

Fostering Strong and Creative Catechetical Formation in a Diocesan Setting

Tuesday, October 18, 2022

The Goal: To provide online groups for Catechetical Leaders to meet once a week for one hour to go through *Franciscan at Home* workshops. Two videos and two tasks can be completed in one hour, while starting and stopping on time.

The Fruit: Being part of a group using *Franciscan at Home* leads to a recognition of the need for and the appreciation of ongoing formation, time for prayer, and the support and encouragement of like-minded parish leaders. Eventually, these Catechetical Leaders begin to use *Franciscan at Home* workshops with parish catechists, youth ministry team, the RCIA team etc.

Helpful tips for facilitating a *Franciscan at Home* workshop online on ZOOM, Google meet etc.

- 1) The group size with *Franciscan at Home* online workshops flow well with 5-8 people. For the majority of interested learners, it is too hard with such busy lives to get around to completing a workshop on their own. I have invited mainly full-time Catechetical Leaders, deacons and those in charge of parish evangelization to be part of a group, at a convenient time for them.
- 2) With 4 people or less, I also participate in the discussion (more than just facilitating), while keeping track of the time so as to complete 2 videos and 2 tasks in an hour. If more than 5 people are part of a workshop, to ensure completing two video segments in an hour, the number of participants who respond to the discussion questions needs to be limited.
- 3) I set up a handout for each session with the instructions for the two tasks that will be covered during the hour, so that we can “see” each other while the instructions are being read and answered. For the handout, in cutting and pasting the tasks from *Franciscan at Home*, a simple change can be made by replacing wording such as “the mentor” or “formation companion” with the word “group.” (See the sample for sessions 1 and sessions 2 for the workshop “Essential Link between Liturgy and Catechesis.”) For segment 1, there is an introduction and sometimes a pre-task, which are also included on the handout.
- 4) With the weekly ZOOM invite, email the group the handout so they can print it out, and also mention if they will need a Bible or *Catechism*. For the **first session** of a specific workshop, save the **Presenter’s Handout** to your computer, which is downloadable from *Franciscan at Home*, and include it also in the email to the group, but only when starting a new workshop.
- 5) Here are the steps to facilitate an online group:
 - Have the *Franciscan at Home* workshop open on your computer screen before the online meeting begins.
 - When on ZOOM with the group and after simple greetings and an opening prayer, when beginning a new workshop, read aloud the **Introduction** from the handout.

- Next, **1)** click on **Share Screen** at the bottom of the screen to access the video. For the best sound and video, **2)** click on **Share Sound** and **Optimize for video clip** at the bottom left-hand corner of the screen. Note: By clicking these two boxes, the other learners cannot see the group while watching the video. **3)** Now click on the **Franciscan at Home workshop** and then click **Share Screen** at the bottom, right-hand corner, to watch the video.
 - After watching the video, **4)** click **Stop Sharing** at the top of the screen, and then as you can see the group again, read through and discuss the task.
 - Regarding the tasks, if there are a good number of paragraphs to read in the *Catechism*, for example, divide up the paragraphs among the group for the discussion. If the task is to read a passage in the Scriptures and meditate on it, set a specific amount of time, such as 3 minutes, or 5 minutes if a longer task is required. People will usually turn off their video and mute themselves for this time of prayer. Note: The Holy Spirit truly blesses these times of prayer.
 - After completing the task, share screen again so that the **Response** on *Franciscan at Home* can be read aloud. In the response box, type in "Completed" (you can fill in your response after the workshop is over) and click Save, and the prepared Response will come up. The Responses is always worth reading as they are compelling and helpful. With only one hour, there is usually not enough time to read the response for the second video and task. This Response can be included on the next-week's handout as the starting point. Beginning the next session by reading the response aloud from the handout provides a good review to help recall the essence of the workshop.
- 6) At the beginning and end of a session, one person prays aloud, and everyone else prays along silently. During an online meeting, it is too disjointed to pray aloud together.
- 7) In facilitating these workshops, it is much easier to get to know the Catechetical Leaders on a very personal basis, and for them to get to know you - the facilitator. They are more apt to call for guidance, help, direction etc. and come with their real needs. Further, some will ask to stay on the ZOOM meeting afterwards to discuss something briefly.

Email from a Catechetical Leader responding to me about asking to cancel the group this week:

Sounds good! I had a conflict today as well and am still discerning if I should continue with the next workshop. My workload is beginning to be a little more than expected and I need all the time I can get to prepare. On the other hand, I really enjoy learning, discussing, and praying together with other like-minded people who understand what it is like to work in ministry. Thank you for setting this up! Have a good week!

Kristin

Oct. 11, 2022