

**MNS 271 – Pastoral Catechetics**  
**Sacred Heart Major Seminary**  
**Fall Semester – 2009**

**Instructor:** Dr. Carol Jadach

Phone: Work – 313-237-5956

Home – 586-997-9895

Email: [Jadach.carol@aod.org](mailto:Jadach.carol@aod.org)

Weather Hotline: 313-883-8780

**Class Schedule:** Tuesday, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

**Course Description:**

This course is an introduction to and exploration of the catechetical principles stated in *The General Directory for Catechesis* and *The National Directory for Catechesis*. Catechesis is that form of Ministry of the Word, which is intended to make people's faith living, active and conscious through the light of instruction. Since catechesis is directed to the baptized, it is lifelong and calls for conversion and is oriented to adults as well as to children.

Classes will focus on the process of catechesis and its applications to pastoral ministry in general.

**Required Texts:**

Mongoven, Anne Marie. *The Prophetic Spirit of Catechesis*. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2000.

White, Joseph. *Catechist's Companion to the National Directory for Catechesis*. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor, 2005.

Various assigned articles

**Objectives:**

At the conclusion of the term, the fully participative learner will:

1. be familiar with the major catechetical documents
2. understand the process of catechesis
3. have tools for evaluating catechetical experiences
4. be able to articulate the role of catechesis within the Catholic tradition and practice
5. be able to apply formal knowledge to pastoral experiences of catechesis
6. To...(name your own desired outcome)

**Course Requirements:**

**1. Expectations**

Students are expected to be on time for and attend all class sessions unless excused by the instructor. It is the student's responsibility to obtain materials distributed during class in the event of an unavoidable absence.

Students should also come to class prepared to discuss the assigned reading.

Completed assignments are to be handed in on the date due. Late assignments may be subjected to a lower grade. All assignments – oral and written as described in the syllabus – are to reflect quality college level work.

Written papers are to be typed, double-spaced, free from spelling and grammatical errors, and presented in a clear and concise manner with appropriate bibliography.

Recording devices may be used in class only with the permission of the instructor. Personal computers may be used in class provided others in the class agree to their use.

Plagiarism will never be tolerated. Please refer to the SHMS Bulletin, pages 21-22, for a definition of plagiarism and its consequences.

## 2. Assignments

### A. Weekly reading assignments:

Assigned and elective readings as noted on the syllabus. Written responses to the reflection questions posed for each reading assignment are due on the prep date.

### B. Papers:

#### Due on dates noted below:

Two-three page essay that answers each of the following questions. Each essay should include material from class, assigned readings, the perspective of the student, and one catechetical example.

- **November 17** – What is conversion?
- **November 24** – What is faith?
- **December 8** – Ten Commandments of Catechesis

Written reports on two articles – See Study Sheet for Reporting Critical Reading

**DUE: October 6 and October 27**

### C. Critical reflection on pastoral practice:

#### Due December 1 and December 8:

Students will work collaboratively to assess a parish-based catechetical program according to the principles set forth in the *NDC #6IA* and material used in class. The results of this assessment are to be presented in class (not to exceed 25 minutes). Students will provide a written outline of their presentation. (See Study Sheet #2)

## 3. Grading

Please refer to the SHMS Bulletin, pages 25-26, for a description of the work required for each grade which will be based on:

- 30% Attendance, Reading Assignments, Class Participation
- 10% Articles
- 30% Essays
- 30% Critical Reflection

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**Tentative Weekly Schedule**

**September 8, 2009**

CLASS #1 CONTENT:

Overview of syllabus  
Introduction to material  
Terms  
Introduction to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*  
Current dominant forms of catechesis

**September 15, 2009**

PREPARATION FOR CLASS:

Read Mongoven, pp. 13-35

How would you define a catechist? Your response should be based on the material in Chapter One.

Read Mongoven, pp. 271-283

You have been asked to participate in a program to help catechists deepen their identity as a catechetical minister. Name five points from this chapter that you would include in your work.

CLASS #2 CONTENT:

Continuation of last week  
Historical overview of catechesis  
Catechesis in the U.S.

**September 22, 2009**

PREPARATION FOR CLASS:

Read “Holistic, Inclusive, Comprehensive Catechesis: The GDC Revisited”. *The Living Light* (Summer, 1998), 66-74.

