



Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP)
Episcopal Commission on Catechesis and Catholic Education (ECCCE)

500 Years of Christianity (YOC) in the Philippines (1521-2021)

CATECHETICAL MODULES

Christian Faith: Call, Gift, Mission



A *Research-based Intervention Outcome (RIO)* of selected catechists and catechetical leaders inspired by the findings of the *National Catechetical Study (NCS) 2016-2021: Pastoral Action Research and Intervention (PARI) Project* implemented by the Research Center for Social Sciences & Education (RCSSD), University of Santo Tomas (UST).





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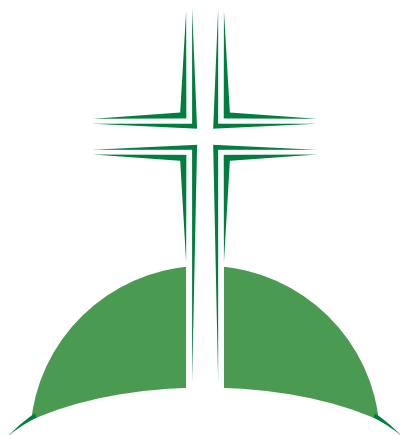
by *Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) – Episcopal Commission on Catechesis and Catholic Education (ECCCE) and Research Center for Social Sciences and Education (RCSSSED) University of Santo Tomas (UST)*

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*For the Faith-driven Servants, Front-liners,
and who may be considered the hidden
treasures of the Philippine Catholic Church,
our beloved Filipino Catechists*

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OUR GRATITUDE, OUR MODULE STORY

By: **Sr. Ma. Jesusa G. Enginco, O.P. & Dr. Clarence M. Batan**

Inspired by the call for a *New Evangelization* of our Holy Fathers, Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI and Pope Francis, and on the occasion of celebrating our *500 Years of Christianity (YOC) in the Philippines*. Our journey to produce a new set of *Catechetical Modules (CM)* for our faith-driven servants - our Filipino catechists, was made more meaningful by the overflowing support of the many people and organizations, whose passion and love to the catechetical ministry deserve our utmost gratitude and respect.

Maraming salamat po sa lahat ng tulong, malasakit, at pagmamahal.

The inspiration of this project roots from the CBCP *Pastoral Exhortation on the Era of New Evangelization* entitled, “*Live Christ, Share Christ*” (Looking Forward to our Five Hundredth) released last July 23, 2012, by Most Rev. Jose S. Palma, DD, the then *CBCP President*. This ushers the start of the nine-year spiritual journey that will culminate with the *Great Jubilee of 2021*, the 5th centenary of the coming of Christianity in our beloved land.

Thus, these Catechetical Modules (CM) respond to the call of the Spirit for a New Evangelization by utilizing the *nine pastoral priorities as key module themes of this project*. These are *Integral Faith Formation (2013)*; *Laity (2014)*; *The Poor (2015)*; *The Eucharist and of the Family (2016)*; *The Parish as a Communion of Communities (2017)*; *Clergy and Religious (2018)*; *Youth (2019)*; *Ecumenism, Interreligious Dialogue, and Indigenous Peoples (2020)*; and, *Missio ad Gentes (2021)*.

Contextually, these themes reflect the Filipino concepts of *Pananampalataya (2013)*; *Mga Layko (2014)*; *Ang Mga Mahihirap (2015)*; *Ang Eukaristiya at Pamilya (2016)*; *Ang Parokya Bilang Komunyon ng mga Pamayanan (2017)*; *Klero at Mga Relihiyoso (2018)*; *Mga Kabataan (2019)*; *Ekumenismo, Diyologo sa Pagitan ng Mga Relihiyon, at mga Katutubo (2020)*, at *Misyon sa mga Bansa (2021)*, which these modules hope to bring forth in various spaces of catechesis in the country.



Our gratitude goes to all our Filipino bishops, the *Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP)* led over the past nine

years by Archbishop Jose S. Palma, DD (CBCP President 2011-2013), Archbishop Socrates B. Villegas, DD (CBCP President 2013-2017), and Archbishop Romulo G. Valles, DD (CBCP President 2017-Present). The CBCP, through the *500 YOC Executive Committee entrusted the CBCP - Episcopal Commission on Catechesis and Catholic Education (ECCCE)* under the chairmanship of Bishop Roberto C. Mallari, DD to spearhead in the preparation of the catechetical instruction materials (both in print and electronic forms) as formation tools for prayer, study, and reflection. Initially, CBCP-ECCCE's idea was to produce a three-year intensive formation program across Ecclesiastical Territories covering 2018 until 2021. Our gratitude goes to the *CBCP – Episcopal Commission on Catechesis and Catholic Education (ECCCE)* under the leadership of Bishop Roberto C. Mallari, DD (Chair); Msgr. Gerardo O. Santos and Fr. Ernesto B. De Leon (Executive Secretary) as well as to the former *ECCCE Technical Working Group (TWG)* composed of Fr. Rene De Guzman, SDB; Dr. Caridad Barrameda; Fr. Salvatore Putzu, SDB, and Dr. Lysander Rivera, Sis. Rhea Castillo, OP and Sis. Silvestra Orbigo, FMM; who initially conceptualized and designed this project. Thank you for the inspiration, persistent nudge, and prayers.

The initial outputs of the *ECCCE TWG* were shared with various catechetical offices, centers and institutions offering Catholic religious education. We are thankful to catechetical leaders and catechists from the following institutions who responded to our call for module contributions: *Archdiocese of Caceres; Archdiocese of Cebu; Archdiocese of Manila; Diocese of Cubao; Diocese of Novaliches; Diocese of Parañaque; Diocese of Pasig; Mother Francisca Catechetical & Missionary Formation Center, and the University of Santo Tomas' (UST) Institute of Religion, Research Center for Social Sciences and Education, and the Office of the Vice Rector for Religious Affairs.*

After the production of initial modules, the CBCP 500 YOC Executive Committee suggested to prepare more catechetical lessons which can be used even beyond the 500 YOC 2021. This project evolved as a *Research-based Intervention Outcomes (RIO) activity of the National Catechetical Study (NCS) 2021: Pastoral Action Research and Intervention (PARI) Project team*. This initiative responds to one of the salient NCS findings that catechists in the ground are in dire need of fresh and relevant catechetical sources. To ensure the quality of these modules, the NCS Research Team solicited the assistance of education practitioners as reviewers whose valuable insights led to the process of rethinking the general module design of this project. We owe our deepest thanks to Dr. Joan Christi Trocio-Bagaipo, Cecilia Balajadia, Pamela Avellanosa, Mc Kenneth Baluyot, Fr. Christian Buenafe, O'Carm, Fr. Antonio Zamora and Fr. Eliseo Mercado, OMI.

Special gratitude to all our priest-catechists who in one way or another, sent their comments and suggestions, as well as provided a network of key persons who helped in module development. Thank you, Fr. Pablo Tiong, O.P., Fr. Carlo Magno and Fr. Emmanuel Rico Ayo.

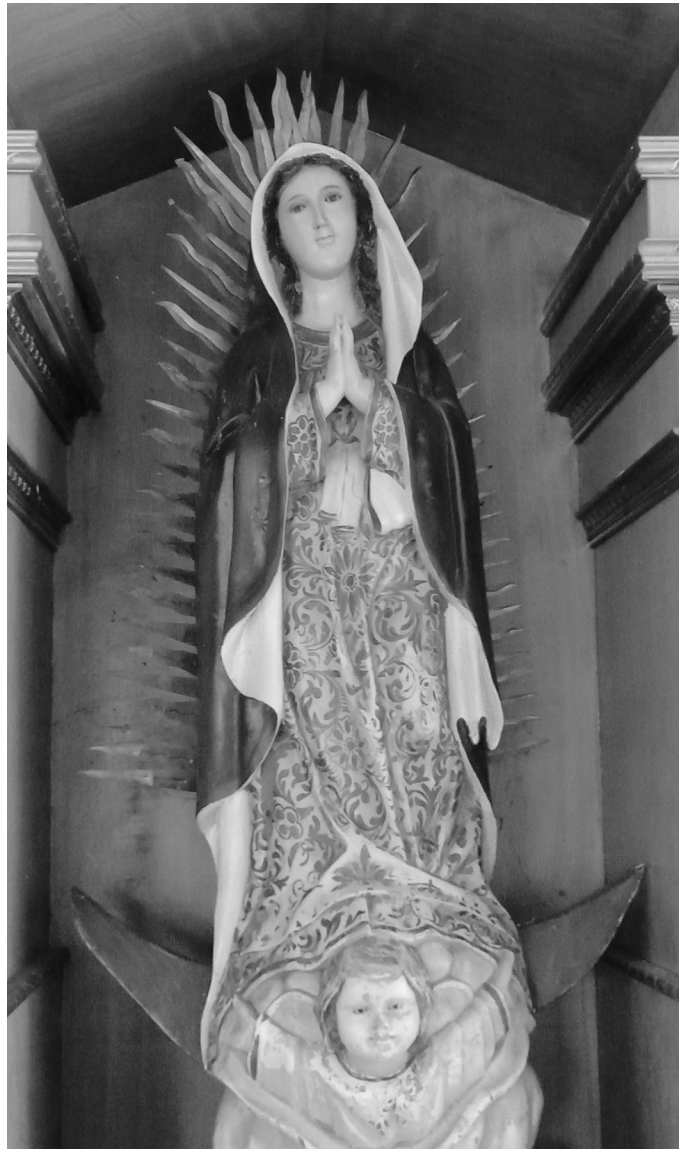
The updated module design was a by-product of a series of consultations and assessments. The laborious technical assistance task was provided by Jaycar P. Espinosa whose outputs became the bases for the finalization of modules. At the crucial time of module synthesis and integration, we were blest by the generosity of talent and spirit

provided for by Fr. Richard P. Lagos, OP, of the Diocese of San Jose, Nueva Ecija, and three seminarians from the Diocese of Tarlac - Sem. Anthony Paul R. Tawatao, Sem. Gerald A. Cortes, and Sem. Jayson A. Besa. Other contributors who deserve our utmost gratitude are Dra. Gaines Marie Rosario for her specific input about “the laity”, and Richard G. Pazcoguín, who provided a list of songs related to the module themes.

Despite the pandemic, our *NCS 2021: Research Team* took this RIO activity to heart. We would like to thank everyone for their dedication to the CM production. To Danielle Villena, who designed the initial layout, and Romel Sencio, whose creative talent for design made our CM visually-appealing. Our language editor, Pamela Avellanosa also deserves our utmost gratitude, for the patience and eye for technical errors, idea construction and composition, who made our CM clear and readable. And to our team members, Dr. Florence Navidad, Ruth Andaya, Tisha Isabelle de Vergara, Keith Aaron Joven, and Vincent Reuben Valientes, thank you for your untiring dedication to this project.

All the hard work, inspiration, and deep prayers led to the final module version of this project. May these Catechetical Modules be easy-to-understand and be easy-to-use by all those making up all our catechetical ministries across the country and around the world. May this work serve as a seed towards a renewed integral evangelization and renew us all in the Church – bishops, priests, religious, and lay people. May this project encourage us to unceasingly beg the Holy Spirit’s guidance especially for the Filipino-Catholics of today.

As we celebrate our Christian’s faith 5th centenary in 2021, our penultimate gratitude to our Lord Jesus Christ, who guided us in the production of these Catechetical Modules as a moment of His loving embrace and overflowing grace.



CATECHETICAL MODULE TEAM

■ Concept & Design

- Fr. Rene De Guzman, SDB, Dr. Caridad Barrameda, Ms. Tessi Ponteras of MOL, Fr. Salvatore Putzu, SDB, Dr. Lysander Rivera of BAMCREF DLSU, Fr. Ernesto B. de Leon, Mr. Eduardo Frando & Ms. Noemi Buena of ICAM, Sis. Rhea Castillo, OP of Archdiocese of Lingayen-Dagupan, Sr. Silvestra Orbigo, FMM, of Lumen Christi and Sr. Ma. Jesusa G. Enginco OP, *members of the Episcopal Commission on Catechesis & Catholic Education (ECCCE) Technical Working Group (TWG) 2017-2018.*
- Dr. Clarence M. Batan & Jaycar P. Espinosa of the *National Catechetical Study (NCS) 2021: Pastoral Action Research and Intervention (PARI) Project Research Team*

■ Writers

- Fr. Richard P. Lagos, OP, *of the Diocese of San Jose, Nueva Ecija, YOUCAT PHILIPPINES National Director*
- Sem. Anthony Paul R. Tawatao, *Diocese of Tarlac*
- Sem. Gerald A. Cortez, *Diocese of Tarlac*
- Sem. Jayson A. Besa, *Diocese of Tarlac*
- Dr. Clarence M. Batan, *Principal Investigator, NCS 2021: PARI Project*
- Dra. Gaines Marie Rosario, *Head, Lay Formation Center, Archdiocese of Manila*
- Fr. Emmanuel Rico Ayo, *Dean, San Carlos Seminary, Makati City*
- Ms. Jane Roble, *Executive Secretary, EC-ECUM Affairs*
- Fr. Sebastiano d'Ambra, PIME, *Executive Secretary, ECIRD*
- Mr. Antonio Abuso, *Executive Secretary, ECIP*
- Br. Anthony San Pedro Dameg, *PMS, ECM*
- Assoc. Prof. Richard G. Pazcoguin, *Director, UST Campus Ministry*
- Br. Simon Peter Ramos, OP
- Br. Joenner Paulo Enriquez, OP
- Br. Marc Adrian de la Pena, OP
- **Contributors from the following centers:**
 - Archdiocese of Caceres
 - Archdiocese of Cebu
 - Archdiocese of Manila
 - Diocese of Cubao
 - Diocese of Novaliches
 - Diocese of Parañaque
 - Diocese of Pasig

■ Language & Content Editor

- Pamela Guenevere Avellanosa, *Adamson University*
- Keith Aaron Joven, *NCS 2021: PARI Project*

■ Reviewers



- Dr. Joan Christi Trocio-Bagaipo, *University of Santo Tomas*
- Dr. Florence Navidad, *University of Santo Tomas*
- Ma. Cecilia Balajadia, *University of Santo Tomas*
- Pamela Avellanosa, *Adamson University*
- Mc Kenneth M. Baluyot, *Department of Education*
- Fr. Christian Buenafe, *Order of the Brothers of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel*
- Fr. Conegundo Garganta, *Executive Secretary, ECY*
- Fr. Antonio Zamora, *Catechetical Director, Archdiocese of Cebu*
- Fr. Eliseo Mercado, *Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate*

■ Consultants

- Bishop Roberto C. Mallari, DD, *Chair, CBCP - ECCCE*
- Fr. Ernesto B. de Leon, *Executive Secretary, CBCP-ECCCE*
- Sr. Ma. Jesusa Enginco, O.P., *Assistant Executive Secretary, CBCP – ECCCE*

■ Layout & Design

- Danielle Villena, *Multimedia Officer, NCS 2021: PARI Project*
- Romel Sencio, *Multimedia Graphic Artist, NCS 2021: PARI Project*

■ Technical Support

- *The National Catechetical Study (NCS) 2021: Pastoral Action Research and Intervention (PARI) Project Research Team: Jaycar P. Espinosa, Ruth Andaya,*



FOREWORD

Most Rev. Roberto C. Mallari, D.D.

Bishop, Diocese of San Jose de Nueva Ecija

Chairperson, Episcopal Commission on Catechesis and Catholic Education (ECCCE)



My Dear People of God! Grace and peace!

We continue our nine-year journey that began in 2012 which brings us to the 500th year commemoration of Christianity's advent in our country in 2021.

To make this truly a celebration of gratitude for the gift of faith, the *Episcopal Commission for Catechesis and Catholic Education (ECCCE)* came up with catechetical lessons for our people for the next three years as our immediate preparation. The general theme sums up that of our 2021 Jubilee Celebration: Gifted to Give – *Kaloob, Isinasaloob, Ipinagkakaloob*.

It is with hope that this humble contribution will help our faithful understand more what this gift of Christian faith (kaloob) requires from us – that by understanding with the heart (isinasaloob), they will all the more believe and can pray more through it; manifest it in their daily lives; and thus share their faith with others (ipinagkakaloob). We go back to teaching the truth of *lex credendi, lex orandi, lex vivendi* (how we worship reflects what we believe and determines how we will live) to our people.

