

Called to Teach and Learn

A Catechetical Vision and Guide for the Episcopal Church

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Chapter One

To Be Christian: Catechetical Aims

A Way of Life for the Baptized

Christianity is a way of life. It is the life of the baptized. "Christians," wrote Tertullian, the third-century theologian, "are made (fashioned), not born." Called to Teach and Learn is a guide to the ongoing process by which Christians are "made." In the words of the Presiding Bishop's Task Force Report, this process is one "whose purpose is to support the people of God as they seek to live the Baptismal Covenant and to express their unique calling as followers of Jesus Christ." Before we explore the various dimensions of that process, we need to consider the question: what is the Christian way of life? We do that by exploring our baptismal liturgy, for it is at our baptism that we are told who we are and how we are to live.

St. Paul reminds us that "we have been buried with him [Christ] by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:4). Or, as our thanksgiving over the water of baptism reads: "In it we are buried with Christ in his death. By it we share in his resurrection. Through it we are reborn by the Holy Spirit." (The Book of Common Prayer, 1979, p. 306). Christian baptism is rooted in the ministry of Jesus of Nazareth, and in his death and resurrection. Baptism is our response to Jesus' call, "Follow me." Baptism marks the beginning of our journey as his disciples, a journey in which we apprentice ourselves to him that we might become like him. Through baptism we are incorporated into Christ, who is the crucified and risen Lord of life; through baptism we enter into the new covenant made between God and God's people. Baptism celebrates a gift from God and our grateful human response to that gift, administered in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

In An Outline of the Faith, or Catechism (BCP, 1979, p. 845) we read, "Holy Baptism is the sacrament by which God adopts us as his children and makes us members of Christ's Body, the Church, and inheritors of the kingdom of God." (BCP, 1979, p. 858). As such, baptism is the sacrament of new beginnings: our incorporation into a new era in history and a new way of life, the life of all the baptized. Thus, the Christian way of life begins with baptism. To be baptized is to be in Christ and to share a common life of faith, a Christ-like life intended to be radically different from the lives of the unbaptized. It is a life of service and servanthood. It is a life of action for justice, peace, and reconciliation. It is to be a faithful witness to the life that is possible for all those who respond to what God has made possible in the death and resurrection of Jesus and continues to make possible through the Holy Spirit for all who accept Jesus as their Savior. It is a way of life rooted in love and faithfulness, rather than law and obligation. It is a life resulting from a gift and a grateful response, not from fear and duty. It is a life whose goal is purity, both of motive and of act.

As The Book of Common Prayer (1979, p. 312) suggests, it is especially appropriate to celebrate baptisms and baptismal renewals at particular occasions. The first and foremost is the **Easter Vigil**, for it makes us aware that in baptism we are buried with Christ in his death, and by it we share in his resurrection. Baptism signifies our death to self-centered life and resurrection to self-giving life in Christ. Another occasion is the **Day of Pentecost**, the final day of the Easter season, which, while maintaining the Paschal setting of baptism, makes us aware of the baptismal gift of the Holy Spirit. It is through the action of the Holy Spirit that we, too, are called to action and raised to and guided in this new life. A third is **All Saints' Day** (or the Sunday following), which makes us aware of the union of all who have been baptized with Christ and with one another in the communion of the saints, and of the triumph of the saints over bondage to sin and death. A fourth is the feast of **the Baptism of our Lord**. It makes us aware that in baptism we are empowered for ministry, to love and serve in Christ's

name. And the last occasion for celebrating baptism is the visitation of the bishop, which makes us aware that Holy Baptism is full initiation into Christ's body, the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. Having had the gift of a new life bestowed upon us in the waters of baptism, we are sealed by the Holy Spirit, marked as Christ's own forever, and placed under the rule of Christ.

Baptism, then, is a sign of God's reign and of the life of the world to come. It initiates us into the reality of this new life in the midst of the present world. Baptism is the sign of new life in Jesus Christ; through it the baptized are pardoned, cleansed, sanctified, and empowered to be a people of justice and peace under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Baptism is more than a momentary experience; it is the beginning of a life-long process of growth in Christ. We are always living into our baptism, that is, becoming more fully who we already are: Christ's body, Christ's presence in the world, a sign and witness to God's reign, acting, building with God the reign of wholeness and holiness. As St. Matthew remembers the commission of the disciples, "Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit and teach them to obey everything that I have commanded you." (Matt. 28:19-20).

The Baptismal Covenant (BCP, 1979, pps. 304-5)

At baptism God calls us into an indissoluble bond with God, whose grace in our lives makes it possible for us to respond with a solemn promise to live a particular way of life in faith. The first segment of this Baptismal Covenant — the Apostles' Creed - provides us with a summary of Christian faith as contained in Scripture, and an image of the nature and character of the triune God, who has chosen to enter into covenant with us. Our baptismal creed presents us with a poetic narrative, concerning what we know by faith, of God and God's ways, including what God has done for us.

But first, before we enter into that covenant, we perform two important actions. In the first set of vows we renounce evil, that is, we renounce the power of those forces in

the cosmos, in society, and in ourselves that strive to influence us to live in ways that alienate us from God, our true selves, each other, and the natural world. In the second, we commit ourselves to Jesus Christ and his influence, so that we might live in unity and harmony with God, our true selves, each other, and the natural world.

Responding to and enabled by God's unmerited, transforming love and desire to enter into a covenant with us made known in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we turn from the influence of evil, and toward Jesus Christ. We acknowledge him as the one whose action on the cross saves us from captivity to evil's power and sin by not only forgiving us our sinfulness, but also freeing us from the compulsion to keep on sinning. We affirm Jesus as our Savior, the one who frees us to act as healthy, mature persons in the image of God. We put our trust in God's redeeming and transforming power and love, which is ever present and active, turning the negative effects of evil and sin into positive graces in history and in our lives. We acknowledge that we need no longer rely on our own strength and courage, or on our own wisdom and will. We acknowledge that God will supply all our true needs and will provide us with the power to resist evil and to know and do God's will. And last, we promise to follow and obey Jesus. That is, we promise to apprentice our lives to him in order to become fully Christ-like. Having made those vows, we enter into covenant with God.

The frame of our creedal covenant is I believe and Amen. The I of our Baptismal Covenant is both personal and communal in that while each of us affirms our own faith, the faith we affirm is first the community's faith. The I believe (credo in Latin) is not so much an intellectual acceptance of doctrinal truths, as it is an act of offering our love, loyalty, devotion, and obedience to a personal triune God. The amen, the so be it, is our public profession that on this act we stake our lives and promise to use this image of God and God's ways as our guide to the life of faith into which we are baptized. We do this by responding to three questions concerning the nature and character of God.

In the language of poetry, this symbol of faith provides us with an image of God

held by the Church from its birth at Pentecost, an image of God centered in the revelation of Jesus Christ. As the first step in our Baptismal Covenant the creed not only affirms our convictions concerning the nature and character of God, but it also implies a set of appropriate responses.

The triune and personal God with whom we make this covenant is the one who births, rules, and orders all life in sovereign, transcendent majesty, and yet who is like a loving parent who nurses and nurtures us as sons and daughters. God longs for intimacy with us and for harmonious relations among all creatures and all of creation. The world which we inhabit belongs to this God, who has a purpose for all of creation and is present and active within it, recreating (redeeming) all that we do to deny or distort that purpose. And in God's good time, God will bring the world to its intended end.

This same God entered human life and history in the person of Jesus of Nazareth to provide us with an image of who and whose we are, and how we are to live. Jesus in his crucifixion joins us in our suffering. He remains faithful, while bearing the consequences of our unfaithfulness, and his faithfulness destroys the power of evil. In his resurrection and the gift of the Holy Spirit, the power to resist and overcome evil present in him, is available to us. Jesus' death and resurrection frees us from captivity to the influences of heredity and environment so that we might, with God's help, become what God intends us to be, faithful sons and daughters, brothers and sisters, abiding together until God's reign of justice and peace comes in its fullness. Jesus through his resurrection raises us to new life.

This God conquers evil through sacrificial love and searches after the estranged with a judgment that seeks reconciliation rather than retribution.

This God guides, goads, and strengthens us through the Holy Spirit as we endeavor to abide in God's reign and live according to God's will. This God remains present and active in the world as Spirit. This is especially true in the Church, which is a

community of reconciled and reconciling people, a sign and witness to God's intentions for human life and history. This same God can be trusted to see that nothing prevents us from fulfilling the meaning and purpose of our lives. To put it another way, nothing can separate us from the love of God and never-ending life with God.

To summarize, in the Baptismal Covenant we respond to God's grace by giving our love, loyalty, devotion, and obedience to a triune, personal God who brings all life into being and makes human beings in God's likeness, and sets them free to live in relationship to God, each other, and nature. This God continually acts to transform all that we do to deny and distort these relationships. This same God is present and active in human life and history, restoring all people to unity with God and each other in Christ, thereby bringing to fulfillment God's intentions for all creatures and creation.

Our life with God is one of response. In gratitude for what God has done and is doing for us, we are enabled to promise to live a particular way of life. God's will for us is to love God and to love all others as we are loved. With God's help, we are to abide in God's reign, walk in God's ways, and do God's will. To clarify and make specific what this implies, in our Baptismal Covenant we make five concrete promises.

One: "Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers?" (BCP, 1979, p. 304) Acknowledging that one cannot be in community with God if one is not living in a community of faith, we promise to take our place in a learning, caring, witnessing, and worshiping community. We promise to do all that is necessary to live into our baptismal life of faith, by engaging the Scriptures until its story becomes our story, by disciplining our lives that we might grow into an ever-deepening and loving relationship to God, and by participating faithfully in the Church's sacramental life, so that we as Church might be Christ's sacrament in the world.

Two: "Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?" (BCP, 1979, p. 304) Acknowledging that while evil has no power over us, its influence surrounds us and we will surely succumb to it; therefore, we

promise to live a self-critical life and, when we sin, to reverse the direction of our lives and return again to modeling our lives after Jesus.

Three: "Will you proclaim by words and example the Good News of God in Christ?" (BCP, 1979, p. 305) Acknowledging that we have an obligation to share with others the gifts and graces God has lavished on us and desires for all people, we promise to live lives that are a sign and witness to the good news of God's reign of justice and reconciliation. That is, we promise that by what we say and do we will make known to the world that there is an alternative for human life, which is life with God, in God's reign, doing God's will. And we promise that we will invite our sisters and brothers in the human family to join us in participation in and practice of the Christian life of faith as it is lived in a worshipping, learning, caring, serving community of faith to follow the Way of God in Christ.

Four: "Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?" (BCP, 1979, p. 305) Acknowledging our gratitude for God's unconditional love, we are to seek out Christ, the image of God, in all people. Especially are we to help those who have denied and/or distorted the image of God in which they are created by loving them in the same manner as God has loved us. We are also to seek out the needy, the neglected, and the unloved to be present to them in ways that make it possible for them to experience God's grace and receive the wholeness and health God wills for them.

Five: "Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?" (BCP, 1979, p. 305) Acknowledging that God's reign is a social as well as a personal reality, we make a commitment to act for justice and peace. We do this by showing, in gestures large and small, what it means to abide in God's reign, where all people live in unity with God and have respect for each other, and where all human needs are met with equity. And we are to witness to God's reign by joining with others to make a contribution to the transformation of society into one, in

which all persons are reconciled with God, each other, and the natural world, and justice for all people is realized. We further commit to honor and respect the uniqueness of persons of all ages and persons of special needs, across all racial, ethnic and cultural groups.

The Christian Life of Faith: Related Issues

Having outlined the Christian life of faith as expressed in the Baptismal Covenant, we now identify three of the varied dimensions of this life needing to be addressed, if we are to live that life faithfully.

Faith and Theological Reflection

The concept of faith is multifaceted. In Scripture and tradition it is used in various ways. For example, from an intellectual perspective, faith encompasses believing and discerning both truth and God's will, and is concerned with thought and convictions. From an attitudinal perspective, faith encompasses trusting and loving, and is concerned with experience and loyalty. From a behavioral perspective, faith encompasses obeying and worshiping, and is concerned with action and commitments. However, faith is perhaps best understood as perception, that is, a person's world-view, their way of "seeing" life and their lives. These perceptions are contained in the symbols, sacred stories, and rites that shape our beliefs, experiences, and actions. The Christian way of life cannot be separated from the Christian perception of life and our lives. It is a perception about reality that is not self-evident, but comes to us as revelation, a mediated gift.

While faith is something we do, it also has content. It is, therefore, more appropriate to say that we grow in faith, than it is to say that faith develops or grows. Faith is both a gift and a human response to God's self-revelation. As the author of Hebrews put it (Hebrews 11:1), faith gives substance (assurance) to our hope and

makes us certain (convinces us) of a reality we do not see. It is through faith that we perceive (understand) that the universe was fashioned by the Word of God (Hebrews 11:3), and it is by faith that persons throughout history have been able to believe and accept the promises of God. Faith is a virtue, a "habit of the heart" like hope and love, a quality and action of the mind, the grace of perceiving life and our lives through the eyes of God.

Faith and theology, therefore, are not the same. Faith precedes and presupposes theology. There is only one faith, but there are multiple theologies. Theological reflection is faith seeking understanding. It is a contextual, constructive, and systematic act of trying to make sense and meaning of the Church's faith in a particular time and place. Theological reflection is a necessary activity for all who are able to reason. Faith, for which all persons, including the youngest child, have a capacity, is more basic. And, theology and doctrinal statements always need to be secondary to faith; for while faith unites, theology can divide.

Character and Ethical Decision-Making

Christian character is, like faith, foundational. Our character is our sense of identity and how we are disposed to behave. A person's character refers to their "habits of the heart," their disposition to behave in particular ways, their distinctive style of life. Good character implies a virtuous life involving integrity, reliability, and consistency. A Christian's character, if it is to be Christ-like, embraces both actions and motives.

Conscience is different from character. An act of conscience is a rational decision, concerning the right thing to do in a particular situation, in the light of principles and norms drawn from faith, and theological reflection. A Christian conscience presupposes a Christian character.

Consciousness and Life in the Spirit

Consciousness is the capacity to be aware of, attentive to, or respond to, particular aspects of experience, such as, the needs of others. Piety, the interior life of religious experience and the awareness of God's presence and action in our lives, is dependent on consciousness. The psyche, ego, or self is the carrier of our consciousness. It is as a consequence of our consciousness that we are able to experience God, communicate with God, and be aware of God's presence and action.

Without a Christian consciousness, awareness of particular experiences will elude us. Just as faith comes before theological reflection and character before acts of conscience, so consciousness comes prior to life in the Spirit.

Life in the Spirit is life lived in an ever-deepening and loving relationship to God, and, therefore, to self, neighbor, and nature. While we learn to think theologically, to make ethical decisions, and to live a life of prayer through one set of particular processes, we acquire our faith, character, and consciousness through very different ones. This explains why it is important to differentiate among them, to acknowledge their individual importance, and to affirm their interrelationship.

Summary

The aim or goal of the Church's catechetical ministry is, with God's help, to become communities of persons who are devoted to assisting each other, and who are compelled to live fully the life of faith into which they have been baptized.

sidebars for Ch. 1

Note: they are taped to the original ms. approximately where they should appear on the page.

To be baptized is to be in Christ, to be members of his body, the Church, and thus to share a common way of life. It is a commitment to a life-style radically different from that of the world.

Charles Price and Louis Weil in Liturgy for Living, Seabury Press, 1979.

Baptism is that essential act by which the Church always reveals and communicates her own faith.

Alexander Schmemmann in Of Water and the Spirit, St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1974.

Say the creed daily. When you rise, when you compose yourself to sleep, repeat your creed, render it to the Lord, remind yourself of it, be not irked to say it over.

St. Augustine in a sermon.

The goal of catechesis is right living. We find this goal's clearest illustration in the early catechumenate, with its gradual correction of life-style, completed only when the candidate was able to walk as a follower of Jesus among the followers of Jesus.

Michael Warren in Faith, Culture and the Worshipping Community, Pastoral Press, 1993.

Faith is that sure and certain knowledge of the divine benevolence toward us...revealed to our minds and confirmed to our hearts by the Holy Spirit.

John Calvin in The Institutes of the Christian Religion, 1536, trans. Ford Lewis Battles, Eerdmans Publishing, 1986.

The creed serves both as a chant of praise and as a witness of faith....We confess with our lips what we believe in our hearts.

Bernard Marthaler in The Creed, Twenty-Third Publications, rev. 1993.

Chapter Two

The Making of Christians:

The Catechetical Process

Overview—Theological Foundations

Jesus, in Matthew's account of God's good news (Matt. 28:18–20), presents the Church with its great commission: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you."

As the baptized, we are to make every effort to invite all people to follow Jesus, and to imitate his way of life by apprenticing their lives to his. We do that by incorporating them into the life of a community of faith, where, with the faithful, they might participate in life under God's rule, and practice obedience to God's will.

In these verses, the Church is given an evangelical and a catechetical task, a mandate to preach and teach. The Church is called to engage in an evangelizing catechesis, which not only communicates and nurtures the life of faith, but unceasingly confronts and continually converts those within and without the community of faith to gospel loyalty, convictions, and commitments.

With its roots in baptism, catechesis is an aspect of the prophetic mission of the Church to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ. The Church is bidden by God and history to renew its commitment to, and trust in, its catechetical ministry as a foundational element in the fulfillment of that mission.

Catechesis comes from the Greek root of a verb, meaning "to cause to sound in the ear," or, "to echo." The literal translation implies that Christian catechesis is to cause to sound in the ear of the learner the Word of God -- the biblical story and, ultimately the

Word made flesh, Jesus Christ. Unfortunately, this may lead to an understanding of catechesis as echoing words in terms of memorized Bible verses or words from a catechism. While it is important to remember that catechesis is concerned with making the biblical story our story, emphasis on echoing the Word also reminds us that Jesus is the Word and that catechesis is the process by which we "reproduce" Jesus, or "make Christians." In English, catechesis is "Christening," the process for forming Christ-like persons.

Catechesis implies teaching as Jesus taught. Jesus sought disciples (learners) and invited them to follow him. He wanted them to identify with him, be present to him and observe his way of life, and then to participate in and practice that way, to imitate it. Catechesis, therefore, is best exemplified within the apprenticeship tradition.

Jesus went about preaching and teaching the coming of God's reign, a condition in which people lived their lives under God's rule and showed it in their relationships to God and each other. That preaching and teaching had authority because Jesus not only talked about it as a way of life, he lived it. The same was true in the early Church; the lives of the faithful attracted others to the gospel. Catechesis was the nurturing-converting process by which persons participated in and practiced this way of life, to prepare for baptism. At their baptism, they renounced their past way of life and its influences, turned in a new direction, to adhere to the influence of Jesus and his way of living, and then made a covenant to live that life ever more fully.

As time went on, adult converts became fewer, and increasingly children were baptized. Soon, however, the Church realized that there is a difference between being made "a Christian" by baptism and being "Christian," that is, living a Christ-like life of faith. Catechesis then began to include the ways we shape persons to be Christian after their baptism. Today, it includes all the means by which we prepare new Christians for baptism, and aid all the baptized to live into their baptism and become who they already are — Christians — but in ever deeper and fuller ways.

The aim of all this is to fashion Christ-like persons and communities who live in fellowship with Christ and in community with each other. This enables each to live Jesus' way of life, for others to see, be attracted to, and learn to model.

Recall that from the beginning those who followed Christ were troubled by being called Christians, or Christ-like persons. However, Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, told his flock, before he was martyred, "Accept the name, not as something of which you are worthy, but as something to which you aspire. Soon they will put me to death because they say I am a Christian. I pray that I may be found Christian in fact and not in name only."

With this in mind, catechesis is best understood as three intentional, interrelated, life-long processes: Formation, education, and instruction/training.

I. Formation: Participation and Practice

Formation is the participation in and practice of the Christian life of faith. It is the same process that nurtures (helps us to conform to Christ's way of life) and converts (helps us to be transformed from another way of life to Christ's way of life).

Formation is the means by which a community's world-view and value system are transmitted. It is called enculturation, or socialization, when it occurs between one generation and another. It is called assimilation, when it involves a person changing from one world-view and value system to another. It is called inculturation, when it involves a community taking a world-view and value system and translating it into their own world-view and value system.

Our faith (how we perceive life and our lives), our character (our identity and behavioral dispositions), and our consciousness (our awareness and predispositions to particular experiences) result from such processes. This begins the moment we are born, occurring first in our homes and church, then later including our experiences in school, peer groups, voluntary associations, work places, mass media, and so forth.

Enculturation, or socialization, is best understood as a process of interaction and influence. Not only do persons determine their responses to these influences, but there are multiple influences desiring loyalty, and these may radically differ. Therefore, it is particularly important that there be cohesion and correspondence among the influences on children in their primary associations. Minimally, these are the home and congregation.

When we are unaware of these influences or unintentional about them, they become a "hidden curriculum." This explains why people sometimes appear to learn the opposite of what we intended to teach. The following areas of formation must be examined carefully in the light of our understanding of the Christian life of faith. Unless we are intentional about these aspects of our common life, in home and congregation, our ability to fashion Christians will be diminished.

Participation in the Communal Rites of the Church

Ritual worship is the primary responsibility of the Church, and nothing else that it does can compare in importance. If the Church only gathers for worship, it need not question its place or influence in the world. If it loses faith in the act of worship, if it is mindless in ordering and careless in the conduct of worship, it cannot expect its other activities to save it, for it is dead in its heart. This explains why, historically, when the Church discerned that it was not living faithfully, it revived itself by engaging in liturgical reform. It also explains why participation in the rites of the Church have always been considered essential for all persons, regardless of age.

The Church's rites are repetitive, symbolic actions (word acts and ceremonial acts), which tell the Church's sacred story. There are many other rites in society which compete for loyalty and attempt to shape people's lives: spectator sports and T.V. advertising being the most pervasive. For the Church, its most important rites are baptism and the Eucharist. The Daily Offices and the other rites and ceremonies of the

Church found in The Book of Common Prayer and The Book of Occasional Services are also important for catechesis. These books shape how we worship and create a worshipping community of faith.

Congregational life both in and out of the classroom, is filled with rituals. Some are liturgical rituals (who sits where at the parish supper, who says grace, how is the coffee hour set up, etc.). Some are organizational rituals (how leaders are chosen, how events are planned, who takes which role). Others are fun rituals such as games. In all these rituals it is important to examine the covert messages they convey, as well as the overt messages. For example, many games while fun and supportive of learning also form people to be competitive, when cooperation may be the higher Christian value. Awards, based upon deserving, may work against the good news that God gives us what we need and not what we deserve. And, when persons earn rewards for their works, we may negate the Christian conviction that grace is free and all that we are and have is gift from God.

The Environment

All that we see, taste, touch, smell, and hear, as well as the arrangement of the space in which we gather and live, significantly influence us. We shape our space, and then it shapes us. Our space, what we put into it, and how we arrange and shape it, encourages or discourages particular actions and interactions. How we use our space and care for it; who we encourage or discourage from using it; how we decorate our space, including the art and pictures we gaze upon; provide insight into how we are influencing the faith, character, and consciousness of ourselves and others.

For example, if we do not see representations of Jesus from the perspective of numerous races and cultures, we may have difficulty understanding the universality of the gospel. We may not see that the Christian life of faith is not confined to European American cultural understandings and ways of life.

If all spiritual leaders pictured are male and adult, we may unconsciously learn to see male adults as spiritual leaders, and fail to recognize the spiritual leadership of women, youth, and children.

If all our images of ministry are pictures of institutional church groups, we may have a harder time recognizing our ministries at home, work, school, and in our community.

The Ordering of Time

The ordering of time has to do with the whole of our communal life. The Church has a calendar based on a story. Our faith, character, and consciousness are shaped, and community made possible, by the internalizing of that story. It is important that Christ's story, every Christian's story, be seen and lived out in our communal life. But, we compete with other calendars: the secular calendar (Mother's Day, Halloween, Valentine's Day, etc.), the civil calendar (New Year's Day, Independence Day, etc.), and the school calendar. If we are not intentional about ordering time according to our story, other calendars may influence how we live.

The Organization of Our Life

This aspect of formation has to do with how we encourage persons to spend their time, talents, and resources. It is seen in our programs and budgets. For example, to form a budget and then have a stewardship drive to acquire pledges for it may never help persons to be faithful stewards; it may only teach them to vote on budgets. The question for us is, How does our life together contribute to God's reign, and equip us for ministry in daily life and work; and how do the activities and programs sponsored by the Church make contributions to this end?

Do we encourage persons to keep their lives balanced with work, leisure, study, service, and worship? Do we encourage persons to help the needy? Do we support

those who fight injustice? When we engage in fund-raising projects, are we raising money for ourselves or the benefit of strangers? Is the tithe understood as the minimum expectation for all members to contribute to the work of the Church? When young people observe adults, and are encouraged to engage in such activities themselves, we are reinforcing patterns that we hope they will carry throughout their lives.

Communal Interactions

Life in the congregation should be a sign to the world of what life in God's reign looks like. It is seen in how we treat young people, the differently abled, the poor, and all those who are in some way potentially vulnerable. It includes all the ways we interact with each other: How we greet newcomers and each other, how we talk about each other, how we settle our differences, how we organize our life together, how we make decisions, how we choose our leaders, and whether the coffee hour has drinks for children and seats for those who need them. All these communicate who we are to each other and to others who come into our congregation.

Independent study in which students are encouraged to progress at their own rate may not help students to learn to be compassionate in helping others, or value the gifts and concerns of others. When each student has his or her own crayons, they may not learn to share. If we are to help persons learn that they are communal, interdependent beings we may need to emphasize communal, relational learning activities.

Role Models

Role models are those persons, past and present, whom we raise up to be examples of some aspect of the Christian life. Who are the persons whose lives we celebrate? Are they inclusive of women and men, children, youth, older adults, laity and clergy, various racial, ethnic, and cultural groups? Not only should we be concerned

with the ones we celebrate in liturgy (for example, those included in Lesser Feasts and Fasts), but those we publicly commend or thank. Role models in secular society today are typically athletes and entertainers.

Role models are particularly important for young people, who need the example of visible and effective adults committed to the values found in the gospel. Parents, church school teachers, youth advisors, clergy, and other congregational leaders frequently become role models for young people. It is important to recognize that children and youth can become important role models themselves. Jesus used a child as a role model for his disciples.

Disciplines

What behaviors do we encourage and practice? We learn to be virtuous by practicing the virtues. We learn to pray by the practice of prayer; we learn to care for others by the practice of caring. We need to identify the characteristics of the Christian life (such as being good stewards and living simply) and then practice these behaviors.

In so far as the Christian life has social and public dimensions, Christians need to practice thinking theologically, assessing the justice of social institutions, and participating in social and institutional change. We are called to be concerned for both the spiritual and temporal well-being of others. Thus the Christian extends an authentic concern to all God's people; spiritually, intellectually, culturally, physically and materially. These concerns are necessarily expressed through action to improve existing housing, food, education, health, and employment opportunities, and includes efforts to build a just cultural, social, and political order -- in our local communities, nationally, and internationally.

Language

How we name God, good, and evil, as well as the way we talk, and what we talk

about, are all expressions and shapes of our faith, character, and consciousness. For example, when conversation and singing is dominated by "I," we may reinforce individualism. On the other hand, if we neglect the "I" we may not learn to speak for ourselves. When we permit the possessive "I have" to dominate our speech, we may begin to think of having (possessing) friends rather than being a friend. When we say "I can't," and mean "I will not," we may learn to be victims. When we listen and do not object to sexist or racist remarks, we encourage their continuance, and contribute to the oppression of others. When we neglect feminine images of God, we make our God too small.

As Christians, we need to be intentional about how we talk and write. Sensitivity to inclusive language is the outgrowth of our commitment to Christian values found in the relationships and beliefs that underlie our lives. Each image of God portrays something of our experience of God. While each image is incomplete, images of God are limited only by our imagination and our own hesitations to reflect on our communal experience. Language that includes persons, rather than excluding them, becomes essential.

II. Education

Education is critical reflection on what we participate in and practice, on our thoughts, feelings, actions, and experiences in the light of the gospel and the Christian life of faith. Education is a process that intends to produce change, to aid us to reform and renew our personal and communal lives, to bring them into line with more Christ-like lives. It is also the procedure by which we continually examine and reflect upon how faithfully we are engaging in formation.

The Church is not so much an educational program, as it is an educational community. Christians are to be a self-critical people, always striving to be more faithful.

In one sense, the steps in the educational process are natural. There are four:

concrete experience (when we become aware of, and are able to name, our life experiences); reflective observation (when we reflect on these experiences in order to discern insights and implications); abstract conceptualization (when we name these insights and implications); and active experimentation (when we act on these implications, thereby creating new concrete experiences). We can begin with any one of these steps; all four must be completed before education has taken place.

For example, we may begin with an experience like reading a book or hearing a lecture; we may begin with reflecting on a childhood experience attempting to intuit insights or learning; we may begin with the formulation of a hypothesis or reasoned implications based on a lifetime of experience; or we may begin with an action such as living in a slum or testing someone else's convictions in a classroom; but wherever we begin, the others must be engaged also.

The educational process is easily adaptable to pastoral counseling and spiritual direction, Bible study, decision-making at vestry or committee meetings, helping persons relate their daily lives and worship, and classroom-schooling situations. What makes the educational process Christian is that it always engages the learner with Scripture, tradition, and reason.

The process of Christian education can be outlined as follows:

1. Examine Our Lives: Focus attention on some particular practice, conviction, or participatory experience so that it can be acknowledged and named.
2. Engage the Church's Faith: Consider the faith of the Church contained in Scripture and tradition as related to this named practice, conviction, or experience, and engage that faith afresh.
3. Renew and Reform Our Faith: Reflect on our lives and the faith of the Church so as to intuit insights or learning.
4. Live Our Faith: Reflect on these insights. Find implications and then act upon them. This will result in new practices, convictions, and participatory experiences

and return us to the first step.

A Church in which education is not central to its catechetical ministry will have difficulty forming faithful Christians.

III. Instruction-Training

Instruction is the process that provides us with the necessary content about the Christian life of faith to make critical reflection and faithful formation possible. All three processes are essential to a faithful catechesis.

Instruction in Christian knowledge concerns learning about the Bible, Christian theology and ethics, about the spiritual life, and about Christian service and ministry. It also includes learning the skills of biblical interpretation, theological thinking, ethical decision-making, the discernment of God's will, and ways of prayer.

While necessary for all ages, instruction is particularly important for adults, and should become a major aspect of every congregation's catechetical ministry. Adults need to be in situations where other Christians can help them reflect on discipleship, learn together, support each other in prayer, and hold each other accountable for Christian living at home, at work, and in their communities.

Instruction need not be limited to formal settings, such as classrooms. It can occur in a wide variety of formal and informal settings such as dinner-table conversation at home, sermons, following Morning Prayer or Evening Prayer, in conversations at meetings, in programs and retreats at conference centers, and the like.

It is important to acknowledge that there are two sorts of knowledge and ways of thinking or knowing. One is intellectual and the other intuitive. While the first has been inadequately addressed in most congregations, the second has been typically neglected. Intuitive knowledge and knowing is in the realm of the arts and is nurtured by the arts. It is the natural means by which children and young people think, learn, and

experience God. It is founded on a subject to subject relationship to all of life. It embraces the world of the imagination and creativity and is essential to envisioning an alternative future, praying Scripture and discerning the will of God.

The intuitive process follows these steps:

1. Contemplation or the giving up of our need to control.
2. Engagement with life or some material such as clay, until something begins to emerge.
3. Form-giving, in which we aid the process of giving birth.
4. Emergence, in which new life occurs.
5. And resolve, in which we let go of our creation so we can create again.

The intellectual way of thinking and knowing and knowledge involves cognitive processes that are only partially developed in children. It is through the use of the intellect that we make sense of our experience of God and make acts of conscience. It is necessary for doing theology, studying the Scriptures, and making ethical decisions. The lowest level of intellectual knowing is being able to repeat what you heard or read. The next level is being able to put it into your own words. The third level is being able to use it by applying it to other things known. The fourth level is to begin to grasp how the thought or idea came into being and to be able to compare and contrast it with other knowledge. The fifth level is to take various pieces of knowledge and put them together in new ways, thereby creating a position. And the last and highest level of knowing (dependent on having learned all the others) is evaluation, meaning the ability to make a judgment as to truth and worth. Many people have never progressed to this level and so are only able to give their opinions, rather than informed judgments on issues. This is what makes so many conversations in the Church irrational and divisive.

The instructional process is more controlled and involves the following guidelines:

1. A clear and accurate understanding of the learners, who they are, what they know, and how they learn.
2. An awareness of the environment in which the learning is to take place, its limits and possibilities, as well as the time and resources available.
3. A clear statement of goals and measurable objectives.
4. A carefully selected series of activities and resources that are sensitive to the diversity of learners to reach these objectives.
5. The conduct of the activities, or a clear sense of what activities are to be included and how they relate to the overall educational task.
6. An evaluation of whether the objectives were met, which creates a feedback loop for the instructional process.

One must realize that both the intuitive and intellectual ways of knowing and thinking are important. For example, in science it is through the intuitive that new discoveries are made, and through the intellect these discoveries are given shape and form. Through the intuitive, we experience and know God. Through the intellect, we describe and make sense of this knowledge and experience.

Summary

As Tertullian, a third-century theologian, commented, "Christians are made, not born." Historically, the process of making Christians was called catechesis. Today we understand catechesis as three intentional, interrelated, life-long processes: (1) formation — the participation in and practice of the Christian life of faith; (2) education — critical reflection on participation and practices in light of the gospel; and (3) instruction — the acquisition of knowledge and skills related to the Christian life of faith. Where faithful to the gospel, these processes provide the necessary influences to fashion persons and communities to be Christian in fact, and not in name only.

A congregation with a faithful catechetical ministry will examine its total life in terms of these three processes, and then plan ways to be more faithful, as they intentionally design ways to engage in them with persons of all ages.

A model for catechesis can be found in the rite of the Christian initiation of adults. As practiced today it is comprised of a series of rites and stages of preparation for baptism. Through a faithful witness to the gospel and a hospitable invitation to come to church, persons are attracted to the Church. They typically come as inquirers. They tell their stories and listen to others tell theirs. The faithful offer hospitality and tell their stories, explaining the significance for them of the Christian story and the Church, the community formed by that story, for their lives.

