



Leaven

The Newsletter of the
Religious Education Office



REGISTER NOW!



Most Reverend
J. Peter Sartain
Bishop of Joliet

**Pastor/Staff
Leadership Day
October 20, 2006**

**"FORGING THE FUTURE
OF CATECHESIS"**



Daniel Mulhall
USCCB Dep. of
Education

**With the National Directory for Catechesis and our New Bishop,
the Future of Catechesis Awaits Us!**

To view the registration form or for more information visit our website at
www.dioceseofjoliet.org/reo/leadershipdays.asp
Registrations may be faxed, mailed, or e-mailed:

Fax: (815) 722-7362 or Email: jlange@dioceseofjoliet.org

Location: **St. Elizabeth Seton**
2220 Lisson Road
Naperville, IL 60565

Cost: **\$25.00 per person, if registered**
or **\$35 at the door**

The day begins at 8:15 a.m. with mass celebrated by Bishop Sartain and
concludes at 3:00 p.m

Liturgical Catechesis: Helping Families Foster Catholic Identity through Devotions

Joyce Donahue

Recently, I opened one of those church giftware catalogs and flipped past page upon page of resin ornaments and do-dads. Suddenly, I froze in mid flip. There, next to the "affordable bookmarks" and "pocket tokens", was a photo of a wooden wall sign which read "This is a Catholic Home."

Now, *that* is a sad commentary on Catholic homes. If a home is truly Catholic, it will have no need for a sign. Catholic identity should be immediately evident in the details of the home: statues of the saints, symbols of the liturgical year, and other signs of Catholic identity, which



Catholic identity should be immediately evident in the details of the home: statues of the saints, symbols of the liturgical year, and other signs of Catholic identity, which have been a familiar part of home life for generations of Catholics. Among some cultural groups, a family altar or prayer space was even a normal part of home décor. We were (and should be still) truly a people physically rooted in our faith: "smells and bells" and all that.

(Continued on Page 4)

PGS
2-3

Letters from the
Director

PGS
2-3

Upcoming
Cluster
Meetings

PG 4

REO Staff

PG 4

Liturgical
Catechesis
continued

PG 5

Safe
Environment
Update

PG 5

Media Center

PG 6

REO Calendar

PG 6

"Tonight's
Presentation:
God is Love"

PG 7

The NDC: Those
Who Catechize

PG 7

NCCYM

PG 8

Spanish
Resources for
Catechists

PG 8

YLC 2006

PG 8

Joliet Cluster
In-Service

**SEPTEMBER
2006**

UPCOMING CLUSTER MEETINGS

Please attend your local cluster meetings for assistance, support and information. The next meetings will be as follows:

Directors of Adult Faith Formation (DAFF)

October 26, 2006
SCPC, Romeoville
12:00pm - 2:30pm

Northeast DuPage Cluster

September 21, 2006
"Catechesis in Finance"
10:00am

West DuPage Cluster

October 12, 2006
Corpus Christi, Carol Stream
10:00am

Ford-Iroquois Cluster

September 14, 2006
St. Peter, Clifton
6:30pm

November 9, 2006

St. Edmund, Wateska
6:30pm

Joliet-Will Cluster

September 21, 2006
Immaculate Conception,
Morris; 10:00am

October 12, 2006

St. Francis, Bolingbrook;
10:00am

Kankakee Cluster

September 14, 2006
Cancelled

October 12, 2006

St. Paul, Peotone
1:00 - 3:00pm



Tom Quinlan
Director

A Time To Sow



Putting Evangelization Theory into Practice!

'Tis the season for that scramble of registrations to come pouring in for faith formation sessions for another year. Sure there was spring registration. And you may have had special opportunities in August to facilitate getting everyone signed up. But there's no way around it, a great many families will sign up just before sessions begin. Still others will straggle in even many weeks later.

As a DRE once, I found these days to be filled with excitement and stress. And I was lucky to have a wonderful administrative staff carrying the burden of creating class lists and sorting out the monies owed. This allowed me to put my energy into reaching out to families that, it appeared, were not enrolling for another year. I have to admit that it required a pretty conscientious job of inviting them to continue their relationship with the parish and their family's journey into the good news of Catholic faith. Making that invitation sometimes made the difference. And even when it didn't, parents would often open their heart about struggles and issues in their lives that gave me a chance to minister to them. It was a rewarding effort!

