the communicating hands of catechists, CM engagements utilize well-planned, documented, and research-based approaches to warrant a more informed and meaningful sense of belonging in CM.

This communicative aspect of CM was emphasized by Saint Pope John Paul II (1979) in *Catechesi Tradendae*. He describes that, “Catechesis is likewise open to missionary dynamism. If catechesis is done well, Christians will be eager to bear witness to their faith, to hand it on to their children, to make it known to others, and to serve the human community in every way.”

This is what belongingness to CM means through the communicating hands of catechists – open, inclusive, context-based, participatory, research-based, and more importantly pastoral in nature.



Guide Question for Reflection

- ✦ In what way do you think the processes of planning, documentation, and research enhance catechetical engagements?





 Military Ordinariate



Our Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be Your name.
Your kingdom come,
Your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever.
Amen.

(Matthew 6:9-13, RSVCE)



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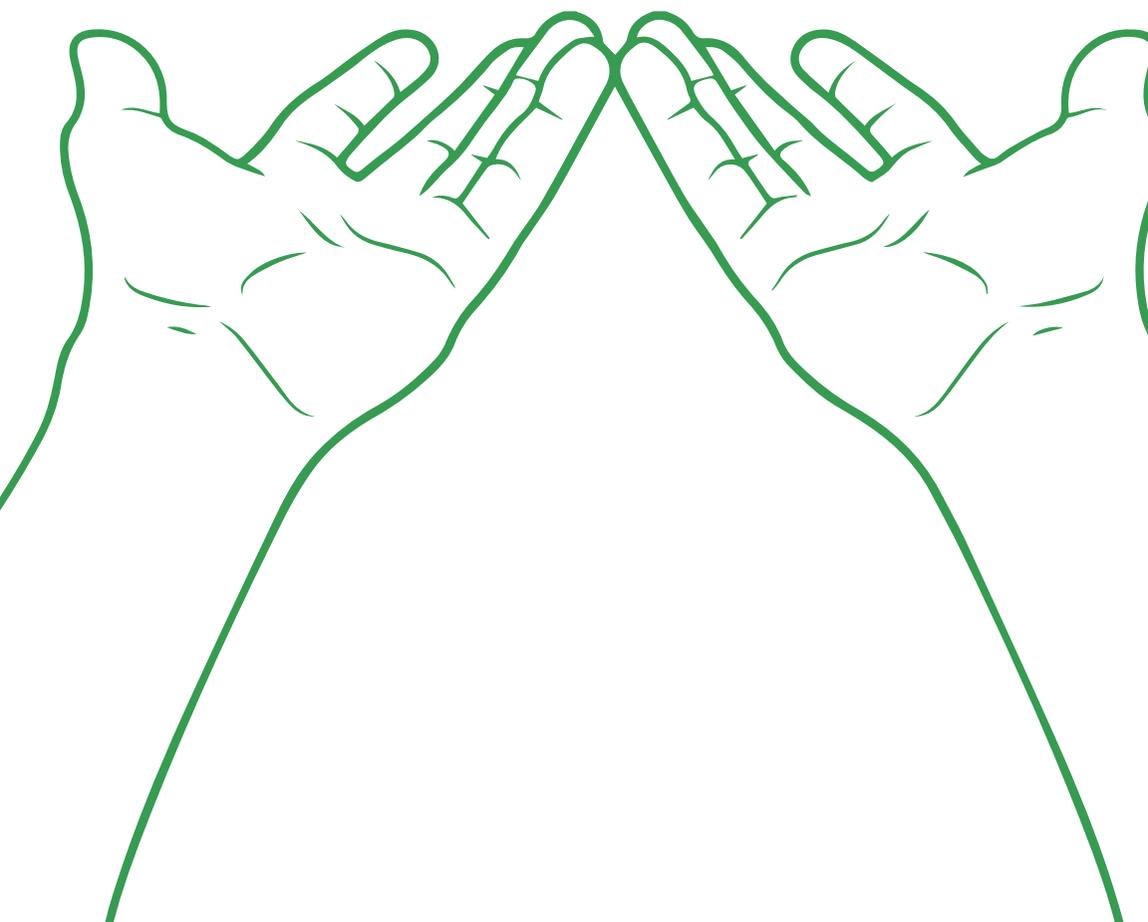
Blessed are the
poor in spirit: for
theirs is the
kingdom of
heaven.



CHAPTER 8

The Catechist in All of Us

**Clarence M. Batan
Jayson U. Dela Cruz**





📷 NCS 2016-2021: PARI Project

Our handbook ends with a deep hope of collective solidarity among us who journeyed the personal and spiritual processes of being, becoming, and belonging to a Catechetical Ministry (CM), and those beyond us, whom by virtue of being part of our Catholic Church, equally share the gift, life, and mission of catechesis. This shared mission encapsulates the fuller message this handbook advocates - "The Catechist in All of Us". This theme emerges as one of the most sociologically fascinating research insights in our *NCS 2016-2021: PARI Project* that promotes on the one hand, an invitation to encourage all Catholic faithful a re/discovery of the wealth of catechetical knowledge our Church possesses, and on the other hand, a plea for action to actively engage with the catechesis of the New Evangelization.

As an invitation, our handbook concludes with a catechetical primer originally written by a young Filipino Catholic, Jayson U. Dela Cruz, a *UST Sociology* undergraduate student, whose initial interaction with our NCS Research Team as a layout artist prompts his interest to pursue Catholic Studies. His initial exposure to our research data and this handbook allowed him to pen a succinct *Catechetical Primer on the Lay Ministry of Catechists*. This primer represents the voices of young

Catholics whose spiritual energies are expected to sustain the future of CM in the country.

The plea for action, symbolically reflected by the many hand gestures we used in this handbook, communicates what we consider as two contemporary blessings to CM across the world. These are the (a) *Apostolic Letter* issued as *Motu Proprio* by Pope Francis, *Antiquum Ministerium* (2021), *Instituting the Ministry of Catechist*, and (b) *Letter of Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments (CDWDS)* to the Presidents of the Episcopal Conferences on the Rite of Institution of Catechists, offering "some notes on the Ministry of Catechist, on the necessary requirements, and on the celebration of the rite of institution" (CDWDS, 2021).

By publishing the full transcripts of these two governing catechetical documents, our handbook humbly acknowledges the power that lay hands the blessings our CM enjoys, encapsulates and endures in sustaining the faith, hope, and love of our Catholic Church in the Philippines beyond the 500 years of her foundation.

May these concluding gestures continuously empower the truest hands that cradle our CM. As we started drawing inspiration, *In Manus Tuas (In Your Hands)*, we beseeched the

future of CM in the Philippines, *In Manus Tuas (In Your Hands)*, Amen.