During this period those initially attracted to the Christian community are guided to examine and test their motives, in order that they may freely commit themselves to pursue a disciplined participation in the Christian life of faith. They are aided to understand that Christianity is a way of life, learned through participation in the life of the Church, and practiced over a life-time, and that the way to begin is to engage in this process.

Having expressed a desire to prepare for baptism, the candidates participate in a public liturgical act, which includes being signed with the cross. This enters them into a period known as the catechumenate. The catechumenate is primarily a period of formation which includes attendance at Sunday worship, engagement with the Scriptures, the development of a disciplined life of prayer, participation in the congregation's outreach programs, reflection on their ministry in their daily life, tithing, and the like. During this period they are accompanied by a sponsor, who is a role model, as well as a help to them, in reflecting on their experiences. This period cannot be hurried. It takes time to acquire a new way to perceive life and our lives; a new set of allegiances, attitudes and values; a new identity and behavioral dispositions. Personal readiness is the crucial factor in this period of formation and testing, and each person

will come to that readiness in a different way and at a different pace.

When the community observes signs that the catechumens have adopted a new way of life, they are ready for the rite of election, which will make them candidates for baptism. As the elect, they enter upon a forty-day Lenten discipline of intense self examination, fasting, and prayer to prepare themselves spiritually and emotionally for baptism. This is a period of purification and enlightenment, not study or instruction. Its aim is to lead the converts to a renunciation of the power of evil and the acceptance of Jesus Christ as Savior. It bids converts to receive the tradition of the faith, and commit themselves more fully to the life of faith. It is a time for recollection, reflection, and readiness. This recollection is reviewing their catechumenal experience, and reflecting upon it in the light of the gospel, so that they might accept the life and faith, and commit themselves to its requirements.

This period culminates in the rite of baptism, the symbol of forgiveness of sin and the new life of grace; chrismation, the symbol of being marked as Christ's own forever, incorporation into his body, the Church, and the empowerment of the Holy Spirit; and reception of Eucharistic bread and wine, the symbol of life in God's reign of justice and peace.

Following baptism, the newly baptized enter a final period known as the mystagogia, the great fifty days between Easter and Pentecost. Having experienced the great mysteries of the sacraments, they are helped to gain a deeper understanding of their meaning. Through a series of formal and informal activities, including instruction, they experience the fullness of corporate life in the Church, as well as gain a deeper understanding of daily life and work as ministry.

Now, having accepted their places in the life of the Christian community of faith, they begin their life-long pilgrimage of living into their baptism. Having come to know who and whose they are and how they are called to live, through continuing catechesis in the Church, they are enabled to become who they already are, namely, persons who

have been incorporated into Christ's body, infused with Christ's character, and empowered to be Christ's presence in the world.

Today, when we baptize both adults and children, we think of evangelism as the process that attracts persons to the gospel and its way of life; and evangelization, as the catechetical process that prepares them for baptism. For children who are baptized, this same process is called catechesis; it, of course, has an evangelizing component.

Following are sidebars for Chap. 2. Note they are taped to the page in ms. where they should go.

Christian initiation, or "Christening," is the process which a person goes through while being transformed into a new creation modeled in the likeness of Christ himself.

Mark Searle in Christening: The Making of Christians, Liturgical Press, 1980.

Ritual, strictly speaking, refers to the words in the liturgy. All of us are familiar with the Christian use of hymns and psalms in worship, and in these we have ritual, that is, fixed "second-hand" words furnishing us with the very capacity which our own imaginations lack to say what we would like to say. All hymns are ritualistic in this sense: the words which somebody else has written, and which are "imposed" on us, turn out, lo and

behold, to set us free. They help us to say what we wish we could say but cannot, left to our own spontaneous devices. Old and New Testament worship operated on this principle. The ritual you find in the Christian liturgy is a matter of words that have been ripened by wise and widespread usage in the Church.

Thomas Howard in The Liturgy Explained, Morehouse-Barlow, 1981.

When we come to the assembly, we also have the sense that we are coming to a holy place and meeting at an appointed holy time. The human conventions of holiness in place and time, like the conventions and symbolic meanings of sacred meal, sacred bath, or sacred words, also are alive in this gathering. In fact, in the Christian assembly at its best, sacred places and sacred time are functions of washing, words, and meal. The sacred place is the place for doing these things. The appointed sacred time is the time at which these things are done.

Gordon W. Lathrop in Holy Things, A Liturgical Theology, Augsburg Fortress, 1993.

God is with us in our struggle. He is with us in the Advent times of our lives, in the Christmas and the Lenten times. Knowing that, we can experience his presence with us in the Easter and the Pentecost times when we proclaim resurrection and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. We do have a story to tell.

Joseph P. Russell in Sharing Our Biblical Story, Morehouse-Barlow, revised 1988.

When does racial "unconsciousness" or awareness of race enrich interpretive language, and when does it impoverish it?

Toni Morrison in Playing in the Dark, Harvard University Press, 1992.

Christian education is a group of Christians sharing in dialogue their critical reflection on present action in light of the Christian story and its vision toward the end of lived Christian faith.

Thomas Groome in Christian Religious Education, Harper San Francisco, 1982.

Listen to the Bible as it is read, reflect on it in groups, read whole chapters and sections regularly. Be willing to question what biblical witnesses are saying to us, bring your own questions and learn with others.

Fredrica Harris Thompsett, in We Are Theologians, Cowley, 1989.

The sacraments of this Church become the way we telescope the story and find continuing power in it. As we tell the story of the exodus we realize the exodus happening in our lives, and we act out that realization with the waters of baptism. As we tell the story of the Last Supper we share a Christian seder or Passover meal and experience the Lord leading us in our own Passover with Christ. We are a storytelling people who together find power for the present and vision for the future in celebrating the story together in sacrament and in daily life.

Joseph P. Russell in Sharing Our Biblical Story, Morehouse-Barlow, revised 1988.

Imagine for a moment that you are a new convert to the faith. You were converted during the summer or fall, the rite of welcome celebrated your entrance into the Church sometime before Advent, and now at Advent your formation within the catechumenate begins. What you will experience in the worship life of the Church between Advent and

Easter is an introduction to the core of the Christian faith.

Robert E. Webber in Celebrating Our Faith, Evangelism Through Worship,
Harper & Row, 1986.

To be a catechumen is to be a pilgrim; to be a catechist is to be a compassionate
companion and guide to pilgrims.

John H. Westerhoff, III, in A Faithful Church: Issues in the History of Catechesis,
ed. by John H. Westerhoff, III and O.C. Edwards, Morehouse-Barlow, 1981.

Chapter Three

Church and Society:

Catechetical Context

Catechesis takes place within some particular social, historical context, a context which can either support or undermine catechetical efforts, but always should inform them. It is important that we attempt to describe accurately the context in which we live, along with resulting insights and implications for our catechetical ministry. In this chapter we will do so in broad strokes. Further study is recommended.

Social Context: Diversity

Race, Culture, and Ethnicity

Nearly every race, culture, and ethnic group on earth is represented in the United States and those countries in which the Episcopal Church is at work. For many years the principle of unity over diversity has dominated and attempts have been made to develop a homogenized population. The understandings behind this sense of unity was informed by a white, European perspective, with the prevailing belief that diversity should be avoided. Increasingly, this point of view has been questioned. There has been a growing appreciation of diversity and an affirmation of the splendid beauty and unique richness in the numerous races, cultures, and ethnic groups which comprise our population. As a consequence, however, tension has emerged between the once dominant, white, European population's understandings and way of life and those of other groups.

Religion

While there has been from the beginning some religious diversity among persons

in the United States and other countries where the Episcopal Church works, Christians were the dominant group in these places. This situation has significantly changed as the variety of religious groups and the number of their adherents has increased. To complicate matters, Christians are divided and often compete with each other for members. Further, while a significant number of persons are baptized Christians, large numbers of them are unchurched or lapsed. There are also many people who consider themselves religious, but are not formally affiliated with any religious group. At the same time many affirm the principle of religious pluralism, which tends to relativize and privatize religious life. This great religious diversity and the large numbers of unchurched persons, point to the need for further ecumenical activities and evangelization efforts. Catechesis can foster healthy ecumenical relationships through: clearly explaining the beliefs and values of the Episcopal Church, by accurately and honestly portraying the beliefs of other denominations, and through cooperation on projects of mutual value.

Interfaith relationships are also of importance to Christians living in a religious pluralism. Christians should be especially sensitive to relationships with the Jewish people, with whom we share a common biblical heritage. Moreover, the centuries-long persecution of the Jewish people, calls for the repudiation of anti-Semitism and its causes. Christians and Jews should work to promote a mutual understanding of their traditions through continued dialogue, scholarship, and social action. Similarly, Christians need to appreciate the insights and seek the common bonds we hold with other faith groups, including Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism, and to collaborate with them in promoting spiritual values, and to promote local and international projects of justice and peace.

Significance

Religion and culture are deeply connected. A religion also may be multicultural in

expression, as Christianity obviously is. Similarly, peoples of different religions can share much of a common culture.

The principle of social pluralism welcomes the diversity of races, cultures, and ethnic groups within one society and within religious communities. Christianity affirms that principle with one caution: every race, culture, and ethnic group is under the gospel's judgment, and none are unreservedly Christian. The challenge of prophetic self-criticism is great, and the problem of separating the Christian life of faith from its racial, cultural, and ethnic expressions more so. There is also the challenge of achieving unity in the Church's life while maintaining racial, cultural, and ethnic diversity. At the same time, we need to encourage distinctive cultural groups to live the gospel in ways that are expressive of their cultures, in worship, music, and other creative arts.

The principle of religious pluralism presents the Church with a more serious challenge. It is one thing to describe society as religiously diverse, and it is another to affirm this diversity, that is, assert that the differences among religions are not a matter of truth in terms of faith and life. When the principle of religious pluralism is affirmed, talk of religious beliefs as true or false, or of ethical action as right or wrong, is inadmissible. For example, many Christians have acknowledged that anti-Semitism is a sin, and have affirmed a new appreciation for the uniqueness of Judaism and its relationship to Christianity.

For many years the ecumenical movement was founded upon the principle of a melting pot by which the unity of the Church would be achieved through a blending of the various traditions. However, in the current period there has been a move to reassert the principle of pluralism within Christianity not only in terms of race, culture, and ethnic groups, but in terms of maintaining the uniqueness of various traditions (denominations), each with its own character. All of these social situations and unresolved issues will influence and challenge the Church's catechetical ministry.

Implications:

A multicultural approach to learning implies the need to work with persons representing various racial and ethnic backgrounds. This will involve catechetical programs aimed at attitudinal and behavioral change.

Such programs will need to address racism, sexism, ageism, ableism, classism, and other forms of stereotyping, prejudice, bigotry, and discrimination. We must be careful not to lump all African Americans, European Americans, or Asians, into homogeneous entities. We need to acknowledge the diversity within these groups. We need to include stories, music, art, dance, and drama from these various culture groups. We need to learn to appreciate the contributions of each group by learning about their histories, their understandings and ways of life, and their experiences. Respect and appreciation of differences along with a self-critical attitude toward one's own ethnic group and culture, especially in terms of how we relate to others, is crucial.

Multicultural life will result from a lifelong process rather than a program or event. For example, a multicultural organization style will include openness to change, willingness to take risks, flexibility in leadership style, and a persistent commitment to a multicultural agenda. For predominately white groups this will mean a willingness to give up control of the institutional agenda and changing the constituency of groups so that people of color are part of all decision-making.

We will need to address Jewish-Christian relations by striving to transmit a better, more positive understanding of our Jewish roots and a greater appreciation of Judaism today. We will also need to learn more about other religions and learn how to engage meaningfully in dialogue with them.

Social Order

Rapid progress in science and technology has put into human hands unprecedented power which can either reap great benefits for the human race or sow destruction on the earth. Similarly, unprecedented progress in the life sciences,

especially biology and its allied disciplines, has produced a host of new ethical problems. Progress in medical and health sciences has created new possibilities for population control, genetic engineering, and increase of the human life span. These factors create challenges related to abuse and other problems of the aged, infirm, and handicapped persons.

Technological progress has created new problems in terms of ecology and weapons of mass destruction, while political and economic realities have resulted in an ever-increasing global interdependence as well as deeper divisions between the rich and the poor. Increased mobility and urbanization have created social problems; as have the rural issues of isolation, farm labor, and agricultural policies.

Mass media communications and computer technology have produced both positive and negative effects on society. Families are progressively fragmented and isolated; child abuse, alcohol and drug abuse, and the growing numbers of single persons create new challenges for us. Racism, sexism, classism, ageism, homophobia, and ableism, as well as questions of economic justice, including poverty and unemployment, problems of refugees and immigrants, particularly those without documentation, homelessness, the availability of health care, and numerous other social problems continue to be a part of the fabric of our society.

Significance

The rapidity of change and the escalation of ethical issues never encountered before increases our difficulty in being faithful to the gospel. Those engaged in research and development are raising questions concerning the limits of their work. Those who must live with the results of their labors are raising questions as to a faithful response. The problem of achieving consensus on these complex ethical issues is great.

Implications:

The Church's catechetical ministry needs to both inform its people of the issues and help them learn to respond faithfully. Catechesis works to uncover the root causes of social injustice, and seeks to bring Christians to recognize our individual and collective obligations, as well as our complicity with the forces of evil. Not only does this imply that we give greater attention to making ethical decisions and discerning God's will, but we will need to be better informed on science and technology, medicine, world politics and economics, social and ecological issues.

Furthermore, some issues, such as those related to gender and human sexuality, will need to be addressed from the earliest years. How we use Scripture, reason, and tradition in ethical decision-making will need to become important aspects of our catechetical ministry.

Social issues such as the changing family and roles of men and women along with the new emerging needs of children, youth and adults, especially the aging, will need to inform our work.

Modernity

Even as the Church exists within history, it is influenced by history. These influences are comprised of a combination of positive and negative factors. During the modern period in the West known as the Enlightenment, an emphasis was placed on reason and logic, the intellectual way of thinking and knowing. Emphasis was placed on material reality, on progress, individualism, and competition. In science and technology, the ability of human beings to solve problems, and an understanding of nature as objective reality to be manipulated for our benefit, has dominated thinking. While we have benefitted from these emphases, increasingly many believe that they have reached the ethical limits of usefulness.

Significance

We cannot ignore or deny the significance of modernity's understandings and the ways our catechetical ministry will need to identify and emphasize alternatives. We need to reaffirm our imaginations, the intuitive way of thinking and knowing, nonmaterial reality, community and interdependence, cooperation and nonaggression, the arts, nature as a subjective reality which engages us, the presence and action of God in human life and history, and our dependence on God.

Implications:

The arts will need to play a more significant role in our catechetical ministry. Opportunities for involvement in dance, music, drama, writing, graphic arts, film and television production for all ages will need to increase. While making more creative use of computer technology in catechesis, more attention will need to be given to small group interactions, alternative forms of decision-making, communal experiences, diversity training, conflict resolution, etc.

Church-State Relations

For many years, the environment in which the Western Church has existed has been friendly. Church and society were for all intents and purposes united. For example, the United States was considered by many to be a Christian nation; the nation's flag flew in the church, and still does in many churches. Persons who lived in a geographical area (parish) believed they had a right to the services of the Church on demand. Baptism was associated with birth, and there were few boundaries between life in society and life in the Church. Indeed, there was little significant difference seen between being a good citizen and a good Christian. Public schools and other institutions were considered to support the "Christian way." The mission field was outside the

nation, and we approached this pagan world with a gospel fully integrated into our national ways. The Church assumed it had a rightful influence on the state and that the state should respond affirmatively to its influence.

This situation is changing. Society is increasingly ambiguous and indifferent, if not antagonistic, to the Church. It is difficult to defend the proposition that there is no difference between being a faithful Christian and a good citizen, or that the public schools fully support the Christian way of life. An increasing number of people believe that we are entering a new era in history, a post-Constantinian or post-Christian era.

Significance

This changing situation has resulted in differences among us. Some desire to reconstruct a nation influenced by Christian policy, and they continue to affirm the image of the parish church, with church life much as usual. They will attempt to attract the masses to the Church by better identifying and meeting people's needs.

Others contend that we need a new image of Church. This means seeing the mission field as our communities, seeking adult converts among our neighbors, a lessening of identification with the state or expectation that we can significantly influence its life, parochial schools and the restructuring of congregational organizations.

Our catechetical ministry will be affected dramatically by which of these positions we maintain. If we are to be faithful in our catechetical ministry, we will need to discern the signs of the times accurately and imagine appropriate means to address them.

Implications:

This implies our working toward a consensus on the vocation of the Church, as follows.

The Vocation of the Church

The Church is the bearer of a gospel that announces the reign and the sovereignty of God. It calls men and women to repent of false loyalties to other powers and influences, to serve the one true sovereign God and so become a sign and foretaste, a witness and instrument of that one true, living, and active God who rules over all nature, nations, and human lives. It is not a call into a safe escape from the world, but a call out of that world to be shaped and empowered by God so as to return as agents of God's reign in that world.

Faced with an increasingly non-Christian society, we are confronted by a situation somewhat similar to the early centuries of the Church. The mainstream of early Christianity was sectarian in the sense that, while it embraced a wide variety of races, social classes, styles of life, and liturgies and theologies, it was a relatively small, unified, deviant minority unsupported by cultural convention and without prestige within the larger society. This is a situation difficult for Anglicans to imagine. Through most of our history we united society and Church, national government and ecclesial government. We have never sharply distinguished ourselves from the society at large. As long as society is widely permeated by Christian ideas and behavioral patterns, there is no need for Christians to form close-knit communities in order to transmit and preserve their way of life. But as society and its understandings and ways become only marginally Christian, the Church will need to consider becoming a more intentional, disciplined community, without becoming sectarian. Perhaps monastic orders and religious communities will again thrive as an alternative way of living the Christian life.

Jesus' message to the people of his time was that, with his presence, the reign of God was near; that is, the presence, the action, and the power of God was at work in their midst. While it was not obvious to the naked eye, because they were facing in the wrong direction, Jesus told them that if they made a U-turn (a 180-degree change in course), they would be able to catch a glimpse of it. He taught his disciples to pray for

the day when that which is hidden will be uncovered, when God's reign will be obvious to all. In the meantime, they were to be an example of what has come, is present, and is yet to come in its fullness.

The Church is a community that pledges to form its life around the one who is the way, the truth, and the life: Jesus. The Dominion of God, the condition in which God's rule is manifest in every aspect of life, is something we cannot plan for, organize, build, make, invent, or even fully imagine. It is freely given to us by God and all we need do is inherit and abide in it. Our ministry is not an end, but a reflection of service under God's rule. Its aim is not to make the world better, solely by our own efforts, but to demonstrate by our behavior what Jesus made possible in the world. Our ministry is not so much to be effective, as to be faithful.

The Church is called once again to be a missionary Church rather than a maintenance Church. A few implications of such an image of the Church's vocation are these: We will need to learn better how to reflect critically on our society and its understandings and ways of life. We will need to learn how to resist its negative influences and teach our children and youth to do the same. We will need to explore new strategies for influencing the social, political and economic structures of our society and act to transform those structures that unjustly oppress our sisters and brothers. We will need to help all people to acknowledge their daily lives and work as their ministry, and then to assist them in learning how to live faithfully in the world.

If we are to do that, we must become an intentional community of faith, a self-critical community, ever striving to reform and renew its life, engaged in converting and nurturing its own members as well as others who are attracted to the Church. The challenge of faithfulness in our day is great, and the key to faithfulness will be grounded in a new emphasis on the role of catechesis in the Church. To use Pauline images, the Church is called to be a community of faith where Christ's reconciling power is made known — living, conscious, and active - so that it might be the body of Christ, Christ's

reconciling presence in the world to the end. This is the Church's mission, that all people are restored to unity with God and each other in Christ.

Community of Faith

A community of faith has particular characteristics:

1. A community of faith has a common story and its life is shaped by that story. It is a story rehearsed in Eucharistic Prayer D (BCP, 1979, pg. 372). Stories form community, and it is the Jesus story that must shape the Church's life by becoming its story.

(set following as sidebar)

"[God] formed us in God's image, giving the whole world into our care, so that in obedience to God, our Creator, we might rule and serve all creatures. When our disobedience took us far from God, we were not abandoned to the power of death. In mercy, God came to our help, so that in seeking God we might find God. Again and again, God called us into covenant and through the prophets taught us to hope for salvation. God loved the world so much that in the fullness of time God sent Jesus to be our Savior. Incarnate by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, he lived as one of us, yet without sin. To the poor, he proclaimed the good news of salvation; to prisoners, freedom; to the sorrowful, joy. To fulfill God's purpose he gave himself up to death; and rising from the grave, destroyed death, and made the whole creation new."

From The Book of Common Prayer, 1979, pg. 373.

2. A community of faith lives under a common authority. It agrees on its author, its source for discerning the will of God. Unless there is an agreed-upon authority and a knowledge of how that authority operates in aiding us to discern and make decisions, there is nothing to hold us together when we differ, nor a

means for reconciling differences and reaching a new consensus.

3. A community of faith has common rituals around which it celebrates and orders its life. As repetitive symbolic actions (word and deed acts) that express its sacred story, rituals provide the primary influence in shaping faith, character, and consciousness. They also make possible harmonious communal life and aid persons to make meaningful transitions in their lives.

4. A community of faith has a common life that is more like a familial community than an institutional community. That is, it focuses its concerns on every aspect of human life and not solely on religious matters; it continuously engages the whole personality of people, and not just some aspect of it for a period of time; it is bound together by a covenant that calls us to do whatever love demands to keep us united, rather than a contract in which the terms are if you do A, I will do B; it orders its life by custom (habits of the heart) rather than by laws and rules; and the worth of its members is in their being and not in their contributions or participation. When conflicts erupt, a community of faith views these differences as a healthy and normal part of human existence, and allows for honest dialogue as part of the conflict resolution process.

5. A community of faith will have an end beyond itself and its own survival. This implies that intimacy cannot be the only goal, for if it is, it will exclude people who are different. Instead it will bind together very different kinds of people through commitment to a common end and not because they like each other.

6. A community of faith values diversity. This implies that the community welcomes into its midst persons of different ages, cultures, class, and racial and ethnic backgrounds. Such a community sees the positive value of differences

and encourages their expressions in daily life.

The Body of Christ

The Church is a community of faith so that it might shape, equip, and empower its people to be Christ's presence in the world. The people of God are called to take their places in the life, worship, and governance of the Church so that they might faithfully represent Christ and his Church, be witnesses to Christ wherever they might be, and according to their various gifts carry on Christ's reconciling work in the world.

Ministry is doing God's will wherever we are: in church, in home, in community, and in daily life and work. As such, ministry is not a role we play, such as being laypersons, deacons, priests, or bishops. Nor is it fundamentally functions we perform, that make it possible for us to name something we are doing as our ministry. Ministry is best understood as character traits, a Christ-like identity and behavioral dispositions, making ministry the same whether we are rich or poor, wise or simple, young or old, infirm or healthy. When people look at us, they must be able to see persons who are striving in all that they say and do to imitate and represent Jesus in every aspect of their lives and work. The primary content of ministry is therefore our daily life and work.

Being clear on the vocation and mission of the Church and being able to name accurately the world in which the Church exists are essential beginning points for shaping the Church's catechetical ministry. As the Presiding Bishop's Task Force Report put it, "Congregations which effectively educate their members convey a clarity of mission and cultivate a shared vision of what the Church is called to be."

Summary

We continually need to discover new ways to be the Church. To do that, we will need to acquire the capacity to live with differences and learn the skills of using conflict positively and creatively. We will need to acquire the capacity to discern the movements

of the Holy Spirit and learn to live an alternative way of life. We will need to be committed to the reform and renewal of our congregations as they strive to be communities of faith, and personally and socially be the body of Christ in, but not of, the world.

Epilogue: Insights From Our Past

The year was 1985. The 68th General Convention established Christian education as a priority. It had not happened since the 55th General Convention in 1946 and the five General Conventions which followed. In the decades that transpired between then and now the Church and the world have changed greatly, but the same educational concerns remain.

During the period of our last attempt to make Christian education a priority, it was affirmed that a renewal of spiritual vitality was necessary if our educational programs were to be successful; that as Christian education was only one component of the Church's ministry, it was inseparable from the total life of the congregation, especially its worship; that what was done in the church and its school had to be supported in the home; that there had to be agreement as to the Church's mission and ministry; and that there had to be consensus on what the Church was to teach.

But having acknowledged all that, for the first time in history we appeared to have accepted society's assumption that school reform can remedy whatever is wrong in society. We proceeded to make radical educational reforms, based on extraordinary confidence in what the church school could accomplish. While attempts were made to include the total life of congregations and families, the primary context for learning became the church school and that primarily, though not exclusively (recall The Church's Teaching Series), for children up to the age of confirmation. The creation of curriculum resources became our primary educative intervention, while an enormous amount of energy was put into leadership training, focusing on group dynamics and

personal growth. We also assumed that educating, even changing, the individual would make a difference in the Church and society. We have since learned that we need to change systems. Changing a few leaders through training or educating classes of children or adults without changing the congregational system, undercut the individual's attempts to live a more faithful Christian life. We need to find ways in which the congregation will call and support members in their individual ministry and will hold them accountable for their discipleship.

The early years of this reform focused on nurture for life in the Church. In the '60s, the emphasis began to shift to education for mission, but, interestingly, when that shift began, commitment to Christian education appeared to lessen, and the Church got out of the curriculum resource business. At the same time, educational leadership shifted from the national Church to dioceses and congregations where a large cadre of professional religious educators were available. Having cut the national Church's educational staff, when finances began to dwindle, local educational staffs were the first to be cut, and there was no longer a strong national resource (people or materials) to fill the gaps. During this period, there were two emphases in Christian education: discernment and response to God's action in the social order; and the nurture of life in the gathered Church, which, regretfully, competed for attention.

In this interim period we learned that we cannot separate the vocation of the Church to be a community of faith, which nurtures its people, from being the body of Christ, Christ's active presence in the world. We have learned that neither the church school alone, nor a particular curriculum resource can save us; that learning is a lifelong task and many of the most important things we need to learn cannot be learned until adulthood. We have also learned that we need to integrate learning into every aspect of our lives and not permit it to become a separate category. We have learned that until we agree on the Church's mission and ministry, our educational activities will not be focused enough to make Christian congregations and persons. There is no reason to

talk about means until we are agreed on ends. And we ought not to talk about means until we understand our times and the context in which we strive to reach our agreed upon aims. We have also learned that we need to unite local, diocesan, and national efforts, if we are to be successful.

following are sidebars for Chapt. 3:

What we should be striving for is a spirituality that will inform both evangelism and social transformation. Jesus evangelized out of who he was. He was Good News; therefore he proclaimed good news....We must discover a biblical spirituality that serves as a basis for all our activity as Christians, including reconciliation.

William Pannell in [The Coming Race Wars? A Cry for Reconciliation](#), Zondervan, 1993.

As black and white women in America, as Israeli and Lebanese women, as white South African and black South African women, as Asian and European women, as the wives

of terrorists and the wives of victims of terrorists, working for righteousness in splendid isolation from one another is a luxury we cannot afford.

Renita Weems in Just A Sister Away, LuraMedia, 1988.

God, now that we like each other, help us to understand as well that we do not understand each other -- but can learn to. God, help us learn. Speedily and soon. Amen.

Concluding prayer in Jews and Christians, The Myth of a Common Tradition by Jacob Neusner, Trinity Press, 1991.

The question that must be addressed, therefore, is not how to care for the planet, but how to care for each of the planet's millions of human and natural neighborhoods, each of its millions of small pieces and parcels of land, each one of which is in some precious way different from all the others.

Wendell Berry in What Are People For? North Point Press, 1990.

The heart of the catechumenal process is the journey of growth and formation embarked on by people seeking to discover how God is calling them and how God is acting in their lives and ministries in the world.

From The Catechumenal Process, Office of Evangelism Ministries, The Episcopal Church, 1990.

The vocation of the Church is to hear God speak, to see God act, and to witness in word and deed to these experiences.

John H. Westerhoff, III, in A Faithful Church: Issues in the History of Catechesis, ed. by John H. Westerhoff, III and O.C. Edwards, Morehouse-Barlow, 1981.

next sidebar is in the text from the BCP.

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From The Book of Common Prayer, 1979, p. 373.

...It is not simply to be taken for granted that the Christian has the privilege of living among other Christians. Jesus Christ lived in the midst of his enemies. At the end all his disciples deserted him. On the Cross he was utterly alone, surrounded by evildoers and mockers. For this cause he had come, to bring peace to the enemies of God. So the Christian, too, belongs not in the seclusion of a cloistered life but in the thick of foes. There is his commission, his work....

From The Martyred Christian, Readings from Dietrich Bonhoeffer, ed. Joan Winmill Brown, Macmillan, 1983.

Chapter Four

**Liturgical, Ethical, Spiritual,
Pastoral, Missional Life:
The Catechetical Ministry**

Integration of Life

Within theology there is a discipline known as Practical Theology or Pastoral Studies, which addresses the question, "How are we as believers in Jesus Christ and his Church to live?" As a theological discipline of research and study, it is comprised of six dimensions: liturgies and homiletics, ethics, spirituality, pastoral care, catechetics, and ecumenics (missional dimensions of Christian life such as evangelism and stewardship, the relationships among various Christian groups, and the Church's relationship to the world and other religions). These various dimensions are to be integrated and informed by Scripture, theological reflection, and historical insights.

In our most recent history, this synthesis broke apart, and each dimension became a specialty. Each one tended to associate itself uncritically with a similar secular discipline, and to focus its concern upon practical techniques.

Typically, liturgies addressed how to conduct worship; and homiletics, how to preach. Ethics was removed from these ministerial concerns and united with systematic theology. Spirituality tended to be ignored, or was about how to pray. Pastoral care, associated with secular psychology and psychiatry, focused on the techniques of counseling. Catechetics, associated with secular education, focused primarily on the instruction of children in the context of a Sunday church school. Ecumenics was transferred to systematic theology, and concerned itself solely with the relationships among Christian Churches. In its place was put church administration, modeled after secular business practice. Stewardship typically became church finance and fund

raising, and evangelism became church growth.

Today there is a movement to reestablish liturgies, ethics, spirituality, pastoral care, catechetics, and ecumenics as dimensions of a common discipline that reflects upon the Christian life of faith, uniting theory and practice, theology and life. And while still being informed by secular fields of study, pastoral studies are not to be dominated by or solely associated with them. Understanding these dimensions of pastoral theology and life can provide a doorway into understanding our catechetical ministry.

Dimensions of Life

The Liturgical Dimension

The Church is a worshiping community in which God's people continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, the breaking of bread, and the prayers. Worship creates, expresses, and fulfills the Church. Through worship we continually become aware of God's grace in our lives and respond. By its action, we are drawn into the mystery of the crucified and risen Christ, and become aware of God's grace in our lives.

The Church's worship is focused on its two great sacraments, baptism and Eucharist, and the daily offices. These are supplemented by its pastoral rites: confirmation (reaffirmation and reception); commitment to Christian service; the celebration and blessing of marriage; thanksgiving for the birth or adoption of a child; reconciliation of a penitent; ministrations to the sick; ministrations at the time of death, and burial of the dead, by its episcopal services; and by other liturgies found in The Book of Occasional Services.

The Ethical Dimension

The Church is an active, ethical community called to strive for justice and peace among all people and to respect the dignity of every human being. As such, the Church is called to be a community of ethical discourse and discernment, concerned with every

personal and social issue such as human rights, racial justice, human sexuality, ecology, and economic justice. Concerned for both personal and social relationships, the Church needs to aid its people to live faithfully in daily life and work, and to be a faithful influence within society. The Church must also submit its policies, programs, and life-style, as well as how its people relate to each other, to continuing review, to ensure that it is a sign of the ethical life it intends for others.

The Spiritual Dimension

The Church is a prayerful, contemplative community, which acknowledges our human need for an ever-deepening and loving relationship with God, aiding us to persist in resisting evil and, when we fall into sin, to repent and return to the Lord. Prayer, personal and communal, deepens the awareness of our covenanted relationship with God and aids us to live in total harmony with God's will. A personal and communal spiritual discipline are foundational elements in the Church's life. Communal, daily, morning and evening prayer, as well as the other liturgies of the hours, should permeate the life of the Church. People should be equipped and encouraged to engage in personal private prayer, Scriptural meditation, and other acts of devotion, such as the examination of consciousness and the discernment of God's will.

The Pastoral Dimension

The Church is a caring community in which persons seek to serve Christ in all persons, loving their neighbors as themselves. The Church is to focus its acts of charity and mercy on persons who are poor, homeless, unemployed, hungry, disabled, infirm, aging, captive, lonely, transient, grieving, and dying, both within their own community and within society at large. Pastorally, the congregation is to be a reconciling, healing community which assists its people in becoming healthy and whole persons, who have experienced the unconditional love of God, and are able to love those who act in

unlovable ways.

The Ecumenical Dimension

The Church is a witnessing community, which proclaims, by word and example, the Good News of God in Christ. Just as Christ is the sacrament of God, so the Church is to be the sacrament of Christ in the world, an outward and visible sign of God's grace and will. As a community of apostles who have experienced God's unmerited love, in gratitude, members share with others the story of God's grace in their lives. The Church invites others into the community of faith, so they might share in its life of faith and mission to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ. As a community of stewards, the Church has experienced the abundance of God's generosity, and in gratitude, its members live lives of simplicity, sharing with others their time, talents, and resources. And as a community of disciples, it prays and works for the unity of the Church.

The Catechetical Way

In each of the dimensions of our lives as believers in Jesus Christ and members of his Church, we need to apply the three processes which comprise catechesis: namely, (1) formation — that is, to participate in and practice the life of faith; (2) education — that is, to reflect on our lives of faith so we might live more faithfully; and (3) instruction — that is, to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to be faithful. It is essential to the Church's catechetical ministry that each family, congregation, and school be intentional about each of these processes in reference to each dimension of pastoral theology. A few examples for consideration follow.

