A Guide to Designing Age Group Catechesis

Practices for Age Group Catechesis from the *Directory for Catechesis*
(See Chapters 1 and 2 in *Guided by the Directory*.)

✦ Catechesis is for **everyone**!

✦ Our catechetical mission is to **accompany** people in maturing in faith at each stage of life, to **educate** them to riches of Catholicism for living a life of faith today, and to provide **formation** in the practices of following Jesus, the Way, in our world today.

✦ Through our catechetical ministry every person will have opportunities throughout life to experience a **living encounter with Christ**, to know Jesus Christ and his Gospel of liberating salvation, to choose Jesus' way of life, and to live the mission of Christ in the world today.

✦ Catechesis is called to address the **diverse** spiritual and religious needs of our community including those who are *active believers*, *believers* who participate occasionally, *inactive believers*, and *inactive nonbelievers*. We introduce (or re-introduce) people of all ages to the life, message, death, and resurrection of Jesus – **kerygmatic catechesis.** We foster ongoing maturity in faith with all ages – a **mystagogical** catechesis – that nourishes continuing growth in faith and educates them in a "mentality of faith in keeping with the Gospel to point of gradually coming to feel, think, and act like Christ" (77).

✦ The **baptismal catechumenate** is an inspiration for all catechesis through its holistic model of formation that incorporates:

- A first proclamation of the Gospel (kerygma
- A comprehensive introduction to the Christian life; liturgies, rituals, and symbols
- A community of faith and support
- Engagement in the mission of the Church
- Ever deeper formation in faith and the life of the community

✦ Catechesis is **comprehensive** formation through five interrelated tasks or elements of catechesis – providing each person with a variety of faith forming experiences throughout the year that include:

- *Knowledge of the faith* – exploring the Christian message in Scripture and the Church's tradition
- *Initiating into the celebration of the Mystery* – understanding and experiencing liturgical celebrations
- *Forming for Life in Christ* – educating to the good life of the Gospel through the Christian formation of the moral conscience

- *Teaching prayer* – educating for prayer and in prayer - personal, liturgical, and community prayer
- *Introduction to Community Life* – developing belonging to the Church and living its mission

✦ **Human experience** is integral to catechesis in its identity and process, and in content and method. Catechesis seeks to illuminate and interpret people's experiences of life in the light of the Gospel. In order to make the Christian message intelligible to people of all ages, catechesis must value human experience and utilize a variety of processes and methods for educating and forming people in faith.

✦ Catechesis speaks to the needs, traditions, and spirituality of each **culture** in the parish and designs approaches that are designed for the uniqueness of each culture.

✦ Catechesis builds a culture of full inclusion in the life of the Church and all catechetical programming for **persons with disabilities**; and utilizes educational methods that meet the needs of children and young people with disabilities.

Applying the Practices
(See Chapters 4-5-6 in *Guided by the Directory*)
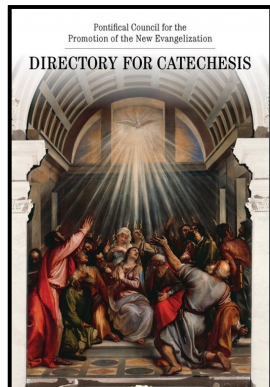
✓ Whole Community / Intergenerational
✓ Families
✓ Children
✓ Adolescents
✓ Young Adults (20s-30s)
✓ Midlife Adults (40s-50s)
✓ Mature Adults (60s-70s)
✓ Older Adults (80+)

@ Home   @ Parish
@ School   @ Community / World

Imagine
*How can you design catechesis that is a **comprehensive** formation in faith through five interrelated tasks or elements of catechesis – providing each person with a variety of faith forming experiences throughout the year?*

- *Knowledge of the faith* – exploring the Christian message in Scripture and the Church's tradition
- *Initiating into the celebration of the Mystery* – understanding and experiencing liturgical celebrations
- *Forming for Life in Christ* – educating to the good life of the Gospel through the Christian formation of the moral conscience
- *Teaching prayer* – educating for prayer and in prayer - personal, liturgical, and community prayer
- *Introduction to Community Life* – developing belonging to the Church and living its mission

Imagine
*How can you design catechesis with age groups that addresses the **diverse** styles of faith and practice with catechetical experiences, programs, and activities personalized to people's faith journey?*

- Designing for *Active Believers. Believers*, *Inactive Believers*, and *Inactive Nonbelievers*.
- Discerning where people are in their faith journey and charting a path for faith growth
- Offering "taste and see" (or refresher), "growing," and "going deeper" catechetical experiences

Imagine
How can you design catechesis so that families with children, young people, and adults can select from a menu of faith forming experiences that address their diverse needs and provide a variety of times, places, and ways to participate?

