

# DIOCESE OF SALFORD

## Department for Formation

Forming Missionary Disciples – Building Missionary Parishes



# CATECHISTS' HANDBOOK

# Dispositions of a Catechist

Consider who you are first and foremost. Many people make the mistake of getting caught up in preparing sessions before they prepare themselves. This does not make anyone bad or ineffective, but it ignores the Directory for Catechesis when it encourages us to recognise our primary role as witnesses. The Adults, Young people and Children will be affected by your example more than your message. Here are some guiding principles which apply to all catechises.

## 1. Be A Joyful Messenger.

*Jesus teaches us "I have told you all this so that my own joy may be in you, and that your joy be complete." John 15:11*

Sometimes this means digging deep. Pope Francis is joyful despite the challenges he faces and the responsibilities he carries. Our task is to recognise that the people we are serving won't believe in our words if we act like we carry the world on our shoulders. Joy is in any encounter with Jesus so please.... cheer up and tell your face!

## 2. Be prayerful.

*St Paul teaches us "I can do all things through the one who gives me strength." Philippians 4:13*

Sometimes we try to do things by determination. The Gospel's remind us again and again that will power won't get you there. Ask the Holy Spirit to be evident in your planning, in your car journey to Church and in the sessions. Don't be afraid to show people what prayer looks like when you do it.... and as Pope Benedict reminds us, use silence as much as words.

## 3. Approach tenderly.

*St Paul teaches us "Be generous to one another, sympathetic, forgiving one another, just as God forgave you in Christ." Ephesians 4:32*

Pope Francis reminds us that tenderness is not softness. Tenderness is a strong inclination not to pass judgement quickly. Allow people to be real around you and do your best to accept their endless inconsistencies, unreliability and occasional ingratitude. The Church knows that most people have a very odd idea about what this is all about and it will take time to convince them that holiness is the key to their happiness.

## 4. Be patient.

*Jesus is not afraid to walk with people, even in the wrong direction. He inquires of the disciples "What are you discussing as you walk along?" Luke 24:17.*

This means avoiding the temptation to look for immediate results. The pastoral strategy of Pope Francis is accompaniment. It means we join people where they are as Jesus did on the road to Emmaus. Then, we gently guide them through the Gospels and the tradition towards their fulfilment. The real skill here is to discern their pace and walk at it. If you walk too slowly you will bore them. If you walk too quickly you will frighten them. The skill here is the art and skill of practicing accompaniment.

## 5. Two-way Conversation.

*Jesus listens to people. In Marks Gospel he asks the blind man "What do you want me to do for you?" Mark 10:51*

In following Jesus' example we should have a conversation with the world but that means we must listen as well as talk, so we can learn as well as teach, and deepen our own faith as much as that of others.

# Guiding Principles

## 1. Healing the Domestic Church.

*The Church teaches us “The family is defined as a domestic Church” GDC 255*

The first principle is reconnecting with the domestic church. Our challenge is to engage with the whole family. That doesn't mean telling parents to bring children to Mass but entering genuinely into family relationships supporting parents to converse meaningfully with their children around *the things of God*. In many families the domestic church is broken, and this priceless conversation is lost. Our task is to help revive such a conversation so that it continues without us and builds up the entire family. This also means welcoming them into the programme and the community and celebrating their participation rather than making them feel inadequate because they haven't been quite 'holy' enough in the past.

## 2. Missionary Discipleship.

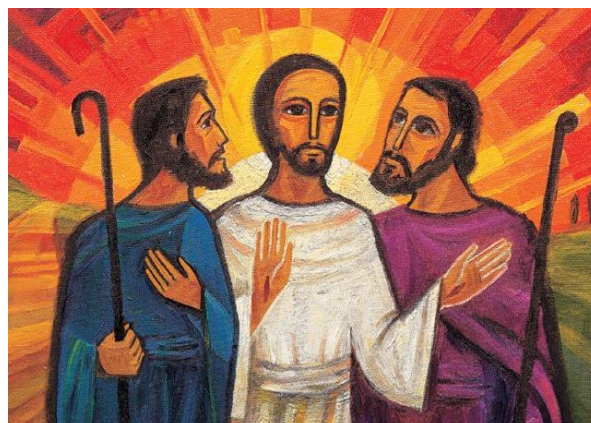
*The Church teaches us that “The definitive aim of catechesis is to put people not only in touch, but also in communion and intimacy, with Jesus Christ” LG64*

The second principle is to see yourself as a missionary more than a teacher. Your role in catechesis is to be in communion and intimacy with Jesus so that when people meet you, they meet Jesus. This of course sounds very scary because we are human and we fail. The skill here is to put your trust in Jesus, ask him to be closely at your side and invite others to do likewise. You are not teaching people a set of intellectual propositions the Church teaches. That takes a lifetime. Essentially you are introducing families to Jesus, who loves them, died for them and is present to them. Everything else builds on that and takes a lifetime to discover. *“To teach means not only to impart what we know, but also to reveal who we are by living what we believe. It is this latter lesson which tends to last the longest.”* St Pope John Paul II

## 3. Accompaniment.

*Fr Vincent Donovan wrote “In working with young people do not try to call them back to a place they were, and do not try to call them to where you are, as beautiful as that place might seem to you. You must have the courage to go with them to a place that neither you or they have ever been before.” Christianity Rediscovered.*

The final principle is to look for ways to see and develop what you do as accompaniment. What does this mean? Firstly, it means genuinely engaging with peoples' struggles as a starting point, so we have to listen carefully. Secondly we have to walk with them as Jesus did on the road to Emmaus, seeking not destinations but next steps. Thirdly we discern with them what is right for them. In the end, we are here to help them make their own decisions, as Jesus did. We cannot do it for them.



# RCIA as the model for all catechesis

*“The model for all catechesis is the baptismal catechumenate”  
(General Directory for Catechesis, 59)*

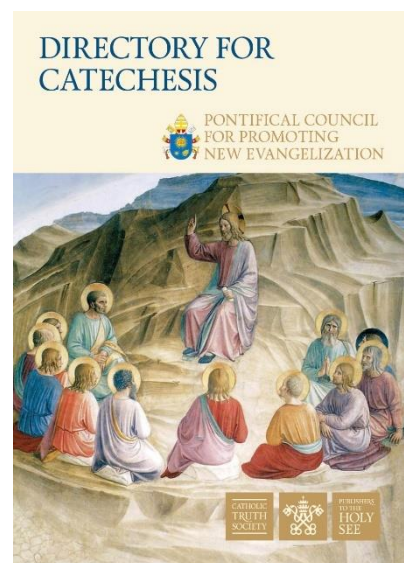
There are many principles we can learn from RCIA which can be used for all catechesis. These include;

- Candidates are presented to the parish so the whole parish can pray and accompany candidates before, during and after their catechesis.
- Faith is a journey. We need to find out where people are coming from and help them to understand the Kerygma/Gospel message (Pre-Catechumenate/Pre-Evangelisation), we need to help them understand the teachings of the Catholic faith, the Creed, liturgical celebrations, Christian living, prayer and Sacraments (Catechumenate/Catechesis) and we need to provide opportunities for lifelong faith formation after they have received the Sacraments (Mystagogy/ongoing formation).
- It takes as long as it takes - everyone is on a different faith journey so some may need more support than others. There shouldn't be a rush to get the catechesis done in time for deadline; if the candidate isn't ready to receive the Sacraments there is always next time/year.
- There isn't a 'one programme fits all' - you may need to write your own programme based on a number of resources to suit your context and audience.

## Directory for Catechesis (2020)

In 2020 the Holy See published the new Directory for Catechesis. In many parts it is not an easy read. But it does provide us with the opportunity to look at our catechetical endeavours in the light of changing times, demonstrated, of course, by the lockdown and the journey to a new and undetermined normal.

