

CELEBRATING OUR CATECHISTS



Photo by Dave Hernandez
Annamarie Stolfo helps fifth-graders William Lynn, left, and David Fulton with a religious education lesson Sept. 13 in Saint Joachim Parish, Bellmawr.

A SUPPLEMENT TO THE CATHOLIC STAR HERALD

SEPTEMBER 16, 2022

Witnesses to faith called to vocation

“Catechesis is not a ‘job’ or a task that is external to the person who is a catechist; because one ‘is’ a catechist, and all of life revolves around this mission. In fact, ‘being’ a catechist is a vocation of service to the Church.”

Such were the words of Pope Francis during the first International Catechetical Symposium in 2017, a reminder that not only have catechists responded to a vocation from the Lord, but those around them have a duty to support these evangelizers who are “fearlessly open to the working of the Holy Spirit.”

On Catechetical Sunday, which falls on Sept. 18 this year, the faithful men and women who serve in religious education will be recognized during Masses across South Jersey. Their ministries are as diverse as they themselves – whether teaching youth or adult parish programs and in Catholic grammar and high schools, or administrating such programs.

Religious education ‘like learning a language,’ teacher says

For Lori ScottoDiVetta, anyone can be a catechist – from someone in a position like hers teaching religious education to even children who participate in such programs.

“Children will repeat many of the teachings they learned in religious education classes when they go home,” said ScottoDiVetta, director of religious edu-

cation in Saint Mary of Mount Carmel Parish, Hammonton. “Parents will see and hear their children wanting to say grace before meals, re-telling the parable of Jesus the Good Shepherd, or saying their prayers before they go to bed. It is through these actions that their children are actually serving as the catechist to their family.”

ScottoDiVetta, who has served in her position for eight years, has also been a teacher for more than two decades, working with students from kindergarten through eighth grade. This year, her parish will be implementing a new program called the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd for children ages three through six.

“I tell all my families that religious education is like learning a language,” she said. “The more you hear and practice it, the more you will understand and learn it.”

She explained, “I compare it to the language of God’s love. The best way to learn the language of God’s love is for families to bring their children to Mass, become actively involved within our parish and continue to register their children every year for religious education classes.”

Her parish includes large Italian and Latino populations, and this diversity has enriched the religious education experience for children, she said.

“We implement both of their cultures, customs and celebrations throughout the liturgical year,” she said. “This gives the children in our program the opportuni-

ty to participate and celebrate in religious traditional events to which their family is accustomed.”

~ By David Karas, correspondent

For adults, a heart for social justice

When it comes to religious education, putting liturgy into practice is a “big focus” for adult parishioners.

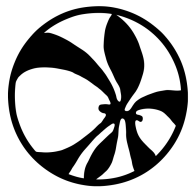
“They are very service-minded. Many, overall, are interested in adult studies, catechist certification and social justice,” said Cathy Johnson, pastoral associate for lifelong faith formation in Cherry Hill’s Catholic Community of Christ Our Light. “They want to put their faith into action and not just check a box.”

That being the case, Johnson, who is also director of adult faith formation, said that several years ago, staff researched areas of catechesis with an eye toward the adult community – worship, music and lifelong faith formation – and conceived a program divided along adult and elementary lines for those of all ages.

The parish’s religious education program reflects the concept that catechesis should not just be limited to the sacraments, but rather, it should be a lifelong mission. For example, adult educational opportunities include marriage and baptismal preparation; Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults classes, retreats and guest speakers, and faith-sharing groups.

(continued on page S3)

May the wisdom of Christ the Teacher be imparted on all of our Catechists as they help our youth to know God, love God, and receive eternal life through God.



*Catholic Church of St. Mary
2001 Springdale Road
Cherry Hill, NJ 08003*

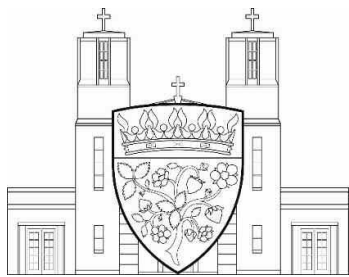
St. Simon Stock Parish
A ROMAN CATHOLIC COMMUNITY



Our prayers and gratitude are extended to our Religious Education Leaders.

May God bless all our students and teachers during this school year.

Berlin



**With Heartfelt Thanks & Appreciation to
Mrs. Mary Anne Serra & The Catechists
at All Saints, Millville**

*Blessings and Prayers for
Another Faith-filled Year!*



Saint Teresa of Calcutta Parish
Collingswood - Haddon Township

*With gratitude to our
Director of Faith Formation,
Dr. Patricia Lipperini, and to our Catechists
who continue to pass on our faith
to the next generation.*



St. Charles Borromeo Parish
congratulates and thanks

MRS. MARY ANN EXLER

and all of our Religious Education Staff, Catechists and Aides for their exemplary, loving, and enthusiastic service to the children, youth and families of our Catholic faith community!



**The Parish of
St. Katharine Drexel**

Honoring

CRE Jean Wickham

RCIT Coordinator Millet LoCasale

RCIA Coordinator Mary Reynolds

All of our faithful Catechists

and

Members of our

Life-Long Faith Formation Ministry

Religious education tailored to all ages

(continued from page S1)

“We have about 75 folks who help run the programs. In terms of generations, we have a broad range, most 40 and above and a young adult group. It’s a broad experience,” said Johnson, who holds a doctorate of ministry and two masters degrees – one in religious studies and a second as a spiritual director in pastoral care.