Imagine
How can your design preparation for sacraments to reflect the catechumenal model and process?

- Personalized parent preparation for those who need a first proclamation of the Gospel (or a refresher) <u>or</u> who need an introduction to the Christian life <u>or</u> need to deepen their faith and practice
- Personalized confirmation preparation for young people to address the diversity of faith and practice
- Mystagogy that provides personal accompaniment for parents and children/teens

Imagine
How can you design catechesis that engages each distinct culture in your community?

- Getting to know deeply the culture of persons
- Understanding how the Gospel and the faith is already present in each culture
- Recognizing the significance of popular piety, cultural traditions and stories, festivals and holidays, art and music In transmitting and celebrating the Catholic faith
- Using learning methods best suited to cultural groups

Imagine
How can your parish become more inclusive and accessible to people with disabilities?

How can you utilize effective teaching practices (flexible grouping, adaptive materials, and natural supports) to structure catechesis for person with disabilities?

How can you implement educational methods that are designed for the learning needs of children and young people with disabilities?

Imagine
How can you utilize the latest research and practices on learning today; and employ the most effective learning strategies and methods for educating and forming people in the faith and for the faith?

How do ensure that learners are at the center of the learning experience, and that everything is designed around them and how they learn best.

Part 2. Strategies for Catechesis in *Guided by the Directory*

Children
See Chapter 4 in Guided by the Directory *(pages 37-50) for descriptions and examples of each strategy.*

1. Develop catechesis with children guided by the research on the most important contributors to faith forming with children.
2. Incorporate the ways that Generation Alpha (2012-) children learn into all catechetical programming and experiences.
3. Utilize the process of the catechumenal model in sacramental preparation for Baptism and First Eucharist using a three-movement process of preparation, celebration, and mystagogy.
4. Implement a comprehensive plan for forming the faith of families with young children (after Baptism) with age-appropriate programs, activities, and resources to guide the family from birth through the start of school.
5. Provide a holistic curriculum for grade-school children that provides a rich menu of faith forming experiences each year, incorporating intergenerational, family, and children's programs and activities.
6. Engage grade-school children and their parents (and grandparents) in a family catechesis program.
7. Provide environments that allow children to encounter the living God directly.
8. Create safe spaces for children to wonder, discover, and make meaning.
9. Implement parent formation and education through programs, activities, resources, webinars, and more for parents of children.

Adolescents
See Chapter 5 in Guided by the Directory *(pages 37-50) for descriptions and examples of each strategy.*

1. Incorporate the ways that Generation Alpha (2012-) and Generation Z (1997-2012) young people learn into all catechetical programming and experiences.
2. Provide a holistic curriculum for young people that provides a rich menu of faith forming experiences each year, incorporating intergenerational, family, and youth programs and activities.
3. Utilize the process of the catechumenal model in sacramental preparation for Confirmation using a three-movement process of preparation, celebration, and mystagogy.
4. Immerse young people into the practices that constitute a Christian way of life that address young people's quest for *becoming* (identity), *belonging* (relationships and community), and *meaning* (how to live with meaning and purpose today).
5. Provide safe spaces, small communities, trusting adults, and faith building skills to guide young people in the process of constructing their own identity and faith.
6. Provide interest-centered small group experiences or sessions on a variety of topics that integrate faith and life around the interests and gifts of young people.
7. Implement parent formation and education through programs, activities, resources, webinars, and more for parents of young people.

