

CEC E-Newsletter

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Happy New Year: A Catechist's Resolutions

Happy New Year! It's hard to believe it's 2011! Of course, the Catholic New Year began with Advent; but our focus then is usually preparing for Christmas. So, now that things are getting back to "normal", we can really focus on this great opportunity for a fresh start.

One tradition I've always liked about New Years is the idea of making resolutions. We often focus on diet/exercise, giving up bad habits or taking on good works. I'd like to offer some ideas for catechists. Here are my top ten!

10. Clean out your supplies and organize them (throw out dry markers, garbage that has been collected, etc. and spend a little time being sure you have everything you need

to teach in the places that are convenient for you).

9. Go through your calendar. Be sure you have time to finish your chapters, and include special/planned activities.

8. Re-commit time to making your lesson plans. Often this falls by the wayside with experience and time-constraints. Your lessons will be better if you take time to plan and re-assess recycled lessons.

7. Focus your time for ministry. It is very easy to let your ministry take over your time! Be sure you use your time well, and be sure to make time for your family, work and rest.

6. Consider your students and their needs. Every student learns differently and has

different gifts; are you allowing every student to shine in your class? While you're at it, offer prayers of thanksgiving for your students, and ask God to help you teach them.

5. Meet with other catechists and share ideas. They have a wealth of information, and provide a great support network.

4. Make time for rest. It's never easy, but always good!

3. Take a class and/or learn more about your faith. You will teach what you learn.

2. Make a little retreat, and receive the Sacrament of Penance. There's no better "new beginning"!

1. Spend time before the Blessed Sacrament in prayer. God nurtures your ministry.

Suggested Websites:

Novus Ordo Mass Parts

<http://www.ncbuscc.org/romanmissal/samples-people.shtml>

Arlington Elementary

Religious Education

Guidelines

http://www.arlingtondiocese.org/documents/cat_religiouscurriculum.pdf

Arlinton Secondary Religious Education Guidelines:

http://www.arlingtondiocese.org/documents/cat_hs_religion.pdf

Upcoming On Site Training Opportunities

During the Spring Semester, Colette Lienhard will be teaching EDUC 602: The Catechetical Tradition on Saturday mornings (10:00 a.m.-noon) at Christendom Graduate School (Alexandria, VA). This three credit Education course provides students with an appreciation of catechesis through

the lens of Church History. The same course content is offered online through the Catholic Education Center, LLC, in CAT202-204 (The Teaching Church, Parts 1-3) and participants who have taken CAT202-204 may "upgrade" this coursework for academic credit. For information, call: 703-658-4304.

To book on site training at your parish or school, call Colette Lienhard at the Catholic Education Center, LLC at 703-785-2319 or book online at: www.catholiceducationcenter.com

No Ordinary Activities for Ordinary Time!

Ordinary time focuses on the life of the Church. It is a time to nurture grace in the daily routines of the people of God. If every day were your birthday, not only would you be old but your birthday wouldn't seem special, anymore. We all need "ordinary time" to catch our breath, settle in and enjoy our daily lives and grow!

Many teachers struggle with "what to do" during ordinary time. It's easy to find activities for Advent/Christmas, Lent/Easter—but ordinary time doesn't need to be ordinary! Here are some ideas!

Teach the new translation of the Novus Ordo Mass.

The life of the Church leads to and flows from the liturgy. Catechesis must prepare people to participate in the liturgy. The new translation of the Novus Ordo Mass begins Advent 2011—which will be here before you know it!

Many frequently asked questions are answered here: <http://www.nccbuscc.org/romanmissal/faqs2.shtml>.

If you haven't already begun teaching this to your students, take time to review the translation of the Mass at this website: <http://www.nccbuscc.org/romanmissal/order-of-mass.pdf>.

The people parts are found: <http://www.nccbuscc.org/romanmissal/samples-people.shtml> and they are presented in a chart form comparing the present and new texts. These could be made into flash cards, posters, and review games.

