

ARCHDIOCESE OF DENVER
Office of Evangelization & Catechesis
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OUR MISSION

The Office of Evangelization & Catechesis provides support, training and resources to catechists, evangelists, pastors and directors of religious education in order to help them fulfill the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20) and teach the Catholic faith in complete fidelity to the *Magisterium* under the direction of the Archbishop.

RCIA workshop: the Catechumenate

Saturday, Nov. 19th - 8:00 to 12:00

Bonfils hall, John Paul II center

(1300 S. Steele St., Denver)

This workshop will focus on the **Rite of Acceptance and the third period of RCIA**. It's for anyone involved in RCIA, including team members, especially if they haven't had any instruction in RCIA lately. **Cost: \$15.**

Topics include:

- Understanding the difference between the baptized and unbaptized members of your RCIA group and how to handle them.
- How to do the Rite of Acceptance (for the unbaptized) and the Rite of Welcome (for the baptized).
- How to 'break open the Word' with your group.
- How to plan and implement a catechetical session, content and methods.

Presenters: Jere Allen, DRE, St. Thomas More, Centennial
Loretta Flom, Former DRE of Shrine of St. Anne
James Cavanagh, Director of Evangelization & Catechesis

Finest Wheat

A newsletter for the New Evangelization
November 2011

Inside:

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- Confirmation Guideline's Meeting: RCIA; the model for all catechesis
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Pope Benedict's prayer intentions for November 2011



General intention: "That the Eastern Catholic Churches and their venerable traditions may be known and esteemed as a spiritual treasure for the whole Church."

Missionary intention: "That the African continent may find strength in Christ to pursue justice and reconciliation as set forth by the second Synod of African Bishops."

*We encourage you to include these intentions
in the prayers of the faithful.*

Evangelization and the world of the Roman missal

James Cavanagh, Metro Area Director



The time has finally come. In a few short weeks we'll be celebrating Mass using the new translation of the Roman missal. I hope you're ready! A number of parishes have already started using the sung parts of the Mass with the new words as a way of easing people into the new missal. Over the last year and a half the liturgy office has provided numerous opportunities to acquaint people with the new missal, especially clergy and musicians. Since the Eucharist is the source and summit of the Christian life the advent of this new translation of the liturgy is an ideal opportunity for renewal. As Bishop Conley wrote recently, "Implementation of the new translation of the Roman Missal is an opportunity to once again take a fresh look at the liturgy and its central place in the life of the Church."

Here, I would like to focus on one aspect of the Mass that doesn't always receive the attention it deserves, and that's the evangelistic dimension. Think about it. If the whole point of evangelization is to introduce people to Jesus Christ, what better way to do that than to invite them to Mass where the Lord is present 'body, blood, soul and divinity'? Like Philip to Nathaniel we can say, "We have found him of whom Moses and the prophets wrote. . . . Come and see!"

But what exactly will they see, and hear, when they enter the church? Look at your church through the eyes of someone who's never been to a Catholic church before. What do you see? At my parish in Boulder, Sacred Heart of Jesus, a magnificent set of bronze doors greets you when you arrive. There are three sets of doors; six altogether. On each door is a bronze relief depicting six key moments in salvation history: the creation of man; the fall; the giving of the Law to Moses; the baptism of Jesus; the crucifixion and, finally, the resurrection. Over the years, the bronze doors had taken on a deep, dark brown patina due to oxidation, which rendered the reliefs barely visible. Recently the doors were restored and now shine with their original golden luster. Now, when people drive by they slow down and look. And what do they see? The entire gospel message in a single glance.

Doors are important. In speaking of the place where the liturgy is celebrated, the Catechism talks about the symbolic importance of the threshold. "The Church," it says, "has an eschatological significance. To enter into the house of God we must cross a threshold, which symbolizes passing from the world wounded by sin to the world of the new Life to which all men are called." [1186] When we pass through the doors of the church we enter a different world: a mysterious world where "the Church celebrates in the liturgy above all the Paschal mystery by which Christ accomplished the work of our salvation." [1067].

The invitation to pass through the door of the Church is an invitation to accept God's mercy. In his homily celebrating the opening of the Holy Door at the Basilica of St. John Lateran Christmas 1999 Pope John Paul II said, "We have entered through this Door, which represents Christ himself: in fact, he alone is the Savior, sent by God the Father, who enables us to pass from sin to grace, bringing us into the full communion which unites him to the Father in the Holy Spirit."