Over the next year Fr Paul Daly, Episcopal Vicar for Formation, will be summarising the Directory, with some suggested pointers for reflection. A summary is, by its nature, subjective. Fr Paul will try to include the sections that he feels has most to say to ourselves and our parishes and communities at this time. You can read the reflections here - [www.dioceseofsalford.org.uk/faith/directory-for-catechesis/](http://www.dioceseofsalford.org.uk/faith/directory-for-catechesis/) and buy the directory here [www.cathedralcentrebooks.com/Directory-of-Catechesis\\_9781784696412](http://www.cathedralcentrebooks.com/Directory-of-Catechesis_9781784696412)



# Evangelisation

## Alpha



Alpha is a parish tool for evangelisation based on hospitality, sharing and open conversation. The videos and resources are available online for free.

It gives an overview of the Christian faith and is ideal for someone who knows nothing about the faith and wants answers to the 'big questions'. Why not try Alpha in your parish, inviting people from the community who never go to Church to a meal and a talk.



More information at [www.alpha.org/catholic](http://www.alpha.org/catholic)

## Sycamore

S Y C A M O R E

How can we find happiness? What's the meaning of life? Is there a God? Does prayer make a difference?

Sycamore is an informal course about the Christian faith and its relevance for life today. It gives you space to meet other people, share ideas, explore your beliefs, and think about questions that really matter. Each Sycamore session involves a short film and some time for discussion. There's no pressure and no commitment. You can be yourself without any fear of being judged. There's a real sense of community, a spirit of friendship, some great conversation, and often some delicious food. Everyone is welcome.

More information at [www.sycamore.fm](http://www.sycamore.fm)

## The Kerygma

The Kerygma (a Greek word meaning proclamation) is the summary of our faith and our salvation through Jesus Christ. It is important that we start here as it is the foundation of our catechesis. There are several ways this can be presented, here are some examples -

The Great Story of Jesus - [www.dioceseofsalford.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/The-Great-Story-of-Jesus-1.pdf](http://www.dioceseofsalford.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/The-Great-Story-of-Jesus-1.pdf)

1. God loves us, our lives are good and full of meaning.
2. Jesus is the face of God's presence among us.
3. Jesus did divine things – he healed and forgave sins!
4. Jesus embraced the Cross out of love for us.
5. Jesus overcame death, and is now alive forever.
6. We are invited to follow Jesus.
7. Our sins also can be forgiven.
8. We can accept God's Holy Spirit, through baptism, or through repentance of past sins – this requires us to set out on a way of life that leaves something old behind.
9. Many Christians now walk the path of being disciples.

*The above is a summary of chapter 10 from Sherry Weddell's book 'Forming Intentional Disciples'*

Graphic summary -



Heart - God created me and loves me

Division - Sin has separated me from God

Cross - Jesus has reconciled us with God by his death and resurrection

Question mark - What am I going to do about it? Am I willing to be in relationship with him?

Taken from <https://www.cru.org/us/en/train-and-grow/share-the-gospel/evangelism-principles/one-easy-way-to-talk-about-jesus-with-todays-generation.html>

In 2013 in Evangelii Gaudium Pope Francis wrote...

In catechesis too, we have rediscovered the fundamental role of the first announcement or kerygma, which needs to be the centre of all evangelizing activity and all efforts at Church renewal. The kerygma is trinitarian. The fire of the Spirit is given in the form of tongues and leads us to believe in Jesus Christ who, by his death and resurrection, reveals and communicates to us the Father's infinite mercy. On the lips of the catechist the first proclamation must ring out over and over:

**“Jesus Christ loves you; he gave his life to save you; and now he is living at your side every day to enlighten, strengthen and free you.”**

This first proclamation is called “first” not because it exists at the beginning and can then be forgotten or replaced by other more important things. It is first in a qualitative sense because it is the principal proclamation, the one which we must hear again and again in different ways, the one which we must announce one way or another throughout the process of catechesis, at every level and moment. For this reason too, “the priest - like every other member of the Church - ought to grow in awareness that he himself is continually in need of being evangelized”.

**Pope Francis, 2013, Evangelii Gaudium, 164-165**

Practical Suggestions for Evangelisation - [www.dioceseofsalford.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/EVANGELISATION-SUGGESTIONS-UPDATED-2.pdf](http://www.dioceseofsalford.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/EVANGELISATION-SUGGESTIONS-UPDATED-2.pdf)

### **Pre-evangelisation Resources**

Genesis Mission - [www.genesismission.co.uk/](http://www.genesismission.co.uk/)

Ananias Training - [www.siena.org/ananias](http://www.siena.org/ananias)



# Baptism

FROM THE DIOCESAN POLICY FOR BAPTISM, as approved by Bishop John.

Good preparation for Baptism is essential and can also have very positive benefits for the parents of the child being baptised, often being the opportunity to bring them back to a committed practice of their faith. We must seek to provide the best catechesis and preparation for this sacrament, in all our parishes. There are a variety of resources available from the Department of Formation. I would like to stress the following points:

The General Directory on Catechesis (90) reminds us that the process of preparing adults for initiation is the model for all of the Church's catechising activity. Therefore, baptism preparation, its celebration and its follow-up are marked by clear stages, as in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA). For example, the quality of the welcome parents receive when they make their first enquiry is vital. It cannot simply be a question of completing a form, collecting details, telling them of a meeting and booking a date. It is often an opportunity to begin to get to know the family. It can also be an opportunity to invite families to reflect on their own faith and to offer suggestions as to how they might deepen that faith. Can they understand that Baptism is a new beginning for the child in a life-long commitment in which they, as parents, are "the first and best teachers in the ways of faith"?

This initial warm welcome can be followed up in a variety of ways. For example, some parishes have parish visitors who meet with families in their own homes. It can also be an opportunity for a pastoral visit from the priest. Although the time for making home visits is more limited these days, St John Paul II, on his visit to Manchester in 1982, said that pastoral visiting was 'a strength of the Church in England' and 'a pastoral practice that should not be neglected.'

It is important to share with the family the importance of their commitment to bringing their child up 'in the practice of the faith.' This might well include the suggestion that they should be attending Sunday Mass or beginning to do so. Catholics are obliged to attend Mass every Sunday, except when prevented by a grave reason. This obligation has not changed. Where parents do not yet live this aspect of a Catholic life, gentle but clear encouragement needs to be shown, in order to lead them to their own recognition of the place of Sunday Eucharist in their spiritual lives. For some parents who sincerely desire baptism for their children, the reality of their own formation in faith and religious upbringing may sometimes be such that to move from knocking on the presbytery door to regular long-term attendance is a leap for which they are not prepared. Such a journey might take years! Their willingness and sincerity in wanting to grow in faith themselves can only be discovered by speaking with them in a spirit of discernment.

As an indication, though, of the parents' willingness to embrace the call to live as part of the Church, it should be asked that they, or at least the Catholic parent, attend Mass for at least six Sundays in preparation for baptism. However, when there is a willingness to do so but genuine serious difficulties, baptism should not be refused or delayed. We must recognise the difficulties that some families with young children can have in attending Mass every week, such as changing work shift patterns, being single parents or families where one non-Catholic parent is unwilling to attend Mass. Good prayerful liturgy and a welcoming congregation will do more to encourage families to carry on coming to Sunday Mass than any number of rules laid down by the priest!

The guiding principle for the lawful baptism of infants is 'the well-founded hope that the child will be brought up in the Catholic religion.' 'If such hope is truly lacking, the baptism is...to be deferred and the parents informed of the reason for this.' The word 'truly' (Latin *prorsus*) carries the sense of 'completely' or 'entirely'. There need to be clear and solid grounds to defer baptism. Where parents are willing to commit to the

requirements outlined here, or have genuinely severe difficulties whereby they can only fulfil them in part, then baptism should not be deferred. It is important to stress that the marital status of the parents cannot be used as a reason to refuse or to defer baptism.