As our country celebrates its 5th Centenary of Christianity, we are likewise commemorating the 60th Anniversary of the Opening of the Second Vatican Council when the now St. John XXIII widely opened the Church's doors and windows to facilitate the Holy Spirit's access in renewing the Church. It was an experience of a New Pentecost indeed. The 30th year Anniversary of our own Second Plenary Council of the Philippines will also coincide this year. PCP II ushered so many promises of renewal, of another Pentecost for the Church in our country. It Envisioned the Filipino Church to be a Community of Disciples; a Church of the Poor, embarking on a Renewed Integral Evangelization, and witnessing to Jesus Christ's Gospel of salvation and liberation through words, deeds and lives. "Behold, I make all things new", was the clear message then of the *National Pastoral Consultation on Church Renewal (NPCCR)*.

May these simple, easy-to-understand and easy-to-use catechetical lessons help us all in the work of renewed integral evangelization and help us pin our hopes on the Holy Spirit to renew us all in the Church-- bishops, priests, religious and lay people. Strengthened by prayers, may we share our faith by living it in the midst of all in this vale of tears. May we be encouraged to unceasingly beg for the Holy Spirit's guidance especially for the Filipino Catholics of today so that our celebration of our Christian faith's fifth centenary, becomes a moment of God's grace even now. To inspire us more, let me share one of the touching fb posts which reads: **'IF WE DON'T TEACH OUR CHILDREN TO FOLLOW CHRIST, THE WORLD WILL TEACH THEM NOT TO'!**

We fix our eyes on Jesus Christ, our Redeemer as we make our collective journey with the guidance of His Mother, the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Star of Evangelization.

All in JESUS' NAME,



INTRODUCTION

Rev. Fr. Ernesto B. De Leon

Executive Secretary

Episcopal Commission on Catechesis and Catholic Education (ECCCE)

Our nine-year journey, nine-year novena preparation for the 5th Centenary of Christianity in the Philippines began in 2012, which we dubbed as the Year of Faith. A new era indeed for New Evangelization. Reflecting on the essential components of the subsequent years, perhaps we can take cue from Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI who asked us “to consider the content of faith that is **professed, celebrated, lived** and **prayed**” and to “**reflect** on the act of Faith” as a whole (PF 9). These indispensable elements of Faith give us a glimpse as to the identity that we have as a Church from the moment we have literally received the faith 500 years ago. Not only has the gift of faith prepared the way for us, but even much more, the MANNER in which we give witness to the received faith is ushered to us by Christ, Himself through the intermediary of Spanish Missionaries.



The faith we PROFESS, CELEBRATE, LIVE, and PRAY, summons each of us to authentically recast, recalibrate and revisit whether we have lived the faith sincerely and wholeheartedly [via the sacraments as our focus] or we have simply just accepted it but not evangelized - or have been transformed by it. If ever that we have failed to truly live the core-values of our faith, it should not discourage or even frustrate us, even if we have not achieved our goals as planned. Instead, it should incite us to confront and accept, to exert and be efficient, to magnify for ourselves our multifarious shortcomings, human limitation-related realities that have hindered us to really be God’s instruments in proclaiming the Gospel to all nations (cf. Mk.16:15) and made it fulfilled in our hearing (cf. Lk.4:21).

This only shows us that we still lack that profound ability to REFLECT (PF 9) in order to understand comprehensively the Church’s missionary tasks. However, our human-related efforts from this vantage point are not futile. Why? Because, lest we forget, the Church is vivified by God’s Spirit and that is what makes her dynamic. And so we are called likewise, to be dynamic, to be discernibly creative and realistic enough with our approaches.

The *National Catechetical Study of 2016-2018* not only gave us profiles of our catechetical ministers. It revealed as well the often-insufficient tools, materials and even formation of our important laborers in God’s vineyard. One significant research insight it gave was the necessity for alternative and appropriate catechetical modules. *NCS 2021* came at the right time when the bishop-members of the Executive Committee for the Centenary Celebration tasked ECCCE to provide such modules using the previous years’ theme (Laity, Poor, Eucharist and the Family, Parishes as Communion of Communities, Clergy and Religious, Youth, Ecumenism, Inter-religious Dialogue and Indigenous People)

culminating in *Missio Ad Gentes*, the goal of which is to drum-beat awareness and appreciation apropos the 500 Year of Catholic Christianity through intense catechesis, helping and challenging Filipino Catholics to truly PROFESS, CELEBRATE, LIVE and PRAY the faith.

Such efforts to go back to the sources, foundations (ressourcement) of our faith, will make our witness even more meaningful and relevant. This is because we tirelessly work hand in hand to critically exhaust all possible means to improve our approaches in coming up with new and fresh methods of not only catechizing our faithful but also helping them out to mature in the practice of faith. This return to the source is a mature move for us to allow our faithful [including pastors (i.e., religious and diocesan), catechists, and lay leaders] to be immersed in the language of transformation and conversion, that is, to be piecemeal evangelized!

This humble attempt of Catechetical Directors and ministers from various Catechetical Centers through ECCCE is a vivid proof of our desire as a local Church incessantly working towards *aggiornamento*. Such an aim only validates that we, the Catholic Church in the Philippines, after embracing the Catholic Faith with the Christian spirit, is open to having a profound love for the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Eventually with gratitude, the present form became one of the interventions of the *NCS 2021: Pastoral Action Research and Intervention (PARI) Project* implemented by the *Research Center for Social Sciences and Education of the Pontifical University of Santo Tomas*.

Let therefore, our confidence in love grow and our hopes be evident as we walk through the challenges of the times with profound faith as we prove ourselves equal to the encouragement of contextualizing and translating these Catechetical Modules to our local dialects and to pursue the promptings of the Spirit. For our nation to have a complete adherence and be enculturated to the Gospel message of the One Great Teacher, Jesus Christ (CT 20) so that we all may be one in this catechetical endeavor, not only for 2021 but even beyond.



Photo from the Diocese of Kabankalan



Photo from the Diocese of Maasin

CATECHETICAL MODULE GUIDE

The purpose of this guide is to clarify the outline of catechetical lessons that will serve as the catechists' convenient resource in teaching catechesis for all ages. Also, it will help them achieve the goals of teaching catechesis and will introduce them to new strategies in effectively facilitating a catechetical class. The creation of catechetical lessons is a vital fragment of the *Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP)*'s response to their commitment to lead Catholic Filipinos to *Live Christ and Share Christ*, which has been their mission since the commencement of the nine-year era of New Evangelization in 2012.

As stated by Pope John Paul II (1979) in his apostolic exhortation *Catechesi Trandendae* or *CT*, the universal catechetical goals are: (1) to strengthen the solidity of the faith and of Christian living; (2) to give fresh vigor to the initiatives on hand; (3) to stimulate creativity with required vigilance; and (4) to help spread in communities the joy of bringing the mystery of Christ to the world. In the same Church document, he also remarked that in terms of its relation to evangelization (or the proclamation of the Good News to the whole humanity), the specific goal of catechesis is to develop initial faith and to advance in fullness and to nourish the daily Christian life of those who received them (CT 20).

Evangelization in Vatican II

The Church reached a turning point to the modern world with the Second Vatican Council. The Council embraced the optimistic vision of John XXIII of a renewed Church seeking greater unity with all men. This renewal resulted in a self-examination and a radical transformation of the Church in many aspects in her life and doctrine (Bokenkotter, 2005). What the Church has today, that is, the presence of faith in every corner of the world, with various traditions and practices is due to the evangelical work of the Apostles, their successors, and the various religious men and women missionaries.

The command of Jesus to His Apostles to proclaim the Gospel to the whole world has been handed down to the Church and to Her members. The Second Vatican Council was right in saying that "the Church has received this solemn mandate of Christ to proclaim the saving truth from the Apostles and must carry it out to the very ends of the earth" (Lumen Gentium 17). Today, the proclamation could be more difficult and challenging but the task remains, just as the enthusiasm and courage that moved the Apostles and the first disciples to proclaim did not change.

The spirit of Vatican II may be described by some key words such as renewal, reform, *aggiornamento* (updating), openness, dialogue and reading the signs of the times. Truly, in Vatican II, the Church got to dialogue with the world of today. The New Evangelization thrust has its origin in the Second Vatican Council. It had been the Council's desire to respond to a sense of disorientation experienced by Christians facing powerful changes and divisions which the world was experiencing at that time. The Council had appropriately stressed what these

new situations demand from the Church: new zeal, new sensitivity, and new ways of doing its evangelizing mission (Canilang, 2013). Therefore, New Evangelization began with Vatican II and its awareness of the changes going on with the world and its commitment to dialogue with these changes in the hopes of achieving a “new ardor, a new zeal, renewed and re-strengthened commitment to proclaim Jesus Christ and his Gospel of salvation to the world today.”

The New Evangelization

The use of the term “New Evangelization” refers to the unique situation of the Catholic Church in today’s generation. Many Catholics just feel too busy to attend Mass regularly and do not feel particularly connected to the Church. Many have begun to call themselves sacramentalized but not evangelized. These are the new problems in the history of the Church. For many centuries, the Church's evangelical mission sought to preach the Gospel to the nations of non-Christians who did not know Christ. Now, the Church is called to a New Evangelization, or an evangelization within itself, a re-evangelization.

There are many people who immediately assume that the New Evangelization is equivalent to the use of social media. New media such as *blogs, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram etc.* are certainly essential to evangelization today. But John Paul II already called for a New Evangelization over a decade ago before online social networking was even possible.

What John Paul II, Benedict XVI and Francis now call for is an evangelization of those who have already been baptized. The call for New Evangelization is a call for the baptized members of the Church to deepen their faith and reach out to other Christians in deep need of a new encounter with Christ. The audiences for the New Evangelization are those who have already heard Christ being proclaimed, while not neglecting the evangelization of those who have not yet heard the Gospel of Christ (Evangelii Nuntiandi 52). This New Evangelization had to be directed to all the baptized in order to renew, purify, and strengthen their faith.

Why is there a need for New Evangelization? In the year 2000, Joseph Ratzinger, now Pope-Emeritus Benedict XVI, answered this question saying that to evangelize means “to show this path that will teach the art of living. This is why we need New Evangelization; if the art of living remains unknown, nothing else works. But this art is not the object of science, rather this art can only be communicated by the One, who has life—He who is the Gospel personified” (Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, 2000).


Thus, in the conference of the Asian Congress on Evangelization, Bishop Teodoro Bacani in his article *The Need for a New Evangelization* stated that a New Evangelization is called for because of change in the situation of the recipients of evangelization, and because of changes in the condition of the Church herself (Bacani, The Need for a New Evangelization, 43). Therefore, evangelization must be renewed according to the present circumstances of the world and Church, likewise according to the situation to whom the Word of God must be preached.



This part of the discussion exposes the presentation of the Pontiffs who were responsible for the establishment of the New Evangelization. Here are the Popes for the New Evangelization:

Pope Paul VI

Pope Paul VI ushered in a time of reflection on the evangelizing ministry of the Church. Among his many works, it is his Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi* that captures the beginning of the New Evangelization. This Apostolic Exhortation was written after the Third General Assembly of the Synod for Evangelization. Therefore, the basis that he used for the Church to move forward is evangelization. Pope Paul VI emphasizes first and foremost that evangelization is central to the Church's identity. It is her essential mission and a task that is made more urgent by the changes in contemporary society (Canilang, 2013). Then, he proposes that the Church's evangelizing activity must constantly seek the proper means and language for presenting, or representing, to them God's revelation and faith in Jesus Christ (Instrumentum Laboris 12). After the death of John XXIII, who called for the Second Vatican Council, Pope Paul VI eagerly continued his works and pursuit for an effective evangelization.



Pope Paul VI has in mind the Christians of the West who have distanced and drifted away from the Church. The existence of many atheists and unbelievers in the 1970s gave bigger problems to the phenomenon of Christians who were sacramentalized but not evangelized--Christians only in name. Thus, in order to re-evangelize these Christians who have fallen away from the Church, we must be witnesses of faith. As he exclaimed: "modern man listens more willingly to witnesses than to teachers" (EN 41). The good evangelizer is the one who can translate into his/her own life what he/she preaches to his/her audience. Therefore, we could not expect to transform others unless we have had a personal transformation ourselves (Catan & Giordano SJ, 2007). There must be a continuous personal transformation in order to have an effective transformation in others.

There are three points which are important in this discussion of Paul VI's understanding of New Evangelization. The first point is "evangelizing is in fact the grace and vocation proper to the Church. It is Her deepest identity. The Church exists to evangelize and through that evangelization process, She grows ever more faithful,

loving and hopeful in the Lord” (EN 14). The second point is the resistance to faith by many atheists and unbelievers takes the form of a certain refusal and an inability to grasp the new order of things, the new meaning of the world, of life and of history. This creates a big problem in the phenomenon of the Christian way of life (EN 56). The third point is the “Church is an evangelizer, but She begins by being evangelized Herself” (EN 15). In order to re-evangelize these Christians who have fallen away from the Church, one has to be a witness to the faith (EN 21). This means that an evangelizer should be the first to be evangelized. The witnessing must not be focused on the pious actions of the Church, but rather it should be seen in the daily ways of life.

Pope John Paul II

The New Evangelization in Pope John Paul II’s concept is a response to new cultural realities. John Paul II is the one who coined the term “New Evangelization” in public. He addressed this in homilies, seminars, public viewings, etc. Then, it easily scattered around the globe and this term became a sign of the beginning of the era of New Evangelization.

Perhaps, the clearest definition of “New Evangelization” is in his Encyclical, *Redemptoris Missio*. In section 33 of this Encyclical, John Paul II describes three different circumstances in the evangelization of the people.

The first situation that John Paul II described is the so-called *Missio ad Gentes*. This situation is an essential missionary focus of the Church on proclaiming the Gospel of Christ to those who have not heard it (RM 33).



The second situation focuses on those with strong Christian affiliation who were “fervent in their faith and Christian living. These are Christian communities with adequate ecclesial structure in its activity thus, needing pastoral care” (RM 33). Hence, the clergy, especially the parish priests, must support them for their sustainability and pastoral care so that there will be no isolated communities to the Church/parish.

The third situation is the concern of New Evangelization. This is the “ongoing evangelization of those in the intermediate situation who have lost a sense of the faith.” They no longer consider themselves members of the Church. We need to re-evangelize such people who have lived a life far from Christ and His Gospel (RM 33). There are many Catholics who have been baptized in infancy but have fallen away from the faith when they grew up. They do not live a personal commitment to Christ

and do not practice the faith as adolescents or adults. The New Evangelization is directed to these fallen-away baptized Catholics.

It is believed that John Paul II repeatedly called for New Evangelization which began in 1983 during his address to the Catholic Bishops of Latin America. He said to the bishops who are present: “The Commemoration of the half millennium of evangelization will gain its full energy if it is a commitment to re-evangelize or to New Evangelization, new in its ardor, methods, and expressions” (Hann, 2014, pp. 15-16). This was how he described New Evangelization: an evangelization with enthusiasm in evangelizing, new in its ardor, effective methods that the faithful can easily and effectively be captured by it, and creative expressions that the faithful may understand it well.

Pope Benedict XVI

Pope John Paul II’s call for a New Evangelization was taken up and reaffirmed by his successor Pope Benedict XVI. During his pontificate, Pope Benedict XVI addressed the theme: “The New Evangelization for the Transmission of the Christian Faith” in the 13th General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops to support and better prepare for the work of the New Evangelization (Hann, 2014, p. 18).



Thus, Pope Benedict XVI pointed out that New Evangelization is an important element of the Church's mission and that the Church exists to evangelize. The fact is, evangelization is what makes the Church a true Church. Hence, if the heart of the Church is to evangelize the Gospel to the whole world, then New Evangelization is one of the vital

processes needed to achieve this goal.

During mass at Saint Peter’s Basilica for the closing of the Synod of Bishops for New Evangelization, Pope Benedict XVI reflected on the three aspects of the New Evangelization: First, the Pope reminds us that our ordinary pastoral ministry must be more animated by the fire of the Spirit. Second, we are called to proclaim the Gospel to those people who do not know Jesus Christ. Finally, the mission of the New Evangelization is to find new ways to help renew the faith and lives of people who have drifted away from the Church so that they may encounter Jesus Christ anew and rediscover the joy of faith and return to the religious practice of the community of the faithful (Wuerl, 2013, p. 13).