Evangelization... that core mission of the Church around which all our ministry should be focused...takes many shapes and sizes. Conferences will continue to be held on the subject, as diocesan and parish leaders across the nation try to figure out just what it means. And while evangelization is rightfully a hot topic for us to discuss in an ongoing way, I would like to suggest there are, oh, maybe a million ways for any parish to actually *do* it today! All one has to do is look at parish life through the lens of evangelization.

You will find a letter from me as an *insert* in this issue of *Leaven*, the same letter many of you received electronically this summer. It is one facet of an evangelization strategy that a parish might employ in just one dimension of parish life and ministry: *Reaching out to inactive families and families as yet unregistered for religious education and youth ministry.*

I'd ask you to read the letter and imagine the possibilities for how your parish can reach out to such families. A letter might be only one of several ways to show a family that they matter to you and to the parish...that their absence is a loss both for them and for the parish community! Some means of reaching out are more labor intensive than others, and might require parishioners, and not just staff, to be involved. And those might ultimately prove more effective. Perhaps each active family is asked to find a way to reach out to an inactive one? The possibilities are endless!

To engage in outreach to inactive families that goes far beyond the obligatory, especially at this tremendously busy time of the year, is a challenge, no doubt. But if we take seriously the model of Jesus, who made a habit of seeking out and inviting those on the margins of society, we will likewise feel compelled to go out and reach out enthusiastically and creatively to those on the margins of the parish.

(Continued on the next page)

"...the fields of inactive Catholic families are ripe this season (and every season) for us as parish ministers."

Let's consider, even in the busy stretch we are in, the rich and varied possible ways we can grow our programs (yes, even the really large ones!) and gain opportunities to open people's hearts to the grace in our parishes by intentionally committing to a strategy or two...or three...of evangelizing outreach. Indeed, the fields of inactive Catholic families are ripe this season (and every season) for us as parish ministers. We can wait for life-events to, hopefully, draw them back to their faith practice...or we can actively pursue them, as Jesus did. Religious education and youth ministry programs give an entry into reaching many, many Catholics.

Two very serious and large questions remain for me, beyond reaching out to inactive families in your parish. One is how to reach out to Catholics in your area who are *not* registered in the parish. They are out there in large, very large numbers! And second, how can religious education and youth ministry participation evangelize an entire household so that a family's faith practice may be reinvigorated? Both of these questions and many other aspects of evangelization are fodder for future columns and discussions. But please do consider them now, as you explore how your ministry can contribute to the broad and dynamic renewal of your parish!

As Catholic faith practice continues to dwindle (how painful it is to name this reality), more and more we need to be intentional and assertive...dare I say bold...in lovingly extending our hands and our hearts to those at the margins and expressing, with conviction, that we want them sharing the good news of Christ with us in our Catholic community of faith.

Please feel free to use my outreach letter, in part or in its entirety, if you wish. (It is also on the website, both in English and Spanish.) My intent is that it be of assistance to you either directly or to help jumpstart your creativity on how to be evangelizing with families in your parish. Let's continue to talk *evangelization* during this year and beyond...but let's be sure we keep looking for innovative and effective ways to do it, too!

Brief Mentions.....

Our annual Pastor/Staff Leadership Day is set for Friday, October 20th, at St. Elizabeth Seton Parish in Naperville. Please work to bring the parish staff as a whole to what promises to be an exciting and worthwhile day. It would be great for everyone at your place to be present to hear from our new bishop, Bishop Sartain, as well as to engage in a process that explores the pastoral implications of the *National Directory for Catechesis*. Our presenter will be Dan Mulhall, from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, who has been in high demand across the nation to give *NDC* workshops. We've planned our time with Dan to be practical for parish staffs! Don't miss this important opportunity!

I want to publicly thank everyone associated with the planning and execution of this past July's Youth Leadership Conference. It was as fine a YLC as I've experienced in the past six years! This weekend event, held annually at Lewis University, is a joyous and faith-filled gathering of Catholic youth from many of our parishes. I always leave the weekend proud of the experience our diocese (REO and parishes together) is able to provide and honored to know so many of the wonderful young people in our diocese who are serving as peer leaders in their parishes. We're already on to planning for YLC '07. Again, many thanks to all who served in leadership roles!

In the last six months of 2006, I've scheduled a few discussion forums in different locales in the diocese. My hope is that these informal gatherings will offer opportunities for me to be present with catechetical leaders of the diocese and hear some of their hopes, concerns and questions about our ministry as we look to the future. The agenda is set by the participants! The first of these forums took place in early August in Woodridge at Christ the Servant Parish. A number of directors of religious education and directors of adult faith formation participated in a morning full of lively conversation around many topics of interest. I am grateful for their input and their commitment to catechetical excellence. And I am glad that they were able to express enthusiasm for our time together.