~ By Lois Rogers, correspondent

Sharing one’s personal faith keeps teens engaged

When it comes to teaching youth about the Catholic faith, Diane Crowell, who chairs the Religion Department in Camden Catholic High School, readily admits that “keeping teenagers engaged isn’t easy.”

But, she is quick to add, “If we make it comfortable to talk about our faith life in the classroom without being judged by others, it works.”

A recent example of that strategy was found on the Cherry Hill high school’s Facebook page, which outlined plans for a senior religion class to focus on what it means to be “living for the common good, and living as more caring, compassionate Catholics and world citizens.” The students were then asked to journal about the advice they would like to share about that topic with fellow students.

“Having the students commit to listening to each other and never judging is key,” said Crowell, a 1978 alumna of Camden Catholic and longtime faculty member who has served as a teacher and administrator over the years including as the dean of International Students.

She encourages fellow religion teachers to reveal their own faith, which “makes [students] feel comfortable and gives them the opportunity to strengthen their own.”

Among the many blessings of Catholic education, she said, is that it “reinforces faith by the constant focus on the teachings and life of Jesus.

“When our teachers are teaching math and science,



Courtesy photo

Diane Crowell, a longtime religion faculty member at Camden Catholic High School, Cherry Hill, says when teachers are open about their spiritual life, teens tend to follow suit.

it is always God-centered. Our students know that God is our creator, and that is reinforced in everything we learn. Our teachers also demonstrate their own Christianity in all they do in class. Math, science and faith do not work against each other,” she said. “They are complimentary.

“We pray together, we worship together and we learn together.”

~ By Lois Rogers, correspondent

New CRE aims to expand family participation

As the new coordinator of religious education in

Saint Vincent de Paul Parish, Mays Landing, Yolanda Stanley is looking to keep families front and center in the life of the community of about 2,100 members.

Stanley, a parish catechist for 15 years who sees her fluency in Spanish as adding to these “teachable moments,” said it’s her goal to involve children and their parents in “every aspect of the year with intergenerational programs” that bring the whole community together.

Stanley and her husband, Jonathan, have two children, Christina and John. She said they benefited from a family-focused approach and believes their early involvement in parish life played a role in keeping them active church-goers as they grew up.

“They became altar servers,” she said. “Our daughter married in the Catholic Church, her two children are baptized and her daughter is a student in Saint Vincent de Paul Regional School.”

To unite parents and children with the Church throughout the year, she said she’s following the lead set by her predecessor, Kathy Mattson, whom she called an “inspiration and a wonderful guide.”

Stanley envisions activities such as distributing “passports” at the beginning of the school year. She hopes this will inspire children to act as catechists themselves by encouraging their parents to take them to Mass each weekend and having their passports stamped.

“I want to involve the parents because they are the children’s first teachers and as such, I want to put a little responsibility on them,” she said. “Children can’t get to church without their parents.”

~ By Lois Rogers, correspondent



YOLANDA STANLEY



A Catechist’s Prayer

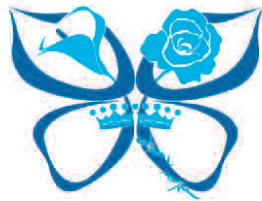
CATECHETICAL SUNDAY 2022

A Catechist’s Prayer

Loving Father, pour forth your Holy Spirit upon me that I may be a good catechist of your Word, your Son, Jesus Christ.

Render my mind and heart so open, receptive and responsive to your Holy Spirit that, like Mary, I might become a living instrument of your Word to others. Help me to be a faithful witness to Gospel life so that your Church may become ever more alive.

Let the fire of your love so enkindle my heart that I may be an instrument of drawing others to love of you in the Church of your Son.



In thanksgiving for

Mrs. Agnes Bross, PREP Director

& the catechists of Saint Maximilian Kolbe Parish;

Start children off on the way they should go,
and even when they are old they will not turn from it.

~Proverbs 22:6

Heavenly Father, we thank you for the gift of our coordinators, catechists and volunteers in our parish religious education program.
We lift them up to You in their hopes and needs as they teach the joy of the Gospel to our parish family.

THE PARISH OF THE HOLY CROSS



LA PARROQUIA DE LA SANTA CRUZ

Padre Celestial, te damos las gracias por el don de nuestros coordinadores, catequistas y voluntarios en nuestro programa parroquial de educación religiosa. Los elevamos hacia Ti en sus esperanzas y necesidades mientras ellos enseñan la alegría del Evangelio a nuestra familia parroquial.

AMEN

*"I received from the Lord
what I also handed on to you."*



THANK YOU, CATECHISTS,
FOR HELPING PARENTS AND GUARDIANS
PASS ON THE FAITH INTO THE HEARTS
AND MINDS OF OUR CHILDREN.

*From Father William Kelly, Staff and
Parishioners of St. Brendan the Navigator Parish*

Avalon ~ Stone Harbor

We Are Grateful

To our Catechists who share who Jesus is
through teaching and by their faith example.
This happens in our Faith Formation Program at
Saints Peter and Paul Parish and
through the teachers at
Our Lady of Hope Regional School.

Remember: Parents, Guardians, Grandparents, Siblings,
Godparents, Confirmation Sponsors Are Always Called
To Share Their Faith In Jesus With Those Who Are In
Their Care! They are Catechists Too!

Saints Peter & Paul Parish

362 Ganttown Road
Turnersville, NJ 08012

Array of catechetical instruction offered across Diocese

By Christina Leslie
Correspondent

Though all have been made in God's own image, catechesis is not one-size-fits-all. The Diocese of Camden and its faith-filled parishes offer instruction and resources to families, those with special needs, and tactile-centered education to assure God's message of love is clearly understood by all his children – from youngster to adult.