A Catechetical Primer of A Young Filipino Catholic

Jayson U. Dela Cruz

“O Beauty so ancient and so new” – These words of Saint Augustine in his *Confessions* (Sheed, 1943) perhaps capture the nature of CM as framed in Pope Francis’ *Antiquum Ministerium (AM)* for it starts with the premise that the ministry of Catechists is ancient, thus the apostolic letter’s title, yet continues to exist in the Church meriting such a recognition, thus new. Since the Apostolic Age up until today, the presence of catechists in the Church (and in the world) has been an undeniable aspect of service to the propagation of the Faith, especially among the laity, with the the Pope articulating: “the history of evangelization over the past two millennia clearly shows the effectiveness of the mission of catechists” (Francis, 2021a). The Quincentennial Jubilee, and concurrently this study, highlights in the Philippines a quarter of the Church’s two millennia of history. No less than the two greatest icons of Filipino sanctity, Saints Lorenzo Ruiz and Pedro Calungsod, were lay catechists (Francis, 2021b) and are attestations of the Pope’s exhortation.

Speaking of the jubilee’s theme of *missio ad gentes (mission to the nations)*, it was even on the Church’s celebration of World Mission Sunday that both saints were canonized in 1987 and 2012, respectively (Mojares, 2002; Marini, 2012). Adding to this, it was April 2021, the start of the jubilee, when the Pope challenged the Philippines to renew its vigor for evangelization through the examples of these two saints, who were “two holy catechists who knew how to give without cost what they had

received without cost...” (Francis, 2021b). A month later, the Pope conveyed the same message, but now to the whole world, when he released AM in which he said, “the long line of blessed, saints and martyrs who were catechists has significantly advanced the Church’s mission and deserves to be recognized, for it represents a rich resource not only for catechesis but also for the entire history of Christian Spirituality” (Francis, 2021a).

With these in mind, what better way to encapsulate the past five centuries than the image of a catechist whose apostolate was and is the means of communicating the Faith in a then-mission area, thus birthing what we call as *Filipino Catholicism* (Francisco, 2021). The Pope’s institution of the *Lay Ministry of Catechist* cements the legacy of the missionary role they played in the Church since the time of the apostles, of which, interestingly, its etymological root is the Greek word “apostolos” meaning “to be sent forth” (Coppieters, 1907). This new institution to the lay ministry – now the acolyte, lector, and catechist – distinguishes it from deputized or recognized liturgical ministries in parishes (Krosnicki, 2004) as now it is included among the ministries “established by the Church even in the most ancient times [...] to be carried out in the liturgy and the practice of charity....” (Paul VI, 1972).

Institution to this Ministry requires a definite vocation, discernment of the Bishop, and a commitment to do the apostolate in “a more specific manner” (CDWDS, 2021). Furthermore, it is highlighted that the lay ministry of Catechist is differentiated from others as it is a “stable form of service rendered to the local Church in accordance with pastoral needs....” They have also identified two main avenues, although not exclusively, through which an instituted Catechist could exercise his/her ministry: (1) the specific



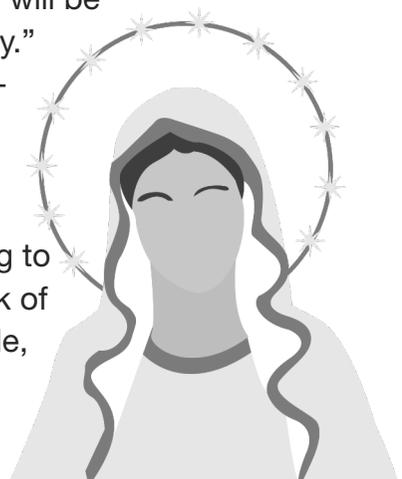
task of catechesis, and (2) participation in various forms of apostolate. Aside from teaching, they could also participate in other functions in the parish, such as but not limited to “guiding community prayer, assisting the sick, leading funeral celebrations, training and guiding other Catechists, coordinating pastoral initiatives, human promotion according to the Church’s social doctrine, helping the poor, and fostering the relationship between the community and the ordained ministers” (CDWDS, 2021). Various tasks in the Church naturally require a vocational aspect regarding the transmission of faith, such as the preparation of children and catechumens for the Sacraments. Nevertheless, the Congregation clarifies that one does not require the institution to the *Lay Ministry of Catechist* to do catechetical functions.

As hopefully clarified by the handbook, what separates catechesis from mere education is that at the heart of the former lies the quintessential Great Commission of Christ (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2009): “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age” (Mt. 28:19-20, RSVCE). This challenge of *missio ad gentes* (*mission to the nations*), therefore, corresponds not only to the *being, becoming, and belonging* of catechists but also concerns that of the nations—their *being, becoming, and belonging* to the Catholic Church through the work of catechesis. This “work” is not simply that of an occupation or a business firm. Traversing through the handbook are not corporate hands; rather they are *volunteering, helping, offering, loving, communal, and communicating*. This self-giving for the mission of the Church and not for one’s material gain is what elevates catechists among the roster of teachers.

True to its name, this handbook is a ‘hand book’ – a book full of hands, an essential part of the body through which a servant in the Lord’s vineyard can do his/her mandate. This word, which means “command” or “instruction”, comes from the Latin words *manus* (meaning “hand”) and *dere* (meaning “give”) (Partridge, 1966). Suffice to say, this handbook named *In Manus Tuas* gives a helping hand in the catechetical mandate of the Church. This handbook responds to AM’s emphasis of CM’s nature and mandate as both ancient and new, a ministry that has been established since time immemorial which, at the same time, still requires renewal in the time of the New Evangelization (Benedict XVI, 2010; Legaspi, 2007), and is now made more meaningful as the nation passes the quincentennial marker.



To all faithful catechists, achieving fruitful communion within the ministry is a good direction towards the realization of the Lord’s mandate. Pope Francis (2013), in his first apostolic exhortation *Prayer to the Blessed Virgin Mary, Star of the New Evangelization*, dearly invites the whole Church to ask Mary, as the Star of the New Evangelization, “to intercede that this invitation to a new phase of evangelization will be accepted by the entire ecclesial community.” As the Catholic Church in the Philippines – the *pueblo amante de María* or *bayang sumisinta kay María* (Macalisag & de Nazareno, 2014) – enters a neo-quincentennial chapter in history, it is fitting to ask her maternal intercession that the work of catechesis, hopefully renewed by this guide, may greatly contribute to the challenge of evangelization in contemporary times.



Vector Art by Jayson Dela Cruz



Evangelii Gaudium

Pope Francis

Mary, Virgin and Mother,
you who, moved by the Holy Spirit,
welcomed the word of life
in the depths of your humble faith:
as you gave yourself completely to the Eternal One,
help us to say our own “yes”
to the urgent call, as pressing as ever,
to proclaim the good news of Jesus.