YOUTH MINISTRY CLUSTERS

Senior High Youth Ministry Cluster

(Aurora, Bolingbrook, Lisle,
Naperville, Oswego)

September 14, 2006

St. Thomas the Apostle,
Naperville
2:00pm

October 12, 2006

St. Raphael, Naperville
2:00pm

Junior High Ministry Cluster

(Aurora, Bolingbrook,
Naperville)

September 5, 2006

St. Raphael, Naperville
3:30pm - 5:00pm

October 3, 2006

St. Margaret Mary,
Naperville
3:30pm - 5:00pm

Joliet Cluster Youth Ministry

(St. Paul, St. Jude, St. Ray,
St. John, St. Mary Nativity,
Holy Family, St. Bernard, SS
Cyril & Methodius)

Dates TBD

South of the Border Cluster

(Northern DuPage)

***All Meetings Begin at 10am**

September 27, 2006

St. Petronille, Glen Ellyn

October 25, 2006

St. Petronille, Glen Ellyn

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(Liturgical Catechesis...continued from front page)

When did deeply cherished symbols of our faith get replaced by cute and cuddly teddy bear angels, wide-eyed doll nativity figures, and cheaply produced giftware laced with pithy pseudo-religious sentiments? What happened in the lifetime of the current generation of parents that traditional outward signs of our Catholic faith are so absent from their homes?



Today's typical Catholic parents grew up after the sweeping liturgical reforms of Vatican II, when statues and other symbols of Catholic faith "disappeared" from churches. Never having experienced these things or the devotional life that spawned them, many may be confused about the relevance of personal devotions. Mass marketing rooted in an American "generic" Christian culture has likewise influenced tastes and availability even for devotional culture has trivialized our faith. For many, the faith may have meaning beyond its decorative value.



As recently as 2003, from the US Catholic proper relationship to the liturgy, reminding also responding to a

statement came out of the Bishops about the value of popular devotions to us of their value, but a kind of backlash that has occurred in some communities to the wholesale abandonment of Catholic devotional life. In some communities, among some groups, devotions have taken on a degree of prominence that made such a document to put them in perspective necessary from that standpoint as well as from the standpoint of their neglect by the general Catholic population.

Most likely, in the average parish, there are families from both "camps" - the "what the heck is a devotion?" crowd and the "let's circle the wagons and pray for the return of the good-old-days" group. What's a catechetical leader to do?

- First, assess your community. Are most of your families in the first group, or the second?
- Second, include family catechesis about devotions in your programming. Go beyond simple recitations of the Rosary or group "performances" of the lighting of the Advent Wreath or praying of the Stations of the Cross. Rather, prepare families for these events by teaching the children and families their meaning, and by inviting families to participate, not only at the parish level, but at home as well, in the celebration of devotions.
- Third, work with those in your parish who are still rooted deeply in devotional traditions to assist in bringing devotions to a balanced and appropriate level among your community's families. Let them help you make quality religious articles available locally.
- Use the pamphlet *Popular Devotional Practices: Basic Questions and Answers* from the USCCB (Publication 5-610) as a basis for understanding.

If you engage in such a process, (perhaps throwing in a few novenas to St. Jude along the way) maybe families in your parish will not feel the need to hang a sign in their living room declaring "This is a Catholic Home"! Instead, they will become the true domestic church that they are - living cradles of Catholic identity forming those who will cherish their faith enough to pass it to future generations.

Brian Topping

The recently published *National Directory for Catechesis* calls us to make our Catholic religion relevant to the people we catechize, using modern means and technologies. People are bombarded with images just about everywhere – TV, movies, internet, email, picture capable cell phones, magazines, advertisements, etc. Often, these images are multimedia, using a variety of sensory inputs to deliver an “experience” rather than just an image.

For years, the Media Center of the Religious Education Office has offered an extensive catechetical video library in the hopes of combating some of those secular multimedia experiences with catechetical ones. That library now contains 5,000 video resources for all age groups. New videos are added all the time. In fact, an insert in this newsletter highlights suggested videos for the fall. What Media Centers across the country are encountering is that videos themselves are losing ground to the multimedia “experience.”