Liturgical Catechesis

Aware that participation in the Church's rites and rituals is foundational to the

formation of the life of faith, we need to make sure that the weekly celebration of the Eucharist is taken seriously, and that all the baptized (including the youngest) are present and fully participate in both the liturgy of the word and sacrament, reforming the celebration where necessary so that children can meaningfully and joyfully participate. Worship in the home needs to be encouraged, and families helped to find ways to build communal worship into their life.

Opportunities need to be provided to reflect critically on the Church's liturgical life in both home and church, using as its test the faithfulness of its people both within the life of the congregation and within their daily life and work, so as to be more intentional, reforming them where necessary. Opportunities also need to be provided before worship to help persons reflect critically on their lives in the light of Scripture, and name the needs they bring to liturgy so that they might more meaningfully participate in the liturgy. They also need help and encouragement in reflecting on their experience in the liturgy and naming what God is calling and empowering them to be and do so that they might live more faithfully in their daily lives and work.

Instruction in the history, nature, character, and meaning of the Sacraments and their celebration, as well as of the contents of both The Book of Common Prayer and The Book of Occasional Services needs to be provided.

Adult converts need to be prepared for baptism by participation in a catechetical process including formation, education, and instruction with a faithful sponsor within the life of a congregation. Similar programs are needed to prepare persons for the renewal of their Baptismal Covenant in preparation for confirmation, reception, and reaffirmation at special times in their lives. Special attention needs to be given to formation, education, and instruction of parents and godparents in their preparation for the baptism of children.

The same catechetical processes need to be provided as means to prepare persons to participate in the rites of matrimony, commitment to Christian service,

reconciliation, ministration to the sick, ministration at the time of death, and ordination.

Ethical Catechesis

We need to provide and encourage opportunities to practice having a sense of identity as Christ's persons in the world, and the dispositions to behave in Christ-like ways. These opportunities need to be provided in a systematic way, in homes, and in all congregations.

Instruction is needed in Christian ethics (the principles and norms of Christian life), the nature and character of contemporary personal and social issues, how to discern God's will and make ethical decisions in concrete situations, and how to achieve consensus in decision making and other areas of community life.

Spiritual Catechesis

Aware that our spiritual lives — that is, our consciousness of God's presence and action in our lives and our relationship with God — is continually being formed, we need to provide the celebration of the daily offices and other opportunities for communal and personal prayer, both in church and home. Opportunities for retreats and quiet days need to be provided, as well.

Opportunities for critical reflection on our communal prayer life and personal spiritual disciplines, as well as our experience of God and relationship to God, need to be provided. Also opportunities for spiritual direction are important.

Instruction in a biblical theology of prayer, the various schools of prayer, and the characteristics of the spiritual pilgrimage, along with various techniques to aid the life of prayer such as meditation, contemplation, fasting, prayer, and Scripture, are needed.

Pastoral Catechesis

Aware that our knowledge of human needs and the predisposition to be present

to those needs in Christ-like ways is a consequence of formation, we need to provide opportunities to be present to, and to minister with, the poor, the homeless, the sick, the lonely, the hungry, the oppressed, and others in need.

Opportunities to reflect critically on our personal lives in terms of health and wholeness, as well as on how society deals with those in need, are necessary.

Opportunities for pastoral counselling with individuals and group are also important.

Instruction in the knowledge and skills necessary for persons to minister with the needy, as well as the means to achieve greater personal and communal health, is needed.

Ecumenical Catechesis

While catechesis alone cannot restore Christian unity, it can foster ecumenism in a variety of ways. Aware that our lives as evangelists and stewards are continually being formed, we need to provide opportunities to practice the ability to explain that way of life with others in terms of the gospel. By presenting information about other Christians honestly and accurately, and by communicating those values and beliefs that we share, Episcopalians can work with other Christians in promoting cooperation in projects for the common good. Similarly, opportunities and encouragement to be faithful stewards of God's creation, and to tithe (a minimum aim for the faithful) our time, talents, and treasures to the mission of the Church, need to be provided.

Following are sidebars for Chap. 4

The fundamental question which catechesis asks is this: What is it to be Christian together in community and in the world?

John H. Westerhoff, III, in A Faithful Church: Issues in the History of Catechesis, ed. by John H. Westerhoff, III and O.C. Edwards, Morehouse-Barlow, 1981.

The first fruit of the Church is its worship...worship, at the heart of the educational program of the local congregation, is an educational experience...[and remember] we learn to worship by worshipping, not by talking about it.

Randolph Crump Miller in Education for Christian Living, ed. by Marvin L. Roloff, Augsburg Fortress, 1986.

Mission and theology must have meaning to a community. Evangelization is a social event, an act of genuine concern for people who find themselves in the same situation, people who need bread.

Manuel Ortiz in The Hispanic Challenge, Opportunities Confronting the Church, InterVarsity Press, 1993.

We are all beginners in the liturgy, really. All of us -- from the first-time visitor who finds himself paging helplessly through the Prayer Book wondering what is happening, to the aged priest who has known it all by heart for half a century -- are only on the lower slopes of worship. If the great seraphim themselves cover their faces in the presence of the Divine Majesty, who of us will claim to be experts at the act of approaching the Throne with offerings of adoration and praise?

Thomas Howard in The Liturgy Explained, Morehouse-Barlow, 1981.

Catechesis aims to provide persons with a context for falling in love with Christ, so that, having their eyes and ears opened, they might perceive and experience personally the gospel of God's Kingdom come.

John H. Westerhoff, III, in A Faithful Church: Issues in the History of Catechesis, ed. by John H. Westerhoff, III and O.C. Edwards, Morehouse-Barlow, 1981.

chapter Five

The Anglican Way: Catechetical Ethos

The Anglican tradition, like every other Christian tradition, is founded upon the affirmation that Jesus Christ is Lord. Indeed, it is that affirmation that is both essential to, and the basis for, the unity of the Church. As Anglicans, who along with all other Christians hold to that affirmation, we believe that Christ's transcendent presence in the Holy Spirit has continually formed, reformed, and informed who we are as one branch of the tree which is the Christian Church.

Our Anglican tradition represents a continuous tradition of the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church in England, which became a distinctive political entity during the Reformation era, along with those Churches around the world which owe their birth to the English Church. The Episcopal Church, officially the Protestant (not Roman Catholic or Orthodox) Episcopal (not Protestant) Church in the United States, is one branch.

This Anglican tradition, of which we are a part, has over the years acquired a distinctive identity with resulting predispositions to behave in particular ways. These need to be named and described, so that we might be faithful in framing an Episcopal understanding of our catechetical ministry.

Identity

Fundamentally, Anglicans are Christians who worship according to some authorized edition of The Book of Common Prayer and are in communion with the See of Canterbury (the seat or jurisdiction of a bishop). We are a world-wide Church comprised of many diverse cultures. Wherever we are found, our identity is as a community of practice. We are bound together by our liturgy. To put it simply, we are best understood as a "prayer book tradition." Orthodoxy, for us, is right worship. Theological and ethical issues are resolved through decisions concerning liturgy, rather than doctrine.

Through the years, in our ever constant call to be faithful, we have revised The Book of Common Prayer and reformed our worship. This has often been painful and difficult because our liturgy is at the heart of our identity as a Christian people.

In other branches of Christianity, the decisions of councils, the writings of particular theologians, catechisms, confessional doctrinal statements, particular interpretations of Scripture, or forms of polity have significance unknown to Anglicans. If anyone wants to know what Anglicans believe about issues of faith and life, they need to turn to The Book of Common Prayer and engage in the process of interpreting that document. Changes in the historical development of Christian belief and practice are seen through revisions of that prayer book. The current Book of Common Prayer is the most representative Anglican prayer book in our Episcopal Church history. By providing for unity in essentials, allowing diversity and flexibility in nonessentials, and centering on loving God and loving neighbor as we are loved by God, it shows important elements in our tradition.

For Anglicans, therefore, the answer to the question, "What is it to be an Anglican Christian?" is, "Come, worship and work with us"; that is, join us in liturgy. Others might initially invite inquirers to study Scripture or explore doctrine, but we would save these activities for later as aids in our reflection on the experience of worship and ministry. The Book of Common Prayer will, therefore, be foundational to all Episcopal catechesis and a fundamental resource for any curriculum we devise.

Authority

As with all Christians, our supreme authority is the triune God: God the Father, creator of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen; God the Son, the author of our salvation and the head of the Church; and God the Holy Spirit, God at work in the world and in the Church, leading us into all truth and enabling us to grow in the likeness of Christ, one God in glory everlasting.

Traditionally Anglicans have operated with a diffused understanding of authority; that is, we have pointed to three interrelated authoritative sources: Scripture, tradition, and reason. Their nature and relationship can be difficult to comprehend; perhaps the best we can do is use a metaphor. The relationship between Scripture, tradition, and reason is like the relationship between the three persons of the Trinity.

Scripture

Anglicans have a high regard for the Holy Scriptures, but we do not describe them as having ultimate authority in all matters, nor do we assert that everything found within them is binding on us. We are a biblical tradition, but we have no doctrine of biblical supremacy, literal inspiration, or verbal inerrancy. While not accepting the Scriptures as our sole authority or guide, we do believe they provide the Church with the primary criteria for its teaching and the chief source of guidance, in terms of principles and norms, for its life.

We believe the Holy Scriptures are the Word of God. That is, they contain the revelation of God. God inspired their human authors and God still speaks to us through them. We understand their meaning through the aid of the Holy Spirit who guides the Church in their true interpretation. (BCP, 1979, The Catechism, pp.853-854).

These Scriptures, while not a text providing final judgments on every ethical or theological question or issue, contain all that is needed to be known or believed for our salvation.

The Scriptures taken as a whole are foundational to God's revelation. Each part is to be heard in relation to every other part and nothing is to be accepted literally, understood legalistically, or followed blindly. Christianity is a religion of a person — Jesus Christ — and not of a book. Because this is so, special authority is given to the Gospels which contain the narrative of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection and of his teachings. While Christ is the head (mind and heart) of the "Church, which is his body"

(Eph. 1:23), even he did not claim to know the mind of God fully (Mk. 13:32). He did promise, however, that "the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you" (Jn. 14:25–26).

While there is a unifying element in the Scriptures, there is also great diversity of opinion. Each and every statement is historically conditioned and context-specific. The Scriptures are a literary, historical document in need of critical examination and interpretation.

The Scriptures emerged from the experience of a community who believed that God had been and was mysteriously, but clearly, present and active in their midst. Beginning as an oral tradition, the Hebrew people and the Church gradually gathered and developed its sacred texts and established a final, unchanging canon to be a measuring rod or standard for the Christian life of faith. These Scriptures, however, were intended to be interpreted and reinterpreted over and over again in the light of contemporary knowledge and experience within a believing and worshiping community open to the leading of God's Spirit into new truth.

Tradition

Our Anglican acknowledgment of the proper role of tradition in discerning the mind and will of God is founded upon the awareness that the Scriptures themselves are the product of tradition. As St. Paul wrote, "For I handed on to you as of first importance what I in turn had received" (1 Cor. 15:3). An oral tradition and the liturgies and practices of the early Church were used in the formation of the Holy Scriptures.

Since these Scriptures do not speak plainly on all issues and by their nature are in need of interpretation, the wisdom of the Church throughout history has always been an important guide to our life of faith in the present.

Tradition, of course, is much more than the history of the interpretation and application of Scripture. Tradition is also expressed in the Church's liturgies with their

prophets, appointed collects and psalms, lessons and prefaces, and preaching.

Tradition's role is to guard and witness to Scripture, especially through its worship, and thereby provide an ongoing resource for discerning the mind and will of God. However, while Scripture informs tradition, tradition continually informs Scripture.

Anglicans give special attention to the first five centuries after Christ, the formative years of the Church in which the canon of Scripture was established, to the seven ecumenical councils during that period, and the creeds, as well as to the work of classical theologians, the "church fathers," and their varied imaginative modes for interpreting Scripture.

The 1571 Articles of Religion and our varied catechisms, best understood as historical commentary on Scripture and the creeds, and other historical documents such as the prefaces to the numerous editions of The Book of Common Prayer, are also part of our tradition; a tradition which is neither Roman Catholic nor Reformed, but intentionally inclusive of elements from both.

While the Church is not infallible, tradition too must be interpreted and open to change. It is important to acknowledge that we Anglicans are a people who, at our baptism, are incorporated into a living tradition, established by a community of faith, which continually reflects on its experience.

Reason

Our Anglican emphasis on the crucial role of reason in discerning the mind and will of God is founded upon an awareness that human experience and reflection upon it are foundational to both Scripture and tradition. God's grace has always been present to our reason, making it possible for God's Spirit to lead us into truth. We are able to receive and comprehend the revelation of God in Scripture, tradition, and experience through reason.

While reason is not infallible and is in need of the judgment placed upon it by

Scripture and tradition, it remains the means given to us by God to evaluate Scripture and tradition and to discern the working of God's Spirit in present experience. The prophetic and historical traditions in the Scriptures emphasize remembering stories, learning the commandments, reciting the history and so on. The wisdom tradition leads to a significantly different way of thinking, thinking which is reflection on experience. The wisdom tradition affirms that creation can be trusted because God made it. Human experience can be trusted because we are created in God's image. We need to listen and take seriously creation and experience in discerning God's will and ways.

The tri-fold nature of our Anglican understanding of authority and the interconnectedness of Scripture, tradition, and reason, when applied to discerning the mind and will of God cannot help but result in creative tension within the life of the Church. Therefore, the Church must be held together finally by the authority of love, or as St. Paul would advise us, we are "to lead a life of . . . humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:1–3).

Postscript

In order to maintain this triangular understanding of authority, the Episcopal Church has over time ordered its life around a cluster of attitudes and preferences championed by an ever-shifting kaleidoscope of individuals and groups. While each affirmed the appropriate roles of Scripture, tradition, and reason, an evangelical community emerged to remind us of the importance of Scripture; an Anglo-Catholic community to remind us of the importance of tradition; a Liberal community to remind us of the importance of reason; and a Broad Church community to remind us that, if any of the others becomes dominant or excludes another, we fall into the heresies of biblicism, traditionalism, or rationalism.

While each of these communities has an essential contribution to make, none

may dominate nor diminish the importance of the others. Each needs to consider seriously the insights of the others. Each needs to listen carefully to and reflect prayerfully on the convictions of the others. Each needs to believe that the others may know the mind and will of God more fully than they. Each needs to be open to the working of the Holy Spirit and be willing to change its convictions, if the community comes to a new discernment. And each needs to be committed to maintaining the unity of the Church. As St. Paul reminds us, the body of Christ is comprised of many parts, each of which needs the others if the body is to be healthy (1 Cor. 3 and 12). And may we never forget that St. Paul worked among all his congregations to elicit their financial support for the Church in Jerusalem, despite their theological differences (2 Cor. 8 and 9).

Spirituality

Anglican spirituality, our understanding of how we approach our relationship to God and grow in an ever deepening and loving relationship to God and therefore to self and neighbor, has numerous characteristics.

Liturgical and Biblical

Anglican spirituality is rooted in communal daily prayer: morning prayer, noonday prayer, evening prayer, and compline as found in The Book of Common Prayer. Intending to shape our relationship to God, these daily offices are informed by Scripture and are dominated by content from Scripture. At the heart of the daily offices, especially morning and evening prayer, is the divine reading of Scripture and the prayerful meditation on the Psalms. We are a tradition that believes in a daily discipline of formal ritual prayer and the prayerful engagement of Scripture. Anglican spirituality would rule out any spiritual practices that neglected the Scriptures.

Communal

Anglican spirituality contends that personal prayer issues forth from communal prayer. Communal prayers in The Book of Common Prayer teach us how to pray and for what to pray. The community's calendar assigns persons to be remembered, as role models for our spiritual lives. Likewise, before decisions are made by the Church meeting in council, the community gathers in the context of worship, prayer, and meditation on Scripture so that the Holy Spirit might inform and influence our actions. We are also prone to wait for consensus rather than take win or lose votes, listening prayerfully to the discernment of others (especially the least among us), more than trying to convince them that our discernment is God's will. And, it is assumed that personal religious experience and discernment needs to be confirmed by at least one other person. Any individualistic or privatized understanding of the spiritual life would be antithetical to Anglican spirituality.

Sacramental

Anglicans understand the sacraments as outward and visible signs of inward and spiritual grace given by Christ as sure and certain means by which we receive that grace. The two great sacraments are baptism and Eucharist. Through baptism God adopts us as children and makes us members of Christ's body. The norm or standard of believer's baptism in The Book of Common Prayer reminds us that baptism is not magic, but that it requires an ethical response; and that it is to be a mature act of faith. The prayer book's affirmation of infant baptism as a legitimate exception to that norm reminds us that the community's faith comes before individual faith, that God's grace is given before we respond, that we are always living into the reality of our baptism (hence baptismal renewal), and that participation in the sacraments offers us the gift of faith.

We also emphasize the importance of weekly Eucharist. Through our participation in this action we are reconstituted as the body of Christ, infused with Christ's life, and empowered to be Christ's presence in the world. Each week we come

to experience again life in God's reign, where all people are restored to unity with God and each other in Christ, and where God's will is known and done, so that we can return to our daily lives and work as a sign and witness to the reality of God's reign.

Our sacramental spirituality informs our conviction that just as Christ was the sacrament of God, the Church is to be the sacrament of Christ in the world. This implies that our spirituality combines the contemplative and the active into a spirituality that relates to our social, political, and economic lives.

Pastoral

Our emphasis in The Book of Common Prayer is on the celebration and blessing of marriage, thanksgiving for the birth or adoption of a child, reconciliation of a penitent, ministrations to the sick, and ministrations at the time of death. These emphases, along with the intercessions we regularly make at worship and our baptismal promises, support a spirituality which says that our relationship to God is measured by our relationship to self, neighbor, and the natural world. Prayer as devotion to God, and prayer as service to the neighbor in need, necessarily go together.

Incarnational

Our Anglican emphasis on God's entry into human life and history has influenced our spirituality to be earthy. We believe that the extraordinary is to be found in the ordinary. We affirm life in this world and believe that the body, pleasure, and material reality are good. Similarly, the natural world is God's good gift to us. What matters is what we do with these gifts. Because they are good, we need to honor and care for them. Therefore, care for physical health and care about ecology are aspects of our spiritual life; so are play and pleasure.

Mystical

Historically, in spirituality there are two understandings of our human quest for the experience of union with God, namely pietism and mysticism. Pietism emphasizes an immediate, emotional, felt experience of God and assurance of divine election. Mysticism describes a long, slow journey into union with God through spiritual discipline and prayer. Anglican spirituality has always had an inclination toward mysticism.

Temperament

Temperament refers to a tradition's characteristic way of thinking and behaving. The Anglican temperament is comprehensive, ambiguous, open-minded, intuitive, aesthetic, moderate, naturalistic, historical, and political. Following are descriptions of some aspects of this temperament.

Comprehensive

Anglicans affirm a principle of comprehensiveness or the via media (literally, the middle way), that is, the conviction that all truth is known and guarded by maintaining the tension between two counter-opposite truths. This principle is exemplified in the conviction that Jesus was fully human and fully divine, in the Anglican commitment to be fully Protestant and fully Catholic, and in desire to hold in tension personal freedom and communal responsibility so as to avoid both anarchy and tyranny. Anglicans, therefore, affirm both the sacred and the secular; material and nonmaterial reality; the speculative illumination of the mind and the affective illumination of the heart; the possibility of a direct unmediated experience of God and the indirect mediated experience of God; and both the transcendence and immanence of God. This principle provides a way to resolve what may appear to be severe disagreements. For example, Anglicans contend that we live into our baptism by becoming who we already are. This contention makes it possible to affirm two conflicting beliefs, namely, that every benefit is given us at baptism and that we must do something after baptism to achieve baptism's benefits.

Ambiguous

To affirm the ambiguous implies that when we are faced with new experiences or complex issues, we will be open to various interpretations and show a willingness to live with some uncertainty of meaning or intention, until a resolution can be found. It does not mean we do not care or that nothing really matters. But it does mean that we affirm an openness to experience and believe in the developed capacity to be sensitive to and accept what our senses tell us, even when these things do not fit into neat established categories, that is, are ambiguous, incomprehensible, or obscure. Anglicans can tolerate a bit of messiness, and do not need to have everything resolved or settled immediately. With a developed sensibility, we tend to be more inductive and pragmatic than deductive and systematic. We are willing to live with trial and error as means toward establishing truth, and have no trouble dealing with seemingly contradictory statements that may nevertheless be true, such as "faith is a gift of participating in the sacraments and faith is necessary for reception of sacrament." Anglicans believe that conflict, when handled in reconciling ways, is healthy and not to be avoided.

This ability to live with ambiguity helps us to deal with situations in which two or more biblical texts, theological principles, or ethical norms, appear logically incompatible. When this does occur, we are able to wait patiently (neither fleeing the situation nor fighting it), to pray with a discerning heart, and to listen with an open mind until the conflict can be reconciled, through the aid of the Holy Spirit.

Open-minded

We encourage a searching, questioning, reasonable mind always open to new insights. We listen carefully to everyone, search for wisdom everywhere, take seriously the secular world and its work, and recognize that contemporary knowledge is not necessarily in conflict with faith, and indeed, may offer wisdom. We affirm a reasoned faith.

Intuitive

While never being anti-intellectual, Anglicans are more at home in the intuitive way of thinking and knowing. We prefer art to philosophy and are more at home in the world of symbol, myth, and ritual than theology; more at home with liturgy that makes use of the arts (drama, dance, music, visual arts, and poetry) than with discursive prose. Recognizing that human nature and society are more deeply motivated by images than by ideas, we are prone to emphasize the imagination, while keeping in tension objective consciousness and rational ideas with subjective consciousness and nonrational impressions.

Aesthetics

Truth, goodness, and beauty are related to each other in that the presence of one is judged by the presence of the other two. While some traditions begin with truth or goodness, Anglicans have made beauty the doorway into truth and goodness. We have a strong respect for, and belief in, the beauty of holiness. Money, therefore, spent on beauty is justified in so far as it advocates truth and goodness. Our churches are intended to be works of art and we make every effort to ensure that the arts used in them are of quality. Artists have always been at home in our congregations and played a significant role in our worship and common life.

Moderate

Anglicans believe that they are called to live a godly (to give evidence of the divine image in ourselves), righteous (to live in a right relationship to God and neighbor), and sober life. That means that Anglicans typically avoid extravagance, extremes, and excessiveness in any aspect of personal life, thought or emotion. We are a people of moderation and restraint who model a temperate, balanced, reasonable approach to

life. It is a life in which prayer, work, study, and play have a rhythm.

Naturalistic

We have a reverence and delight in the natural earthy rhythms of life, the seasons and their changes, the natural world and creation. We have always taken pride in using live flowers and real candles, and in surrounding ourselves with natural things in the church. Not only have we affirmed natural theology and natural law, means by which God has made possible to all human beings some knowledge of God's will and God's ways, but we have always taken seriously the contribution of the natural sciences to human life. Through the years our poets have filled us with an awareness of nature and ecology.

Historical

We have a great sense of history and a desire to preserve it. At times this can encourage us to turn our churches into museums, rather than remodel them for contemporary worship, but mostly it has encouraged us to honor the past and what we can learn from it, as well as to strive to maintain our roots in Anglican history and culture. This historical consciousness is seen in our concern for apostolic succession as the way to link the Church with its past.

Political

Our English history has made us a political Church. That is, we value the civic virtues and affirm free, peaceful, public debate as a basis for unity. We believe that such civic debate should be encouraged and that the Church is an appropriate place to engage in it. We have shown our concern by assuming responsibility for participation in public life, and accepting leadership roles in politics.

Summary

The Anglican tradition at its best has the characteristics named above, but it must be acknowledged that they do not always describe all of us, nor all of the time. Still, they are important for our catechetical ministry. The liturgy will always be central as a guide to catechesis — its content and process. Our understanding of authority will dictate the importance of learning Scripture but also how to interpret it; of acquiring a knowledge of the tradition and how the Church over time interpreted the Scriptures; and of learning to use reason in our search for truth so that it doesn't become pure rationalism, but prayerful reflection. Our spirituality will need to frame both catechetical goals and the means for achieving them. The character of our temperament should do the same.

Following are sidebars for Chap. 5:

Those three distinct theological attributes -- interpreting the Bible reasonably in community, grounding the Church in the created order as the sphere of God's continuing operation, and affirming the salvation of humanity by grace -- shaped the initial framework of Anglican theology. Together they convey the spirit and identity of Anglicans within Christianity. They also express a distinct theological methodology, revealing how Anglicans learn from Scripture, reason, tradition and experience. Anglican theology continues to be formed and reformed, amid conflict and tension, in accord with these several sources of authority.

Fredrica Harris Thompsett in We Are Theologians, Cowley, 1989.

Jesus as educator has laid out for us the true life and has effected the education of the one who abides in Christ.

Clement of Alexandria in Christ The Educator, Simon P. Wood, trans., Catholic University Press, 1954.

The religious impulse unmediated by reason terrifies me, and it seems to me that we are always having to mediate between the emotions, the body, the reason. So even though I can't be moved forward in any way by systematic theology, I like it to be there, in the same way that I like modern architecture to be there, even though I don't want to live in it.

Mary Gordon in Spiritual Quests, Houghton & Mifflin, 1988.

The idea of tithing in the Old Testament does not exactly fit our contemporary bang'-em-

on-the-head-to-get-more-bucks model. Back then, tithing was not linked to a building program, utilities or payroll. It was a system that subsidized a party -- a great festival honoring Yahweh's goodness, grace and forgiveness. It was a celebration that (God) remembered the people's sins no more and dealt with them mercifully.

From 101 Ways Your Church Can Change the World by Tony Campolo and Gordon Aeschliman, Regal Books, 1993.

To truly communicate in Holy Communion is to experience Christ, to experience our oneness with God, with our brothers and sisters, and with the saints of every age. This is worship.

Leanne Payne in Real Presence, The Christian Worldview of C.S. Lewis as Incarnational Reality, Crossway Books, 1988.

The most important social task of Christians is to be nothing less than a community capable of forming people with virtues sufficient to witness to God's truth in the world.

Stanley Hauerwas in A Community of Character, University of Notre Dame Press, 1981.

Chapter Six

Insights from Biblical Theology

Scripture and tradition provide important insights into the nature of human beings. These insights are built around human existence in the image of the triune God and the call of Christ to personhood, both of which are important to establishing ends and understanding means for catechetics.

The Christian doctrines of creation and redemption provide a rich framework for exploring the nature of personal existence. The Genesis creation narratives establish that human beings are intrinsically related to God and one another. Humanity is incomplete prior to the creation of Eve. The lone Adam is not fully human. Adam and Eve become human because of their relationship to each other. Humanity is only in the image of God when lived in a dialogical relationship of mutuality and interdependence.

In the creation story we read, "Let us make humankind in our image" (Gen. 1:26). In the one God there is something analogous to a communal existence, which later develops into the doctrine of the triune God. The divine image requires a social unit, so it was that God "created male and female" (Gen. 1:27). As the story continues, the fracture of relationships with God and with one another results from humanity's free decision to transgress the God-ordained boundaries of a healthy relationship with God and therefore each other. That is, humanity chose to free itself from dependence on God by desiring to "be like God, knowing good and evil" (Gen. 3:5).

In creation God made human beings "in the image of God" a relationship of dependence and trust in which we human beings are open to the indwelling presence of God, and are given freedom to be creative agents in discerning, with God's help, God's will and purpose for the whole of creation and history. But humanity was unfaithful to that covenant relationship, desiring to live on its own without God's help — it was the original sin and the sin upon which all other sins are founded.

In the mystery of God's grace humans were created as dialogue partners with God, partners free to make what response they will. All that we humans do and make of ourselves is in fact a response to God. In our freedom we can choose whether or not we will live in a proper dependent relationship to God. We can reject, deny, or distort our relationship with God, but we cannot avoid being in some form of relationship.

New Life in Christ

Christ, the second person of the Trinity, is both fully divine and fully human. Christ is the manifestation of the image of God in its fullness. Jesus is the human person properly related to God and others. To be fully human in God's image is to be conformed to Christ. Jesus became human so that we might become divine.

Through God's grace we humans have received the gift of faith, and thereby can perceive God's unmerited, forgiving, transforming love, making it possible for us to be holy and healthy and to live lives modeled after the way of Jesus.

Personal responses to God's grace come in the form of multiple conversions to new loyalties, new convictions, and new commitments. Some of these experiences come in the form of memorable moments; others are but a dawning recognition and realization of long-term experiences.

In any case, the call to discipleship is not to an individualistic address, but a call into community, into the Body of Christ, (the Church) followed by a personal moment of decision to enter into relationship. When Jesus said, "Follow me," he did not mean to choose a way of life for oneself. To follow in the way of Jesus is to acknowledge that we cannot go it alone, that we cannot fully control our lives. We are dependent creatures who can do nothing without God's help and the support of others. All claims to independent self-orientation, and the illusion of self-sufficiency, are shattered. We are a people content to live "out of control" because we trust in God.

Historical Beings

We are a people formed by a story, the story of Jesus. To be a disciple means to share in Christ's story, to participate in the reality of God's rule. Though we still move toward death, we have already experienced death; though the resurrection is still in the future, we already share in the new life in God's reign. We are a people on a journey, of becoming who we already are; and because of the story that forms us, we live lives consistent with the conviction that God is the Lord of history and with God all things are possible.

We humans are made by our history, and we make history. We are influenced, and we influence. We make decisions, within limits, affecting the shape of our future and other's futures. Our past decisions influence our present and future. We are aware of having grown out of a past, of being shaped by past decisions and acts of self and others. And we know that we are moving into an open future, which will be shaped by decisions yet to be made. The good news is that Jesus is our Savior. Jesus frees us from having to be victims of either our heredity or environment. There is a way for us to begin anew, and while we will carry with us external products of past decisions made by self and others, internally we can, with God's help, make new beginnings.

The influences of heredity and environment are only influences, they are not determinative. We cannot make others into Christians against their wills. We can, for example, provide influence; the child decides to accept or reject that influence for his or her own good or bad reasons. Parents know that sometimes their children turn out like them, and sometimes they don't. For this reason God will never judge parents on how their children turn out, only how they as parents turn out. The tragedy is that some people say "no" or "yes" to our distortions of the Christian life of faith and not to the Christian life of faith itself. Worse, some never make any decision at all because we do not offer them anything to decide for or against.

Jesus and Teaching

One other insight from Scripture contributes to our understanding of catechesis, namely Jesus as teacher. Jesus summons disciple-companions, promising to make them into people who are able to seek, summon, make, and commission others in a similar manner.

For the most part Jesus teaches his disciples as they travel together in what is best described as the itinerant in contrast to the schooling tradition. In the first phase, they simply observe his life and discuss what they observe. They are expected to learn specific duties and accept special responsibilities. Thus, they learn how to do things before they learn why. They participate in and practice Jesus's life of faith before they understand its meaning or implications.

The second phase includes reflection and conversation in order to understand. The third phase includes significant discourse and the call to action.

In every case the disciple-companion is an active participant, not a passive listener. Advanced schooling or education was not required to comprehend his teaching. He did not use scholarly or technical theological language. He used metaphor and story; he engaged the imagination, used illustrations, and produced demonstrations. He lived what he taught; his words and actions were consistent. He asked nothing of his students which he did not first do himself.

Jesus' teaching was not based on memorization, repetition, and recitation, but rather spontaneous creative responses to situations and experiences. He wove daily life experiences into his teaching and reflected on life experiences. And the authority for his teaching was his life itself. Any catechetical ministry in the name of Jesus should take his example seriously.

Sidebars for Chap. 6:

The creation of man and woman thus embodies three features: equality, diversity and unity. They are made equals, sharing together a distinctiveness from the animals and sharing together in the image of God. They are made different, complementing each other's sexuality with different reproductive functions. They are made to be together, united as "one flesh," together as the two halves of mankind and providing companionship for each other.

Elaine Storkey in What's Right with Feminism, Third Way Books, SPCK, 1985.

Christ is our peace. At every Eucharist we quote these words at its most central moment. It is not a pious hope, or empty rhetoric. He has broken down the dividing wall -- between God and ourselves, and between each other.

George Carey in A Charter for the Church, Morehouse, 1993.

Faith is communicated by a community of believers and the meaning of faith is developed by its members out of their history by their interactions with each other and in relation to the events that take place in their life.

C. Ellis Nelson in Where Faith Begins, Westminster/John Knox, 1984.

Mission should be seen as a worshiping event. It celebrates what God has done for women and men in Jesus Christ. It calls them to receive and share the gift of God's grace.

Orlando Costas in The Integrity of Mission, Harper & Row, 1979.

Chapter Seven

Insights from Psychology

Ever-changing insights from psychology, the other social sciences, and pedagogy can be of value. Nevertheless, we should not imagine that any one school of thought or theory is sufficient or that any should be accepted uncritically. What follows are brief summaries of a few insights that may be helpful in planning for teaching and learning.

Psychology focuses its attention on individual persons and their behavior. While the debate over the influences of heredity and environment continue, most would agree that both have significant influence over our lives. The nature of that influence is complicated by the fact that the minds of people interact with their environment and perhaps with genetic influences, making the degree of influence difficult to determine. While generalizations can be made and are useful, it is not wise to establish universals concerning the behavior of individuals. Nevertheless, various schools of psychology offer insights that may be helpful for catechetics.

Developmental psychology aims to describe stages and transitional processes of growth in persons. It is concerned with how individuals characteristically behave over the life cycle. A psycho-social approach of developmental thought makes us aware that interactions between the generations play an important role in the development of self-image and social role. One implication is that our children's lives of faith are significantly affected by the adults in their lives. It is, therefore, reasonable to conclude that if we care about children, we will be concerned about the lives of adults, place an emphasis on adult teaching/learning, and pick with care those who will associate with, and teach, young people.

Freud taught us that much of human behavior is governed by motives of which we are

unaware. The roots of distress in the human spirit lie in childhood and our relationships with our parents. Eric Erickson took Freud's theory and applied it to human growth in important ways for catechesis.

Maintaining the unity of body and soul, Erickson observed that there were special moments in the human life cycle for developing particular human qualities. Each of these comes about through the creative tension of two opposing forces. While these will return again and again, how they are resolved, when first addressed, makes a significant difference throughout our lives. That is, each stage is built on the one before. Our life stories, therefore, are very important. Indeed, being in touch with our personal histories aids our growth. Erickson's stages and opposing forces follow, but first we need to acknowledge that various cultures will address these needs differently.

