

# CEC E-Newsletter

Catholic Education Center, llc

November—December 2011

[www.catholiceducationcenter.com](http://www.catholiceducationcenter.com)



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## *The New Mass Translation has begun!*

It seems like we have been preparing for so long, and finally, with the beginning of Advent, we can rejoice in the implementation of the New Translation of the Mass. This is a wonderful time for catechesis!

In our pews, we find cards with the New Mass parts, provided by our Bishop—what a pastoral gesture to invite us to all actively participate in the Mass. Perhaps you could use these during your religion class to practice the new translation, and even make children's missals that your students can take to Mass in order to better follow along.

Here is a web-link to the text of the Mass:

<http://www.old.usccb.org/romanmissal/resources.shtml>

If you would like to rehearse the new Mass settings, you can find links and downloads at:

<http://www.wordonfire.org/WOF-TV/Commentaries-New/Fr-Barron-comments-on-the-new-translation-of-the.aspx>

There are still many who have questions about why the Mass has been re-translated. I have found a wonderful resource you might also enjoy:

<http://www.wordonfire.org/WOF-TV/Commentaries-New/Fr-Barron-comments-on-the-new-translation-of-the.aspx>

It is truly an exciting time for the Church. Here are some ideas to make the most of your catechetical time:

- Invite a priest to visit your class and discuss the changes
- Rehearse the new Mass parts (and make a Missal)
- Learn the new Mass settings
- Discuss the text, be sure the students understand the language used
- Create opportunities for your students to ask questions and state their observations about the new Mass. Help them to become comfortable with the new translation.

## Suggested Websites

Advent Activities:

[http://www.catholicmom.com/advent\\_kids.htm](http://www.catholicmom.com/advent_kids.htm)

Christmas Activities:

<http://www.silk.net/ReIEd/christmas.htm>

Advent Prayers:

<http://www.catholic.org/prayers/prayer.php?s=57>

Vatican Museum:

[http://mv.vatican.va/3\\_EN/pages/MV\\_Visite.html](http://mv.vatican.va/3_EN/pages/MV_Visite.html)

## *Upcoming On Site Training Opportunities*

CAT101: Catholic Education: What Every Teacher Needs to Know will be offered on January 7 and 21 from 9:00-3:00 at Angelus Academy.

CAT102: The Creed will be offered on March 3 and 10 from 7:00-1:00 at St. Mary of Sorrows.

Details and registration forms for these on site courses are available on our website:

<http://www.catholiceducationcenter.com/UpcomingEvents.html>

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](http://www.catholiceducationcenter.com)

## Advent in the Classroom

It is not uncommon for teachers to be surprised that Advent is suddenly upon us. It seems like we had just begun the year, then it was Columbus day, Thanksgiving and all of a sudden it's Advent!

Advent is the beginning of the Church year, and is a penitential season. During Advent, we prepare for the coming of Christ—in His Nativity, at the Second Coming, and into our hearts.

There are a great number of Advent activities we can do to help us prepare for the coming of Christ. We can read the Old Testament stories and prophecies that foreshadow Christ and make Jesse Tree ornaments, we can light candles on a Advent wreath, or open "doors" on an Advent Calendar and say the suggested

prayers. Younger children can do good deeds to earn "straws" to cushion Baby Jesus' mangers or become Advent Angels focusing on charity. There are so many things we can do!

It is not uncommon to "interrupt" our curriculum (or at least rearrange the chapters in our texts) so that we can spend time on Advent. I recommend looking at your textbook and calendar to ensure you can cover all the content; perhaps you will only be able to spend portions of each class during Advent on this liturgical season.

During the Advent season there are some wonderful feasts that are worthy of instruction and celebration. The Feast of St. Nicholas is on December 6

(often celebrated with the filling of shoes or stockings with treats—consider holy cards or medals). This is a great opportunity to discuss the relationship between St. Nicholas and Santa Claus—and the generosity of Christ. December 8 is the Feast of Mary's Immaculate Conception (not to be confused with the Virginal Conception of Christ). This is a Holy Day of Obligation, and the patronal feast of the United States of America! On December 12, we celebrate the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe. In this beautiful image, Mary is with child, and under this title, she is entrusted with the Pro Life movement.