At least one of the parents must be Catholic, unless exceptional circumstances suggest otherwise. In cases where (with neither parent being already Catholic) one or both parents and child are preparing for initiation, the parent(s) should be initiated into the Church according to the rites of the RCIA. The baptism of the child can then be arranged to take place at their reception or at a suitable time thereafter.

The Code of Canon Law requires that the baptism of infants should take place in the proper parish church of the parents, except for a just reason. It further defines one's proper parish as that parish in which one has domicile. Therefore, priests should not baptise children resident in another parish without a just reason. One example of a just reason is where one or both parents are REGULAR attenders at Sunday Mass in another parish, such that they consider that parish to be the parish to which they "belong". In such situations, the parish priest of the parish in which they live should still, in conformity with Canon Law, be contacted before the baptism for his permission, which should be recorded in the Baptismal Register. I would expect parish priests to grant such permission.

In other situations, where a family request baptism in a parish in which they do not live, where there is a just reason the family should obtain the permission in writing of the parish priest of the parish in which they live. I would expect parish priests to be similarly generous in granting such permission. Where this happens, the parish priest of the parish in which the parents live might wish to include the family in whatever post-baptism care his parish offers. (For advice/clarification on this or other related matters, please contact the Episcopal Vicar for Formation).

Parents are strongly encouraged to give their child the name of a saint. When a child is conceived God gives that child a Guardian Angel. When a child is named, parents should give their child a patron saint. If there are any opportunities, in this digital age, to point parents in the direction of information about their child's patron saint(s), they can be helpful. Please note that even if a child's name, as registered at birth, does not contain a saint's name, parents might choose to add one at the baptism.

Following their initial enquiry and welcome, parents should be provided with some form of preparation which might take the form of a meeting or series of meetings. These sessions may well be conducted by catechists and provide an opportunity for prayer with the families. An important objective should be the discussion about how Baptism may be the foundation of a daily life of Faith and not just a single occasion. For many parents there might usefully be a focus on their own faith development, ways of praying, an introduction to the parish, its mission and its activities. It should be a priority for every parish to identify catechists to be trained to help in the preparation of parents for the baptism of their child. The Department for Formation will offer resources for any necessary training.

The General Directory on Catechesis reminds us that initiation is the responsibility of the whole community. This can be demonstrated by a regular welcome at Sunday Mass for children and parents preparing for baptism. This might use the opening questions from the Rite of Baptism, questions to the parishioners asking them to welcome and encourage the families, and the anointing with the Oil of Catechumens. The texts are provided in an appendix to this document. This can all be repeated at the baptism ceremony if it takes place outside Sunday Mass. Prompted by the RCIA's emphasis on "mystagogia", some parishes follow up baptisms either by a visit from priest or parish team or by a card delivered on the first anniversary of baptism. Once again any ideas in this important but neglected area are worth considering. The opportunities for evangelisation provided by a request for Baptism of a child are not to be underestimated. Pope Francis (speaking then as Cardinal Bergoglio) in 2009 said: "The baptism of children often becomes a new beginning for parents. Usually there is a little catechesis before baptism then a mystagogic



catechesis during liturgy. Then, the priests and laity go to visit these families to continue with their postbaptismal pastoral activity.

Godparents: for the baptism of infants only one godparent is required but two may be chosen. Their role is 'together with the parents to present the child for baptism, and to help the child live a Christian life befitting the baptised and faithfully to fulfil the duties inherent in baptism'. (Canon 872) The Code of Canon Law makes no mention of having more than two godparents. However, baptised non-Catholics may be admitted as 'Christian witnesses.' There is a balance to be struck in addressing with parents the question of godparents. It is not necessary to be too insistent on limiting the number of godparents, as long as it is restricted to a reasonable number. It would be better to look at ways of ensuring that the godparents, as far as possible, understand their role and are willing it to carry it out. Please do ensure that each child has at least one godparent who fulfils the canonical requirements. Please also, either in the preparation or during the ceremony, remind the godparents of their responsibility to be people of living Christian faith to be an example of faith and an encouragement in faith to the child and its parents.

### **Resources**

#### **CaFE (Catholic Faith Exploration) - Baptism - helping your children get the most from life**

A new flexible and enjoyable film designed to inspire parents and godparents and stir discussion. It was filmed in this Diocese, with contributions from Bishop John, and from children and parents in local parishes. Available as high-quality DVD or simple download. 12 parts plus questions, which can be run over one or two sessions. Free online leader's guide -

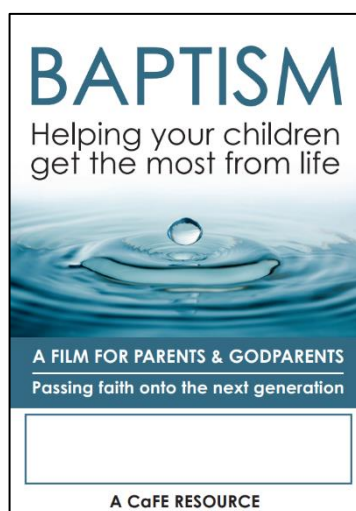
[https://cdn.shopify.com/s/files/1/0151/7885/files/BAP\\_Leaders\\_Guide\\_-\\_Download.pdf?34](https://cdn.shopify.com/s/files/1/0151/7885/files/BAP_Leaders_Guide_-_Download.pdf?34)

Engaging booklets for parents and godparents included with the course (extra inexpensive booklets available).

Includes a filmed baptism with input from Bishop John Arnold (Diocese of Salford) plus sharing from parents and children.

<https://faithcafe.org/collections/baptism>

Available to order from the Department for Formation priced £40 (includes DVD and 5 parents and 5 godparents booklets)



# First Reconciliation & Communion

Our logo, seen here, is available to use in your local programmes. It represents the guiding principles described at the beginning of this handbook. It signifies the three guiding principles we hold dear. We walk together on a journey of faith as families. We have a missionary intention. We accompany and listen to one another. We keep our focus upon God's Spirit, which is always there to strengthen and unite us in joy. The logo therefore portrays two people, stepping forth on a journey, shoulder to shoulder, guided and accompanied by the Holy Spirit. The image is how we travel as pilgrims towards our eternal destiny. To help all parish catechists prepare children for the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist the following support is available.



## Wisdom Group

A small group meets monthly to consider the catechetical issues and needs of the day. They are not called the "Wisdom Group" because they are wise but because they are searching for wisdom in the issues they address. At present they are headed by Fr Paul Daly as Episcopal Vicar for Formation. Also in the group is Fr Chris Lough who has served the catechetical endeavour in our diocese for many years. Patty Ganley has years of experience supporting our local schools whilst Sean Thorpe is a catechist with many years experience serving his local parish. John Griffin helps us to keep in mind the aspirations of the Diocesan vision "Hope in the Future." David Wells brings an outside perspective with his knowledge of Church initiatives from around the world. Together they meet regularly to help you. The meetings are open to anyone and nothing is in secret so if you would like to attend a meeting please contact Fr Paul Daly.

## Practical Considerations

The Wisdom Group is committed to:

1. Promoting the three guiding principles espoused widely and especially at the beginning of the document.
2. Keeping abreast of new catechetical initiatives.
3. From time to time providing diocesan training events and local workshops.
4. Reviewing current resources for First Communion and Reconciliation.
5. Providing support for catechists through the diocesan newsletter with a private Facebook group "Catechists in Salford Diocese" to help in the sharing of ideas, encouragement, and good practice.

Thus far the Wisdom Group has:

1. Provided two Clergy Training Days, one diocesan catechist day, and five regional roadshow workshops.
2. Produced a library of short videos to encourage new catechists and which can be accessed on the diocesan website. A link can be found below.
3. Produced a library of short video clips for catechists to use with parents also available from the Diocesan Website. A link is below.
4. Produced a short synopsis of the Catechetical resources currently available and which is included below. This will be regularly update.
5. Created a network of catechists with the aspiration of encouraging a community of confident missionary disciples with culture of dynamic self-renewal.