Adults
See Chapter 6 in Guided by the Directory *(pages 37-50) for descriptions and examples of each strategy.*

1. Be responsive to the lives of adults – their unique life tasks, situations, needs, interests, and spiritual and faith journeys in the four distinct seasons of adulthood: young adults (20s-30s), midlife adults (40s-50s), mature adults (60s-70s), and older adults (80+).
2. Incorporate the ways that adults learn best into all catechetical programming and experiences.

3. Provide a holistic formation in faith for each season of adulthood – young adults, midlife adults, mature adults, and older adults – with a rich menu of faith forming experiences each year that are responsive to the diverse spiritual-religious lives of adults. Guide adults in discerning where they are in their faith journey, charting a path for faith growth, and providing programming and experiences tailored to their lives.
4. Provide adults with multiple ways to experience one program.
5. Expand the opportunities to engage more adults in learning and faith growth with "on-your-own" faith-forming experiences.
6. Provide interest-centered small groups on a variety of topics that integrate faith and life around the interests and gifts of adults in each season of adulthood.
7. Address the many transitions of adulthood.
8. Engage adults in exploring their Christian vocation and how God calls them throughout the seasons of adulthood – as young adults, midlife adults, mature adults, and older adults.
9. Guide adults in developing a life of faith by exploring and experiencing the practices that constitute a Christian way of life, helping adults create their own "rule of life."
10. Move adult catechesis out to the wider community, expanding the locations for adult programming and experiences.
11. Utilize the catechumenal model of formation with sacramental preparation for adults and address their diverse spiritualities and faith practices.

A Guide to Incorporating the Practices into Age Group Catechesis in Parish

1. Five Tasks of Comprehensive Catechesis
(See Chapter 1 – pages 16-18, Chapter 4 – page 57, Chapter 5 – page 69, and Chapter 6 – pages 84-87)

How can age group catechesis with children, adolescents, and adults incorporate the 5 tasks?
✓ *Knowledge of the Faith*: Fostering knowledge of and exploration of the Christian message in Scripture and the Church's tradition.
✓ *Initiating into the Celebration of the Mystery*: Assisting in the comprehension and experience of liturgical celebrations: the sacraments, especially Eucharist, and the feasts and seasons of the liturgical year.
✓ *Forming for Life in Christ*: Educating the believer to the good life of the Gospel through the Christian formation of the moral conscience.
✓ *Teaching Prayer*: Educating the believer for prayer and in prayer, developing the contemplative dimensions of Christian experience; teaching personal prayer and liturgical and community prayer.
✓ *Introduction to Community Life*: Developing the sense of belonging to the Church and contributing as active participants to building up the community and as missional disciples to its growth.

2. Responsive to Diverse Religious Faith & Practice
(See Chapter 2 – pages 22-23, and Chapter 6 – pages 87-86) (See Resource #1)

How can age group catechesis respond to the diversity of spiritual and religious needs of people?
✓ *Active Believers* who have a vibrant faith and relationship with God and are engaged in a faith community.
✓ *Believers* who participate occasionally in a parish community and whose faith is less central to their daily lives
✓ *Inactive believers* who are not involved in a parish community, but may value and live a spiritual life
✓ *Inactive nonbelievers* who have little need for God and religion.

3. Catechumenal Formation in Sacramental Preparation
(See Chapter 2 – pages 23-24, Chapter 3 - pages 40-42, Chapter 5 – pages 70-72, and Chapter 6 – pagers 90-92) (Example: See page 111)

How can you design preparation for sacraments to reflect the catechumenal model and process?
✓ What would it be like if your parish personalized parent preparation – for Baptism and First Eucharist – to address parents (and children) who need a first proclamation of the Gospel (or a refresher) or who need an introduction to the Christian life or need to deepen their faith and practice.
✓ What would mystagogy look like that accompanies parents and the child in continued faith growth after the sacramental celebration of Baptism and First Eucharist?
✓ What would it be like to personalize the preparation of young people for confirmation to address the different styles of faith and practice among young people: *active believers* growing in faith and practice, *believers* but only occasionally involved in the faith community, *inactive believers* who are more spiritual than religious, and *nonbelievers*.