In the Suggested Websites section of this newsletter (page 1), we have provided some wonderful links for educators for Advent and Christmas. Enjoy!

## Earn Catechist Certification from the Catholic Education Center, LLC!



The Catholic Education Center, LLC, has begun offering catechist formation certificates through its online program. The basic certificate includes 60 hours of coursework:

- 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

The advanced certificates may be earned after the basic, and are 30 hours of coursework, and include the following areas of study:

The Teaching Tradition of the Church (CAT202-204)

Being developed for Fall 2012 are certificates in:

- Scripture
- Methods
- Ecclesiology
- Morals

... please check our website for details!

## Four NEW online courses to learn about the Faith!

The Catholic Education Center, LLC, specializes in online catechist formation courses, which allow teachers and catechists to learn more about the Faith and obtain hours for Catechist Certification in various dioceses.

It is important for teachers of the Faith to continue their formation; finding opportunities, however, can be difficult. Finding conferences and talks to attend may be as simple as looking in your parish bulletin but it is usually much more difficult to find the time! Teachers and volunteers are busy! In addition, finding child care or worrying about parking add to the challenge. Online education really is a great way to learn from the comfort of your home at a time and speed that is convenient for you!

Many worry that taking an online course requires advanced experience with computers. The Catholic Education Center, LLC, has recently changed online classrooms to a more user-friendly format. A pictorial user's manual has been created to guide beginners through the online classroom (from how to get on to the internet to getting into the classroom, to all the various features of the site). We are also available Monday-Friday 9:30-5:30 to assist registrant—either by telephone or email.

Online courses have a great deal of flexibility. "Lectures" are read, and quizzes immediately review and assess the participant's knowledge of the course material. Forums (message boards) allow teachers to share their Faith and classroom ideas—this is a great way to see what other teachers are doing and expand your teaching methods and lessons.

**In addition to the courses we have offered in the past, the Catholic Education Center LLC, now offers four new 200-level courses. Each course has ten classes and should take about ten hours to complete.**

In **CAT210: Teaching Methods and Learning Styles**, Susan Doyle, M.Ed., highlights what is unique to Catholic Education, provides practical applications for effective classroom management, including teaching strategies, community building-ideas, suggested teaching resources, assessment tools and answer common "trouble-shooting" questions. This is an excellent refresher for School Teachers and a wealth of information for Parish Catechists.

In **CAT220: An Introduction to the Bible**, Instructor Salvatore Ciresi, M.A. presents the fundamentals needed to read and study the Sacred Scriptures with "the mind" of the Catholic Church. This course will be a basic, yet rich and substantial, examination of God's Word. Highly recommended for all Adult Faith Formation (including Catechists/Teachers).

In **CAT230: The Church**, Kenneth D. Whitehead, distinguished author, will present the Church as taught through the Catechism of the Catholic Church. This is a timely course as we approach the 50th anniversary of Vatican II!

In **CAT240: Catholic Medical Ethics**, [Patricia Maskell, M.A., B.S.N.](#), will present the Church's moral teaching on current pastoral and medical issues. This course is wonderful for any catechist that teaches adults, apologist, and every Catholic that wants to be informed or to be able to answer questions about these topics often in the media.

These new courses are taught by excellent instructors who truly are experts in their respective fields. We are pleased and honored to offer these courses, now available online, and on site!

