

“Alive in Christ” Catechist Formation
Formation and Certification Guidelines For Catechists

Why Formation is Essential:

In their 1998 joint statement, "*The Catechist in the Third Millennium: Call, Mission and Formation*," The New York State Catholic Bishops made catechist formation priority of their ministry when they stated in their cover letter:

"...it is critical that we ensure that all catechists be well prepared and supported for this important ministry."

We are committed to this goal so that all catechists...receive not only initial training but also on-going formation in order that they keep growing in their personal faith (p. 7).

Catechist formation should offer a diversity of approaches and be presented in a variety of ways to meet the needs of all catechists (p. 7):

“Local ordinaries are to see to it that catechists are duly prepared to fulfill their task correctly, namely: that continuing formation is made available to them, that they acquire a proper knowledge of the Church’s teaching, and that they learn in theory and in practice the norms proper to the pedagogical disciplines.”

Code of Canon Law, 780.

In keeping with this vision, the Diocese of Rochester is committed to making Catechist Formation a priority and as accessible as possible, using new initiatives such as the *Diocesan DVD Formation Series*.

In the Diocese of Rochester we embrace fully the U.S. Bishop’s statement:

“Because effective catechesis depends so heavily on human effort- on professional preparation, planning, performance and evaluation; on personal qualities and commitments; and especially on the faith, hope and love of catechists- we celebrate and express our deepest gratitude for the many thousands of persons who serve the Church as catechists.”

*In Support of Catechetical Ministry
A Statement of the United States Bishops*

Requirements for “Alive in Christ” Certification

There are three levels of Catechist Certification:

The Commissioned Catechist

- I. Each new catechist is to be welcomed and commissioned as a catechist.
- II. Each new catechist will participate in an orientation upon entering the ministry.
 - a) This orientation should include:
 - i) An initial interview where the catechist completes the volunteer application, provides references, and acknowledges and affirms their commitment to the ministry by signing a volunteer covenant.
 - ii) Training on Policies and Procedures of the Parish Program, including completion of the “Creating a Safe Environment Training” **prior** to engaging in active ministry, training and awareness of all Parish or School Safety procedures, and familiarity with Diocesan policies.
- III. Each new catechist will teach under the supervision of the Principal, Parish Director of Faith Formation, or a catechist with Master Level Certification.

Foundational Catechist Certification

I. All catechists in the Diocese of Rochester are expected to have completed or to be actively pursuing the requirements for Foundational Catechist Certification. A Commissioned Catechist has three (3) years to complete the requirements for Foundational Certification.

II. In addition to the requirements for a Commissioned Catechist, Foundational Catechist Certification includes:

- a) Completion of formation modules in **ALL** core content areas:
 - i) Discovering My Experience of God
 - ii) Faith within Families
 - iii) Scripture
 - iv) Creed (doctrine)
 - v) Worship (sacraments)
 - vi) Community (church)
 - vii) Discipleship (morality)
- b) Completion of formation modules in a Catechist’s area of concentration.
Please review the Foundational Certification Worksheet for details about areas of concentration.

Foundational Certification can be accomplished in a number of ways. One practical possibility is completion of the entire ***Echoes of Faith*** video series. Self-Assessment Tools are also available, as well as participation in workshops and seminars.

Master Catechist Certification

I. In addition to the requirements for Commissioned Catechists and Foundational Catechist Certification, requirements for Master Catechist Certification include:

a) Completion of all required content modules for Master Catechist Certification. There are twenty-two (22) additional modules to complete. The Diocese of Rochester's DVD Formation series is the standard and preferred method to complete Master Catechist Certification.

Please review the Master Catechist Certification Worksheet for details of the modules.

II. Master Catechist Certification should be completed no more than five (5) years after obtaining Foundational Certification.

Completion of Master Catechist Certification can be accomplished many ways, the most practical being successful completion of the Diocesan Master Catechist Formation DVD Series. Certification can also be completed through self-assessment, coursework at an approved institution, and workshop or seminar participation.

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Advanced Catechist Training (ACT)

I. After completion of Master Catechist Certification, every catechist is expected to complete and additional ten (10) hours of ACT formation every two years.

This additional formation can be accomplished in a number of ways, including non-required DVD topics, completion of any of the existing 48 non-required Master Catechist Certification modules, coursework at an approved institution, and pre-approved workshop or seminar participation.

Administrative Notes

1. Catechists exercise a special ministerial role in the Church. Therefore, they should be recognized at the parish level in a ritual and with appropriate symbols to recognize their important role on an annual basis.
2. College and university theology and philosophy courses may be submitted for certification credit in some cases. Acceptance of any coursework for credit is at the discretion of and shall be granted by the Diocese of Rochester. Courses proposed for credit should be submitted to the Diocese for *prior* approval, in order to avoid miscommunication.
3. To apply for Catechist Certification, applicants must submit the appropriate diocesan “Catechist Certification Worksheet” to their Principal or Parish Director of Faith Formation.
4. Application for Certification shall be made to the Diocese by a Principal or Parish Director of Faith Formation. The Diocese of Rochester will issue a certificate upon approval of certification to the Principal or Parish Director of Faith Formation.
5. All record keeping is done at the local level using the appropriate Diocesan worksheet. One copy is maintained at the local level and the catechist maintains one copy. The Diocese of Rochester does not maintain records of catechists’ progress. The Diocese of Rochester only maintains a record of certificates issued.

For more information or if you have questions, please contact:

Department of Evangelization and Catechesis
Roman Catholic Diocese of Rochester
1150 Buffalo Road, Rochester NY, 14624
585.328.3210
www.dor.org/ec/

DIOCESE OF ROCHESTER CATECHIST FORMATION WORKSHEET - FOUNDATIONAL CERTIFICATION

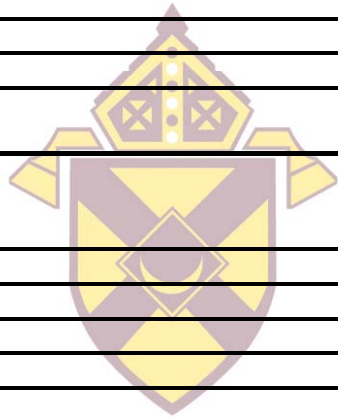
Foundational Certification for the catechist involves completion of the seven core areas of concentration plus the other areas specified for his/her area of ministry. This worksheet is for use by both the catechist and the Catechetical Leader/School Principal, etc. as a way of recording what **Areas of Concentration** have been accomplished. The process should be completed within three years and submitted to the Diocesan Office of Evangelization and Catechesis for the catechist to receive diocesan certification.

Catechist Name Phone #	Address	City	State	Zip Code
Parish/School Name Phone#	Location	CL/Principal		
Start Date of Process	Completion Date of Foundational Certification			

AREA OF CONCENTRATION	HOW WAS MODULE COMPLETED? Course Work? Video? Print? (Explain)	START/COMPLETION DATE	CL/PRINCIPAL/YM INITIALS
CORE AREAS			
SCRIPTURE 1. Basic Tools 2. Old Testament 3. New Testament	1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____	1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____	1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
Creed (Doctrine)			
Discipleship (Morality)			
Community (Church)			
Worship (Sacraments)			
Discovering My Experience of God			
Faith in Families			

ADDITIONAL FOR CATECHISTS OF CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS			
Session Planning			
Group Management/Facilitation			
Age-Level Characteristics			
Praying with Children/Adolescents			

ADDITIONAL FOR SACRAMENTAL CATECHISTS			
Marriage Preparation Team Training			
RCIA Team Training			
Baptism Team Training <i>or</i>			
Preparing Children for Sacraments			
Praying with Children/Adolescents			
Group Management/Facilitation			
Session Planning			
ADDITIONAL FOR ADULT EDUCATION CATECHISTS			
Principles of Adult Learning			
Adult Group Dynamics and Session Planning			
Prayer Styles (a Master Catechist module)			
The Adult Life/Faith Cycle			
ADDITIONAL FOR CATECHISTS IN FAMILY PROGRAMS			
Designing an Intergenerational Learning Session			
Family Spirituality and Prayer			
Age-Level Characteristics			



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**DIOCESE OF ROCHESTER
CATECHIST FORMATION WORKSHEET
MASTER LEVEL FORMATION**

Master Level Formation for the catechist involves completion of all of these modules. This worksheet is for use by both the catechist/teacher and the Catechetical Leader/School Principal/Youth Minister, etc., as a way of recording which modules have been completed. Catechists are expected to complete Master Level Formation within 5 years of completing foundational level catechist formation.

Catechist Name	Address	City/State	Zip	Phone #
Parish/School	Location	CL/Principal/YM		Phone #
Start Date of Process		Completion Date of Master Level Formation		
Completion Date of Foundational Level Formation				

MODULES FOR MASTER LEVEL

REVELATION/CREEDAL CONCEPTS MORALITY/JUSTICE AND PEACE

<p>_____ Christology</p> <p>_____ Trinity/Images of God</p> <p>_____ Mary</p> <p>_____ Death/Judgment/Eternity/ Last Things</p> <p>_____ What is Grace?</p>	<p>_____ Jesus, Justice and Church</p> <p>_____ Principles of Social Justice</p> <p>_____ Principles of Moral Development</p> <p>_____ Conscience Formation</p> <p>_____ Examination of Conscience</p>
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SCRIPTURE

_____ Synoptic Gospels

_____ Gospel of John

CHURCH

_____ Marks of the Church

_____ Teaching Authority of the Church

_____ Laity

SACRAMENTS

_____ Sacraments of Initiation

_____ Marriage & Holy Orders

_____ Penance & Anointing of
the Sick

PERSONAL GROWTH AS A DISCIPLE

_____ Human Sexuality

_____ Vocations and Lifestyles

_____ Scripture and Daily Life

_____ Prayer Styles

Please indicate on the line the date when the module was completed, how it was completed and the initials of the Catechetical Leader, Youth Minister or School Principal.

Ways the Module can be completed: W=workshop, DVD, SA=Self-Assessment

A copy of this worksheet should be kept on file at the parish/school, and a copy should be given to the catechist/teacher to keep in their personal files.