New Evangelization focuses on those who are baptized and have lost their sense of faith. But it does not mean that evangelization is only offered to them. In fact, all are subjects of evangelization. In other words, New Evangelization is sharing and living the Gospel of Jesus Christ in today’s changing world.

The New Evangelization for the Life of the Church in the Philippines

Concern with the New Evangelization has been the overall theme of the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines (PCP-II) in 1991, of the National Mission Congress for New Millennium (NMC) held in Cebu in September/October 2000, and of the National Pastoral Consultation on Church Renewal (NPCCR) which the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) sponsored in Manila in 2001. Especially since PCP-II, a great number of synods and pastoral assemblies have been established and carried to term in various dioceses. These synods and assemblies called for extensive surveys and studies on "Faith and Church situations" in many sectors of the country. They involved much serious discussions among members, ordained and lay, in Catholic communities on different levels. Reports, summaries of the deliberations and conclusions of these assemblies were sent to the Holy See for review. Religious Orders, congregations, and a good number of lay institutes and organizations have also held, on the national level, analogous conferences since PCP-II.

Thus, we in the Church in the Philippines come to this program of the "New Evangelization" already with considerable prior extensive and intensive study, reflection, deliberation and resolution. In truth we have been trying to earnestly pursue "renewed evangelization" especially in the last twenty-five years.



Photo from the Diocese of Alaminos

The task of New Evangelization calls us to continue earnestly the initiatives and projects which have been ongoing under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. *We are called to examine more deeply the pastoral situation that we all face together as Church in the Philippines. We are asked to explore and discover "the new methods and means for transmitting the Good News" more effectively to our people, always under the guidance of the Spirit. Above all, we are challenged anew to foster in the Church in our country a renewed commitment and enthusiasm in living out the Gospel in all diverse areas of our lives, in "real-life practice", challenged anew to become more and more authentic witnesses of our faith, especially to our Asian neighbors!*

CATECHETICAL MODULE STRUCTURE

The framework employed in teaching catechesis adopted the nine Pastoral Priorities of the Church in the Philippines (that also act as the key themes over the nine-year period of New Evangelization) as a response to Pope John Paul II's emphasis on the need for systematic catechesis, which deals with essentials, and is sufficiently complete and open to all other factors of Christian life (CT 21).

Hence, in making this lesson we provide a module based on pastoral priorities of the Philippine Church. Every module has four topics consisting of the four themes of New Evangelization. They are: Encountering Christ, Conversion, Communion (sense of belongingness) and Zeal for Mission. To better comprehend these four themes of New Evangelization, let us reflect on the Holy Father Pope Francis' Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium* as the basis for this study.

Four Themes of New Evangelization

Encountering Christ

Pope Francis said that the first step of evangelization is having an encounter with the person of Jesus Christ. No one can begin an authentic evangelization without having encountered Christ in their lives. In fact, the opening sentence of his Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* states: "The joy of the Gospel fills the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus. Those who accept His offer of salvation are set free from sin, sorrow, inner emptiness, and loneliness" (EG 1).

The Holy Father moves quickly to say: "I invite all Christians, everywhere, at this very moment, to a renewed personal encounter with Jesus Christ, or at least an openness to letting Him encounter them; I ask all of you to do this unfailingly each day (EG 3)." It is important to go back to the basic premise that all of us are created in the image and likeness of God. Everyone is an image of Christ, capable of serving, loving and doing good.

This is the direct challenge of Pope Francis to all Christians, to open the hearts and lives of the faithful to the person of Jesus Christ. Perhaps one must need to be reminded of the simple doctrine of the Church that Christ dwells within each other. One does not have to search for Him or ask for any incredible revelations to know Him (Gaudete et Exsultate 20). Thus, the faithful must seek Him in every moment, in every day, in prayer, worship, work, relationships and in every act of kindness.

One might ask who is God? God is love. God shares his love to His people, and as one who received the love which restores meaning to lives, how can one fail to share that love with others? Jesus came down to the world to show us the extraordinary way of love through the cross. Hence, encountering Christ leads to joy and the fullest possible experience of life.

Each encounter with Jesus is an invitation to follow Him. For that reason, the Church exists for a mission, and that mission is to proclaim Christ by the witnessing of one's own life and proclaiming Him to the world (EG 20). It is an encounter with a personal God that transforms man to evangelize and impels Him to open the hearts and lives of the faithful to the person of Jesus Christ. At the opening synod for the New Evangelization Benedict XVI points out that: "In every time and place, evangelization has its starting and finishing points, which is Jesus Christ, the Son of God."

Conversion

It is very important to encounter Christ in the daily basis of our life. After encountering Christ, the next step for renewal is conversion. When we have already encountered and recognized Christ as significant in our life, it is the starting point, in which man seeks for conversion. What is conversion? The Greek word for conversion is *metanoia*. It means to rethink. It is a process wherein a person questions one's own and common way of living, allowing God to enter the criteria of one's life and not merely judge according to the current social opinions (Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, 2000). This conversion is not a mere change of religion but rather it is a conversion of the heart and mind, which is a radical conversion, "a conversion which restores the joy of faith in their hearts and inspire a commitment to the Gospel" (See EG 14).

Thereby, to convert means not to live the mainstream way of life for its own sake or do things just because others are doing it. It is not feeling justified in doing dubious, ambiguous, or evil actions just because others do the same. Conversion means beginning to see one's life through the eyes of God; thereby looking for the good, even if uncomfortable and aiming not for the judgment of men, but on the justice of God. In other words: to look for a new style of life, a new life (Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, 2000).

Hence, to be converted is not only about the change of perspective in life but it also includes the way we live our lives to the fullest; how we act, how we behave and how we give meaning to our lives by doing mission, in accordance to our own purpose and calling in life. For example, if one is already converted to Christ, he/she will not be able to cheat his/her neighbor, but rather think about the goodness he/she can offer to his/her brethren. In this conversion we should not only follow our own desires in life but also become aware of the presence of God in our manner of living. "The important thing in this conversion process is not to walk alone, but to rely on each other as brothers and sisters, especially under the leadership of the Church leaders, in a wise and realistic pastoral discernment" (EG 33).

Communion (Sense of Belongingness to the Church)

In *Caritas in Veritate* no. 53, Benedict XVI explains that the development of the people depends, above all, on recognition that the human race is a single family working together in true communion, not simply a group of subjects who happen to live side by side. When a person sees others as a family member, it becomes a responsibility to give assistance, to offer help, to be there when others are in need.

To evangelize is to make the Kingdom of God present in the world and to proclaim Christ. The Word of God clearly has a social content: at the very heart of the



Gospel is life in community and engagement with others (EG 177). Therefore, one must connect Himself/herself to others in building the Kingdom of God here on earth. One has a personal calling to respond in proclaiming the Good News. Sooner or later, a person will realize that he/ she needs a community to belong to. It is better to have many workers in the vineyard of Christ so that the Gospel will be easily preached to every individual.

The very mystery of the Trinity reminds us that all have been created in the image of that Divine Communion. The Gospel is not merely about personal relationship with God. It is rather living in intrinsic interdependence with others (EG 178-179). With this statement, the value of communion or sense of belongingness to the Church is highly regarded by every faithful servant of God. To this end, the Holy Triune God is the model of this communion.

Zeal for Mission

When a person has already encountered Christ, converted to Christ and is in communion with the Church as children of God, then it will be the time for Him/ her to do mission in whatever way he/she can to proclaim the Word of God through his/her daily witnessing to the Gospel.

To pray and to work: this must be the attitude of every spirit-filled evangelizers. Sometimes, evangelizers easily get tired to the point that his/her work becomes meaningless to Him/her. Thus, because of weariness and difficulties, the evangelizer's liveliness and fervor dies out. Thereby, it is important to have moments of adoration, prayerful encounter with the Word, and sincere conversation with the Lord through the sacraments (See EG 262).

Every period of history is marked by the presence of human weakness, self-absorption, complacency and selfishness. We must learn from the wisdom of the saints who confronted their own difficulties (See EG 163). It is good to be inspired by early Christians and the many brothers and sisters throughout history who were filled with joy, persistent courage and zeal in proclaiming the Gospel.

Pope Francis proposes four spiritual motivations for mission that can help us imitate the saints who continue to proclaim God's Word, even though they encountered a lot of trouble and difficulties.

A. Personal Encounter with the Saving Love of Jesus

The primary reason for evangelization is the love of Jesus which one has received, the experience of salvation urges ever greater love for Him. The best incentive for sharing the Gospel comes from contemplating it with love and reading it with the heart. Its beauty amazes and constantly excites Him/her (EG 264). This can lead to a missionary enthusiasm in proclaiming Christ to others. This conviction is sustained by constantly renewing the experience of savoring Christ's friendship and His message. A person who is not joyful, enthusiastic, certain and in love will convince nobody (EG 266). Therefore, the admiration and excitement of proclaiming the Kingdom of God should always be accompanied with great enthusiasm. A true evangelizer is the one

who never stops being a disciple of Christ, who always walks with Him, communicates with Christ, and eagerly works with Him.

B. The Spiritual Savour of Being a People

To be an evangelizer of souls, one must develop a spiritual taste for being close to people's lives and discover that this is a source of greater joy. God invites us to acknowledge that we are a people. Jesus Himself is the model of this method of evangelization (EG 268). He opened Himself to others, whatever state of life they may be in. It is interesting to recall the closeness of Jesus to everyone. He is very accessible. He draws near to the blind man and the outcasts (cf. Mk. 10:46-52). He eats and drinks with sinners (cf. Mk. 2:16), without worrying about being thought of as a glutton and a drunkard Himself. He shows compassion by allowing a sinful woman to anoint His feet (cf. Lk. 7:36-50) and healing a man with a withered hand during Sabbath (cf. Mt. 12:9-13).

With His inspiration and moved by His examples of sharing in the lives of all, listening to their concerns, helping them materially and spiritually, everyone is called to be committed in building a new world. But this must not come from a sense of obligation or a burdensome duty. Rather, it should be done because of a personal decision which brings joy and gives meaning to the lives of all the faithful (See EG 269).

C. Sense of Mystery

Some people do not commit themselves to mission because they think that nothing will change and so it is useless to make the effort. Sometimes, one misses to inculcate in his/her mind that in the midst of darkness, something new always springs to life and sooner or later produces fruit; (EG 275) that God is capable of intervening and He does not abandon His people.

This fruitfulness is often invisible, intangible and unquantifiable. One can know quite well that lives will be fruitful, without claiming to know how or where or when. But one thing is for sure, no single act of love for God will be lost, nor any of the acts of sincere concern for others. Moreover, no generous effort is meaningless and no painful endurance is wasted (See EG 279) because God will repay it with the abundant gift of salvation. This conviction is called a sense of mystery, that when one entrusts Himself/herself to God, he/she will bear good fruit.

D. Fervent Prayer

Pope Francis tells everyone the importance of prayer in doing mission in the task of evangelization: "Constant prayer will grant us the guidance for every crisis that one is experiencing in his/her mission" (EG 282). It is very essential to beg God in prayer. One must not abandon prayer even in the midst of doubtful moments. The special weapon that everyone must always use is prayer so that one may never get tired of his/her mission to spread the Good News. In fact, "when evangelizers rise from prayer, their hearts are more open. Freed from self-absorption, they are desirous of doing good and sharing their lives with others." In short, evangelizers must always stand in his/her friendship with God in prayer.



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CATECHETICAL MODULE 7: THE YOUTH

Overview

The young people make up for the most number of the population in the Philippines. But they are also the most vulnerable to the negative effects of developments brought about by a technological society. The youth must affirm their gifts and capacity to pursue Christian ideals in their lives and in building up a society. The Church must dialogue with them, enter their world, and journey with them towards a maturity in Christ since their aspirations will shape the third millennium.



Photo from the Archdiocese of Davao

“Young people need to encounter Christian communities that are truly rooted in friendship with Christ, which leads them to the Father and be in communion with the Holy Spirit (Christus Vivit 62). Parents must be models of faith to their children. This means that parents should make it possible for their children to experience how valuable and beneficial it is to live in the familiar presence of the loving God (YOUCAT 373). As children of God who are growing to become virtuous disciples of God, there should be a living encounter with God in the environment through the individuals they will meet under the guidance of the Church.

Hence, Filipino youth ministers made an “open letter”. This lengthy and detailed letter is an enlightening contribution of the young people to the fruitfulness of the Year of the Youth. The response to that open letter is a pastoral letter issued by the CBCP for the formal launching of the Year of the Youth. This Pastoral Letter points out that the youth are beloved, gifted, and empowered (Valles, 2018).

Youth are Beloved

The faith of young people is often accompanied by greater devotion and generosity “because the Lord often reveals to a younger person what is better.” That is why the youth are beloved Disciples of Christ, they make the Church young. Just like John, the beloved disciple (John 21:20), who in his youth was called by the Lord to follow Him. Many parishes in the Philippines are filled with young people, serving as altar servers, choir, youth ministers, etc. The Church really loves the youth with a special affection (Valles, 2018). Therefore, the Church must invest in them and give them full support.

“As the Father loves me, so I also love you” (John 15:9). The Gospel of John invites the youth, who probably seeks complete joy in life, to become a loving person. The Church in the Philippines seeks to show the same love of God especially through Her youth ministry, whose

aspiration is to raise the youth and carry them lovingly through life, despite all its trials and tribulations (Episcopal Commission on Youth, 2004, pp. 35-41).

Youth are Gifted

We remember, as inspiration, two brave young lay missionary catechists who proclaimed the Good News by words and deeds, St. Pedro Calungsod was martyred by his faith in God, and Richie Fernando, the young Jesuit who died shielding his students from a grenade explosion. Like them, the youth are called to become courageous witnesses of the faith. The youth are gifted with the Holy Spirit who inflames them in faith, passion, and courage (Valles, 2018). Many people recognize the youth of today for their talented skills or gifts and in many ways that they contribute to the Church and the society. However, the youth needs proper guidance by their parents, the government and the Church. The Church has a big responsibility in accompanying them to grow in faith and love for God.

Youth are Empowered

Everyone is longing for a better world, better society and a renewed Church, and the Church sees the youth as protagonists of this change. The youth, when properly guided, are a dynamic force in the Church for New Evangelization. The inspiration of the life of Darwin Ramos reminds the youth that they could do so much in proclaiming the faith. A young boy who lived his faith and gave witness to Jesus, Darwin Ramos was declared as “Servant of God” on May 31 2019. Bishop Honesto Ongtioco of the Diocese of Cubao said that Darwin developed a deep personal relationship with Christ, taking time every day to pray and entrust himself to God (Union of Catholic Asian News, 2019). Not only was he one of the many street children, he was also afflicted with myopathy. “he is closely united with Christ in his suffering and joy.” Darwin is a model of holiness to the Filipino youth of today’s generation. When the youth genuinely imitate Christ, they are really empowered to do mission and be active workers for renewal in the Church and also in the society.

Youth are Missioned

Pope Francis challenged the youth, when he said: “So make a mess! But also help in cleaning it up, a mess that brings a free heart, a mess that brings solidarity, a mess that brings us hope, a mess that comes from knowing Jesus and knowing that God, once I know Him, is my strength” (Pullella & Desantis, 2015). Quite clearly, the youth are really a source of great hope for New Evangelization. Their contribution for social transformation and spreading the Good News with their gifted abilities can make the mission of the Church brighter.

Pope Francis also spoke beautifully and powerfully to the Filipino youth gathered at the University of Santo Tomas on January 18, 2015 when he reminded the young participants of the significant contribution they can make to the life of this country by learning to “act with honesty and fairness in their dealing with others and to learning to love the right way” (Llego, 2015). The pope literally bestowed to the young the duty of building a civilization of love. This message of Pope Francis to the Filipino youth entails great responsibility that calls for accompaniment to assist them in their path towards the love of God.

On the account of the road to Emmaus, Jesus showed that accompanying requires availability to walk a stretch of road together, establishing a significant relationship. It is

therefore the community as a whole that is the prime subject for accompanying the youth such as; All the significant persons in the various spheres of young people's lives, such as family members, teachers, animators, trainers, pastors and other figures of reference including professional ones (CV 92-93).