Filled with Christ’s presence,
you brought joy to John the Baptist,
making him exult in the womb of his mother.
Brimming over with joy,
you sang of the great things done by God.
Standing at the foot of the cross
with unyielding faith,
you received the joyful comfort of the resurrection,
and joined the disciples in awaiting the Spirit
so that the evangelizing Church might be born.

Obtain for us now a new ardour born of the resurrection,
that we may bring to all the Gospel of life
which triumphs over death.
Give us a holy courage to seek new paths,
that the gift of unfading beauty
may reach every man and woman.

Virgin of listening and contemplation,
Mother of love, Bride of the eternal wedding feast,
pray for the Church, whose pure icon you are,
that she may never be closed in on herself
or lose her passion for establishing God’s kingdom.

Star of the new evangelization,
help us to bear radiant witness to communion,
service, ardent and generous faith,
justice and love of the poor,
that the joy of the Gospel
may reach to the ends of the earth,
illuminating even the fringes of our world.

Mother of the living Gospel,
wellspring of happiness for God’s little ones, pray for us.
Amen. Alleluia!



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APOSTOLIC LETTER
ISSUED "MOTU PROPRIO"
BY THE SUPREME PONTIFF
FRANCIS
"ANTIQUUM MINISTERIUM"
INSTITUTING
THE MINISTRY OF CATECHIST

1. The ministry of Catechist in the Church is an ancient one. Theologians commonly hold that the first examples are already present in the writings of the New Testament. The service of catechesis may be traced back to those “teachers” mentioned by the Apostle in writing to the community of Corinth: “Some people God has designated in the Church to be, first, apostles; second, prophets; third, teachers; then, mighty deeds; then, gifts of healing, assistance, administration, and varieties of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work mighty deeds? Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? Strive eagerly for the greatest spiritual gifts. But I shall show you a still more excellent way” (1 Cor 12:28-31).

Saint Luke begins his Gospel by stating: “I too have decided, after investigating everything accurately anew, to write it down in an orderly sequence for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may realize the certainty of the teachings you have received” (Lk 1:3-4). The evangelist seems to be well aware that his writings offer a specific form of instruction that can give firm assurance to those already baptized. The Apostle Paul, for his part, tells the Galatians that: “one who is being instructed in the word should share all good things with his instructor” (Gal 6:6). As is evident, this text provides yet another detail; it speaks of



the communion of life as a sign of the fruitfulness of an authentic catechesis.

2. From the beginning, the Christian community was characterized by many different forms of ministry carried out by men and women who, obedient to the working of the Holy Spirit, devoted their lives to the building up of the Church. At times, the charisms that the Spirit constantly pours out on the baptized took on a visible and tangible form of immediate service to the Christian community, one recognized as an indispensable diakonia for the community. The Apostle Paul authoritatively attests to this when he states that “there are different kinds of spiritual gifts but the same Spirit; there are different forms of service but the same Lord; there are different workings but the same God who produces all of them in everyone. To each individual the manifestation of the Spirit is given for some benefit. To one is given through the Spirit the expression of wisdom; to another the expression of knowledge according to the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit; to another mighty deeds; to another prophecy; to another discernment of spirits; to another varieties of tongues; to another interpretation of tongues. But one and the same Spirit produces all of these, distributing them individually to each person as he wishes” (1 Cor 12:4-11).

Within the broader charismatic tradition of the New Testament, then, we can see that certain baptized persons exercised the ministry of transmitting in a more organic and stable form related to different situations in life the teaching of the apostles and evangelists (cf. SECOND VATICAN ECUMENICAL COUNCIL, Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation *Dei Verbum*, 8). The Church wished to acknowledge this service as



a concrete expression of a personal charism that contributed greatly to the exercise of her mission of evangelization. This glance at the life of the first Christian communities engaged in the spread of the Gospel also encourages the Church in our day to appreciate possible new ways for her to remain faithful to the word of the Lord so that his Gospel can be preached to every creature.

3. The history of evangelization over the past two millennia clearly shows the effectiveness of the mission of catechists. Bishops, priests and deacons, together with many men and women in the consecrated life, devoted their lives to catechetical instruction so that the faith might be an effective support for the life of every human being. Some of them also gathered around themselves others of their brothers and sisters sharing the same charism, and founded religious orders wholly dedicated to catechesis.

Nor can we forget the countless lay men and women who directly took part in the spread of the Gospel through catechetical instruction. Men and women of deep faith, authentic witnesses of holiness, who in some cases were also founders of Churches and eventually died as martyrs. In our own day too, many competent and dedicated catechists are community leaders in various parts of the world and carry out a mission invaluable for the transmission and growth of the faith. The long line of blessed, saints and martyrs who were catechists has significantly advanced the Church's mission and deserves to be recognized, for it represents a rich resource not only for catechesis but also for the entire history of Christian spirituality.



4. Beginning with the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, the Church has come to a renewed appreciation of the importance of lay involvement in the work of evangelization. The Council Fathers repeatedly emphasized the great need for the lay faithful to be engaged directly, in the various ways their charism can be expressed, in the “plantatio Ecclesiae” and the development of the Christian community. “Worthy of praise too is that army of catechists, both men and women, to whom missionary work among the nations is so indebted, who imbued with an apostolic spirit make an outstanding and absolutely necessary contribution to the spread of the faith and the Church by their great work. In our days, when there are so few clerics to evangelize such great multitudes and to carry out the pastoral ministry, the role of catechists is of the highest importance” (cf. SECOND VATICAN ECUMENICAL COUNCIL, Decree on the Church’s Missionary Activity *Ad Gentes*, 17).

Along with the important teaching of the Council, mention should be made of the constant interest of the Popes, the Synod of Bishops, the Episcopal Conferences and individual Bishops who, in recent decades have contributed to a significant renewal of catechesis. The Catechism of the Catholic Church, the Apostolic Exhortation *Catechesi Tradendae*, the General Catechetical Directory, the General Directory for Catechesis and the recent Directory for Catechesis, as well as the many national, regional and diocesan Catechisms, have confirmed the centrality of a catechesis that gives priority to the education and ongoing formation of believers.

5. Without prejudice to the Bishop’s mission as the primary catechist in his Diocese, one which he shares with his presbyterate, or to the particular responsibility of parents for the Christian formation of their children (cf. CIC can. 774 §2; CCEO



can. 618), recognition should be given to those lay men and women who feel called by virtue of their baptism to cooperate in the work of catechesis (cf. CIC can. 225; CCEO cans. 401 and 406). This presence is all the more urgently needed today as a result of our increasing awareness of the need for evangelization in the contemporary world (cf. Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, 163-168), and the rise of a globalized culture (cf. Encyclical Letter *Fratelli Tutti*, 100, 138). This requires genuine interaction with young people, to say nothing of the need for creative methodologies and resources capable of adapting the proclamation of the Gospel to the missionary transformation that the Church has undertaken. Fidelity to the past and responsibility for the present are necessary conditions for the Church to carry out her mission in the world.