As an alternative, consider using the available a/v equipment to enhance the catechetical multimedia “experience.” The Media Center offers digital imaging equipment, such as still cameras and video cameras. It offers projection equipment, including two newly acquired large venue projectors capable of 5500 lumens (that’s bright!) but weighing only 20 pounds each. The Media Center offers five different size projection screens, five different portable audio systems, an array of audio/video playback equipment (DVD, VCR, CD, etc.), rental laptop computers, presentation remotes, walkie-talkies, and even the ability to “simulcast” a parish event from one location to another within the parish! Professional lighting equipment is also available in a variety of configurations to add that finishing touch.



What does all this mean? Simply put, you can now create your own catechetical multimedia “experience” in a way not available to many Catholic churches today. For example, you could use PowerPoint to design a guided meditation that incorporates motion video, text, still images, sound effects (including silence), music, voice recordings, etc., and project it with corresponding effect lighting to any size group your buildings can accommodate. The only limitation is your imagination.

The people we minister to are formed and taught how to learn in large part by our society. It is important that we make every effort to meet them where they are at if we are to make religion relevant to them. As Church, we will always be able to offer the quiet moments, the reflective and meditative moments, the opportunities for prayer. But can we adapt as an institution to catechize in a way that people who are shaped by this current culture will find relevant? That process has already begun, more quickly in some places than in others. The Media Center is here to assist parishes in that process. Let us know how we can help.

“The people we minister to are formed and taught how to learn in large part by our society.”

Visit the Media Center website at www.dioceseofjoliet.org/re/mediaservices.asp to view the collection of resources – book, video, audio, and equipment. And let your imagination wander. Contact Brian Topping to discuss the possibilities or for more information.

UPDATE: Safe Environment Reporting



By **June 15** of each year, religious education programs are to notify the Religious Education Office of the number of children enrolled and the number who participated in safe environment training as of **June 1** of that year.

Documentation of date of annual distribution of the diocesan parent guide – *Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse* – **must be kept.** If a family removes their child from instruction, parish leaders must keep a signed receipt for the brochure from that family.

These records should be kept, along with records for Safe Environment training and background checks for employees and volunteers, accessible for inspection by diocesan personnel or agents upon request.

REO CALENDAR

September 9, 2006

Catechist Initial
Formation Day
St. Michael, Wheaton
9am-1pm
Contact: Joyce Donahue

September 16, 2006

Catechist Initial
Formation Day
St. Joseph, Addison
9am-1pm
Contact: Joyce Donahue

September 17, 2006

Catechetical Sunday
ALL Parishes
Contact: Joyce Donahue

September 21, 2006

Youth Ministry Workshop
10am-2pm
Contact: Paul Mach

September 23-24, 2006

CMD YM Certificate
Program
Loyola University
Contact: Paul Mach

September 23, 2006

Catechist Initial
Formation Day
St. Joseph, Downers Grove
9am-1pm
Contact: Joyce Donahue

September 30, 2006

Catechist Initial
Formation Day
St. Raphael, Naperville
9am-1pm
Contact: Joyce Donahue

October 13, 2006

8th Grade Evening
Location TBA
6pm-9pm
Contact: Paul Mach

October 14, 2006

Catechist Initial
Formation Day
St. Irene, Warrenville
9am-2pm
Contact: Joyce Donahue

October 20, 2006

Leadership Day #1
St. Elizabeth Seton,
Naperville; 8am-3pm
Contact: Brian Topping

Tonight's Presentation: God is Love

Madonna Wojtasek-Healy,
Ph.D.



I was standing in the doorway of a theater where a community production was about to open its doors for the evening's performance. The man in charge of seating called out to those gathered in the lobby that large groups and people with special needs would be seated first, so they should come forward. A caretaker with a large group of people, who also happened to have disabilities, approached the door. She protectively draped an arm around one of her charges, a very thin, middle-aged woman with mental retardation,

whose eyes shone bright with excitement. The man put up his hand and stated that he would bring everyone into the theatre as soon as he was told to do so by the directors. The woman reached out and grabbed his hand. He folded his thumb around her slender fingers and asked gently, "What's your name, Sweetheart?" The woman appeared to be non-verbal, but her caretaker answered for her, "Charlene." "Well, Charlene, we'll just stand here and hold hands until it's time to go in," he said with tenderness. As the wait continued and more people pushed forward, anxious to be seated, Charlene got caught up in the moment, withdrew her hand from his, and began to clap his hand with hers. "Well, I can always use a hand," the man joked with her. She beamed at him. I felt myself beaming at him. I witnessed the communion of two human spirits, a moment of God's presence for them and anyone fortunate to be close enough to experience the interchange.