The Synod Letter for the Youth says that like the two disciples who were met by Jesus on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-35), "you are invited to open your eyes and ears, your minds and hearts: listen with a disposition of faith in Him, so you may turn your steps from a world of fear and despair towards that of God's Kingdom (Synod of Bishops, 2018). Thus, by fostering great values and protective spirituality in the Filipino youth, they will become great evangelizers and a hope for New Evangelization. As the national hero of the Philippines Dr. Jose Rizal (1879) would say "*Ang kabataan ang pag-asa ng bayan*", the Filipino youth must inculcate in their mind and heart this sublime calling of the Church and the society.

Catechetical Intended Learning Outcomes

- † **Encountering Christ.** The youth encounter Christ through friendship, because they view Christ as companion and they long for accompaniment. They are the most in need of guidance and accompaniment. Thus, we should be a friend to them, who will patiently accompany them in their journey of life.
- † **Conversion.** The Church must change their outlook on the youth, that is, that the parish will only spend money on them to no avail, that they are stubborn, etc. where in fact they are indeed the hope of the Church, the Church must consider the youth as treasures. The Church must support them and should invest in them.
- † **Sense of Belongingness.** Proper guidance and accompaniment of the youth is given high regards. This will have a great effect in their lives since they will be guided in accordance to the Church's teaching, especially Christian faith and morals. These foster great values which they really need in, as they, too, have a big role to play in transforming the Church anew.
- † **Zeal for Mission.** The youth are really a source of great hope for New Evangelization. Their contribution for social transformation such as their availability to spread the Good News, skills in social communication and other talents can make the mission of the Church brighter.



Photo from the Diocese of Kalibo



Photo from the Apostolic Vicariate of Calapan

Youth

Old English *geoguð* "youth; young people, junior warriors; young of cattle," related to *geong* "young," from Proto-Germanic **jugunthi-* (source also of Old Saxon *juguth*, Old Frisian *jogethe*, Middle Dutch *joghet*, Dutch *jeugd*, Old High German *jugund*, German *Jugend*, Gothic *junda* "youth"), from suffixed form of PIE root **yeu-* "vital force, youthful vigor". It can be understood also as the freshness and vitality of characteristics of a young person, young people collectively (i.e. "*rock music appeals to the young*", "*youth everywhere rises in revolt*"), a young person (especially a young man or boy), early maturity; the state of being young or immature or inexperienced, the time of life between childhood and maturity and an early period of development (Online Etymology Dictionary, 2021).

Catechetical Context

Filipino Youth in Mission:

Beloved, Gifted, Empowered

CBCP Pastoral Letter for the 2019 Year of the Youth

Dear young people,

Grace and Peace to you all!

We, your shepherds, thank you from our hearts for coming together to chart the course of our celebration of your year, the Year of the Youth. We commend your courage in expressing your very selves through the "Open Letter of the Filipino Youth to the Catholic Church". We delight in your recognition of your being vital members of the Body of Christ, the Church. As a response to your letter, the Philippine Catholic Church embraces you and your being life-given and life-giving, and with you, we affirm that:

You are BELOVED. Just like John the beloved disciple, who in his youth was called by the Lord to follow Him, the Church loves you with special affection, and we share with you the same call from the Lord. You are loved by the Father (Dt. 1:31; Is 40:11; 41:10; 46:4) as Jesus declared to His disciples, "As the Father loves me, so I also love you" (Jn. 15:9), and He then invites you to remain in His love by following His commandments (Jn. 14:15). Only then will you experience the joy that is complete (Jn. 15:9-11). The Church in the Philippines seeks to show you the same love (PCP II 385; Episcopal Commission on Youth, pp. 35-41), especially through her youth ministry, whose aspiration is to raise you up and carry you lovingly through life, with all its trials and tribulations.

You are GIFTED. The Sacrament of Baptism you received initiated you into the life of God and with God. Through the Sacrament of Confirmation, you were gifted with the Holy Spirit who inflames you with faith, passion, and courage. Like the young lay missionary catechist St. Pedro Calungsod and Richie Fernando, the young Jesuit who died shielding his students from a grenade explosion, your fresh and energetic youthfulness is also a gift, enabling you to commit yourselves in service of others, as well as renewing the Church and the world. To the countless

The Road to Emmaus Story (Lk 24:13-35)

youth volunteers and missionaries who share their gifts in the building up of God's Reign—upholding and defending life and human dignity, the environment, justice, freedom and peace, among others—your families, the Church and our society recognize you, and need more of your willingness and dedication. You clearly remind us that a life embraced and shared wholeheartedly contributes to the ongoing work of creation and glorifies God.

You are EMPOWERED. In the face of so many problems and difficulties today affecting our Christian life, families, social relationships and communities, as well as various personal and socio-cultural concerns you raised in your letter (mental health, substance abuse, HIV-AIDS, access to education, environmental problems, human trafficking, politics, dialogue with cultures, digital community, etc.), you are able to exhibit the humility to seek the support that will lead you to discover your strengths and capabilities to live meaningful lives. Like Mary, you are humble enough to proclaim “How can this be...?” (Lk. 1:34) and still give your assent in faith. This pleases not only the Lord but also your elders, because you are making us an important part of your development into mature individuals, fully aware of being persons called by God, capable of discerning decisions that positively impact your lives and those of others. We all long for a better world and society, for a renewed Church, and we see you as protagonists of this change, as the dynamic force of the Church now, when you reach out to the peripheries to bring Jesus and His message of salvation to the lost, the least and the last, including other young people like you who yearn to be loved, gifted and empowered.



Photo from the Diocese of Kidapawan



Photo from the Apostolic Vicariate of Jolo

You are IN MISSION. We look at you, our young people, so full of dynamism, as disciples sent on a mission to make disciples for Jesus. We pray that your discernment, choices and actions will lead you to a purposeful life—whether in the ordained ministry, consecrated life, marriage and family, or the single state—with the Spirit of the Risen Christ directing your steps in making and leaving a marked difference in the world and society [cf. Mt 28:19-20]. As we look forward to 2021, we envision that the celebration of the 500th anniversary of the arrival of Christianity in the Philippines will be a time to celebrate a bountiful harvest from your ranks—youth committed to families, to the Church and to the country with a renewed passion to proclaim the Word, ready to work with their communities and the Church, and willing to share in molding a just and peaceful world through missionary involvement. As the Holy Father Pope Francis challenged you, we also say: “So make a mess! But also help in cleaning it up... a mess that brings a free heart, a mess that

brings solidarity, a mess that brings us hope, a mess that comes from knowing Jesus and knowing that God, once I know Him, is my strength” (from the WYD2013). Awaken the shepherds in us, your elders, and rekindle the fire of faith, hope and love in everyone in the Church so that together, we can journey and minister with you, as you serve the Church and your fellow youth.

We appreciate your courage and openness to welcome the Year of the Youth with all its challenges and hopes. May you overflow with joy and trust that can only come from your encounter with Jesus through your moments of prayer, from the celebration of the Eucharist and other Sacraments, through the reading and study of the Word of God, in your pastoral youth formation activities and gatherings, in your participation in the life of your local churches, and through your works of mercy and charity.

Lastly, like the two disciples who were met by Jesus on the road to Emmaus (Lk. 24:13-35), you are invited to open your eyes and ears, your minds and hearts: listen with a disposition of faith in Him, so you may turn your steps from a world of fear and despair towards that of God’s Kingdom. Together with the Synod Fathers, we express our wish to “continue the journey now in every part of the earth where the Lord Jesus sends us as missionary disciples” (Synod of Bishops, 2018).

With Mary our Mother who, in her youth trustingly said to the angel “Be it done to me according to your word” (Lk. 1:38), may our own FIAT resound this 2019 and beyond!

For the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of the Philippines

+ ROMULO G. VALLES, D.D.

Archbishop of Davao

President, Catholic Bishops’ Conference of the Philippines

December 2, 2018

First Sunday of Advent



Photo from the Archdiocese of Davao



Photo from the Archdiocese of Capiz

Song for Reflection

LIWANAG SA DILIM

By: Rico Blanco

Intro: Em-G-Em-G-A-G-A-G-break
(D,C#m,)A-(Em,F#m,)G-; (3x)
F#-break

A G
Ituring ang iyong sariling
A
Tagahawi ng ulap
G
Sa kalangitang kulimlim
A G
Kampanang yayanig sa bawat nilalang
A G
Magigising ang lupang kulang sa dilig

F#m G
Ikaw ang magsasabing (kaya mo 'to)
F#m G
Tulad ng isang tanglaw sa gitna ng bagyo

Chorus
A
Isigaw mo sa hangin
G A
Tumindig at magsilbing liwanag
G A
Liwanag sa dilim
A G
Harapin mong magiting
A
Ang bagong awitin
G break (A)
Ikaw ang liwanag sa dilim

Interlude: A-G-A-G-break
Oh woh oh...

A
At sa paghamon mo
G A G
Sa agos ng ating kasaysayan

A G A G
Uukit ka ng bagong daan, ohh...

F#m G
Ikaw ang aawit ng (kaya mo 'to)
F#m G
Isang panalangin sa gitna ng gulo

(Repeat Chorus except last line)

G break
Ikaw ang liwanag

Adlib: A-G-A-G-A-G-;
F#m-G-A-;
(D,C#m,)A-(Em,F#m,)G-; (2x)

A
Isigaw mo sa hangin
Bm G
Tumindig at magsilbing
D

Liwanag sa dilim
F#m
Harapin mong magiting
G F#m
Ang bagong awitin
G break D,C#m,A
Liwanag

A
Isigaw mo sa hangin
Bm G
Tumindig at magsilbing
D

Liwanag sa dilim
F#m
Harapin mong magiting
G F#m
Ang bagong awitin
G A-G-A-
Liwanag sa dilim (woh oh oh...)
G A G-A-G-A hold
Liwanag sa dilim (woh oh oh...)

Catechist's Corner

“Then they made a crown out of thorny branches and placed it on his head, and put a stick in his right hand; then they knelt before him and made fun of him. ‘Long live the King of the Jews’ they said”

(Matthew 27:29)

Becoming and being a catechist is an active process of partaking in the educative mission of understanding, learning, and living our Catholic faith. This module part offers an empirical narrative glimpse of the lives of catechists captured in a creative methodological approach called, “research poems”.

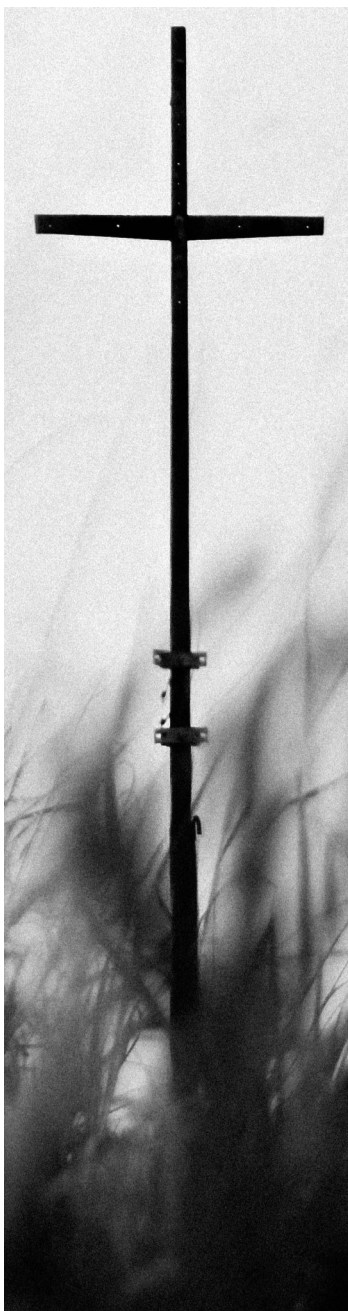
Read, recite, listen, and/or reflect on your **life as a “catechist”** using the selected research poem below. Discuss your views and insights with fellow catechists using the provided guide question/s in relation to the module theme on *the youth (mga kabataan)*.

Guide question for Discussion:

† Are we prepared to face suffering in order to fulfill the will of God?



Photo from the Diocese of Cabanatuan



CROWN OF THORNS

By Clarence M. Batan¹

Translated to English by Luciana L. Urquiola

The first time she taught,
There was so much joy
In every day
Mission of catechizing
The playful children.
But as time passed by
The catechist had observed
The gradual loss
Of the children's
Interest to listen
Children weighed down
Eyes forlorn
Because their lives
Are a wearisome battle
With serious problems at home:
Their parents do not go to mass,
Who are jobless,
Separated, not married.
It seemed to the catechist
That she had been crowned
With thorns that pierced her heart,
Because it seemed not enough
To simply understand the sacraments.
This society that the
Children lived in
Desperately needs catechism.
This is the fourth
Way of the Cross
Of a servant-catechist,
For meaningful servitude.

¹This research poem is part of the book, *KATEKISTA: Mga Tulang Pananaliksik Hango sa National Catechetical Study 2016-2018*, produced as a Research-based Intervention Outcome (RIO) of the National Catechetical Study (NCS) 2021: Pastoral Action Research and Intervention (PARI) Project. To access this, you can visit this link: <https://www.ncs2021pariproject.com/katekista-mga-tulang-pananaliksik>.

CATECHETICAL LESSON 1: ENCOUNTERING CHRIST: CULTURE OF ENCOUNTER



Introduction

The youth must also become evangelizers themselves. The best way to evangelize young people is through other young people (Pope Francis, 2013b). Thus, the Church should prepare them and give them opportunities to engage themselves in various apostolates. Even while still young, they should be involved in parish apostolates after due training and must be part of the Parish Pastoral Council (PCP II 650-651). By witnessing and experiencing good examples from Church leaders and other youth, they will be given a sense of direction that may transform them into being aware and sensitive to their environment, and be renewed as faithful servants of God.



Photo from the Archdiocese of Davao

For young people, accompaniment has a great effect in their lives. It ensures continuous and suitable accompaniment for the vocational process of the young people. They need to be guided in accordance with the Church's teachings on Christian faith and morals. These are crucially needed in this generation (CV 242). These will enable them to grow in the right direction and not be lost in the world's sinfulness and distractions.



Worship

Gospel of Luke 24:13-35

¹³ Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, ¹⁴ and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. ¹⁵ While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, ¹⁶ but their eyes were kept from recognizing Him. ¹⁷ And He said to them, "What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?" They stood still, looking sad. ¹⁸ Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered Him, "Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?" ¹⁹ He asked them, "What things?" They replied, "The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, ²⁰ and how our chief priests and leaders handed Him over to be condemned to death and crucified Him. ²¹ But we had hoped that He was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. ²² Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this

morning,²³ and when they did not find his body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that He was alive.²⁴ Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see Him.”²⁵ Then He said to them, “Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared;²⁶ Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into His glory?”²⁷ Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, He interpreted to them the things about Himself in all the scriptures.

²⁸ As they came near the village to which they were going, He walked ahead as if he were going on.²⁹ But they urged Him strongly, saying, “Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.” So He went in to stay with them.³⁰ When He was at the table with them, He took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them.³¹ Then, their eyes were opened, and they recognized Him; and He vanished from their sight.³² They said to each other, “Were not our hearts burning within us while He was talking to us on the road, while He was opening the scriptures to us?”³³ That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together.³⁴ They were saying, “The Lord has risen indeed, and He has appeared to Simon!”³⁵ Then they told what had happened on the road, and how He had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.



Doctrine

† Wisdom

Wisdom is the first and highest gift of the Holy Spirit because it is the perfection of the theological virtue of faith. Through wisdom, we come to value properly those things which we believe through faith. The truths of Christian belief are more important than the things of this world, and wisdom helps us to order our relationship to the created world properly, it leads us to love Creation for the sake of God, rather than for its own sake.

† Understanding

Understanding is the second gift of the Holy Spirit, and people sometimes have a hard time understanding how it differs from wisdom. While wisdom is the desire to contemplate the things of God, understanding allows us to grasp, at least in a limited way, the very essence of the truths of the Catholic faith. Through understanding, we gain a certitude about our beliefs that moves beyond faith.

† Counsel

Counsel, is the third gift of the Holy Spirit, is the perfection of the cardinal virtue of prudence. Prudence can be practiced by anyone, but counsel is supernatural. Through this gift of the Holy Spirit, we are able to judge how best to act almost by intuition. Because of the gift of counsel, Christians need not fear to stand up for the truths of Faith, because the Holy Spirit will guide us in defending those truths.



† Fortitude

While counsel is the perfection of a cardinal virtue, fortitude is both a gift of the Holy Spirit and a cardinal virtue. Fortitude is ranked as the fourth gift of the Holy Spirit because it gives us the strength to follow through on the actions suggested by the gift of counsel. While fortitude is sometimes called courage. However, it goes beyond what we normally think of as courage. Fortitude is the virtue of the martyrs that allows them to suffer death rather than to renounce the Christian Faith.

† Knowledge

The fifth gift of the Holy Spirit, knowledge, is often confused with both wisdom and understanding. Like wisdom, knowledge is the perfection of faith, but whereas wisdom gives us the desire to judge all things according to the truths of the Catholic Faith, knowledge is the actual ability to do so. Like counsel, it is aimed at our actions in this life. In a limited way, knowledge allows us to see the circumstances of our life the way that God sees them. Through this gift of the Holy Spirit, we can determine God's purpose for our lives and live them accordingly.

† Piety

Piety, the sixth gift of the Holy Spirit, is the perfection of the virtue of religion. While we tend to think of religion today as the external elements of our faith, it really means the willingness to worship and to serve God. Piety takes that willingness beyond a sense of duty so that we desire to worship God and to serve Him out of love.

† Fear of the Lord

The seventh and final gift of the Holy Spirit is the fear of the Lord, and perhaps no other gift of the Holy Spirit is so misunderstood. We think of fear and hope as opposites, but the fear of the Lord confirms the theological virtue of hope. This gift of the Holy Spirit gives us the desire not to offend God, as well as the certainty that God will supply us the grace that we need in order to keep from offending Him. Our desire not to offend God is more than simply a sense of duty; like piety, the fear of the Lord arises out of love.



Photo from the Diocese of Cubao



Photo from the Diocese of Tandag



Human Values

- † **Enthusiasm** - Enthusiasm is one of the most divine feelings we can experience. Enthusiasm is energy vibrating at the highest level, energy vibrating in tune with creation. This divine feeling of excitement is our reward for heading towards our soul's true purpose.
- † **Creativity** - Creativity helps us see things differently and helps us to better deal with uncertainty. Studies show that creative people are more able to live with uncertainty because they can adapt their thinking so as to allow for the flow of the unknown.

Three important reasons to be more creative

- † **Creativity predicts a longer life.** Researchers found that creativity decreases mortality risk. One possible reason why creativity is protective of health is because it draws on a variety of neural networks within the brain (Carver, 2019). James Clear (2021) cites studies and researches that show how art therapy decreases negative emotions, reduces stress and anxiety, and improves medical outcomes. Not only can being creative help you live longer, but it can improve your quality of health and life too.
- † **Helps solve problems.** Being creative helps us become a better problem-solver in all areas of life and work. Instead of coming from a linear, logical approach, creativity can help us approach a situation from all angles. Creativity helps us see things differently and better deal with uncertainty. Studies show that creative people are better able to live with uncertainty because they can adapt their thinking to allow for the flow of the unknown.
- † **Develop confidence.** Being creative comes with many ups and downs along with risks of failure. We allow ourselves to be vulnerable when we share our art. After all, not everyone might be able to appreciate it. Thus, engaging in the creative process is a great confidence builder, because we discover that failure is part of the process. Once we see failure as something that is survivable, and something that helps us grow and that it makes our work better, we can release our fears and try new things even at the risk of failing.
- † **Optimism** - Optimism is an attitude reflecting a belief or hope that the outcome of some specific endeavor, or outcomes in general, will be positive, favorable, and desirable. Being optimistic, in the typical sense of the word, is defined as expecting the best possible outcome from any given situation. It improves your emotional well-being, fosters better relationships and provides protection against adverse events. Optimism as a practice is self-fulfilling: it leads to greater effort, which in turn leads to better outcomes.



Morals

- † **Accompaniment of the youth** - “By virtue of their baptism, all the members of the People of God have become missionary disciples” (EG 120). There is a deep hunger in youth and young adults--a hunger for love, for truth, for meaning, for belongingness, and for a sense of purpose that culture cannot satisfy. This hunger is satisfied only in friendship with Jesus Christ. A friendship that leads to the community of His Church and helps us to be fruitful in sharing love and care with those in need. Another way to describe this friendship is the invitation to become missionary disciples of and for Jesus Christ. Youth and young adults begin their discipleship journey in baptism and continue on with that journey when they come to love Christ and follow His ways. They become missionary disciples when they seek to witness and serve those who are in need the most, beginning with those closest to them. Our engagement with the youth and young adults should help young disciples to encounter Christ. We have to accompany them, promote belongingness in the parish community, and lead them to missionary witness.
- † **Encounter** - “I invite all Christians, everywhere, at this very moment, to a renewed personal encounter with Jesus Christ, or at least openness to letting Him encounter them” (EG 3). Like the disciples on the road to Emmaus, young people are often filled with questions. They long to encounter Christ, and they want to have someone to walk with and listen to their questioning (not necessarily answer them, but just be present for them). They want a first-hand experience of God, and they want that experience to be connected to their everyday life. Young people encounter God in the sacramental life of the Church, in prayer, community, in the Word, nature, service, witnessing, friendship, acts of kindness, hospitality, silence, art, and music etc. Some helpful reflection questions are: 1) how can we rethink our ministries with youth so that we are providing a series of encounters and opportunities to reflect on these experiences? And 2) How can we become architects of encounter for young people?

SOME PRINCIPLES TO GUIDE ACCOMPANIMENT OF YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS

- † **Look broadly at the youth and young adult populations and develop targeted ministries for different segments.** Some youth, and young adults are looking to go deeper and become more engaged in formation and community services, while other young people need deeper prayer experiences. Some young people are anxious to come to weekly gatherings and join communities, still, others resist this kind of participation but are longing to have someone to talk to about their faith. Thus, we need differentiated approaches that begin with the variety of young people in mind.
- † **Engage families and see parents as part of our ministry.** Parents need to be inspired and equipped to take lead in the spiritual formation of their children. This looks different when children are youth and young adults. We can help families make this transition. What can we do to strengthen and support families as they share faith across generations? For families that are struggling with faith and active participation

in the community, our work with the youth can be a spark that evangelizes the whole community. Families with young adults often face different challenges. We can support parents as they continue to foster the faith life of emerging adults.

- † **Look broadly at our community and engage other disciples who are willing to spend time with the youth and young adults.** Notice we didn't say "recruit more ministry leaders." Discipleship is about developing the practices of being a disciple of Jesus which is something we learn in community and in relationship with other disciples. We try to identify who are the youth and adults in our community whom we want young people to "catch" faith from.
- † **Focus on spiritual growth and attend to youth and young adults in a comprehensive way.** Youth and young adults are more than just a family member or learner. Our ministry responses and faith formation need to address and engage each young person and assist them in taking the next step in their journey. It is especially important to invest time in helping youth and young adults who are evangelized to take deeper steps toward accountability, witness, and engagement in mission.
- † **Touch their hearts and make it personal.** Young people yearn to belong and to relate to people who care about them and value them as individuals. To build this relationship, we need to learn names, know youth and young adults, and provide ministries that move, inspire, and engage.
- † **Provide multiple contact points.** Youth and young adults grow in commitment through a variety of relationships. They benefit from hearing different voices that provide an echo of faith.
- † **Listen and include the youth, young adults, families, and leaders from among the diverse cultures within the community.** Dioceses and parishes are learning new ways to come to know and include the needs and gifts of people from various cultures in developing authentic and inclusive ministry responses. The Bishops of the United States are calling ministry leaders to develop intercultural competencies so that we have the capacity to listen, welcome, include, and be formed by people of many cultures. These resources are an important part of our accompaniment to young people (Stanz & East, 2021).
- † **Go where the youth and young adults are, including online.** The roots of youth ministry are to go to the corners where youth hang out. Young adult ministry has a similar history. To do this today, we should be proficient in social media, and use technology as a means to draw them towards gathered participation with the faith community.
- † **Engage youth and young adults in ministries that help them belong, believe, and share their gifts.** These elements address fundamental human needs that profoundly shape the youth and young adults. Ministry that addresses these elements develops the commitment and identity that are foundational to formation as growing young disciples.



- † **Empower them to make a difference.** Young people welcome and value opportunities that empower them to make a difference in the world. To put individuals in situations where their involvement truly affects another person is at the heart of faith. Ensure that ample opportunities are given to perform service and ministry that directly impacts the life of another.
- † **Be action oriented.** Young people value instant communication, respond quickly to action, and are adept at multitasking. They would rather participate in service than talk about it. If you decide to invite a young person to a parish committee, make sure that your committee is action oriented. Youth and young adults do not respond well to sitting around and talking about ministry; they prefer to make a difference now. Long, drawn out meetings without a clear focus are certain to only drive away youth and young adults!



Photo from the Archdiocese of Cagayan De Oro

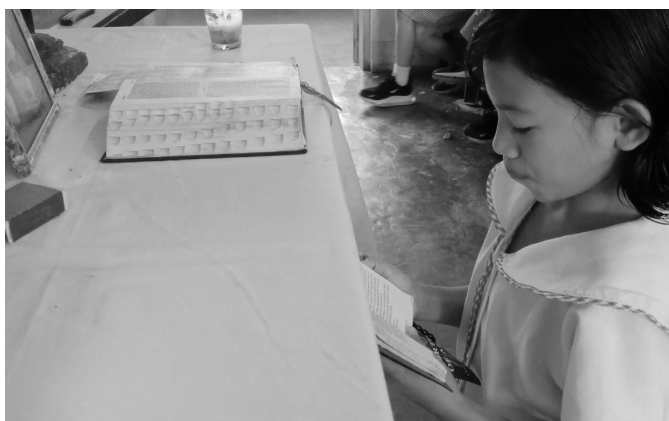


Photo from the Archdiocese of Palo

Simple Activities

Activity: This is Better Than That

The team divides into pairs. One member of the pair wears a blindfold. The blindfolded member then has to complete a task while his or her partner verbally guides him or her safely through it. For this exercise, you need a large empty area. Fill the area with obstacles such as chairs, boxes or anything else you have on hand. The blindfolded partner needs to navigate the area without bumping into anything, while his or her partner guides him or her safely through the obstacle course.

Song Analysis (see next page)

Guide for Reflection:

- † How do I become a steward of God's creations?
- † How do I help my fellow youth be closer to God?



ONE MISSION

(2019 YEAR OF THE YOUTH THEME SONG)

We are the true stewards of His creation
Serving humanity with joy and compassion
Creating change amidst our horizon
Building a brighter future with youthful passion

Chorus:

So let us sing and dance for the Lord
Spreading His words through this melody
Uniting His nation
One in faith, Hope and Charity

Let the love of God reign in our hearts
Shaping the world with the gifts we impart
Beloved, gifted, empowered through Jesus
We are one in mission
The Lord is with us
We are one!

Let the spirit of Christ be our guide
Like the spark of light forged in the sky
Together we'll reach our dreams up high

Chorus:

So let us sing and dance for the Lord
Spreading His words through this melody
Uniting His nation
One in faith, Hope and Charity

Let the love of God reign in our hearts
Shaping the world with the gifts we impart
Beloved, gifted, empowered through Jesus
We are one in mission
The Lord is with us
We are one!

Let the love of God reign in our hearts
Shaping the world with the gifts we impart
Beloved, gifted, empowered, through Jesus
We are one in mission
The Lord is with us
We are one!
(Repeat chorus)



Prayer / Worship

A Prayer for Accompanying the Young

Heavenly Father, You call people from all walks of life to You. You have called me to walk with young people and accompany them on their journey of faith. Nourish me by Your Body and Blood. Sustain me through Your Body the Church Encourage me through Your Word. Help me to be Your hands, feet and voice to all young people I meet. I ask this in the name of your Son Jesus Christ. Amen.



Zeal for Mission

- † **KNOW** - The life of a young person and the vocation to which God calls each one is “holy ground” that pastors and parents must respect, nurture and encourage. Pope Francis emphasized this in his apostolic exhortation *Christus Vivit* (Christ Lives). Likewise, the pope’s reflections on the 2018 Synod of Bishops on young people, on the faith and on vocational discernment, is a combination of a letter to young people about their place in the Church and a plea to older members of the Church not to stifle the enthusiasm of the young, but rather, to offer gentle guidance when needed.
- † **LIVE** - Help young people do what disciples do and get good at it! Our ministries could focus less on participation and learning information and more on practicing the skills of being a disciple. When youth and young adults are good at praying on their own, reading the Bible, participating in Mass and the Sacrament of Reconciliation, engaging in service, and witnessing to their faith, they will continue to do these things and seek communities and relationships that support them in being disciples.
- † **SHARE** – For the youth, (those whose age are from 18 until 40), you must not hide your talent. Rather, you should share your giftedness, the talents that God has given must be shared with others. As the parable of Talents would teach us that we should not bury into the ground the gift of God to us, but we should make it grow not for our own sake but for the Kingdom of God.

CATECHETICAL LESSON 2:

CONVERSION: WHEN GOD SPEAKS, WE LISTEN



Photo from the Diocese of Kalibo



Introduction

The youth must also become evangelizers themselves. The best instrument to evangelize young people are other young people. The Church should prepare them and give them opportunities to engage themselves in various apostolates. Even while still young, they should be involved in parish apostolates after due training and must be

part of the Parish Pastoral Council (PCP II 650-651). By witnessing and experiencing good examples from Church leaders and other youth, they will be given a sense of direction that may transform them into being aware and sensitive to their environment, to be renewed and faithful servants of God.

Accompaniment of the young people has great effect in their lives. With the aim of ensuring a continuous and suitable accompaniment of the vocational process of the young people. Because they must be guided in accordance to the Church's teachings and Christian faith and morals which are crucially needed in this generation (CV 242). In this way, they will be able to grow in the right direction and not be lost by the world's sinfulness and distractions.



Worship

Book of 1 Samuel 3:1-20

Now the boy Samuel was ministering to the Lord under Eli. The word of the Lord was rare in those days; visions were not widespread.² At that time Eli, whose eyesight had begun to grow dim so that he could not see, was lying down in his room; ³ the lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the temple of the Lord, where the ark of God was. ⁴ Then the Lord called, "Samuel! Samuel!" and he said, "Here I am!" ⁵ and ran to Eli, and said, "Here I am, for you called me." But he said, "I did not call; lie down again." So he went and lay down. ⁶ The Lord called again, "Samuel!" Samuel got up and went to Eli, and said, "Here I am, for you called me." But he said, "I did not call, my son; lie down again." ⁷ Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord, and the word of the Lord had not yet been revealed to him. ⁸ The Lord called Samuel again, a third time. And he got up and went to Eli, and said, "Here I am, for you called me." Then Eli perceived that the Lord was calling the boy. ⁹ Therefore Eli said to Samuel, "Go, lie down; and if He calls you, you shall say, 'Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.'" So Samuel went and lay down in his place. ¹⁰ Now the Lord came and stood there, calling as before, "Samuel! Samuel!" And Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant is listening."¹¹ Then



the Lord said to Samuel, “See, I am about to do something in Israel that will make both ears of anyone who hears of it tingle. ¹² On that day I will fulfill against Eli all that I have spoken concerning his house, from beginning to end. ¹³ For I have told him that I am about to punish his house forever, for the iniquity that he knew, because his sons were blaspheming God, and he did not restrain them. ¹⁴ Therefore, I swear to the house of Eli that the iniquity of Eli’s house shall not be expiated by sacrifice or offering forever.” ¹⁵ Samuel lay there until morning; then he opened the doors of the house of the Lord. Samuel was afraid to tell the vision to Eli. ¹⁶ But Eli called Samuel and said, “Samuel, my son.” He said, “Here I am.” ¹⁷ Eli said, “What was it that he told you? Do not hide it from me. May God do so to you and more also, if you hide anything from me of all that he told you.” ¹⁸ So Samuel told him everything and hid nothing from him. Then he said, “It is the Lord; let Him do what seems good to Him.” ¹⁹ As Samuel grew up, the Lord was with him and let none of His words fall to the ground. ²⁰ And all Israel from Dan to Beer-Sheba knew that Samuel was a trustworthy prophet of the Lord.



Photo from the Apostolic Vicariate of Jolo



Photo from the Diocese of Tandag



Doctrine

Three Theological Virtues

The theological virtues are the foundation of Christian moral activity; they animate it and give it its special character. They inform and give life to all the moral virtues. They are infused by God into the souls of the faithful to make them capable of acting as his children and of meriting eternal life. They are the pledge of the presence and action of the Holy Spirit in the faculties of the human being (CCC 1813).