Teaching the new translation provides a great opportunity to review various min-

istries, liturgical colors, vestments, vessels, linens, liturgical spaces and even gestures. You can also use this time to teach the extraordinary form of the Mass (a quick google search provides great resources and videos).

Teach the Virtues.

The daily life of the Catholic should give witness to the virtues. Every year we are to teach specific virtues by grade. The diocesan Religious Education Guidelines (see page 1 for web links to guidelines) outline which virtues are to be taught in each grade.

Virtues are a habit of doing good. They are like muscles that need to be exercised. At first, they may be challenging, then they may become easier. Ultimately, we should love the virtue and hate the opposing vice. There are plenty of opportunities to practice virtue in the classroom, but students should also be encouraged to live the virtues in the world around them. Students could create virtue journals—writing about living and seeing others live the virtues, create stories about the virtues, research the saints who exemplified various virtues or create games that test knowledge on the virtues (and suggest age-appropriate ways to live the virtues).

Teach the Saints.

The Saints are a tremendous witness to living the Faith. They lived the Faith with heroic virtue and for many students, they can see the same challenges they face daily. Consider St. Therese and her "little way" to perfection, or St. Joseph and his silent wit-

ness in living family life. There are many Saints—some less well known, who can teach us a great deal about living the Faith. Have the students teach each other about the Saints, with reports/presentations, and dramatizations. The occasional video can also be a good teaching tool. Many Saints wrote prayers, you could have your students create prayer books (with devotions to the saints, pictures, prayers, etc.) and learn/memorize prayers that are age-appropriate. Teaching the Saints allows students to see their own potential for holiness.

Commit yourself to further training.

The Arlington Diocese has catechist certification guidelines (<http://www.arlingtondiocese.org/religious/documents/guideline.pdf>). These guidelines outline what the Diocese recommends for every catechist regarding their formation. There are many catechist training opportunities, including online opportunities. Catholic School teachers that teach religion must attain certification, and many of these opportunities can also be used towards maintaining teacher certification (VA and VCEA).

Parish Catechists are encouraged to obtain certification. This is a rewarding commitment for catechists—and training provides tools for the classroom.

If you haven't taken a course lately, or have put off taking another—consider taking one now (be sure to check out the coupons/discounts offered by the Catholic Education Center, LLC in this newsletter!)

Online Courses:

CAT101:

Catholic Education: What Every Teacher Needs to Know

CAT102:

The Creed

CAT103:

The Sacraments

CAT104:

The Moral Life

CAT105:

The Life of Prayer

CAT201:

The General Directory for Catechesis

CAT202:

The Teaching Church (Part 1)

CAT203:

The Teaching Church (Part 2)

CAT204:

The Teaching Church (Part 3)

CAT205:

Tools for Teachers

Watch for new courses soon!

New Year's Savings on Catechist Training from the Catholic Education Center, LLC! (Our Gift to You!)

Would you like an online course taught on site for your catechists?

Save 1/3 on the On Site Speaker's Stipend* if booked during January/February 2011.

(*For details, contact the Catholic Education Center, LLC: 703-785-2319 or catholiceducationcenter@yahoo.com)

Did you start a course, but never finish? Don't worry, we've saved your grades/records.

Re-register to complete your course(s) for only \$25.00/course * during January/February 2011.

(*Attach this coupon to your registration form, ma not be used with other discounts/coupons. No need for Principal/DRE signature).

Register for any online course during January/February 2011 and save \$10.00*.

(*Limit one coupon per course., may not be used with other discounts/coupons. Attach this coupon to your registration form.)

Refer a friend who has never taken an online course through the Catholic Education Center, LLC. If you send a new registrant our way, we will email you a \$10.00 coupon* good for 2011. Have your friend indicate you referred them on their registration form.

(*Limit one coupon per course, may not be used with other discounts/coupons.)

