



Christ
the King
ANGLICAN CHURCH

Catechesis Plan Updated July 2023

Preface

To a significant degree, the advance of the Church rises and falls upon the catechesis of her members. The Church has seriously failed in this regard for quite a while, and this has contributed to a national apostasy and a cultural degradation in our generation that is historically unprecedented. We have the task of rebuilding the ruins of a Christian culture, which is the purpose of catechesis. Catechesis is far broader and more essential than most people think. It never ends, for there is *nothing* that happens in a church or home that does not have “catechetical force.” How we eat, educate, shop, joke, sing, dance, and relax all have formative implications, not only for ourselves but for our children as well. The culture created in our parish and home is what communicates our true beliefs and therefore is a powerful catechizing force. Doctrinal instruction, though not insignificant, can rarely on its own reverse a contradicting culture in a home or parish. For this reason, the “Catechesis Plan” addresses more than Sunday School. The intention is to lay out the basic elements of a parish and home culture that is *thick*. We must incarnate a *Way* of being human that is distinctly Christian and rooted in our Anglican tradition, and “walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise...for the days are evil” (Eph 5:15-16).

Means of Catechesis

This catechesis plan primarily first focuses on our parish’s formal means of catechesis--that is, our explicit, intentional, and structured plans to catechize our people. For true and lasting catechesis, however, we also need to pay attention to non-formal avenues of catechesis in our parish, which are deeply formative but not explicitly educational, as well as the means of catechesis within each family or household.

Formal Catechesis

At Christ the King, there are three formal avenues by which the work of catechesis takes place, reflecting the reality that different parishioners are at different ages and stages of faith. Each parishioner is strongly encouraged to engage with the catechetical avenue(s) most appropriate for him or her. Per the REC (canon 19.2a), formal catechesis focuses on the Holy Scriptures and the Doctrine, Polity, History, Liturgy, and Missionary work of the Church. The three ongoing formal avenues of catechesis are as follows:

1. ***Children’s Catechesis.*** These ongoing classes, for children ages 4-12, take place on Sundays immediately following the Liturgy. All children first meet together for a time of singing and recitation of Bible memory work before breaking into their individual classes.

- The **Cranmer** Class (ages 4-5) trains children in understanding the “big story” of the Bible and the liturgical year, making use of the God’s Big Story curriculum.
 - The **Ridley** Class (ages 6-8) aims to increase biblical literacy, making use of the Aelfred Rex Storybook Bible curriculum.
 - The **Latimer** Class (ages 9-12) introduces hermeneutics and a deeper study of different genres of Scripture, using the ESV Bible.
2. **Young Adult Catechesis.** This ongoing class, for young adults ages 13-18, takes place on Sundays immediately following the Liturgy. The focus of the class is applying the Bible and theology to life.
 3. **Adult Catechesis.** This ongoing class, for all adult members of the parish, takes place on Sundays immediately following the Liturgy. Videos summarizing the content of the class are posted on the church’s [YouTube](#) page the following week. Flagship series include:
 - Our Anglican Heritage: A History of Anglicanism (2021)
 - The Apostolic Fathers (2022)
 - Theological Exegesis: How Anglicans Read the Bible (2023)

Additionally, Christ the King offers the following occasional avenues for formal catechesis tied to the pursuit of Confirmation:

1. **Young Adult Catechumen Class.** This seasonal class (generally offered one cycle per year) for baptized children ages 13-18 seeking Confirmation leads youth catechumens through the ACNA catechism *To Be a Christian*. The catechumen engages in spiritual direction with a member of the clergy team, which will include the preparation of a spiritual autobiography (“where I have been”) and the development of a basic Rule of Life to provide structure to their life in Christ (“where I am going”). The catechumen also participates in spiritual mentoring with a lay adult mentor of the same sex, which includes 2-3 “mentor meals” to build relationships with other trusted adults in the parish.
2. **Adult Confirmation Cohort.** This seasonal cohort (generally offered one cycle per year) for baptized adults interested in Confirmation leads adults through a series of four sessions centered on the topics of ecclesiology, apostolic succession, a biblical theology of blessing, and the theology of Confirmation itself.