Awakening personal enthusiasm on the part of all the baptized and reviving the awareness of their call to carry out a proper mission in the community demands attentiveness to the voice of the Spirit, who is unfailingly present and fruitful (cf. CIC can. 774 §1; CCEO can. 617). Today, too, the Spirit is calling men and women to set out and encounter all those who are waiting to discover the beauty, goodness, and truth of the Christian faith. It is the task of pastors to support them in this process and to enrich the life of the Christian community through the recognition of lay ministries capable of contributing to the transformation of society through the “penetration of Christian values into the social, political and economic sectors” (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 102).

6. The lay apostolate is unquestionably “secular”. It requires that the laity “seek the kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and directing them according to God’s will” (cf. SECOND VATICAN ECUMENICAL COUNCIL Dogmatic



Constitution on the Church *Lumen Gentium*, 31). In their daily life, interwoven with family and social relationships, the laity come to realize that they “are given this special vocation: to make the Church present and fruitful in those places and circumstances where it is only through them that she can become the salt of the earth” (*ibid.*, 33). We do well to remember, however, that in addition to this apostolate, “the laity can be called in different ways to more immediate cooperation in the apostolate of the hierarchy, like those men and women who helped the apostle Paul in the Gospel, working hard in the Lord” (*ibid.*).

The role played by catechists is one specific form of service among others within the Christian community. Catechists are called first to be expert in the pastoral service of transmitting the faith as it develops through its different stages from the initial proclamation of the kerygma to the instruction that presents our new life in Christ and prepares for the sacraments of Christian initiation, and then to the ongoing formation that can allow each person to give an accounting of the hope within them (cf. 1 Pet 3:15). At the same time, every catechist must be a witness to the faith, a teacher and mystagogue, a companion and pedagogue, who teaches for the Church. Only through prayer, study, and direct participation in the life of the community can they grow in this identity and the integrity and responsibility that it entails (cf. Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization, *Directory for Catechesis*, 113).

7. With great foresight, Saint Paul VI issued the Apostolic Letter *Ministeria Quaedam* with the intention not only of adapting the ministries of Lector and Acolyte to changed historical circumstances (cf. Apostolic Letter *Spiritus Domini*), but also of encouraging Episcopal Conferences to promote



other ministries, including that of Catechist. “In addition to the ministries common to the entire Latin Church, nothing prevents Episcopal Conferences from asking the Apostolic See for the institution of others, which for particular reasons, they consider necessary or very useful in their own region. Among these are, for example, the offices of Porter, Exorcist and Catechist.”

The same pressing invitation is found in the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi*; in calling for a discernment of the present needs of the Christian community in faithful continuity with its origins, the Pope encouraged the development of new forms of ministry for a renewed pastoral activity. “Such ministries, apparently new but closely tied up with the Church’s living experience down the centuries, such as that of catechists... are valuable for the establishment, life, and growth of the Church, and for her capacity to influence her surroundings and to reach those who are remote from her” (SAINT PAUL VI, Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 73).

To be sure, “there has been a growing awareness of the identity and mission of the laity in the Church. We can indeed count on many lay persons, although still not nearly enough, who have a deeply-rooted sense of community and great fidelity to the tasks of charity, catechesis and the celebration of the faith” (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 102). It follows that the reception of a lay ministry such as that of Catechist will emphasize even more the missionary commitment proper to every baptized person, a commitment that must however be carried out in a fully “secular” manner, avoiding any form of clericalization.

8. This ministry has a definite vocational aspect, as evidenced by the Rite of Institution, and consequently calls for due discernment on the part of the Bishop. It is in fact a stable form of service rendered to the local Church in accordance with pastoral needs identified by the local Ordinary, yet one carried



out as a work of the laity, as demanded by the very nature of the ministry. It is fitting that those called to the instituted ministry of Catechist be men and women of deep faith and human maturity, active participants in the life of the Christian community, capable of welcoming others, being generous and living a life of fraternal communion. They should also receive suitable biblical, theological, pastoral and pedagogical formation to be competent communicators of the truth of the faith and they should have some prior experience of catechesis (cf. SECOND VATICAN ECUMENICAL COUNCIL, Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church *Christus Dominus*, 14; CIC can. 231 §1; CCEO can. 409 §1). It is essential that they be faithful co-workers with priests and deacons, prepared to exercise their ministry wherever it may prove necessary, and motivated by true apostolic enthusiasm.

Therefore, after having taken all things into consideration, and by apostolic authority

**I establish
the lay ministry of Catechist**

The Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments will soon publish the Rite of Institution of the lay ministry of Catechist.

9. I invite the Episcopal Conferences to render effective the ministry of Catechist, determining the necessary process of formation and the normative criteria for admission to this ministry and devising the most appropriate forms for the service which these men and women will be called to exercise in conformity with the content of this Apostolic Letter.

10. The Synods of the Oriental Churches or the Assemblies of Hierarchs may adopt what is established here for their



respective Churches *sui iuris*, in accordance with their particular law.

11. Bishops should make every effort to comply with the exhortation of the Council Fathers: “Pastors... know that they were not established by Christ to undertake by themselves the entire saving mission of the Church to the world. They appreciate, rather, that it is their exalted task to shepherd the faithful and at the same time acknowledge their ministries and charisms so that all in their separate ways, but of one mind, may cooperate in the common task” (Lumen Gentium, 30). May the discernment of the gifts that the Holy Spirit never fails to grant to the Church sustain their efforts to make the lay ministry of Catechist effective for the growth of their communities.

I order that what has been laid down by this Apostolic Letter issued “*Motu Proprio*” have firm and stable effect, anything to the contrary notwithstanding, even if worthy of special mention, and that it be promulgated by publication in *L’Osservatore Romano*, taking effect that same day, and published thereafter in the official commentary of the *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*.

Given in Rome, at Saint John Lateran, on the tenth day of May in the year 2021, the liturgical memorial of Saint John of Avila, Priest and Doctor of the Church, the ninth of my Pontificate.

Franciscus



Congregation for Divine Worship
and the Discipline of the Sacraments

LETTER
TO THE PRESIDENTS OF THE EPISCOPAL CONFERENCES
ON THE RITE OF INSTITUTION OF CATECHISTS

Your Eminence / Your Excellency,

Recently, Pope Francis intervened with two Apostolic Letters in the form of “*Motu Proprio*” on the subject of instituted ministries. The first, *Spiritus Domini*, dated 10 January 2021, amended canon 230 §1 of the Code of Canon Law regarding the access of women to the instituted ministry of Lector and Acolyte. The second, *Antiquum ministerium*, dated 10 May 2021, instituted the ministry of Catechist.

