

From Font to Table: Welcoming the Stranger into Christ and Congregational Life

Veteran pastors and commissioned ministers of parish ministry are well aware there is no “magic bullet” that guarantees to increase a congregation’s membership, and we make no such claim for an adult faith formation process. Rather, our research—case studies at four congregations with robust catechumenal practices—points to congregational transformation that draws newcomers *and* long-time members into an apprenticeship into the way and life of Jesus Christ and that fosters a missional identity for the whole congregation.

Conceived more as a visioning lab than workshop, Rev. Dr. Kent Burreson (Louis A. Fincke and Anna B. Shine Professor of Systematic Theology, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis) and Dcs. Dr. Rhoda Schuler (Professor Emerita, Concordia - St. Paul) will offer background material on adult faith formation, facilitate small group studies and discussions, lead participants through experiential learning on ritual, and moderate structured time designed for participants to formulate a plan for introducing an adult faith formation process in their congregations. Pastors from our research congregations will lead short sessions via Zoom to share their wisdom on various topics related to an adult catechumenate.

In the end, faith formation is not a program, not even a set of processes or practices, but a way of life. Through its life of community and worship, teaching and preaching, witness and service God transforms the baptized and the community, deeply and broadly.

Schedule

- Day 1 will meet from 1:00 pm until 5:15 pm; evening free
- Day 2 will meet from 8:30 am until 5:30 pm, with lunch included; evening free
- Day 3 will meet from 8:30 am until noon
- The detailed schedule below is provisional.

Wednesday, July 5

1:00 – 1:45	Welcome, Introductions, Opening Reflection on Scripture
1:45 – 2:30	A Vision for Faith Formation and the Stage of Inquiry
2:30 – 2:45	Break
2:45 – 3:15	Scripture Study: Hoffman Method
3:15 – 3:45	Inquiry Experience (Prayer)
3:45 – 4:15	Planning your Catechumenal Experience: Inquiry
4:15 – 5:00	Enrollment and the Stage of the Catechumenate
5:00 – 5:15	Closing Prayer

Evening Free

Thursday, July 6

- 8:30 – 9:15 Opening Devotion (Rite of Enrollment) and Video on Enrollment
- 9:15 – 10:00 Reflection on Enrollment Experience and Discussion of Catechesis Content
- 10:00 – 10:15 Break
- 10:15 – 10:45 Planning your Catechumenal Experience: Enrollment and Catechumenate
- 10:45 – 11:30 Election and the Stage of Enlightenment
- 11:30 – 12:45 Lunch
- 12:45 – 1:15 Scripture Study: African Method
- 1:15 – 2:00 Wisdom from the field (we'll have a pastoral expert address the group via Zoom)
- 2:00 – 2:15 Break
- 2:15 – 3:00 Election Experience and Video
- 3:00 – 3:30 Planning your Catechumenal Experience: Election and Enlightenment
- 3:30 – 4:30 Initiation Rites and This is the Night
- 4:30 – 5:00 Planning your Catechumenal Experience: Initiation
- 5:00 – 5:15 Closing prayer
- Evening Free

Friday, July 7

- 8:30 – 9:15 Mystagogy
- 9:15 – 9:45 Scripture Study: Visualization Method
- 9:45 – 10:00 Break
- 10:00 – 10:45 Wisdom from the field (we'll have a pastoral expert address the group via Zoom)
- 10:45 – 11:15 Planning your Catechumenal Experience: Mystagogy
- 11:15 – 11:45 Wrap-up on Implementation
- 11:45 – 12:00 Closing Prayer and Experience: Rite of Vocation