Trust vs. Mistrust: Our first human need is love, affirmation, and support. This need continues throughout our lives, but how it is met in the first year of life significantly affects later life. Indeed, those experiences that lead to trust or mistrust with humans carry over into our ability to relate to God as loving and trustworthy.

Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt: During the "terrible two's" persons express willfulness and "mineness." As they do so, they either acquire a sense of positive identity or negative identity and self-doubt.

Initiative vs. Guilt: During the 3's, 4's, and 5's our conscience is acquired and our values formed. Persons learn it is acceptable to take the initiative, be inner directed, and take responsibility for their actions; or they learn to fear taking personal initiative and become an other-directed person, whose morality is based on the fear of being caught.

Industry vs. Inferiority: During childhood we acquire the fundamental beliefs, attitudes, and skills necessary for adult life. It is important that we do well and have success. If persons do not, they will have difficulty acting as healthy productive adults.

Identity vs. Identity Confusion: During youth we forge who we are and the direction for our lives. We search for something to which to be faithful. This takes time

and experimentation. We need to avoid premature closure.

Intimacy vs. Isolation: Soon after our identity is formed, we are able to enter into healthy relationships with others. Unless we have acquired a positive self-identity, our relationships with others will be distorted and we will have difficulty entering into loving, caring relations with others.

Generativity vs. Stagnation: Through the 40's we learn what it means to be creative, productive, and make a contribution to society. If we do not, we turn in on ourselves, focus primarily on our own needs, and find it difficult to give ourselves to others or any cause.

Integrity vs. Despair: During the later years we learn what it means to be healthy and whole. If we do not, life becomes hopeless and without purpose or meaning.

Erikson affirms the importance of ritual, repetitive symbolic behavior, and play, especially during childhood for addressing these stages and human development.

Those who plan catechesis need to take these stages seriously and address the struggles of each stage in positive ways.

A constructivist approach to human development focuses its insights on cognition, how people know, and how the mind structures experience and constructs reality, through the interaction of people and their environment. Piaget is the major voice in this approach. One of his insights is that children do not think in the same ways as adults. However, while age is a factor in understanding what persons are able to do in terms of cognitive processes, there are stages through which individuals pass at their own rate, and at which they may become arrested if not helped to make a transition to a higher stage.

Constructivists have examined general patterns of thinking: Kohlberg on moral reasoning, and Fowler on faith (understood as an activity of the mind irrespective of particular content). Their insights can help us understand why people deal with the world and information differently, and how they can be helped to mature in theological,

ethical thinking.

Kohlberg's concern was moral thinking and decision-making. Morality is preeminently a matter of reasonableness. Justice is the highest moral principle. He identified three levels and six stages of moral reasoning. Persons proceed from one stage to another without direct reference to chronological age. A person can become arrested at any stage.

Preconventional

1. Obedience and punishment orientation. Egotistic deference to superior power.
2. Naively egotistic orientation. Right action is what satisfies the self's needs and occasionally the needs of others.

Conventional

3. Good boy, nice girl orientation. Orientation to approval and to pleasing and helping others.
4. Authority and social order orientation. Orientation to doing duty and showing respect for authority.

Postconventional

5. Contractual legalistic orientation. Duty defined in terms of contract; general avoidance of violating the rights of others.
6. Conscience or principle orientation. Orientation to principles of choice involving appeal to logical universality and consistent (word msg).

More recently, Carol Gilligan found a gender bias in previous research on these stages and has attempted to provide correctives, by basing her research on the

disparity between women's experience and the representation of human development found in psychological literature.

Morality, from Gilligan's perspective, is rooted in relationships and is preeminently a matter of compassion and care. Nonviolent relationships are her highest principle. She speaks of three stages: First, one in which there is a tenuous concept of self, and one obeys whatever is demanded by others. Second, one in which goodness involves self-sacrifice; therefore, one must do what society establishes as right for oneself. And third, one in which persons accept responsibility for their own decisions and create healthy relationships by caring for others including oneself.

Fowler proposes six stages of faith through which a person passes, in any one of which a person may be arrested.

Stage 1: Intuitive-Projective Faith (about age two or when the use of language begins). Persons experience the birth of the imagination. Faith is fantasy-filled and imitative. Persons are powerfully influenced by experiences, examples, action, ritual, and stories. While only concrete symbols and images can address their ways of knowing, they inhabit a world in which God is alive in the universe and life is a daily miracle.

Stage 2: Mythic-Literal Faith (between the ages of six and eight). Persons begin to embody the language of sacred narrative and metaphor. Oral tradition slowly becomes written tradition. While knowing is concrete and literal, children become able to envision reality from the perspective of others. God begins to assume personality, and individuals become conscious of being part of a particular community and begin to acquire its way of life.

Stage 3: Synthetic-Conventional Faith (between the ages of eleven and thirteen). Persons develop the ability to think conceptually, to make generalizations and abstractions, and to acquire a sense of history. Nevertheless, while question-asking and the search for truth begin to emerge, these persons tend to remain conventional in their

thinking, mirroring that of their community. Their thinking is marked by concreteness, literalness, and one-dimensionality of meaning. God is seen in anthropomorphic terms. Moral reciprocity provides the intuitive basis for a construction of God and of God's dealing with the world. Very gradually, they develop foundations for the later development of a theology and theological ethic, a rational system of beliefs and practices.

Stage 4: Individuative-Reflective Faith (after age eighteen). Persons begin to reflect critically on the tradition they have acquired, as they take seriously the burden of responsibility for their own commitments, lifestyles, beliefs, attitudes and values. With a growing confidence in the conscious mind, in critical thought and reason, they enter a demythologizing stage, often marked by doubt and rejection of earlier beliefs.

Stage 5: Conjunctive Faith Persons begin to circle back to earlier ways of being religious, and begin to integrate by holding life together in terms of paradox, ambiguity, and comprehensiveness. Aware of alternatives, they are able to make a commitment to a conviction concerning truth and the Christian life of faith, while remaining open to other belief systems. This stage involves a reuniting of symbolic power with conceptual meanings, as well as a reclaiming and reworking of one's past. A new appreciation of symbols, myths, and rituals emerges.

Stage 6: Universalizing Faith Persons move beyond paradoxical awareness and the embrace of polar tensions. The tensions between inclusiveness and exclusiveness disappear. There is a dramatic widening of social perspective, and there is a mystical relinquishing of self into God.

Gabriel Moran offers another description of three religious stages and six moments.

1. Simply Religious (birth - age seven)

- a. The Physical. The religious life of the small

child is one of unending mystery and unalloyed wonder. Interactions and experiences is the key to learning.

b. The Mythic. (eight - beginning adolescence)

Persons have intense religious experiences in a universe where God and gods are alive. Stories play an essential role in helping them understand these experiences.

2. Acquiring a Religion (through adolescence)

a. Our people's belief. Specific beliefs and regulated practices arise. Persons ask questions and receive answers. They acquire the religion of their communities.

b. Disbelief: Persons begin to question and doubt beliefs recently acquired, because both in their form and content they are limiting.

3. Religiously Christian (Jewish)

a. Parable: Persons pass beyond the negative stance of disbelief and decide to set their hearts on something, aware that we are never able to reduce life to a rational system.

b. Detachment: Persons have come to terms with life and befriended death. The human vocation is to live faithfully in a healthy dependence on God.

Moral development and faith formation have been discussed above as a linear

progressive from one stage to another. Others, such as Linda Vogel in Teaching and Learning in Communities of Faith, do not see this development in sequential and hierarchical stages (progressing from primal faith to universalizing faith, pp. 49-51). They recognize the complexity of human development and the possibility of transformative experiences that may catapult a person from one stage of faith formation to a stage beyond the next. Faith development can be compared to a bedspring: one follows the coils forward but in a cyclical fashion which implies that the experience at one "round" of the spring is related to the experiences both before and after that "round."

An alternative way to describe and apply such insights is to imagine the Christian pilgrimage as pathways over which persons may travel with others. On the experiential pathway, the intuitive way of knowing and thinking is dominant. Our relationship to the world is subject-to-subject (I-thou), and involvement in the arts provides a dominant mode for learning. Participation in the rituals of the community and the acquisition of the community's story are fundamental. Persons are dependent upon the community for their faith and life, and desire to be incorporated into the community's life. This way is complete and whole for the person with mental handicaps and provides a foundation for a deep spiritual life. For those with other gifts and graces, doubt naturally surfaces and, if not discouraged, provides the basis for journeying on the reflective way.

On the reflective way, the intellectual way of thinking and knowing dominates. Our relationship to the world becomes a subject-to-object one (I-it), and involvement in the sciences (theology) is fundamental to knowing. Participation in study, argument, and action now dominate, as people seek to establish what they believe and that to which they want to give their lives. Individuals seek independence from the community as they individuate. Those who remain in the community typically desire to produce change in the community. When this way of life reaches its limits, despair tends to surface, and people are motivated to move to the integrative way.

On the integrative way persons are prepared to own their own faith, while taking

their place in the life of the community. Having given up childish ways on the reflective path, persons become childlike and return to incorporate the experiential way. Now they integrate intuitive and intellectual ways of thinking and knowing, realize their interdependence, affirm continuity and change, personal freedom and community responsibility.

Children from birth through twelve (perhaps much later), as well as some new Christians regardless of age, tend to travel on the experiential way. Youth from perhaps thirteen (and many young adults) travel the reflective way and may continue on that path for some time. Beginning for some in the late twenties and for most much later, the integrative path is appealing.

The psychology of personality also is important to catechetics, especially for learning and teaching. The work of Jung on personality is seminal to this school of thought, especially as it has been interpreted into personality types by Isabel Briggs Myers and Peter Myers and into temperaments by David Kiersey and Marilyn Bates. Our personalities, a result of heredity and environment, influence how people relate to their environment and others. A simplified explanation of personality types as developed by these theorists follows:

There are two contrasting ways people approach the world and receive data from the world. Sensate persons receive their data from the world through what they can see, touch, taste, smell, and hear. Intuitive persons receive their data through their imaginations. Sensing people tend to enjoy practical application, while intuitive people enjoy theoretical design.

There are also two contrasting ways of judging or evaluating the data persons receive. One is thinking, through impersonal logical, objective processes, and the other is feeling, by personal, subjective apprehension.

Most people prefer one to the other and use it more frequently, thereby developing different personalities. Various combinations of these traits result in

personalities with different interests, values, needs, habits of the mind, learning styles, and so forth. For example: persons who are dominantly sensate-thinking persons are primarily interested in facts, and make their decisions through impersonal analysis. Those who are dominantly sensate-feeling persons approach decisions with personal warmth, are more interested in people than facts or tasks, and are more concerned with immediate experiences than reflection on those experiences.

Dominantly intuitive-thinking persons focus on possibilities but approach them impersonally. They are logical and ingenious, successful problem solvers. They are creators of new systems of thought and ways of doing things and have more questions than answers. Dominantly intuitive-feeling persons do not concentrate on concrete situations so much as on possibilities, new projects, new truth. They have a gift for language and are enthusiastic and insightful.

Another basis for differentiating personality types is in terms of where people receive energy. The main interests of introverts are in the inner world of concepts and ideas. They get their energy from being alone. Indeed, they need to be alone to think and create, but will try out their ideas on others in public. Extroverts prefer the outer world of people and things. They get their energy from people and go off by themselves to drain it off. They learn best with others in a group activity or discussion.

The last preference has to do with different attitudes or methods for dealing with the world. Judging people order their lives and need closure to go on to something else. They cannot learn in a disorderly environment and they make decisions rapidly, but will also change their minds rapidly. Perceptive people just live their lives. They hate to bring closure, can learn amidst great confusion, and make decisions very slowly, but once they make them, tend to stick to them.

As can be seen there are multiple combinations of factors, or preferences, which make up our personalities and influence how we learn. Nevertheless there appear to be four dominant ways that personality affects learning.

Style One

There are those who desire and need an expert teacher. They learn best from lectures, textbooks, and workbooks. They like routine, assignments and repetitive drill. They want to please and learn the facts. They need to know what is expected, and they want to be right. They are sensible and studious, and a pleasure to have in a classroom, and often become teachers themselves.

Style Two

There are those who desire and need a caring teacher. They are sensible and playful people who need to experience life to learn. They are active, competitive learners who resist rules. For them everything lies in the moment. They enjoy being fully involved in active learning as performers and typically desire a great deal of attention. Small group work, team activities, and interaction with persons and things are important, but they will not want to stick with any task too long. Difficult to teach and mostly misunderstood, they often become discipline problems and drop out of school.

Style Three

There are those who desire and need a directing teacher. They learn by individual study, experimentation, or trial and error. As intuitive thinkers, they question everything and are more interested in questions than answers. They like to change the rules and are nonconformists in thought and action. Both curious and hard working, they can be trying. Often loners, they are devastated by criticism.

Style Four

There are those who desire and need a role-model teacher to observe and imitate. Intuitive feeling students have a gift for language and all the arts. Always

searching for identity and interacting with their environment, they have a strong need to talk through their experiences. Their imaginations are highly developed. They are emotionally hypersensitive and are more oriented to cooperative than competitive activities.

Most people teach in a style consistent with how they learn. If that is not the way their students learn best, their students may have difficulty learning or become behavior problems. This implies that learning centers with more than one teacher to a class are important to consider. Another possibility is to permit students to choose their teachers, rather than being assigned to a teacher. In any case, it means that good teachers need to be able to adapt and vary their teaching style to address the various ways people learn.

The psychology of behaviorism is our last school. B.F. Skinner is the spokesperson for this view. He and others contend that children are born empty of psychological content. Like a mirror children come to reflect their environment. Like empty slates their minds are written upon by external stimuli. The sources of self-understanding and behavior are stimuli from the external world. That is, our behavior is conditioned. Through observation, imitation, and rewards, we are conditioned to act and think as we do.

Summary

The core of all these theories is that it is through human interaction with the environment that learning and growth occur. Some emphasize the environment, others, human action; some are concerned with the intellect, and others, the role of the unconscious and affections; some emphasize heredity and instincts, and others, external demands. Teachers who are involved in catechesis need to consider all of these theories and unite them into a holistic understanding of learning and growth.

sidebars for Chap. 7:

All of us write a "script" that details our life pattern. We do this early in life, influenced by our parents, grandparents, significant teachers, older brothers and sisters, and even TV personalities and fairy tales. We decide at an early age who we shall be, what we shall do, because we desperately need to know who we are. In that sense we form a fair amount of our personality. We spend the rest of our lives living out our script. Still, our basic personality has a dominant influence on us. Many psychologists believe that we are born with a basic personality. Our script must be influenced by our basic preferences, even if we are unaware of them.

Charles J. Keating in Who we are is How we pray, Twenty-Third Publications, 1987.

The Christian is called to feel and to act as a whole person. Christian education which does not take (one's) total behavior/lifestyle seriously is simply not Christian.

John H. Westerhoff, III, ed., A Colloquy on Christian Education, Pilgrim Press, 1972.

Given the evidence of different perspectives in the representation of adulthood by women and men, there is a need for research that elucidates the effects of these differences in marriage, family, and work relationships. My research suggests that men and women may speak different languages that they assume are the same, using similar words to encode disparate experiences of self and social relationships.

Carol Gilligan in In A Different Voice, Harvard University Press, 1982.

Whatever religious instincts I have bring their messages to me through the senses -- the images of my religious life, its sounds, its odors, the kind of kinesthetic sense I have of prayerfulness. These are much more real to me than anything that takes place in the life

of the mind.

Mary Gordon in Spiritual Quests, Houghton & Mifflin, 1988.

The great model for all teachers, and certainly for all teachers who are spiritual directors, is Jesus himself.

Margaret Guenther in Holy Listening, Cowley, 1992.

Chapter Eight

Insights From Sociology

Sociology focuses on human social or interactional behavior in groups. It studies social systems and human behavior in communal units such as the family and the congregation. One of sociology's most significant contributions to catechetics is in the area of systems theory. While there are various metaphors for social systems, one is biological. A social system is two or more living organisms related to each other by a common purpose to carry out a particular aim. Using this definition and a biological metaphor, a family, a church-related school, and a congregation display the following characteristics.

A system has boundaries, that is, persons know if they are inside it or not. There is a clear understanding of membership and its responsibilities. A healthy family, school, or congregation needs well-established and stated boundaries. However, boundaries are like skin; necessary for life, but if too closed, or too open, the system will not survive.

A system has a character, an identity, and the disposition to live in particular observable ways. A healthy congregation gives evidence of its traditions and ethos, and yet has a distinctive personality. It is inclusive in terms of age, gender, race, social class, and other such characteristics. It has a clearly stated aim or understanding of its mission, and there is a strong correspondence between its stated mission and its life. It is a witnessing community.

A system has a life cycle. It exists in history and necessarily responds to its historical context, but it also has a history, which has influenced and continues to influence its life. As it exists in history, it experiences life-cycle changes. In the beginning a system has great energy, enthusiasm, and vision; as it enters "childhood,"

its emphasis shifts to community life and identity formation; during "adolescence," it focuses on activity, program, and experimentation; in "adulthood," stability, coordination, and planning occupy its concerns; in "old age," it returns to community life and survival. Then it is either reborn and starts the cycle over again, or it dies. When congregations significantly change in size, get smaller or larger, they experience death, and need to make a new beginning as a new body. What worked or did not work in the past may or may not work any longer.

A system has size. Small, medium, and large congregations have significant differences in how they order their lives. For example, in small congregations decisions tend to be made informally. Less structure and organization are needed. Activities are naturally intergenerational. A catechetical program could conceivably be effective without a church school.

On the other hand, large churches will need to be more formal in decision-making and program. High structure and organization are needed; a committee to plan catechetical ministry and perhaps an employed coordinator for catechetical ministry may be useful. Small groups for pastoral care, spiritual formation, and catechesis are needed. The size of the congregation significantly affects its catechetical ministry.

A system exhibits a quality of interdependence, the result of connections between and among the various parts. Every part of the system is related; all the parts are connected and affect each other. Any change in any part of a system will affect the whole system. Persons behave differently and assume differing roles in their families, congregations, and societies. When persons become ill or leave a system, it is affected until someone assumes the role they have been playing, consciously or unconsciously.

A system can be healthy or sick. A healthy congregation does not tolerate co-dependent or passive-aggressive behavior, or other forms of pathology. It rather encourages self-critical behavior, engagement and transformation, and reconciling and healing relationships. It is a caring community.

A system needs nourishment to live. At the very heart of a vital congregation is its spiritual life. It is a community which focuses on its relationship with God. It is a community of prayer and learning.

A system needs to protect itself from its environment. That is, it needs an immune system and if one does not exist, it will get sick and die. A healthy congregation needs ways to resist the influences of society.

Transplants are possible in a system, but some transplants take and some do not. When adding persons, and especially lay and clerical leaders, some will be able to survive and be healthy in the system, and some will not.

Systems might be described as messy and mysterious because they are alive. However, appreciation of these characteristics can make life within them more purposeful and faithful.

We also are all members of numerous systems. We humans are not abstractions existing in vacuums; we are unavoidably related to others. These relationships take particular form in terms of families, jobs, friendships, networks, neighborhoods, as well as schools and congregations. We are known and shaped by the systems of which we are a part. By the groups to which we belong, we are known. Our membership in particular systems can make it difficult to associate with those from other systems. It is important to choose carefully those groups to which we belong, and it is important to belong to those groups which support a common life of faith.

Although we can enter and leave certain systems, membership in some is indelible. For example, our families, by birth, and the Church, by baptism. Because we, who call ourselves Christians, are members, by virtue of our baptism, of the Church, we belong to the Church for the duration of our lives. The only issue is whether or not we are responsible, faithful members of the Church. We can reject and distort our membership in Christ's body, but we cannot deny it. Our only real decision is how to exercise or not exercise this membership faithfully. Our relationship to the body of Christ

is not contractual any more than our relationship to our family of origin is. That is the beauty of St. Paul's biological metaphor for the Church (1 Cor. 12:12–30).

The system, the body, is healthy only when the differing contributions of the various members are recognized, valued, and encouraged. We are called to welcome the healthy tension of heterogeneity from which creativity emerges.

set the following as a sidebar in a box:

If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? As it is, there are many members, yet one body.

From 1 Corinthians 12:17–20.

Our individual choices for action will be related to our gifts and graces and to particular opportunities for faithful response afforded by our circumstance or position, or by the roles or status assigned to us by the body. The follower of Jesus who is experiencing continual personal growth and transformation will choose repeatedly how to exercise responsibility to and for the systems to which he or she belongs. If the connectedness of the parts of a system is acknowledged and our delusion of separateness discarded, then the issue becomes where is the head of the body to which we belong. For the Christian the answer is self-evident. As St. Paul wrote: "He [Christ] is the head of the body, the Church; he is the beginning" (Col. 1:18).

For the Christian, it is our relationship to the body which is to be our primary system, and others are to be related to it. Similarly the system of which we are a part must be larger than the congregation to which we belong; for Episcopalians that is best expressed in our relationship to a diocese.

While the Church is a distinct body and thus different from other systems in the

world, we are connected to other systems, and are to be involved with them. First, the Church needs to be a self-critical community, always reflecting on the faithfulness of its life. We need to be a community of resistance, avoiding unhealthy influences from other systems.

Second, we need to withdraw from the world, on behalf of the world, to pray for it.

Third, we need to separate ourselves from the world so that we might strive to form a faithful alternative for life and become a sign of life in God's reign.

Fourth, we need to participate fully in the society so as to make a witness to that alternative through both social action and service.

Finally, we need to work for radical change in the systems of the world by exerting direct pressure for political, social, and economic justice.

All of these are appropriate, and from a systems point of view are mutually dependent. Consistent with systems theory, any action by any part of the system affects the whole system. All members of the system do not need to participate in all these activities, but we do need to support each other as we work toward a common end.

One other insight from systems theory is that every system has both an aim, typically seen in a statement of mission, and a primary task. What is important is that every system critically and honestly look at its life, name both its aim and primary task, and then seek to close the gap. It does this by seeing that what the system does, and how it lives, corresponds, and contributes to its stated aim.

Summary

It is important to examine the various systems in which we participate to discern how we might best relate. A prime example is the family. No system has changed more radically than the family. The family is smaller and less stable. Many are divided by divorce and remarriage. Increasingly, marriages unite persons who do not share a common faith or commitment to similar communities of faith. The family has less

influence and control on its members. The number of one-parent families increases. Both men and women work outside the home, and the roles of men and women have changed. The family is more mobile, and many more people choose to remain single, or are single for a longer period of time. Many of the functions of the family, such as education, are now provided by societal systems, such as schools. Children spend less time with their families than ever before. Families increasingly live in urban and suburban environments. The relationships between family, community, school, and church are changing. The school system has greater influence than at any time in history. And the influence of television is significant. The Church is smaller and less influential on both its members and on society. All of this is to say that the Church has a serious responsibility to rethink its catechetical ministry in the light of these systemic changes.

sidebars for Chapt. 8:

Prayer equips us for action. Many of us tend to eagerly run out to take on the world's needs without first consulting with the One who can meet those needs. We march off to war before we get our orders. We cannot be effective in God's work unless we first get our directions from God.

John Perkins in With Justice For All, Regal Books, 1982.

Despite differences in time, culture, lifestyles, attitudes, biblical women were compelled by the same passions as we -- love, compassion, hope, jealousy, and fear. A common thread of sacred female experiences continues to bind centuries of women.

Renita Weems in Just A Sister Away, LuraMedia, 1988.

next one is 1 Cor. 12:17-20 - it's in the text, but set as a sidebar, please...

Every year, April 22nd is Earth Day. Citizens across the nation celebrate it with special clean-up efforts, recycling drives, reforestation projects, parades, speeches and much flag waving. It makes a lot of sense for churches to be right in the middle of these activities.

This could make some people uncomfortable. "You mean mix with those New Agers and Earth-First types? What if someone should see us?" That is the whole idea! For starters, Christians are meant to live in the world (see John 17:15). That concept is part of our very identity because we follow the One who left heaven in order to live in the world. And how else do we expect to make friends with New Agers if we do not hang around them?

Working together on an Earth Day project is a natural setting for building relationships. It is not contrived. Your involvement could even be a nice kind of shock for these folk. Many of them would not imagine that Christians care much about

creation.

From 101 Ways Your Church Can Change the World by Tony Campolo and Gordon Aeschliman, Regal Books, 1993.

Chapter Nine

Insights From Anthropology

Anthropology's major contribution to catechetics is its understanding of culture. Culture is humankind's learned, shared understanding of life (world-view or social construction of reality), our ways of living (ethos or behavioral dispositions), and our resulting artifacts. Everyone has a cultural identity, and we often participate in several cultures at one time. Cultural groups may include, for example, ethnic, racial, linguistic, political, religious, socio-economic, or familial groups. Many people have cultural identities that draw from several groups within each category, and one's cultural identity can vary over time, and from setting to setting. Understanding culture not only gives us greater insights into human nature, it also can serve to promote understanding between individuals and groups.

Culture is to be differentiated from race and ethnicity. While race is not a scientific category, society within the United States has endowed it with great social importance. Inappropriate distinctions have been linked to physical characteristics such as skin color, hair texture, and eye shape. Institutional racism occurs when an individual's access to societal resources and power is limited on the basis of racial characteristics. The goal of catechesis is to develop an awareness and pride in racial identity, and an awareness and respect for racial differences, without the judgement of racism.

Ethnicity is a societal category which refers to groups of people, who conceive of themselves, and are regarded by others, as belonging together by virtue of common ancestry, cultural tradition, national origin, history, language, or religion. Examples are Hispanic Americans, Asian Americans, Italian Americans, Native Americans/American Indians. People may share race but not ethnicity; for example, African and Caribbean

Americans.

The United States is a pluralistic society comprised of numerous ethnic and cultural groups. In the past, the majority of these ethnic and cultural groups were of European origin, and while they maintained a sense of ethnic identity such as Irish, Italian, and French, they tended to be assimilated into a common European American culture. Now there are a growing number of ethnic and cultural groups who are not European in origin and intend to maintain their distinctive identities. This creates for the Church not only issues of language, but also of styles of worship and ways of learning and teaching.

It is important to differentiate among various approaches to the interaction of diverse cultures. Uni-culturalism assumes the superiority of one culture, and the need for all others to be assimilated. The result is a closed society. Multi-culturalism affirms the maintenance of distinctive, identity-conscious groups separated from each other but relating in peaceful ways for common purposes. This results in a pluralistic society. A third possibility is cross-culturalism, which affirms the importance of identity-conscious communities relating to each other with tolerance and openness to each other's influence. This produces an open society and the possibility of bi-culturalism or the blending of various distinctive cultures into a new one. In most cases when the Church uses the word "multicultural," it does not make these distinctions, but understands the word to mean several cultures living in close contact with each other.

Thus, we are faced with numerous subcultures that present variables, which affect catechetical planning. For example, there is the culture of socio-economic groups (rich and poor), and the culture of geography (both regional differences and differences between urban, rural, and suburban life).

The Culture of Geography

Generalizations can be meaningless and dangerous. If they are not taken too

seriously, they can help us in understanding and affirming the differences that geography makes in how we live. For example, anthropologists have found that rural culture tends to be more tradition-oriented and more resistant to change. Social controls tend to be vested in customs more than codified laws. Social relationships are long-lasting and personal. Gender and age roles tend to be more prescribed, and status is ascribed more than achieved. There are more rigid social class structures, but less social disorganization (crime, etc.). Suspicion of outsiders and intolerance of deviant behavior is more typical. The lives of the people are self-sufficient. They tend to enjoy simple entertainment with an emphasis on participation. There typically is a male-dominated family system. Less value may be placed on formal education, but there is high regard for participation in church activities.

Urban culture, typically, is somewhat different. It tends to be more future-oriented and is characterized by continuous change and the breakdown of traditional values. Codified laws govern behavior, and complex formal agencies of control, such as, police and fire departments, take over for volunteers. Relationships tend to be more transitory, impersonal, and anonymous. There is a tendency to blur distinctions between age and gender roles. Individualism and social disorganization tend to increase. While there is a more open social class system, achievement becomes increasingly important. More sophisticated entertainment and growth of spectatorism are typical. Formal education may be considered important, but it is often inadequate, and the poor and minorities tend to drop out early. Participation in the life of the Church tends to decrease, while various voluntary associations and social groups become the context in which persons seek intimacy. Of course, in many cities there are ethnic enclaves that have the characteristics of rural culture within an urban context.

Suburban culture is different still. It tends to be more comfort-oriented. Social controls are reinvested in neighborhood and family, as in rural and urban ethnic communities. However, there tends to be a desire for neighborhoods of like-minded

people with the same interests, where friendships can be formed. Social disorganization typically is more personal than communal. As a common social class emerges, there is a gradual dissipation of religious, ethnic, or racial subcultures. Libertarianism tends to grow. There is increasing participation in formal education and an emphasis on quality. Mobility is high, and the churches that attract people tend to take their social needs seriously.

To engage in faithful catechetical ministries, we need to understand and appreciate such cultural variables, so that we can work meaningfully within them, and engage congregations in critical reflection on them.

Low and High Context Cultures

Another important cultural variable for catechesis is what anthropologists refer to as low and high context cultures. Northern Europe and North America are examples of low context cultures. As such, these cultures envision messages as explicit, that is, words carry a direct message. Such cultures are more visual than verbal and place their emphasis on the written word. Not being very tactile, they maintain the privacy of space. Individualism and the value of independent self-reliance is typical. They have a monochromatic view of time and emphasize schedules, segmentation, promptness, and appointments, holding meetings in private offices. Their lives are dominated by clocks and calendars. They affirm compartmentalization and specialization. Space is considered private and functional. Because many of us in the Episcopal Church share this way of life and have been thoroughly enculturated into it, we treat it as the only natural and reasonable way to live. More seriously, we connect it with the Christian life of faith. This can be a problem for us when we work together with Episcopalians from other countries and/or cultures. It is important to acknowledge that anthropologists place no value judgement on these various cultural differences.

It is also important for us to recognize that there are, what anthropologists

describe as, high context cultures throughout the world, including Africa, Latin American, Southern Europe, and Asia. As persons from high context cultures increase in numbers in the United States, their cultural ways need to be understood and appreciated. In high context cultures the message is in the context more than in the words. A person's word is a bond and need not be spelled out in detail. These are oral cultures where the spoken word is more important than the written word. These people are more tactile; that is, they touch. They work in close proximity to each other and engage in body rhythms. They may talk continually and use song to guide their work. They are emotionally involved in life and express emotions freely. They are more attuned to the nonverbal. Their sense of time is polychromatic: several things are happening at once and "body time" controls events; that is, they begin and end when it feels right. They are comfortable transacting business in public without appointments. Phenomena such as tides are apt to determine what people do, how long they do it, and when they do it rather than the clock or calendar.

Anthropologists also speak of technological and personal cultures, which correspond in some ways to low and high context cultures. In technological cultures, the workplace dominates the home, while in personal cultures, the opposite is true. Technological cultures emphasize the intellect and objective rational truth. They are lineal and move toward a defined future; they value pragmatism, individualism, and competition. Such cultures focus on the particular and are literalistic, expect high internal control, and tend to specialize.

Personal cultures, on the other hand, emphasize the intuitive. They are cyclical and tend to be tradition-oriented, valuing a memory of the past. They are more personal and subjective, valuing the community and cooperation. They focus on the general and tend to be holistic in their approach to life.

Of course these are only broad generalization, but we need to have some understanding of the various ways cultures learn, so that we can engage in relevant

teaching/learning. Once again, let us remember none of these are superior, or more Christian; they are simply different. Anthropologists place no value judgements on these various cultures. They describe them so as to help people understand and appreciate their differences and in the case of catechesis help us to work meaningfully with those who differ from us.

Culture and Language

Cultures have different ways of relating language to reality. Nothing happens in the world of human beings that is not influenced by linguistic forms. Both vocabulary and grammar are important. Therefore, direct literal translation of English into another language, for example, Spanish, is inadequate. Both the vocabulary and structure of Spanish need to be taken into account and a dynamic equivalent translation made, if real communication is to be possible. Communication includes both verbal and nonverbal, oral and written language. The grammar and words we use determine how we think and act. As language changes, so do we. To force someone to change their language is to affect their culture radically as well. Similarly, cultures have characteristic manners of locomotion, sitting, standing, reclining, and gesturing, all of which are essential aspects of culture and communication.

Gender and Culture

How we understand being men and women is a result of culture as well as biology. Women in our culture tend to have particular cultural characteristics, and men others. Our culture as a whole tends to assume that the male cultural characteristics are superior, and that women must learn to adapt, if they are to "make it in the system."

It becomes more complicated when we acknowledge that it is really white, European American, male characteristics that are being affirmed. In European American, masculine culture, time is perceived as moments on a clock or calendar; for

European American women it is process or a series of passages. In a masculine culture, relationships tend to be hierarchical, while in feminine culture, relationships are more likely among peers; masculine culture tends to be task-oriented, while feminine culture is relational and people-oriented.

Within masculine culture, sexual intimacy typically is approached physically; within the feminine, it is verbally. In terms of friendship, in masculine culture, a friend is someone who can be relied on for support in a team effort; for feminine culture friendship involves basic respect, trust, knowing, and being known. Masculine culture is goal-oriented; feminine culture is process-oriented. In so far as these are cultural traits, all women and all men do not necessarily share them.

These characteristics also may have something to do with personality type. In any case, it is important to realize that we often take particular cultural manifestations and give them value they do not deserve. We can ignore the fact that, for many white European men, pride may be a serious disposition to sin, while for many white European women, it is not pride but a lack of self-worth that haunts their lives. While these characteristics are not true for all men and women, and they are always changing, to be aware of differences is important to catechesis.

Learning and Culture

North American culture tends not to value play and so depreciates the importance of play as a way to learn. Our dominant culture tends to separate education from life, so we organize schools as our prime context for education. Having institutionalized learning, we place children in age groups and have adults do the teaching. In other cultures, informal small groups where peers teach and play are the dominant ways to learn.