4. Cultural Inclusivity throughout Catechesis
(See Chapter 2 – pages 28-29)

How can you design catechesis that engages each distinct culture in your community?
- ✓ Getting to know deeply the culture of persons
- ✓ Understanding how the Gospel and the faith is already present in each culture
- ✓ Recognizing the significance of popular piety, cultural traditions and stories, festivals and holidays, art and music In transmitting and celebrating the Catholic faith
- ✓ Using learning methods best suited to cultural groups

5. Inclusion of People with Disabilities
(See Chapter 2 – pages 29-31)

How can you design catechesis that is inclusive and responsive to people with disabilities in your parish community?
- ✓ Becoming more inclusive and accessible to people with disabilities
- ✓ Utilizing effective teaching practices (flexible grouping, adaptive materials, and natural supports) to structure catechesis for person with disabilities
- ✓ Implementing educational methods that are designed for the learning needs of children and young people with disabilities?

6. Variety of Content, Methods, Formats, and Schedules
(See Chapter 2 – pages 27-28) (See Resource 3)

How can you design catechesis with children, adolescents, and the seasons of adulthood that provides a variety of "pathways of catechesis that vary based on the participants needs, ages, and stages of life" (Directory, 223).
- ✓ Variety of content, programs, activities, and resources
- ✓ Variety of learning methods to address the whole person and how he or she learns best
- ✓ Variety of catechetical formats for learning:
  - One program designed in multiple formats
  - One your own learning
  - Mentoring
  - At home learning
  - Small group learning
  - Large group learning
  - Community-based learning
  - Hybrid learning using digital methods
  - Online-only learning
- ✓ Variety of schedules by offering programming in synchronous and asynchronous modes and making programming available anytime and anywhere.

7. Menu of Faith Forming Experiences
(See Chapter 4 – page 58, Chapter 5 – 69-70, Chapter 6 – pages 84-87) (See Resource 1 and 2)

How can you design catechesis so that families with children, young people, and adults could select from a menu of faith forming experiences with a variety of content, methods, formats, and schedules?

Resource 1. Responding to Religious Diversity through a Menn of Faith Forming Experiences

A menu of faith forming experiences for **adults** can be tailored to the profiles of adult faith and practice. A menu approach provides a way to structure learning with experiences, programs, and activities designed to promote growth in faith for adults who want to grow deeper in the faith, for those who are inquiring or aren't sure the Christian faith is for them, and for those who don't need God or religion in their lives.

1. Taste and See Experiences
2. Refresher Experiences
3. Growing Experiences
4. Go Deeper Experiences

Scripture Study Focused on the New Lectionary Cycle
(See pages 109-110 in *Guided by the Directory*)

Introduction to the Gospel
- Online two-part video-based introduction using videos from The Bible Project (https://bibleproject.com)
- Podcasts and audio programming on the Gospel

Exploration of the Gospel (4 sessions)
Four week speaker series: Overview of Gospel, Teachings of Jesus, Ministry of Jesus, and Passion-Resurrection
- Gathered format at church (morning and evening sessions)
- Streamed live online
- Recorded for viewing on YouTube
- Offered as a four-session small group format with videos and study guide

Growing and Going Deeper through Bible Study
Six session Bible Study of the Gospel
- At church with morning and evening sessions for small groups
- Small groups In homes or other setting
- Online small groups using Zoom
- On-your-own learning

Going Deeper through an Online Gospel Course
Eight session online course for on-your-own learning or for small group learning

Curated On-Your-Own Resources
- Bible websites
- Online Bible apps
- Books and video programs

Resource 2. Designing a Menu of Programs and Activities

A significant systemic change in faith formation programming is the move from one-size-fits-all programming to multiple approaches and programming for each season of life (children, teens, young adults, midlife adults, mature adults, and older adults) that provide a variety of experiences, activities, content, and resources for diverse needs and interests; in a variety of formats (on-your-own learning, mentored, small group, large group, church-wide, in the community); with gathered in-person, online, and hybrid modes of faith formation.

The assumption of the one-size-fits all approach is that people of a certain age or stage of life learn in the same way, are in a similar place in their faith journey, have similar religious backgrounds, share common interests and learning needs, and, therefore, have the same religious and spiritual learning needs that can be addressed by one program. This mentality focuses churches on how to get everyone (whoever the audience might be) to participate in the one program.