The Holy Father’s interventions orient reflection on the ministries towards the future while at the same time deepening the reflection already begun by St Paul VI with the Apostolic Letter “*Motu Proprio data*” *Ministeria quaedam* of 15 August 1972, by which the discipline concerning first tonsure, the minor orders and the sub-diaconate were renewed in the Latin Church.

The publication of the Rite of Institution of Catechists offers a further opportunity for reflection on the theology of ministries in order to arrive at an organic vision of the distinct ministerial realities, on the understanding that *legem credendi lex statuat supplicandi* [1].

In order to respond quickly to the need for a rite of institution, this *Editio typica*, which is part of the *Pontificale Romanum*,



is published without a Praenotanda. The 50th anniversary of Ministeria quaedam (1972 / 2022) will provide the occasion for the publication of an Editio typica altera (De institutione Lectorum, Acolythorum et Catechistarum), accompanied by Praenotanda.

The presenteditio typica can be widely adapted by the Episcopal Conferences which have the responsibility of clarifying the description and the role of Catechists, of offering them adequate formation programmes, and informing communities so that they understand their service. [2] This adaptation must follow the provisions of the General Decree implementing the Motu Proprio Magnum Principium [3] for obtaining the confirmatio or recognitio from the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments. This letter, which accompanies the publication of the Edition typical of the Rite of Institution of Catechists, aims to offer a contribution to the reflection of the Bishops' Conferences, proposing some notes on the ministry of Catechist, on the necessary requirements, and on the celebration of the rite of institution.

I. The ministry of Catechist

1. The ministry of Catechist is a “stable form of service rendered to the local Church in accordance with pastoral needs identified by the local Ordinary, yet one carried out as a work of the laity, as demanded by the very nature of the ministry”. [4] It is a broad and varied ministry.

2. First of all, it should be emphasised that this is a lay ministry based on the common baptismal state and the royal priesthood received in the Sacrament of Baptism and is



essentially distinct from the ordained ministry received in the Sacrament of Orders. [5]

3. The “stability” of the ministry of Catechist is analogous to that of the other instituted ministries. This definition of stability, as well as expressing the fact that it is a “stable” ministry in the Church, also affirms that lay people who have the age and qualifications determined by decree of the Episcopal Conference, can be admitted in a stable manner (like Lectors and Acolytes) [6] into the ministry of Catechist. This takes place through the rite of institution which is therefore not to be repeated. The exercise of the ministry, however, can and must be regulated by the individual Episcopal Conferences in terms of duration, content and modalities, in accordance with pastoral needs. [7]

4. Catechists, by virtue of their Baptism, are called to be co-responsible in the local Church for the proclamation and transmission of the faith, carrying out this role in collaboration with the ordained ministers and under their guidance. “Catechizing is, in a way, to lead a person to study this mystery [of Christ] in all its dimensions. [...] It is therefore to reveal in the Person of Christ the whole of God's eternal design reaching fulfilment in that Person. It is to seek to understand the meaning of Christ's actions and words and of the signs worked by Him, for they simultaneously hide and reveal His mystery. Accordingly, the definitive aim of catechesis is to put people not only in touch but in communion, in intimacy, with Jesus Christ: only He can lead us to the love of the Father in the Spirit and make us share in the life of the Holy Trinity”. [8]

5. Such a goal includes various aspects and its attainment is expressed in multiple forms, depending on the needs of the communities and the discernment of the Bishops. For this



reason, and in order to avoid misunderstandings, it is necessary to bear in mind that the term ‘catechist’ indicates different realities in relation to the ecclesial context in which it is used. Catechists in mission territories differ from those working in churches of long-standing tradition. Moreover, individual ecclesial experiences also produce very different characteristics and patterns of action, so much so that it is difficult to give it a unitary and synthetic description. [9]

6. Among the great variety of forms, one can distinguish - though not rigidly - two main types of Catechists. Some have the specific task of catechesis, others the broader task of participating in different forms of apostolate, in collaboration with the ordained ministers and obedient to their guidance. The context of the ecclesial reality (Churches of long standing tradition; young Churches; the size of the territory; the number of ordained ministers; pastoral organisation, etc) determines one or the other type. [10]

7. It is important to note that, since this ministry has “a definite vocational aspect [...] and consequently calls for due discernment on the part of the Bishop,” [11] and since its content is defined by the individual Bishops’ Conferences (obviously in conformity with what is stated in *Antiquum ministerium*), not everyone who carries out a service of catechesis or pastoral assistance and who are called ‘catechists’ have to be instituted.

8. It is preferable that the following should not be instituted as Catechists:

those who have already begun their journey towards Holy Orders and in particular have been admitted among the candidates for the Diaconate and the Priesthood. As already



mentioned, the ministry of Catechist is a lay ministry and is essentially distinct from the ordained ministry which is received with the Sacrament of Orders; [12]

men and women religious (irrespective of whether they belong to Institutes whose charism is catechesis), unless they act as leaders of a parish community or coordinators of catechetical activity. It should be remembered that, in the absence of instituted ministers, they can - like all the baptised - exercise ministries “de facto,” precisely because of their Baptism, which is also the basis of their religious profession;

those who carry out a role exclusively for the members of an ecclesial movement: this function, which is equally valuable, is in fact assigned by the leaders of the individual ecclesial movements and not, as in the case of the ministry of Catechist, by the diocesan Bishop following his discernment in relation to pastoral needs;

those who teach Catholic religion in schools, unless they also carry out other ecclesiastical tasks in the service of the parish or diocese.

9. Careful reflection - which can truly be deepened by a comprehensive and balanced reconsideration of the instituted ministries as a whole - is required in the case of those who accompany the initiation of children, young people and adults. It does not seem appropriate for everyone to be instituted as a catechist. As already mentioned, this ministry has “a definite vocational aspect [...] and consequently calls for due discernment on the part of the Bishop”. [13] Instead, it is absolutely appropriate that at the beginning of each catechetical year they all should receive a public ecclesial mandate entrusting them with this important function. [14]



It is not ruled out, however, that after suitable discernment, some who are involved in initiation programmes may be instituted as ministers. However, it would be wise to ask the question which ministry is the most suitable, that of Lector or of Catechist, in view of the specific content of each.

In fact, the rite of institution of Lectors states that it is their task to educate children and adults in the faith and to guide them to receive the sacraments in a worthy manner. [15] Considering that it is an ancient tradition that every ministry is directly linked to a particular office in the liturgical celebration, it is certainly evident that proclaiming the Word in the assembly clearly expresses the service of those who accompany candidates on the path of initiation. Those who receive catechetical instruction should see the liturgical expression of the service being rendered to them in the Lector who becomes the voice of the Word.