Some cultures prefer formal serious teachers, competitive projects, individual efforts, material rewards, schools independent of the home, and age grouping, and are

concerned with thoughts and ideas and words. Other cultures prefer warm supportive personal teachers, collaborative noncompetitive projects, modeling by older children and adults and intergenerational activities, personal rewards, and school related to the home, and are concerned with activities and experiences.

Knowing cultural differences is important, if we are not to confuse Christianity with any particular culture. Many people in the world think most North Americans talk too much, too fast, and interrupt others. These persons may say we brag and always want to win, that we are selective in helping people, that we always plan for tomorrow and miss today, and that we are without emotion or feelings. But, in response, we may see persons of other cultures as having false humility, act as if they always expect someone else to help them, refuse to plan for tomorrow, and are too emotional.

We take our way of life for granted and therefore neglect to examine critically its consequences. For example, when we put children into age groups with an adult teacher, we may slow down maturation. This becomes a problem in a society where television increases our children's early sophistication.

Symbols, Myths, and Rites

Cultural anthropology asserts the centrality of symbols, myths, and rites, in structuring a people's thoughts, experiences, and behaviors. "Symbols" are objects, words, or actions found in the world of the senses, that reveal what cannot be found in the world of the senses. Symbols point beyond themselves and are what they point to. Symbols are agents of revelation. As outward and visible signs of inward and invisible reality, sacraments are the ultimate symbols. Jesus is the symbol, the sacrament of God. The Church is called to be the symbol, the sacrament of Christ. The creeds are symbols of Christian faith. Catechesis takes place in a world of symbols, and must avoid treating them as signs or propositional truths to be defined rationally.

"Myths" are symbolic stories, sacred narratives which point beyond themselves

to reveal a truth which cannot be described in ordinary speech. Myths establish our view of the world, our perceptions of reality. It is unfortunate that in common speech the word myth is used for fantasy and untrue stories. Cultural anthropology, however, rightfully uses the word myth to describe ultimately true stories, stories that point beyond themselves to truth that otherwise cannot be revealed, and stories that participate in the truth to which they point, giving them power over our lives.

The most important and central narratives within the Scriptures are myths: the creation narrative, the birth of Jesus narrative, and the paschal mystery narrative, all of which have historical relevance, reveal a truth that history can neither affirm or deny.

Besides myths, Scripture contains other kinds of stories directly related to myths. There are historical narratives which explore our life experience in the light of the myth and, while reflecting on dissonance between life experience and the truth of the myth, always end up supporting the myth. The Book of Job is a good example. And there are parables, which subvert our view of the world so that we can view the world through the eyes of the myth. The Book of Jonah, as well as many stories told by Jesus, are parables.

Stories as found in Scripture have particular characteristics important to understand. For example, sacred stories are concrete and not intended to be used to create ethical or doctrinal truths. They are open-ended and intended to engage the imagination and, therefore, not to be taken literally. They are experiential and are intended to engage us and our senses rather than be read as objects of our investigation. And finally, they are communal, that is they belong to the community and are to be interpreted by the community. An understanding of myth, and of the Bible as the Church's story book, is essential to catechetical ministry.

"Rites" are repetitive, symbolic actions (word action and deed actions) that express and manifest the community's sacred story or myth. As such, nothing is more important for catechetical ministry. There are two kinds of rites: rites of intensification or

community; and rites of transition, passage, or life crisis, that include rites of initiation.

Rites of intensification, following the calendar by week, month, or year, act to intensify the sense of community and maintain communal life. They continually shape and preserve the community's understandings and ways of life. Daily offices and weekly Eucharist are examples.

On the other hand, rites of transition help the community and those in it to make meaningful transitions in their lives; for example, from singleness to marriage, from alienation to reconciliation, from sickness to health, from death to new life. But one of the most important is the movement from childhood to adulthood. In simple societies this is a single move. In cultures like our own, there is a period of adolescence (twelve to eighteen) which interrupts that transition. Unfortunately, the Church has tried to use confirmation as a puberty rite of transition. It has failed. We may want to consider establishing a rite of transition from childhood into adolescence, around twelve, unrelated to confirmation, and another from adolescence into adulthood, around eighteen, if youth are to make healthy transitions. Confirmation needs to be reconsidered as a person's first baptismal renewal, to take place whenever a person is ready and willing to do so, but perhaps not until early adulthood. And, since initiation, baptism, and baptismal renewal are becoming more important, we need to understand better the dynamics of rites of transition and their usefulness in helping us to understand liturgical and catechetical ministries with adolescents.

Rites of transition aid persons and communities in passing through, and adjusting to, life-cycle crises. They require a catechetical component. In rites of transition, the key element is a liminal period in which persons are formed for a new role. If we took that seriously, part of marriage preparation would be involving engaged couples in practices related to healthy families, such as: communication, trust, sharing a common faith and tradition, participating in common rituals, sharing quality time, respecting privacy and respecting each other, valuing service to others, and admitting and seeking help with

their problems.

A rite of transition has three parts. First, there is a separation ceremonial. Second, there is a period of transition in which a person experiences liminality (being betwixt and between). This is intended to be experienced as an ordeal that serves to bind the person into community with others who share and have shared the experience. There, persons are formed and prepared for their new condition, and they acquire the knowledge and skills needed to function in their new condition.

The third part is a rite of reincorporation, a ceremonial in which the person is re-established within the community for new responsibility.

Knowledge of these rites should help us not only with preparation of adults for baptism, but with all those who seriously wish to prepare for their baptismal renewal, as well as for marriage catechesis and catechesis with adolescents.

The Acquisition of Culture

The process by which culture is transmitted from generation to generation is an interactive process called enculturation. It is the process by which persons internalize and adapt the culture into which they are born. For example, some children grow up in large extended families, where they experience continuous care by adults, are toilet-trained and weaned late, and have few responsibilities until the end of childhood. Aggression may not be permitted and is corrected by an embrace accompanied by the words, "That's not our way of life." Other children grow up in small nuclear families with few children in a house alone. The father goes away to work, and the mother has responsibilities around the house. These children may be toilet-trained and weaned early, given responsibilities at a young age, and spend a lot of time alone. Aggression may be permitted, and when a child oversteps the bounds of safety, he or she is corrected by being spanked. Children who grow up in the first family will tend to hold the values of community, cooperation, and non-aggression. On the other hand, children

raised in the second family will tend to hold the values of individualism, competition, and aggression. Thus, we see how enculturation shapes us intellectually, emotionally, and behaviorally.

Acculturation is learning to live in a second culture while maintaining loyalty to one's own, realizing that by so doing one's own is modified. If a community maintains a resistant critical perspective and spends significant time together within its own cultural community, this modification can be held to a minimum.

Assimilation is a process of enculturation in which persons leave behind the culture in which they were raised and are enculturated into a new culture, so there are no longer any significant remains of their original culture. In terms of religion, this is the process of conversion.

Inculturation is the process by which a faith tradition becomes intertwined with its cultural context; a faith tradition is shaped, and its expression is shaped, by the culture of its adherents. Christian faith is bound to no particular human culture. Each culture needs to express the Christian message in its own cultural way. The Church is called to live in creative tension with the diverse cultures of its people, making sure that what is constitutive of its tradition is retained, while its expression honors a people's culture.

Anglicanism has always embraced the call to be a transforming presence in the culture. This requires us to be fully involved in whatever culture we find ourselves. We must be careful, however, not to confuse our cultural manifestation of the Christian tradition with the tradition itself. We must be careful also not to impose our cultural manifestation of the tradition on another culture.

sidebars for Chapt. 9:

A church culture ought by its very nature to be life-giving, open and free.

George Carey in A Charter for the Church, Morehouse, 1993.

One thing I know: I couldn't have done the work I did in the South without the "inner" sanctuary that churches can provide. And besides my personal desire to go to church and sit there and think and pray and sing and listen and feel touched and somehow more alive, I was constantly learning from blacks in the South and whites in Appalachia what religion can mean and be to people....I learned a lot about how those men and women think and feel, and what the possibilities are for them, how they manage to survive, how they struggle and keep some of their wits about them. Yes, I learned those things right in church while listening and joining in.

Robert Coles in Geography of Faith, Conversations between Daniel Berrigan and Robert Coles, Beacon Press, 1971.

The difference between these two groups is that white people smile at you in public and say all sorts of bad things about you behind your back. Black people would rather have it the other way around: "We are more likely to jam you up front, get it all out in the open. Then afterward we all go for coffee."

William Pannell in The Coming Race Wars? A Cry for Reconciliation, Zondervan, 1993.

You can find generous, sacrificing women in all churches. It has not always been the woman with a lot to give who has been the best supporter of the Church: instead, the one who consistently gives what she has is often the one who makes a difference in the Church's survival.

Renita J. Weems in Just A Sister Away, LuraMedia, 1988.

The fact is that most Americans are people of good will. Most of us really do like other people, even those who are not like us. We prefer that they not be too close, however. We like those people in the abstract, not in the concrete. That is how black people view Koreans; how Koreans view Latinos; how Latinos view Anglos; and on and on. Yet, in spite of this peculiar sociology, many Americans will admit to having a friend who is "one of them." At least it is a beginning.

William Pannell in The Coming Race Wars? A Cry for Reconciliation, Zondervan, 1993.

Interpretation of Christ's teachings is the province of the Spirit. He, said Jesus, "will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you" (Jn. 14:26). These are not separate functions but part of the same process. To teach is to communicate and to communicate one must make constant reference to memory.

Orlando E. Costas in The Integrity of Mission, Harper & Row, 1979.

One of the greatest ways to compliment someone is to try to learn from them. More than that, however, it has a certain equalizing power -- I need you, you need me. This exchange can also lead to a healthy admiration of the other person's culture and background.

Most people are not aware, for example, that several important medical discoveries, mathematical systems and Western architectural styles came from the Arab culture. We are indebted to them for their genius and creative eye. But these facts have been hidden from us, not by some cynical design but by stereotypes about them and the subtle mistrust we have been taught.

From 101 Ways Your Church Can Change the World by Tony Campolo and Gordon Aeschliman, Regal Books, 1993.

Chapter Ten

Insights From Pedagogy

Pedagogy's major contribution is in terms of learning and teaching. Learning occurs in many ways, under many circumstances, and in a host of varied contexts. From one point of view, learning is contiguous with living, certainly with growth. Teaching is arranging environments and being present to others in ways that assist their learning.

Learning

Learning takes place best when the learner is active rather than passive; when that which is learned is repeated, reinforced, and practiced in varied contexts; when that which is to be learned is motivated by the learner's interest or needs; when the learner establishes the goals of learning and cooperates in establishing the means; when that which is to be learned is consistent with the learner's abilities; when the necessary foundational learning for what is to be learned is present; when a safe, noncompetitive environment accompanies the learning; when what is to be learned is clear and concrete; and when there is a continuous evaluation of the learning and appropriate teaching responses are made to assist learning.

Teaching

There is no one way to teach, to assist others in their learning, just as there is no one way to learn. There are teachers and learners. Most people teach the way they learn. When we put people together who learn the same way, they can help each other to learn. Regrettably, when we put persons together who teach and learn differently, we are apt to end up blaming the teacher for being a poor teacher, or the learner for being

1 a poor learner, when the problem was the match-up.

2 A good teacher is knowledgeable and skilled and much more. Good teachers
3 have some of the following characteristics: a positive self-identity; a realistic view of
4 themselves and the world; the ability to identify with others and affirm differences; a
5 belief in people and the ability to see the image of God in them; a perception of the
6 world as mystery; a tolerance for ambiguity, and an openness to new experience; a
7 commitment to learning understood as growth and change; a conviction that teaching is
8 freeing and helping others to accomplish their own learning goals; a concern more for
9 the processes than the products of learning; a consciousness of being ethical agents
10 who will influence others and are therefore self-critical about their lives and teaching; an
11 artistic ability to arrange environments in which others can do their own learning; and
12 lives that are authentic, self-revealing, trustworthy, honest, and inner-directed.

We need to be wary of the single-dimension theories and methodologies that flood the educational scene. Human beings are variable creatures. Their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors never have adhered to a single theory or interpretation. There are a host of understandings and a smorgasbord of techniques, all of which have some truth, and yet are inadequate and limited. Teaching, and learning, is comprised of a chain of decisions that are best made between teacher and learner, whenever possible. The first set of decisions are made prior to the learning act. They comprise the following:

✂ Who: Who are we to teach, what are they like, how do they learn, what do they already know, and what do they want to learn?

✂ What and why: What concretely do we intend to teach, and why do we believe it is important?

✂ When and where: What are the boundaries of time and space?

✂ How: How will we arrange our environment for learning and what will we do to assist the learner, and how will we help the learner evaluate his or her learning?

When children are young, more of these decisions are made by the teacher, but as children grow older these decisions are increasingly shared. Children tend to be more other-directed, limited in their experience, unable to apply their learning immediately, and are more content-centered than adults. Adults are increasingly self-directed, bringing a rich resource of experience and the ability to apply their learning immediately.

The language of teaching needs to be critically examined. There are a host of slogans, such as, "back to basics," "effectiveness for teaching," and "making a difference in the lives of people," that need to be placed under theological scrutiny. What is basic? Is it knowing about the Bible and its contents, or is it the ability to be engaged by the Scriptures and to interpret the meaning and implications of that experience? Are we primarily to be concerned about making a difference in the lives of

others, or in our own lives?

We need to be clear on goals, so we can choose the most appropriate models for teaching. Some of those models and their ends are information-processing, which aims at the acquisition of knowledge and its comprehension; group interaction, which aims at social responsibility and decision making; indirect communication, which aims at self-examination and encounter with truth; personal development, which aims at helping persons to mature and express themselves; and action-reflection, which aims at doing the truth. In each of these models, teachers and learners have different roles. Also, each has a different strategy.

Teaching can involve hearing (verbal), seeing (visual), simulation, and direct experience. Verbal teaching through talking, workbooks, and the like is the least effective form of teaching. Learners remember the least from this method, and it is valuable only if used in connection with other forms. Visual learning using flannel boards, films, blackboards, pictures, television, computers, videos, CDs, or CD Roms and the like, when used with verbal learning, is more effective but still limited. Simulated learning through playing with puppets, simulation games, drama and other art activities increases learning significantly. But, direct experience, in which the learner is fully involved, is the strongest learning of all. Teaching should, therefore, attempt to involve as much direct experience as possible.

It is important to acknowledge that when we make a decision to teach one thing, we have made a decision not to teach something else. That decision needs to be justified. And the way we choose to teach may influence learning more than what we teach. For example, to provide external rewards for learning implies that there is no intrinsic reward in learning. More seriously, it implies that God gives us what we deserve and that we can earn rewards from God. This violates the Church's teaching that God gives us what we need, not what we deserve, and that the grace of God is free and does not need to be earned.

Teaching is an art. As an art it is performed with such skill and grace that both student and teacher experience it as an artistic expression. Furthermore, it is an art in the sense that the teacher makes judgments based largely on qualities that are unfolding during the process. It is artistic in that it is influenced by the unpredictable. And it is artistic in that its ends are achieved during the process.

Teaching is also a science. As a science it is founded on understandings of learners and the learning process that have been tested. It is founded on identifiable knowledge and skills which may be stated as behavioral objectives, which can be evaluated in terms of being met.

Curriculum

A curriculum is a course to be run. It requires a beginning and end. The notion of a course to be run implies a track and a set of obstacles or tasks to be overcome. We make an error when we offer courses, conceiving them as content to be learned, rather than a process in which to be involved. The course to be run is both an objective reality and a subjective experience. A curriculum is a series of planned intentional events that are intended to have particular consequences for one or more persons. There is, of course, an intended or explicit operational curriculum. There is also always an overt, implicit, or "hidden curriculum." What we intend persons to learn, and what they really learn, are often different because we neglect the implicit curriculum and the fact that how persons learn becomes what they learn. There is also a "null curriculum" comprised of that which we neglect to teach.

Of course, the metaphors we use for teaching and the course to be run have profound consequences. There is a production line metaphor in which a child or learner is a valuable piece of material, the teacher or parent a skilled and loving technician. The process is one of molding carefully each valuable piece of material into the parent or teacher's predetermined design. We do things to learners that we believe enhance their lives and give them meaning.

There is also a greenhouse metaphor. Now the child or learner is a seed and the teacher or parent a gardener. The gardener has a book on plants and knows what they need in terms of light, water, heat, and fertilizer. The process is now caring for each seed until it grows up or develops into what it is intended to be. We do things for persons so that their lives will find fulfillment.

In the first, the learner is empty and needs to have life put in; in the second, the life is already fully within the person but needs to be brought out. While both of these metaphors are helpful and have some truth in them, a third metaphor is perhaps more faithful to Scripture. In this case, the metaphor is a pilgrimage. The child or learner is a pilgrim. The parent or teacher is a co-pilgrim. The process is a shared journey over time in which both grow through their interaction. We now do things with persons.

A curriculum demands we have some idea what we hope to have achieved when we cross the finish line and the best way to arrange the course so that we might successfully reach its end. We need to have a clear image of what a Christian looks like so we can design a course to be run and engage in a "training" program that might prepare us for the race. As the author of Hebrews puts it, "Let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith" (Heb. 12:1).

Pedagogy reminds us that there are learning objectives which need to be achieved one at a time. There are cognitive objects: knowledge (being able to repeat what you read or are told); comprehension (being able to put this into your own words); application (being able to converse with, and use, what you have learned); analysis (being able to understand how it was arrived at and compare and contrast it with other knowledge; synthesis (being able to take various bits of knowledge and put them together into an original statement); and evaluation (being able to make a judgment on its worth). And there are affective objectives: to receive (participate in life); to attend (be aware of one's experience); to respond (give an emotive response to one's experience);

to value (name what occurred and ascribe worth); to internalize (make this value your own); and to characterize (let it become a way of life).

One of our greatest mistakes is to put our trust solely in curriculum resources. It is teachers who teach; and curriculum resources are, when well utilized, aids for teachers. No curriculum resource is teacher-proof. Teachers need materials that stimulate their ingenuity rather than materials to which they are subservient. Curriculum resources include both the materials and experiences of learning. All curriculum resources need to be adapted to fit teachers and learners in particular situations. Every course needs to be revised for the specific setting in which it will be used. Nevertheless, while it is appropriate for teachers to be consulted, it is the rector and vestry with the assistance of the Christian education committee, if there is one, that is responsible for making decisions on curriculum resources. However, clergy and vestry members do not necessarily have sufficient background for the choice of curriculum resources. They will need some kind of orientation to the issues of curriculum choice. Also, the congregation needs to provide help to aid the teacher to use the curriculum chosen.

Choosing curriculum resources is a difficult and demanding task. Listed here is a basic list of criteria for choosing such resources:

- * How compatible is the material with the congregation's mission, values and beliefs? Is the resource compatible with Episcopal tradition?

- * How clearly and accurately does the resource provide information? Are the purposes and objectives clearly stated? Does it accomplish its stated purpose?

- * Are the biblical, theological and ethical assumptions of the material consistent with our tradition? How is biblical material used? How are learners encouraged to connect their life experiences to the text? To think theologically?

- * Is the resource sensitive to the developmental needs of the learner? Developmentally, spiritually, physically, intellectually? How does the resource motivate the learner? Does it raise questions rather than answer them? Does it stimulate inquiry

and discovery? Does it allow for a diversity of feelings and opinions? Does the material involve a variety of types of activities as part of the learning process? Are the activities also developmentally appropriate? Does it teach anything that will have to be unlearned later?

* Is the resource sensitive to the issues of gender, class, race, ethnicity, and culture? Is it written in nonsexist and nonracist language? Do both the text and visual images found in the resource portray positive images of women and men, as well as persons from different racial and ethnic groups? What messages are portrayed by the art work?

* Does the resource encourage the learner to explore the physical, political, social, and economic structure of the events and situations to be studied?

* How does the resource demonstrate the connection between the Church and global issues? Between the living of a Christian life and seeking justice and peace in the world?

* How is the resource designed? Is it attractive and user-friendly? Does the resource strive to meet the expectations of both the learners and teachers? How adaptable is the resource to groups of various sizes? Different settings?

* What training and skills are needed to effectively use the resource? What preparation is required, and are these demands realistic in your setting?

Summary

Teacher education is not to be solely for those who officially teach in the Church's school. Teacher education is for all Christians, for all engage in teaching, and because of this fact it is important to be aware of the developmental needs of all Christians.

Some pedagogical guidelines follow: In order to communicate with children (birth-12), adults must listen to them with respect, be sensitive to their circumstances, value

them for their being, and respect their dignity regardless of gender, race, ethnic group, or culture.

It is essential that we provide experiences to live the faith and practice its way of life. Adolescents (12–18) have special needs and problems which must be addressed if they are to be enabled to live into their baptism. Young adulthood (18–35) necessitates aiding persons to translate their ideals into a personal way of life in terms of vocation and career and making crucial decisions in accord with God's will. Middle adulthood (35–65) is a time when many face the crises of limits in terms of life goals. Later adulthood (65-80) is a time for a new sense of mission. On retirement, people today normally have ten to twenty years for sharing of their wisdom and insight. While their energy may be reduced, they have much to contribute to Church and society. Older adults (80 plus) develop special needs as they begin to have to deal with the realities of physical limitations and their ministries.

Sidebars for Chapt. 10:

The Church must once again take seriously that as an educating community it is called to be a witnessing learning community of faith.

John H. Westerhoff, III, in Values for Tomorrow's Children, Pilgrim Press, 1970.

A good teacher is vulnerable...always a learner...always hopeful...educating for maturity....

Margaret Guenther in Holy Listening, Cowley, 1992.

To have Christian faith, each of us needs to retain or recapture the imagination and wonder of our childhood.

John H. Westerhoff, III, in Bringing Up Children in the Christian Faith, Winston Press, 1980.

It is painful to be told so often how hard it is to find a place in the Church where ordinary people can talk about the ways they actually experience the presence and absence of God in their lives without causing embarrassment or arousing resistance.

Martin Smith in Cowley, news magazine of the North American Congregation of the Society of St. John the Evangelist, Vol. 19, No. 3, Fall, 1993.

Chapter Eleven

Understanding the Needs of Children

Introduction

Catechesis is about persons, not programs; it should take seriously not only persons of different ages, but the diversity among those persons. While maintaining the unity of the faith, the Church recognizes and affirms diversity, the equality of all, and the need for charity and mutual respect among all people.

The Church should provide appropriate and faithful catechesis for all members of the community. Intergenerational learning is particularly important. The young have much to learn from the mature, and older persons need the ministry of children. It is important that these interactions be intentional; the Church is one of the few places in our society where adults, youth and children may interact with each other as equals.

Catechesis should take into account the fact that because children's comprehension and other intellectual abilities develop slowly, they need to be provided opportunities to participate in and practice the life of faith in ways appropriate to their ages. They also need to be included in activities with youth and adults so that they might observe and imitate faithful behavior.

It is most important not to classify children as a group. Each child is a unique self, and each grows and matures at her or his own rate. Interaction between children, youth, and adults needs to increase. Segregating children and/or youth may slow maturation. It also diminishes the opportunity for adults to learn from children how to be childlike. Therefore, while providing catechetical programs to meet the special needs of children, youth, and adults, intergenerational programs are also essential.

Children and youth of religiously indifferent parents have needs that should be considered. They need to be reached out to and invited into the life of the congregation.

Children (0-12)

While the Anglican Church affirms the value of infants and toddlers through its practices of infant baptism and participation in the Eucharist, few members of the typical congregation understand how much young children are learning from these experiences. The first two years of life contain rich potential for intellectual, social, and spiritual growth. In the months immediately before and after birth, the infant's brain grows more rapidly than at any other stage of life, all senses are functioning acutely, and the newborn is capable of recognizing parents by sight, sound, and smell, and of responding to their touch and smiles with affection and mutuality. These God-given abilities lead to strong bonds between infants and those trustworthy adults who care for them, creating a basic trust in the goodness of others, oneself, life and, ultimately, God.

The infant's transition from total physical and emotional dependence toward increasing interdependence, during the second year of life, is brought about by equally rapid growth in physical abilities, both nonverbal and verbal communication skills, memory for familiar people, places, and rituals, and the ability to interpret and mirror others' emotional reactions. Toddlers' growing curiosity, desire for autonomy and attempts to explore their world, make this an exciting but challenging period. Unfortunately, parent-child struggles for control may result in the child's experiencing punishment, the labeling of his actions as "bad," and the construction of a deep-seated sense of shame and doubt in his developing sense of self. The hope is, of course, that infants and toddlers will emerge from this stage of life with strong feelings of basic trust, confirmation of their individuality and freedom to choose, and the desire to relate to others in a loving and cooperative manner.

Helping expectant parents clarify their own faith and practices of Christian living, before their infant is born and baptized, will enable them to be intentional about the kinds of formation experiences they provide. Bringing their infant regularly to Eucharist helps the child begin to build a sense of familiarity with liturgical rites, as well as a sense

of welcome and belonging to the congregation. Unfortunately, these positive feelings may be lost during the second year of life as other adults may lose patience with the toddler's strong needs for physical movement and uninhibited expression of emotions and desires during quieter times in the liturgy.

While the catechetics program should educate the congregations about welcoming young children into its midst, parents should also be sensitive to the messages of disapproval their child may be receiving and to possible negative effects upon the child's construction of a sense of self.

Some congregations provide a "soft" space for children within their worship space, where children and sometimes adults, can go in and out. This way both children and their caretakers can still see and hear all that is happening. Because toddlers will probably need an environment during the liturgy which provides freedom, space, and materials to express their energy, the congregation should very carefully choose the individuals who will staff such a room. Continuity of caregivers is particularly important, especially during the period (nine to fifteen months) when the child is most strongly attached to parents and fearful of strangers; and the adult's gentle, loving guidance of toddlers' first interactions with peers is very much a part of their feelings about being introduced to this congregation and to God.

Because infants and toddlers can imitate actions and interpret emotional responses of beloved adults, other experiences of spiritual catechesis should include family prayers and other rituals at meals and bedtimes.

Growth during the next three years continues rapidly, with preschoolers' brains attaining ninety percent of their adult weight by the age of five. Control of large muscles improves dramatically, although they still have difficulty managing smaller muscles in fastening, tying, drawing, and writing. Activity level peaks about the age of three, and by the kindergarten year most preschoolers are beginning to be able to focus their energy and attention in quiet activities for ten to fifteen minutes. Their vocabularies increase

enormously -- up to 10,000 words -- but young children's thinking and language reveals fantasy\reality confusions and limited understanding of time, space, and other abstract, relational concepts.

The preschool years are best described as "feelings-oriented." Parents continually experience the child's spontaneous expressions of emotions, curiosity, imaginative play and language, initiation of new activities, and attempts to control others. Young children's many dependency needs lead them to stronger interest in adults than in peers, although they are beginning to enjoy supervised play. Morally, they are capable of rudimentary empathy, but much of their reasoning about good and bad behavior is motivated by their desire to win rewards or avoid punishment from adults.

Because of their literal, concrete, experience-based style of learning, preschoolers typically do not comprehend symbolic or metaphorical language. They tend to feel rather than think their way into stories and typically focus upon what sometimes seems to them the most salient aspect of a Bible story, missing its deeper meanings or relationship to other stories. Thus, spiritual growth during the early years is more in the formation of foundational religious attitudes than in the acquisition of religious knowledge. However, trust in God and in the goodness of all Creation, a deep-seated conviction that one is loved and valued as a child of God, and a sense of wonder and reverence about life in its various forms, are vitally important parts of the Christian personality.

Catechesis for this age group should provide many activities of formation and instruction, although preschooler's inability to "think about their thinking" still limits reflection. Liturgical catechesis should regularly invite young children into the weekly celebration of the Eucharist. Young children particularly enjoy seeing others baptized and sharing the story of their own baptism with parents and other significant adults. Ethical catechesis should offer formation opportunities to hear stories about a loving God and about people who respond to God in love and obedience, along with many

opportunities to show love toward friends. Instruction can be offered through discussions and in spontaneously arising classroom situations about being kind to others, resolving conflicts peaceably, respecting others' rights, empathizing with those who are sad or joyful, and asking for forgiveness from friends whom they have hurt.

Formation experiences in spiritual catechesis should include many opportunities for the catechist and children to spontaneously offer prayers of thanksgiving for the many gifts of God, as well as encouragement to parents to provide similar opportunities at meals and bedtime. Because of preschoolers' well-developed memories, instruction can help them learn the Lord's Prayer, graces before meals, hymns with simple tunes and texts, and short verses of praise, thanksgiving, and adoration from the Psalms. Pastoral catechesis will provide opportunities for preschoolers to show care for others within the congregation through such simple activities as making cards for shut-ins, visiting the elderly with their families, and bringing food to church for the community food bank. Instruction may be needed to help preschoolers understand the slurred speech, physical limitations, or unfamiliar medical equipment, if they are to be comfortable with handicapped, ill, or elderly people. Ecumenical catechesis formation experiences can include inviting unchurched friends to church school or Bible School and bringing their pennies to church in celebration of a birthday or for a special mission project. Because they are so curious about natural phenomena, young children most readily respond to the concept of God as Creator and enjoy instruction about caring for God's creatures.

The years of middle childhood bring many opportunities for children to grow in faith. Their rate of physical growth has slowed, bringing good body control and the development of skills necessary for successful participation in playground games and Little League sports. Organized activities, such as, Scouting, and various music, art, and other kinds of creative activities, are enjoyed by this age child. Children's thinking changes during their elementary years, moving gradually beyond the imagination, self-

centered perspective, and illogical relationships characteristic of the preschool years, toward the understanding and application of principles of cause and effect, from ordering, and classifying objects, to the study of mathematics and the natural and social sciences. These new physical and mental skills result in strong drives for achievement, pride in one's accomplishments, and -- fueled by societal messages -- competition with peers. Not surprisingly, the child's sense of self-worth is often greatly affected by success or failure in learning to function in the various activities, roles and social situations which fill his/her days.

Relationships with others also change gradually over these years, as children move away from the strong emotional dependence on parents of the preschool years toward an increasing reliance upon friends for understanding, help, loyalty, and sharing of mutual interests. They often create special clubs, codes, languages, and humor to keep their activities secret from outsiders, and can be quite cruel to those who do not measure up to their standards. Relationships with teachers, neighbors, clergypersons, coaches, activity group leaders, etc., can become important influences and can help to confirm the child's sense of self-worth. Morally, elementary age children's reasoning moves slowly away from an emphasis upon "keeping score" and trading equal favors or hurts, toward accepting and abiding by the norms and rules of important groups, in order that adults and other group members will think well of them and they can think well of themselves.

Because of their newly emerging cognitive abilities and responsiveness to social groups, liturgical catechesis should focus on helping elementary age children learn the history, heroes, traditions, and world-view, which characterize the Christian faith and their particular congregation. Expanding thinking and language skills help this age child begin to build more abstract understandings of symbols and sacraments and to order Bible stories into a narrative of salvation history. Formation experiences should include not only regular attendance in congregational worship but also occasional opportunities

to participate in simple leadership roles.

Since this age child loves "knowledge for its own sake," instruction should be offered in a more systematic study of the Bible; use of The Book of Common Prayer and The Hymnal; and worship elements such as the creeds, vestments, and colors and seasons of the liturgical year. The catechist can also provide opportunities for children to talk with adults in the congregation about their faith, and how it guides their daily life, work, and ministry. This helps children to reflect upon their growing understanding of how God is calling them to respond to the issues in their own lives.

Ethical catechesis can help youngsters to analyze and overcome societal pressures to "win at any price." Christian character traits are formed as they practice behaving fairly toward friends and competitors, rejoicing in others' successes and comforting those who have been disappointed, and courageously trying again when they themselves have experienced failure. Instruction and critical reflection can utilize children's literature, and biblical or current stories of persons who demonstrated uncommon qualities and acts of Christian character. This will help teach children how to recognize ethical issues, make ethical decisions, and reflect upon the impact these decisions have upon themselves and others.

Spiritual catechesis should help youngsters begin to form a personal, prayerful relationship with God, and the catechist should provide many opportunities for this age child to join in mission and ministry projects with their families and with other members of the congregation. Through their daily school experiences, travel through the community, and television viewing, children are frequently reminded that others in their world are homeless, poor, lonely, ill, or imprisoned. Experiences of instruction and reflection should be provided about Jesus' concern for the oppressed, about Christians who have demonstrated Christ-like compassion for the unfortunate, and about ways in which this congregation -- and they -- can fulfill their Baptismal Covenant promises and respond to such needs. Children should have opportunities to serve with their families in

the community soup kitchen; to collect toys, clothing, and household items for victims of natural disasters; to write government leaders about changes they believe could be made to relieve suffering and oppression; and be regularly encouraged to look for opportunities to serve or "do what is right" at school and at play.

Ecumenical catechists can build upon what older school age children are learning about other cultures in their social studies classes. The catechist could arrange for a group of older children to visit in another faith community and to learn about its beliefs, traditions, and forms of worship. The intent, of course, would not be to teach about theological differences but to help children experience similarities in the centrality of God to the daily work and worship of persons who may seem very different from themselves. Likewise, the school's science curriculum in conservation and ecology might be incorporated into formational, educational, and instructional experiences on the theme of "God the Creator, Human the Steward."

sidebars for Chapt. 11:

Children cannot focus very well on the learning task when the room about them is

always changing. They need a steady, stable environment to deal best with the changes of learning. They need an orderly background against which to discover something new. Young children cannot hold words, ideas, or the environment as firmly in their minds as adults can, so stability is especially important for the little ones.

Jerome W. Berryman in Godly Play, Harper San Francisco, 1991.

A child may engage the cross with wonder and find it pointing into the Mystery of God spontaneously. The child does this without choice, but the adult must choose to use the symbol for such a task.

Jerome W. Berryman in Godly Play, Harper San Francisco, 1991.

Prayer always brings us closer to God and opens us to receiving God's love. Whenever we are closer to God, we are closer to knowing what actions are the right ones for us....I have taught students how to use their imaginations for problem solving, and to enrich their walk with our Lord. I have taught them how to pray in pictures...this prayer method brought them closer to God, and helped them better understand their problems.

Pat Egan Dexter in Children Imagination and Prayer, Twenty-Third Publications, 1993.