At Mass, we enter another world. Fr. Jeremy Driscoll, O.S.B., theological advisor for Vox Clara, the bishop's committee that worked on the translation of the missal, explained the task of the translator. He said the translator has to immerse himself in the world of the language he is trying to translate. Then he has to translate not just the words, but the imagery, tone and feeling of that world. "It's not a naked content that I'm translating," he says, "but a whole world of thought and feeling which are inextricably intertwined." Anyone who has tried to learn another language knows what he means. The Roman Catholic Mass is rooted in the Latin language and the world it represents. "With the Roman Missal," he goes on to say, "a whole world is being entered, and it is a different world from, or at least more than, my own mundane and everyday world. . . . Every piece of the liturgy, language included, builds up this mysterious world and reveals divine reality - realities in themselves not directly perceivable to the senses."

This helps explain why there is such a difference between the first translation and the new version. The first translation removes the differences between the ancient Latin-speaking world and our own modern English-speaking world. The new translation lets those differences speak. There's a good reason for this, apart from the obvious need to translate the original language as accurately as possible.

The world of the Roman missal is bigger and in so many ways a more mysterious world than our own. What struck the disciples was just how different, and mysterious, Jesus was: "What sort of man is this that even winds and sea obey him?" they said. (Mt. 8:27). Catholic churches should look, sound and even smell different. Churches that try to be "relevant" by embracing secular forms of music, for example, look like movie theaters or have clergy who dress like businessmen more often than not go out of business. As the old saying goes: "Marry the spirit of the age and you soon become a widow."

My point is that evangelization starts and ends with the liturgy because it's there that we encounter Christ. When one passes through the doors of your church, they should feel like they're entering another world, because they are. If the tone and feel of the Mass is indistinguishable from a Broadway musical, a cocktail

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lounge or a picnic; in other words, if the Mass feels no different than the secular world then what, or who exactly are we introducing people to when we say "come and see"?

Evangelization starts and ends with the liturgy because that's where we encounter Christ. That's not to say we can't encounter Christ in the world: in the poor and lonely, the sick and suffering. But we're only able to see him there because the eyes of our faith have been trained to see him at Mass. That's why the Missionaries of Charity begin their day with an hour of Eucharistic adoration.

RCIA: The model for all catechesis

In our next Confirmation Guideline's Meeting we'll focus on the particular recommendations as outlined in the draft of "Confirmation Guidelines." Your input is important, so please join us to discuss these proposals. Here is a portion of what we'll be discussing:

Evangelization. Candidates for Confirmation should be given a careful explanation of the Gospel and God's plan of salvation. Complete knowledge of the entire Bible is not necessary, but a thorough introduction to Sacred Scriptures is essential.

- Catechumenate. This period aims at training candidates in the Christian life. Catechesis on the moral life (how Catholics live) should be the focus of this period. This period should revolve around the Ten Commandments, which the candidates should be encouraged to memorize. Candidates for confirmation should also receive catechesis on the Sermon on the Mount and the virtues.
- Purification & Enlightenment. This is a time of "more intense spiritual preparation, consisting more in interior reflection than in catechetical instruction," (RCIA 139). This period should focus on prayer, specifically the Our Father, the Hail Mary and other common Catholic prayers. Catechesis on the spiritual life while leading the confirmandi to a deeper, personal relationship with the Lord should take precedence.
- Mystagogia. The fourth and final period focuses on the sacramental life, especially the Paschal Mystery. "During this time Candidates for Confirmation are introduced into a fuller and more effective understanding of the mysteries through the Gospel message they have learned." (RCIA, no. 245) Catechesis on the liturgy and sacraments should be the focus of this period with a special emphasis on Confirmation. Catechesis on the sacraments of healing, espe-

cially Reconciliation, and the sacraments of service, Marriage and Holy Orders, should also be emphasized.

1. A suitable catechesis for confirmation should follow the liturgical year and be based on the Scriptures. Teaching from the lectionary will lead candidates to a greater appreciation for the teachings of the Church and the mystery of salvation.
2. Catechesis on the Christian way of life is developed through love of neighbor, involvement in the Christian community and service to the wider community.
3. Candidates for Confirmation should be led to a greater understanding and appreciation of the importance of prayer and the Church's liturgical rites. This is done through active participation in the Mass followed by reflection on those experiences.
4. The mission of the Church is essentially apostolic. Therefore, candidates for Confirmation should learn how to work with others to spread the Gospel and build up the Church by the witness of their lives and by professing their faith.

DRE meeting - Confirmation guidelines

Thursday, December 1st

10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Bonfils Hall - John Paul II Center

(1300 S. Steele St., Denver)

Please RSVP at 303-715-3260 or at ursula.jimenez@archden.org

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