



Celebrate Catechetical Sunday

Make plans for September 16, 2018

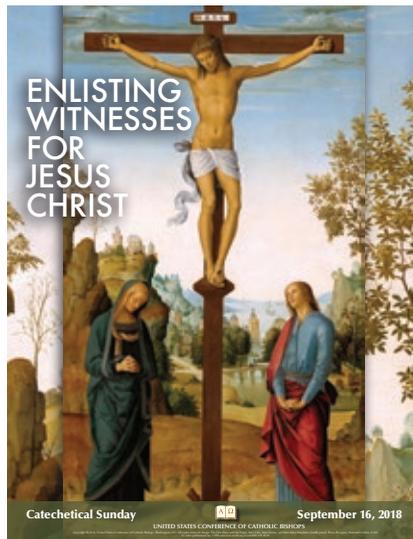
DEANNA BARTALINI

The start to a new school year can be hectic with the rush to put children in their appropriate classes, handle late registrations, and maybe even find catechists. In all this activity the Church reminds us how important catechesis is with Catechetical Sunday, which began in 1935. The document *Provido Sane Consilio*, (*On the Better Care for Catechetical Education*), published by the Vatican in 1935, asked the Church to recognize the importance of the Church's teaching ministry and those who serve in the ministry. In the United States the bishops set the third Sunday of September as Catechetical Sunday. This year, Catechetical Sunday is on September 16, with the theme "Enlisting Witnesses for Jesus Christ."

How to celebrate

Since we are first and foremost a people of prayer, it is best if you begin your parish celebration at Mass. Resources for the liturgical celebration of Catechetical Sunday can be found at USCCB.org. Select one Mass and ask all the catechists to come to it. Don't forget to include those who serve in youth ministry, RCIA, and other adult programs. During Mass the celebrant can bless and commission the catechists. After the blessing, if time permits, have children from the religious education program give a prayer card to each catechist. It is a great witness to the parish if the catechists come forward from wherever they are sitting and stand where they can be seen.

After Mass, continue the celebration with a breakfast in the



catechists' honor. This is your opportunity to let them know how much you appreciate, need, and admire them. Does your parish have a Knights of Columbus or Council of Catholic Women's group? Ask them to prepare and

serve breakfast. If your parish is a potluck type of place, ask parents to bring food. Or keep it simple with bagels, donuts, juice, and coffee. Whatever you choose, have something to gather all the catechists and their families together to thank them.

Tokens of appreciation

It's always nice to give something to the catechists that reminds them of the parish's gratitude. A planning calendar, such as the Handbook Planner one from *Catechist* magazine, along with a notebook and a new pen is both practical and fun.

Another gift idea is a Scripture jar or bag. Pick verses that pertain to children, teaching, conversion, and perseverance. Or, use our suggested verses at CATmag.us/ScriptureJar. Attach a note from the pastor as the tag and you're all set.

One year I invited the parishioners to pray for a catechist. I put each catechist's name (first name only) on a card and asked parishioners to take one as they left Mass on Catechetical Sunday. (Don't forget to add your name!) You could also add each class or group to the cards. This reinforces the idea the everyone in the parish has a part in catechesis — and you have covered your work in prayer.

No matter how you choose to celebrate and acknowledge those who serve as catechists, do so with joy!



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Suggested Bible Verses for Scripture Jar

“I love the LORD, who listened to my voice in supplication, Who turned an ear to me on the day I called.” **PSALM 116:1-2**

Then Jesus approached and said to them, “All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Spirit,²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age.”

MATTHEW 28: 18-20

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us rid ourselves of every burden and sin that clings to us and persevere in running the race that lies before us while keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus, the leader and perfecter of faith. For the sake of the joy that lay before him he endured the cross, despising its shame, and has taken his seat at the right of the throne of God.” **HEBREWS 12:1-2**

“The aim of this instruction is love from a pure heart, a good conscience, and a sincere faith.”

1 TIMOTHY 1:5

“I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingly power: proclaim the word; be persistent whether it is convenient or inconvenient; convince, reprimand, encourage through all patience and teaching. For the time will come when people will not tolerate sound doctrine but, following their own desires and insatiable curiosity, will accumulate teachers and will stop listening to the truth and will be diverted to myths. But you, be self-possessed in all circumstances; put up with hardship; perform the work of an evangelist; fulfill your ministry.” **2 TIMOTHY 4:1-5**

“Let the children come to me; do not prevent them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Amen, I say to you, whoever does not accept the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it.” Then [Jesus] embraced them and blessed them, placing his hands on them.

MARK 10:14-16

“May my teaching soak in like the rain, and my utterance drench like the dew, Like a downpour upon the grass, like a shower upon the crops.”

DEUTERONOMY 32:2

“And all day long, both at the temple and in their homes, they did not stop teaching and proclaiming the Messiah, Jesus.”

ACTS 5:42

Indeed we call blessed those who have persevered. You have heard of the perseverance of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, because “the Lord is compassionate and merciful.”

JAMES 5:11

“In contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.” **GALATIANS 5:22-23**

“Train the young in the way they should go; even when old, they will not swerve from it.”

PROVERBS 22:6

“Be still and know that I am God! I am exalted among the nations, exalted on the earth.” **PSALM 46:11**

“Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for yourselves.”

MATTHEW 11:28-29