The Church is perhaps the only institution with the beliefs, literature, liturgy, practices, social structure and authority (diminished though it be) necessary to rescue children from the violence and other deforming features of late 20th-century life. But it cannot accomplish this by simply laying the faith before young people and inviting them to choose it. Nor can it impose Christian identity by force and indoctrination. It can only prepare the setting for the Holy Spirit slowly to nurture children into Christian faith and practice. Churches need to think creatively about how to assist the Spirit in this process of formation.

Ellen T. Charry in "Raising Christian children in a pagan culture," Christian Century, February 16, 1994.

Chapter Twelve

Understanding the Needs of Youth

Introduction

Youth have special needs, and it is important that they not be completely isolated in youth catechesis and youth groups, but integrated into the life of the congregation. They also must not be viewed as a group. Each is a distinct individual with special needs. Placing children and youth solely in age groups is to be discouraged. Youth often drift away from the Church because the Church ignores their needs. Youth have a need to give their lives to a cause, to be active in the life of the congregation, especially its outreach and worship, and to experience hospitality to their psychological, intellectual, and political needs. Between twelve and eighteen, youth either begin to abandon the Church and its faith, or they become more deeply committed. Special efforts to encourage the latter need to be developed. To do this we need to emphasize the "personal-experiential," the intellectual, and service/social action dimensions of the Christian life of faith. An increased search for truth, goodness, and beauty; an increased interest in the spiritual life; and an increased concern for justice and peace often accompany the adolescent years. Unless they are affirmed and addressed by the Church, youth will drift away.

Youth (12-18)

Adolescence is undoubtedly the most variable period of life to describe and the most challenging and unpredictable to experience. Between the ages of ten and twenty, more physical, intellectual, and psychological uneven development take place than during any other decade of life. Early physical development does not necessarily indicate emotional or social development. Cultural, family, and congregational expectations of, reactions to, and support for adolescents greatly affect how smoothly their development toward adulthood will proceed. There are, however, commonalities in

development which are helpful to consider as catechesis is planned for this very rich time of faith formation and growth. But we need to remember that adolescence requires a variety of types of activities designed to meet their needs.

Adults who live and work with young people need to take into consideration their physical, intellectual, social and emotional, moral and faith development before even beginning to plan programs or activities. Because of their enormous developmental diversity, adolescents require a variety of types and levels of activities. The adolescent growth spurt includes growth to nearly the full height in both boys and girls, though girls begin their growth spurt on the average one year earlier than boys. Limbs can grow quickly and unevenly, which accounts for the clumsiness that often emerges in adolescents. Coordination can be a problem at this point, as the brain cannot keep up with the body to negotiate anything close to graceful movement.

The adolescent metabolism rate is high, resulting in periods of boundless energy followed by total lethargy. While young people may not be able to tell us what is happening to their bodies, they may act it out in their behavior. They can be clumsy, tired, energetic, or hungry as a result of their growing bodies, and it is unfair to interpret their actions as lazy or rambunctious without recognizing that biology is at work.

It is during adolescence that the reproductive systems mature. Both girls and boys develop primary and secondary characteristics and begin to have strong sexual and romantic feelings. Adolescent bodies change at different rates, according to highly individual internal "clocks." It is false to say that adolescents are "walking hormones." Adults forget how innocently the process of physical change begins with growth and size changes that then gradually include sexual development.

On a daily basis, adolescents must contend with images of the perfect body in the media. They feel their appearance is judged by their peers and by their parents. While most adolescents are excited by the body changes (or the expected body changes) that make them look more adult, at the same time they are concerned about

whether their bodies are "normal," and how they will look when they mature.

Adolescents need to know that the changes in puberty are normal and that they happen to everybody. They especially need affirmation for their unique growth pattern.

The primary developmental task of early adolescence is forming a working definition of self. It is essential for adults who live and work with youth to distinguish between behavior that is disturbing or annoying to adults (loud music, messy rooms) and behavior that is disturbed and harmful to the young person (substance abuse, suicidal behavior, depression).

One sign of serious disturbance in young people is the inability to relate to peers and fit into a peer group. While the peer group can be a source of negative influence in some situations for some adolescents, involvement with friends is necessary for youth to become socially competent adults. It is through the peer group that youth begin to learn how to develop and maintain close, mutually supportive relationships with people their own age. This is a social skill not characteristic of younger children, whose most significant relationships are dependent relationships with parents, but it is an essential skill for normal, fully functioning adults.

In addition to close relationships with peers, close relationships with families and other adults are necessary for healthy adolescent development. There are times when adolescents need adult guidance to put their peer group into context, for example, an adult facilitating a conversation to establish norms for an event.

Because of their need to be like their peers, their collective inexperience, and their belief that "it can't happen to me," situations arise in which adolescents need to be protected from themselves and one another. In our society, many adolescents are abandoned to their peer group because adults believe that they cannot offset peer pressure. Adults who work with youth can have an influence on peer groups through the expectations they set, the relationships they build, and the opportunities they provide for adolescent peer groups to function in a constructive, healthy manner.

In expanding their world, young adolescents frequently seek the company of adults other than parents. These other adults, youth advisors, teachers, relatives, neighbors, or clergy, serve as crucial role models. These relationships with other adults are an important part of adolescent social development. As young people begin to explore what it means to be an adult man or woman, they need positive role models, especially of their same gender, race, and ethnicity, who can serve as "living proof" of what they can become. Other adults also can provide adolescents with a secure respite from the intensity of peer and family relationships. This is why it is important to provide a wide range of adult involvement in ministry with adolescents. Leadership teams are more effective in this sense than is the solitary "pied piper."

Caring and mature adults are always needed in congregations to work with young people, and those who are willing to fill this role are seldom idle for long. Young people benefit from ministries of adults from all sorts of backgrounds and occupations, as long as the adult is secure in his or her own personal development, and willing to be honest and open with young people. Success in youth ministry is not tied to a particular age group -- young people benefit from the presence of adults of all ages. However, adults who work with young people need to be comfortable in setting reasonable limits, and clear of the boundaries inherent in the relationship with youth. While an adult youth worker should be compassionate to the needs and concerns of young people, beware of those adults who identify themselves with youth, thereby abdicating their adult role, or who rely on young people for their own social needs.

Although adolescents report that they look to the peer group for companionship and for guidance in some aspects of their behavior, such as dress, music, and entertainment, young people look to their families for affection, identification, social and ethical values, and help in solving big problems or important decisions. Problem relationships between adolescents and adults, whether the adults are parents or youth advisors, often center on adolescents' increasing desire for personal autonomy.

If adolescents are to move from the dependency of childhood to the interdependency of adulthood, they must have increasing independence and responsibility. Young adolescents' requests (or demands) for more autonomy in some areas, such as dress, curfew, how they spend their free time, and their selection of friends, are sometimes misinterpreted by adults as cries for complete independence. While they do need gradually increasing amounts of autonomy as they mature, young adolescents continue to need behavior limits that are set by adults. These limits should enable them to have a voice in determining specific norms and expectations.

Disagreements between adolescents and their families are usually related to the family having to reassess its expectations of a youth who is growing up. Families that can make adjustments in mutual expectations, norms, and the way the family members relate to each other usually emerge from such disagreements with family ties intact and sometimes strengthened. In reality, most adolescents report good relationships with their parents. They feel their parents are understanding, reasonable, fair and reliable.

In some cultures where identification with the traditional ethnic culture and family influence are strong, periods of disagreement may take on a unique character. As these young people seek autonomy and deal with their feelings of being caught between their traditional ethnic culture and the larger culture that surrounds them, conflict with parents, especially disagreements related to involvement in peer groups, may be intensified. Adults who work with youth need to be careful not to impose their cultural bias, and to recognize that young people live in the context of their families and their cultural heritage(s). Terms such as "autonomy," "community," "family," and "independence," all can be interpreted differently within the context of culture.

As the body and social context of the adolescent grows beyond the childhood frameworks, so does the mind. During early adolescence a new level of complexity emerges for young people. Similarly, as the growth of the body and emotional self are in response to cultural forces, the growth of the intellect is also affected by external forces.

The educational system experienced by most young people emphasizes the ability to think abstractly and reflectively. In Western societies this model of thinking is valued highly, and understood as progress towards maturity. Some educators question this emphasis on one kind of thought, and see the value of personal experience as a way of understanding the world. Young people, too, are also wondering about their own intellectual ability, and may see themselves as either "too stupid," or "too brainy." Adults who live and work with young people need to be sensitive about all the values placed on the intellect -- from the culture, in families, and from young adolescents themselves. It is safe to assume a variety of intellectual development to be present in any group of adolescents. Programs should provide a variety of ways of learning and participating to ensure everyone is included.

Intellectually, adolescents live in two worlds at once: concrete experience and abstract thinking. Their new cognitive capacity includes the ability to understand metaphors and concepts, yet they are still strongly affected by what they know through what they experience. To a significant degree, young adolescents believe what they see in front of them, they think behaviorally, and will relate their experience through their behavior. Older adolescents, on the other hand, reflect a more critical consciousness and move toward gaining a personal value system.

Adolescents can be very critical of adults' decisions. One especially frustrating behavior, for adults, is the adolescents' questioning of formerly accepted rules and beliefs. These questions are linked to the expansion of the adolescent perspective. Adults need to understand the dynamic that is at work when this questioning occurs. "That's not fair," is a common complaint in response to an adult's efforts to take into account differences and extenuating circumstances. While adolescents are capable of understanding that not everybody thinks the way they do, they need to be reminded of the broader picture.

Adolescents are capable of understanding ideals, and of using logical thinking

skills to analyze their own and others' behavior in relation to those ideals. They can see and question inconsistencies between the ideal and the behavior they observe. They are capable of understanding the reasons for rules and raising objections to rules that do not appear to be logical. They need to know what the real reasons are behind "Because I said so." "Because I said so," is not an acceptable response to adolescents. Adults who work with youth need to be able to acknowledge their own inconsistencies and explain them.

Young people often appear to be absorbed with their own experiences, appearance, and behavior. They feel that they are the center of attention, and that they are judged for everything they do. This self-absorption is a normal and natural reaction to the changes of adolescence. Adults need to refrain from comment, and not promote more self-consciousness by drawing undue attention to young people. Let them decide when they want to be the center of attention.

Adolescents believe their own experiences are unique. This frequently finds expression in such statements as "no one knows how I feel," "I can't talk to anybody," or "You don't understand." It is also an expression of loneliness. Belief in their own uniqueness may result in dangerous risk-taking for adolescents who believe they are immune to the consequences of their actions and invulnerable to harm. Statements such as "I won't get pregnant," "I won't die in a car accident," "I won't get AIDS," or "I won't be tired if I stay up all night," are examples of what they say to themselves and others.

Adults should be encouraged to listen to young people, and not to argue that they understand. Responses such as, "Maybe I don't understand, explain it again" can be helpful. Adults may see the need, however, to impose limits on potentially dangerous behavior. Young adolescents begin to break out of these forms of egocentrism as they grow and mature. Through mutual relationships with other adolescents and sharing innermost concerns and dreams, they begin to realize that other people experience life

somewhat as they do. As they gain life experiences and observe the harm that befalls others because of dangerous behavior, they begin to realize that they are not immune to the consequences of their actions.

As adolescents mature, their world expands to reflect their emerging capabilities, desires, and interests, and to include their peers, adults other than their parents, and their communities. They begin to relate their present interests, aspirations, and circumstances to vocational, social, and cultural roles they will fulfill in the future. They often become eager to make commitments to people, ideals, and projects. Because they are changing so rapidly, many of their commitments will be short-term, but intense. They need opportunities for short-term commitments with visible exits. Being reprimanded for failing to complete long-term commitments is inappropriate. Neither should it be interpreted as lack of commitment.

Adults within the congregation may at first be disarmed about the honesty of adolescents, yet it is important to begin by validating their experience. Comments such as "I am never going to church again!" are an opportunity to open the conversation around why Christians participate in communal worship, rather than close the discussion. The most meaningful responses for the adolescent are the most honest. Adults need to be clear about their own values and motivations before attempting to influence the choices of an adolescent, as no real exchange will happen without these being revealed.

Because adolescents have one foot in the world of concrete experience and the other in abstractions, they are not consequence oriented. To be influenced by the potential consequences, one must be able to project the outcomes of the actions. A mere warning about the consequences of potentially dangerous actions is not enough information for them. Although they may not contest advice at the time it is offered, if their experience tells them otherwise, advice has less impact. For example, a warning about the dangers of drinking and driving is lessened when they have done it and

managed to avert disaster. Even if an accident happened to someone they know, they may explain it away by saying, "It won't happen to me." Adolescents do not have a consistent sense of their own mortality.

Moral education for adolescents needs to be current, ongoing, and related to their own issues. One of the significant tasks of adolescent development is to develop and strengthen one's own ability to make decisions with integrity. Young people need adult encouragement, trust and support in this process. Young adolescents are only beginning to learn to reason deductively. They need to know the "real reasons" for behavioral choices to help them make sense of decision-making. They need reasons, not rules. A strict system of rules will not be helpful to them in making decisions on their own in various and complicated situations. Learning to reason will.

Young adolescents can be very authoritarian. As they are beginning to consider ideals like justice and broader social issues, they begin to understand that there is such a thing as a social contract, and that norms and laws are necessary for the greater social good. However, they are not yet able to see the finer distinctions, "the gray areas," between right and wrong. Their notion of justice is not yet tempered with mercy. It takes time for them to understand the nuances and interrelatedness of different ideals. Justice education can often leave adult youth leaders at odds with young adolescents, when they fail to appreciate nuances. It is important that adults be aware of the limitations in perception for young people.

Adolescents tend to make ethical decisions based on external demands. Personal standards of behavior are determined largely outside the self. Family, peers, society and organizations they belong to, such as the Church, all influence them. The adolescent respects and uses others as reference points in his or her reasoning about the rightness and wrongness of personal acts. It is important to provide adolescents with group opportunities. Loyalty and conformity to groups are primary values. Personal acceptance and approval by others is crucial to self-esteem. The challenge for families

and churches, and peers, is to provide strong and healthy communities where adolescents can nurture their own personal integrity.

Adults who work with young people are frequently confronted with questions, such as, "How do we get young people involved in the Church?" However, the real emphasis should be placed on how the Church can be more involved with young people. Youth ministries should not be about nurturing potential adult believers, but rather about enabling the continued growth of adolescent believers. The shift towards lifelong learning communities is perhaps the key to changing the mentality, which suggests that the main motivation behind children's and youth ministries is to provide instruction that can be drawn on in later years. The physical, social, and intellectual changes of adolescence provide the starting point for youth ministry efforts. The totality of a ministry with adolescents can not be encompassed in a youth group and/or church school program. Youth ministry is not limited to the programs and activities sponsored within the church community. It is also directed outward to the needs, concerns and issues of youth in society.

Adolescents begin to construct their faith interpersonally. They recompose their childhood image of God. God becomes a personal God. They are open to learning more personal forms of prayer and becoming more reflective in entering into liturgy and sacrament. Adolescents need opportunities to connect religious traditions with varied opportunities for self-discovery and self-definition.

In ministering with adolescents, we should be alert to their personal experience for God's active presence. It does not mean that we abandon the tradition of the faith community. Rather, we need to make an effort to connect the young adolescent's experience with the community's understanding of God and the Church as a supporting community. The most powerful human influence on the forming faith of young people is that exerted by families and significant others, who are living and expressing their own faith. To a large extent, youth make their ethical judgments in keeping with what is

expected of them by family, peers and other significant others in their lives.

For adolescents there is a very definite link between believing and belonging. Early adolescence is a time to encourage affiliation to one's faith community through knowledge of its tradition and though participation in its present life and vitality. It is a time for active participation in the life of the community, with its symbols, rituals, history and traditions. It is a time for allegiance and alliance. Older adolescents will begin to move to a searching style of faith, and seek conviction through critical judgment of the community's ways. Older adolescents will struggle for their own faith identities, and may tend to distance themselves from the authority of community to some degree in order to begin to create a faith system that is inner-directed and personally held and valued. Nurturing adolescent faith is not another program task, but it is encouragement into a life of relationships.

Adolescents are seeking personal commitment. Commitment includes reaching out towards people, ideas, beliefs, causes, and work choices. The Church can assist young adolescents as they begin this formation process of building commitment and purpose in their lives. Participation in religious activities provides an outlet for the curiosity, idealism, and desire for accomplishment that is characteristic of adolescents. Involvement in worship events and community service can be a source of affiliation when they are actively involved in decision-making.

Participation in the worship life of the congregation is one of the ways that adolescent faith is expressed; it is also one of the key ways faith is formed. But it is not the only, or even the primary way. The fundamental formation of young people's understanding of the world and faith in God takes place within the home. From a very young age, children learn whether or not asking questions about God, life and death make their parents uncomfortable. They know whether their parents allow their questions and take their comments seriously.

Often when adolescents begin to state their lack of desire to attend worship

services, parents feel compelled to respond with feelings of failure and hostile compromises. Yet, in households where adults regularly pray with their children, create household rituals, and work together on issues of justice and peace, young persons learn a great deal about what it means to be a faithful person. In a home where a young person's faith is nurtured in daily life, participation in the worship life of the congregation is one, albeit very important, aspect of faith expression. Whether or not a family worships together can still be a source of family tension, but attendance will not matter as much as the developing faith of the young person.

Attendance is a secondary issue to being a family and a church community that strives to enable people to express their faith in God, their concern for humanity and the earth, and their support for one another as companions on the journey. Within this framework it is easier for parents to hear young people's dissatisfaction with the Church as problems to be discussed and potentially solved, rather than as a sign that their children are rejecting faith in God. Too often parents privatize their family faith struggles out of the mistaken belief that they are failing as parents or that their children just do not like church.

But the needs of young people in one family are usually the needs of others as well. If concerned parents were willing to take their concerns to others in their congregation, they might be able to advocate successfully for what their daughters and sons need. Parents might even find their own faith enhanced by engaging with others, including their children, to make the larger community more responsive to the needs of its participants of all ages.

To some extent, contemporary opinion has erroneously dictated that it is a natural movement for young people to leave the congregation. The assumption is that it is important to anxiously await their return following this phase of rebellion. Our acceptance of these assumptions prevents us from looking seriously at the issues of belonging for young people in faith communities. Youth leave the Church because it is

solely designed to meet the needs and interests of adults, and the adults in the community are unwilling to share their faith and lives with them.

There are no mysterious reasons why young people often fail to participate in congregational life. For the most part, they do not feel welcome. In many instances there are not opportunities for meaningful participation. Perhaps not enough attention is being paid to provide young people with a social group where they can belong. It could be that the instruction being given is not taking into account, among other concerns, young people's need to have some say in setting the agenda. Perhaps there is no room in the worship service for the contribution of young people, and the language is not explained or the concepts made applicable to daily life. The relative absence of young people from congregational life speaks as powerful evidence. This pattern will only be seriously reversed when congregations take seriously the issues of inclusiveness and participation in all aspects of its life.

Youth ministry should empower young people to transform the world as followers of Jesus Christ by living for justice and peace. Youth ministry empowers young people with the knowledge and skills to serve others and learn how to transform the unjust structures of society. Effective youth ministry encourages young people to examine their culture in the light of their faith and their faith in the light of culture. It is often in and through the cultural context that young people will give birth to their personal faith and adopt our communal faith. This cultural context is not a peripheral concern in youth ministry, but a foundational principle.

Adolescents often express a desire for more contemporary and personal liturgy, and liturgical catechesis might include formation and instructional experiences by a clergy person or catechist working with a group of teens to study the structure of the Eucharist and to design and offer an alternative liturgy, using the Rite III framework. Youth liturgical events can provide opportunities for adolescents to share their musical, dance, or other creative or interpretive gifts, but it is better if these are integrated into

the parish liturgy each week. Teens should also be encouraged to reflect on the Scriptures and on the promises made in their name in the Baptismal Covenant in the light of life decisions which they believe God is calling them to make.

Ethical catechesis for adolescents should focus upon helping them confront the ethical decisions they must make within the framework of Christian ethics. For example, awakening sexuality brings many questions and possible decisions: about the sexualization of a relationship, possible pregnancy and responsibility to one's sexual partner and unborn child, protection from AIDS or other sexually transmitted diseases, the ethics of abortion versus giving up a child for adoption, etc. Sadly, teens' values are too often formed from media or from "values neutral" presentations of information by a group that does not include the discernment of God's will as a part of decision-making, as the catechetical program can.

Adolescents' keen interest in discussing thoughts and feelings in intimate relationships can lead to spiritual catechesis in small prayer, Bible study or sharing groups meeting in one another's homes. Adolescents need to be well grounded in orthodox Christianity as they move away from parental and congregational guidance into relationships with persons of very different religious and ethical belief systems. Since most teens respond positively to retreats, especially in an outdoor setting, the catechist might design retreats that would introduce them to new forms of prayer, such as, meditating upon Scripture or God's creation, or to other forms of spiritual discipline, such as, silence, journaling, and fasting.

An important way to validate adolescents' gifts is to offer them opportunities to participate in service projects and social action programs. A social action program for youth should provide young people with the opportunity to develop a social consciousness and commitment to peace and justice through education and action. Service provides opportunities for community service through outreach. Many congregations and dioceses sponsor social action or "mission" trips for young people.

Such learning experiences can build self-esteem and leadership skills, as well as a greater sense of social responsibility. Yet well-intentioned projects far too often fall short of potential benefits, becoming primarily opportunities for travel on the part of the youth and sponsors and occasions for anger or feelings of powerlessness for those visited! Social-action projects for young people, in order to be transformative experiences, need to educate young people on how oppression operates in society, and to stress how we participate in that oppression. Rather than patronize, participants need to recognize how God is already at work in those encountered. While the typical service project stops short of transformation by focusing on temporary exposure to individuals, a social action project focuses on the issue of justice by emphasizing systemic oppression and the need for empowerment.

Helpful criteria for those planning social-action experiences for youth include:

- * The project is built on a long-term relationship between groups of people.
- * The project has a direct relationship to and impact on the participants' home community.
- * The project emphasizes the mutual relationship between people rather than work for people.
- * The project demonstrates a systems approach to issues rather than an approach emphasizing charity of service.
- * The project designs allows for those who are visited to define their own needs.
- * The project demonstrates a planning-and-evaluation process which includes the full participation of young people and adults who reflect the diversity of the sponsoring congregation or diocese as well as the host community.
- * The project design clearly incorporates intentional community-building, as well as decision-making which will enable young people and adults to speak openly and honestly, trusting their experience.
- * The project includes an educational, pre-project orientation for all young people

and adult participants.

* The design clearly demonstrates how the project will be supervised and evaluated.

Other activities that give young people an opportunity to explore justice issues include workshops, political actions, international pen pals, and issues forums. Parents and youth together can participate in refugee host programs, or peace festivals. Advocacy work involving concerted action aimed at addressing changing the structures that allow injustice to exist and grow, falls into this program category, and involves education on how systems work and how structures impact people and can be changed. Young people in congregations can be advocates through attending political meetings, letter-writing to legislators, and symbolic actions, as well as through organizing and participating in boycotts, and writing letters to the editor.

Because adolescents enjoy testing their physical powers, many are excellent in the outdoors and as conservationists. They are not, however, always able to articulate a theological basis for their concern about protecting the earth. Ecumenical catechesis experiences are needed to help teens understand why and how they can be faithful stewards of God's creation. Perhaps they might volunteer their time and energy to animal protection groups or faithfully clean litter from an "adopted highway." The catechist could also offer instructional experiences that encourage teens with advanced thinking skills to study the political process of enacting laws that affect God's creation, such as, the use of animals in product testing, the protection of whales or other endangered species, or the commercial abuse of Native Americans' tribal lands, and to learn ways to make their views heard in the halls of Congress. The time, thought, and emotional energy invested in such a project will embolden even ordinarily reticent teens to proclaim their positions in terms of the gospel and to evangelize through living their faith.

Youth ministry needs to shift from a program-oriented ministry to a ministry rooted in relationships, from a ministry to and for youth to one with and by youth. This means that we need to avoid equating youth ministry with a youth group. It means that we acknowledge that youth ministry is the responsibility of the entire congregation and not a "youth minister."

Youth benefit from a balanced leadership comprised of adults from a variety of ages, socio-economic, and cultural backgrounds. The most effective youth ministers are those who can articulate a lively faith, are psychologically mature, are committed to the Christian way of life, and love being with and working with youth.

Another reality that needs to be addressed is that the vast majority of our youth programs are addressed to white, middle class youth. The needs, interests, and approaches of a variety of races, ethnic groups, and cultures must be included.

Our ministries with youth need to address those youth who are at risk, for whom the future looks bleak, who are neglected or abused by the adults in their lives, who live with stress, and often suffer from depression. The conditions that put youth at risk are often products of their environment, but they are also the consequence of typical adolescent behavior.

sidebars for Chapt. 12:

Adolescent daughters want to be recognized and respected. They want to maintain their connectedness to us as mothers while continuing to get the recognition and acknowledgement that they are becoming adults.

Elaine McEwan in My Mother My Daughter, Harold Shaw Publishers, 1992.

Adolescents need to transform rather than abandon their relationships with their parents...while male and female adolescents have the same needs for self-discovery and self-individuation, they clearly act out these needs in very different ways.

Elaine McEwan in My Mother My Daughter, Harold Shaw Publishers, 1992.

Every parent, simply by accepting the job, commits himself or herself to provide the children certain basic things every child has a right to receive, as a matter of course: what he or she needs to survive, permission to dream, memories with which to begin his/her own story, a share in parents' faith, and the freedom to write his/her own story.

Lewis Smedes in Caring and Commitment, Harper & Row, 1988.

The future of our world and the future of the Church is built upon youth. If we are to ensure a healthy future, a concerted effort must go beyond token outreaches and short-term programs. That process must begin with leaders who are truly heartbroken over the plight of today's young people, leaders who sense a high and holy calling to stand in the gap where society and religion have failed....It is time for the Church to parent these children and address their pain as if these kids were their own flesh and blood.

From 101 Ways Your Church Can Change the World by Tony Campolo and Gordon Aeschliman, Regal Books, 1993.

As parents, we naturally hope our children will grow to have a strong faith. We offer them whatever we have found to be true, meaningful, and solid, and we are hurt if they reject it.

LaVonne Neff in One of a Kind, Multnomah Press, 1988.

Morality is about treating people fairly and lovingly. When we say we ought to do right, we really mean that we ought to treat people right.

Lewis Smedes in Choices: Making Right Decisions in a Complex World, Harper & Row, 1986.

The Church must keep in mind that linguistics is only one cultural criterion. A youthful population that is trying to determine its identity and destiny will need sensitive Christians to assist it. In the process, the Church will be challenged in its cultural traditions, its theological perspective and its ecclesiastical formation.

Manuel Ortiz in The Hispanic Challenge, Opportunities Confronting the Church, InterVarsity Press, 1993.

The quality of a Christian's spiritual and intellectual development is usually related to the kind of teaching made available to him through his lifetime. The teaching of the Holy Spirit, without which our lives are utterly barren, is a teaching mediated through the servants in Christ's Church.

Locke Bowman in Straight Talk About Teaching in Today's Church, Westminster Press, 1967.

The small group begins with the very nature of God.

Neal F. McBride in How to Lead Small Groups, NavPress, 1990.

The Church has been silent far too long. We have allowed those outside the faith to define our obligation to care for the "garden." We have, in fact, withdrawn from our duty to tend it...When we care for the environment, we show our deep respect for the Creator...When we care about God's handiwork, we demonstrate our love for God, and that speaks volumes...

From 101 Ways Your Church Can Change the World, by Tony Campolo and Gordon Aeschliman, Regal Books, 1993.

Chapter Thirteen

Understanding the Needs of Young Adults, Middle Adults and Older Adults

Introduction

Young adults are increasingly a distinct group of persons with special needs. The generation born 1961-1981 is coming of age with the realities of television and high technology as constant companions, the challenges of newly divided and blending families, a job market that is the worst in recent memory, the environmental crisis, and an economic future that is sometimes termed "downwardly mobile." Some of these young adults will have access to higher education, but many will not. Both need to be included in the general catechetical ministry of a congregation, and to be ministered with in terms of their special needs.

Between eighteen and thirty-five, numerous life decisions are made concerning career and vocation, relationships, social role and lifestyle, and religious affiliation, to name a few. Increasingly, many are taking more time to make these decisions. People in this age group also need to learn more fully how to live more faithful Christian lives and how to engage in ministry in their daily lives, as well as how to assume responsibility within the Church. The parish can offer a community of mentors and peers for those searching for identity, meaning and faith.

There are also those in middle adulthood (from thirty-five to sixty-five) with their special needs. Adult catechesis is particularly important if the Church is to be faithful. The Church needs to take seriously both singles and married persons. It needs to provide parents and guardians with help to carry out their responsibilities to bring up children in the Christian life of faith. It needs to prepare adults to participate in the Church's mission in the world and to view daily life and work as ministry. Adults need to play a central role in shaping the catechesis they need. Their life experience needs to

be valued as they learn to reflect upon those experiences in the light of Christian faith.

Similarly, those in later (sixty-five to eighty) and older adulthood (over eighty), need to be valued for their distinctive contributions to the Christian community. Adults are crucial to the future of the Church; unless there are faithful adults, the Church will not be able to bring up children in the Christian life of faith. Therefore adult catechesis must become a priority.

Nevertheless, to assign primacy to adult catechesis is not to sacrifice catechesis throughout the life-cycle. It rather means to make sure that what is accomplished earlier is carried to its culmination and that adults are equipped to aid children, youth, and young adults grow in their life of faith. Further, in an age of rapid change and a growing number of national and international problems, adults need to be equipped and stimulated to engage in the Church's mission to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ. Adults need to learn and practice the gospel demands of stewardship in terms of personal time, talent, and treasures, as well as of stewardship of the creation. They need to learn to practice the gospel demands of evangelism, presenting Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit that persons may be led to accept him as Savior and follow him as Lord within the fellowship of the Church.

Those in later adulthood (from sixty-five to eighty), are growing in numbers and living healthy productive lives, but are often neglected. Some, having retired, have a great deal to contribute to the Church's mission. They require new opportunities for ministry. Their needs for catechesis are as great as any other age group and they have increased time for learning and service. Bringing a lifetime of acquired knowledge and skills, they are new resources for the Church's catechetical ministry.

Older adults (those over eighty) begin to have special psychological and social needs, as well as increased mental and physical limitations which need to be addressed. Their catechetical needs are often complicated by the fact that many in this age group are home or institution bound. Also, many no longer have their peer group

relations to support them. Increasingly, their children live long distances from them. The Church needs to find imaginative ways to minister with them and to integrate them into the life of the congregation.

Young Adults (18-35)

Our culture's social and legal thresholds of adulthood come at inconsistent times (e.g. legal majority, selective service, graduation from college, marriage). For working class people, graduation from high school and/or working full-time is a marker, while for those on the margin of the economy, receiving one's own welfare check has sometimes marked a "coming of age." For those who invest in an undergraduate education, it has been assumed that initiation into adulthood is at about age twenty-two.

These assumptions seem to be challenged today more than in the past. We meet young adults at a point in their life journeys where life commitments are being made, and are still open to question and change. These would include commitments to a faith community, career and vocation, and intimate relationships. The Church has had a place in conversations about all of these commitments, but the time frame in which these questions are raised has been stretched. It is common for those in their late twenties to still be exploring career and vocational commitments and the life issues related to them. The job market today assures fewer opportunities for lifetime employment, or even a continuous career in one field. Young adults today are likely to take calculated risks, such as, limited or no health insurance coverage, with part-time jobs that are fulfilling, or just to pay the bills. Sometimes this is done "to keep the options open." That may seem indecisive, but much of this behavior is, in fact, pragmatic. The temptation of "vocationalism," or an orientation to particular professions or careers for personal security, is a constant one.

We also find that young adults today defer making life-relation commitments, now pushing the median age at marriage toward thirty. Again, much of this is born of

pragmatism rather than indecision. With the rise of a generation having grown up with divorce, the realities of AIDS and teenage pregnancy, many go through trials of co-habiting or even remaining celibate. Ten percent may never marry, double the previous rate. Our assumptions about marriage in the life-cycle must continue to be challenged, as well as our understanding of "family." This is not meant to over-emphasize the need to focus on "singles" ministry, but rather to consider the life-status issues seriously in deciding when and where the gathered community comes into contact with these individuals. As in the case of ministry with youth, the question is not "How do we get young adults more involved in Church?" but rather "How do we get the Church more involved with young adults?" Our congregational lifestyle must in some ways accommodate, for instance, differences in the appropriate times for activities, the length of time commitments required, and the central life questions that young adults bring.

Young adults are not primarily preparing for life, they are already in life. Their identities are for real, but perhaps not forever. Postadolescence is a time of testing, vulnerability, and fragility in strength.

In terms of faith development, young adults are in the process of moving from an acquired faith to an owned faith. The process by which one moves in this continuum needs to be facilitated by the gathered community. It is not unusual for young adults, especially those new to the Episcopal Church, to have studied other faith traditions and to have questioned and explored Christianity as one of several legitimate and dynamic traditions. We must be receptive to this searching in order to remain in the conversation.

Although some young adults do return to the Church as they establish their own families, we cannot assume that the many youth that we raise in the Church will return after being "dropped" from youth ministry. To address the transition between adolescence and young adulthood, we should think out and mark it more carefully in congregational life. A focus on marker events would emphasize the passage to young adulthood more clearly, exploring future plans, bringing closure to one relationship and

beginning a new one. Significant contact with adults and a reiteration of the availability of roles in the congregation for young adults is essential; for those who are moving away to college or military service, some congregations have instituted "affiliate" memberships, while others have referred them to other congregations.

Of the many opportunities that we have to reach young adults, our ministry on college and university campuses is probably the most significant, given their numerical concentration and the nature of the academic enterprise. The Church's response to the searching of young adults cannot wait until the end of formal schooling; it must be fully engaged in the entire journey, continually inviting them into community.

Middle Adults (35-65) and Older Adults (65+)

Adults do not go through the major physical or psychological developmental stages identified for other age groups. Nonetheless, there are differences in life experiences, differences in world-view, and differences in faith development and moral formation of adults, that effect how adults approach learning and how the Church needs to shape catechesis.

The midlife years are usually times of great change. Traditionally men have established themselves in careers, perhaps reaching their pinnacle and wondering what is next, while women were moving out of the intensive child-rearing time and seeking new directions in their lives.

