

# DIOCESE OF BOISE

## OFFICE OF CATECHESIS



The Office of Catechesis supports the mission of the Diocese of Boise by assisting the Bishop in carrying out his role as the chief catechist of the diocese.

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### Catechist Certification

### Praying With Children

Kathy Barkdull, Presenter

# Opening Prayer

Jesus, the Son of God, entered the world to live as one of us, as a child in Mary's womb. He welcomed children when others would rebuke them and held them up as a sign of the kingdom of God. As Jesus, let our hearts and minds be open with the peace and innocence of childhood.

*People were bringing even infants to him that he might touch them, and when the disciples saw this, they rebuked them. Jesus, however, called the children to himself and said, "Let the children come to me and do not prevent them; for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Amen, I say to you, whoever does not accept the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it."*

*Luke 18:15-17*

Lord God, may we see in the children we catechize the face of Jesus, God's child, and gather them into our arms with love and compassion. May we be as children in our trust in God's love.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

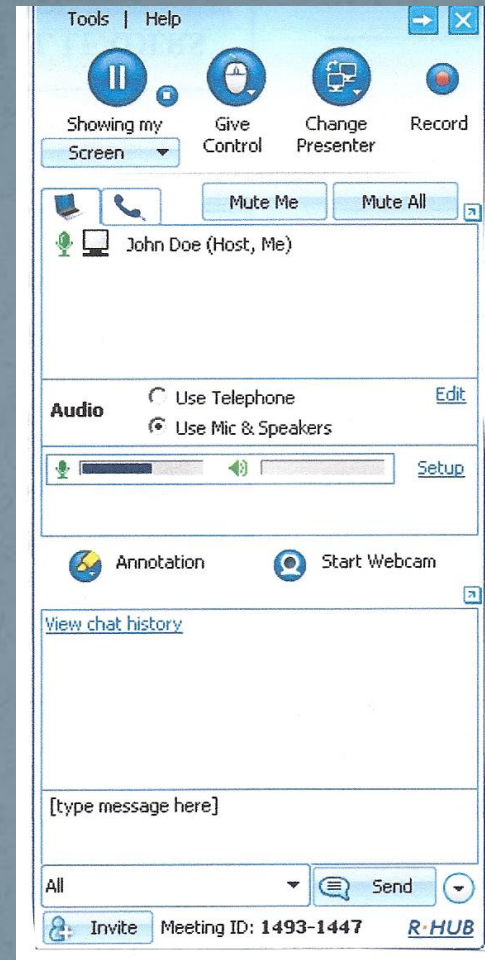
Amen.

# Introductions

As a child, what was your favorite prayer or method of prayer?

## Questions/Comments??

Use the “Chat” box option in your tool pane on the right side of your screen.



# Praying With Children



## The Fourth Fundamental Task of Catechesis

### *Teaching to Pray*

*When catechesis is permeated by a  
climate of prayer, the assimilation of the  
entire Christian life reaches its summit.*

*GDC 85*

*Because catechesis seeks to lead persons and communities to deeper faith, it is oriented to prayer and worship. Catechesis for prayer emphasizes the major purposes for prayer – adoration, thanksgiving, petition, and contrition – and includes various prayer forms: communal prayer, private prayer, traditional prayer, spontaneous prayer, gesture, song, meditation, and contemplation.*

*NDC 34*

*Catechesis for prayer begins when children see and hear others praying and when they pray with others, especially in the family. Young children seems to have a special sense of wonder, a recognition of God's presence in their lives, and a capacity for prayer. They should be encouraged by parents and catechists to call upon the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit as well as the Mother of God, the angels, and the saints. From infancy they should be inculturated into the daily prayer life of the family, thereby learning the prayers and prayer forms of the Catholic tradition and becoming accustomed to praying daily: e.g., morning and evening prayer, prayer before and after meals, and prayer at special moments in the life of the family.*

*By the nature of their ministry, catechists are often called to lead the community in prayer.*

*Sharing the Light of Faith*

Our Students are our Community





# Catechists as Role Models of Prayer

- Children learn it is okay to pray by seeing significant adults in their lives pray without embarrassment or hesitation.
- This requires a commitment on the part of the Catechist to not only grow in their individual prayer life but also to model prayer in the lives of their students.
- Praying with adults helps children to learn we are all brothers and sisters in the family of God and that God loves us all.

# Benefits of Praying with Children

- We learn that children have unique concerns and ways of expressing their concerns to God.
- The simplicity of a child's prayer emphasizes God's never-ending love for us.
- We gain a greater appreciation for even the simplest prayers as we teach them to the children.
- Our own repertoire of prayer can expand as we experience the various ways a child prays.

# A Child's Capacity to Pray

- Children pray very naturally when they have prayerful adult role models (parents, catechists, etc.) in their lives.
- Just as children observe how the adults communicate with other adults, they also observe how the adults communicate with God.
- Children have the ability to learn the words to simple prayers, sing hymns, create a prayer with craft supplies, to pray spontaneously expressing their joys, fears & frustrations or sit in awe of the magnificence of God's creation.

