

**The Fargo Catechetical Institute**

**Presents**

***The Gift of the Catechism***

**Featuring by Dr. Petroc Willey**

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Birmingham, England*

**Study Guide**

*Recorded at Sts. Anne and Joachim Church  
Fargo, North Dakota*

**September 15, 2013**

*During the Year of Faith*



## Introduction

*Schedule each group session to be 2 hours long, which will allow for sufficient time for discussion. The length of each session on the DVD:*

*Part I: 52 minutes*

*Part III: 46 minutes*

*Part II: 48 minutes*

*Part IV: 44 minutes*

*Set up a DVD player and a television or a video projector. For each participant have a copy of the Catechism of the Catholic Church plus a copy of this Study Guide. Tip: have them write their name on the front cover, collect them after each session, and distribute them at the next session.*

*While this Study Guide is intended for catechists, it may be used by any interested parishioner.*

## Prelude (optional)

*Before beginning the first DVD presentation, spend about 5-10 minutes discussing the following questions. Answers will vary.*

1. Are you familiar with the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*? How much of it have you read? When do you use it?

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2. Do you know how to navigate inside the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (paragraph numbers, footnotes, cross references, indices, etc.)? Do you think of it as a reference work (like an encyclopedia or dictionary)?

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3. What are your initial thoughts on why someone would read the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*? Do you think it is meant to be read by everyone, by catechists or just by “specialists”?

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4. Consider your thoughts on what a gift is and what the word means. Do you consider the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* a gift intended personally for you? If so, how is it a gift?

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## Part I: The New Evangelization

*Discuss these questions following the DVD presentation.*

1. St. Bernard of Clairvaux says we should be like (*circle one*):

(a) the dead sea (b) a reservoir (c) a channel

Why should we be like this? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. What is the Good News (a one sentence summary)?

(*hint: see CCC 422*): \_\_\_\_\_

Why was it necessary for God to reveal this Good News?

(*hint: CCC 421*): \_\_\_\_\_

3. What is Evangelization?

Evangelization is \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What three stages of evangelization did Dr. Willey identify? Briefly describe them.

Stage 1: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Stage 2: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Stage 3: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. *Discuss how you can improve each of these three stages of evangelization in your life. What suggestions do you have for the parish to help you in these areas?*

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5. What does the phrase “economy of salvation” mean?

The “economy of salvation” is \_\_\_\_\_

How does God accomplish this? \_\_\_\_\_

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6. Who is the primary cause? (*hint: CCC 308*) \_\_\_\_\_

Who are secondary causes? \_\_\_\_\_

7. What are three ways we can deliberately enter into God’s providential plan? (*hint: CCC 307*)

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

8. Dr. Petroc shares an analogy of God and children in the kitchen. God’s plan includes small children and broken eggs to make (*circle one*):

(a) a cake (b) a banquet (c) an omelet

9. *Share a concrete example when you recognized God’s providential plan at work in your life or in the life of another person.*

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## Part II: The Deposit of Faith

Discuss these questions following the DVD presentation.

1.  True  False (*check one*): "This is the first time in the history of the Church that a catechism was written for the *whole* people of God."
2. Dr. Willey talked about his struggle with understanding how "Guarding the Deposit of Faith is the mission which is entrusted to the Church." How are we to understand guarding the Deposit of Faith as *our* mission?

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Discussion could include the following points:

- the *Catechism* is more than learning a list of stuff we have to know;
- we should not be afraid to tell others about it because we might make mistakes;
- every adult should study it and pray with it so they can hand it on.

3. Dr. Willey used the word "Christocentric".

"Christocentric" means \_\_\_\_\_

Why is Christocentricity so important when teaching the faith?

(*hint: CCC 427*) \_\_\_\_\_

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4. Briefly study paragraph 331. *Discuss how this paragraph in the Catechism of the Catholic Church treats angels in a Christocentric way.*

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5. The picture on the cover was chosen because it symbolizes what is contained in the *Catechism*. Describe each symbol and explain how it helps us understand what is inside the *Catechism*:

The Shepherd: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

The lamb: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

The tree: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

The fruit: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Branches grafted on the tree: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Shepherd's staff: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

The stump / chair: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

The panpipes: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### Part III: The Symphony of Truth

*Discuss these questions following the DVD presentation.*

1. Several universal catechisms were published, each with a unique style and intended audience. Match the terms on the left with its description on the right.

- |                                             |                                                                   |
|---------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ___ <i>Catechism of the Catholic Church</i> | A. a question and answer catechism for adults                     |
| ___ <i>Compendium of the Catechism</i>      | B. a question and answer catechism for young people               |
| ___ YOUCAT                                  | C. the universal catechism which the others condense and simplify |

2. The shepherd playing the panpipes makes us think of music and how we like to listen to it; its beauty attracts us. What does this image teach us about how to pass on the truths of the Faith?

