

CATECHISM TODAY



*A Rendez-Vous  
for people of all ages*





*From yesterday to today...*

### **Whatever happened to catechism?**

We often have the tendency to associate catechism exclusively with children. Until recently, the teaching of religion was provided in school so that children could be prepared for the reception of the sacraments. Keep in mind that the place of religion in Quebec schools has undergone major changes. Since 1983, the school no longer assumes the role of preparing children for the sacraments. The teaching of religion has now been replaced with a non-confessional program called the Ethics and Religious Culture Program. Christian Life Formation of young people is now the full responsibility of families and parish communities.

As for adults, for a long time it was an accepted fact that they had been “catechized” as children, and that was once and for all. Today we are invited to think differently. More and more, Christian Life Formation relates to people of all ages by responding to their various spiritual needs.

*Both the world and the times are changing!*

## *A Rendez-Vous to shed light on life*

### **What place does Christian Faith have in life today?**

“Catechize” comes from the Greek meaning “to echo the teaching”... Catechism seeks to make the Gospel resonate so that it echoes in the lives of those who accept it.

But society is changing and lifestyles are quickly evolving. No matter what the age and situation is of those to whom it is addressed, catechism seeks to conform with their culture. Its goal is to further the development of the person in his/her emotional, social and spiritual life.

Through dialogue and with respect for each person’s journey, it aims to help them...

- To discover their own strengths, weaknesses and reasons to hope;
- To listen for the presence of God in our world;
- To personally chose to live the Gospel as a follower of Jesus Christ;
- To make a decision about belonging to the family of Christians;
- To contribute to the building up of a more compassionate world.

*Faith asks questions ... The Gospel is a search for meaning!*



## *An encounter for the whole family*

### **What is the family's role in the faith journey?**

The Catholic Church values the family unit as the primary place for awakening and formation in Christian life, and often refers to it as the “Domestic Church”... If society is changing, we also see many changes in family, of which there are many different models today. It remains that each family is nourished by the spiritual life experiences of its members.

Neither the school, nor the parish, can replace the parents' role in the awakening of the faith in their child. However, family life is not a one-way street: parents and children mutually enlighten each other along the path of dialogue and witnessing.

It also falls upon the extended family, whatever its nature, to accompany the new generations in the discovery of their spiritual life. In addition, the family is bound to rely on the witnessing of the Christian community, while contributing to its vitality.

*The family upholds the spiritual life of its members.*



## *Getting to know God within a community*

### **What does the parish propose for Christian Life Formation?**

Today, the word “parish” may also mean a “parish community” or a “pastoral unit”. Moreover, certain activities may be proposed at a regional or diocesan level, rather than locally. What remains important is the quality of the proposed activities. On the whole, dioceses and parishes are proposing a variety of catechetical courses, as stages of formation which provide for the discovery, experience and integration of faith in Jesus Christ.

Parents are invited to enroll their children in these courses and then to support them in their participation, and accompany them on their journey. Adults will also have processes for spiritual journeying and Christian Life Formation suggested to them by the Church and in which they can enroll according to their own needs.

*New paths are opening up to you!*



## *From the awakening to the deepening of faith*

### **How are adults affected?**

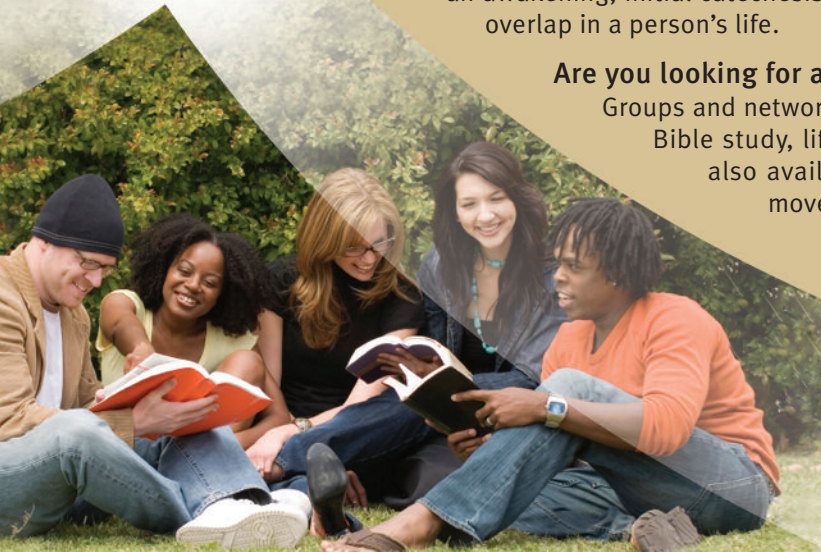
Many adults are questioning themselves about their faith or their spirituality in the different circumstances of their lives. Some were baptized as children and then left their Christian traditions behind and now want to return to them, for example, by asking for confirmation. Others want to be initiated into the Christian faith and be baptized. Still others, who are accompanying their child in catechism, develop a taste for it themselves and join an adult catechesis group.

For a long time, having been considered as a step for deepening faith, adult faith formation in Christian life may be adjusted to the needs of a variety of people. Consequently, we speak of catechesis as an awakening, initial catechesis and ongoing catechesis as important moments which can overlap in a person's life.

### **Are you looking for a course adapted to your own spiritual quest?**

Groups and networks are being formed in parishes and elsewhere, focused on Bible study, life situations or questioning. Individual accompaniment is also available. Please ask: at the parish, the diocese, a particular movement or at a spirituality center.

*The search is personal, the answers are varied.*



# *I'm signing up for Catechism!*

## **How and when can I enroll for catechism?**

Most parishes offer courses for the awakening and initiating of faith for children of school age. Some parishes also offer activities for very young children. For adolescents and adults the situations may vary: when courses are not offered in parishes they may be regional or even diocesan. In all cases, it is recommended that you contact those responsible for catechism in your parish or sector. Often the catechetical activities begin in the autumn but information is available during the whole year.

## **At what age can one receive the sacraments of Christian initiation?**

There is no set age to experience the high points of Christian life which are the sacraments. One can be baptized, confirmed and receive first communion as a child, an adolescent or an adult. Whatever our age, it is important that we are well prepared for the sacraments. This step is not primarily related to age or to education, but rather to the person's spiritual growth.

*It is never too late to begin life as a believer.*





# *Some answers to your questions*

## **Are you wondering...**

- Whatever happened to catechism?
- What place does Christian Faith have in life today?
- What is the family's role in the faith journey?
- What does the parish propose for initiation into the Christian Faith?
- In what way are adults affected?
- When and how do I enroll for catechism?

We look forward to meeting you!

MY PARISH :



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