If, however, those who are involved in initiation are entrusted - under the moderation of ordained ministers - with a task of formation or the responsibility for coordinating all catechetical activity, then it would seem more appropriate for them to be instituted as Catechists.

In conclusion: not everyone who prepares children, young people and adults for initiation need to be instituted as Catechists. The Bishop's discernment may call some of them to the ministry of either Lector or Catechist, according to their abilities and to pastoral needs.

10. Because of what has now been established, candidates for the instituted ministry of Catechist—having some prior experience of catechesis [16] – can, therefore, be chosen from among those who carry out the service of proclamation in a



more specific manner: they are called to find effective and coherent means for this first evangelization, and then to accompany those who have received it into the initiatory stage.

They play an active part in the rites of the Christian initiation of adults which expresses the importance of their ministry. [17] In the period of the pre-catechumenate, Catechists collaborate with Pastors, Sponsors and Deacons to find the most suitable forms for the first proclamation of the Gospel, awakening the candidates to faith and to conversion; they help to discern the external signs of the dispositions of those who intend to be admitted to the catechumenate. [18] During this period they carry out an appropriate catechesis suited to the liturgical year and supported by celebrations of the Word of God, from which they are able to bring the catechumens “not only to a suitable knowledge of dogmas and precepts, but also to an intimate knowledge of the mystery of salvation”. [19] The Bishop delegates “truly worthy and suitably prepared” Catechists to celebrate the Minor Exorcisms. [20]

Once the catechumens have been initiated, Catechists remain with the community as witnesses to the faith, teachers and mystagogues, companions and pedagogues who, in every way, are willing to encourage the faithful to conform their lives to the baptism they have received. [21] They are also called upon to find new and bold ways of proclaiming the Gospel that will enable them to stir up and reawaken the faith in the hearts of those who no longer feel the need for it. [22]

11. However, the area of proclamation and teaching describes only a part of the activity of instituted Catechists. In fact, they are called to collaborate with ordained ministers in the various forms of the apostolate, carrying out many functions under the guidance of the pastors. In attempting to offer a by no means



exhaustive list of these functions, the following can be indicated: guiding community prayer, especially the Sunday liturgy in the absence of a Priest or Deacon; assisting the sick; leading funeral celebrations; training and guiding other Catechists; coordinating pastoral initiatives; human promotion according to the Church's social doctrine; helping the poor; fostering the relationship between the community and the ordained ministers.

12. This breadth and variety of functions should not come as a surprise: the exercise of this lay ministry fully expresses the consequences of being baptised and, in the particular situation of the lack of a stable presence of ordained ministers, it is a participation in their pastoral action. This is what the Code of Canon Law [23] affirms when it provides for the possibility of entrusting to a non-ordained person a share in the exercise of pastoral care in a parish, always under the moderation of a priest. It is necessary, therefore, to form the community so that it does not see the Catechist as a substitute for the Priest or Deacon, but as a member of the lay faithful who lives their baptism in fruitful collaboration and shared responsibility with the ordained ministers, so that their pastoral care may reach everyone. [24]

13. It is the task of the Episcopal Conferences, therefore, to clarify the description, the role and the most appropriate forms for the exercise of the ministry of Catechists in line with what is indicated in *Motu Proprio Antiquum Ministerium*. Adequate formation programmes for candidates must also be defined. [25] Finally, care must also be taken to prepare communities so that they may understand the meaning of this ministry.



II. Requirements

14. It is the task of the diocesan Bishop to discern the call to the ministry of Catechist by assessing the needs of the community and the abilities of the candidates. [26] Men and women who have received the sacraments of Christian initiation and have presented a freely written and signed petition to the diocesan Bishop may be admitted as candidates.

15. The *Motu Proprio* describes the requirements as follows: “It is fitting that those called to the instituted ministry of Catechist be men and women of deep faith and human maturity, active participants in the life of the Christian community, capable of welcoming others, being generous and living a life of fraternal communion. They should also receive suitable biblical, theological, pastoral and pedagogical formation to be competent communicators of the truth of the faith and they should have some prior experience of catechesis. It is essential that they be faithful co-workers with priests and deacons, prepared to exercise their ministry wherever it may prove necessary, and motivated by true apostolic enthusiasm”. [27]

III. Celebration

16. The ministry of Catechist is conferred by the diocesan Bishop, or by a priest delegated by him, by means of the liturgical rite *De Institutione Catechistarum* promulgated by the Apostolic See.

17. The ministry can be conferred during Mass or during a celebration of the Word of God.



18. After the liturgy of the Word the structure of the rite envisages an exhortation (this given text lends itself well to adaptation by the Bishops' Conferences in relation to how they wish to specify the role of the Catechists); an invitation to prayer; a blessing; the handing over of a crucifix.

In conclusion I would like us to return to the ever prophetic words of Saint Paul VI in the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi*:

“We cannot but experience a great inner joy when we see so many pastors, religious and lay people, fired with their mission to evangelize, seeking ever more suitable ways of proclaiming the Gospel effectively. We encourage the openness which the Church is showing today in this direction and with this solicitude. It is an openness to meditation first of all, and then to ecclesial ministries capable of renewing and strengthening the evangelizing vigour of the Church. It is certain that, side by side with the ordained ministries, whereby certain people are appointed pastors and consecrate themselves in a special way to the service of the community, the Church recognizes the place of non-ordained ministries which are able to offer a particular service to the Church”. [28]

To Mary, Mother of the Church, we entrust our service for the building up of the Kingdom.

From the Offices of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, 3 December 2021, the Memorial of Saint Francis Xavier, Priest.