† Faith

Faith is the theological virtue by which we believe in God and believe all that He has said and revealed to us, and what the Holy Church proposes for our belief, because He is truth Himself (CCC 1814). By faith "man freely commits his entire self to God." For this reason the believer seeks to know and do God's will. "The righteous shall live by faith." We live out our faith through works of charity.

The gift of faith remains in the one who has not sinned against it. But "faith without work is dead." When it is deprived of hope and love, faith does not fully unite the believer to Christ and does not make him/her a living member of his Body (CCC 1815).

The disciple of Christ must not only keep the faith and live on it, but also profess it, confidently bear witness to it, and spread it. "All must be prepared to confess Christ before men and to follow Him along the way of the Cross, amidst the persecutions which the Church never lacks." Service of and witness to the faith are necessary for salvation. "So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven; but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven" (CCC 1816).

† Hope

Hope is the theological virtue by which we desire the kingdom of heaven and eternal life as our happiness, placing our trust in Christ's promises and relying not on our own strength, but on the help of the grace of the Holy Spirit (CCC 1817).

The virtue of hope responds to our aspiration for happiness which God has placed in the heart of every man; it takes hope to inspire men's activities and purify them so as to order them towards the Kingdom of heaven. Hope keeps man from discouragement, sustains him during times of abandonment, and opens up his heart in expectation of eternal beatitude (CCC 1818).

Christian hope takes up from the fulfilment of the hope of the chosen people. It has its origin and model in the hope of Abraham, who was blessed abundantly by the promises of God fulfilled in Isaac, and who was purified by the test of sacrifice. "Hoping against hope, Abraham believed, and thus became the father of many nations" (CCC 1819).

Christian hope unfolds from the beginning of Jesus' preaching in the proclamation of the beatitudes. They trace the path that leads through the trials that await the disciples of Jesus. Hope is expressed and nourished in prayer, especially in the Lord's Prayer, which summarizes everything that hope leads us to desire. We can therefore hope in the glory of heaven promised by God to those who love Him and do His will. In every circumstance, each one of us should hope in the grace of God. This enables us to persevere until the end until we obtain the joy of heaven, as God's eternal reward for the good works accomplished with the grace of Christ. In hope, the Church prays for "all men to be saved" (CCC 1820).

† Charity

Charity is the theological virtue by which we love God above all things for his own sake, and our neighbor as ourselves for the love of God. Jesus makes charity the new commandment when He said: "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you; abide in my love." And again: "This is my commandment, that you love one



another as I have loved you.” Charity is a fruit of the Spirit and the fullness of the Law. Charity keeps the commandments of Christ: “Abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love” (CCC 1822-1823).

Christ died out of love for us, while we were still enemies. The Lord asks us to love as He does, even our enemies, to make ourselves the neighbor of those farthest away, and to love children and the poor as Christ himself. The Apostle Paul says: “charity is patient and kind, charity is not jealous or boastful; it is not arrogant or rude. Charity does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in the right. Charity bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things.” If I have not charity, says the Apostle, “I am nothing.” Whatever my privilege, service, or even virtue, “if I do not have charity, I gain nothing.” Charity is superior to all the virtues. It is the first of the theological virtues: “So faith, hope, charity abide, these three. But the greatest of these is charity” (CCC 1825-1826).

The practice of all the virtues is animated and inspired by charity, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. Charity upholds and purifies our human ability to love, and raises it to the supernatural perfection of Divine love. The fruits of charity are joy, peace, and mercy. Charity demands beneficence and fraternal correction, it is benevolence. It fosters reciprocity and remains disinterested and generous. It is friendship and communion. Love is itself the fulfillment of all our works (CCC 1828-1829).



Human Values

- † **Hopeful** - To have hope is to want an outcome that makes our life better, Not only does it help make a tough situation more bearable but it can also eventually improve our lives, because envisioning a better future motivates us to take the steps to make it happen. Having hope gives us the courage to think that things would get better with time, despite the difficult odds. Hope keeps us moving forward, and gives us the strength and the ability to bounce back from whatever obstacles in life.
- † **Prudent** - It is the virtue that allows us to judge correctly what is right and what is wrong in any given situation. When we mistake the evil for the good, we are not exercising prudence. In fact, we are showing our lack of it. Because it is so easy to fall into error, prudence requires us to seek the counsel of others, particularly those we know to be sound judges of morality. Disregarding the advice or warnings of others, whose judgment does not coincide with ours is a sign of imprudence.
- † **Temperance** - Temperance is the restraint of our desires or passions. Food, drink, and sex are all necessary for our survival, individually and as a specie; yet a disordered desire for any of these goods can have disastrous physical and moral consequences . Temperance is the virtue that attempts to keep us from excess, and,

as such, requires the balancing of legitimate good against our inordinate desire for them. Our legitimate use of such goods may be different at different times; temperance is the "golden mean" that helps us determine how far we can act on our desires.



Photo from the Diocese of Calbayog



Photo from the Archdiocese of Nueva Segovia



Morals

Millions of young people listened intently to the words of Pope Francis during the concluding Mass of World Youth Day 2013 held in Brazil. His homily reminds us of the importance of the youth not just to the future of the Church but to present times as well. Pope Francis said: "The Church needs you, your enthusiasm, your creativity and the joy that is so characteristic of you." He also stressed: "Jesus Christ is counting on you! The Church is counting on you! The Pope is counting on you!"

We re-echo the words of Pope Francis to the Filipino youth in the Philippines. The Philippine Church needs the youth and is counting on them. Being youthful is an important aspect of the Filipino youth's mission. As Pope Francis said, the Church needs their 'enthusiasm and creativity'. The Church needs their youthful approach to life, their ideals and new perspectives on things, especially on faith.

The youth are beloved. Jesus loves you the way you are.

Pope St John Paul II in his homily at the 10th World Youth Day held in Manila Philippines in 1995, would remind us what it means to be loved by the risen Lord. St John Paul said: "Beloved ones, sisters and brothers: build your lives on the one model that will not deceive you! I invite you to open the Gospel and discover that Jesus Christ wants to be your friend (Jn. 15: 14). He wants to be your companion at every stage on the road of life (Lk. 24: 13-35). He wants to be the "way", your path through the anxieties, doubts, hopes and dreams of happiness (Jn. 14: 6). He is the "truth" that gives meaning to your efforts and your struggles. He wants to give you "life", as he gave new life to the young man of Nain (Lk. 7: 11-17), and gave a whole new future to Zacchaeus who was dead in spirit through ambition and greed (Lk 19: 1-10). He is your "resurrection", your victory over sin and death, the fulfilment of your desire to live forever (Jn. 11: 25). Because of this, he will be your "joy", the "rock" on which your weakness will be turned into strength and optimism. He is our salvation, our hope and happiness and peace."



John Paul II (1993) considered the youth as agents of New Evangelization. He tapped the youth of this generation on the eighth gathering of World Youth Day in Denver, U.S.A. In his address to the youth, the venerable Pope said: “Dear young people, with a spirit of generous self-giving, recognize that you are directly involved in the New Evangelization, which demands the involvement of all of us.” The Pope told the young people gathered in that event that the New Evangelization is their special task, a mission entrusted in a singular way to their generation (ibid).

Youth are Gifted.

Find that special gift in you. Find that purpose God has assigned for you. You have the chance to appreciate life and all the good things that may come with it as you go on living. Don't take this for granted. You have the opportunity to invest your time and talents that not only make your life better but also that help better the lives of others. You have all the opportunity to not just dream of good things, but getting up and make those dreams a reality. Be a gift yourself (a good influence to your friends all the time).

Four ways to become a youthful gift

- † Strive to look for what is true, good and charitable.
- † Do the right thing always even if no one is looking.
- † Grow in Faith. Faith is our direct connection to God, a direct link to Jesus.
- † Uphold your Identity. Be who you are. Do not pretend to be someone you are not.

Youth are Empowered.

Youth empowerment is a process where children and young people are encouraged to take charge of their lives. They do this by addressing their situation and then take action in order to improve their access to resources and transform their consciousness through their beliefs, values, and attitudes. Christ not only loves the youth to be His friends. He also wants them to tell others about him. He wants the youth to bring their friends to Him. He wants them to make Him part of their circle of friends. He wants the youth to take an active part in the process of establishing God's kingdom. Thus He empowers the youth to share in the values and principles that Christ is passionate about.

How can we empower the youth?

- † 1. Include the youth in decision-making processes.
- † 2. Honor the voice of the youth.
- † 3. Understand and implement their honest opinions and ideas.
- † 4. be willing to share your adult power and privileges in order to make the community a better place for both the young people and adults alike.



Photo from the Archdiocese of Palo



Simple Activities

Activity :

Game Description:

This is a fun youth ministry game that serves a double purpose: 1. To remind the youth players of things that strengthen or weaken their relationship with God; 2. to have fun as a group of young people who are building their faith in Jesus Christ.

Materials needed

40-50 balloons blown up and tied and markers to write on the good and bad balloons. Use permanent markers so that the ink does not get on the players hands or clothes. Give the ink from the markers time to dry before using with the youth.

Instruction

Leaders will have blown up about 40-50 balloons of various colors and shapes. The leaders will write phrases or words that remind players of some of the ways they can be closer to God on 20-25 (half) balloons. On the other remaining balloons, leaders write phrases or words that pull all of us away from God's influence. Keep the "good" and "bad" balloons in separate large garbage bags.

Divide the youth into two teams, and divide the room with tape on the floor. Leaders will throw both the good and the bad balloons equally on each side. If the word or phrase on the balloon is good, players want to hold onto them. If they are bad, and only pull them away from their relationship with Jesus Christ, the players should throw those balloons over the line on the other team's area. After all of the balloons have been tossed out, give the players a couple of minutes to play the game. Then call, "Stop!" None of the balloons may be picked up or thrown after the "stop" is called. Each of the "good" balloons that are being held by a player count as a point. Even good balloons stuffed up in the players' shirts count. Any "bad" balloons being held by players or bad balloons on the floor of the team, count as a point against the team's total points. The team with the most points is the winner of the round. The balloons can be gathered and the game can be played again.

Follow-up lesson:

There are many things that draw us closer to Jesus Christ, and many things that can pull each of us away from Jesus Christ. It is up to each person to make good choices, and to get rid of bad choices. Remind the players, that each follower of Jesus Christ, no matter how young or how old, must make these choices every day, and that some days it is difficult to let go of the bad things that pull us from building a strong relationship with Jesus Christ. We cannot give up and give in, we must keep building our faith, trust, and love in God each day.

Song Analysis (See next page)





Photo from the Diocese of Borongan

JAM

By Kevin Roy & Cookie Chua

Hirap umawit mag-isa
And kasabay lumang gitara
Parang walang saysay ang kilos ko sa mundo

Pero ang kinabukasan mo
Tungkulin ba ng ibang tao
Maghanap ng entablado mo
Ngayon

Wag lang pagmasdan ang pangyayari
Gumala't gumalaw
Lamang sa ihip ng damdamin
Sabay sabay ng sumigaw

[chorus]
Kilos kabataan oras natin to
Makialam, makijam, makilahok
Kilos kabataan buhay natin to
Ang mundong dinatnan tayo magpatakbo
Makijam ka pare ko

Gusto ko man maki-isa
Sa paglutas ng mga problema
Anong magagawa ng isang katulad ko

Pero ang kinabukasan mo
Tungkulin ba ng ilang tao
Makibahagi sa bagahe ng mundo

Wag lang pagmasdan ang pangyayari
Gumala't gumalaw
Lamang sa ihip ng damdamin
Sabay sabay ng sumigaw
[repeat chorus]

[bridge]
Matuto ka makisaya
Ang mundo ma'y magka-iba

Sabay sabay kung mag-ingay
Makilahok, magpakilala

[repeat chorus 2x]

Guide for Reflection

- † How do I share my talents?
- † How do I make my fellow youth share their talents?



Prayer / Worship

Prayer for Youth Ministries

Thank You, Lord, for Christian youth ministries that are being used to share the Gospel with a range of young people. I pray that You would draw each one closer to Yourself as they meet together for fellowship, fun and to learn more about You.

Lord, I pray that you would use such youth ministries to strengthen and encourage all those that have been born again, so that they may grow spiritually. And Lord, for those youngsters who do not yet know You, I pray that You would convict each one of their need of a Savior, so that they may come to faith through the Word of God and the witness of these youth fellowships and ministries.

Protect them from the wiles of the enemy, who would seek to undermine their trust in You, but rather equip each one to look to Jesus rather than to the things of the world. May they grow in grace and become effective witnesses to friends and family, not only in what they say but in the way that they behave. In Jesus' name, Amen.



Zeal for Mission

- † **KNOW** - The need to empower the youth for a better tomorrow is connected, both to the financial elevation as well as spiritual well-being. Awareness is a key factor for this empowerment, with guidance towards developing a wholesome outlook of life. Youth empowerment in any development is imperative not only for national development but also for personal development of an individual. Youth empowerment is pursued by promoting youth rights, youth activism and participation in community decision making. Empowerment is necessarily a process of inculcating values to equip the learner to lead a life that is both fulfilling and in accordance with the cherished values and ideals of the society. At present, this is the most effective means that the society possesses for confronting the challenges of the future.
- † **LIVE** - To the whole Church is addressed by Christ's command: "Go out to the whole world; proclaim the Good News to all creation" (Mk. 16:15). The whole Church, therefore, is missionary and should be evangelizing; she lives constantly in a state of mission. Youth in this day should be the new missionaries and the new apostles of Christ. It is not enough to discover Christ, they (youth) must bring Him to others by using their exceptional skills and talent in proclaiming the Gospel through social



media, arts, music, facilitating youth encounters etc.

- † **SHARE** - In today's day and age, young minds should have access to resources to transform their consciousness through their beliefs, values, and attitudes. Then only can we believe in making our nation "shine", even in times of adversity. True happiness and selfishness cannot coexist. We must always be looking outward, "watchers of the dawn" with our eyes fixed on Jesus. It is easy to think the next new phone or electronic gadget, a new outfit, or a fun evening out can bring happiness, but these things can only bring pleasure, they do not last. Before looking for the next new piece to give us happiness, we should instead, place our hope in Christ.

CATECHETICAL LESSON 3:

COMMUNION: NAZARETH



Introduction

Jesus is “young among the young in order to be an example for the young and to consecrate them to the Lord”. For this reason, *Christus Vivit* (22) states that “youth is an original and stimulating stage of life, which Jesus himself experienced, thereby sanctifying it.” It is important to realize that Jesus was a young person. He gave His life when He was, in today’s terms, a young adult. He began his public mission in the prime of His life, and thus “a light dawned” (Mt 4:16) that would shine most brightly when He gave his life at the end. That ending was not something that simply happened; rather, His entire youth, at every moment, was a precious preparation for it. “Everything in Jesus’s life was a sign of His mystery”; indeed, “Christ’s whole life is a mystery of redemption” (CV 23).

Youth is more than simply a period of time; it is a state of mind. That is why an institution as ancient as the Church can experience renewal and a return to youth at different points in her age-old history. Indeed, at the most dramatic moments of her history, she feels called to return with all her heart to her first love. Recalling this truth, the Second Vatican Council noted that, “enriched by a long and living history, and advancing towards human perfection in time and the ultimate destinies of history and of life, the Church is the real youth of the world”. In her, it is always possible to encounter Christ “the companion and friend of youth” (CV 34). The Church is young when she herself receives ever anew the strength born of God’s Word in the Eucharist, and the daily presence of Christ and the power of His Spirit in our lives. The Church is young when she shows herself capable of constantly returning to her source (CV 35).

Certainly, as members of the Church, we should not stand apart from others. All should regard us as friends and neighbors, like the apostles, who “enjoyed the good will of all the people” (Acts 2:47; 4:21.33; 5:13). Yet at the same time we must dare to be different, to point to ideals other than those of this world, testifying to the beauty of generosity, service, purity, perseverance, forgiveness, fidelity to our personal vocation, prayer, the pursuit of justice and the common good, love for the poor, and social friendship (CV 36). It is really important to note that Jesus does not teach the young people, from afar or from without, but from within their very youth, a youth He shares with them. It is very important for us to contemplate the young Jesus as presented in the Gospels, for He was truly one of us, and shares many of the features of our young people. We see this, for example in the following: “Jesus had unconditional trust in the Father; He maintained friendship with His disciples, and even in moments of crisis, He remained faithful to them (CV 31).