The menu approach puts people at the center of faith formation and gives them choices over what and when and where they will learn. The variety of offerings is more appealing, as is the flexibility of the program options. It moves away from one-size-fits-all catechesis programming. A menu approach provides the opportunity for variety, choice, flexibility, intentional community, and personalization.

A menu approach provides a way to structure learning with experiences, programs, and activities designed to promote growth in faith for people who want to grow deeper in the faith, for those who are inquiring or aren't sure the Christian faith is for them, and for those who don't need God or religion in their lives.

Parishes can establish participation guidelines so that each year or season children (and their families) and youth would select a certain number of intergenerational experiences, family at-home activities, and age-specific programs at church. This approach puts the learner at the center of faith formation and gives them choice over what and when and where they will learn. This approach might look like this for a semester time-frame:

- Select two in-person catechetical experiences (mini course, one-day program, retreat, etc.) chosen from a list of offerings
- Engage in one service activity or project – alone or with a small group – chosen from a list of projects, followed by an online session to debrief the service experience
- Participate with other generations in a parish-wide activity or take a leadership role in a parish-wide activity
- Participate in two liturgical experiences with other young people or with the whole community: prayer service, special Mass, Stations of the Cross, and more
- Develop a daily prayer practice using one of the resources provided by the parish

Resource 3. Catechetical Formats

A variety of formats can be utilized in age group catechesis. The variety provides a way to offer a diversity of programs in different formats and to offer one program or experience in multiple formats, expanding the scope of catechesis offerings and providing people with more options to participate. Included in this resource are the following formats:

1. One program designed in multiple formats
2. One your own learning
3. Mentoring
4. At home learning
5. Small group learning
6. Large group learning
7. Community-based learning
8. Hybrid learning using digital methods
9. Online-only learning

1. One Program Designed in Multiple Formats
With multiple ways to program in physical, online, and hybrid spaces, one program or experience can be designed in all three spaces, increasing the availability to a wider audience of people while not increasing the number of unique programs a parish creates. The choice is no longer whether to participate or not, but which option best suits a person's time, schedule, and learning preferences. Here is an example of a program that is conducted in multiple formats – same program, multiple ways to experience it.
1. *Large group physical gathering*: People gather at church and a leader facilitates the program—making a presentation (or having a guest presenter) or showing a video, providing time for people to read and reflect, and guiding small groups in discussing the content.
2. *Small group physical gathering*: People gather in small groups in homes or coffee shops or other conducive setting, watch the video, read and reflect on the content, and discuss the content.
3. *Small group hybrid*: People watch the video on their own, then gather online in a small group (Zoom or other video conferencing platform) to reflect and discuss the content.
4. *Online with interaction*: People complete the sessions on their own and share reflections in a Facebook group (asynchronous) or meet on Zoom to discuss the program (synchronous).
5. *Online independent*: People complete the learning program on their own.

2. On Your Own Formats
On your own learning provides maximum flexibility for the learner – when to learn, how to learn, where to learn, and what to learn. With the increasing number and variety of books and printed resources, audio podcasts, video presentations, video programs, online courses, and online resource centers, independent learning offers a 24/7 approach to faith growth and learning. Churches can serve as guide to help people find the best learning format and content to address their learning needs. Examples:
- Reading or listening to books and online recommended reading lists
- Websites for learning, prayer and spiritual formation, action for service and justice
- Online courses: Bible, theology, spirituality, life issues, and more
- Online retreat
- Podcasts
- Videos and video-based programs
- Online prayer websites
- Daily activities online and through apps: prayer, Bible reading, devotions, and much more

3. Mentoring

Mentoring provides a one-to-one relationship that can be utilized as an individual program option, such as a spiritual director/guide with an individual, or as a component in a larger program, such as having mentors for each person in the Christian initiation process or for those who want to explore Jesus and Catholicism after leaving church earlier in life. Mentoring works older to younger, but also younger to older as in the case of young people mentoring adults. Examples:

- Spiritual direction
- Apprenticeships
- Career and life planning
- Life transitions
- Gifts discernment
- Vocational or calling discernment and formation
- Strengths discernment