Today the situation is even more complex. Most men and women now work full time. Dual career tracks sometimes result in times when one partner in a couple sacrifices his or her own career goals in order that the other person may advance. Commuter marriages, often over long distances, are more common. A man sometimes finds himself in the new position of following his wife when she is transferred, and he must seek whatever employment he can find in the new locale.

Recent economic times have resulted in those with high-paying and/or secure

jobs facing unemployment or underemployment. Grown children, sometimes with children of their own, have returned to live with their parents, or have been unable to leave as they reached young adulthood. Middle adults, who often find themselves caring for aging parents well into their own older years, may now be caring for three generations: their parents, their children and their grandchildren.

For most people, midlife is a time to re-examine priorities as they honestly assess their dreams and the realities of their lives. Different directions in careers, changes in relationships, changing bodies and health issues, and just the time "left," all impact self-perception and the goals for the rest of one's life.

Congregations have a responsibility to listen to middle adults and walk with them. These adults tend to take responsibility for their own learning and want their life experience to be valued and integrated into what they are learning. They want to deal with the life and death issues and concerns they and their friends and families are facing on a day to day basis.

Middle-aged adults need to find meaningful ways to live as faithful disciples through liturgy, study, service, witness and community without being burdened with institutional maintenance tasks that can turn church into yet another demand on their already busy lives. It is not helpful to tell them more about what is wrong with the world - they already know a great deal about that. Rather, they need to find ways in which they can individually and corporately work to make a real difference.

With older adults, chronological age becomes less and less helpful as a developmental guide. Important issues are health, circumstances, personality, lifestyle, and outlook on life. Many older adults are physically healthy and active. Some have more energy and time to devote to teaching and learning than at any other time in their lives. Many have a mature faith, plus life wisdom, which makes their contributions particularly valuable to the Church.

Older adults face life and death issues with increasing frequency, as family

members, friends and other peers die or are incapacitated. They may need to deal with their own loss of abilities or freedoms, and they need to face their own ever more impending death. More than most adults, older persons are able to recognize the illusionary nature of many of the promises of our society and to see beyond the here and now.

The frail old often have great needs and minimal energy and resources. Increasingly, they are older in age as modern medical technology helps keep us alive and healthy longer. They may not be able to join the congregation physically to participate in catechesis. But they continue to have a need to learn and to teach. Efforts need to be made to include them in the development of a congregation's catechetical strategy.

Older adults are important story bearers and need to be encouraged to share their faith stories. Their stories are an important witness to younger Christians, who are just beginning to face some of the struggles which older adults already faced. The stories of these older adults become valuable building blocks in the story of the Christian community that is passed from generation to generation. The loss of these stories is a danger in today's fast moving, media-oriented society. Such a loss would have a profound impact on the ongoing well-being of the Christian community.

Most Christian cognitive learning takes place during one's adolescent and adult years (see Chapter Seven: Insights From Psychology). The ability to think abstractly is required to reflect on one's beliefs, relate them to one another and apply them to different situations. If most of our cognitive learning about the faith occurs after about twelve years of age, it heightens the importance of the Church's catechetical efforts with adolescents and adults.

Piaget views abstract thinking as being the product of both nature (brain cell development) and nurture (formal and informal education that enables the person to use the capacity to think abstractly). Adults, then, tend to fall into three broad categories.

Those who will never develop the capacity for abstract thinking (those developmentally impaired), those who have developed the capacity and used it effectively in religious arenas, and those who have the capacity but have not practiced it effectively in thinking about religious issues.

Most of our efforts have been directed to the second group, with some commendable work being done to work with those who are developmentally impaired. The third group is increasingly important in a congregation's catechetical work, as many of today's young and middle adults left the Church in their teen years and have not developed their ability to reflect on their beliefs and apply them. Some of these adults as well as those involved in the Church may operate out of the concrete-thinking stage. This means they take literally that which is metaphoric, or they have not reflected on and internalized their beliefs as their own and either uncritically accepted (or rejected) what they understood as children.

Those with little adult experience of the Church are often embarrassed to admit that they have neither the basic knowledge of Scripture or Christianity, nor the understanding of the language or concepts (what does "atonement" or "reconciliation" mean?). These adults are often likely to explain that they don't go to church because it doesn't make sense to them and they feel they can be just as good a Christian without church. Those who have been in the Church, but have not used their capacity for abstract thinking in this arena, may react defensively ("I think the Bible means just what it says," or the equivalent of "All I need to know I learned in kindergarten.")

The Bible includes some complex abstract thinking and the Christian faith holds up a high stage of moral and faith development as the ideal. Engaging in this kind of thinking requires learning how to do it and practice in doing it.

The importance of understanding differences in faith formation and moral development is that it prevents one from assuming that all adults are the same. Regardless of age, the adults in our congregations will have very different needs for

catechetical experiences that help them continue their journey. Offering one or two learning opportunities for adults will only meet the needs of a small number of adults.

Because people of all ages have different learning styles, as well as being at different stages of physical, emotional, and spiritual development, it is always best to use a variety of ways in which adults can engage the material (visual and oral, active and reflective, thinking and being, writing and drawing), without assuming that any one way will work for the entire group. For example, the standard "passive learning" method of listening to a speaker is only effective with a small number of adults. In addition, sensitivity to cultural differences needs to guide the selection of materials and ways of using them.

Most adults learn best when the principles of participatory adult education are followed. These principles are taken from the Adult Education Idea Book, The Kerygma Program, (pps. 22-23):

- * Adults are responsible for their own learning, rather than expecting the leader or book to be the authority and primary source of information.

- * Adults learn best when they can participate directly in the process of their own learning, by making decisions about what they will study and how they will interact with the subject matter and other learners.

- * Learning is reinforced best when adults have opportunity to practice skills and express ideas in their own words.

- * Learning occurs within the environment of trusting relationships, developed in a setting where participants are encouraged to share feelings, needs, and concerns and where their contributions are respected and valued.

- * Adults are motivated by cooperative, collaborative activities. It is not necessary to use competitive activities to motivate them to participate or learn.

- * Adults who have a positive sense of self-worth are less threatened by new information and experience. Strategies that enhance self-worth will also enhance

learning.

* Adults learn more when they experience satisfaction and success. Providing a variety of activities at which participants can succeed enhances their learning.

There are several ways most adults in our society learn, apart from the Church. One way is to acquire knowledge or skill for an immediate need (a training course at work or a community course in an area of personal interest). Another way is by reading (books, magazines, newspapers, work reports), or through audiovisual and interactive media (television, radio and more recently, computers, CD ROMS, interactive television, etc.). In some situations adults learn experientially -- by observing someone, asking questions and working together. The first way involves a large or small group, while the last usually involves a mentor or co-learner. Other ways are through independent learning (except for the learning that comes from discussing what one has read or heard with others). Looking at how adults learn in nonchurch settings may help us establish effective adult catechesis in our congregations.

The Adult Education Book, from The Kerygma Program mentioned earlier, specifies several different styles of adult education. (pps. 22-23) Effective adult education in secular settings (a university continuing education program) is structured, disciplined, intentional, progressive, and cumulative. Many congregational programs lack one or more of these elements.

Structuring an educational program means offering a course or courses with a definitive schedule, and having a registration process that includes purchasing materials or "investing" in the course in some concrete way.

Being disciplined means expecting those who register to actively participate on a regular basis, to do homework and to complete the course.

Being intentional means having specific courses offered for specific reasons to meet specific needs.

A progressive program provides a variety of opportunities that move from one

level of exploration and learning to another.

A cumulative program provides learning experiences that have the cumulative effect of informing nurturing faith and equipping adults to express their faith in action.

Many adult education leaders have low expectations for the participants in their congregation's programs. And those low expectations are often met. Yet, the same adults may be highly committed to learning at work or in a continuing education course at a university. Raising expectations and implementing the basic principles of adult participatory education can help those adults have the same commitment to Christian learning.

Some congregations have found that offering many small groups opportunities to learn about a variety of subjects in a variety of ways is often more helpful than trying to find a general "one-course-fits-all." Careful mentoring of group leaders and encouraging the active participation of group members in selecting and designing the learning experience allows a congregation to offer more options than might be possible if all "classes" need to be "taught" by experienced catechists. The primary pastoral leader(s), lay or ordained, assume the roles of mentor, coach, teacher, trainer and supporter of the small group leaders rather than teaching the one adult education class offered. This system develops additional leaders and has a multiplier effect whereby the efforts of the trained leader in the congregation are multiplied and thus able to reach more people.

A catechetical schedule offering multiple small groups is often more appealing to today's young and middle adults, many of whom seek learning experiences that meet specific needs. Setting up ways for them to identify those needs and structuring learning experiences to meet them will encourage participation. Regular opportunities to invite new members, especially persons who are not members of the congregation, makes these small groups a way of doing primary evangelism.

The need to be a part of and accountable to a Christian community makes small groups especially important in a Church environment. But many people learn in other

ways and in today's increasingly busy world, many people find some times when they are unable to fit one more activity into their already busy schedule. The woman you hoped would lead a study group on Wednesday nights is working full-time and finding most evenings filled with work she took home from the office. She is busy chauffeuring her eight-year-old to soccer and ballet and the four-year-old to day care, while trying to make time to take the twelve-year-old to the mall. Her husband travels a great deal, and when he is home he works late at the office, or has a church committee meetings so she rarely sees him. She's already on the parish stewardship committee, which has evening meetings and now you want her to lead a study group? "Get real..."

Married or single, with children or without, today's young and middle adults are especially busy. Yet they too want and need to learn. We need to take advantage of the ways of learning they already have established. Providing a wide selection of good books, computer programs and videos which address different topics and different levels of faith development can provide learning opportunities for busy adults. They can watch a video series or read a book on their own time and then gather with a group at church, at work, at school or at home to discuss what they learned. Or, they can call a friend or mentor on the phone to discuss it. Or, they can sign onto a computer bulletin board and start a discussion there. Or, invite a couple of friends over to watch a video with them and discuss it with them. Or, watch it with their family and hold a family discussion.

Independent learning experiences such as these are flexible and thus easily adapted to today's busy lifestyles. A congregation's catechetical process needs to provide both materials and help for individuals and families in learning how to use them. Idea lists, simple directions, discussion questions, and stories about how others are using these materials, can help people see ways they can incorporate them into their lives. It is also helpful to set up ways for people to find out who is available for discussion, and to provide guidance on how they might invite others to discuss

whatever they want to study. Also, assistance in selecting appropriate materials would be helpful.

Another way of learning is that of working with a mentor. This way is most evident in some ethnic cultures and certain work settings. Again, the Church can adopt this method, especially if members of the congregation use it in other aspects of their lives. In some cultural settings, the mentor is a community elder, who has specific knowledge or skills that are passed on to the next generation. In a work setting, a mentor is someone who does the work with an apprentice, sharing information and insights as they naturally arise.

The adult catechumenal process is built on this principle. There is no established curriculum. Rather the seeker and the team working with him or her together reflect on the Scriptures and their lives. The mentors share what they have learned and the seeker shares what he or she has learned. Together they explore questions, seeking knowledge and understanding.

A similar pairing of older and younger, life-time Christian and new Christian, long-time member and newcomer, can create a mentor relationship. The goal is not to put one who knows with one who knows nothing, but rather it is to establish a relationship where two can learn together, drawing on each other's experiences and knowledge. The mentor's role becomes that of "mid-wife," not giving the answers, but asking the questions and inviting the seeker to reflect together. The mentor teaches by example, by living faithfully, and encourages mutual learning by opening his or her life and faith to critical reflection. In doing so, he or she encourages the seeker to engage in the same critical reflection. Together they strive to apply their values and beliefs in their day-to-day living.

Understanding Diversity

Responsible attention to the various dimensions of human development, must

begin with an understanding that not everyone of a particular age is part of a homogeneous group. While they typically face common problems, they also deal with a variety of different experiences related to their social, economic, racial, or ethnic backgrounds, and their gender and sexual orientation.

There are numerous racial, ethnic, and cultural groups who are societally hindered in obtaining, keeping, or exercising their God-given rights as human beings; for example, African Americans, women, the older adult, lesbians and gay men. Within these groups it is important to distinguish the subgroups within the larger group. For example, Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans share the same language, but have distinct cultural characteristics, customs, and needs.

The preparation of catechetical resources and catechists needs to take these differences into account. Ideally, those who prepare catechetical resources and the catechists who teach will be members of the particular racial, cultural, ethnic group, or other minority group. Those who are not, need to understand and empathize with the group. The language of a particular group should be used, not just in terms of vocabulary, but in terms of thought patterns, cultural idioms, customs, and symbols. Art work and graphics should also identify with and show the characteristics of the group. All resources should affirm the identity and dignity of the members of these various groups.

Catechetical resources also need to take into account the various educational backgrounds of persons, making adjustments to correspond to the educational level and economical circumstances of diverse groups, avoiding unrealistic demands on time, physical resources, and finances.

Even in congregations which are homogeneous, catechesis should be multicultural as well as global in its perspective. All people should be encouraged to participate in every congregation's life. We need to strive for global awareness, to be mindful of how our decisions affect others and of how we are interdependent people

and nations throughout the world. We also want to work to be aware of justice and peace issues so we may respect the dignity of all and, not only respect their dignity, but also be aware of their work in Scripture and theology and seek to learn from them as well as with them.

Persons with disabilities are another special concern of catechetical ministry. They include the mentally retarded, those with learning disabilities, the emotionally disturbed, and the physically handicapped. It is important to recognize that each person as an individual has special needs, which need to be recognized and met by the congregation. They each have special gifts to be shared with the congregation. We are all abled differently and each has a contribution to make. We need each other. Catechetical ministries should not segregate those with disabilities from the rest of the community unnecessarily; indeed, they need to be integrated as much as possible for our mutual benefit. At the same time catechetical resources and programs need to take seriously their varied special needs. Catechists also need to be trained to work with them. Particularly important are support and catechetical aid for the families of those with handicapping conditions.

The list of persons with other special needs is vast: the aged and homebound, the socially and economically disadvantaged, the illiterate and educationally deprived, military personnel, single people with children, young couples with and without children, the divorced, couples in mixed marriages, gay and lesbian persons, middle-aged singles, the widowed, the imprisoned, the terminally ill, those with AIDS, the homeless, and others. Catechesis needs to address their needs, and provide suitable teaching/learning opportunities, as well as help those who live and work with them, to minister with them. Catechetical resources and programs need to be developed in consultation with representatives of these persons with special needs.

Sidebars for Chapt. 13:

How does one find one's identity? My answer would be through work and through love, and both imply giving rather than getting. Each requires discipline, self-mastery, and a kind of selflessness and they are each lifetime challenges.

May Sarton in Recovering, A Journal, W.W. Norton, 1980.

Since everybody is an individual, nobody can be you. You are unique. No one can tell you how to use your time. It is yours. Your life is your own. You mold it. You make it. All anyone can do is to point out ways and means which have been helpful to others.

Eleanor Roosevelt in You Learn by Living, Westminster Press, 1960.

The discovery now being celebrated by men in mid-life of the importance of intimacy, relationships, and care is something that women have known from the beginning. However, because that knowledge in women has been considered "intuitive" or "instinctive," a function of anatomy coupled with destiny, psychologists have neglected to describe its development.

Carol Gilligan in In A Different Voice, Harvard University Press, 1982.

It is no easy matter to accept that one is growing old, and no one succeeds in doing it without first overcoming his spontaneous refusal. It is difficult, too, to accept the growing old of someone else, of one's nearest and dearest.

Paul Tournier in Learn to Grow Old, Westminster/John Knox, 1983.

The decisive thing is the desire to learn and the desire to understand, the willingness to undertake something, to try, to persevere, to correct one's mistakes, to strive to improve, to gain experience and learn the tricks of the trade, to enlarge one's horizon, to broaden one's mind by seeking new paths -- at bottom, to grow in love, because to be

interested is to love, love persons and love things.

Paul Tournier in Learn to Grow Old, Westminster/John Knox, 1983.

A small group drawing upon the resources of Scripture for inspiration and encouragement can experience the reality of the "koinonia" of Christ with his people.

Roberta Hestenes in Using the Bible in Groups, Westminster Press, 1983.

If more churches practiced mentoring in a deliberate form, their new leaders would be much more effective, and the cause of Christ would be multiplied in the world.

Mentoring is essential to providing the Church with well-prepared leaders.

Manuel Ortiz in The Hispanic Challenge, Opportunities Confronting the Church, InterVarsity Press, 1993.

As I come into contact with different cultures, different sets of priorities, even different expressions of values similar to mine, I need a biblical value system by which to judge them all. Truth and love, I believe, are at the core of this system.

Thom and Marcia Hopley in Reaching the World Next Door, InterVarsity Press, 1993.

Globalization and its importance to the task of doing theology here in the United States will raise new tensions. Latin American theology can no longer be viewed as foreign...but rather as significant to dominant theologies....In our seminaries, we will need to discuss the value not only of the Western philosophical tradition, but also of sociology and anthropology as tools in doing theology, recognizing that knowledge is an interpretation of reality.

Manuel Ortiz in The Hispanic Challenge, Opportunities Confronting the Church, InterVarsity Press, 1993.

Prayer for Education

Almighty God, the fountain of all wisdom: Enlighten by your Holy Spirit those who teach and those who learn, that, rejoicing in the knowledge of your truth, they may worship and serve you from generation to generation; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

The Book of Common Prayer, 1979.

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5 A Mandate from and for the Episcopal Church
6

7 In the mid-1980s a growing number of persons in the Episcopal Church
8 recognized that continuing social and cultural change called for new educational
9 methods and resources to ensure that the timeless truths of the gospel would remain
10 accessible. The 1985 General Convention called for a seventeen-member task force on
11 Christian education and commissioned it to engage representative persons and
12 educational leaders in conversation and then proceed to develop a vision and
13 recommendations to help the Episcopal Church address this foundational issue in its
14 common life. The members of the task force were appointed by the Presiding Bishop in
15 1986, and after two years of work the task force presented its work to the 69th General
16 Convention in Detroit:

17 Christian education is an ongoing process whose purpose is to support the
18 people of God as they seek to live out the Baptismal Covenant and to express their
19 unique calling as followers of Jesus Christ. One of the greatest challenges to the
20 leadership of the Church is the empowerment of all Christians through both formal and
21 informal learning opportunities. It is the responsibility of the leadership in each
22 congregation to establish and to develop an environment which enables people to
23 discover themselves as God's people and to carry out the ministries to which they are
24 called. It is through this vision and leadership that the whole congregation comes to feel
25 its responsibility for community and total ministry within the life of the Church.

26 Congregations which effectively educate their members convey a clarity of
27 mission; cultivate a shared vision of what the Church is called to be; involve and value
28 all of their members; affirm, celebrate, and utilize their diversity — racially, culturally,
29 and linguistically; enable a strong sense of community centered in God; and balance the
30 nurture of their membership with their ministry in the larger community in which they live
31 and in the world. In such congregations everyone is a learner and is challenged and
32 nurtured through education, worship, liturgy, and action. Members become

1 knowledgeable about the Christian faith and receive spiritual direction and a solid
2 theological grounding through their participation in the sacraments, Bible study,
3 reflection, prayer, and action. These congregations will resemble Paul's description of
4 the Church at Corinth.

5
6 I continually thank my God for you because of the favor he has bestowed on you
7 in Christ Jesus, in whom you have been richly endowed with every gift of speech and
8 knowledge. Likewise, the witness I bore to Christ has been so confirmed among you
9 that you lack no spiritual gift as you wait for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ (1
10 Corinthians 1:4–7).

11
12 When the local congregation develops a responsive and clear sense of mission,
13 it can become both an oasis and a catalyst, a place for spiritual replenishment and
14 growth, and a center for outreach and social change. It is a community in which
15 members are helped to integrate Scripture into their understanding of contemporary
16 issues and to ground their actions in the new insights they gain. Members of
17 congregations like these are keenly aware that Christ meets them among the struggling
18 peoples of the world (Matt. 25). As a result, they feel a strong sense of relationship and
19 caring for all people. For them the Church exceeds the boundaries of four walls and
20 encompasses their whole life.

21 With these thoughts in mind, it is important that we focus our attention on the
22 entire life of the congregation as the context for education. It is the life lived together as
23 a Christian people in the congregations of our churches that teaches — or fails to teach
24 — the values and direction of the gospel. How we welcome the stranger, care for the
25 child, settle our differences, and make decisions is an integral part of the Christian
26 education "program" of the congregation. Moments of focused learning need to be
27 offered so that members of the congregation can make sense of the events of their life
28 together. The goal of the focused events is to help the people see as they have never
29 seen before. Everyone in the congregation is a learner and everyone is a teacher.

30 In the past, many churches have tended to segment congregational life into
31 specific program areas. We have created programs for stewardship, programs for
32 evangelism, programs for children's education, and programs concerned with social
33 justice issues — hunger and the rights of minorities, for example. Our efforts in the
34 future need to be directed towards seeing congregational life as "whole cloth." We need
35 to see the relationships between all aspects of ministry and witness if we are to know
36 the fullness of the gospel's impact on our lives. As Bishop Browning said in his address

1 to Executive Council in March of 1987:

2
3 How do we integrate the many facets of education — education for the purpose
4 of identity, education as consciousness raising, education for problem and issues
5 solving — into a holistic system? . . . What tools are necessary for the Episcopal Church
6 to exercise its education ministry and enable and empower every person for mission?
7

8
9 In addition to the emphasis we heard on finding ways to express the ministry and
10 mission of congregations holistically, there were certain other recurring concerns.
11 Perhaps the most important of these was the central importance of biblical literacy. It
12 has often been said that we Christians are a "story-formed people." Our consciousness
13 and identity grow out of the salvation story as it is contained in Scripture, a story that is
14 recalled each time we gather for Eucharist together. As long as the people of the
15 Church are not intimately familiar with that story, we risk moving through the present
16 with a hazy vision of who we are and where we are going rather than with the clear
17 vision that Scripture provides, a vision of hope for the future and a vision that can lend
18 meaning and direction to the present moment. "Who are we as the people of the Book?"
19 needs to be the question that we ask ourselves as we shape the education programs of
20 the future. We Episcopalians must be literate about the tenets of our faith.

21 An understanding of who we are as Christians standing in the Anglican tradition
22 is a second concern that emerged from our study. Distinctive Anglican theological
23 perspectives must inform our understanding. Prayer Book literacy and an appreciation
24 of our heritage and polity as Episcopalians are essential ingredients in our educational
25 approach. This in no way denies the call to ecumenism to which we are equally
26 committed. It simply means that if we are to contribute to the ecumenical dialogue we
27 need first to know who we are and what we bring to that dialogue. It means that if we
28 believe Episcopalians have something to contribute to a world seeking God's truth and
29 justice, we must be aware of the heritage that shapes the way we make decisions
30 together, interpret Scripture, face suffering and ambiguity, and witness to a loving God
31 acting in history. Episcopalian Christians, hearing the call to a renewed sense of
32 mission, need to be literate about the foundations of our Anglican heritage just as we
33 need to be literate about Scripture and about the unique Prayer Book that helps live out
34 and interpret Scripture.

35 Our study has reminded us of who we are as the Episcopal Church. We are a
36 Church composed predominantly of small congregations across the country. Therefore,

1 as we think about designing education programs and resources at the national level, we
2 must keep in mind the special needs of small congregations. We are a Church with a
3 black presence and heritage, representing both Afro-American and Caribbean roots.
4 The influence of Hispanic and Asian-American peoples is also growing in the Church.
5 And Native Americans make important contributions to our understanding of who we are
6 as Episcopalians today. Any educational program we design or produce for the
7 Episcopal Church must take this rich diversity seriously.

8 Speaking the "mind of the Church" can be a difficult task as we recognize our
9 diversity; but this is not a new phenomenon. Old divisions between "high church" and
10 "low church" were a concern for those who struggled to produce a national curriculum
11 and shape the educational ministry of the Church thirty years ago. Although we
12 sometimes bemoan our theological diversity in the Episcopal Church, it is our prayer
13 that, rather than seeing our differences as barriers, we will see them as providing a
14 more creative engagement between our lives and theology.

15 The apostles realized that they were sent into the world but were not of the world;
16 the New Testament Church took that call seriously (John 17:16). Preparation for
17 baptism in the early Church was an intensive process of formation in the Word of God.
18 As the Presiding Bishop's Task Force on Christian Education, we call for the leaders of
19 congregations to take seriously the commitment to call people into ministry shaped by
20 the Baptismal Covenant. The baptism of infants, youth, and adults, and the renewal of
21 Baptismal vows, must be seen as a major event, denoting conversion and commitment
22 in the life of the whole congregation. The liturgical church year provides a natural
23 pattern of education that supports this endeavor. The emphasis is on Christian
24 formation: the forming of Christian consciousness in a people called out of the world to
25 be sent back into the world to image Christ in word and act. It is out of such a formation
26 process that the Church and the individual Christian make a prophetic witness to
27 society. For it is when Christians begin to perceive a relationship through Christ with the
28 peoples of the world that they come to an involvement in the common struggle for
29 justice. Thus, it is out of such a formation process that a Christian ethical stance begins
30 to take shape in both adults and children. A discipline of prayer, study, reflection, and
31 spiritual direction lies at the heart of the formation process. Evangelism, renewal,
32 Christian education, and prophetic witness are inextricably linked in congregations
33 where conversion, formation, and Christian witness are the hallmarks of congregational
34 life.

35 The goal of the teaching ministry is to draw each person into the communion that
36 is the Body of Christ: through sacrament, through the ministry and witness of the

1 congregation, through the process of helping persons reflect and learn from the
2 common experiences of life, and through engagement in the social issues of the day.
3 The context for doing that is the congregation, the family, the community, and the wider
4 community that comprises all the nations of the world. The standard for response is the
5 biblical Word. The call to mission is the Baptismal Covenant. The ultimate goal of
6 Christian education is to help us change those things in ourselves and in the world that
7 are not part of God's plan, those things that are oppressive and that are not faithful to
8 the gospel of Jesus Christ. Out of this conviction. . . we offer our vision for Christian
9 education into the twenty-first century.

11 **Intentions and Audience for "Called to Teach and Learn"**

12 One of the fundamental recommendations in this report was the development of
13 a "manual" entitled Called to Teach and Learn to be published and distributed
14 throughout the Church for its use. The General Convention of 1988 received the report
15 of the task force on Christian education with gratitude and, in a resolution, called upon
16 the Education, Evangelism, and Ministry Development Unit to assume responsibility of
17 oversight in the preparation of this "manual." The intent was to lift up a vision of
18 Christian education consistent with the task force report along with guidelines for
19 planning and implementing Christian education in various contexts.

20 A first draft of Called to Teach and Learn was completed in 1992 and circulated
21 for evaluation and comment to over 2000 individuals and groups from a majority of the
22 dioceses in the Episcopal Church. This guide has been rewritten in the light of these
23 comments for presentation to the 1994 General Convention.

24 A document of this kind proved extremely difficult to write. Readers brought their
25 own anticipations and desires, theological and educational presuppositions, convictions
26 and prejudices, personalities and life histories with them. What was clear to one was
27 confusing to another. What was jargon to one was precision of language to another.
28 What was obvious to one was original to another. What was simplistic to one was
29 complex to another. What was faithful to one was questionable to another. Many were
30 not clear on the purpose of the document or for whom it was written. Each had a
31 different document in mind. Some would have preferred an inspirational work filled with
32 stories and illustrations. Some hoped for a "how-to" guide filled with concrete
33 suggestions. Some desired an easy-to-read textbook with numerous footnotes and
34 bibliography for further study. And some anticipated a new curriculum resource for
35 parish education.

36 We are an extremely diverse, opinionated, strong-willed people for whom no

1 document will be fully satisfactory, but it is hoped that Called To Teach and Learn will
2 capture the imagination and interest of the broad, centrist population of the Episcopal
3 Church.

4 Let us be clear, this guide is not intended to be a study-discussion guide written
5 in a popular fashion for general use in congregations. Nor is it intended to be a practical
6 help to church school teachers. Such resources based upon the content of this guide
7 may be written after this guide has been published. This guide is intended to be a
8 foundational, theoretical document with implied practice. It is written for clergy and laity
9 with some foundational knowledge in theology and education, who have primary
10 responsibility for the Church's educational ministry within congregations, dioceses,
11 provinces, seminaries and the national staff. As such, it is not intended to provide a
12 dogmatic position to be accepted and acted upon. It is rather intended to provide a
13 vision, an ideal, a direction, and insights to stimulate and guide conversation and
14 decision-making. Those who wrote this document understood the General Convention
15 mandate as asking for a challenging visionary statement concerning the end and
16 direction for our Church's educational ministry to stimulate thought and action. It will,
17 therefore, point toward an ideal, which may seem beyond realization. It will need to be
18 read carefully, pondered thoughtfully, and argued with graciously by those called to
19 educational leadership in our Church.

20 Before we proceed, it is appropriate and important to say a few words about the
21 language of catechetics which was chosen for this guide. While it is a language which
22 appears often in the documents of the early Church and has had continual use in
23 Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches, it has not typically been used by other
24 Christian Churches in the modern period. It is a language some do not like and many
25 are uncomfortable with. But, it has been the language of catechetics throughout most of
26 the Church's history. It was used for years before and after the Reformation by both
27 Protestants and Roman Catholics. While most Christian Churches stopped using it in
28 the eighteenth century, as a result of liturgical reform, it is slowly returning to use among
29 Protestants.

30 The language of Christian education (also religious education) has traditionally
31 been associated with schooling, knowledge about intellectual content, and instructional
32 techniques (primarily with children). Catechetics, on the other hand, has been
33 concerned with aiding individuals and communities in acquiring and deepening the
34 Christian life of faith. Therefore, the language of catechetics appears to be more
35 consistent with the vision that informs this manual, providing us with a much broader
36 and inclusive understanding of the Church's educational ministry.

1 We trust that, as the reader becomes engaged with this guide, the present
2 unfamiliarity with words like catechesis, catechetics, and catechist will fade. It is the
3 authors' hope and intention that the language of catechetics will come back into use in
4 the full depth of its meaning and significance, and will benefit each member of the
5 Church, both today and in the future.

6 Themes, concepts, and convictions of many Episcopal voices in Christian
7 education will be found in this document. Each, of course, would have written a vision
8 and guide from a somewhat different perspective and with different emphases.
9 Nevertheless, the Episcopal Church is in their debt and they will see their influences on
10 this document. Sola Gloria.

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23 **Glossary**

24 To aid the reader, we offer the following terms and definitions:

25
26 BCP - The Book of Common Prayer

27
28 Catechesis - The process by which persons are fashioned into Christians within the life
29 of a community of faith. It includes three intentional, interrelated, life-long processes:

30 Formation - Participation in and practice of the Christian life of faith; a natural
31 conforming and transforming process about which we are intentional.

32 Education - A reforming process of critical reflection on participation and practice
33 in the light of the gospel.

34 Instruction/Training - Informing processes by which knowledge and skills
35 important to the Christian life of faith is acquired.

1 Catechetics - An exploration of the aims and "content" of the Christian faith and life.

2 This content is fundamentally related to three dimensions of the Christian life of faith:

3 Faith - Perception or the particular way persons perceive life and their lives.

4 Character - Identity and corresponding behavioral dispositions.

5 Consciousness - Subjective interior awareness that underlies all experience.

6
7 Catechist - One who teaches in the catechumenal process in a particular congregation
8 or church.

9
10 Catechumenal Process - That program of study which carries the believer from a
11 beginning inquiry through full participation in the life of the Church.

12
13 Catechumenate - A period of formation that includes participation in worship, Scripture
14 study, development of a disciplined life of prayer, participation in outreach programs,
15 one's daily ministry, tithing and all of the rites of the Church.

16
17 Catechumens - Those persons who desire to participate in the catechumenal process in
18 the particular congregation they are joining.

19
20 Chrismation - The symbol of being marked as Christ's own forever, usually done by the
21 priest during the service of holy baptism, marking the sign of the Cross on the forehead
22 with oil.

23
24 Christian initiation of adults - A series of rites and stages of preparation for baptism.

25
26 Mystagogia - The great fifty days between Easter and Pentecost.

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Chapter Fourteen

The Context:

Home, School, and Congregation

The Home

The first and primary context in which our catechetical ministry of formation, education, and instruction should take place is the home, that place in which persons reside alone or in groups, related by blood or by commitment.

Living faithfully in the home implies a conscious effort to fulfill one's Baptismal Covenant. The home is an appropriate place to pray, to study and reflect on the Scriptures, to offer thanks for God's blessings, to "break bread" together, and to care for each other. It is the primary context in which the generations participate in and practice the life of faith. They do this by ordering their common life so that each may be to the other a strength in need, a counselor in perplexity, a comfort in sorrow, and a companion in joy. The home is to be a sign of a reconciling community, a community in which each is held accountable by the others and where each member asks for, offers and receives forgiveness.

Within the context of their common life, those who live together strive personally and communally to knit together their wills with God's will, and their spirits with God's Spirit, that they may grow in love and peace with God and each other. So it is that their lives become a sign of Christ's love, a love in which unity overcomes estrangement and forgiveness heals guilt.

The home is the primary context for living the gospel and telling the story of Jesus Christ. Here the good news is shared in word and deed, not only with each other but with others they meet, neighbors and friends, guests and acquaintances. The home is to be a place of mutual affection so that those who live there may reach out in love and concern for all others, seeking to serve Christ in them, loving them as one is loved by God and each other.

And finally, the home is a place where its members are committed to striving for justice and peace in the world, providing a place of hospitality for the stranger and the outsider, and practicing those simple gestures that indicate that one is abiding in the reign of God. The home is a place where the stewardship of human and natural resources is practiced and the dignity of every human being is honored. It is a community of persons who assume responsibility in the life of the larger community on behalf of social justice and the reconciliation of all persons. While persons live in varied circumstances, the home, even if it is a single room in which a single person dwells, needs to exemplify these characteristics. Families, whether they live together or apart, share similar responsibilities.

For many, this image of home and family will appear so idealistic as to be oppressive. The reality for most is quite different. While it may seem, therefore, unfair to establish unrealistic expectations, the Church needs to offer a vision to strive for, with God's help. Rather than making persons experience guilt, frustration, or depression, because they have not realized the ideal, we need to remind each other that God redeems our failures.

