

Why Catholic? helps Catholics explore faith

Anticipation inside Our Lady of the Fields in Millersville for Why Catholic? has been building to a fever pitch for weeks.

The adult faith formation process will start its third year in the Archdiocese of Baltimore and Our Lady of the Field's pastor, Father Eugene Nickol, says the excitement level has not waned.

"We've been using it in helping our parishioners learn more about the catechism and as a resource in our daily lives," Father Nickol said. "It's great. There is a lot of confusion out there and we can help solve that."

Why Catholic? is a four-year program offered in one-third of the parishes in the archdiocese. Interested parishioners will learn through small groups more about their faith and how to integrate it into their own lives.

"Why Catholic? is a learning tool that helps Catholics explore their faith through study of the Catechism of the Catholic Church," said Sharon Bogusz, coordinator of Evangelization and Adult Catechesis. "It's a process of faith sharing and discussing. It's designed to be done in a small group with other learners, but a certain amount of the materials can be self-directed, too."

Ms. Bogusz said Why Catholic? will explore the third pillar of the catechism of the church - Life in Christ. The pillar is commonly referred to as the "morality pillar," but Ms. Bogusz said it is more about "discipleship in action." Small group topics will include virtues, the beatitudes, and moral law among others.

"What I find great about this process," Ms. Bogusz said, "is that it calls upon us to use our intellect, our hearts and to put what we have learned into action."

A Why Catholic? Book will help the group explore a topic of the week, which includes Scripture analysis and an overview of the catechism, she added.

“The book provides a few questions that can guide the discussion, but a group is not limited to simple questions in the book,” Ms. Bogusz said. “Some groups will go deeper and read further about a topic from the Catechism of the Catholic Church. Often the lessons will include thoughts from Church Fathers and Saints. Every lesson encourages participants to consider new ways that they might live the good news during the upcoming week.”

Susan Dobrzykowski, Our Lady of the Field’s coordinator of adult faith formation, said Why Catholic? is arriving at the perfect time of the year.

“With the election coming ... what an opportunity to form our conscience, to learn and be informed,” she said. “It all coincides.”

Ms. Dobrzykowski said many parishioners are curious about Why Catholic?

“Our mission,” she said, “is to reach out to all of them.”

Those who wish to join a Why Catholic? group may go to their local parish, or call the archdiocesan office of Evangelization and Catechesis at 410-547-5403.