# Servants of Prayer

The *Christian Family* is the first place of education in prayer. Based on the sacrament of marriage, the family is the “domestic church” where God’s children learn to pray “as the Church” and to persevere in prayer. For young children in particular, daily family prayer is the first witness of the Church’s living memory as awakened patiently by the Holy Spirit.

CCC 2685

The *catechesis* of children, young people, and adults aims at teaching them to meditate on The Word of God in personal prayer, practicing it in liturgical prayer, and internalizing it at all times in order to bear fruit in a new life. Catechesis is also a time for the discernment and education of popular piety. The memorization of basic prayers offers an essential support to the life of prayer, but it is important to help learners savor their meaning.

CCC 2688

# Strategies and Activities to foster the growth of a child's prayer life at each age level.



# Infants and Toddlers

- Say simple prayers aloud using words your child can repeat in time or sing hymns.
- Teach them gestures or actions associated with prayer.
- Family times that are consistently dedicated to God (meals, bedtime) using words and gestures such as the Sign of the Cross.
- Allow them to touch objects associated with God such as a cross or holy picture explaining them in simple language.
- Allow them to see you take times of concern or sadness to God in prayer.

# Preschoolers

- Allow the child to lead simple prayers or sing favorite hymns together.
- Consistent times of prayer including short rituals allowing the child to lead in their own way.
- Encourage them to sit quietly and talk to God, listening for God's quiet reply.
- Encourage them to create a prayer using art having them explain why certain shapes or colors were used and pray with them expressing the sentiments of the art.
- Read a children's Bible together asking them about the pictures and stories.
- Encourage them to pray for family and friends.
- Encourage them to experience God in creation.



# Elementary School Age

- Encourage questions about God or prayer. Have them write a list of questions for God along with the replies they receive when they pray.
- Utilize art as a method to communicate with God or as a gift to God.
- Encourage prayer for those outside their family and friends.
- Teach them how to express honest feelings in prayer even if they are negative or write a letter to God.
- Read Scripture together encouraging them to read scripture outside of the classroom setting.
- Introduce the lives of the Saints.
- Incorporate movement and music in prayer times.

# Preteen or Young Adolescents

- Encourage them to share their questions about God and prayer. Don't be afraid to share your own questions.
- Encourage quiet, personal prayer that includes writing down their questions, joys, sorrows, and fears assuring them it will remain private.
- Explore the Bible on a deeper level helping them to discern how the stories apply to their individual lives.
- Teach them to take their prayer for others into current events.

# Older Adolescents

- Continue to encourage their questions about God and prayer providing resources so they can search out their own answers.
- Introduce them to prayer forms such as the Examen so they can review and reflect on their day asking for God's help to do better in the future.
- Continue to encourage quiet, personal prayer using a journal to express their honest feelings in prayer.
- Encourage reading scripture on a daily basis.
- Assist them in taking their prayer to the world even for those they have nothing in common.
- Helping them to get involved in their parish as they take their relationship with God and others more seriously.

# Strategies and Activities for All Ages to Form “Pray-ers” for Life



# Be Reverential in speech and actions

- Do not use God's name in a sloppy or profane manner.
- Even if you think your child/student doesn't hear you or understand, your words could come back to haunt you.
- Do not tolerate teens or older children using God's name in a sloppy or profane manner.
- Have classroom discussions on the widespread use of profanity in popular culture and how they can approach it from a point of Christian values.

# Pray with your Child or Student

- Begin with simple prayers for very young children using words they will be able to repeat in time.
- Sing hymns with them that are easy to learn.
- Allow them to start leading the prayers at a young age.
- Children and adolescents learn how to pray from the example of adults they respect.
- Pray for your child or student in their presence.
- Allow them to witness you in honest prayer, in good times and the bad.

# Establish Prayer Routines

- Develop consistent times for family or classroom prayer so it becomes part of their regular day.
- Introduce simple rituals as the children get older.
- Invite older children and adolescents to plan these prayer times.
- Encourage teens to decide on other appropriate times of family or classroom prayer.
- Provide resources for families and students to enhance their prayer life outside of the classroom.

# Experience Liturgy from an Early Age

- Begin at an early age (infants/toddlers). Arrive early so they can experience the sights, sounds and aromas of the Church.
- Take children to Mass on a regular basis allowing them to ask questions. Find creative ways to encourage parents to get their children to Mass especially during sacramental prep years.
- Provide opportunities for students to participate in the Liturgical experiences of your parishes.
- Offer Liturgy of the Word opportunities for children.
- Make training available for older students and teens to serve as lectors, ushers, Eucharistic Minister, etc. and have opportunities for them to plan liturgies geared for the youth.