'Good Shepherd' leads children

Ten years ago, when James Hemschoot first learned about a program of religious instruction known as the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, "I thought, 'Eureka, this is it! This is the secret sauce,'" he said.

Hemschoot, who serves Gibbsboro's Saint Andrew the Apostle Parish as pastoral associate for lifelong faith formation, realized the Montessori-based instruction "is a Biblical, sacramental and liturgical approach that makes so much sense," and one that could be adapted to accommodate the larger-sized classrooms his program attracted. The parish calls it mystagogical catechesis – a catechesis that initiates the faithful into the mystery of Christ.

In a program adhering to the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd guidelines, an atrium is filled with child-size shelves filled with items commonly found in a church, which the children are encouraged to explore. Conversations with guides on Scripture and liturgy might lead one child to mimic the celebration of Mass, while another might use the figures of Jesus and the sheep to bring the parable of the Good Shepherd to life. Colored vestments for the different seasons of the Church year add to the explanation of the cycle of Jesus' Birth, ministry, Death and Resurrection in a tactile way.

This mystagogical catechesis allows for larger class sizes and a portable cart to serve as an atrium due to parish space constraints. In addition, the parish promotes apprenticeship teaching and a teacher page to give depth to the lessons.

"We don't even mention sin with first- and second-graders," Hemschoot said. "Kids have relationships with God embedded within them. Our job is to help them recognize and verbalize it. The child needs to hear about God's personal love and care for each one of them – 'The Good Shepherd knows his sheep by name and they know his voice.'"

Second-grade students are introduced to the notion that the sheep might stray from the shepherd, but



Photos by Dave Hernandez

Youngsters in religious education class at Gibbsboro's Saint Andrew the Apostle Parish eagerly raise their hands to ask questions of their teacher, Jackie Dougherty.



Dougherty uses figures of Jesus and the sheep to bring the celebration of Mass and the parable of the Good Shepherd to life.

love prompts him to go looking for them. Students in grades three and four learn how their faith "fit together" the books of the Bible, the order of Mass, the liturgical seasons and the sacraments; upper grades "continue with lessons that are more attuned to the reasoning mind, but are still focused on our relationship with God in God's plan," Hemschoot said.

Hemschoot, who has served as a catechist for 50 years – "I learn more every year," he asserted – noted the

program's many successes.

"All of our early grade teachers have been humbled by the profound understanding and acceptance by the children, and the learning and relationship are quite evident in the Confirmation interviews," he said. "These lessons are tried and true, deep but simple."

He chuckled as he recalled comments from a parent. "The mother said, 'I don't know what you are doing, but my kids come into the car on the way home and want to talk about it.'"

Hemschoot is an eager advocate of the program, inviting those interested to ask for his virtual lesson plan on First Holy Communion or even an in-person visit to further explain mystagogical catechesis.

He can be reached at JHemschoot@ChurchofSaintAndrew.org or 856-783-0550.

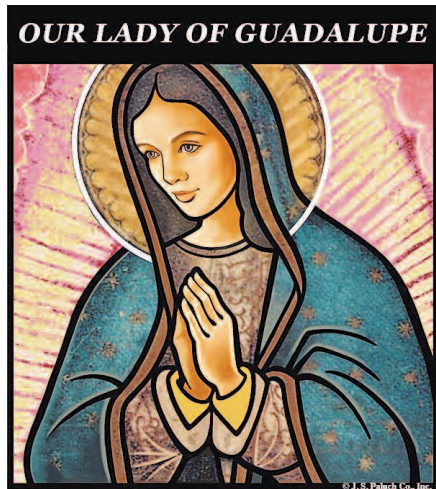
Special needs 'a custom fit'

In Vineland, a mother/daughter team of catechists conducts an adaptive faith formation program for children with specialized needs. The bi-weekly afternoon program is tailored for children younger than 17 who might not fit into the standard classroom model.

Cathy DiAntonio, sacraments coordinator for Christ the Good Shepherd Parish, and her mother, Lisa Pagden, a special-needs aide in the local school system, work one-on-one with students "to see what level of relationship with God we can recognize to thrive," explained Felicia Navarro Morris, director of lifelong faith formation for the Vineland Catholic Collaborative, which encompasses Vineland's three parishes: Christ the Good Shepherd, Divine Mercy and Saint Padre Pio.

Pre-COVID, the duo worked with about a dozen children from grades two through 10, some experiencing hearing loss, those exhibiting ambulatory challenges, still others non-verbal or with

(continued on page S8)

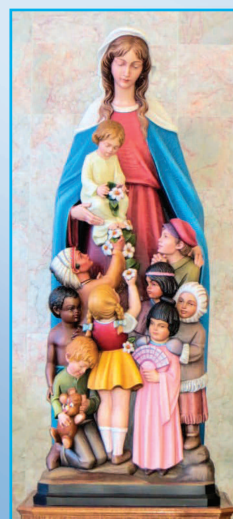


“This is my body given for you” (Luke 22:19).

Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish, Lindenwold, NJ are thankful for Helen Persing (Principal of St. JPII School), Gelen Hernandez (Spanish D.R.E.), Darcella Mercer-Wilson (English D.R.E.) and all of our teachers and parish catechists for their devotion to our School and Faith Formation Programs.

Thank you for all you do!

*Blessings from Fr. René Canales, Pastor
Clergy, Staff and Parishioners*



OUR GRATEFUL THANKS

to the volunteer Catechists and Mentors in our Youth Faith Formation Program . . . and to our Parish Staff for their leadership and support of our Catechists.

May the Lord continue to bless our efforts in this most necessary *Ministry of Faith and Love.*

MARY, MOTHER OF MERCY PARISH

The Churches of *Our Lady of Lourdes, Glassboro* and *Our Lady Queen of Peace, Pitman*



We are very proud and grateful to our Catechists who love, care and form our children in the faith and morals taught by Jesus Christ.

- Priests, Deacon, Sisters, Parish Staff & Parishioners of Infant Jesus Parish.

**St. Mary School • Vineland, NJ
Celebrates Our Catechists**



God bless our teacher catechists in your ministry of leading our students to Jesus

St. Mary School teachers

Take a hand,
Open a mind and
Touch a heart.



(856) 692-8537 X 324
www.smrschool.org
735 Union Road - Vineland, NJ 08360



**The parishioners and staff of
St. Andrew the Apostle**

Gibbsboro, NJ

express gratitude to

Jim Hemschoot, DRE

& all of our Parish Catechists.

**Thank you for making
a difference!**

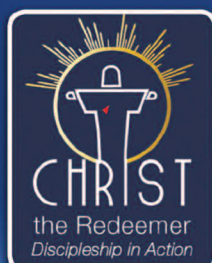
Honoring Our Ministries

Christ the Redeemer Parish recognizes its thirty-six Parish Ministries. The Ministry leaders and members are the backbone of the Parish.

We offer them our heartfelt thanks for the dedication and service they provide to the Parish.

May God continue to bless each one of you.

Father Wallace, Deacon Al LaMonaca,
Deacon Joe Janocha, Deacon Nick Ludovich
and all the Pastoral Staff.



**Christ the Redeemer
Catholic Parish**

Phone: (856) 767-0719

Fax: (856) 753-7917

www.ChristTheRedeemer.us

facebook.com/christtheredeemeratco



St. Mary Parish Gloucester City

May the Holy Spirit guide and direct all who
echo the Good News of Jesus
to the children of our parish and their families.

CATECHISTS FOR 2022-23 & YOUTH MINISTRY

Pastor: Rev. Fr. George C. Seiter

Director Religious Education: Elizabeth Mariani

Director Youth Ministry: Alaina Silber

1st Grade: Sophia O'Mara, Elizabeth Holzworth

2nd Grade, Communion Prep: Dawn DiLorenzo

3rd Grade: Rebecca Leonchuck

5th Grade: Bailey Heiney

6th Mike Murphy

7th & 8th Grade, Confirmation Prep:

Michelle Kidd, Dan Spencer, Sarah Murphy

Volunteers: Betsy Arey, Ava Conneaney, Michael Teti,

Emma Eddis

Thank you for saying Yes!

The Office of Catholic Education is grateful to all of the catechetical ministers serving in the parishes and schools throughout the Diocese of Camden. Thank you for accepting the sacred call to share the faith and be a witness to the Gospel.

We celebrate each and every catechist who inspires another step forward on the journey to a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ.

For those still considering a call to become a parish catechist, you are needed! Contact your local parish today!



Religious education programs tailored to needs

(continued from page S5)

learning delays. “Not all are able to fit into traditional classes,” Morris said.

“This is a custom fit. Some of these children already have a wonderful relationship with God; it is not our job to change or interfere with that.”

Morris shared anecdotal stories of children who might not be able to clearly discuss Christ, but who seem to recognize his place of love and forgiveness in their lives.

She said, “I am not a [check-off-the] box person; I am in the business of relationship and evangelization. The boy who recognized Christ and was able to draw him knows who Christ is in his life and where to find him. I hope when their families come to CCD, we encourage them by our actions to go to Mass and build up their desire to know God.”

Hands-on family faith

Also in Vineland are the Collaborative’s Family Catechetical Gatherings, which were designed for students in private or home-based schools who want to integrate their faith into their unique schedule. Families gathered one evening per month in one of the parish halls to have dinner together, explore a biblical or sacramental theme and complete an assignment. Then came COVID.

“Our book series had an at-home component, but after two weeks in, when parents were revealing the stress of the family staying home for school and work, we pivoted,” Morris said. Utilizing modern technology to introduce ancient Church teachings, Morris and her assistants brainstormed new topics with the intent to have families gather at the table without the pressure of a lesson plan.

“We planned a series of crafts with a religious theme and brought families back together with the tactile activities,” she said. “Most of the creativity came from Cathy DiAntonio and Lily Simpkins. They have been invaluable in creating these activities and lessons. I would come to them and say, ‘How can we ...’ and they would take to Pinterest and have at it.”

A system of socially distant supplies deliveries, use of QR code for directions, and the ingenuity of one of the parents and her son posting YouTube videos enabled the homebound families to make the monthly crafts. Morris made sure to schedule each craft to coincide with events in the Church year.

“We made magnets which read, ‘I always thought love was shaped like a heart, but love is actually a cross’ during Lent,” Morris recalled. “First Holy Communicants made their own wood-

en tabernacles, and kids made Paschal candles they later lit as their family prayed together or received their Sacraments.

“This helped to build up the Domestic Church,” Morris said. “It’s not just a craft project. We will do it again this year, but now [with the waning of COVID], families can gather together to do it.”

For more information on the numerous religious education initiatives underway through the Vineland Catholic Collaborative, visit vineland-catholic.org/services.

Diocesan resources abound

In its document “Guidelines from the Celebration of the Sacraments with Persons with Disabilities,” the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops wrote, “The Catholic Church wants all people of various abilities to feel welcome and to participate in the life of the Church. Catholics with disabilities have a right to actively participate in the Eucharist as full functioning members of the local Church.”

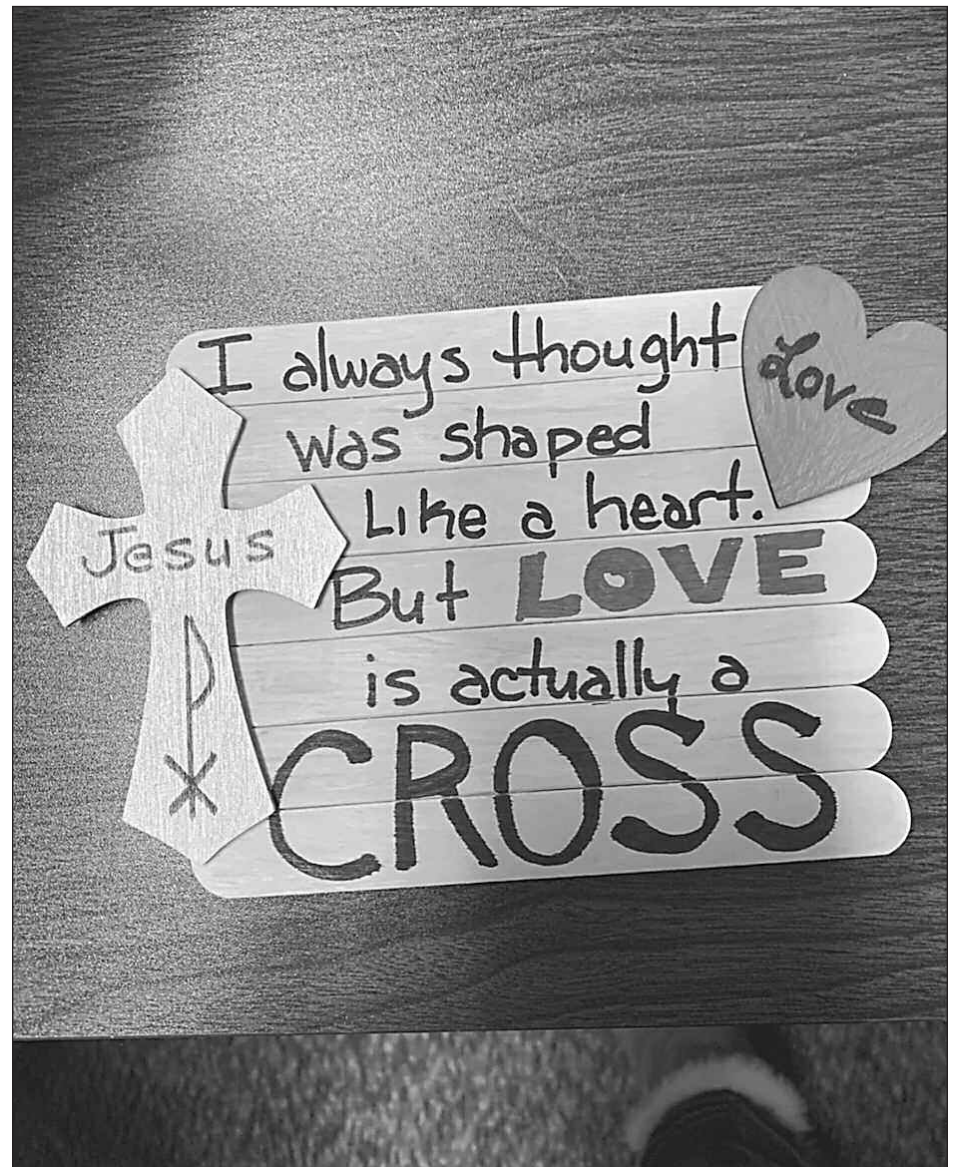
To aid parishes in the mission of catechesis, the Diocese of Camden offers many opportunities for the deaf or hard-of-hearing brethren to partake of the Holy Mass and Sacramental preparation via the VITALity Catholic Healthcare Services ministry.

Father Hugh Bradley, director of the diocesan Office of Ministry With the Deaf and Persons with Disabilities, has compiled a schedule of these Masses of Welcome and Inclusion, which are celebrated both in person and livestream. Opportunities for sacramental preparation are numerous; faithful might obtain assistance with Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Reconciliation and First Holy Communion) as well as visits to the sick, faith formation for children and adults, Pre-Cana classes, funeral preparation, pastoral counseling and spiritual direction.

“In Jesus’ ministry in proclaiming the Kingdom of God, he went to marginalized people. Therefore it’s the obligation of the Church to continue that mission, specifically to the deaf community, people with disabilities and their families,” Bradley said.

In addition, the ministry offers the deaf lector training, Cursillo, ASL classes, support for hearing parents of deaf children, and interpreting services for parishes. Links to outside agencies and social media focused on the deaf Catholics’ unique needs are also available.

For more information or to view a list of resources, visit vitality.camden-diocese.org/ministry-with-the-deaf/.



Courtesy photos

In Vineland, catechesis is a family affair, such as creating magnets together.



Among the many family catechetical activities initiated through the Vineland Catholic Collaborative: First Communicants making their own wooden tabernacles.