This Wisdom Group will:

1. Encourage Catechetical formation into the future.
2. Make available various resources for local clergy and catechists to use at their discretion.
3. Draw in and encourage more priests and experienced catechists to train others in this beautiful ministry.
4. Continue to update, improve and revise what it does.

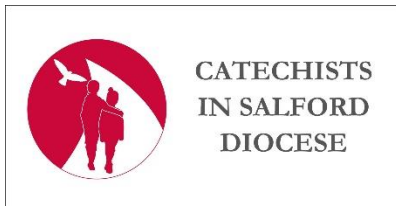
## Finally

In our initial research two years ago, we visited parishes and talked to Catechists across the diocese. What we realised quite quickly is that the life experience in the parishes varied so considerably that if we proposed a “One Size fits all” approach to the First Sacraments we would quite quickly run into difficulties. It would be wrong to impose an approach which only some parishes could deploy. For this reason, we take very seriously the Priest’s role as Pastor to determine the way forward in his parish and we as a diocesan service wish to make that discernment as well informed and supported as possible.

We do, however, strongly urge all catechists to keep the following principles in mind when determining the way forward. We are available to help with these should it be deemed useful.

1. First Sacraments Catechesis should involve in various ways the whole family (The Domestic Church) helping to revive a faith conversation especially between parents and their children
2. Our missionary intention is first and foremost to introduce a child to Jesus. As awkward as it may sound to us, our starting is a relation with Jesus who loves us, died for us and is living at our side to accompany us. This is the only foundation we can rely upon and if this is experienced, the journey into faith will happen. In God’s time.
3. Our pastoral strategy is accompaniment. We walk, as Jesus did on the road to Emmaus, side by side with the children. We are there to listen to them, to get to know them, to discern the promptings of the Spirit within them, and to guide them at their pace towards what God has in store for them. Much has been said and written about this principle and we hope to help develop it with you in the coming years.

If you would like to contact us, please email [formation@dioceseofsalford.org.uk](mailto:formation@dioceseofsalford.org.uk) or call 0161 817 2214.



Join our Catechists in Salford Diocese Facebook group to seek guidance, discuss ideas and share inspiration with each other.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/2263934637234008/>

## Videos

Parents Videos - <https://www.dioceseofsalford.org.uk/faith/sacraments/parents-videos/>

Catechist Videos - <https://www.dioceseofsalford.org.uk/faith/sacraments/catechist-videos/>



## Review of Resources

### Suggested Online/Home learning resources:

#### **1. Heart Speaks to Heart: Reconciliation & Holy Communion**

Online interactive PDF workbook & videos for each session available at the links below. These resources are available free of charge for our parishes, schools and homes.

Please contact the Department for Formation for the access password by emailing [formation@dioceseofsalford.org.uk](mailto:formation@dioceseofsalford.org.uk) or calling 0161 817 2214 and let us know any feedback. It is the same password to access the workbook and videos.



#### PDF Workbook

#### Session Videos

If you would prefer printed copies of the resource, please order them via the Cathedral Centre Bookshop ([https://www.cathedralcentrebooks.com/Heart-Speaks-To-Heart-Reconciliation-and-Holy-Communion\\_20210410](https://www.cathedralcentrebooks.com/Heart-Speaks-To-Heart-Reconciliation-and-Holy-Communion_20210410)). The workbook will be £5.00 per copy and parishes/schools can be invoiced for this. These can be delivered to you or collected from the Cathedral Centre Bookshop. The printed workbooks are a quality product which the young people can keep as a reminder of your journey of faith.

#### **2. With You Always**

#### Sessions for use at home

#### Guide to family resources

#### With You Always Website

The full printed resource can be ordered via The Archdiocese of Liverpool Pastoral Formation Department

T: 0151 522 1040 | E: [formation@rcaol.org.uk](mailto:formation@rcaol.org.uk)

#### **2. Blessed**

#### Online programme

#### **3. Diocese of Salford PDF materials**

#### Introduction

#### Prayer

#### Unit 1

#### Unit 2

#### Unit 3

#### Unit 4

#### Unit 5

#### Unit 6

#### Unit 7

#### Holy Communion Certificate

#### **4. The Pastoral Center**

#### Online Resources

### Printed resources:

#### **1. *'Journey Together Towards Reconciliation'* by Paddy Rylands (Kevin Mayhew publication)**

The introductions give some very good ideas for preparation of Catechists for accompaniment of children and parents. A lot of very useful resources for sessions here, including scriptural excerpts with questions and activities to relate to their own lives. There are work sheets for the sessions which would be very helpful for catechists, parents and children. There are suggestions for family prayer, lovely poems and prayers to use.

#### **2. *'We Share in the Eucharist' (Children's Workbook)* by Francoise Darcy-Berube and Jean Paul Berube (Twenty Third Publications- Novalis)**

A detailed set of activities focusing on the Mass. These would probably be too detailed for most parish's programmes. The second half of the book is a 'Family guide' which would be useful if programme sessions were organised for families together. There are some very nice short prayer liturgies which could be used in the sessions or at home. (Pages 7-12). There are also some activities focused on stories that illustrate themes which reflect the elements of the Mass.

#### **3. *'I belong'* by Aileen Urquart (Redemptorist publications)**

The Pupil's book is attractively presented (hardback). It would be expensive to buy one for each child and most parish programmes wouldn't have time to cover all the activities. There are some good questions and activities though. The children's book has a 'Family time' page after each section. These would be useful if sessions were family sessions or for follow up at home. I didn't have the parents' book for this programme so it wasn't clear how the children sessions and adult session fitted together.

#### **4. *'Making things right' (for Reconciliation) & 'Called to His Supper' (For First Holy Communion)* by Jeannine Timko Lechner (Our Sunday visitor publication)**

Black line drawings and text. Lots of close procedure type activities and colouring sheets. Could be used sparingly but might encourage passive activity in the children. They could be used if sessions were for parents and children together, if it encouraged discussion between them. They could also be used for 'Take home' follow up activities.

#### **5. *'Loved and Forgiven'* (Preparation for Reconciliation (supported by The Parents and Catechists' companion) by Joan Brown SND (Kevin Mayhew)**

This was a very attractively presented workbook, which placed the emphasis on the child being welcomed and loved by God. There were some good activities on the themes of Welcome, Myself, Listen, Remember and Rejoice. It was a very positive slant on Reconciliation. Could be used very effectively at home within the family or in Catechist sessions for children together with parents. It dates from 1999. Hopefully it is still in print! In the Parents' and Catechists' Guide there were lots of good activities for use in Catechists' session with children accompanied by instructions for parents for Home sessions. There is also a companion workbook for Holy Communion called "Meet Christ with Joy" but I haven't had the opportunity to review that. However, the Parents' and Catechists' guide mentioned above covers this workbook as well, so it should be of the same quality as "Loved and Forgiven".

**6. *“I am preparing for my first Confession” & “I am preparing for my first Holy Communion”* by Marie-Paule Mordefroid (Mc Crimmon Publishing Co Ltd, originally published in France by French publishing company).**

These are children’s workbooks with black line drawings illustrating text. There are straightforwardly written explanations of church teaching on the Sacraments with relevant scripture. The workbooks have pull out sections for Catechists and Parents. I wouldn’t use the workbook as a whole with children but there are parts which might be useful for information for parents and catechists. It is more useful for reading with children; there aren’t many activities to make the children think more deeply about the Sacraments. It could be used in Sacramental Programme sessions for families together with some guidance from catechists.

