



Invest time each week to
expand your vocabulary and
deepen your faith.

15 September 2024

WORD OF THE WEEK

Catechesis \'ka-tə-'kē-səs\

From the Greek "to instruct orally," originally "to resound" or "echo." More than simply teaching religious concepts, **catechesis** involves instruction, ritual, and formation of conscience. At its heart, **catechesis** awakens and develops faith.

Pronunciation: <https://tinyurl.com/Take5-Catechesis>

CONTEXT

The goal of **catechesis** goes beyond the mere acquisition of knowledge to a living, conscious, and active faith.

—*Sharing the Light of Faith: The National Catechetical Directory*

The definitive aim of **catechesis** is to put people not only in touch but in communion, in intimacy, with Jesus Christ: only He can lead us to the love of the Father in the Spirit.

—*Pope John Paul II, Catechesi Tradendae*

WHY IT MATTERS

Far too often, **catechesis** is reduced to methods of memorization and recitation. This results in adult Catholics who know how to operate in church contexts but often lack a sense of Christian values to enrich and guide their lives. As Pope Francis explains: For catechists "the first proclamation must ring out over and over: 'Jesus Christ loves you; he gave his life to save you; and now he is living at your side every day to enlighten, strengthen and free you.'"

From *Evangelization and Catechesis: Are We Really Proclaiming the Gospel?* by Johannes Hofinger, S.J.: Our objective is not to make theologians of children, but to make them loving children of God who know what God has done for them and what they are expected to do in return."

RELATED WORDS

Catechist | Catechism | Evangelization

QUESTION OF THE WEEK

Catechesis, catechism: What's the difference?

Catechesis is the process of awakening a person to faith. While it involves teaching, textbooks aren't central to the process. It is reading God's word and entering into dialogue with it. Our lives literally become an echo of what we hear.

Catechetics is the theory behind **catechesis**. It uses age-appropriate and culturally sensitive methods of instruction so that faith formation is the result. Catechists must know church teaching but also grasp the context of their times and how the church is called to respond to them.

Catechism is formerly the way **catechesis**, or religious instruction, is accomplished. A catechism is a manual of instruction with a question-and-answer format. Catholic catechisms are structured on the Creed, Ten Commandments, and seven sacraments. The current Catechism of the Catholic Church wasn't created as a manual for classroom instruction, but to guide bishops in the formation of diocesan programming.

—*Alice Camille, from Questions Catholics Ask* <http://tinyurl.com/QCA-catechesis>

REFLECTION OF THE WEEK

CATECHETICAL SUNDAY (SEPTEMBER 15)

Major in God's love

There was a time when young people were encouraged to stay in school and learn so that they could make valuable contributions to society. Today the push for higher education is for the purpose of getting good jobs and making a lot of money. These shifting cultural values do not change the teachings of the gospel. The celebration of Catechetical Sunday reminds us that, for people of faith, our advance in learning is not for our own benefit but for God's sake.

READINGS: Isaiah 50:5-9a; James 2:14-18; Mark 8:27-35 (131 <https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/091524.cfm>). "You are thinking not as God does, but as human beings do."

FAITH IN ACTION

Imagine all the good we can accomplish with advanced degrees in divine mercy and justice.