Religious ed, sacramental prep go hand in hand

By Peter G. Sánchez
Staff Writer

“This is my body given for you” (Luke 22:19), the theme of this year’s Catechetical Sunday, is a reminder of the profound and sacred influence catechists have in the religious education and sacramental preparation of the faithful.

Sacramental preparation is an element of religious education. “Religious education is the overall teaching of the faith,” explained Father Joseph Wallace, pastor of Atco’s Christ the Redeemer Parish. “Sacramental prep is a formational aspect, preparing one

and forming one to encounter Christ” in the sacraments, such as Baptism, Reconciliation, the Holy Eucharist and Confirmation.

While formal religious education takes place in parishes and Catholic schools, the immediate preparation for the sacraments is parish-based. As stated in the Confirmation Preparation Procedures for the Diocese of Camden, sacramental preparation is a “process distinct from and in addition to the ongoing catechesis which the parish/Catholic school provides. This preparation takes place in the parish and has a different focus from parish/school catechesis.”

“The preparation of our ... people

into the completion of the sacraments is the primary aspect, if not the central focus, of religious education,” Father Wallace said. “We are a sacramental Church. Our touching God, and him reaching us [is made possible] through the sacraments.”

Through the Holy Spirit, working in catechists, individuals are led to a “total understanding and spiritual formation for their readiness to receive him,” Father Wallace said.

It is this drawing closer to Christ in education and reception that is the crux of spiritual formation, said Sister Vilma Butron, FMIJ, director of religious education at Infant Jesus Parish, Woodbury Heights. “It’s not just about

knowing Jesus, but forming in our hearts how much he loves us, and that we should love him in return.”

As well, she added, the sacraments reveal the character of the Savior.

For example, she said, “The Sacrament of Reconciliation shows us the love and mercy of Jesus, while the Eucharist is his Real Presence.”

Similarly, Father Joseph Pham, pastor of Infant Jesus Parish, said the sacraments can serve as “channels for God’s grace” and lead to a greater understanding of the faith, the fruits of which are something he has witnessed firsthand. He said he has seen children

(continued on page S10)

Love for Christ leads to sharing faith in word and deed, pope says

By Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY – The first task of a catechist is to love the Lord and to live the faith in a way that makes others want to live it, too, Pope Francis told more than 1,400 people attending the International Congress on Catechesis.

“Catechesis” is not simply a weekly, hourlong religious education class, but is a sharing of a “living experience of faith,” the pope told the catechists, priests and bishops Sept. 10 at the closing session of the three-day meeting.

The congress was sponsored by the Dicastery for Evangelization and brought together national, diocesan and parish directors of catechesis from more than 50 countries.

Focusing on the third section of the Catechism of the Catholic Church, “Life in Christ,” the plenary sessions and study groups at the congress centered on “The catechist, witness of the new life in Christ” with a focus on forming the moral consciences of Catholics and helping them understand

the social obligations of faith in Christ.

Archbishop Rino Fisichella, who organized the congress, told Vatican News that just as the early Christians gave witness to the faith by forming communities, sharing what they had and caring for the poor, Christians today also must show the concrete implications of their faith, including by caring for the environment.

Pope Francis told the catechists, “You are required to make visible and tangible the person of Jesus Christ, who loves each one of you, and therefore becomes the rule of our life and the criterion of judgment for our moral action.”

“Never stray from this source of love, because it is the condition for being happy and full of joy, always and despite everything,” he told them. “This is the new life that sprung forth in us on the day of our baptism, and which we have the responsibility to share with everyone, so that it may grow in everyone and bear fruit.”

Every Christian, but especially catechists, priests and bishops, are called “to make the Gospel resonate in the heart of every person,” he said.



CNS photo/Vatican Media

Pope Francis accepts a gift showing Jesus, Mary and Joseph during an audience Sept. 10 with people attending the International Congress on Catechesis at the Vatican.

Sr. Maria Metzger, SSJ Dir. of Lifelong Formation
Michael Jenkins • Donna Wicker
Suzanne Jenkins • Tammy Boyle

We offer our prayers and gratitude for your faithful service in supporting parents in educating our parish children in the faith.

God Bless You

The parish community of Our Lady Star of the Sea, Cape May

*This is my body
given for you*
Luke 22:19

“Who are catechists? They are people who keep the memory of God alive; they keep it alive in themselves and they are able to revive it in others.” Pope Francis
Thank you to our Catechists!

St. Mary of Mount Carmel Parish | Hammonton, NJ
www.smmcp.net | www.facebook.com/smmcp

Los niños también pueden servir de catequistas a sus familias

Por David Karas
Corresponsal

Para Lori ScottoDiVetta, cualquiera puede ser catequista: desde alguien que ocupa un puesto como el suyo enseñando educación religiosa hasta incluso los niños que participan en esos programas.

“Los niños repetirán muchas de las enseñanzas que aprenden en las clases de educación religiosa cuando vayan a casa”, dijo ScottoDiVetta, directora de educación religiosa en la parroquia de

Santa María del Monte Carmelo, en Hammonton. “Los padres verán y escucharán a sus hijos querer dar las gracias antes de las comidas, volver a contar la parábola de Jesús el Buen Pastor o rezar sus oraciones antes de irse a la cama. Es a través de estas acciones que sus hijos están realmente sirviendo de catequistas a su familia.”

ScottoDiVetta, que lleva ocho años en su puesto, ha sido también profesora durante más de dos décadas, trabajando con alumnos desde el jardín de infancia hasta el octavo grado. Este año, su

parroquia implementará un nuevo programa llamado Catequesis del Buen Pastor para niños de tres a seis años.