✠ **Arthur Roche**
Prefect



- [1] Cf. *Indiculus*, cap. 8: *Denz n. 246 [ex n. 139]*. Cf. also Prosper of Aquitaine, *De vocatione omnium gentium*, 1,12: CSEL 97, 104.
- [2] Cf. Francis, *Antiquum ministerium*, n. 9.
- [3] Cf. Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, *Postquam Sumus Pontifex*. Decree giving effect to the dispositions of can. 838 of the Code of Canon Law (22 October 2021).
- [4] Francis, *Antiquum ministerium*, n. 8.
- [5] Cf. FRANCIS, *Spiritus Domini*, s.n.
- [6] Cf. *Codex Iuris Canonici*, can. 230 §1: “Lay persons who possess the age and qualifications established by decree of the Conference of Bishops can be admitted on a stable basis through the prescribed liturgical rite to the ministries of lector and acolyte. Nevertheless, the conferral of these ministries does not grant them the right to obtain support or remuneration from the Church”.
- [7] Francis, *Antiquum ministerium*, n. 9.
- [8] Cf. John Paul II, *Apostolic Exhortation Catechesi tradendae* (16 October 1979), n. 5, in: AAS 71 (1979) 1281.
- [9] Cf. Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples, *Guide for Catechists* (3 December 1993), n. 4.
- [10] Cf. *ibid.*
- [11] Francis, *Antiquum ministerium*, n. 8.
- [12] Cf. Francis, *Spiritus Domini*, s.n.
- [13] Francis, *Antiquum ministerium*, n. 8.
- [14] Cf. *Rituale Romanum*, *De Benedictionibus*, editio typica 1984, nn. 361-377.
- [15] Cf. *Pontificale Romanum*, *De institutione Lectorum et Acholytorum*, n. 4: “Lectores seu verbi Dei relatores effecti, adiutorium huic muneri praestabitis, et proinde peculiare officium in populo Dei suscipietis, et servitio fidei, quae in verbo Dei radicatur, deputabimini. Verbum enim Dei in coetu liturgico proferetis, pueros et adultos in fide et ad Sacramenta digne recipienda instituetis, nuntiumque salutis hominibus, qui adhuc illud ignorant, annuntiabitis. Hac via et vestro auxilio, homines ad cognitionem Dei Patris Filiique eius, Iesu Christi, quem ipse misit, pervenire poterunt et vitam assequi aeternam”.
- [16] Cf. Francis, *Antiquum ministerium*, n. 8.
- [17] Cf. *Rituale Romanum*, *Ordo initiationis christianae adultorum*. *Prænotanda*, editio typica 1972, n. 48.
- [18] Cf. *ibid.*, nn. 11.16.
- [19] Cf. *ibid.*, n.19 §1.
- [20] Cf. *ibid.*, n. 44.
- [21] Cf. Pontifical Council for Promoting the New Evangelisation, *Directory for Catechesis*, n. 113.
- [22] Cf. *ibid.*, n. 41.
- [23] *Codex Iuris Canonici*, can. 517 §2: “If, because of a lack of priests, the diocesan bishop has decided that participation in the exercise of the pastoral care of a parish is to be entrusted to a deacon, to another person who is not a priest, or to a community of persons, he is to appoint some priest who, provided with the powers and faculties of a pastor, is to direct the pastoral care.”
- [24] Cf. St. John Paul II, *Apostolic Exhortation, Christi fideles laici* (30 December 1988), n. 15; Benedict XVI, *Address opening the Pastoral Convention of the Diocese of Rome on the theme: “Church Membership and Pastoral Co-responsibility”* (26 May 2009); Francis, *Address to Italian Catholic Action* (3 May 2014).
- [25] Francis, *Antiquum ministerium*, n. 9.
- [26] *Ibid.*, n. 8.
- [27] *Ibid.*
- [28] Paul VI, *Apostolic Exhortation Evangelii nuntiandi* (8 December 1975), n. 73, in: AAS 68 (1976) 72-73.





Appendices



Appendix 2.1 Sample Curriculum Vitae (CV) Template



Ecclesiastical Territory (ET)
Parish
Address



Catechetical Ministry Curriculum Vitae

Last Name:		First Name:		Middle Name:	
Birth Date:		Citizenship:		Civil Status: (if married, where and when)	
Gender:	Religion:	Baptized: YES/NO	Where & When:		
Permanent Address:					
Mobile No.:			Telephone No.:		
E-mail address:					
SSS No.:			PAG-IBIG No.:		
PhilHealth No.:			TIN No.:		
Name of Spouse:			Birth Date:		
Number of Children:					
Name		Age		Occupation/Company	
Educational Level		From-To		Name of School	
Work History (Name of Company)		Date (From & To)		Position	
Religious Affiliations, If Any:					
Skills, talents, charism that may be useful for the position applied for					
Training and formations attended (where & when)					
Personal References:					
Applicant Signature					



Appendix 2.2 Sample Interview Guide Questions for Aspiring Catechists

- ✦ What does being a catechist mean to you?
- ✦ What are the common expectations of/for being a catechist?
- ✦ How important is catechetical formation process to you?
- ✦ In what way does being a catechist deepen one's relationship with God?
- ✦ What do you consider as important traits in becoming a good catechist?
- ✦ Who do you think will offer forms of support and assistance when you become a servant catechist?
- ✦ How will you enrich the sense of belongingness with your fellow catechists?



Appendix 4.1 Sample Catechetical Apostolate Assessment Form



Ecclesiastical Territory (ET)
Parish
Address



Catechetical Apostolate Assessment Form

Name of Catechist	Name of Assessor
Position	Position
No. of Years of Service	Assessment Date

Assessment of the Catechetical Engagement by Catechetical Goals

Direction: Use the Catechetical Engagement descriptors (SE, CE, & BE) to assess the Catechetical Goals below. Write qualitative comments whenever possible.

Substantive Engagement (SE)	Consistent Engagement (CE)	Basic Engagement (BE)
Consistently and exceedingly engages and meets the catechetical goals expected.	Consistently engages and meets the catechetical goals.	Sometimes engages and meets essential catechetical goals.

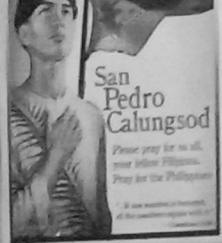
Catechetical Competencies	Substantive Engagement (SE)	Consistent Engagement (CE)	Basic Engagement (BE)	Comments
A Solid Grasp of Catholic Doctrine and Worship* <i>The individual should have a mature understanding of the basic teachings of the Catholic faith as contained in The Catechism of the Catholic Church and understand the sacramental nature of the Christian life.</i>				
Familiarity with Scripture* <i>The individual should be familiar with the sacred scriptures and be able to use scripture for teaching, prayer, and reflection.</i>				
Communication Skills* <i>The individual should be able to effectively utilize a variety of communication skills, creative activity skills and group skills. Thus he/she will be able to select suitable activities for desired learning environments.</i>				
Ability to Use Various Methodologies* <i>The individual recognizes the unique needs of the participants and is able to adapt and plan a class to meet these needs.</i>				
Understanding of the Stages of Development* <i>The individual understands and is able to apply the basic elements of the psychology of learning. He/she will know the stages of moral development and be able to integrate these into teaching. The catechist will understand the stages of faith and be able to orient religious content to the level of the participant's readiness.</i>				
Organizational Skills <i>The ability to plan, arrange, and complete priorities effectively and efficiently; make efficient use of available resources to maximize productivity.</i>				
Adaptability <i>The ability to master new methodologies or perform duties as required; flexibility in meeting changing demands of the mission</i>				
Interpersonal Relations <i>The ability to relate effectively with catechumens, parents, co-catechists as teammates, other ministries, religious organizations, parish staff and with the ministry priest director</i>				
Attendance and Punctuality <i>The ability to devote the time necessary to complete the ministry task; makes use of effective time management.</i>				