I had to wonder, if this group of people with disabilities entered a church (and not a theatre), would Charlene have received the same loving welcome? Would the ushers there or other members of the congregation have allowed her to clasp their hands without pulling away or discouraging her? Would she have been addressed with tenderness or uneasiness? I have no doubt that some would think to themselves that people who inappropriately touch others have no place in public settings, where they make others feel uncomfortable. I've heard people say this. Those of us who work in ministry with the disabled know that church is especially the place where people like Charlene should be welcomed. Why? Because they are part of the Body of Christ, and we would not be complete without their presence among us.

Many Catholics do not realize that inclusion of people with disabilities in our communities, religious or civil, is part of the body of social justice teachings of our faith tradition. Our "pro-life" teachings extend beyond pregnancy and birth. Pope John Paul II and the U.S. bishops have issued statements that persons with disabilities have the same dignity, "to achieve the fullest measure of personal development of which he or she is capable." Furthermore, they state, "Parish liturgical celebrations and catechetical programs should be accessible to persons with disabilities and open to their full, active and conscious participation, according to their capacity."

(www.usccb.org/doctrine/disabilities.htm)

It is the responsibility of all Catholic Christians to pray for the grace to be able to wholeheartedly welcome persons with disabilities into their parishes and into their lives. May every "Charlene" that enters your parish community bring you closer to experiencing God's loving presence in the Body of Christ.



The NDC: Those Who Catechize

Joyce Donahue

When the *National Directory for Catechesis* tackles the question of the various persons and groups responsible for catechesis, it truly covers our American map. There is wisdom and a role for everyone: the bishop, diocesan staff, pastors, parochial vicars and other parish priests, deacons, those in consecrated life, parish catechetical leaders, youth ministers, catechists, Catholic schools (principals, religion teachers, all Catholic school teachers) others, and parents. (See Chapter 8, section 54) Each person in this picture should certainly be familiar with the section pertaining to his or her role in catechesis.

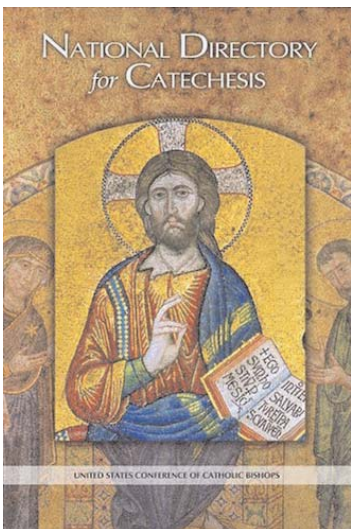
“Only after the candidate has given careful and prayerful consideration to the responsibilities connected with being a catechist should the pastor formally invite the person to begin initial catechist formation.” (p. 236)

Each person who serves as a catechist must discern if he or she is truly called to the role. – not just anyone should be a catechist: “Only after the candidate has given careful and prayerful consideration to the responsibilities connected with being a catechist should the pastor formally invite the person to begin initial catechist formation.” (p. 236)

How often, because of the demands of a large program are directors of religious education pushed to accept the “willing volunteer” because they cannot find anyone else to fill an opening! In those cases, it is especially important that the person receive initial formation early in his or her catechetical ministry.

Initial formation, as described on pp. 237 and 238 pays primary attention to the spirituality and character of the catechist, not to filling his or her head with knowledge. Ongoing formation takes into account the human, spiritual and intellectual levels, with an eye to supporting their apostolic zeal (eagerness to evangelize others for Christ.)

The *NDC* goes on to point out that ongoing formation of catechists is most effective in reaching them when conducted at the local level, within the community of faith. Secondly, there is a call for diocesan and cluster level workshops, perhaps in cooperation with local Catholic colleges and universities.

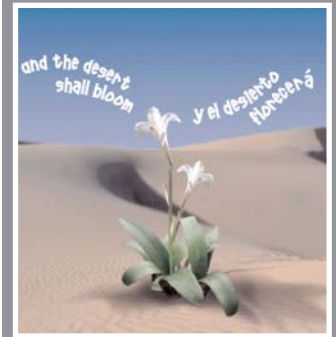


The call for local formation puts the responsibility back on those who call catechists to ministry, providing a context steeped in the culture, values, needs and experiences of the catechesis of the local people. This is something a diocesan or national program cannot do as well.

