

Catechetical Program

«COME, FOLLOW ME»

for training availability and program material:
comefollowme.catechesis@gmail.com



The Catechetical program “Come, follow me” is used for the catechesis of children in parishes and schools.

The authors of this program – Father Benoit Caulle, parish priest, and Anne-Marie Le Bourhis, school teacher and member of the International Catechetical Commission – are both members of the Notre Dame de Vie Institute and have been involved in catechesis for many years.

The books, written to help catechise children aged 7-11, have received the imprimatur for catechetical use and have also received the stamp of approval of the French Episcopal Commission for Catechesis and the Catechumenate. This program has been tried and tested for many years in France and abroad (Lebanon, Lithuania, Philippines...). It has been conceived and written in the light of the teaching of the Church: the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and the *General Directory for Catechesis*.

Responding to the call of the universal Church in the General Directory for Catechesis (GDC), the series “COME, FOLLOW ME” offers a catechetical program which answers some of the challenges that have marked catechesis in our recent times:



It welcomes the children in their diversity

Current situation: today catechetical groups welcome children coming from widely differing backgrounds. Some come from practicing Catholic families while others have no knowledge or experience of the faith. Moreover, since families tend to move from one place to another, it is sometimes impossible for the children to be catechised in a linear progression over many years.

THE EVANGELIZATION OF URBAN CULTURE IS A FORMIDABLE CHALLENGE FOR THE CHURCH... THE CHURCH IS CALLED TODAY TO UNDERTAKE A METHODICAL AND FAR-REACHING URBAN EVANGELIZATION THROUGH CATECHESIS. JOHN PAUL II, *ECCLESIA IN AMERICA*, 21

What this program offers: modelled on the pedagogy of God in Scripture, and built on years of catechetical experience, this program has adopted a ‘spiral’ progression. This progression unfolds over each year in three stages. The spiral progression ensures that a systematic catechesis is proclaimed each year, covering the essential aspects of the Catholic Faith.

First proclamation and catechesis

Current situation: The children’s diversity of background and practice of the faith means that in the same group some may need evangelization while others need a more developed catechesis.

FREQUENTLY, MANY WHO PRESENT THEMSELVES FOR CATECHESIS TRULY REQUIRE GENUINE CONVERSION. GDC 61-62

What this program offers: The spiral progression, which follows the liturgical year, offers a structured catechesis adapted to the needs of the unevangelized. The children are invited to commit themselves freely and to give a response of faith in their own time. First proclamation and catechesis are combined within the program, which can be addressed to all children.



Word of God and experience of God’s Revelation

Current situation: In our pluralistic society, a vast number of “paths to happiness” are offered. In this context, how can the children recognise and find the truth? Where can they turn?

THE STUDY AND EXPLORATION OF SACRED SCRIPTURE, READ NOT ONLY IN THE CHURCH BUT WITH THE CHURCH AND HER LIVING FAITH, HELPS ONE TO DISCOVER DIVINE TRUTH, WHICH IT CONTAINS, IN SUCH A WAY AS TO AROUSE A RESPONSE OF FAITH. GDC 71

What this program offers: this catechesis is founded on the Word of God read in the Church. The Word of God unfolds throughout the session in such a way that the children are led to discover its truth and understand its meaning. They receive the Word of God in prayer, allowing the Holy Spirit to carry out his work in their hearts, initiating a real dialogue with God.

The Interior life and education in the faith

Current situation: In a fragmented world, which only seeks instant gratification and entertainment, how can we develop an interior life? How can we allow the children to access the reality of their own inner life and so make it possible for them to enter into a relationship with God?

IN THE PLURALITY OF SITUATIONS, ADAPTATION MUST ALWAYS KEEP IN MIND THE TOTALITY OF THE PERSON AND HIS ESSENTIAL UNITY, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE VISION OF THE CHURCH. CATECHESIS DOES NOT STOP WITH A CONSIDERATION OF THE MERELY EXTERIOR ELEMENTS OF A GIVEN SITUATION, BUT IS ALWAYS MINDFUL OF THE INTERIOR WORLD OF THE PERSON, THE TRUTH OF BEING HUMAN, 'THE FIRST FUNDAMENTAL WAY OF THE CHURCH'. GDC 170

What this program offers: To awaken a desire for the interior life, the program helps the children to acquire a personal self-knowledge, covering all the dimensions of their own being (bodily, emotional, social, intellectual, and spiritual). The program is designed so as to respect the psychological maturity of the children and their spiritual growth. The education of the interior life is progressive. It teaches the children the "art of prayer" (SEE JOHN PAUL II, *NOVO MILLENNIO INEUNTE*). It also allows the children to discover their own conscience and to exercise their judgment in freedom.