Non-formal Catechesis

In a very real sense, everything that our parish does is catechetical. While not every aspect of our life together is identified as educational, every aspect is in fact formative. The Anglican tradition, for example, has a saying, *lex orandi, lex credendi* (roughly, “praying shapes believing”). It is our worship, then, as well as our other corporate gatherings, that contribute to our catechetical formation. Examples of where informal catechesis takes place in our parish include:

1. **Sunday Liturgy.** This central weekly act of our life together is a combination of Morning Prayer and Holy Communion from the 1928 Book of Common Prayer. All baptized Christians are invited to partake of the Eucharist. All members are expected to attend the Liturgy every Sunday unless sick or out of town.
2. **Cell Groups.** Meeting every other week, cell groups cultivate community and spiritual friendships within designated geographic areas. All members are expected to make participation at Cell Group a priority.

3. **Men's, Women's, and Young Adult Fellowships.** Meeting once a month, these fellowships offer further opportunities for spiritual friendships and accountability. Participation in these fellowships is encouraged, but not expected as is the case with Cell Groups.

Home Catechesis

St. John Chrysostom called the home a “little church,” rightly intuiting that the rhythms of our families are deeply catechetical in nature. Further resources for equipping families in the work of home catechesis will be provided in a separate document. Generally speaking, some of the aspects of “Home Catechesis” that we commend to all members of our parish include:

1. **Daily Office.** One of the gifts of the Prayer Book, the Daily Office connects us to God and to one another. The Prayer Book includes an abbreviated form of the Daily Office, “Family Prayer,” to be used by families with small children.
2. **Sabbath.** Making intentional choices to honor and keep the Sabbath is a powerful, counter-cultural action in our society today, and communicates volumes to our children about our true priorities.
3. **The Church Year.** Observing the church calendar, with its various seasons, feast days, and fasts, enables us to live into God’s story anew each year. Opportunities abound for fun traditions to reach the hearts of even the youngest of children.

Appendix: All About Catechesis

Content

Traditionally, the church has recognized three primary facets or dimensions of Christian teaching, which correspond with different parts of the human persons, the three self-descriptions of Christ in John 14:6, and the three core elements of most Christian catechisms:

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|-----------------------|----|-------------------------|----|------------------------------|
| 1. Doctrines (Heads) | -> | Believing “The Truth” | -> | The Creed |
| 2. Devotions (Hearts) | -> | Experiencing “The Life” | -> | The Lord’s Prayer/Sacraments |
| 3. Duties (Hands) | -> | Walking in “The Way” | -> | The Decalogue |

Stages

Historically, and as affirmed by the ACNA, there are five defined stages in Catechesis:

1. Inquirers
2. Catechumens
3. Candidates
4. Newly Initiated
5. The Faithful

These five stages work well for thinking about receiving adult converts into the church, but the model seems less helpful for developing an approach to children’s catechesis. For those who enter the church as children of the families in our parish, the following sets out a rough scope and sequence for promoting spiritual growth and development from birth through adulthood. With a clear *telos* of Christian maturity in place, it is then possible to identify key “bench-marks” for each age and plan

developmentally-appropriate pedagogy, utilizing quality curriculum, that will help young people to grow into their identity as members of the family of God. Accordingly, we aim to develop the heads, hearts, and hands of each of the following age groups of children and youth:

1. Small Child (0-4)
2. Child (5-8)
3. Youth (9-12)
4. Young Adult (13-18)

Contact

For more information, contact Dcn. Kyle Hughes, Director of Catechesis (khughes@christthekingatl.com). See further Dcn. Kyle's vision for catechesis in his [*Teaching for Spiritual Formation: A Patristic Approach to Christian Education in a Convulsed Age*](#) (Cascade, 2022).

Resources Consulted

ACNA. *To Be a Christian: An Anglican Catechism*.

ACNA Catechesis Task Force. "Toward an Anglican Catechumenate."

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IRCC 2020 Colloquium, "Catechesis as Monasticism."

Hughes, K.R. *Teaching for Spiritual Formation*.

Nelson, L. "Getting Catechesis Back on Track."

Packer, J.I., and G.A. Parrett. *Grounded in the Gospel: Building Believers the Old-Fashioned Way*.

Williams, D.H. "Considering Catechism for Suspicious Protestants."