4. At Home

At home formats provide individuals and whole families with experiences, programs, activities, and resources designed for use at home or in daily life. This can include a wide variety of print, audio, video, digital media, and online programs and resources. Examples:

- Online resources and playlists for faith practice at home—praying together, reading the Bible, celebrating rituals and milestones, celebrating the church year seasons, serving, learning the Christian story, eating together, having family conversations, providing moral instruction, and talking about faith, religious issues, and questions and doubts
- Milestone preparation and celebrations
- Celebration of seasons of the church year and the calendar year
- Sunday worship activities for families—conversations, table rituals, podcast or video, daily prayer, Bible reading, service ideas
- Online ideas and resources for parents—faith sharing, parenting skills, family life activities
- Parent support groups online or in physical spaces

5. Small Group

Smal group formats provide lots of flexibility in content, schedule, and location (online, home, coffee shops, at church, and more). Groups can meet at times and places that best fit members' lives. Small groups create an accepting environment in which new relationships can be formed. It is not always necessary for the church leaders to conduct small group programs. Churches can provide resources, support, and training for small group leaders, thereby enabling people to organize their own small groups. Examples:

- Discipleship, faith sharing, or study groups such as Bible study groups, theological study groups, thematic or issue-oriented study groups, Sunday lectionary-based faith-sharing groups, seasonal small groups such as Lenten study groups
- Spiritual formation and direction
- Prayer and spiritual growth groups
- Book or video study groups
- Practice-focused groups such as prayer groups and service/faith in action groups
- Support groups for caregiving, recovery, grief, divorce
- Parent support groups for different stages of family life
- Ministry groups involved in leadership in the church and world.
- Life transition groups—college, careers, retirement

6. Large Group
Large group formats provide a way to engage a wider audience with programming and experiences that can be utilized for a variety of theological, biblical, and life-centered themes and topics. Examples:
- Presentations and single-session programs
- Multisession program such as a speaker series or video series
- Seasonal celebrations and presentations through the church year
- Roundtable discussions after Sunday worship to explore the scripture readings and sermon
- Workshops focused on practical knowledge and skills for age groups or families or all ages
- Field trips such as visiting a museum or cultural site
- Retreat experiences such as an evening, one-day, or weekend program
- Intergenerational programs for all ages
- Church-wide action projects for service, justice, or care for creation
- Intergenerational faith formation programs
- Whole family faith formation programs
- Music, art, film, drama or dance programs, performances, and festivals
- Conferences

7. Community
Community-based formats offer a way for churches to utilize programs, courses, clinics, workshops, and presentations sponsored by other churches, community organizations(libraries, the Y, museums), regional and national church agencies, retreat centers, Christian camps, and colleges and universities. This is an important format for developing local partnerships and initiatives for serving, working for justice, and caring for creation. Many organizations—locally, nationally, and globally—have already created programs that can be adopted by a church as part of a lifelong faith formation network.

8. Digital and Hybrid Formats
Hybrid models of catechesis hold together two important values in faith formation: 1) the importance of in-person relationships and faith-forming experiences and 2) the importance of being responsive to the complexity of people's lives and their religious-spiritual needs. Hybrid models expand faith formation opportunities for everyone. Parishes can become much more intentional about when, where, how, and why they gather because they can now integrate online with in-person faith forming. The key to hybrid catechesis is the integration of in-person faith forming with online faith forming in one holistic integrated experience.

One way to develop a hybrid model is to begin in-person and then deepen it with online programming.

Worship & Online Formation
- Participate in weekly worship (in-person or live streamed).
- Engage in faith forming activities using an online playlist on Sunday's theme: prayers, readings, video, podcast, art, music, creative activities, conversations, action ideas, etc.

In-Person & Online Formation
- Meet in-person once per month (or every other week).
- Engage in online faith formation for the other weeks using a playlist on the theme.

In-Person & Online & Video Meetings
- Week #1: Meet in-person for the program.
- Week #2: Engage in online faith forming experiences using a playlist on the theme.

- Week #3: Continue with the playlist learning on the theme.
- Week #4: Conduct a video meeting (Zoom) for small groups or age groups or families to discuss and apply the online learning.