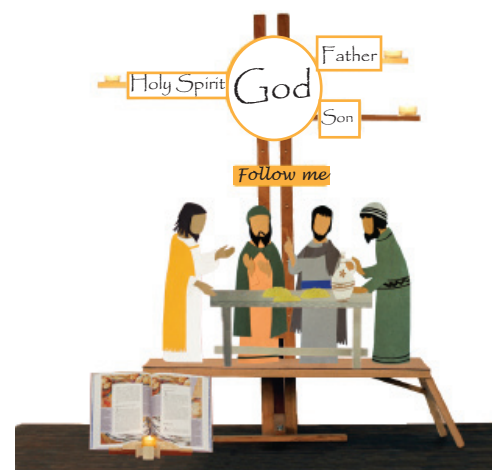


Following Christ today

Current situation: Our post-Christian society is permeated by relativism. Children are torn between a world which doubts itself and its own values, and the call to follow Christ.

CATECHESIS MUST HAVE A CATECHUMENAL STYLE, AS OF INTEGRAL FORMATION RATHER THAN MERE INFORMATION; IT MUST ACT IN REALITY AS A MEANS OF AROUSING TRUE CONVERSION. GDC 29

What this program offers: True conversion can only spring from a free decision, rooted in the heart of the human person. This program's pedagogy opens the children's hearts to the action of the Holy Spirit. He alone enables them to discern the many calls to follow Christ in their own daily lives. He alone gives them the strength to act in ever greater charity and solidarity.



To experience the Church's life

Current situation: the Church is a remote reality for many children. Catechesis is often their first meeting point with the Christian community.

CATECHESIS PREPARES THE CHRISTIAN TO LIVE IN COMMUNITY AND TO PARTICIPATE ACTIVELY IN THE LIFE AND MISSION OF THE CHURCH. GDC 89

What this program offers: It fosters the witness of the catechists and helps to create an environment of charity. This environment enables the children to gain a first experience of the Church family. The pedagogy uses simple ritual actions which unveil to the children the meaningfulness of symbols and beauty. This liturgical environment prepares the children to enter into the liturgy.



Materials necessary for this program: wooden kit and cut out figures to be obtained from the editions du Jubile: www.editionsdujubile.com

4 year program, for children aged 7 to 11.

Each year, the program follows the liturgical year in 3 stages :



First Stage:

September to Advent

THE FATHER

To welcome the love of God, Creator and Father, who gives and reveals himself

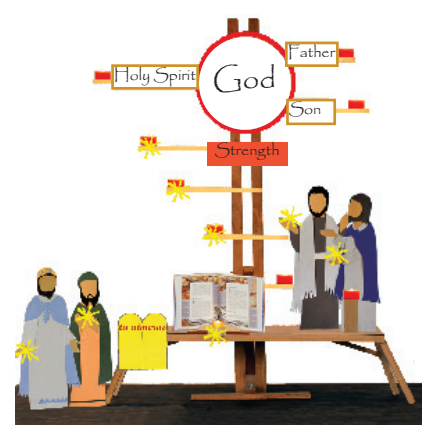


Second Stage:

Advent to Ascension

THE SON

To live in communion with Jesus Christ, Master and Savior



Third Stage:

Pentecost to ordinary time

THE HOLY SPIRIT

To live as children of the Church with the Holy Spirit, giver of Life

This structure respects the child's personal growth in faith. It is deepened each year, according to the progression of the Gospels. It is adapted to the psychological maturity of the age group, year after year.

1st year (age 7): *MERCY* - EDUCATION FOR THE LIFE OF FAITH - DISCOVERING OUR INTELLIGENCE - THE SACRAMENT OF CONFESSION - THE GOSPEL OF ST LUKE AND OF ST MARK.

2nd year (age 8): *COMMUNION* - EDUCATION FOR THE LIFE OF CHARITY - DISCOVERING OUR WILL - THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION - THE GOSPEL OF ST LUKE

3rd year (age 9): *THE WORD OF GOD* - EDUCATION FOR THE LIFE OF HOPE - DISCOVERING OUR MEMORY - THE HISTORY OF SALVATION AND OF THE CHURCH - THE GOSPEL OF ST MATTHEW

4th year (age 10): *THE HOLY SPIRIT* - EDUCATION FOR THE LIFE IN THE SPIRIT - DISCOVERING OUR FREEDOM - OUR MISSION IN THE HEART OF THE CHURCH - THE GOSPEL OF ST JOHN.