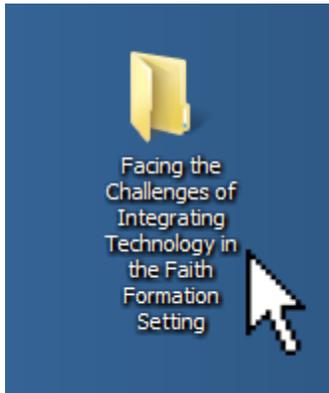


The Catechetical Leader in the Third Millennium

Section on Technology



Handing On the Faith with Excellence
WWW.NYFAITHFORMATION.ORG



The Catechetical Leader in the Third Millennium is a statement approved by the Bishops of New York State to address challenges that face catechetical leaders. It identifies five areas that challenge catechetical leaders today: Evangelization, the Changing Parish Landscape, the Family, Cultural Realities and Technology. The following pages are a copy of the section on Technology with the corresponding section from the *Comprehensive Plan*.

In this statement, the Bishops see what you see – technology is “immediately available and an all-pervading aspect of daily life.”

Personal computers and laptops have given way to tablets and smart phones, changing the way people work, study and use leisure time. The Church desires catechetical leaders to embrace technology for the sake of the Gospel and face the challenges in its use.

Please take the time to read the section on technology carefully. It is an opportunity to use it as a way of self-assessing your own skills in technology. Do you, for example, “embrace digital catechesis as a viable means for evangelization and catechesis?” Take the time to reflect on and identify your own abilities, both strengths and weaknesses. If done honestly and fearlessly, the result will suggest ways in which you can grow in your own use of technology. Everyone, from the neophyte to the digital native has something to learn regarding the integration of catechesis and technology. For some, it may be the challenge of the technology itself; for others, it may be the successful integration of technology into the faith formation setting.

Whatever our particular technology challenges, the Bishops call us to understand and use technology by adapting it for use in our Christian communities. Taken in the right spirit, you can use this statement and the section from the *Comprehensive Plan* not only to gain self-knowledge, but to support one another as you take on the work of using technology as a tool for evangelization and catechesis.

You can find complete versions of the documents online:

- ***The Catechetical Leader in the Third Millennium:*** <http://www.nyscatholic.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/Millennium-leader-final.pdf>
- ***Comprehensive Plan for the Formation of Catechetical Leader in the Third Millennium:*** <http://www.nyscatholic.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/Millennium-leader-plan-final.pdf>



From *The Catechetical Leader in the Third Millennium*

A Statement by the Catholic Bishops New York State

The Rapid Development of Technology

The Pew Research Center and The Nielsen Company ratings note that 55 percent of Americans use the Internet every day and the average American spends 60 hours per month online.¹³ Twenty years ago, personal computers resided on desks at home and/or at work. Fifteen years ago, laptops began to creep into daily usage. Today's personal computer can be a handheld device connected to the Internet. Technology today is no longer a compartmentalized activity; rather, it is immediately available and an all-pervading aspect of daily life.

On January 24, 2011, Pope Benedict XVI reminded us once again of the importance of embracing the Internet and the communication opportunities it offers for spreading the Good News, while also reminding us that human interaction must always be preserved and fostered.¹⁴ The Church needs to advance the use of technology for the sake of the Gospel, and to understand and face the challenges inherent in its use.

What does the competent catechetical leader need to know about technology?

The Competent, Contemporary Catechetical Leader:

- has a broad understanding of contemporary technology, its value and its challenges for evangelization and catechesis;
- embraces digital catechesis as a viable means for evangelization and catechesis;
- employs technology to transform and enhance all catechesis;
- accepts the challenge of, and actively participates in, learning new technologies;
- understands the impact of media, and new media in particular, on the formation of the individual.

This catechetical leader has the skills necessary to:

- communicate the Gospel message in a manner easily accessible to “digital natives”;
- develop catechetical materials for use in a digital format;
- investigate and employ social media for the sake of catechesis.

Notes:

¹³ Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, June 28, 2010, on Internet usage.

¹⁴ Pope Benedict XVI, Truth, Proclamation and Authenticity in the Digital Age, Jan. 24, 2011.



Sections from
*Comprehensive Plan for the Formation of
Catechetical Leader in the Third
Millennium:
The Rapid Development of Technology*

Section 1: The Formation of the Catechetical Leader
The Rapid Development of Technology

In order to develop and/or support catechetical leaders in their initial and ongoing education and formation, formation programs should include:

- knowledge about how and why people use technology;
- basic knowledge concerning the effective and appropriate use of contemporary media and communication technology tools for catechetical formation, especially the effective and appropriate use of social media;
- openness to new technologies as they develop and the ability to use online opportunities designed to introduce and/or update knowledge and use of technology.

Section 4: Sustaining the Vision
The Rapid Development of Technology

Does the Catechetical Leader have a general understanding of contemporary technology; its value, limitations and dangers; and the obstacles and challenges it poses for evangelization and catechesis?

Consider the Catechetical Leader's:

- ability to understand and critique the use, or misuse, of technology in light of the Gospel and Christian values and parish community life;
- ability to discern, and to help others discern, appropriate, edifying and healthy use of technology;
- awareness of the obstacles to evangelization and catechesis posed by the use of new technologies, such as minimal attention spans and perpetual distraction, and the ability to work with and around them.

Does the Catechetical Leader embrace digital technology in general, and new media in particular, as viable means for enhancing evangelization and catechesis?

Consider the Catechetical Leader's:

- use of digital materials that support formation of families, adults, teens and school-aged children;
- knowledge of online resources for parents, teens, children, families and catechists, and the ability to distribute, communicate and make them accessible;
- ability to use effectively and appropriately websites, email, mobile devices, social media (Facebook, twitter, LinkedIn, Youtube), blogs, texting and other digital communication;
- competence to communicate the Gospel message in a manner easily accessible to “digital natives;”
- ability to create effective PowerPoint presentations;
- capability to identify, recruit and cooperate with those who can assist in the content creation (photos, videos, social media), distribution, and administration of materials and information for evangelization and catechesis.

Does the Catechetical Leader accept the challenge of and actively participate in learning new technologies?

Consider the Catechetical Leader's:

- openness and willingness to learning new technologies and to identify and adopt best practices, especially those related to communication, education and community-building;
- ongoing education in technological advances that could potentially enhance evangelization and catechesis in any way.

Does the Catechetical Leader understand the impact of media, including new media, on the formation of the individual?

Consider the Catechetical Leader's:

- general awareness of the nature and extent of media consumption of the people they serve;
- understanding of the impact of not only media content, but the constant consumption of media on the formation of the individual;
- understanding of media culture, its values and assumptions, especially in those areas where it weakens, contradicts, or undermines family and community life, Gospel values and Church teachings;
- general knowledge of today's popular music, TV, movies, video games, and social media that are informing and shaping people's minds, attitudes and actions.