**7. *‘With you always Sacramental Preparation’ Family Catechesis programme for First Reconciliation and Eucharist for the Archdiocese of Liverpool.***

There is a comprehensive Catechists Book accompanied by Parents’ and Children’s leaflets which relate to the seven catechists sessions planned into the programme. These resources presuppose that parents and children attend the sessions together. This resource is well written, very practical and attractively presented. The programme places the emphasis on the parents being the first teachers of their children and aims to equip and strengthen parents’ ability to carry out this task, discovering anew key aspects of their faith. There are materials for seven sessions throughout the year, as well as other suggested activities, such as holding an Advent Celebration focusing on the nativity and a Stations of the Cross service in Lent to supplement the course. We have several very positive testimonies from parishes that are using this resource as its effectiveness. There is a website set up by Liverpool with other supplementary ideas and materials and you can obtain the whole programme translated into Polish for families who need that. Although there are points when catechists would need to give brief input to parents and lead prayer celebrations, they act much more as accompaniers and facilitators than ‘teachers’ or ‘instructors’. Catechists are there to welcome families, organise the sessions and support the families in their activities, questions and discussions and also to be role models and share what they can of their faith where appropriate. The resources are inexpensive and worth the investment. Published by the Archdiocese of Liverpool ([www.withyoualways.org.uk](http://www.withyoualways.org.uk))



# Confirmation

- 1) **EMPOWERED ONLINE CONFIRMATION PROGRAMME - The Gifts & Fruits of the Holy Spirit** - Free to download as PowerPoints & PDFs  
[www.dioceseofsalford.org.uk/faith/sacraments/confirmation/](http://www.dioceseofsalford.org.uk/faith/sacraments/confirmation/)  
[Empowered - Outline \(PDF\)](#)



- 2) **Decision Point - Matthew Kelly** - Free online resources

DECISION POINT is the first Confirmation program specifically developed to engage young Catholics in a meaningful conversation about the genius of Catholicism. It teaches and inspires teens to respond to God's grace, and it's changing hundreds of thousands of young lives. Today, DECISION POINT is the most used Confirmation program in America. It includes up to videos which you can view for free, a candidates guide which you can view on laptops/tablets or print into a booklet and a leaders guide.

Videos - [www.dynamiccatholic.com/confirmation/decision-point.html](http://www.dynamiccatholic.com/confirmation/decision-point.html)

Candidates guide - <https://s3.amazonaws.com/decision-point/workbook/WB-spreads.pdf>

Leaders guide - <https://s3.amazonaws.com/decision-point/leaderguide/LG-spreads.pdf>



- 3) **Transformed in Christ - Hannah Vaughan-Spruce** - £30 leaders guide £10 participants guide

[www.transformedinchrist.com/sample-page/](http://www.transformedinchrist.com/sample-page/)

Developed in a parish setting over three years, Transformed in Christ is a 22-session programme to prepare 12-16-year-olds to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation.

- **Evangelising Catechesis:** Developed and piloted in a parish over three years, this programme is evangelistic in its approach - the Gospel *kerygma* is at the heart of each session
- **Relationship with Christ:** Each session includes a 'time of prayer' resource for introducing candidates to authentic Catholic prayer; the overarching theme of the programme is a constant invitation to candidates to deepen their relationship with Christ
- **Methodology:** Its methodology is in keeping with the principles of the pedagogy of God. Beginning with a period of evangelisation (weekend retreat), 22 sessions of evangelising catechesis and discipleship follow. Each session loosely uses the ecclesial method (preparation, proclamation, explanation, application, celebration)
- **Content:** Over 22 sessions, it covers the full content of the Faith, drawing heavily from the YouCat and respecting the systematic and organic nature of doctrine. It integrates the four dimensions of the Christian life (teaching, liturgy, life in Christ, prayer)
- **Faithful to teenagers:** Acknowledging the reality of teenagers' methods of learning, the flow of each lesson is fast-paced, each activity never extending beyond 10 or 15 minutes
- **Teaching Strategies:** It uses a variety of different teaching strategies (short talks, video clips, quizzes, games, small group discussion) taking into account different learning processes



- **Learning Objectives:** It is ready-to-use for well-formed catechists, with clear and achievable learning objectives for each session and fun and engaging strategies for assessing that these objectives have been met
- **Application to Life:** Catechetical content is constantly made practical - helping candidates to apply it to their everyday life

Included in this resource are everything a catechist will need: ideas for attention-grabbing games; guidance on leading a small group; a full programme for an evangelisation retreat; two or three recommended video clips for each session; a YouCat quiz; an examination of conscience; suggested music to use throughout your programme; resources for 22 short times of prayer.

#### 4) Chosen: Your Journey Toward Confirmation - Ascension Press

<https://ascensionpress.com/pages/chosen-your-journey-toward-confirmation>

Chosen: Your Journey Toward Confirmation provides everything you need to prepare your students intellectually and spiritually to receive the sacrament of confirmation.

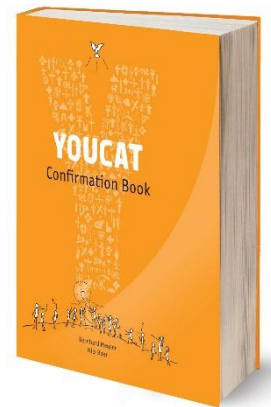
Is your Confirmation prep a struggle?  
Do you have a hard time keeping your teens engaged?  
Are you spending hours preparing for class?  
Are you overwhelmed by the sheer volume of information to cover? Does it feel impossible to get their parents involved?  
Are you frustrated that there isn't any time to just talk to your teens? Do you only hear crickets when you ask them questions?  
Don't spend another year banging your head against a wall, struggling with a program that leaves you exhausted and fails to hold your student's attention. We know just how important the work you do is and how challenging it can be. We want to help.



#### 5) YOUCAT Confirmation programme

An excellent Course for Catechists and Confirmation candidates.

All the topics are explained here for the students in an entertaining and challenging way, adopting the popular YouCat design. Illustrated in colour, the text provides excellent explanations and flags up important questions, with leads for further research throughout each topic covered. The materials invite candidates to engage with their faith honestly and openly. **The course is made up of 12 key steps or lessons:** 1. Getting Started 2. What We Can Know about God 3. Why the World Is Broken 4. Jesus—More than a Mere Man 5. Why Did Jesus Have to Die? 6. The Comeback of Jesus...or the Story of the Resurrection 7. In Search of the Holy Spirit 8. Prayer -Staying in Touch with the Living God 9. The Church - a Home for You and Me 10. Eucharist—the Generosity of God 11. Update! Confession! 12. What Happens in Confirmation? Bringing together the very best in catechetical content and design, this exciting new Course has been developed by the authors of the world's best selling Youth Catechism. Course resources include a **Handbook for Catechists** and this Confirmation Book for Candidates - these are used alongside **the Bible** and the **YouCat Youth Catechism** for one of the most exciting and comprehensive confirmation courses of recent times.



# Marriage

*‘Jesus said, ‘have you not read that the Creator from the beginning made them male and female and said ‘this is why a man leaves his father and mother and becomes attached to his wife and the two become one flesh? They are no longer two, therefore, but one flesh. So then, what God has united, human beings must not divide.’ (Mt 19:4-6)*



The office for Marriage and Family Life seeks to promote the vocation of marriage and to support families in the variety of circumstances in which they find themselves today. Couples seeking to enter into marriage in the Catholic Church must take part in a process of marriage preparation.

The Holy Family Project is a diocesan initiative aimed at offering support to married couples and families to grow in love of God and for one another. Further information can be found on [www.schoenstatt.org.uk/](http://www.schoenstatt.org.uk/) or by contacting Father Bryan Cunningham on [fr.bryan@schoenstatt.org.uk](mailto:fr.bryan@schoenstatt.org.uk)

## Relationship Counselling

To find out more about Marriage Care services visit our website [www.marriagecare.org.uk](http://www.marriagecare.org.uk) or call our appointments team on 0800 389 3801.