# Instruct on the use of Sacred Words

- At a young age, children can learn “Sacred Words” to create a calmness, gentleness and stillness with God.
- Elementary students are capable of explaining their “Sacred Words” and why they are special to their prayer life.
- Encourage pre-teens and adolescents to choose their own “Sacred Words” reminding them of the gift of these words that can keep them connected to God, especially during times of sadness, trouble or worry.

# How Prayer Leads to Service

Communication with God brings us closer to God which in turn brings us closer to the people and things that God loves.

- Explain the connection between prayer and service.
- Inspire older children to do something nice for someone even someone they may not get along with and then incorporate prayer for that person into their prayer time.
- Provide service opportunities for pre-teens and older adolescents such as helping in a soup kitchen, clothing drive, assisting the elderly or mission trips.
- Look for ways where they can witness how prayer leads to service through the adults in their lives.

# Creating a Prayerful Environment



- Create a pray corner or table that is a permanent part of your space or one that can be set up quickly during scheduled class times.
- Keep the distractions to a minimum by shutting the door, turning off electronics and establish a prayer environment with soft music or silence.
- Plan for quiet activities prior to prayer times. Establish cues or gestures so the students know prayer is about to begin.
- Utilize posters with prayers so there are no papers to hold, fold or cause a distraction.

# Prayer in Special Circumstances



# Prayer Services and Rituals for Special Occasions

- Encourage everyone to have an active role in crafting the service or ritual.
- Choose a location that makes sense for the occasion.
- Use symbols that fit the occasion: a creche for Christmas, sacramentals, an award or trophy, tokens of remembrance in the case of loss.
- Include candles to represent God's presence.
- Readings from scripture that represent the occasion.
- Reflection on the readings.
- Ritual actions such as the Sign of the Cross, holding hands, sign of peace, periods of silence, prayer intentions.

# Directory for Masses with Children

November 1, 1973, Congregation for Divine Worship

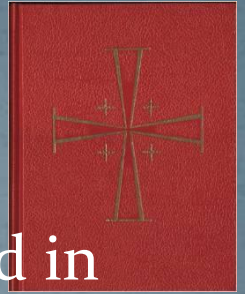
“In the upbringing of children in the Church a special difficulty arises from the fact that liturgical celebrations, especially the eucharist, cannot fully exercise their inherent pedagogical force upon children. Although the vernacular may now be used at Mass, still the words and signs have not been sufficiently adapted to the capacity of children.”

“...we may fear spiritual harm if over the years children repeatedly experience in the church things that are barely comprehensible...”

“The church follows its Master, who “put his arms around the children... and blessed them” (Mk 10:16). It cannot leave children in the condition described. Vatican Council II had spoken in the Constitution on the Liturgy about the need of liturgical adaptation for various groups. Soon afterwards, especially in the first synod of Bishops held in Rome in 1967, the Church began to consider how participation by children could be made easier. On the occasion of the Synod, the President of the Concilium for the Implementation of the Constitution on the Liturgy said explicitly that it could not be a matter of “creating some entirely special rite but rather of retaining, shortening, or omitting some elements or of making a better selection of texts.”

DMC Introduction

# Liturgy of the Word for Children



The Lectionary for Masses with Children was published in English in 1993 as an adaptation of the regular Lectionary for Mass.

God communicates with us through words and especially through Christ, the living Word. When the inspired word of Scripture takes on a human voice and is proclaimed as the word of God in the liturgical assembly, it becomes a sacrament, that is, it has an effective power to communicate and reveal God's presence. If that sacramental presence is to be communicated effectively in the proclamation of the word, then we need to use whatever skills and resources are available to help people experience and "give assent to God's Good News."



# Introduction: Lectionary for Masses with Children

“The Directory for Masses with Children clearly sets forth the Church’s desire that children, no less than other members of the community, be formed by the same word of God. Therefore, at Masses with adults in which children also participate and at Masses with children in which only a few adults participate “biblical readings should never be omitted.”

# Liturgy of the Word with Children

“In Masses with adults in which children also participate, sometimes, moreover, if the place itself and the nature of the community permit, it will be appropriate to celebrate the liturgy of the word, including a homily, with the children in a separate, but not too distant, room.”

Introduction: Lectionary for Masses with Children

# Criteria for Liturgy of the Word with Children

- The children first gather with the rest of the assembly to celebrate the introductory rites.
- At the conclusion of the opening prayer, but before the first reading, the presiding priest may formally send the children and their ministers to the place where they will celebrate their own liturgy of the word.
- The Lectionary (primarily the Lectionary for Masses with Children) may be presented to the one to preside over the liturgy with words of dismissal.
- In the Lectionary for Masses with Children, one of the readings may be adapted, shortened or deleted but the gospel for that particular Sunday, even though adapted or shortened is never deleted.
- At the conclusion of their liturgy of the word, the children return to their families before the liturgy of the eucharist begins.

# