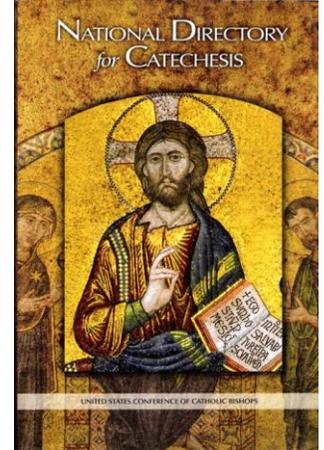


To help catechists, youth ministers and Catholic school teachers faithfully and effectively pass on the faith to others.

# Catechist Formation and the Catholic School Teacher

Catholic Schools of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany

In their *National Directory for Catechesis* the Catholic Bishops of the United States write “The distinctive Catholic identity and mission of the Catholic school also depend on the efforts and example of the whole faculty.... All teachers in Catholic schools share in the catechetical ministry..... Teachers in Catholic schools... should have a thorough knowledge of the Christian message and the ability to communicate it completely, faithfully, and enthusiastically; they should also meet diocesan standards for certification as a catechist.”



Here in the Albany Diocese, the *Personal Policies for Teachers in Catholic Schools* state that “all teachers shall be required to participate in Catechist Formation sponsored by the Office of Evangelization & Catechesis of the Diocese of Albany “(Sect. VII; the responsibility for catechist formation having been assumed by the Catholic School Office as of July, 2015).

## What is Catechist Formation?

Catechist Formation is essentially training of anyone who will be serving the Church in the Albany Diocese as a catechist – one who is sharing the faith with children, teens or adults. New catechists are to receive initial orientation and training before or during their first year in ministry while all catechists are to participate in ongoing training and formation throughout their ministry. The purpose of this training is to help catechists – be they catechists of children, youth ministers, catechists of adults, catechists in intergenerational programs or teachers in our Catholic schools – to faithfully and effectively pass on the faith to others.

## Required Courses and Topics

Recognizing that students in different grades would benefit from their teacher using different techniques, tools and resources in teaching the faith, our catechist formation requirements differ based on the age group(s) that you are teaching, and then there are further differences based on where you are teaching – in a Catholic school or at a parish.

	Catholic Elementary School Teacher (lower grades)	Catholic Secondary School Teacher (upper grades)
<b>BASIC Certification *</b>	<p><i>Common to both tracks/specialties</i></p> <p>Catechetical Tools &amp; Resources</p> <p>Catechetical Techniques</p>	<p><i>Track specific</i></p> <p>The Call &amp; Mission of the Catholic School Teacher</p> <p>Introduction to Hebrew Scripture</p> <p>Introduction to Christian Scripture</p> <p>Jesus: Who do you say that I am?</p> <p>Introduction to the Creed</p> <p>Creative Discipline with Children **</p> <p>Adolescent Catechesis</p> <p>A Vision of Youth Ministry</p> <p>Adolescent Discipleship **</p>
<b>INTERMEDIATE</b>	<p>A Christian Vision of Human Sexuality</p> <p>Church</p> <p>Ecumenism</p> <p>Faith Development</p> <p>Images of God</p> <p>Evangelization</p>	<p>Introduction to Morality</p> <p>Intro to the <i>Catechism of the Catholic Church</i></p> <p>Introduction to the RCIA</p> <p>Introduction to the Sacraments</p> <p>Evangelization &amp; Outreach</p> <p>Introduction to the Liturgical Year</p> <p>Mary &amp; the Saints</p> <p>Ministry to Persons with Special Needs</p> <p>Social Justice &amp; Service</p> <p>Use of Media &amp; Resources</p>

	Catholic Elementary School Teacher (lower grades)	Catholic Secondary School Teacher (upper grades)
	Learning Styles ** Using the Bible with Different Ages Prayer Psychology of the Learner ** Worship	Adolescent Development ** Exploring Scripture with Adolescents Adolescent Spirituality Components of Comprehensive Youth Ministry I Components of Comprehensive Youth Ministry II
<b>ADVANCED</b>	Hebrew Scriptures (4 x 2 hrs) Christian Scriptures (4 x 2 hrs) Christology (4 x 2 hrs) Ecclesiology (4 x 2 hrs) Liturgy & Prayer (4 x 2 hrs)  Electives (3 x 2 hrs)	Morality (4 x 2 hrs) Peace & Justice (4 x 2 hrs) Sacraments (4 x 2 hrs) Perspectives on Ministry 1: The Family Perspectives ... 2: Multiculturalism  Confirmation Today Electives (2 x 2 hrs)
* For information on levels of certification please refer to the diocesan website at <a href="http://www.rcda.org/catform">www.rcda.org/catform</a> . ** Professional teachers are typically exempted from these topics/courses.		

### Opportunities for Catechist Formation

The Albany Diocese expects that those who are teaching religion would have either completed any four of the basic certification topics for their track before they begin, or during their first year in ministry; the remaining four topics are to be completed by the end of their second year. Thereafter, the expectation is that a catechist, youth minister or Catholic school teacher would complete the equivalent of four, two hour courses towards their diocesan certification each year.

This can be done through a variety of means, including...

- New Teacher Orientation
- The Faith Formation Day for teachers offered as part of the Diocese's Spring Enrichment program
- Kateri Institute for Lay Ministry
- St. Bernard's School of Theology
- Individual or series of classes
- Competency Credit
- Independent Study
- Mentoring

On-Line offerings from

- Echoes of Faith 3.0
- My Catholic Faith Delivered
- Sophia Institute for Teachers
- University of Dayton VLCFF
- Notre Dame STEP
- Boston College

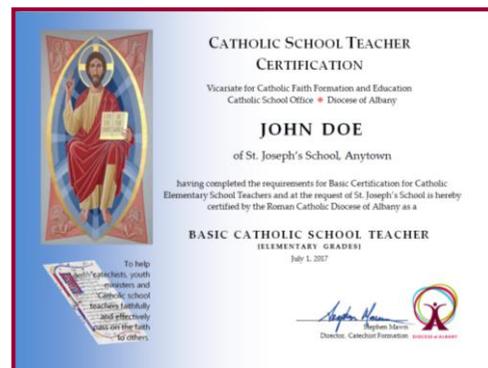
Contact the Diocese's Catechist Formation Office for currently available formation opportunities

Once you've completed a course, you turn in proof of completion/attendance to your school principal or their designee so that it can be entered in your *Diocesan Certification Transcript* (the official copy of which is maintained by your school). When you've completed the necessary courses/topics, your school will submit the request to the diocese that you be certified. After reviewing the request the diocese issues the appropriate certification (to your school to pass along to you) and annually publishes the names of those so certified.

### And what does this certification mean?

Diocesan certification...

- Signifies that you have taken the obligation for ministerial and lifelong formation seriously and have made the effort to pursue training to be a faithful and effective teacher of the faith;
- Publicly shows that your school has taken responsibility for the suitability of its teachers by encouraging their formation and certification, maintaining accurate records and requesting that you be certified when appropriate;
- Is acknowledgement by the Albany Diocese that you have completed the necessary coursework to attain that level of certification; and
- Tells your school community that it can be confident of your competence in both knowledge and skills to serve in catechetical ministry on its behalf.



For further information please consult with your principal and/or contact Stephen Mawn, Director of Catechist Formation at the Catholic School Office ([Stephen.mawn@rcda.org](mailto:Stephen.mawn@rcda.org) | 518-453-6602).