



Catechize Summary

Key Points to Remember:

- Kerygmatic Catechesis is what people need today: to proclaim over and over that Jesus loves us, died to save us, and is with us always (see *Evangelii Gaudium* 164)
 - All truths must be proclaimed in relation to the Kerygma
 - The Kerygma is the first and foundational proclamation
- Family Kerygmatic Catechesis: When missionary disciples use God's pedagogy to hand on the faith to invite and accompany families into ongoing conversion
- Fruitful catechesis hinges on two realities: Our pedagogy/ method and the team that helps us carry it out.
- All catechesis aims to bring people into intimacy with Jesus (see *Catechesi Tradendae* 5)
 - Catechesis is not just about learning and behaving
 - Catechesis is meant to offer a real, ongoing encounter with the Lord and invite a personal, ongoing response, all accompanied by the parish community
 - Kerygmatic catechesis invites initial and ongoing conversion
- While parents ARE the primary catechists, the most appropriate and powerful way they catechize their children is not necessarily through direct teaching but through their Christian Witness and intentional modeling (see *Directory for Catechesis* 227).
 - Families need their parishes to be places of formal and intentional catechesis
 - Families need to be accompanied by their parish community as they grow in faith and virtue together

Our method of catechizing should be based on God's pedagogy:

- Relational: God wants a relationship with us now and for eternity in heaven
- Incarnational: God comes to dwell with us in ways that we can see, touch, taste, hear, smell, understand, experience. He uses earthly realities to help us come to know and love spiritual realities.
- Personal and Gradual: God always meets each of us where we are and walks us, one step at a time, inviting us ever closer to Himself
- Organic and Systematic: everything that God has ever done or wanted us to do and know is rooted in his love for us and has a trajectory that moves us closer and closer to Himself

Using God's Pedagogy in Family Catechesis at the Parish:

1. Relational: God's love is proclaimed, lived, offered, and welcomed as the power at work.

- God's love is not just proclaimed but lived through authentic relationships.
- Gathered opportunities should foster relationships and proclaim truth passionately.
- Blend experiences within families and peer groups, shifting from teachers to witnesses.
- Encourage reflection and conversation rather than passive presentations (from rows to circles).
- Invite the Holy Spirit into everything—prayer, planning, and execution.
- Build meaningful relationships by listening to families, praying with and for them, and fostering trust through personal connections.
- Utilize milestone moments (birth, sacraments, crises) to deepen relationships.
- Provide opportunities for joyful community through food, fun, and faith.
- Engage parents—invite them to share their faith stories with their children.
- Ice breakers are important for inter and intra-family sessions
- Play games and tell jokes; laughter helps many things
- Celebrate milestone moments (birthdays, anniversaries, baptism anniversaries, etc.) to help people feel seen and loved
- Consider meeting with each family (or parents) individually in the summer to get to know and build trust
- Work in such a way that families are empowered to keep sharing prayer and conversations at home, not just assignments at home

2. Incarnational: Making Faith Accessible and Tangible because Jesus is accessible and tangible - Emmanuel

- God meets us in ways that are real, understandable, and inviting.
- Teach through relevant stories and personal testimonies that connect human experiences to spiritual truths (parables, saints, encounters).
- Ensure catechists are passionate witnesses of the faith, conveying their love for the Lord.
- Use object lessons, service projects, retreats, and experiential activities (pilgrimages, washing of feet, Stations of the Cross, Last Supper reenactments).
- Engage all the senses in catechesis and ensure in-person discussions accompany any media resources.
- Meet people where they are, offering space, translators, and support for diverse family needs.
- Like happens in Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, present truth in a simple and accessible way and then use the Socratic Method/ ask questions to help families take greater ownership of truth
- Plan intentional time during catechetical sessions to facilitate faith conversations between parents and their own kids

- Meet in person as much as possible. Screens aren't conducive to starting relationships (with Jesus or other families)
- Combine every activity with a short, delicious teaching (service, fun/ games, etc.) so families always see how everything is relevant to faith and faith is relevant to everything

3. Personal and Gradual: Teaching Truth Over Time in Developmentally Appropriate Ways

- Catechesis should be developmentally appropriate, allowing individuals to grow at their own pace.
- Present one core truth to entire families, then process it in age-appropriate peer groups.
- Avoid watering down content but focus on depth rather than excessive breadth.
- Don't offer catechesis that only caters to the lowest common denominator
- Listen to people's spiritual needs (through surveys and conversations) to accompany them effectively and place them in groups that can journey with them at their age/ stage
- Prioritize meaningful silence to help people hear God's voice.
- Balance structure with flexibility—allow families to choose between different in-person options when possible.
- Help families discern readiness for sacraments rather than relying solely on age-based requirements.
- Facilitate conversations that start easy/ shallow and gradually grow deeper over time
- Offer timing/ date options to better accommodate busy schedules

4. Organic and Systematic: A Holistic, Intentional Approach that helps families see that God's love is the motivation behind, power within, and end goal of everything the Church believes, does, and teaches

- Every teaching should connect to a broader plan with God's love as the central thread.
- Develop a structured catechetical cycle (e.g., 2-year, 3-year, or 4-year plans).
- Take detailed notes on what works and what needs improvement—some approaches may be useful in different contexts later.
- Start small—gradual implementation leads to greater long-term success.
- Move beyond requirements to cultivate a desire for lifelong faith engagement.
- Catechesis should feel less like a lesson/ class and more like a conversation and way of helping people to have more clear vision; "Lord, I want to see." -Luke 18:41