## Marriage Preparation Courses

Marriage Preparation courses which present aspects of the vision of Christian married life today: expectations, communication, the Sacrament and the power of love.

‘Preparing Together’ our 1-day group experience, explores key relationship skills, expectations, sacrament and the importance of your marriage vows. Courses are available throughout England & Wales. Local venues include Blackburn, Oldham, Sale, Stockport and Altrincham. Click on this link and enter your postcode to find the next available dates.  
<https://www.marriagecare.org.uk/marriage-preparation-2/>

*The Joy of Love experienced by families is also the joy of the Church.... “The desire to marry and form a family remains vibrant, especially among young people, and this is an inspiration to the Church”. As a response to that desire, “the Christian proclamation on the family is good news indeed”.*

*Pope Francis, Amoris Laetitia*

## Family is Sacred Course



[Webinar Recording](#)  
[Family is Sacred Webinar PowerPoint Slides](#)  
[Marriage & Family Life – A way to holiness](#)



Recognising the fundamental mission of the Church to evangelise, the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) is the sacramental process that enables parish communities to initiate new members into the Body of Christ through the celebration of Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist. The Rite was revised in response to the mandate given by the Second Vatican Council for the restoration of an integral catechumenate. The RCIA therefore offers a 'gradual spiritual journey', an apprenticeship in faith that take place in stages in the midst of parish life. A close connection is therefore envisaged between those consciously and freely searching for Christ and the community of the faithful. (RCIA 4-9). Central to the process is the invitation and call to personal relationship, 'communion and intimacy' with Christ, deepened by reflection on the Word of God. Throughout the liturgical year, the person, first as enquirer, and then as catechumen is accompanied in gatherings of the community, hearing the word and celebrating the liturgy. This is further grounded in experience of and engagement with all aspects of the life of the Catholic community, including involvement in its internal life of relationships and service and its outreach and mission. In this journey enriched by prayer, suitable catechesis and pastoral guidance, the catechumens are challenged to live and witness to what they believe more completely (RCIA 75). The community recognises its own call to continuing conversion, by joining the catechumens, both children and adult, in their reflection on the paschal mystery (RCIA 4). The published Rite contains authoritative guidance on the liturgical catechetical processes. These help adults to experience 'the mystery of Christ, seek the living God and enter the way of faith and conversion, as the Holy Spirit opens their hearts' (RCIA 1). The Rite also contains material which assists with adaptations for those already baptised and for children and young people of catechetical age. (RCIA 376-386, 242-306). All those involved in ministry (RCIA 9-16) for both liturgy and catechesis, are encouraged to read, study and pray the Rite itself, so that they are in the best position to support those seeking admission as catechumens and candidates.

## **Christian ministry is:**

- rooted in the call received in baptism and confirmation
- using the individual gifts we have received from the Holy spirit
- carrying out some specific service in response to a specific need on behalf of a Christian community
- to help in building up the Kingdom of God

## **Basic Tasks of Ministry**

- To build community
- To tell the Story
- To nurture growth
- To be prophetic
- To enable mission

## **Ministries in RCIA**

- The ministry of 'all the baptised'
- Sponsor
- Bishop
- Priest
- Deacon
- Catechist
- Godparent

## Sponsors

- Provide the one to one relationship of companionship on the RCIA journey.
- They attend the meetings with their 'enquirer' and share their faith
- When possible, they attend Sunday Mass with them, helping with the 'what to do when' issues
- Are open to the questions which are not asked in the big group but might be asked during the week or on the way home
- Try to introduce their companion to other parishioners and aspects of parish life

## Co-ordinator

- Takes the lead in forming the team and facilitating the sharing of the tasks to be done according to the gifts available.
- A good communicator with a sense of humour
- Able to encourage, enthuse, affirm and inspire
- Committed to the vision of RCIA and its journey
- Able to plan, liaise and delegate

## Welcomers

- Take responsibility for ensuring the RCIA group is hospitable.
- Have the gift of making others feel at home, even in strange places!
- Ensure the meeting space is warm, comfortable, attractive and welcoming
- Make sure the means of refreshment are available, be it tea/coffee, cheese & wine, sandwiches etc.
- Are able to identify and greet newcomers, comfortable enough to just 'chat' with them
- Are good at making people feel relaxed, welcome, valued.

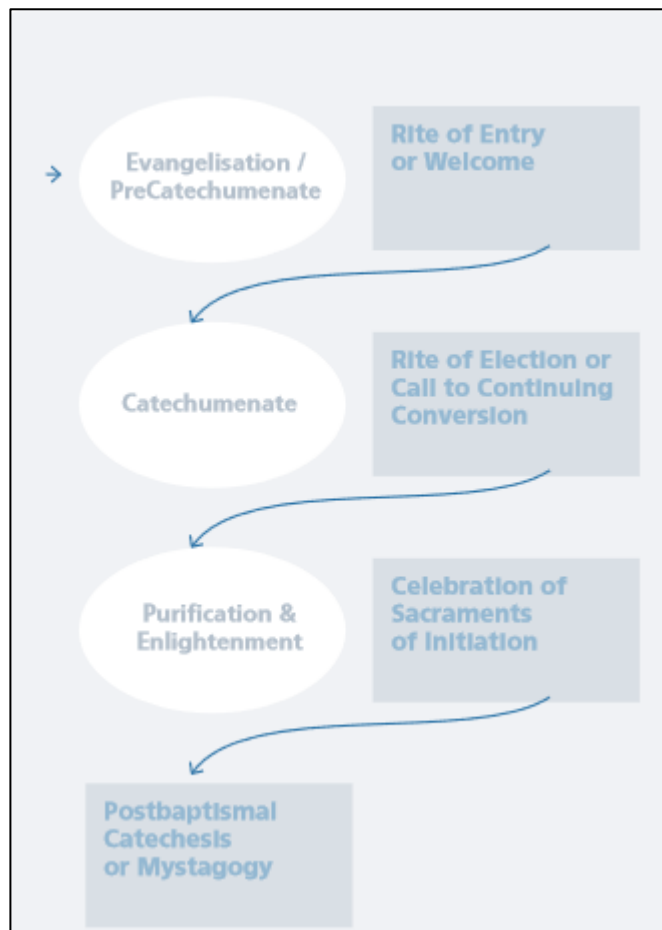
## Catechists

- Are familiar with the key stories of the scriptures
- Are good listeners, aware that adults learn in different ways
- Are able to make real connections between our faith and daily living
- Are committed to preparing a regular 'input' for the group based on Catholic faith and practice.

**Online resource - 20 sessions as PowerPoints & PDFs**

[www.dioceseofsalford.org.uk/faith/sacraments/rcia/](http://www.dioceseofsalford.org.uk/faith/sacraments/rcia/)





*With thanks to the RCIA Northern Network and the Archdiocese of Liverpool*

Introductory Material -

<http://www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Resources/Rites/RCIA.pdf>

Lectionary based catechises -

<http://www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Resources/Scripture/Lectionary-Catechesis.pdf>

Scripture & RCIA -

<http://rcia.org.uk/scripture-rcia/>

Online Resources (The Big Questions of 2020)

<https://www.liverpoolcatholicresources.com/rcia>

Guide to the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults

[https://83ab8943-270c-4e8d-8512-278ee337b78e.filesusr.com/ugd/581b13\\_5e690daeb2784b1994d4cce6853f10a3.pdf](https://83ab8943-270c-4e8d-8512-278ee337b78e.filesusr.com/ugd/581b13_5e690daeb2784b1994d4cce6853f10a3.pdf)



# Lifelong Faith Formation

Resources -

[www.dioceseofsalford.org.uk/faith/hope/resources/](http://www.dioceseofsalford.org.uk/faith/hope/resources/)

Training & Formation events -

[www.dioceseofsalford.org.uk/faith/hope/events/](http://www.dioceseofsalford.org.uk/faith/hope/events/)

## Diploma in Pastoral Ministry and Leadership

Once again the Diocese, in partnership with the Archdiocese of Liverpool and Wrexham Diocese, are offering a Diploma in Pastoral Ministry and Leadership. The Diploma is a combination of Online Learning and a series of leadership workshops, leading to a Loyola University Chicago Certificate and a series of Liverpool Hope CPD Awards.