*Adapted from the Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth (2019). Director of Religious Education Handbook. <https://fwdioc.org/DRE-handbook.pdf>





Diocesan Catechetical Ministry



About the Editors

Clarence M. Batan is Professor and Head of the *Department of Sociology*, and former Director of the *Research Center for Culture, Education, and Social Issues (RCCESI)* now renamed as *Research Center for Social Sciences and Education (RCSSSED)* at the *University of Santo Tomas (UST)*, Philippines. He led the *National Catechetical Study (NCS) 2016-2021: Pastoral Action Research and Intervention (PARI) Project*, a project with the *Catholic Bishops' Conference in the Philippines (CBCP) – Episcopal Commission on Catechesis and Catholic Education (ECCCE)*. His involvement in this project inspires him to pursue further studies on the Sociology of Filipino Catholicism and Pastoral Issues.

Florence C. Navidad is Professor of the *Department of Medical Technology, Faculty of Pharmacy* and a Research Associate of the *UST RCSSSED*. She teaches Medical Technology courses including research, and Biostatistics and Epidemiology. Dr. Navidad co-led the project, *Studying Catechetical Human Resources (SCHR)* where she shared her expertise in the fields of educational management; organizational, cooperative, and union dynamics; and human resource development.

Jaycar P. Espinosa is a research assistant of the *RCSSSED - UST* under the *NCS 2016-2021: PARI Project*. He obtained his Bachelor of Arts in Economics and Master of Arts in Economics from the *Faculty of Arts and Letters* and the *UST Graduate School*, respectively. His involvement with the *NCS* allowed him to learn more about Catechetical Ministry (CM), church network, social research, data analysis, module writing, and handbook development.



About the Contributors

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Victor C. Dela Cruz is a professional licensed teacher and a mandated catechist in 1996 (Missio Canonica). He studied Bachelor of Secondary Education Major in Religious Education at De La Salle University, Dasmariñas, Cavite with advanced catechetical formations at the *Institute of Catechetics – Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (IC-CCD)* and Mary Cause of our Joy Formation Center (MCJFC) where he is the program coordinator at present. He is a full-time catechist of St. Joseph Parish in Carmona, Cavite since 1988. He became the Lay Coordinator since 2010 and head of the Formation Committee in 2017 of the Diocesan Ministry on Catechesis of the Diocese of Imus, Cavite.

Jayson U. Dela Cruz is a BA Sociology student at UST, and served as a research assistant of the *NCS 2021: PARI Project*. His contributions in this handbook are the catechetical primer and the visually appealing layout design. His engagements in the Catholic Church led him to publish his first book entitled, *Vidi Aquam: A History of Catholicism in Pasig (1571-2021)*. His research interests are Sociology of Religion, Catholicism, and Pastoral Issues.



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Maria Cristina V. Santos is a licensed chemical engineer and worked for 40 years in the same industry. She is a volunteer catechist and the parish coordinator of commissioned readers and commentators in *St. Paul Parish*, Langkaan, City of Dasmariñas in the Diocese of Imus. Since 2009, she has been an active member of the Diocese of Imus Ministry on Research and Communications Core Group and currently heads the Written Documentation Committee. Her vocation to catechesis led her to pursue further studies in Masters in Religious and Values Education at the *De La Salle University*, Dasmariñas and Masters in Theology, major in Pastoral Ministry at the *Maryhill School of Theology*.

Layout & Design

Jayson U. Dela Cruz - For his bio-sketch, please refer to the above description.

Vincent Reuben E. Valientes is the multimedia research assistant lead of the *NCS 2021: PARI Project* and served as one of the layout designers of this handbook. He is a BA Sociology student at UST whose research interests are Visual Sociology, Sociology of Youth, Catholicism, and Sports.



Reviews

Congratulations to the whole research team of the *NCS 2016-2021: PARI Project*, Most Rev. Roberto C. Mallari, DD, Rev. Fr. Ernesto B. de Leon, and to the *Diocesan Ministry on Catechesis* of the Diocese of Imus! The *Katekista: In Manus Tuas (In Your Hands) Handbook*'s framework is very figurative and truthful in the pastoral life and spirituality of the catechists. The best practices to manage the human resources of the Catechetical Ministry are elaborated and properly articulated. This handbook is indeed the work and fruits of the Holy Spirit. It is indeed the science of how to do catechesis.

To God be the Glory!

Sr. Evangeline F. Pabalate, MCST

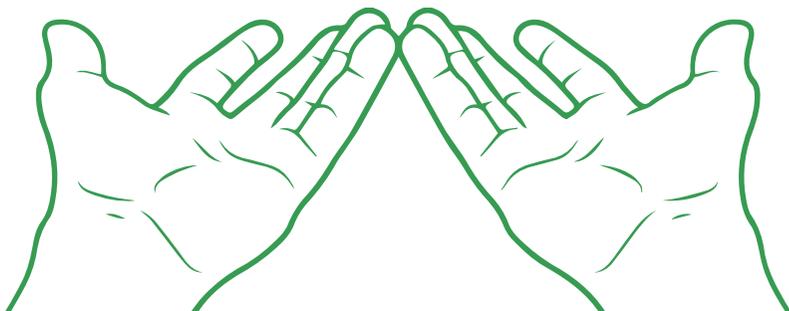
Archdiocese of Cebu

The *Katekista: In Manus Tuas (In Your Hands) Handbook* is well-written and reader friendly. The metaphors used to contextualize the dimensions of catechetical human resources are appropriate. I also love the use of hand signs throughout the handbook. I agree that the catechist should be physically, mentally, spiritually, and even financially prepared.

This handbook will be of big help to all catechetical ministries. Congratulations to the *NCS 2016-2021: PARI Project* Research Team! God bless!

Ms. Ruthie D. Rivera

Archdiocese of San Fernando de Pampanga



“In Manus Tuas, is letting God shape us according to His will.

“In Manus Tuas, is letting our fears and doubts be replaced with enthusiasm and joy in fulfilling our mission.”

Most Rev. Roberto C. Mallari, DD
Bishop, Diocese of San Jose de Nueva Ecija
CBCP-ECCCE Chair (2016-2021)



Contribution of the *University of Santo Tomas (UST)*
for the 500th Anniversary of Christianity in the Philippines



A *Research-based Intervention Outcome (RIO)* based on the results of the *National Catechetical Study (NCS) 2016-2021: Pastoral Action Research and Intervention (PARI) Project* ng *Research Center for Social Sciences & Education (RCSSD), University of Santo Tomas (UST).*