**“Then he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them. His mother treasured all these things in her heart.”
(Lk 2:51)**



Young people can offer the Church the beauty of youth by renewing her ability to “rejoice with new beginnings, to give unreservedly of herself, to be renewed and to set out for ever greater accomplishments” (CV 37). Every young person who feels called to a mission in this world is invited to hear the Father speaking those same words within his or her heart: “You are my beloved child.”



Worship

Gospel of Luke 2: 41-52

⁴¹ Now every year His parents went to Jerusalem for the festival of the Passover. ⁴² And when He was twelve years old, they went up as usual for the festival. ⁴³ When the festival ended and they started to return, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but His parents did not know it. ⁴⁴ Assuming that He was in the group of travelers, they went a day’s journey. Then they started to look for Him among their relatives and friends. ⁴⁵ When they did not find Him, they returned to Jerusalem to search for Him. ⁴⁶ After three days they found Him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. ⁴⁷ And all who heard Him were amazed at His understanding and His answers. ⁴⁸ When His parents saw Him they were astonished; and His mother said to Him, “Child, why have you treated us like this? Look, Your father and I have been searching for You in great anxiety.” ⁴⁹ He said to them, “Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father’s house?” ⁵⁰ But they did not understand what He said to them. ⁵¹ Then He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them. His mother treasured all these things in her heart. ⁵² And Jesus increased in wisdom and in years, and in divine and human favor.



Doctrine

THE VIRTUES

- † **CCC 1803** - "Whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things." A virtue is a habitual and firm disposition to do good. It allows the person not only to perform good acts, but to give the best of himself. The virtuous person tends toward the good with all his sensory and spiritual powers; he pursues the good and chooses it in concrete actions.

The goal of a virtuous life is to become like God with God.

† THE HUMAN VIRTUES

- † **CCC 1804** - *Human virtues* are firm attitudes, stable dispositions, habitual perfections of intellect that govern our actions, order our passions, and guide our conduct according to reason and faith. They make possible ease, self-mastery, and joy in



Photo from the Diocese of Kabangkalan



Photo from the Diocese of Maasin

leading a morally good life. The virtuous man is he who freely practices the good.

Moral virtues are acquired by human effort. They are the fruit and seed of morally good acts; they dispose all the powers of the human being for communion with Divine love.

The Cardinal Virtues

- † **CCC 1805** – Four virtues play a pivotal role and accordingly are called "cardinal"; all the others are grouped around them. They are: prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance. "If anyone loves righteousness, Wisdom's labors are virtues; for she teaches temperance and prudence, justice, and courage." These virtues are praised under other names in many passages of Scripture.
- † **CCC 1806** – *Prudence* is the virtue that disposes practical reason to discern what is true and good in every circumstance and to choose the right means of achieving it; "the prudent man looks where he is going." Prudence is having the "right reason in action," writes St. Thomas Aquinas. It is not to be confused with timidity or fear, nor with duplicity or dissimulation. It is called *auriga virtutum* (the charioteer of the virtues) because it guides the other virtues by setting rule and measure. It is prudence that immediately guides the judgment of conscience. The prudent man determines and directs his conduct in accordance with this judgment. With the help of this virtue we apply moral principles to particular cases without error and overcome doubts about the good to achieve and the evil to avoid.
- † **CCC 1807** – *Justice* is the moral virtue that consists in the constant and firm will to give their due to God and neighbor. Justice toward God is called the "virtue of religion." Justice toward men disposes one to respect the rights of each and to establish, in human relationships, harmony that promotes equity with regard to persons and to the common good. The just man, often mentioned in the Sacred Scriptures, is distinguished by his habitual right thinking and the uprightness of his conduct toward his neighbor. "You shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great, but in righteousness shall you judge your neighbor." "Masters, treat your slaves justly and fairly, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven."

- † **CCC 1808** – *Fortitude* is the moral virtue that ensures firmness in difficulties and constancy in the pursuit of the good. It strengthens one's resolve to resist temptations and overcome obstacles in moral life. The virtue of fortitude enables one to conquer fear, even fear of death, and to face trials and persecutions. It disposes one even to renounce and sacrifice his life in defense of a just cause. "The Lord is my strength and my song."



Photo from the Diocese of Marbel



Photo from the Diocese of San Juan (Nueva Ecija)

- † **CCC 1809** – *Temperance* is the moral virtue that moderates the attraction of pleasures and provides balance in the use of created goods. It ensures the will's mastery over instincts and keeps desires within the limits of what is honorable. The temperate person directs the sensitive appetites towards what is good and maintains a healthy discretion. Temperance is often praised in the Old Testament: "Do not follow your base desires, but restrain your appetites" (Sirach 18:30).

To live well is nothing other than to love God with all one's heart, with all one's soul and with all one's efforts. This comes about when love is kept whole and uncorrupted (through temperance), where no misfortune can disturb it (and this is fortitude). It obeys only [God] (and this is justice), and is careful in discerning things, so as not to be surprised by deceit or trickery (and this is prudence).

The virtues and grace

- † **CCC 1810** – Human virtues are acquired by education, by deliberate acts and by perseverance that is ever-renewed by repeated efforts are purified and elevated by Divine grace. With God's help, they forge character and give facility in the practice of the good. The virtuous man is happy to practice them.
- † **CCC 1811** – It is not easy for man, wounded by sin, to maintain moral balance. Christ's gift of salvation offers us the grace necessary to persevere in the pursuit of these virtues. Everyone should always ask for this grace of light and strength, frequent the sacraments, cooperate with the Holy Spirit, and follow His calls to love what is good and shun evil.

† THE THEOLOGICAL VIRTUES

- † Human virtues are rooted in theological virtues, which adapt man's faculties for participation in the Divine nature. The theological virtues relate directly to God. They dispose Christians to live in a relationship with the Holy Trinity. They have the One and Triune God for their origin, motive, and object.
- † **CCC 1813** – The theological virtues are the foundation of Christian moral activity; they animate it and give it its special character. They inform and give life to all the moral virtues. They are infused by God into the souls of the faithful to make them capable of acting as his children and of meriting eternal life. They are the pledge of the presence and action of the Holy Spirit in the faculties of the human being. There are three theological virtues: faith, hope, and charity.

Faith

- † **CCC 1814** – Faith is the theological virtue by which we believe in God and believe all that He has said and revealed to us, and that Holy Church proposes for our belief, because He is truth Himself. By faith man freely commits his entire self to God. For this reason, faith moves the believer to seek to know and do God's will. "The righteous shall live by faith." We live our faith through works of charity.
- † **CCC 1815** – The gift of faith remains in one who has not sinned against it. But "faith apart from works is dead": when deprived of hope and love, faith does not fully unite the believer to Christ and does not make him a living member of his Body.
- † **CCC 1816** – The disciple of Christ must not only keep the faith and live on it, but also profess it, confidently bear witness to it, and spread it: "All however must be prepared to confess Christ before men and to follow him along the way of the Cross, amidst the persecutions which the Church never lacks." Service of and witness to the faith are necessary for salvation: "So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven; but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven."

Hope

- † **CCC 1817** – Hope is the theological virtue by which we desire the kingdom of heaven and eternal life as true our happiness, placing our trust in Christ's promises and relying not on our own strength, but on the help of the grace of the Holy Spirit. "Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful." "The Holy Spirit is poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that we might be justified by his grace and become heirs in hope of eternal life."
- † **CCC 1818** – The virtue of hope responds to the aspiration to happiness which God has placed in the heart of every man. Hope inspires men's activities and purifies them so as to order them to the Kingdom of heaven. It keeps man from discouragement. It sustains him during times of abandonment. Hope also opens up his heart in

expectation of eternal beatitude. Buoyed up by hope, mankind is preserved from selfishness and led to happiness that flows from charity.

- † **CCC 1819** – Christian hope takes up and fulfills the hope of the chosen people which has its origin and model in the *hope of Abraham*, who was blessed abundantly by the promises of God fulfilled in Isaac, and who was purified by the test of the sacrifice. "Hoping against hope, he believed, and thus became the father of many nations."
- † **CCC 1820** – Christian hope unfolds from the beginning of Jesus' preaching in the proclamation of the *beatitudes*. The beatitudes raise our hope towards heaven as the new Promised Land; they trace the path that leads through the trials that await the disciples of Jesus. But through the merits of Jesus Christ and of His Passion, God keeps us in the "hope that does not disappoint." Hope is the "sure and steadfast anchor of the soul. . . that enters. . . where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf." Hope is also a weapon that protects us in the struggle of salvation: "Let us. . . put on the breastplate of faith and charity, and for a helmet the hope of salvation." It affords us joy even under trial: "Rejoice in your hope, be patient in tribulation." Hope is expressed and nourished in prayer, especially in the Our Father, the summary of everything that hope leads us to desire.
- † **CCC 1821** – We can therefore hope in the glory of heaven promised by God to those who love Him and do His will. In every circumstance, each one of us should hope, with the grace of God, to persevere "to the end" and to obtain the joy of heaven, as God's eternal reward for the good works accomplished with the grace of Christ. In hope, the Church prays for "all men to be saved." She longs to be united with Christ, her Bridegroom, in the glory of heaven:

Charity

- † **CCC 1822** – Charity is the theological virtue by which we love God above all things for his own sake, and our neighbor as ourselves for the love of God.
- † **CCC 1823** – Jesus makes charity the *new commandment*. By loving His own "to the end," He makes manifest the Father's love which He receives. By loving one another, the disciples imitate the love of Jesus which they themselves receive. Whence Jesus says: "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you; abide in my love." And again: "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you."
- † **CCC 1824** – Fruit of the Spirit and fullness of the Law, charity keeps the *commandments* of God and his Christ: "Abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love."
- † **CCC 1825** – Christ died out of love for us, while we were still "enemies." The Lord asks us to love as He does, even our *enemies*, to make ourselves the neighbor of those farthest away, and to love children and the poor as Christ himself.

The Apostle Paul has given an incomparable depiction of charity: "charity is patient and kind, charity is not jealous or boastful; it is not arrogant or rude. Charity does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in the right. Charity bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things."

- † **CCC 1826** - "If I . . . have not charity," says the Apostle, "I am nothing." Whatever my privilege, service, or even virtue, "if I . . . have not charity, I gain nothing." Charity is superior to all the virtues. It is the first of the theological virtues: "So faith, hope, charity abide, these three. But *the greatest of these is charity*."
 - † **CCC 1827** – The practice of all the virtues is animated and inspired by charity, which "binds everything together in perfect harmony"; it is the *form of the virtues*; it articulates and orders them among themselves; it is the source and the goal of their Christian practice. Charity upholds and purifies our human ability to love, and raises it to the supernatural perfection of divine love.
 - † **CCC 1828** – The practice of the moral life animated by charity gives to the Christian the spiritual freedom of the children of God. He no longer stands before God as a slave, in servile fear, or as a mercenary looking for wages, but as a son responding to the love of him who "first loved us":
- If we turn away from evil out of fear of punishment, we are in the position of slaves. If we pursue the enticement of wages, . . . we resemble mercenaries. Finally if we obey for the sake of the good itself and out of love for him who commands. . . we are in the position of children.
- † **CCC 1829** – The *fruits* of charity are joy, peace, and mercy; charity demands beneficence and fraternal correction; it is benevolence; it fosters reciprocity and remains disinterested and generous; it is friendship and communion: Love is itself the fulfillment of all our works. There is the goal; that is why we run: we run toward it, and once we reach it, in it we shall find rest.



Photo from the Diocese of San Juan (Nueva Ecija)



Photo from the Diocese of San Juan (Nueva Ecija)



Faith Response

- † Be open to the transforming grace of God thru the graces that the Church can offer to all her members
- † Let the grace and blessings of God be an instrument for the members of the community, especially the youth, to grow in faith, hope and love.
- † Live in accordance with the teachings and examples of Jesus.
- † Keep in touch with the Church and let Her be our guide, as a Mother, she is willing to guide, protect, and help us achieve our goal which is holiness and a life with God.
- † Look and seek the presence of God at all times and in every situation, place and most especially in every encounter without neighbors. We must see the presence of the Trinity in them.



Photo from the Diocese of Romblon



Photo from the Diocese of Urdaneta



Human Values

- † **Faith (CCC 1814)**
Faith is the theological virtue by which we believe in God and believe all that he has said and revealed to us, and that Holy Church proposes for our belief, because he is truth itself. By faith "man freely commits his entire self to God." Through faith, the believer seeks to know and do God's will.
- † **Hope (CCC 1817)**
Hope is the theological virtue by which we desire the kingdom of heaven and eternal life as our happiness, placing our trust in Christ's promises and relying not on our own strength, but on the help of the grace of the Holy Spirit.
- † **Love/Charity (CCC 1822)**
Charity is the theological virtue by which we love God above all things for his own sake, and our neighbor as ourselves for the love of God.



Morals

- † For the youth: The youth must find time to be alone for self-reflection or with a group in a quiet recollection. Assess where your lives are headed and the meaning behind it.
- † Community: The community must pray for the youth that they will understand, receive or embrace and celebrate their responsibilities in the Church and for them to see that they are important and blessed by God.
- † The Church must facilitate Youth activities by providing them with material support and facilities that enable them to grow as disciplines (Thompson, 2017).
- † Youth must commit to the Church; the Church must also give back to the youths by committing to their development.
- † Every member must be a living witness to the youth and to all members of the community for a healthy and holy Christian life.



Simple Activities

Activity: Youth Get-Together

- † It is much recommended to give time for the youth to organize an activity that will allow the youth to get together, that is to say, a whole day celebration for the Youth.
- † Let the youth leaders organize this whole day program, taking into consideration the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, the praying of the Holy Rosary and the involvement of other ministries so that we can see the unity of the family of God.
- † Give also time for the parish priest to speak and encourage the youth to participate in the mission of the Church.

Song Analysis (See next page)

Guide for Reflection

- † As a baptized Christian, do I tell the world of the good news?
- † How do I fulfill my duties and responsibilities as missionary and disciple of God?
- † Do I consider God as my guide to do my mission on this world?
- † Does Love of God reign in my life?

Tell the World of His Love

Jamie Rivera

For God so loved the world
He gave us Him Only Son
Jesus Christ our Savior
His most precious One

He has sent us His message of love
And sends those who hear
To bring the message to everyone
In a voice loud and clear

Let us tell the world of His love
The greatest love the world has known
Search the world for those who have walked
Astray and lead them home

Fill the world's darkest corners
With His light from up above
Walk every step, every mile, every road
And tell the world, tell the world of His love

(Tell the world of His love)
(Tell the world of His love)
Our Lord, our Savior, our King
Emmanuel, Prince of Peace
Begotten of the Father's love

Born to set us free
Let heaven and earth sing His praises
His righteousness proclaims
Let every heart rejoice in His love
And magnify His name



Prayer / Worship

God our Father, be with us on our pilgrim journey of faith. Give us the grace and courage to step forward in faith and hope on the road ahead. Open our eyes to see your face in all those we encounter. Open our ears to hear your voice in those who are often ignored. Open our hearts that we might be faithful disciples of mercy and truth. Transform us. Empower us to give ourselves to the poor; to welcome the lost; to forgive those who hurt us; to comfort those who suffer and are marginalized. Like the disciples who journeyed up the mountain to witness the Transfiguration, may this experience be an encounter that strengthens us for our work in the world. Through the intercession of Mary, the Immaculate Conception, patroness of our nation,

may we be worthy witnesses of our faith, humble representatives of our country, and inspired missionaries bringing peace, hope, and mercy into our communities. We ask all this through Christ Our Lord. *Amen.*



Zeal for Mission

- † The Church must incorporate contemporary stratagems to the Youth ministry in establishing the growth of youths. Elders' roles have to be flexible and adjust to the ever changing needs of youths through updating and matching the Youth energy and vitality while avoiding old models.
- † The Youth must therefore, in the long-run, not dilute the gospel message but discover how to live out the good news and encourage others to do so (Nielson, 2016).
- † The Youth must therefore be involved actively in drawing the congregation both old and young to participate responsibly in the work, life and mission of the Church and the community (Nielson, 2016).
- † The Youth must demonstrate in the family the moral, spiritual as well as overall faith development and act as mentors to adolescents. With love and support from their parents, the youths are to enhance the family to live in faith and love for Christ which brings about novel understanding as well as skills in the family so family life is enhanced (Campbell, 2000; Day & Kurtz, 2017).
- † The Youth must lead other family members in building a community that precipitates Christianity and the love for Christ (Chancey & Bruner, 2017; Day & Kurtz, 2017).