“Les digo a todas mis familias que la educación religiosa es como aprender un idioma”, dijo. “Cuanto más lo escuchan y practiquen, más lo entenderán y aprenderán”.

Ella coninuó explicando: “Lo comparo con el lenguaje del amor de Dios. La mejor manera de aprender el idioma del amor de Dios es que las familias lleven a sus hijos a misa, se involucren activamente en nuestra parroquia y

sigan inscribiendo a sus hijos cada año en las clases de educación religiosa.”

Su parroquia cuenta con una gran población italiana y latina, y esta diversidad ha enriquecido la experiencia de la educación religiosa para los niños, dijo.

“Implementamos sus dos culturas, costumbres y celebraciones a lo largo del año litúrgico”, dijo. “Esto da a los niños de nuestro programa la oportunidad de participar y celebrar en eventos religiosos tradicionales a los que su familia está acostumbrada”.

Catholics everywhere can help others find Eucharist, priest says

(continued from page S9)

receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation and then have a greater desire to receive the Eucharist. This, in turn, further leads them to attend weekly Mass.

It is these transformed youngsters who then influence their parents to return to the pews, or even convert to the Catholic faith, he said. “I see seeds sown through the sacraments.”

Father René Canales, pastor of Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish Shrine,

“The sacraments create
ambassadors for Christ.”

Father René Canales

Lindenwold, agreed. “When people receive the gifts of the sacraments, they want to make it count. They want to keep learning.”

That learning, Father Wallace said, often changes one’s perspective on the world and leaves many wanting to

bring faith “to all aspects of our human experience.”

Catechists have a vital role in facilitating that learning and can draw inspiration from the Catechetical Sunday theme.

The Catechetical Sunday theme is a

perfect reflection of the goal of the three-year National Eucharistic Revival to educate the faithful on the Eucharist, Father Canales said.

“The Eucharistic celebration is ... the perfect prayer,” he said, even for himself. “Every time I celebrate Mass, I get renewed.”

He calls on Catholics everywhere to catechize and “to help others find the Eucharist.”

“The sacraments create ambassadors for Christ who know they have the power to transform the world,” he said.



Our Lady of Peace Parish
St. Mary Church
WILLIAMSTOWN, NJ

Our Lady of Peace Parish Religious Education Program

Once again it is time to continue our Religious Education Classes. I am looking forward to having so many of our dedicated Catechists returning and getting to know our new Catechists. We have had a very successful program during the past 2 years of Covid restrictions, because of our loyal and committed volunteers. We can't begin to thank them enough for their time and devotion to our students.

Loving Father, pour forth your Holy Spirit
Upon all of our Catechists and faithful
servants of your Word and Sacraments.
Amen

Notre Dame de la Mer Parish THE WILDWOODS

Extends Congratulations and Gratitude to
Our Parish Catechetical Leader
Donnamarie Black

And a special Thank you to her Teachers
Support Staff and Helpers.

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish

Assumption Church, Galloway

St. Nicholas Church, Egg Harbor City

Our Catechists

Thank you for your Faith, Dedication, and your Beautiful Spirit.

Terri Moncrief
Kathy Garcia
Deacon Frank Cerullo
MaryAnn Craft
Carol House
Mary Chialastri
Barbara Giovannieli
Erin Martin
Patricia Cunningham
Dolly Santiago
Nancy Mckeown-Brand
Mary Lou Crawley

Theresa Ortiz
Linda Connelly
Peter Martin
Denise Chavez
Diesly Becerra
Berta Reyes
Claudia Ortuno
Yolanda Lopez
Katiria Rodriguez
Angela Botero
Teresa Medina

Your Dedication and Care for the Grace of God Enriches and Builds Our Future.

La catequesis: Le Importa a éste

Por la Dr. Lee DelleMonache

Un niño está de pie en la playa, donde cientos de estrellas de mar han sido arrastradas por las olas y han quedado encalladas allí para morir. Está lanzando las estrellas de mar de nuevo al agua, una por una, para que cada una sobreviva. Un adulto le observa durante un minuto desde el paseo marítimo y le grita: “Es imposible que devuelvas todas esas estrellas de mar al agua. Podrías quedarte ahí toda la noche lanzando estrellas de mar, no importará”.

El niño mira a su alrededor, lanza otra estrella de mar al agua y dice: “¡Pues a esta sí le importa!”.

Esa conocida historia, atribuida al antropólogo y filósofo estadounidense Loren Eiseley, y su conmovedora frase final, “A éste le importa”, encierra la inspiración que sienten muchos de nuestros catequistas que



DR. LEE
DELLEMONACHE

serán reconocidos este domingo Catequético, 18 de septiembre. Cada año, este día es reservado por la Iglesia Católica para traer una mayor conciencia sobre el papel que cada persona juega, en virtud del bautismo, en la transmisión de la fe y ser un testigo del Evangelio. Se celebra a los catequistas de nuestras parroquias, incluyendo a los que atienden a los adultos, a los jóvenes, y a los maestros y personal de nuestras escuelas católicas por su contribución a la formación en la fe de las familias a las que sirven.

En estos primeros meses como Directora Diocesana de Educación Religiosa, he tenido el inmenso privilegio de pasar tiempo individual con muchos de los líderes Catequistas que sirven en nuestras parroquias. Aunque todavía tengo que visitar a muchos más, me he dado cuenta de que, a pesar de los enfoques individuales de sus ministerios, hay un hilo conductor que los conecta. Comienzo nuestro tiempo juntos preguntando: “¿Qué te atrajo y qué te mantiene en este ministerio?”.