You may in fact notice that the description of initial formation pretty much matches up to the goals of the Diocese of Joliet’s Catechist Initial Formation Day, offered since 2004, as a response to the spirit of the *General Directory for Catechesis*, and even before the *NDC* was published. Perhaps you have noticed as well that over the past three years the REO has shifted from an emphasis on large-group diocesan formation events toward smaller, locally contained

events as well as toward encouraging local parish and cluster level offerings for catechist formation. Under the guidance of the Spirit, now supported fully by the national document, we continue to try to provide what is in the best interest of those who catechize and those to be catechized.

**NCCYM
“And the
desert shall
bloom”**



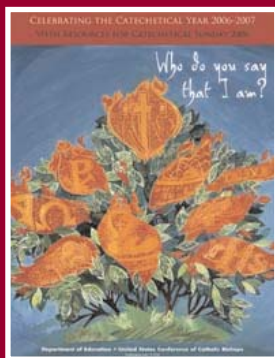
November 30 -
December 3, 2006
Riviera Hotel and
Casino
Las Vegas,
Nevada

Join thousands of
other youth ministers
at The National
Conference on
Catholic Youth
Ministry - the major
connecting point for
the profession of
Catholic youth min-
istry in the United
States.

Mike Patin will be
one of the keynote
speakers! For more
information go to
www.nfcym.org or
contact Paul Mach.

Register on-line by
October 6th to
receive the \$45 early
bird discount.

**Joliet-Will Cluster
In-Service Day
October 21, 2006**



**“Who Do You Say
That I Am?”**

The day will feature prayer with Bishop Sartain and Kenneth Doran, National Religion Consultant for Sadlier, as the keynote speaker.

Registration will begin at 8:00am at the St. Charles Borromeo Pastoral Center in Romeville. The day will conclude at 12:10 with a box lunch that is provided.

The fee is \$10.00 per person which includes your choice of workshops. See the *inserted* invitation for the complete schedule and the registration form.

For more information please contact Theresa Palicka at (630) 759-7588 ext.109

**Spanish Resources for Catechesis
Recursos en Español por catequesis**

For parishes with a need for Spanish resources we now have available:

Safe Environment Parent Videos:



📺 **Que les digo ahora? (What Do I Say Now)**
Committee for Children

Una perspectiva desde Las Sombras: Child Abuse in the Hispanic Community, www.YHTP.org (NEW! Highly recommended fully culturally sensitive film for parents and others who work with children.)



Safe Environment Materials for Students:

Separate Spanish version:

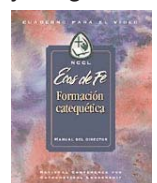
📺 **Rompiendo el silencio (Breaking the Silence)** Diocese of Orange, for grades 9-12

English/Spanish on same DVD:

📺 **A Time to Tell** (Boy Scouts of America) – grades 6-8

📺 **Personal Safety Awareness** (Boy Scouts of America) – grades 9-12

Note: at this time we do not have any resources in Spanish for safe environment for younger children.



For Catechists:

📄 **Diocesan Catechist Certification Brochure -**

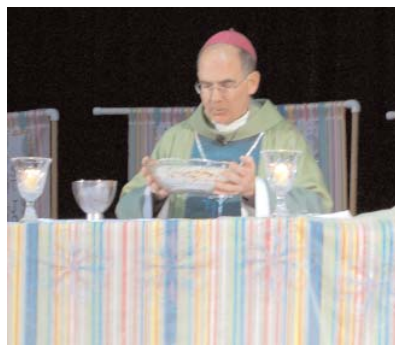
<http://www.dioceseofjoliet.org/reo/documents/catechistbrochureSpanish.pdf>

📺 **The Ecos de fe (Echoes of Faith)** video series for catechists in Spanish is in the Media Center – available for rental.

Spanish Catechist Formation – some parishes are working together and sharing resources to make this a reality. Contact Nata Martinez at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel in Joliet if you are interested. (815) 727-7187.

For more information on these resources and how to borrow or purchase them contact Joyce Donahue at the REO at 815-727-6411, or jdonahue@dioceseofjoliet.org.

YLC 2006 : No Fear Our Shepherd is Near



Bishop Sartain celebrates mass at the conclusion of YLC 2006. In a thank-you letter he stated that, “I was impressed with the enthusiasm and dedication of both the young people and staff, and it was an honor to be with you...”



Youths from St. Paul the Apostle in Joliet use parish time to participate in the team-building activity, creating a “human knot”- where they try to reform a circle without breaking apart.