CATECHETICAL LESSON 4:

MISSION: STAY WITH US

Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. (Mt 24:31)



Introduction

We are all missionary disciples

In all the baptized, from first to last, the sanctifying power of the Spirit is at work, impelling us to evangelization. The people of God is holy, thanks to this anointing, which makes it infallible *in credendo* (in itself). This means that, the community as a whole, does not err in faith, even though it may

not find words to explain that faith. The Spirit guides it in truth and leads it to salvation. As part of His mysterious love for humanity, God furnishes the totality of the faithful with an instinct of faith (*sensus fidei*) – which helps them to discern what is truly of God. The presence of the Spirit gives Christians a certain innateness with Divine realities, and a wisdom which enables them to grasp those realities intuitively, even when they lack the wherewithal to give them precise expression (EG 119).



Photo from the Diocese of Kidapawan



Photo from the Diocese of Romblon

By virtue of their baptism, all the members of the People of God have become missionary disciples (Mt 28:19). All the baptized, whatever their position in the Church or their level of instruction in the faith, are agents of evangelization, and it would be insufficient to envisage a plan of evangelization to be carried out only by professionals while the rest of the faithful would simply be passive recipients. The new evangelization calls for personal involvement on the part of each of the baptized. Every Christian is challenged, here and now, to be actively engaged in evangelization. Indeed, anyone who has truly experienced God's saving love does not need much time or lengthy training to go out and proclaim that love. Every Christian is missionary to the extent that he or she has encountered the love of God in Christ Jesus: we no longer say that we are "disciples" and "missionaries", but rather that we are always "missionary disciples".

If we are not convinced, let us look at those first disciples, who, immediately after encountering the gaze of Jesus, went forth to proclaim Him joyfully: “We have found the Messiah!” (*Jn. 1:41*). The Samaritan woman became a missionary immediately after speaking with Jesus and many Samaritans came to believe in her (*Jn. 4:39*). So too, Saint Paul, after his encounter with Jesus Christ, “immediately proclaimed Jesus” (EG 120).

All of us are called to mature in our work as evangelizers. We want to have better training, a deepening love and a clearer witness to the Gospel. In this sense, we ought to let others constantly evangelize us. But this does not mean that we should postpone the evangelizing mission; rather, each of us should find ways to communicate Jesus wherever we are. All of us are called to offer others an explicit witness to the saving love of the Lord, who despite our imperfections offers us His closeness, His Word and His strength, and gives meaning to our lives. In our hearts, we know that it is not the same to live without Him. What we have come to realize, what has helped us to live and has given us hope, is what we should also communicate to others. Our falling short of perfection should not be an excuse. On the contrary, mission is a constant stimulus not to remain mired in mediocrity but to continue growing. The witness of faith that each Christian is called to offer leads us to say with Saint Paul, “Not that I have already obtained this, or am already perfect; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own” (*Phil 3:12-13* ; EG 121).

Thus, the youth’s increasing number and growing presence in society and likewise the problems assailing them should awaken, in every one of us, the desire to offer them, with zeal and intelligence, the Gospel ideal as something to be known and lived. On the other hand, young people who are well-trained in faith and prayer must become more and more the apostles of youth. The Church counts greatly on their contribution, and has often expressed full confidence in them (*Evangelii Nuntiandi 72*).

The Catholic Church has never absconded her sublime duty of guiding and forming the youths in all places, because the youths play a vital role not only in the Church but also in the world. If society will be better than what we currently have, if the Church and Christianity as a whole will become more and better equipped in her ministry of proclamation and witnessing in this post-modern era of moral/ethical relativism, then youths should have a robust, adequate and well-founded moral, spiritual and intellectual formation.



Worship

Gospel of Luke 24: 28-35

²⁸ As they came near the village to which they were going, He walked ahead as if He were going on. ²⁹ But they urged Him strongly, saying, “Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.” So He went in to stay with them. ³⁰ When He was at the table with them, He took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. ³¹ Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized Him; but He vanished from their sight. ³² They said to each other, “Were not our hearts burning within us while He was talking to us on the road, while He was opening the scriptures to us?” ³³ That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. ³⁴ They were saying, “The Lord has risen indeed, and He has appeared to Simon!” ³⁵ Then they told what had happened on the road, and how He had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.





Doctrine

THE SACRAMENTS OF THE CHURCH



Photo from the Diocese of San Jose, Nueva Ecija

- † **CCC 1117** - As she has done for the canon of Sacred Scripture and for the doctrine of the faith, the Church, by the power of the Spirit who guides her "into all truth," has gradually recognized this treasure received from Christ and, as the faithful steward of God's mysteries, has determined its "dispensation." Thus, the Church has discerned over the centuries that among liturgical celebrations there are seven that are, in the strict sense of the term, sacraments instituted by the Lord.
- † **CCC 1118** - The sacraments are "of the Church" in the double sense that they are "by her" and "for her." They are "by the Church," for she is the sacrament of Christ's action at work in her through the mission of the Holy Spirit. They are "for the Church" in the sense that "the sacraments make the Church," since they manifest and communicate to men, above all in the Eucharist, the mystery of communion with God, who is love, One in three persons.
- † **CCC 1119** - Forming "as it were, one mystical person" with Christ the head, the Church acts in the sacraments as "an organically structured priestly community." Through Baptism and Confirmation the priestly people are enabled to celebrate the liturgy, while those of the faithful "who have received Holy Orders, are appointed to nourish the Church with the word and grace of God in the name of Christ."
- † **CCC 1120** - The ordained ministry or ministerial priesthood is at the service of the baptismal priesthood. The ordained priesthood guarantees that it really is Christ who acts in the sacraments through the Holy Spirit for the Church. The saving mission entrusted by the Father to His incarnate Son was committed to the apostles and through them to their successors: they receive the Spirit of Jesus to act in His name and in His person. The ordained minister is the sacramental bond that ties the liturgical action to what the apostles said and did and, through them, to the words and actions of Christ, the source and foundation of the sacraments.
- † **CCC 1121** - The three sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders confer, in addition to grace, a sacramental character or "seal" by which the Christian shares in Christ's priesthood and is made a member of the Church according to different states and functions. This configuration to Christ and to the Church, brought about by the Spirit, is indelible, it remains forever in the Christian as a positive disposition for grace, a promise and guarantee of Divine protection, and as a vocation to Divine worship and to the service of the Church. Therefore these sacraments can never be repeated.

THE SEVEN SACRAMENTS OF THE CHURCH

- † **CCC 1210** - Christ instituted the sacraments of the new law. There are seven: Baptism, Confirmation (or Chrismation), the Eucharist, Penance, the Anointing of the Sick, Holy Orders and Matrimony. The seven sacraments touch all the stages and all the important moments of Christian life: they give birth and increase, healing and mission to the Christian's life of faith. There is thus, a certain resemblance between the stages of natural life and the stages of spiritual life.
- † **CCC 1211** - Following this analogy, we will first expound on the three sacraments of Christian initiation; *second*, on the sacraments of healing; and the *third*, the sacraments at the service of communion and the mission of the faithful. This order, while not the only one possible, allows one to see that the sacraments form an organic whole in which each particular sacrament has its own vital place. In this organic whole, the Eucharist occupies a unique place as the "Sacrament of sacraments": "all the other sacraments are ordered to it as their end."
- † **THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM (CCC 1213-1284)**
 - † **CCC 1213** - Baptism is the basis of the whole Christian life, the gateway to *vitae spiritualis ianua* (life in the Spirit), and the door which gives access to the other sacraments. Through Baptism we are freed from sin and reborn as sons of God; we become members of Christ, are incorporated into the Church and made sharers in her mission: "Baptism is the sacrament of regeneration through water and the Word."
- † **THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION (CCC 1285-1321)**
 - † **CCC 1285** - Baptism, along with the Eucharist, and the sacrament of Confirmation together constitute the "sacraments of Christian initiation," whose unity must be safeguarded. It must be explained to the faithful that the reception of the sacrament of Confirmation is necessary for the completion of baptismal grace. For "by the sacrament of Confirmation, the baptized are more perfectly bound to the Church and are enriched with a special strength by the Holy Spirit. Hence they are, as true witnesses of Christ, more strictly obliged to spread and defend the faith by word and deed."
- † **THE SACRAMENT OF THE EUCHARIST (CCC 1322-1419)**
 - † **CCC 1322** - The Holy Eucharist completes Christian initiation. Those who have been raised to the dignity of the royal priesthood by Baptism and configured more deeply to Christ by Confirmation participate with the whole community in the Lord's own sacrifice by means of the Eucharist.
 - † **CCC 1323** - "At the Last Supper, on the night he was betrayed, our Savior instituted the Eucharistic sacrifice of his Body and Blood. This He did in order

to perpetuate the sacrifice of the cross throughout the ages until He comes again. This is to entrust His beloved Spouse, the Church, a memorial of his death and resurrection: a sacrament of love, a sign of unity, a bond of charity, a Paschal banquet 'in which Christ is consumed, where the mind is filled with grace, and a pledge of future glory is given to us.'"

† THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE AND RECONCILIATION (CCC 1422-1498)

† **CCC 1422** - "Those who approach the sacrament of Penance obtain pardon from God's mercy for the offense committed against Him, and are, at the same time, reconciled with the Church which they have wounded by their sins and which by charity, by example, and by prayer labors for their conversion."

† THE ANOINTING OF THE SICK (CCC 1499-1532)

† **CCC 1499** - "By the sacred anointing of the sick and the prayer of the priests the whole Church commends those who are ill to the suffering and glorified Lord, that He may raise them up and save them. And indeed she exhorts them to contribute to the good of the People of God by freely uniting their own sufferings to the Passion and death of Christ."

† THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY ORDERS (CCC 1536-1600)

† **CCC 1536** - Holy Orders is the sacrament through which the mission entrusted by Christ to His apostles continues to be exercised in the Church until the end of time. Thus, it is the sacrament of apostolic ministry. It includes three degrees: episcopate, presbyterate, and diaconate.

† THE SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY (CCC 1601-1666)

† **CCC 1601** - "The matrimonial covenant, by which a man and a woman establish between themselves a partnership of their whole life, is by its nature ordered toward the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of offspring. This covenant between baptized persons has been raised by Christ the Lord to the dignity of a sacrament."



Faith Response

- † Open the door of your faith, that is to say, open yourself to the works of God and His Church in your life.
- † Discover the spiritual treasures of the Church, such as the sacraments, and the meaning of these to Christian life.
- † Participate actively in the mission of the Church, be a model to your fellow youth and let them know the beauty of life living with God and having encountered Jesus in your

life.

- † Receive actively the sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Eucharist to grow more on your spiritual life and spiritual journey.
- † Grow in faith with others, that is to say, spread the faith with your colleagues, by your actions and words.



Human Values

Youth must be disciples with these marks...

- † **Disciples are called** - Luke 5:1-11 perfectly illustrates this. God always acts first! Jesus came to the fishermen and gave them an invitation. It was only after this invitation to discipleship that our choice matters. Jesus has called each of us.
- † **Disciples intentionally respond to Jesus' call** - After we are called, then a disciple must respond positively to the call! If Peter had not dropped his nets and followed Jesus, he would not be a disciple. You can't follow, if you don't make a choice. Discipleship is never inherited or accidental!
- † **Disciples love** - This is a primary mark of a disciple. Love of God and love of others. Jesus says that others will know we are disciples by our love for one another. (John 13:35).
- † **Disciples are fruitful** - In fact, Jesus says that being fruitful PROVES that you are his disciple. "By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be my disciples" -John 15:8.
- † **Disciples are obedient** - Go a little farther in John 15 and you find in verse 14 - "you are my friends if you do what I command". Notice, we can't be intimate with Jesus and be disobedient. It is a non-starter.



Photo from the Diocese of San Fernando (La Union)



Photo from the Diocese of Kalibo



Morals

- † Youthfulness is a time to discover yourself – your potentialities, your capacities. Try to discover who you are. Know that you are God’s children and you are called to love and serve Him
- † Never forget that there is a God above watching you in all you do and remember that there are many things about you which your friends and enemies do not know but only God knows. Never forget that you are not a product of chance – you are a product of a conscious thought of God. In whatever you do always surrender to his will. Sometimes, it is difficult to decipher the will of God – ask him to guide your steps
- † Know the real doctrines and teachings of the Church and be one of the active members who are willing to do missions and witnessing in your lives.
- † Live in accordance to the will of God. The Church offers the sacraments in order for us to deepen our relationship with God. Have a sacramental life, hence, may your actions reflect the works of God and these are actions and works of love and out of love.



Simple Activities

Activity: Recollection - Youth - Disciples of Christ!

- † Prepare the learners to have their simple recollection
- † Invite some speakers that can give simple reflections and talks especially about the Christian life and being youth members of the church
- † One-day recollection with Eucharistic adoration and prayer may help also to deepen their relationship to God.

Song Analysis *(See next page)*

Guide for Reflections

- † Do I consider God, the real Light of my Life?
- † Do I participate to the light of God to be light of others?
- † During times of darkness in my life, how do I deal with these moments?
- † Do I keep searching for the real meaning of life despite of the negative things that happen in my life? Do still stand up and look forward?



Photo from the Diocese of Borongan

LIWANAG SA DILIM

Rico Blanco

Ituring ang iyong sariling
Tagahawi ng ulap
Sa kalangitang kulimlim
Kampanang yayanig
Sa bawat nilalang
Magigising ang lupang
Kulang sa dilig

Ikaw ang magsasabing
Kaya mo to!
Tulad ng isang tanglaw
Sa gitna ng bagyo

Ref:
Isigaw mo sa hangin
Tumindig at magsilbing
Liwanag
Liwanag sa Dilim
Harapin mong magiting
Ang bagong awitin
Ikaw ang
Liwanag sa Dilim

At sa paghamon mo
Sa agos ng ating kasaysayan
Uukit ka ng bagong daan

Ikaw ang aawit ng
Kaya mo to!
Sang panalangin
Sa gitna ng gulo (Ref.)



Prayer / Worship

PRAYER FOR YOUTH

We offer to you, Loving God, the gifts and needs of youth. Bless them with your guiding grace as they face the challenges and opportunities in their lives. Touch their hearts with the gentleness of your love, that they may know they are valued and valuable beings. Send your spirit of hope to their lives, that they may believe in themselves and know they are needed in this world. Grace them with the gift of joy that they may celebrate life through laughter and



tears alike. Guide us, as we continue to grow in appreciation of the many gifts of young people, in the ministry opportunities we offer to them, in the journey of faith we walk with them, in our shared mission as a community called to discipleship in the world. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.



Zeal for Mission

- † Be disciples sent on a mission to make disciples for Jesus.
- † Discern for the choices and actions that lead you to a purposeful life—whether in the ordained ministry, consecrated life, marriage and family, or the single state—with the Spirit of the Risen Christ directing your steps in making and leaving a marked difference in the world and society (Mt 28:19-20).
- † Be committed to the families, to the Church and to the country with a renewed passion to proclaim the Word, ready to work with their communities and the Church, and willing to share in molding a just and peaceful world through missionary involvement.
- † Help the Church bring hope knowing and believing that God is our strength Awaken the shepherds in us rekindle the fire of faith, hope and love in everyone in the Church so that together, we can journey and serve the Church.
- † Listen with a disposition of faith in Him, so you may turn your steps from a world of fear and despair towards that of God's Kingdom.
- † Invite Mother Mary into your life. She is always there for those who fly to her patronage. She can intercede for you when 'there is no wine' (John 2:3) in your life. Be constant in invoking her intercession especially through the Holy Rosary. Make the Rosary, a prayer close to your heart.

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A Research-based Intervention Outcome of selected catechists and catechetical leaders inspired by the findings of the National Catechetical Study (NCS) 2016-2021: Pastoral Action Research and Intervention (PARI) Project implemented by the Research Center for Social Sciences & Education, University of Santo Tomas.