

International Catechist Guild: Guild Circles FAQ

1. What is a Guild Circle?

The Guild is a way of finding the people and the answers you need, offering creative ways to gather – to circle – to find supportive community. These circles are places to meet those who have the same enthusiasm for catechetical ministry, the same desire to grow, the same commitment to the Church's Magisterial principles for the communication of the faith, places to make catechetical friendships and to share and receive ideas in ministry together.

2. What is the main purpose of the Guild Circle?

The circles are small groups planned by the Guild leadership to focus on ways we have found most help people to rise towards excellence, whether it be in parenting, in priesthood, or any of the myriad paycheck and volunteer teaching and ministry roles. By creating a context for apprenticeships and mentoring, Guild small group circles steep in Magisterial documents, key books, best practices, methodology studies, and spiritual pathways.

3. Who can participate in a Guild Circle?

The Guild arranges circles of spiritual associations among people who see passing on the faith as a vocation, to be integrated into their lives, not an add on, but as a major part of their vocational path. Guild circles are places for those people to fellowship, support one another, and to move into apprenticeship with others – for growing leaders and for growing oneself.

4. How will the Guild Circle sessions be structured?

The Guild Circle sessions are primarily structured as an online 'small group' forum. Your Guild Circle Leader will introduce the topic and provide an overview of each session and take the participants through the main concepts of the session. This can include reading passages from a text or a short presentation on the main points that may include a PowerPoint presentation. Then, the majority of time during the sessions will involve discussions led by the Guild Circle Leader, where your input and insights will be crucial to share. So, while Guild Circle Leaders establishes the structure of the sessions and provides the primary understanding of the topic, their main goal is to facilitate dialogue between you and them. Guild Circles can also be held locally, whether at a parish, school, or another setting. Each Guild Circle's particular setup is listed under its description, so there will be no confusion as to whether it is an online Guild Circle or a localized in-person one.

5. What if there is an interesting topic for a local Guild Circle that is not in my area? Can I join in electronically?

The Guild Circles will not be a mix of local and online sessions. If you are interested in a topic that you cannot attend, be on the lookout for future Circles on that topic, as many topics will be repeated by various Guild Circle Leaders. You are always welcome to reach out to the CI with your suggestions and requests.

6. What is the time and duration of a Guild Circle?

The length and duration of a Guild Circle is topic-dependent. Generally, they will range from 1 to 1 ½ hour sessions over a period of several weeks, typically between 4 and 10, meeting either weekly or bi-weekly (sometimes monthly). You can view each Guild Circle's particular structure by viewing its description on the website.

7. Do I have to prepare ahead of time for each Guild Circle meeting?

That is contingent upon your Guild Circle Leaders! Depending on the topic, there may be some reading before each session, in order to help the discussions continue more fruitfully. That information can also be found under each Guild Circle on the website.

8. Is there a cost associated with signing up for a Guild Circle?

Yes, each Guild Circle will normally cost around \$25 per participant, and this will provide personal access to an expert on a particular topic as well as the opportunity to learn from others in your field from around the world. Additionally, some Guild Circles may require the purchase of a text for the Guild Circle sessions. If so, there will be a link(s) to purchase this item.

9. What if I can't afford the cost of a Guild Circle?

We understand that there are challenges for all of us in being able to afford formation we are seeking, even at comparatively reasonable prices. Please do not hesitate to reach out to Reba Good at Guild@franciscan.edu and see whether there are scholarship funds available to help you benefit from a particular circle.

10. Will Guild Circles be accessible worldwide?

Yes! One of the major goals of the Guild Circles is to connect people like you from all over the world, so that you can learn from one another and grow individually, as well as communally in Christ's Church. To that end, each Guild Circle will be accessible through an online link, so internet access will be required to participate.

11. Who do I contact if I wish to learn more information about the Guild Circle before committing to signing up?

Reach out to us at Guild@franciscan.edu.

12. What if I can't make it to a session? Will it be recorded so I can watch it later?

One of the main goals of the Guild Circles is the ability to engage in live interactions with one another. To that end, the sessions will not be recorded. The dates and times of each Circle's sessions will be listed on the website, so you will be able to plan ahead.

13. Will there be a certificate or some kind of proof of participation that I will receive upon finishing a Guild Circle?

At the end of your Circle, you may be eligible for a certificate of completion. For example, this can be used as documentation for continuing education hours for a school system. Your Guild Circle Leader will determine their criteria for completion, which could include a required percentage of the attending sessions to merit the certificate. Your Guild Circle Leader will go over their criteria with you at the start of your sessions.

14. Can I keep in touch with the other participants in my Guild Circle?

During your Guild Circle sessions, you are welcome to share your information with your other Guild Circle participants for further collaboration and relationships, which you can share freely through the chat sidebar.

15. What if there is a Guild Circle that I wish to attend, but it is full? Is there a chance I can still join?

There is an electronic waitlist for each Circle, so if the Circle you want is full, you will be notified that you are waitlisted, and then you will be notified immediately via email if someone drops their participation. If you are keen to do it, you will want to respond quickly to this. Additionally, many topics are repeated in different Guild Circles with different leaders. If you are waitlisted and do not make it into a particular Circle, keep checking back for the next available Circle on that topic.

16. Can I sign up to join a Guild Circle after the sessions have already started?

No, this is not an option due to the importance of the first sessions setting the tone and groundwork for the Circle's study.

17. Who do I contact if I am interested in serving as a Guild Circle Leader?

If you are interested in serving as a Guild Circle Leader, email Guild@franciscan.edu.