**Treat yourself to an e-course for Christmas! Deepen your knowledge of the Faith and earn catechist certification hours at the same time.**

**To save \$15.00 on CAT210, print 15%210 on the top of your registration form.**

**To save \$15.00 on CAT220, print 15%220 on the top of your registration form.**

**To save \$15.00 on CAT230, print 15%230 on the top of your registration form.**

**To save \$15.00 on CAT240, print 15%240 on the top of your registration form.**

**Savings codes valid in December 2011 and January 2012 only. Savings may be used with other Catholic Education Center, LLC coupons. Savings may be used for online course registration only. One code per person per course only.**

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

CAT210: Teaching Methods and Learning Styles

CAT220: An Introduction to Scripture

CAT230: The Church

CAT240: Catholic Medical Ethics

## *Christmas is a Season!*

Teaching and celebrating Christmas in the classroom can be a real challenge. The Christmas break for most schools and religious education programs often means that classes don't actually meet during the Christmas Season. Many teachers compensate by teaching and celebrating Christmas during the last class before the break. Unfortunately, this often does not allow for adequate time for Advent—or for Christmas.

Christmas is more than December 25th, it is a season that begins with Christmas Vigil, and extends through Epiphany to the Baptism of our Lord (this year, Jan 9, 2011). During this time, we focus on the Nativity or our Lord, and marvel at His miraculous birth and self-gift.

Unfortunately, many children only see Christmas as a time of receiving. We are blessed to live in such a benevolent society. However, the message of Christmas in the media, and in the minds of many children, is that Santa Claus will come and bring great gifts. They seem to have it all figured out—that if you behave, or at least don't get caught, then you will be bestowed by gifts from Santa, made by his elves. My five year old niece summed it up quite well, saying, "I ask for small things for my birthday, and save the big things for Christmas, because Mom and Dad don't have to pay for them." Quite clever.

It's difficult to teach the joy of Christmas without addressing Santa, and the reality that for many children, Christmas is about what's under the tree. We've seen efforts made, with images of Santa kneeling at the manger of the Christ Child, or the story of St. Nicholas being told as the foundation for Santa Claus. In addition, we tend to celebrate in the classroom with a Christmas party of sorts, emphasizing the joy of Christmas, often with treats, sometimes with gifts.

My favorite Christmas celebrations include Nativity Plays. No matter how complex or who the stars are, Nativity plays are truly memorable, and are catechetical by their nature. I encourage you to read the Nativity accounts from the Bible (there are two: Matthew: 1:18-2:23, Luke 2:1-40), and have your students discuss them, make artistic renditions or act them out.

When teaching on Christmas, we can spend some time discussing the various traditions—like the Christmas Tree given to us by St. Bonaventure, the Nativity Scene, given to use by St. Francis of Assisi, the Candy Cane as a symbol for Jesus, and other great traditions—from cookies to feasts, to carols and plays, from gifts to charities.

When celebrating Christmas as a class, the temptation will be to celebrate before Christmas. Is it possible to celebrate during Christmas Season itself? Not only is this liturgically correct, but it gives the students something to look forward to when they return to class.

Christmas is a good time to thank God for our many blessings, including family and friends, the gifts we receive, and most especially for the gift of His Divine Son.

As a child, I remember learning the Christmas song, The Little Drummer Boy, who brought his talent as a gift to the Christ Child. Perhaps this year, you can challenge your students to use their talents and good behavior as a gift to Christ. Teach them the Morning Offering, to encourage them to offer their sacrifice of love to our Lord, in return for His great sacrifice of Love.

*O Jesus,  
through the Immaculate Heart of Mary,  
I offer You my prayers,  
works, joys and sufferings of this day  
for all the intentions  
of Your Sacred Heart,  
in union with  
the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass  
throughout the world,  
in reparation for my sins,  
for the intentions  
of all my relatives and friends  
and in particular  
for the intentions of the Holy Father.  
Amen.*

Christmas is a wonderful time to learn the greatness of giving, not just physical presents, but spiritual gifts, as well: prayers for those in need; sharing the Faith; giving love to our families; and love to God in return for the Love He has given us, especially in the Christ Child.

Have a Blessed Christmas  
and a Holy New Year  
From the Catholic Education  
Center, LLC

The Catholic Education Center, LLC will be closed from  
December 17, 2011-January 2, 2012



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