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3. *Give an example of a time when you taught or explained a difficult truth by appealing to beauty. (For example, what was your tone of voice? What was your underlining attitude?)*

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4. Unless you understand the whole structure (the “symphony”), you will not know how all the small pieces fit together (the “notes” and “measures” of music). Complete the following titles of the main parts of the *Catechism* (if necessary, refer to the *Table of Contents*):

Part One: The \_\_\_\_\_ of the Faith

Part Two: \_\_\_\_\_ of the Christian \_\_\_\_\_

Part Three: \_\_\_\_\_ in Christ

Part Four: Christian \_\_\_\_\_

Remember, the four pillars of the *Catechism* are like the four parts of a symphony.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* is Christocentric: it always links us back to Jesus Christ. Jesus was sent by the Father in the power of the Holy Spirit to save us. God has visited His people (CCC 422)

5. What is *the central mystery* of the Faith, “the light that enlightens them”? (hint: CCC 234)

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6. What does the word “mystery” mean in this context? (check all that apply)

- a truth known by us with certainty
- something we have to work out and solve ourselves
- something only known to us because it was revealed by God

We enter into the mystery of the Trinity by acting in faith; the more we trust him, the more God reveals Himself.

7. *Give an example of a time when you entered into the mystery, that is, when you asked God and He responded to your need or problem by revealing Himself or His plan for you.*

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8. Jesus said, "I am the Son." What is the significance of Jesus revealing himself as "the Son"? (*hint: to whom does Jesus want to introduce us?*)

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9. The opening sections on the Church (CCC 748-769) show how the *Catechism* is not only Christocentric but also Trinitarian. Write one phrase about the Church which is rooted in our understanding of each person of the Trinity:

Jesus, the Son (*hint: CCC 748*): \_\_\_\_\_

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The Holy Spirit (*hint: CCC 749*): \_\_\_\_\_

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God the Father (*hint: CCC 759*): \_\_\_\_\_

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## Part IV: An Organic Synthesis

Discuss these questions following the DVD presentation.

1. Dr. Willey spoke on the "Aim and Intended Readership" of this Catechism (CCC 11). Why are we being told about the "sources" of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* in the "aim" of the *Catechism*?

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2. What are the *Catechism's* four principal sources? (*hint*: CCC 11)

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

3. What does it mean to say that the *Catechism* is an *organic synthesis* which should be seen as a unified whole (*hint*: CCC 18)?

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How does the structure of the *Catechism* help you to see the organic synthesis? (*hint*: what "navigational aid" helps you see the connections?)

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4. As Dr. Wiley demonstrates, the four Parts of the *Catechism* are interconnected, that is, the same threads are woven throughout. As you are directed to a different paragraph in the *Catechism*, you first identify what main Part you are in. Having a primary question in mind for each Part will quickly focus you to a deeper understanding of the topic you are investigating. Match each question on the right to the Part of the *Catechism*, listed on the left.

- |                                                  |                                                                                            |
|--------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ___ Part 1: Profession of Faith                  | A. How does this show me how to live in Christ?                                            |
| ___ Part 2: Celebration of the Christian Mystery | B. How does this help me know and understand God and my faith?                             |
| ___ Part 3: Life in Christ                       | C. How does this help me relate to God in prayer?                                          |
| ___ Part 4: Christian Prayer                     | D. How does this help me worship God and celebrate the mysteries of Christ and the Church? |

5. Dr. Willey said that the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* can help us pray. He gave the example of how to meditate on “the desire for God.”

Look up the following paragraphs and write some simple notes about something that strikes you. Spend a few minutes sharing and then pray about them (*see below*).

CCC 27 (is in Part \_\_\_): \_\_\_\_\_

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CCC 355 (is in Part \_\_\_): \_\_\_\_\_

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CCC 1434 (is in Part \_\_\_\_): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

CCC 1701 (is in Part \_\_\_\_): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

CCC 2764 (is in Part \_\_\_\_): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Prayer:** Invite everyone to pray in silence, considering how God is calling them to receive the gift of “*the desire for God*”. Remind them that they should not try to pray with all the material, but should stop and pray with just one paragraph or one sentence; they should remain with the text that moves their heart.

*Opening Prayer:* Make the Sign of the Cross, pray the “Our Father”, and ask God, “Lord, what do You want to reveal to me as I consider ‘*the desire for God*’? Where are You leading me?” (*Allow at least 10 minutes of silence to pray.*)

*Sharing (optional):* Spend a few minutes of the session sharing the fruit of the prayer. This is a time for reverence, a time to respect others as they reveal how God spoke to them. Conclude by thanking the Lord and praying a “Glory Be”.

**Take Home Exercise:** Examine paragraph 307, which addresses providence and secondary causes. Follow the cross references to the other sections of the *Catechism* and see how the Lord is leading you to receive the gift of the “economy of salvation”. Using the prayer method above (that is, being silent with the text for at least 10 minutes); see what it reveals about your personal vocation.