In-Person & Live Streamed or Video & Online
- Week #1: Meet in-person for the program.
- Week #2: Engage in online faith forming experiences using a playlist on the theme.
- Week #3: Conduct a livestream presentation or demonstration or prerecorded video (using Zoom, Facebook Live, or YouTube Live) on the theme of the month's program.
- Week #4: Continue with the playlist learning on the theme.

A second way to develop a hybrid model is to begin with online programming leading to in-person experiences. This approach is known as *Flipped Learning* in which direct instruction moves from the group learning space to the individual learning space online, and the group space is transformed into a dynamic interactive learning environment where the leader/teacher guides participants as they creatively discuss, practice, and apply the content. Here is a basic outline of a 4-week model.

Online & Small Group Gatherings
- Week #1: Engage in online learning on the theme.
- Week #2: Participate in a small group gathering to discuss and apply the learning (in-person or through video conferencing)
- Week #3: Engage in online learning on the theme.
- Week #4: Participate in a small group gathering to discuss and apply the learning (in-person or through video conferencing)

Flipped Learning is very helpful when it is difficult to gather people, such as preparation for a sacrament. We can *prepare* people online with the appropriate content (experiences, activities, video/audio, and resources); then *engage* them in-person for the event or program; and *sustain and apply* the experience through online formation. A good example of this is an adolescent confirmation program. Here is a monthly format for young people that can be developed into a yearlong program.

- **On Your Own**: Engage young people with a monthly learning playlist—watching videos, reading short articles, praying, writing reflections in a journal—on the theme.
- **In a Small Group**: Have young people participate in one small group experience (online) to discuss the content in the playlist and what they are learning.
- **In a Large Group**: Involve young people in a monthly meeting with all groups for community sharing, interactive activities, short presentations, and ideas for living faith.

9. Online-Only Learning
Parishes can develop fully online catechetical programming (asynchronous) by offering independent (on your own) faith formation using the abundance of online programs and resources for all ages, especially adults. Churches can develop a complete online faith formation experience with content and experiences, such as an online Advent or Lent curriculum, that connects the seasonal events at church with online content for experiencing the season in daily and home life. The online experiences can include prayer activities, daily Bible readings, daily devotions, study resources, videos, and service activities. Churches can create webinars, such as theology presentations for adults or a parent formation.

Designing Age Group Catechesis Programming

Use this process to create a new program or redesign an existing program based on the practices from the Directory for Catechesis & Guided by the Directory.

Design Process

1. **Audience**: *Who is your target audience?*

2. **Goals**: *What do you want to accomplish? Which faith maturing goal(s) are your focused on?*

3. **Needs**: *What are you addressing in the lives of your target audience?* Consider the life tasks specific to their stage(s) of life; their interests, concerns, needs, and questions; their milestones and transitions in life; their cultural experiences, traditions, and practices; and their religious and spiritual characteristics and needs/hungers

4. **Content**: *What are the essential topics or themes that need to be incorporated in programming that Is responsive to the lives of your target audience <u>and</u> addresses your faith maturing goal(s)?*

5. **Personalized**: *How can you design catechesis that addresses the diverse styles of faith and practice – with active believers, believers, inactive believers, and inactive nonbelievers – with catechetical experiences, programs, and activities personalized to people's faith journey?*

6. **Programming**: *Which catechetical formats can be utilized for this particular(s) and content (themes or topics)?*

7. **Scheduling**: *When will each program format be scheduled? What is the duration for each program?*

8. **Personnel**: *Who will lead and implement each program?*

9. **Resources**: *What resources are needed to implement each program?*

Generating Ideas

When you are generating ideas be sure to practice these simple rules. The key in generating ideas or strategies is to give yourself and the team the freedom to imagine the possibilities. Follow these simple rules:

- Generate as many ideas and strategies as possible.
- Assume you have the resources you need for any idea (money, staff, facility, etc.).
- Don't place limits on your creativity.
- Remind people that there is no discussion and no critique of ideas.
- Feel free to add onto other's ideas.

List the ideas of newsprint. After you have finished generating ideas, connect similar ideas into one integrated idea. Then create a final list of all the ideas you have generated.