De las respuestas que he recibido hasta ahora han surgido dos temas comunes: (1) Los catequistas están en este ministerio porque fueron invitados. Alguien con quien se encontraron les invitó a ser catequistas. (2) Permanecen en este ministerio porque se sienten inspirados cada vez, que lo que están compartiendo sobre nuestra

fe es importante para quien los escucha. “Le importa a éste...”

Uno por uno, cada catequista inspira algún aspecto de nuestra fe para que importe en nuestras vidas. Una vez que importa en nuestras vidas, nuestra relación con Cristo se profundiza. Como dijo el Papa San Juan Pablo II en su Exhortación Apostólica “Sobre la catequesis en nuestro tiempo”, “el objeto primario y esencial de la catequesis es ‘el misterio de Cristo’. ... Es buscar la comprensión del significado de las acciones y palabras de Cristo y de los signos obrados por Él, porque esconden y revelan simultáneamente su misterio”.

Los catequistas son compañeros que facilitan el encuentro con Jesucristo. Al modelar y compartir experiencias de fe, los catequistas llevan a otros a una experiencia más profunda de su fe. Mientras que algunos de nosotros hemos formalizado fun-

ciones de catequesis en nuestras parroquias o escuelas, TODOS estamos llamados, en virtud de nuestro bautismo, a catequizar. Compartimos igualmente la sagrada llamada a “caminar con” y acompañar a otros en el camino del descubrimiento mientras nos esforzamos por fortalecer nuestra propia relación con Jesucristo.

Una belleza particular se encuentra cuando ese misterio es recíproco.

Cuando los catequistas acompañan a otros, ellos a su vez son catequizados. A menudo, recuerdo los momentos en los que, en mi papel de esposa, padre o profesora, mi marido, mi hijo o mi alumno me catequizaron. ¡Qué ciclo tan hermoso e interminable de desarrollo y formación de la fe! Un ciclo que debería celebrarse, respetarse y fomentarse.

En este próximo Domingo Catequético, les invito a que acojan la maravillosa oportunidad no sólo de reconocer a los que tienen funciones formales de catequesis en nuestras parroquias y escuelas, sino también a considerar la oportunidad de reconocer el sagrado papel que usted tiene como catequista para hacer que la fe importe en las vidas de las personas que le importan.

La Dr. Lee DelleMonache es La Directora de Educación Religiosa de la Diócesis de Camden.



La oración de un catequista DOMINGO CATEQUÉTICO 2022

La oración de un catequista

Amado Padre, derrama tu Espíritu Santo sobre mí para que pueda ser buen catequista de tu Palabra, tu Hijo, Jesucristo.

Haga que mi mente y mi corazón sean tan abiertos, receptivos y receptivos a tu Espíritu Santo que, como María, podre convertirme en un instrumento vivo de tu Palabra para los demás. Ayúdame a ser un testigo fiel de la vida del Evangelio para que tu Iglesia pueda estar cada vez más viva.

Deja que el fuego de tu amor encienda mi corazón tanto que pueda ser un instrumento para atraer a otros a amarte en la Iglesia de tu Hijo.

Te lo pido a través de Cristo nuestro Señor.
Amén

St. Joseph the Worker Parish
 would like to offer a heartfelt "Thank you"
 to all of our new and returning Catechists.
 God bless you for serving our Lord
 and our community!

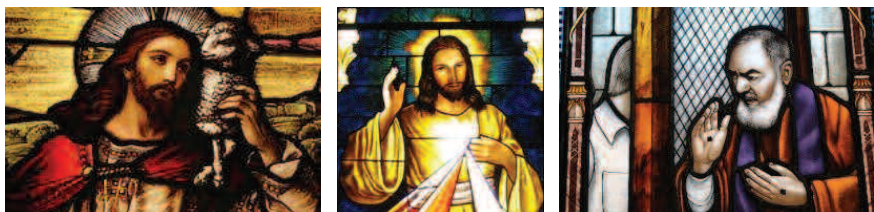
- Mrs. Pat Benesch
- Mrs. Jordan Brennan
- Mrs. Katherine Butler
- Ms. Lori Conley
- Mrs. Lynne Daly
- Ms. Suzanne Ficara
- Mrs. Jacqueline Gallagher
- Mrs. Ainsley Inglis
- Mrs. Cathie Lombardi
- Ms. Franny Marazzo
- Mr. Dave Thompson
- Mrs. Anita D'Imperio, Coordinator Religious Education
 Haddon Township & Oaklyn



Church of the Incarnation

240 Main Street
 Mantua, NJ 08051
 Parish Office: 856-468-1314
www.incarnation-church.org

The Incarnation
 Parish Family
 thanks all our
 PREP Catechists
 for their faithful dedication
 to our students.



Parishes of Christ the Good Shepherd, Divine Mercy & St. Padre Pio

VINELAND CATHOLIC COLLABORATIVE

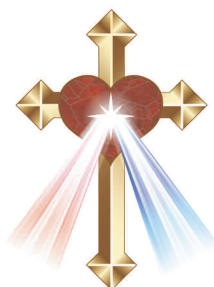
Life Long Faith Formation

741 Union Road, Vineland, NJ 08360 * 856-500-6566

“This is my body given for you” ~ Luke 22:19

We wish to thank the faculty of our Catholic schools and the staff and volunteers
 of our Catechetical programs for their dedication.

We ask the Lord to bless them as they share the Word with our parishes.



Divine Mercy Parish
 PARROQUIA DIVINA MISERICORDIA

