

## **WHAT IS CATECHETICAL SUNDAY?**

The bishops of the United States have designated the third Sunday of September as a day on which every parish community is called to make a public commitment to continue its efforts to bring the Good News to all segments of the parish. This commitment is made concrete through the affirmation and recognition of all those who are directly responsible for carrying out the religious education programs and activities of the parish. This day also presents an opportunity for all the faithful to look at what they have been given and think of ways for them to contribute to the essential teaching mission of the Church.

## **WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN A PARISH?**

"The whole Church must feel responsible and must wish to be responsible" (*Catechesi Tradendae*) to carry out the catechetical task. But, the Church's members have different responsibilities in that task according to their mission and preparation. Not only the pope, bishops, priests, religious, and catechists, but parents and singles — everyone who is a member of the Church — must feel compelled to make a contribution to the teaching mission of the Church.

## **WHAT CAN YOU DO TO CONTRIBUTE?**

### **IF YOU ARE A SENIOR CITIZEN:**

You are the fruit of the vine. The entire community can enjoy the wisdom and skills of your years of growing and loving. Within the religious education program of the parish, there is a variety of projects and celebrations that require preparation of materials, decorations, and food that you can help with in your spare time.

### **IF YOU ARE A PARENT:**

Your responsibility is crucial by reason of your proximity to your children. You are the primary catechist by your example, love, forgiveness, patience, generosity, fairness, and prayerfulness. You are also called to ensure that your children take part in the programs provided for their specific age needs and that you give them the assistance and support required for their happy and willing involvement in the program.

## **IF YOU ARE SINGLE:**

The energy and creativity of your singleness can have a limitless impact on the Church. You can participate in any adult program your parish offers in order to facilitate your growth in the faith through a deeper understanding and interior commitment to the message of Christ and His mission today. Or you can inquire about joining the formation programs made available so that you can become a catechist or an aid in the programs with children or youth.

## **IF YOU ARE A YOUTH:**

The Church has a treasure in your commitment. You can be the Church's principal witness to the youths who have not found themselves and who grope for clarity and meaning in the wrong places. Through your interest and participation in the opportunities provided by your parish for your human and spiritual growth as a Christian, you can be a powerful example and inspiration to others. If such opportunities are available in your parish, become a part of them.

## **IF YOU ARE A CHILD:**

Jesus loved to bless and welcome the children of the villages He visited when He was in Palestine. He told us we had to become like you in order to be part of His kingdom. Your enthusiasm, interest, generosity and determination to learn and grow will be a source of inspiration to your family as well as to those who are eager to help you become the best person God wants you to be.

**EVERYONE** can and should pray for the success of the efforts of our committed parish team that will be responsible for carrying out all the religious education programs of the parish.



PRAYERS AT THE COMMISSIONING AND BLESSING OF CATECHISTS  
AND THE BEGINNING OF THE SCHOOL YEAR

AT the INSISTENT LITANY (EKTENIYA OF FERVENT SUPPLICATION)

*Deacon or Priest:*

We also pray for all of our catechists, that the Lord our God would send His all-holy Spirit to guide and strengthen them as they instruct our students, Lord, hear us and have mercy.

Again we pray that the Lord will enable these our students to grow in wisdom, understanding and virtue, for the glory of His Holy Name; and that He would give them health and long life for the up-building of His Holy Church, we pray to You, Lord, hear us and have mercy.

BLESSINGS AFTER THE AMVON PRAYER

*Deacon:* Let us pray to the Lord.

*All:* Lord, have mercy.

*Priest:* O Lord, Jesus Christ, our God: You revealed fishermen as wise teachers, and commanded them to make disciples of all nations. Look upon these catechists, who offer themselves in service to You and Your holy Church. Bless them, enlighten their minds, and help them to proclaim Your word in their daily lives. Let their faith and love radiate throughout our community, so that all who know them might desire to glorify our Father in heaven. Help them vanquish all fear. Empower them to overcome all fatigue. Fill them with love for their students, and drive from their classrooms every wile of the devil. May their lessons be filled with Your wisdom, so that all who hear them might be saved and come to the knowledge of truth. For You are the Wisdom of God, O Christ our Lord, and we render glory to You, together with Your Father and Your enlightening Spirit, now and always, and for ever and ever.

*All:* Amen.

<b>Deacon:</b>	Let us pray to the Lord
<b>All:</b>	Lord, have mercy !

**Priest:** O Lord, our God and Creator, You have honored us with Your own image, and You taught Your chosen disciples that the fear of You is the beginning of true wisdom. You revealed Your wisdom to children and taught Your law to Solomon and to all who have sought You in purity of heart. Open the hearts, the minds, and the lips of these students.

Enable them to receive the power of Your law, and to comprehend the useful things which will be taught them. Help them understand Your perfect will and contribute to the building up of Your holy Church. Deliver them from every snare of the enemy, preserve them in the true faith, and righteousness and purity all the days of their lives. May they grow in wisdom and in the observance of Your commandments. May they be revealed as worshippers of Your name and heirs of Your Kingdom.

Bless also their teachers; grant that their words be free from every worldly deceit and vanity, and that they always clearly proclaim the word of Your truth. For You are God, the Author of Truth and the Fountain of Wisdom, and to You we render glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever and ever.

**All:** Amen.

*After the final "Amen," all of the school-age children (and catechists) approach the priest who sprinkles each one of them with holy water, saying:*

*The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: May you be preserved from all evil and falsehood, by the descent of the Holy Spirit which is signified by the sprinkling of this holy water, in the name of the + Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

An appropriate hymn during the Sprinkling is either "King of the heavens" and or the Troparion of Pentecost.

After the Dismissal: Mnohaya Leeta ... God grant you many years, as usual