The course lasts three years and begins in January each year. The full Diploma costs £2500, which is payable over three instalments. An increasing number of parishes are willing to part-fund students towards the Diploma.

More information can be found on the website below. Here you will find testimonies from past students, information booklets on the modules, application forms and an online form to book on one of the Zoom information Webinars

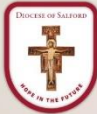
[www.liverpoolcatholicresources.com/diploma](http://www.liverpoolcatholicresources.com/diploma)

Please email [formation@dioceseofsalford.org.uk](mailto:formation@dioceseofsalford.org.uk) for further information.

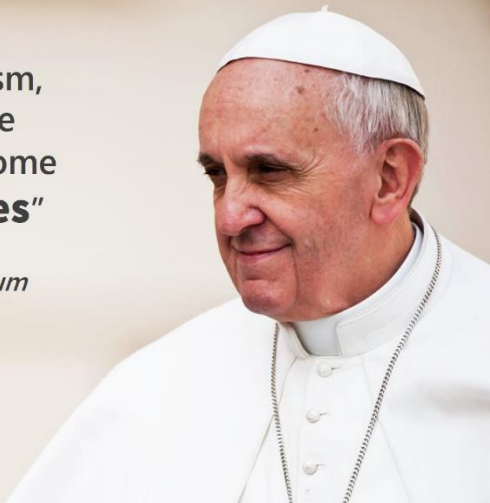


**"In virtue of their baptism,  
all the members of the  
People of God have become  
Missionary Disciples"**

*Pope Francis, Evangelii Gaudium*



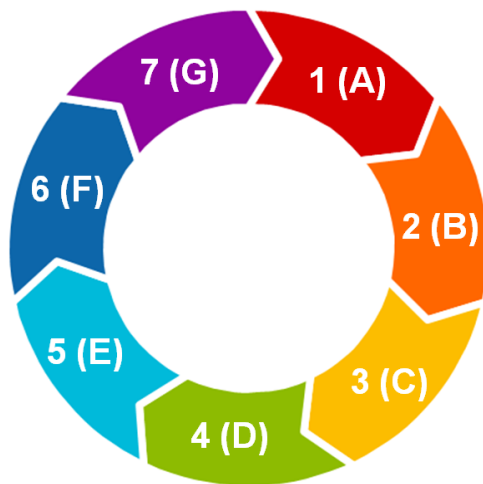
**HOPE**  
IN THE FUTURE



# Visions for a Missionary Church

These suggested visions of a Missionary Church are the result of much prayer and research. They are proven to work well in several contexts around the world including the UK. We invite you to start to think and pray about where you feel the Lord is guiding his Church and if you could start to try some of these principles in your parish. They are not something which will be achieved quickly, rather they are a culture change which will take many years. More information can be found by following the links below. If you would like support in implanting these models, please email [hope@dioceseofsalford.org.uk](mailto:hope@dioceseofsalford.org.uk) or call 0161 817 2214.

## Forming Intentional Disciples (S. Weddell) - Making Disciples & Parish Engine Cycle



### Making Disciples (1-7)

### The Parish Engine (A-G)

**Making Disciples (Thresholds 1-7)** - Generally the journey of an individual with one-to-one relationship building and conversation led by intentional disciples of the parish team to anyone in the area/parish who God puts in their path.

*Taken from Fr Gareth Leyshon's blog 'Catholic Preacher' and based on Sherry Weddell's 7 thresholds of Discipleship - [catholicpreacher.wordpress.com/](http://catholicpreacher.wordpress.com/), [siena.org/](http://siena.org/)*

In the Gospel story of the woman at the well (John 4:5-42), who is sometimes given the name Photina in Christian tradition, Jesus meets a woman who is not even Jewish - yet in a short space of time she is encouraging all her friends to 'come and see' this amazing person who has transformed her life. Would you be surprised to learn that Jesus, the master Evangelist, leads her through precisely the steps identified by Doug Schaupp and Sherry Weddell?

#### 1) TRUST - 'Give me a drink.' (John 4:7)

*The first threshold is TRUST. Without forming a trusting relationship, we have little hope of sharing the Gospel with anyone. Jesus wins this woman's trust by being humble enough to ask her for a drink of water. In the society of that time, he towered over her on three counts: He was a Jew, he was a man, and he was a righteous rabbi in the presence of someone with multiple partners - for who else would draw water in the heat of the noonday sun? But he enters into her world and grants her dignity, affirming that she has the power to do something to help even a Jewish rabbi.*

#### 2) CURIOSITY - 'God would have given you living water.' (John 4:10)

*The second threshold is one of passive CURIOSITY. Now that Jesus has entered a conversation, he drops in a fascinating but perplexing piece of information: 'God*

would have given you living water.’ This is not a demand for the woman to change her behaviour - rather, it’s a statement about God. The woman doesn’t have to pursue this information - but she does! She even acknowledges that Jesus is not one of ‘them’ (a Jew) but one of us (a common heir of ‘our father Jacob’.) The mission is afoot! She is interested! Yet at this stage she is behaving as a ‘consumer’ - she is not looking for God, but only the benefit that God can offer. Who wouldn’t want their own source of water in a hot, dry, Middle Eastern climate?

### **3) OPENNESS - ‘Go and call your husband.’ (John 4:16)**

The third threshold requires OPENNESS to change. The woman wants to take the message of Jesus seriously - she asks how she can receive the living water - but she is aware of problems in her life which could get in the way. She is living outside marriage. We don’t know if it’s her fault that she’s moved on from so many marriages or whether she has been a victim of mistreatment by men, but either way, she knows her current relationship lacks the public commitment which brings God’s blessing on a sexual partnership. How does Jesus deal with this? Does he tell her how to live her life? No. Does he condemn her lifestyle? No. Does he create an opening for her to speak about her lifestyle? Yes! ‘Go and call your husband.’ In this way, the woman is given permission to voice her doubts, and discovers that the door to God’s blessing is not closed in her face.

### **4) SEEKING - ‘Should I worship on this mountain or in Jerusalem?’ (John 4:20)**

At the fourth threshold, Photina - now we can call her this, because the light is entering her life - begins SEEKING. She recognises that Jesus is a prophet - he is one who can speak to her with God’s authority. She starts asking questions about how she can have a better relationship with God. Should I worship on this mountain or in Jerusalem? In reply, Jesus points her to a different kind of worship - but affirms she can be part of it!

### **5) INTENTIONAL DISCIPLESHIP - ‘Could this man be the Messiah?’ (John 4:29)**

Photina now recognises that Jesus is more than just a prophet - he is the Messiah, the Christ, the long-awaited messenger chosen and sent by God. But she doesn’t just recognise this, she becomes an evangelist herself! She goes to the people of her village, with whom she already has some kind of trust, and starts stirring up curiosity in them. Could this man be the Messiah?

By asking the question, we understand that in her heart, Photina has already said ‘Yes, he is!’. In Doug Schaupp’s language, she has become a follower. In Sherry Weddell’s preferred term, she has ‘dropped her nets’ and become an INTENTIONAL DISCIPLE. Pope Francis would certainly recognise her as a missionary disciple.