Read Marthaler, Berard. “Measuring Success in Catechetical Programs”. *America*, October 2, 1999.

Read Mongoven, pp. 36-63. What has this chapter told you about catechesis in the U.S.?

CLASS #3 CONTENT:

Introduction to the major catechetical documents  
*General Directory for Catechesis*  
Major contributions to catechesis

**September 29, 2009**

PREPARATION FOR CLASS:

Read *Catechist's Companion*, pp. 2-3.

Prepare response to reflection questions.

Mongoven, pp. 64-86

CLASS #4 CONTENT:

*National Directory for Catechesis*

Catechesis and evangelization

**October 6, 2009**

PREPARATION FOR CLASS:

*Article #1 due – cf. Study Sheet for Reporting Critical Reading*

Read *Catechist's Companion*, pp. 4-7

Prepare response to reflection questions.

CLASS #5 CONTENT:

International Study Weeks

Four signs of catechesis

Discussion of assigned articles

**October 13, 2009**

PREPARATION FOR CLASS:

Mongoven, 87-116.

Groups assigned for: Mongoven, Natural Signs 146-175

Ecclesial Signs 205-235

Biblical Signs 176-204

Liturgical Signs 237-270

What new insight was gained from reading this section?

What are the pastoral implications of these signs for catechesis in a parish?

CLASS #6 CONTENT:

Continuation of last week

Discussion of reading

**October 20, 2009**

PREPARATION FOR CLASS:

Read: O'Malley, Wm. "Plow Before You Plant", *America* (September 16, 2000), 15-18.

CLASS #7 CONTENT:

The process of conversion

Liturgy and catechesis

Work on plan

**October 21, 2009**

**What Does an Adult Catholic Look Like?**

**October 27, 2009**

PREPARATION FOR CLASS:

*Article #2 due – cf. Study Sheet for Reporting Critical Reading*

Read: Groome, Thomas. "An Overview of Shared Christian Praxis". PACE 22  
(November, 1992), 3-5.

CLASS #8 CONTENT:

Principles of adult catechesis and methodology

**November 3, 2009**

PREPARATION FOR CLASS:

Read *Catechist's Companion*, pp. 8-10

Prepare response to reflection questions.

CLASS #9 CONTENT:

Groome's shared Christian praxis

The signs of catechesis and their application to a catechetical plan

Group work on plan; writing the objective

**November 10, 2009**

PREPARATION FOR CLASS:

Read *Catechist's Companion*, pp. 12-13 (yellow section)

Prepare response to reflection questions.

CLASS #10 CONTENT:

Conversion: justice and peace

Work on plan

**November 17, 2009**

PREPARATION FOR CLASS:

*Due: What is conversion?*

CLASS #11 CONTENT:

What is a catechist?

Faith development

Human development

Work on plan

**November 24, 2009**

PREPARATION FOR CLASS:

*Due: What is Faith?*

CLASS #12 CONTENT:

Faith and faith development continued

**December 1, 2009**

PREPARATION FOR CLASS:

Group Projects

CLASS #13 CONTENT:

Presentations

Pastoral Practice

**December 8, 2009**

PREPARATION FOR CLASS:

*Due: The Ten Commandments of Catechesis*

Group projects

CLASS #14 CONTENT:

Presentations

Pastoral Practice

**December 15, 2009 – FINAL EXAMS**

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### **Helpful Websites:**

*Catholic News Service* ([www.catholicnews.com](http://www.catholicnews.com)) Includes a link to *Origins*.

*National Conference for Catechetical Leaders* ([www.nccl.org](http://www.nccl.org))

*National Pastoral Life Center* ([www.nplc.org](http://www.nplc.org))

*United States Conference of Catholic Bishops* ([www.nccbuscc.org](http://www.nccbuscc.org))

*The Vatican* ([www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va))

### **Periodicals of Catechetical Interest**

*Catechumenate*

*Church* \*

*Religion Teacher's Journal* \*

*Living Light* (no longer published but can be accessed via archives)

*Ministry and Liturgy*

*PACE* \* (no longer published, but back issues available)

*Religious Education*

*The Catechist* \*

\*More practice oriented