One important way to aid families is to bring them together to reflect on their experiences and experience new ones, to support and assist, and to celebrate the Christian life of faith. Within families there is a need, responsibility, and opportunity for adults to teach or catechize each other, and for adults and children to teach or catechize each other. So, catechesis, beginning with children, needs to address issues related to singleness and marriage, preparation for marriage, and life as singles and married, with and without children. Catechesis for parents, to aid them in bringing up their children in the Christian life of faith, is essential. The home may be the primary context for participation in, and the practice of, the Christian life of faith and for critical reflection on one's life in the light of the gospel; but if they are to fulfill faithfully this mandate, individuals and families will require catechetical assistance and support from congregations.

The Schools

In our contemporary society, as central as the home is, it is also limited in its influence. Schools have at the same time increased in their influence. Historically, the public schools were intended to support the family in the Christian nurture of its children. While some still do, expecting the public schools to nurture Christians is no longer reasonable. Christians increasingly will need to consider ways to supplement and/or counter influences in the public schools. The majority of our children in the present and foreseeable future will attend public schools. It is, therefore, important that we attempt to influence what these schools teach, covertly and overtly. At the same time we will need to acknowledge that, in a religiously pluralistic society, religion will necessarily have to assume an insignificant role in public schools. Congregations and families, therefore, will need to provide catechetical programs of greater significance than they have been able or willing to do in the recent past. In some communities, congregations have already initiated projects in the public school system, for instance, by "adopting" a

particular class for a year, or by providing space or other services related to the school's educational mission.

When we consider the creation or continuing support of Episcopal schools, it might be well for us to envision them as another expression of the Church's catechetical ministry. Episcopal schools are called to be true communities of faith in which the catechetical efforts of Christian families are comprehended, reinforced, and extended. It is important that these Episcopal day schools be directly related to one or more congregations, servicing their members. It is important that they understand their central purpose to be aiding growth in the life of faith. As a community, the school necessarily has an independent life of its own, but it needs to perceive itself as contributing to the life of the congregations upon which it depends and into whose life it is integrated, so that a common catechetical ministry can evolve. It is their vocation, as day schools or residential schools, to be schools where Christian formation, education, and instruction are central to their mission. It is important that these schools strive to integrate Christian spiritual and ethical perspectives into both the academic and social life of each school. Episcopal schools should practice the Christian life of faith in every aspect of their lives; they should practice the gospel imperative of inclusiveness in terms of social, economic, racial, ethnic and cultural mix.

Higher Education

Regretfully, over the years Episcopal schools, while maintaining academic excellence, may have neglected their responsibilities for catechesis. This problem is more serious in colleges and universities related to the Church. Episcopal colleges and universities deserve the Church's support and encouragement, providing these schools make a distinctive contribution to higher education by being committed to the making of Christians.

We need to accept the idea that higher education in the United States will be

almost totally separated from any recognizable religious purpose. Nevertheless, colleges and universities are, and will remain, powerful forces in the shaping of our society. They remain a crucial frontier for the Church's mission and ministry, in terms not only of students who attend them, but also of their faculty, staff, and administrators.

The diversity of these institutions is so great that no one strategy will be possible. These specialized ministries, however, must be included within the catechetical concerns of the Church, and they deserve the Church's full support. Episcopal campus ministers, who often work out of a specific congregation, provide one of the Church's most important specialized ministries. More attention needs to be given to the training and support of these persons.

The congregation is the heart of the Church's catechetical ministry. Congregations that exist near colleges and universities need to understand such schools as a significant part of their mission and ministry. They need to make a serious effort to integrate students, faculty, administrators, and staff into congregational life, by addressing their interests, concerns, and needs. They must keep in mind that there is a greater pluralism of people involved in higher education today than ever before.

Seminaries

The seminary has a special responsibility to make sure that future clergy are knowledgeable and skilled in catechetics, in planning for catechetical ministries in congregations, in teaching adults, and in the instruction of lay teachers. To meet this responsibility, seminaries need to consider providing full-time faculty members in catechetics, and a minimum of two required courses: one semester on catechetics and catechetical planning, and another on the role of teacher and the instructor/trainer of teachers. Continuing education courses in various aspects of catechetics, such as liturgical, ethical, pastoral, and spiritual catechetics, might be offered.

The Sunday Church School

In the early nineteenth century the church school became the primary context for catechesis in the Church within the United States. It was successful because it fit well into a society in which the home, public school, neighborhood, and other voluntary associations such as the scouts and Y.M./Y.W.C.A., as well as the mass media, supported and complemented each other. It was a time when life in the United States could be characterized as having a general Protestant Christian ethos. However, in our contemporary society, a society more religiously pluralistic and secular, the church school is increasingly limited in its influence.

What we need is a new strategy in which the congregation is perceived as the agency of catechesis. It is time to look seriously at the idea of a partnership between the home, congregation, and the church school within the context of catechesis. If this is to occur, we will need to recognize that every aspect of life in a congregation is an aspect of catechesis and that learning is going on constantly. We need to be intentional about everything we do. Within this strategy there will continue to be an important role for a church school for all ages, including adults.

The Congregation

St. Paul's letters were to congregations, not individuals. Participation in the life of a congregation is essential to being Christian. From the beginning, the Church was understood to be a community of faith in which "all who believed were together and had all things in common" (Acts 2:44). They devoted their time to the apostles' instruction and communal life, and to the celebration of the Eucharist and daily prayer (Acts 2:42). Community assumes a sharing of beliefs, attitudes, and values; a sharing of experience.

It is important to think of a congregation as a whole, and not as a collection of individuals or even families and groups, because the whole includes all ages and all conditions of persons who are obligated to each other. The dynamic element in the life

of a congregation is the interaction of its members. Some of the most significant things about the Christian life of faith are learned from members talking to each other about ethical choices they have made in particular situations, about prayers that were answered, and about how God has been present to them. Catechesis is going on potentially whenever and wherever the community meets for worship or some part of the community meets to engage in some activity. We, therefore, need to broaden the context of catechesis to include every aspect of congregational life and be intentional about living together the Christian life of faith in everything we do. At the heart of congregational life must be the bringing together of all ages and conditions for communal worship. Nothing is more important for the making of Christians. Nothing deserves more of our attention.

It is important that the congregation order its total life and all of its activities around the church year, that is, the gospel story. It is important that the congregation reflect critically on every aspect of its life in the light of the gospel, ever reforming its life so as to be more faithful to the gospel. It is important that every member of the congregation is involved in acquiring the knowledge and the skills to be faithful Christians in their daily life and work. Most important, we must remember that a congregation is the primary carrier of Christian faith and the primary context for the forming and transforming of persons in the life of faith. The congregation must become an intentional community of faith, an intentional catechetical community, focused on enabling persons to live into their baptism.

sidebars for Chapt. 14:

Parent storytellers make conscious those things which are not seen by the child, but which tell the child what part he or she plays in an immense drama that extends through the ages. To tell the stories that come from the Judeo-Christian tradition and to enrich them from other traditions is to invite children into a drama with cosmic dimensions, and yet one in which each child has a unique part to play.

Sara Wenger Shenk in Why Not Celebrate!, Good Books, 1987.

Our question ought never be, How can we make our children into Christians? Rather, it must be, How can we be Christian with our children?

John H. Westerhoff, III, in Bringing Up Children in the Christian Faith, Winston Press, 1980.

I am convinced that our society desperately needs a philosophy of teaching that explores the dimension of depth in teaching, a philosophy that begins not with technique but with the majesty and the mystery involved in teaching...I want to move away from teaching seen as a problem, to a view that assumes it is far more appropriate to see teaching as a mystery.

Maria Harris in Teaching & Religious Imagination, Harper San Francisco, 1987.

Worship is important because it is in worship that the Church enacts its story: the story of God creating a world and ordaining reality, of a world that turned against its Creator and against reality, and the story of God caring and coming to rescue the world, to restore it and make it new. It is the story of Israel, the original people of truth, and of Jesus, the victor over sin and death.

Robert E. Webber and Rodney Clapp in People of the Truth, Morehouse Publishing, 1993.

1 Chapter Fifteen

2 The Catechist:

3 Person, Functions, and Training

4
5 When the canons describe the duties of the clergy they read: "It shall be the duty
6 of the clergy in charge of a cure of souls to ensure that children youth and adults
7 receive instruction in the Holy Scriptures, in the subjects contained in An Outline of the
8 Faith, commonly called the Catechism, and in the doctrine, discipline and worship of the
9 Church and in the exercise of their ministry as baptized persons."

10 The clergy also have the duty to prepare persons for baptism, confirmation,
11 reception and the reaffirmation of baptismal vows, and "Before baptizing infants or
12 children they shall prepare the sponsors by instructing both the parents and the
13 Godparents concerning the significance of Holy Baptism, the responsibilities of parents
14 and Godparents for the Christian training of the baptized child, and how these
15 obligations may properly be discharged."

16 In the ordination rite for priests, the bishop addresses the ordinand at the
17 examination, saying, "You are called to work as a pastor, priest, and teacher" (BCP,
18 1979, p. 531). Teaching in the Church belongs on a par with other pastoral and
19 sacramental duties. The rector is called to be a congregation's chief teacher. Because
20 the Church has invested in the priest's theological education, the priest has a special
21 responsibility to pass on the tradition as well as to interpret its meaning and significance
22 for our day. Preaching and teaching are inseparable, and adult instruction is essential to
23 a faithful parish. The priest has special responsibility for both.

24 The rector is also charged with the responsibility for oversight of the
25 congregation's full catechetical ministry and with the equipping of lay adults to be
26 catechists (teachers). A rector who is a good teacher is a good learner. Continuing

1 education in the theological disciplines and in catechetics needs to be a regular part of
2 her/his life; the congregation is to encourage and support such activities.

3 In the Constitution and Canons of the Protestant Episcopal Church, there is a
4 canon on a bishop's licensing of lay persons as lay readers, pastoral leaders, lay
5 preachers, lay eucharistic ministers and catechists. The catechist in this case is a lay
6 person licensed to prepare persons for baptism, confirmation, reception, and the
7 reaffirmation of baptismal vows. These catechists are to be trained, examined and
8 found competent in The Holy Scriptures, The Book of Common Prayer, The Hymnal,
9 church history, the Church's doctrine as set forth in the Creeds and the Catechism, and
10 in the methods of catechesis.

11 Training one or more persons to be licensed as catechists becomes especially
12 important in congregations where ordained leadership is not regularly available.
13 However, in most congregations catechists in the adult catechumenal process or
14 catechists/teachers will not need to be licensed under this canon as they will prepare
15 persons for baptism or teach under the direction of the congregation's clergy.

16 Every Christian, including children and youth, is a catechist or teacher, in that we
17 share a common life of faith and influence each other. The chief catechist for the
18 Church is the bishop, and as the bishop's person in a congregation, the presbyter
19 (priest) is given a prime responsibility for the congregation's catechetical ministry as a
20 whole. Beyond that, each and every congregation needs to identify, call, and equip lay
21 people who have the vocation and the gifts of a catechist, that is a teacher, for this
22 important ministry within the congregation. Perhaps all teachers should be confirmed
23 and authorized by the bishop for their role as teachers, and be known as catechists.

24 To be sure, it is God's Holy Spirit who is the teacher/catechist, but the work of the
25 Holy Spirit is mediated through servants in Christ's Church. Those who accept the call
26 to be a teacher/catechist need to consider making this ministry within the Church their
27 primary ministry in terms of time and energy. Unless teachers/catechists have both the

1 necessary gifts and graces and the commitment, talent, time, and energy to give to
2 prayer and study, training and preparation, our catechetical ministry will be less than
3 faithful to its mission.

4 It is sometimes difficult to secure the number of teachers/catechists needed.
5 Because that is so, we typically ignore what the model teacher/catechist might look like.
6 While this ideal may be beyond our grasp, it is important that we use it as a goal.

7 Teachers/catechists need to be carefully selected, confirmed by the rector, and
8 commissioned for their office at the community's Eucharist. Teachers/catechists
9 deserve honor and appreciation as they reconsider yearly, with the help of the rector,
10 their continuing in this role and, if confirmed, renew their vows to fulfill their ministries
11 faithfully. Quality buildings, equipment, supplies, and resources are important to the
12 Church's catechetical ministry, but nothing, and no one, is more important than the
13 teacher/catechist as a person.

14 Children, youth, and adults may or may not engage in study of the Christian life
15 of faith as diligently as desired, but they will always study carefully the lives of the
16 Church's teachers/catechists. Teachers/catechists, therefore, need to be striving to be
17 models of what the Church desires others to become. It was James, the first bishop of
18 the Church in Jerusalem, in what tradition suggests was a sermon delivered to the
19 newly baptized, who cautioned, "Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers
20 and sisters, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness"
21 (James 3:1). So it is that the spiritual and ethical qualities of the teacher/catechist are
22 most important.

23 Teachers/catechists need to be chosen because in some manner they are
24 examples of persons growing in the life of faith as spiritual, ethical, emotional, and
25 intellectual persons. They also need to have the gift of teaching, that rare ability to be
26 with others and arrange environments that make their growth in the life of faith possible.
27 Finally, they need the grace to give this ministry a significant amount of time and

1 energy.

2 A healthy congregation not only chooses its teachers/catechists wisely, but also
3 provides them with the preparation, continuing support, and learning opportunities they
4 need so that they may perform well and improve in their ministry. Beginners need the
5 opportunity to observe and learn from, as well as be supervised and assisted by, more
6 experienced teachers/catechists.

7 Those persons who are committed to the Church's catechetical ministry and wish
8 to serve, but who do not have the gifts and graces necessary, may be used according to
9 their gifts in support roles. In any case, it is essential, when considering the Church's
10 catechetical ministry, that we begin with people and not with tasks or programs.

11 Teachers/catechists called by God and chosen by a congregation are volunteers
12 in the sense that they do not receive payment for their services, but they should not be
13 treated casually, as though we did not expect a lot of them. Each teacher/catechist, and
14 the congregation, should be very clear as to mutual expectations, with an established
15 time for review and renegotiation. They should be offered the material and personal
16 assistance and support needed for satisfaction. They should agree on goals, and the
17 curriculum resources established by the congregation, as well as the means and
18 methods to be used in achieving them. There must be mutual accountability. To permit
19 poor teaching or irresponsible behavior on the part of the teacher/catechist suggests to
20 the learner that they, and the task, are not important.

21 Having chosen carefully those who will assume the role of teacher/catechist in a
22 congregation, the congregation then needs to help each one acquire the knowledge and
23 skills necessary to fulfill her or his responsibilities. In terms of knowledge, they must be
24 knowledgeable of the Christian life of faith, as well as knowledgeable of the subject
25 matter they will teach. In terms of skills, they need the ability to be present to their
26 particular students in ways that will aid them to grow in that life of faith.

27 Being a teacher/catechist is an historic task. The Christian life of faith is rooted in

1 the past and is always about inducting new generations into that past. It is also an
2 eschatological task in that it is aimed at helping persons who have been incorporated
3 into that past to live in the present on behalf of God's future.

4 Teachers/catechists are political agents in that they are part of the ministry of the
5 Church and responsible to the bishop, the Church, and its life of faith. They need to
6 know the Christian life of faith as interpreted by the Church. They are moral agents in
7 that they possess the possibility of influencing others by their lives. They need to
8 examine their own lives continually, and endeavor to grow in the life of faith. They are
9 artistic agents in that they arrange environments in which both they and those they
10 catechize might grow in the life of faith.

11 The ministry of teachers/catechists must not be isolated in the church school,
12 though that will be an important context for their ministry. Under the supervision of the
13 rector, they are a resource for the total catechetical ministry of the Church. They can be
14 of significant help in developing and leading alternative catechetical experiences that
15 are a complement to the church school (for example, marriage preparation and family
16 catechesis, intergenerational events, special liturgies, preparation of persons for the
17 rites of reconciliation, anointing for healing, and dying and death).

18 Teachers/catechists need to be equipped to plan and design, as well as to
19 conduct events, and to secure appropriate catechetical resources to aid them. They
20 need to be able to name catechetical purposes, aims, and objectives; to determine
21 which experiences are most likely to aid in achieving these ends; to organize these
22 experiences so that they might be most effective; and to determine whether these ends
23 were attained and how the experiences might be revised for greater effectiveness.

24 However, in spite of the essential role of teachers/catechists, this ministry cannot be
25 left to them alone. Indeed, this ministry needs to be an intentional dimension of all of the
26 congregation's life for particular teaching\learning activities.

1 sidebars for Chapt. 15:

2 A catechist needs to be a sacramental person, one who brings people to God.

3 John H. Westerhoff, III, in A Faithful Church: Issues in the History of Catechesis,
4 ed. by John H. Westerhoff, III and O.C. Edwards, Morehouse-Barlow, 1981.

5

6 We talk about worship as the "work of the people." ...the work of worship is
7 concentrating on God with love. The hardest part of worship is pushing all thoughts from
8 the mind and concentrating on God with love.

9 Judy Gattis Smith in Developing a Child's Spiritual Growth Through Sight, Sound,
10 Taste, Touch & Smell, Abingdon, 1990.

11

12 I have found that where there is spiritual union with other people, the love one feels for
13 them keeps the circle unbroken and the bond between us and them strong, whether
14 they are dead or alive. Perhaps that is one of the manifestations of heaven on earth.

15 Alice Walker in Living by the Word, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1988.

16

17 The catechist strives to help others to realize that the Lord is always the source of all
18 knowing and the giver of life.

19 John H. Westerhoff, III, in A Faithful Church: Issues in the History of Catechesis,
20 ed. by John H. Westerhoff, III and O.C. Edwards, Morehouse-Barlow, 1981.

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22

1 Chapter Sixteen

2 The Catechetical Ministry:

3 How It Fits In

4
5 **Faithful Planning**

6 There is no one way to administrate or organize the Church's ministry of teaching
7 and learning. Nevertheless, it is clear that old structures may no longer be reasonable
8 or adequate to achieve the aims of catechesis. The following organizational principles
9 are guidelines for consideration:

10 Faithful planning for catechesis is person-centered rather than program-centered.
11 No programs should be established without serious consideration of the persons who
12 will participate in them.

13 Faithful planning has as its primary aims personal growth in the life of faith, and
14 the equipping of persons and the community for engaging in the Church's mission and
15 ministry.

16 Faithful planning maintains integrity between ends and means, aims and
17 methods. It makes the restoration of all people to unity with God and each other in
18 Christ its goal, and avoids engaging in methods or programs that estrange or maintain
19 alienation between persons or groups.

20 Faithful planning involves being intentional and necessitates full participation and
21 generous personal and financial support for all of the Church's catechetical efforts.

22 Faithful planning is a continuous process with regular review, evaluation, and
23 response (an appendix containing a planning guide for use within a local congregation
24 follows this chapter).

25 Faithful planning requires the integration of the unique and distinctive
26 contributions of all national, regional, diocesan, and congregational efforts, each holding
27 the others accountable for their common mission and ministry.

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National and International

The various units of the Church's life assume their appropriate responsibilities and order their life to accomplish them. In principle, no unit should be without some person or group of persons assigned responsibility for the Church's catechetical ministry. On the national and international level, the Church has two important resources: staff at the Episcopal Church Center in New York City who are concerned with ministries for children, youth, young adults and adults; and the Episcopal seminaries.

Under our present organizational structure, the presiding bishop requires a small number of well-informed persons to be responsible for the Church's catechetical ministry from a national perspective. Being comprised of specialists in catechetics and related fields, this group can best keep the Church informed of catechetical developments; stimulate, support, and evaluate and report on research and its implications; identify specific needs and specify suggested future directions for this ministry; determine possible strategies and means for their implementation; disseminate information concerning catechetical experiments and innovations; and provide consultative assistance, especially with regional or provincial groups, undertaking those activities that cannot be done at the provincial, diocesan, or congregational level.

Seminaries also have responsibility to provide an intellectual resource, a "mind" for the Church as well as a means to equip future leaders for their catechetical ministry, and to prepare lay catechetical leaders, especially for congregations. To fulfill this mandate, every seminary will need to seriously consider having a faculty member, trained in theology, who specializes in catechetics from a theoretical and research perspective. Further, seminaries will need to consider degree programs and other ways to train leaders in catechetics.

Provincial

There is much which might best be done on the regional or provincial level of the Episcopal Church. Because of different regional needs, provincial programs provide a unique opportunity for dioceses to work together toward common educational goals. Moreover, provincial networks in areas such as education, evangelism, or youth ministries, have played an important role in supporting diocesan programs, and at the same time informing program needs for the entire Episcopal Church.

Provincial network programs can provide opportunities in the way of idea sharing, conferences, events, and training for diocesan leaders. Through provincial structures, dioceses in a region can be empowered to work together on common concerns without having to "re-invent the wheel," each time a new need arises.

Every province, therefore, needs a group of carefully chosen persons from each diocese to advocate, coordinate, and assist in developing a quality catechetical ministry in the province. As such, these persons need to be in relationship with their own diocesan leadership, other provincial leaders, the staff at the Episcopal Church Center, and seminary faculty in the province.

Diocesan

The diocese is at the heart of who we are as Episcopalians. Each and every diocese, therefore, requires at least one person with responsibility for catechetical ministry. While the bishop is to be our chief catechist, in most cases he or she will need someone to facilitate, and be a resource for this essential ministry. The bishop should ensure that catechetical goals and priorities are established; that necessary structures for communication, program, and resources exist; and that appropriate programs are in place to support quality catechesis in congregations. The diocese may well require a catechetical committee, council, commission, or task force to aid both the bishop and the bishop's catechetical leader in planning, designing, evaluating, and executing this

1 ministry. Each diocese also needs to consider having a catechetical resource center to
2 aid congregations. The diocese also needs to provide means for the equipping of
3 catechists, along with vestry members and congregational catechetical committees, for
4 their responsibilities. These aids are particularly important as a service to our many
5 small congregations.

6 Dioceses also need to identify or provide residential conference centers and
7 retreat houses for the equipping of catechists and the offering of catechetical programs
8 to supplement those offered in congregations.

9 The diocese needs to authorize, encourage, and motivate teachers/catechists at
10 every level by visits, in-service training, newsletters, and diocesan institutes. The
11 diocese needs to propose alternative catechetical models adapted to the needs of
12 particular congregations and schools, supply guidelines for congregational organization
13 and programs, recommend catechetical curriculum resources, provide in-service
14 continuing education and formation for catechetical leaders and teacher/catechists,
15 provide planning models and consultation for the integration of catechesis in
16 congregations and schools, establish instruments for planning and evaluation, and keep
17 the diocese ever mindful of its catechetical ministry. Given that the majority of Episcopal
18 congregations are small, special attention will need to be given to resources that are
19 accessible to these congregations.

20 21 Congregations

22 Aware that the vestry has responsibility for the congregation's catechetical
23 ministry, each congregation needs to have at least one person on the vestry chosen by
24 the rector to be an advocate for this ministry. Further, this person should either chair, or
25 coordinate with the chair, a committee comprised of persons who have gifts of planning
26 and/or facilitating catechetical ministry. Larger congregations likely will have a director
27 or coordinator of catechetical ministry with appropriate training. Smaller congregations

1 can work together and combine their resources. Dioceses should consider providing
2 someone to aid them in their catechetical ministry. Rectors need to assume their
3 responsibility as the chief catechist in the congregation and as the person responsible
4 for its catechetical ministry. The rector is also responsible for choosing catechists and,
5 along with the congregation's catechetical coordinator, if there is one, equipping them
6 for their ministry.

7 Teachers/catechists, authorized by the rector and commissioned by the
8 congregation, need to be supported and nourished for their responsibility. This will
9 include continuing spiritual formation as well as instruction in Scripture, theology, ethics,
10 Church history, the social sciences, and catechetical theory and practice. It will also
11 mean providing them with supervision, as well as with material and personal support
12 and assistance.

13 The recovery of the early Church's catechumenate has found expression in
14 numerous adaptations of the catechumenal process when adults come for baptism or
15 reinvolvement in congregational life. That is, (1) an initial period of inquiry which focuses
16 on the inquirer's story, the congregation's story and the biblical story or drama of
17 redemption; (2) a period of formation in Christian faith and living; (3) an intensive period
18 of preparation for entering or reentering into the baptismal covenant;(4) after baptism, or
19 baptismal renewal, comes life-long learning for mission, that is, what it means to be fed
20 at Christ's table and to be Christ's person in the world. Rites in The Book of Occasional
21 Services mark the stages in this four-fold process. Such focused catechetical
22 opportunities will contribute to the renewal of the Church.

1 Sidebars for Chapt. 16:

2

3 This is the ministry of the church...to remember together the cry from the heart, to
4 confess together our woundedness and to voice our hopes in God's promise.

5 Ann Belford Ulanov in The Wisdom of the Psyche, Cowley, 1988.

6

7 Catechesis occurs within a community of faith where persons strive to be Christian
8 together.

9 John H. Westerhoff, III, in A Faithful Church: Issues in the History of Catechesis,
10 ed. by John H. Westerhoff, III and O.C. Edwards, Morehouse-Barlow, 1981.

11

12 During the first five centuries after Christ, group instruction involved inquirers
13 (catechumens) who studied and prayed for up to three years before admission to the
14 sacraments...Teaching took place through the interpretation of the Hebrew Scriptures,
15 through preaching, through passing on oral sayings, through making public confessions,
16 and through the daily ethical struggle to live as covenanted people...The biblical aim of
17 education was building up the community. Parents were responsible for teaching
18 children and adult education was not optional.

19 Fredrica Harris Thompsett in We Are Theologians, Cowley, 1989.

20

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22

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Appendix

24

Planning A Local Catechetical Ministry

25

26 Catechetical planning takes time and effort. It necessitates involving persons with
27 the ability to describe accurately and evaluate current reality and to imagine

1 alternatives. It requires persons with a clear understanding of the gospel and a
2 commitment to Christ and his Church. This planning guide is designed for use within a
3 local congregation because the congregation is central to the Church's catechetical
4 ministry. Home, school, and other agencies are supplemental. The guide can be
5 adapted for use with them.

6 It is recommended that the rector appoint a catechetical planning committee
7 comprised of those members of the congregation who have the gifts and graces
8 necessary for this important task. At least one member of the vestry, the rector, and any
9 catechetical staff may also serve.

10 Planning for a congregation's catechetical ministry involves the following
11 components:

1 A Community
2 of Christian Faith and Life

3
4 A clear understanding of A clear understanding of
5 catechesis as formation, PLAN the Church's mission and
6 education, and instruction a set of catechetical aims

7
8 An accurate understanding
9 of congregational context

10
11
12 Called to Teach and Learn has addressed each of these components. Those engaged
13 in congregational evaluation and planning need to review the pertinent chapters and
14 then proceed with the following guide (plan to use a notebook that you can keep for
15 future reference):

16
17 **Mission and Catechetical Aims**

18
19 1. State clearly in your own words your understanding of the Church's mission and its
20 catechetical aims (see Chapter One).

21
22 2. Examine carefully the life of your congregation, and identify as honestly as possible
23 your congregation's functional understanding of its mission and catechetical aims.

24
25 3. Describe what your congregation will look like when it is more faithfully expressing
26 and manifesting its stated mission and catechetical aims.

1 **A Community of Christian Faith and Life**

2 (See Chapters Three and Five.)

3 Liturgical Life

4 1. Describe your congregation's liturgical life and who participates in it.

5

6 2. How well do you believe it expresses and supports your stated understanding of the
7 Church's mission and its catechetical aims?

8

9 3. Describe what your liturgical life might look like if it more faithfully expressed and
10 supported your stated understanding of the Church's mission and its catechetical aims.

11

12 Anglican Ethos

13 1. Describe in your own words your understanding of the Anglican ethos or character.

14

15 2. Reflect on your congregation's life, and express as clearly as possible your people's
16 understanding of Anglican ethos or character.

17

18 3. What will you need to do to make your congregation's ethos or character more in line
19 with the Anglican understanding of the Episcopal Church?

20

21 Community of Faith

22 1. State as clearly as possible your understanding of a community of faith.

23

24 2. Describe the nature and character of life in your congregation.

25

26 3. Describe what you will need to do if your congregation is to be more like a community
27 of faith than an institutional church.

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Congregational Context

Historical Context

1. Explore the following:
✂ Beginning with the date of your congregation's birth and continuing to the present, create a time line of your congregation's remembered events and experiences.

✂ Reflect on this time line and list insights.

✂ Explore these insights and list possible implications for being more faithful in the future.

2. Explore the following:

✂ Draw a picture or write impressions of life in our day.

✂ Reflect on your impressions and list insights for your catechetical ministry.

✂ Explore these insights and list possible implications for formation, education, and instruction.

Social Context

1. Describe the following:

✂ How does the size of your congregation influence its life?

✂ How does the fact that your congregation is growing, stable, or declining affect its life?

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✂ What are the ages, social status (single, married, etc.), and special needs of your members? How does your congregation reflect racial, ethnic, or cultural diversity? Does your congregation reflect the demographic realities of your community?

✂ What are the occupations, incomes, and levels of formal education of your members?

✂ What is the nature and character of your members' daily lives? And what are their needs?

2. Reflect on these descriptions of your congregation's social context:

✂ Observe how your catechetical ministry relates and does not relate.

✂ Consider these observations and list insights.

✂ Explore these insights and list possible implications for formation, education, and instruction.

Cultural Context

1. Describe the following:

✂ The region of the country in which your congregation is located and specifically how this is manifested in the lives of your people and in the life of the congregation.

✂ The nature of the town, city, and community in which your congregation is located and specifically how this is manifested in the lives of your people and in the life of the congregation.

1 ✂ The ethnic character of your congregation and specifically how this is manifested in
2 the lives of your people and in the life of the congregation.

3

4 ✂ The racial make-up of your congregation and specifically how this is manifested in
5 the lives of your people and in the life of your congregation.

6

7 2. Reflect on your description of your cultural context:

8 ✂ Observe how your congregational ministry is related or not related to your cultural
9 context.

10

11 ✂ Consider these observations and lists insights for your catechetical ministry.

12

13 ✂ Explore these insights and lists implications for formation, education, and instruction.

14

15 Congregational Personality

16 1. Describe your congregation's personality:

17 ✂ Draw pictures or representations of your congregation's personality.

18

19 ✂ Compare and discuss your drawings and complete the following sentence: Our
20 congregation is like _.

21

22 2. Reflect on your personality:

23 ✂ Observe how your personality is or is not related to your congregation's personality.

24

25 ✂ Consider your observations and list possible implications for your catechetical
26 ministry.

27

1 ✂ Explore these insights and list possible implications for formation, education and
2 instruction.

3

4 Congregational Resources

5 1. Describe your congregation's resources and limitations:

6 ✂ Draw a diagram of existing space and its use. Then name existing assets and
7 liabilities.

8

9 ✂ Make a list of economic resources (money available); available personnel (people
10 with the knowledge, skill, and will to teach); and teaching or learning resources (media,
11 curricula, etc.). Then name existing assets and liabilities.

12

13 ✂ Make a list of all other resources and limitations that are available to and confront
14 your congregation.

15

16 2. Reflect on your resources and limitations:

17 ✂ Examine your catechetical ministry and how it is related or unrelated to your
18 resources.

19

20 ✂ Consider your observations and record insights for your catechetical ministry.

21

22 ✂ Explore these insights and list possible implications for formation, education, and
23 instruction.

24

25 **Catechesis**

26 (See Chapters Two and Four.)

27 Formation

1 Describe your present efforts at formation in each of the following areas and with each
2 of the following groups of persons; include those with special needs:

3 Children Youth Adults*

- 4 Liturgical
- 5 Ethical
- 6 Spiritual
- 7 Pastoral
- 8 Ecumenical

9

10 Education

11 Describe your present efforts at education:

12 Children Youth Adults

- 13 Liturgical
- 14 Ethical
- 15 Spiritual
- 16 Pastoral
- 17 Ecumenical

18

19 Instruction

20 Describe your present efforts in instruction:

21

22 Children Youth Adults

- 23 Liturgical
- 24 Ethical
- 25 Spiritual
- 26 Pastoral
- 27 Ecumenical

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* Note: When looking at adult catechesis, be sure to identify your congregation's specific response to young adults as well as middle and older adults.

Review and Evaluate Findings

(See Chapters 6 through 11 and the first sections of this planning instrument.)

Evaluate the faithfulness of your present efforts as listed above in relation to your understanding of the Church's mission and catechetical aims; the nature and character of a community of faith; and your particular congregational context. Note in the grid below aspects of your catechetical ministry which need to continue unchanged, those in which some change is needed, and those which need radical reform. Note areas which have not yet been addressed.

Plans for Our Catechetical Ministry

Formation

Describe what you intend to do in the following areas of formation with the following groups:

	Children	Youth	Adults
--	----------	-------	--------

Liturgical			
------------	--	--	--

Ethical			
---------	--	--	--

Spiritual			
-----------	--	--	--

Pastoral			
----------	--	--	--

Ecumenical			
------------	--	--	--

Education

Describe what you intend to do in the following areas in terms of education with each of

1 the following groups:

2 Children Youth Adults

3 Liturgical

4 Ethical

5 Spiritual

6 Pastoral

7 Ecumenical

8

9 Instruction

10 Describe what you intend to do in each of the following areas in terms of instruction with
11 each of the following groups:

12 Children Youth Adults

13 Liturgical

14 Ethical

15 Spiritual

16 Pastoral

17 Ecumenical

18

19 **Final Planning**

20 Having stated your intentions, you now need to devise a plan to accomplish them
21 and assign responsibility to those who will administrate them. Make sure that your plans
22 are approved by the vestry and communicated to the congregation. Hold your catechists
23 accountable. Each year repeat the process.

24 Reflecting on every aspect of your congregational life, what do you believe you
25 need to do in formation, education, and instruction if you are to be faithful in the
26 fashioning of Christians?

27

1 Envisioning and Planning

2 If you have a school, you need to engage in a process similar to that of the
3 congregation. Once you are sure what you intend to do, and how you intend to
4 accomplish these intentions, you should set out to secure printed and other resources.
5 Make sure that your plans are communicated to, and owned by, the vestry and the
6 congregation. Hold catechists and others accountable to these plans. Each year repeat
7 this process.

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