### **6) MINISTRY - ‘We no longer believe because of what you told us; we have heard him ourselves and we know that he really is the saviour of the world.’ (John 4:42)**

The Christian life does not end with becoming an intentional disciple; indeed, this is just the beginning of an extraordinary adventure. In some of her teaching conferences, Sherry Weddell speaks of later growth in the spiritual life. A disciple will want to use his or her gifts to serve others, exercising some MINISTRY within or beyond the confines of the Christian community. It is clear that Photina has at least a ministry of preaching and enthusing others, for in a short time all the inhabitants of her village are able to say: We no longer believe because of what you told us; we have heard him ourselves and we know that he really is the saviour of the world. They, too, have become intentional disciples!

- 7) **VOCATION** - *Jesus answered, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me." (Matthew 19:21)*

*The Gospel passage ends here, and it leaves us with so many questions. What happened to the people of the village? What happened to the woman herself? All disciples are called to use their gifts to minister and share the Gospel in the place where they are. Some have freedom to reshape their life to express that ministry - embracing a life-changing VOCATION. Did Photina travel beyond her village as a missionary 'equal to the apostles'? Did she marry the man who was not her husband? Did she embrace a life of celibacy for the sake of the Lord? Some Bible scholars think that the conversation with Jesus reflects the ceremony by which a future husband and wife became betrothed; others are less sure. Did she travel to Carthage and to Rome, eventually dying a martyr's death in the presence of Emperor Nero himself?*

*We will not know the answers to these questions until we meet her in heaven. But her enduring vocation is to teach us the art of making disciples, an art she quickly learns from her Messiah. When we go on mission, and when we meet friends with whom we have an ongoing relationship, let us follow her example. Let us plant seeds for the curious to cultivate. Let us open the door when obstacles are obvious. Let us use cautious questions even when our hearts are crying out with joy. For if I tell you that I have found the Messiah, you might be happy for me, or you might dismiss me as a fool. But if I ask you whether you think Jesus might be the one who longs to pour life-giving water into your soul, then you will at least begin to think about the question! As a missionary disciple, what question will you put next?*

**The Parish Machine (Stages A-G)** - Generally the suggested journey of a parish in 'Making Disciples' remembering that individuals will still need to be accompanied one to one through the seven thresholds above as people will travel at different speeds. Some may need to follow the RCIA, others who have already received the sacraments may need further formation and welcomed into the community.

- A) INITIAL PROCLAMATION** - *'For God so loved the world that he gave his only son, that whoever believes in him should not die but have eternal life' (John 3:16)*

An Invitational Church inviting the unchurched to hear the initial proclamation of the Good News of Jesus. At this stage there is no commitments needed and people can enter and leave as they wish. Suggested resources include Alpha, Seeker Teams, Landings and Discovering Christ.

- B) PERIOD OF INQUIRY** - *'Come and See' (John 1:39)*

At this stage people are still free to enter or leave. Those who have heard about the lifesaving work of Jesus reflect on what it means personally for them and what demands following Jesus in the Catholic Church means for them. Small groups and accompaniment is needed here.

- C) ONGOING FORMATION** - *'They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.' (Acts 2:42)*

If they decide they want to continue on this journey of faith, commitment is required from this point onwards. They may inquire to join the RCIA journey of faith course/welcome group. Suggested resources include lectionary based RCIA, Catholicism, Following Christ and Sycamore. If they are on the RCIA they should be

presented to the parish, attend the Rite of election on the first Sunday of Lent at the Cathedral and enter the period of enlightenment during Lent.

**D) SACRAMENTS OF INITIATION** - *‘For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.’ (Galatians 3:27)*

If the individuals are ready to receive the Sacraments this should happen in the presence of the parish community at the Easter Vigil so the parish can continue to support and pray for the candidates as they continue on their journey of faith.

**E) LIFELONG FAITH FORMATION** - *‘He began to teach them many things.’ (Mark 6:34)*

The parish should provide opportunities of lifelong faith formation and fellowship in small groups as a way of staying connected and exploring faith. These could include prayer groups, CaFE courses and theology study. For those on the RCIA this period is call mystagogia and typically takes place in the season of Easter leading up to Pentecost but should be lifelong. This is not knowing about Jesus, but ‘knowing Jesus’ as He reveals Himself to be. Not only talking ‘about’ Jesus but letting Jesus talk about Himself (as He does in the scriptures).

**F) SHARE THE GOOD NEWS** - *“You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you and you will be my witnesses.” (Acts 1:8).*

Those who have encountered Jesus will want to share the Good News with others. There will be diocesan formation and training days to equip groups to do this. Suggested resources include Sharing Christ, Pass it on, Relit and Called & Gifted.

**G) EVANGELISE OTHERS** - *‘Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit’ (Matthew 28:19)*

Teams who are first disciples of Christ and equipped to share him with others can now go out of mission encouraging others on the journey they have just been on remembering the 7 thresholds of Making Disciples. Teams can be Alpha leaders, share their testimony and present the Kerygma in creative ways remembering that the Holy Spirit is the prime agent of evangelisation.

## Divine Renovation (Fr J Mallon) - 'Game Plan'

Another recommended approach is the Divine Renovation 'Game Plan'



# THE GAME PLAN

Taken from [www.divinerenovation.net](http://www.divinerenovation.net)

## 1. Invitational Church

The starting point is to become an “invitational Church”, which is not a programme but both an attitude towards those outside the Church and a parish culture. The parish measures “success” not by the number that show up but by the number of invitations that are made by parishioners, recognising that the responsibility of the parish lies in the invitation being made, not the response.

## 2. Alpha

Fr Mallon describes the Alpha programme as the “pump” in introducing people to the life of discipleship.

“At Alpha, people hear the Gospel in a fresh way, they often encounter Jesus, experience the Holy Spirit and are welcomed into an experience of Christian community like no other,” Fr Mallon wrote in his Divine Renovation Guide Book. “We have found that Alpha is the best first step for people who have been away from church or have had little to no experience of the Christian faith.”

Alpha is used not only to initiate the journey of discipleship but also to develop lay leaders. It also forms part of the RCIA process and is an element of the marriage preparation for couples.

## 3. Alpha team

Following Alpha, guests are invited to come back as members of the team on the next Alpha. The aim is to have 50% of first-time team members on every Alpha and to move those who have already served on the Alpha team to other ministries, thereby creating a continuous leadership pipeline.

No one can serve on Alpha for more than two years, creating space for new leaders to grow.

## 4. Connect Groups

“Connect Groups” are small to mid-size groups (around 20-30 people) that retain the key ingredients of Alpha such as eating a meal together, praise and worship, a talk by a



member of the Connect Group, and prayer for one another.

The groups, each led by four leaders, meet fortnightly in the homes of parishioners and their primary focus is to build community.

This is how the parish ensures that all parishioners are known individually, loved, nurtured and taken care of. Members of connect groups are expected to have attended Alpha before joining the group.

The most trusted leaders within the parish are invited to pastor the Connect Groups and the parish leadership team prioritises investing in these leaders.

## **5. Ministry**

Any parishioner can take part in ministry. The intention is that every parishioner is involved in at least one ministry. Connect Group leaders help identify parishioners' gifts and talents and encourage and support their current ministry or joining one if they haven't done so.

## **6. Discipleship Groups**

Parishioners are also invited to get involved in Discipleship Groups that are focused on learning content, such as catechesis and Bible studies.

Fr Mallon explains that "unlike Connect Groups, they are temporary, meeting only to do a particular programme with no expectation beyond that".

Parishioners are free to choose any programme approved by the parish and are expected to engage in one faith development programme each year.

## **7. Worship**

"It is our conviction that it is only when the fullness of the Christian life is being lived with some kind of involvement in these other aspects that the Eucharist has its proper place as the 'source and the summit of the Christian life', as the Second Vatican Council said," according to Fr Mallon.

"When we are evangelised and in a discipleship process, seeing, experiencing and serving community, worship, especially the Mass, will come to life."

## JOIN THE CONVERSATION

To share your ideas and feedback, contact:



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