

5 best tips to help new catechists

Our goal with this new column is to help you in your ever-expanding role in the parish as catechetical leader. We are grateful to NPCD for allowing us to work in collaboration with them to bring this supportive information to you.

LORI DAHLHOFF

Supporting new catechists is an ongoing aspect of religious education programs. Help them become successful at handing on the faith by providing them with simple, clear descriptions of what you expect from them. Also, offer ways that you and the parish will support them in this role. Here are five activities that provide an apprenticeship environment for novice catechists. These suggestions will help them develop a healthy mindset, increase their knowledge, and acquire techniques to enrich their service.

1 Guide: Create a handbook describing standard operating procedures or make a checklist of routine tasks catechists are expected to complete.

2 Expand: Connect folks from other parish ministries with the new catechists by asking parish groups such as the Men and Ladies Societies to pray for new catechists by name.

3 Model: Create lesson plans for the first two learning sessions to illustrate what you consider good preparation for teaching.

4 Mentor: Dedicate specific times and places for experienced catechists to interact with new catechists.

5 Supervise: Schedule periodic observations of sessions led by new catechists; follow this with verbal and written feedback focused on what you observed.

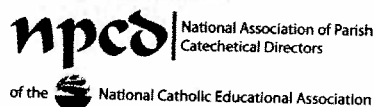
Ultimately, it's the Holy Spirit who helps each catechist nurture the growth in the seeds of faith God has already planted in the hearts of those we teach. The catechetical leader works with the Holy Spirit to develop the being, knowing, and skills of new catechists as artisans of Christian discipleship. ▼

Lori Dahlhoff, Executive Director of the NCEA Religious Education Department, guides the National Association of Parish Catechetical Directors (NPCD).

National Association of Parish Catechetical Directors

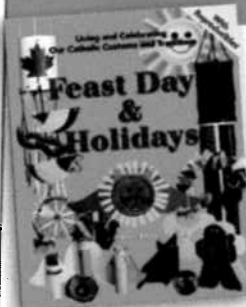
Dedicated specifically to leaders of parish religious education and faith formation programs since 1976.

Go to www.npcd.org to learn how you can join the parish catechetical voice within the broad Catholic educational ministries that make up the NCEA.



Book reviews

Feast Days and Holidays
JOAN MARIE ARBOGAST
Pauline Books & Media, 2012

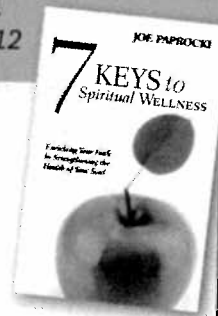


This spiral-bound 250-page book highlights religious feasts and

secular holidays with brief explanations, prayers, and activities to help children better appreciate the reason for the celebration. Most activities are geared toward younger children, although activities are often suggested for older children. This book would be very helpful to parents, teachers, and leaders of children in group settings who are themselves able to make the "God-connections" for each activity.

JClubCatholic.com

7 Keys to Spiritual Wellness
JOE PAPROCKI
Loyola Press, 2012



Employing his inimitable sense of humor, well-known author Joe Paprocki connects each of the seven keys to spiritual wellness to a guiding question: **1)** Who is your court jester? **2)** What do you have that can't be taken away? **3)** Is that your final answer? **4)** What is your security blanket? **5)** What scratches your itch? **6)** Where is your dream vacation spot? and **7)** What gives you heartburn? Even though this small book is easy-to-read (and, hence, ideal for the "no-time-for-reading" person), do not assume that it contains nothing of substance. Nearly every page provides profound insights into spiritual wellness, what keeps us from attaining it, and how we can move toward achieving it.

loyolapress.com