A guide for using our online workshops with a group . . .

"Where two or more are gathered..."
~ Matthew 18:20

Step One: Join us!

- ✓ Registration with the Catechetical Institute takes place through www.FranciscanAtHome.com either with an institution subscription (parish or school) or as individual subscriptions.
- ✓ The Catechetical Institute has a user-friendly PDF designed to help people easily get into the site for free, once their parish or school has a subscription. If you do not have this PDF, feel free to request it via email: ci@franciscan.edu.

CATECHETICAL INSTITUTE
FRANCISCAN UNIVERSITY

Being effective

Launched three years ago, our online platform, www.FranciscanAtHome.com has drawn the interest of over 150 dioceses!

In seeing the many creative ways our workshops are being used by parishes and schools, we have noted that group settings are often as much or more effective than solely individual use of this formation.

So, to encourage this way of using our workshops, we've provided here a set of best practices for how to do so . . .

A great variety of formation

We currently we have 20 ministry tracks being designed, with over 800 formation workshops in total to be filmed, and over 300 filmed thus far.

Our online platform is three years old, and the post-production on our workshops involves much time and care to make them beautifully *engaging* and *effective* formation tools. We appreciate your patience as we build this wonderful work to form those who form others.

Our tracks in development

1. Catechist Track
2. Four Pillar of the Catechism Track
3. Youth Ministry Track
4. RCIA Track
5. Parish Catechetical Leader Track
6. Catholic Schools Track
7. Hispanic Faith & Family Track
8. Ministry of Parenting Track
9. Pastoral Accompaniment Track
10. Young Adults Track
11. First Proclamation Track
12. African-Amer. Faith & Family Track
13. Special Needs Track
14. Culture of Life Track
15. Diocesan Officials Track
16. Priestly Renewal Track
17. Sports Ministry Track
18. Music Ministry Track
19. Collegial Outreach Track
20. Franciscan Spirituality Track

Quick start group guide

- Discuss which adult groups could best benefit from the workshops led in collaborative learning sessions, such as: parish or school staff, catechists across all age levels, godparents/sponsors, parents, liturgical ministries, youth leaders, RCIA teams, young adult groups, etc.
- Choose a track (collection of workshops) or just a specific workshop.
- Determine a time frame (monthly, bi-weekly, weekly, etc.), session length, and what goal is to be accomplished at each gathering, such as the number of segments that can reasonably be discussed in the time available.
- Advertise to your target group, introducing CI, the relevant workshop topics, and the structure. Invite participants to bring their device (laptop or tablet, etc.), including a digital photo, to the first meeting, especially if you'll have them register online at that point.
- Ensure that the meeting location has WIFI or a cable connection to the internet, and that the room can project the workshops clearly enough for everyone.
- Assign a facilitator for the workshop. The facilitator does not teach. The CI workshop presenters teach. The facilitator keeps the discussion from being dominated by a single person, while guiding the discussion to be collaborative.
- The facilitator should be conversant with the videos and tasks in order to plan which texts can be simply read out-loud from the screen and which may need to be printed, such as the key instructions for the tasks. Consider which tasks are best explained, begun, and perhaps encouraged to be continued at home.
- Facilitators could be trained CI mentors, diocesan officials, or parish/school leaders.

"Catechesis is closely linked with the responsible activity of the Church and of Christians in the world. A person who has given adherence to Jesus Christ by faith and is endeavoring to consolidate that faith by catechesis needs to live in communion with those who have taken the same step."

~ Adult Catechesis in the Christian Community, 69

Tips for successful gatherings

- ✓ Introduce a specific track to the group and explore the different workshops in that track.
- ✓ Introduce the online presenters using the biographical videos found in each workshop.
- ✓ Begin a specific workshop and go through the segments according to the time available.
- ✓ Segments and tasks can be viewed and discussed as a group or participants may use their devices to type and save, or simply complete tasks on paper.
- ✓ Have Bibles and Catechisms available for those less familiar with using such texts electronically.
- ✓ Consider printing sheets of key texts as well as the handout available for downloading at the beginning of each workshop. Prior to watching the video, it may be helpful to ask participants to mark the pages in the Catechism or Bible that will be referenced.
- ✓ A large group could be divided into smaller groups for the tasks with a "reporter" for each group.
- ✓ Workshop segments and tasks not completed could be resumed and completed by participants on their own at their convenience, perhaps within a specific time frame. However, it's important to emphasize that the community aspect of the group is essential: "where two or more are gathered…" (Mt 18:20).
- ✓ Set aside time for group prayer and/or silent reflection at the conclusion of the session (a simple prayer, a sharing of intercessory intentions, or perhaps adoration, rosary, chaplet, a litany, etc.).
- ✓ It may be helpful to create a calendar for the parish, showing when certain workshops will be offered.

Considerations for hospitality

- ✦ Assign or invite participants to set up and serve appropriate snacks and beverages, and set up tables and chairs for each workshop.
- ✦ Low volume Catholic meditative music could be played in the background as people enter in order to set the mood and complement the beauty that is the cornerstone of the workshops.
- ✦ Have Bibles and Catechisms to purchase or borrow.
- ✦ Any Church documents referred to in the workshops could be displayed at the gathering (*Catechesi Tradendae, General Directory for Catechesis*, etc.).
- ✦ Have extra pens, pencils, and paper available.
- ✦ Consider using name tags, and taking the time for introductions of the facilitator and participants.