

The Fargo Catechetical Institute

Presents

The Gift of the Catechism

Featuring by Dr. Petroc Willey

*Acting Director of the Maryvale Institute
Birmingham, England*

Study Guide – Answer Key

*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?

Answers will vary

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)?

Answers will vary

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"?

Answers will vary

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?

Answers will vary

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? We should allow ourselves to be filled first and then it can spill over and we can share what we have received.

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

(hint: see CCC 422): God has visited his people; the Father sent Jesus

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

(hint: CCC 421): to overcome the power of sin and set us free

3. What is Evangelization?

Evangelization is proclaiming the whole of the Good News so that every single part of your life can be transformed by it; sharing the Good News.

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

Stage 1: initial proclamation of the faith and joyful witness to the faith

Stage 2: the "school of faith" = a systematic, comprehensive presentation of the faith; systematic catechesis = presentation of the Catechism.

Stage 3: ongoing formation & personal vocation - to be able to live God's specific plan for our lives (particular vocation); discovering the way we are called and gifted to share the Gospel.

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

Answers will vary. 1) share my personal testimony of how God has worked in my life; 2) spend time studying my faith so I can later give an account of my faith to others; 3) discern my personal vocation and ask the Holy Spirit to provide opportunities to share my faith.

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

The “economy of salvation” is God's plan

How does God accomplish this? through our cooperation

6. Who is the primary cause? (hint: CCC 308) God

Who are secondary causes? I am/we are

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

1. actions

2. prayers

3. sufferings

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.

Answers will vary

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?

Through Baptism, we are given our inheritance, the Deposit of Faith. It is our responsibility to nurture our faith, as well as to share it. By sharing it it multiplies (like the story of Petroc & his wife after they were married)

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 Christ-centered

Why is Christocentricity so important when teaching the faith?
(*hint: CCC 427*) Christ is the person we teach about and Christ is the one who teaches

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

Answers will vary. All truths of the faith flow from and return back to Jesus Christ. Some points: a) they are his angels; they belong to him; b) they were created through and for him; they are messengers of his plan; c) they have been present since creation, helping accomplish his plan; d) we are under their protection from the beginning to the end of our life; e) they belong to us because they belong to Christ and we belong to Christ

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: *Jesus Christ is the Good Shepherd, he is in the center; he alone is the One who teaches*

The lamb: *us; we are the flock, sitting at the feet of Jesus listening to Him, under his authority. We have a Shepherd whom we try to obey.*

The tree: *1. the Tree of Life from the Garden of Eden; 2. the Cross of Calvary, tree of life of Jn 10:10, "I came to lay down my life for my sheep"*

The fruit: *fruit of redemption; through the redemption of Christ we are fruitful in the Holy Spirit*

Branches grafted on the tree: *we, Christians, have been grafted on to the "stump of Jesse" (Israel, the Chosen People), the tree of life*

Shepherd's staff: *protection; Christ guards us and keeps us safe from danger; through the authority of Christ we are kept safe from all evil.*

The stump / chair: *the teaching authority of Christ; in the scriptures, sitting down signifies authority to teach the truths of the faith. "Jesus sat down and taught them" = this is authoritative revelation from the divine person, teaching his people; see CCC 427*

The panpipes: *the melodious symphony of faith; music that attracts and delights the sheep. This is the key to the Catechism.*

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.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <u>C</u> <i>Catechism of the Catholic Church</i> | A. a question and answer catechism for adults |
| <u>A</u> <i>Compendium of the Catechism</i> | B. a question and answer catechism for young people |
| <u>B</u> 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?

We must try to show the faith as beautiful, attractive and joy-filled.

These truths must be reflected in our tone of voice, attitude, personal

conviction, and so on. People are more convinced by witnesses than by

the truth alone. We've got to learn it, love it and live it.

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?)

Answers will vary

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 Profession of the Faith

Part Two: Celebration of the Christian Mystery

Part Three: Life in Christ

Part Four: Christian Prayer

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)

The Most Holy Trinity, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit

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.

Answers will vary

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?*)

We are compelled to ask, "Whose son are you?" He is the Son of God.

Jesus wants to introduce us to God the Father, so that we will have

a relationship with Him. Jesus is the revelation of the Father.

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*): *understanding the Church depends on our understanding of Jesus*

The Holy Spirit (*hint: CCC 749*): *the Church is made holy by the Holy Spirit*

God the Father (*hint: CCC 759*): *the Church is the Father's plan born in the Father's heart*

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*?

When we explain the faith, the Church wants us to lead people to the living sources of the faith; we should teach from these sources and be very familiar with them.

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

1. *Sacred Scriptures*

2. *the Fathers of the Church*

3. *the Sacred Liturgy*

4. *the Church Magisterium*

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)?

it should be seen as a unified whole because it is alive; organic = living
The Faith is alive, a living organism and must not be fragmented. When we treat the faith as fragments (inorganic), we kill it.

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

the italicized numbers in the margin are cross-references which connect the different parts together so that it's alive/organic; they are connected to one another because they are born from the same source, the Trinity.

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.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <u>B</u> Part 1: Profession of Faith | A. How does this show me how to live in Christ? |
| <u>D</u> Part 2: Celebration of the Christian Mystery | B. How does this help me know and understand God and my faith? |
| <u>A</u> Part 3: Life in Christ | C. How does this help me relate to God in prayer? |
| <u>C</u> 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*).

Answers will vary. Following is a summary of each paragraph.

CCC 27 (is in Part 1): Part 1 of the Catechism helps me to know and understand the desire for God. The desire for God is written in my heart because he created me. God is always drawing me to himself. Only in God will I find truth and happiness. God alone satisfies me.

CCC 355 (is in Part 1): I was created in the image of God. I have great dignity. I belong to God; his image is in me. I can know and love and give myself to God; this should be my desire.

CCC 1434 (is in Part 2): Part 2 helps me to celebrate and worship the mysteries of God. Penance draws me closer to Jesus, part of the process of conversion, part of my desire for God. CCC 1432: God must give me a new

heart. Conversion is first of all a work of God's grace. Fasting, prayer and almsgiving are three forms of expressing penance.

CCC 1701 (is in Part 3): Part 3 shows me how to live in Christ. How did Christ live the desire for God in his heart? As Christ reveals the Father's love, he restores in me his image and likeness; he allows me to see myself as I am in him. I was created in the image of God; I have a Father! I am a child loved by the Father. I am called to live with my Father in his house.

CCC 2764 (is in Part 4): Part 4 teaches me how to pray in Christ. How should I pray according to the desire for God in my heart? The Holy Spirit helps adjust my desires, gives new form to my desires. Jesus teaches me to ask for new desires by my prayer. Jesus, let my desire be your desire. Like the Sermon on the Mount and the Our Father, I ask for the grace to desire your Kingdom, your Kingdom come!

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.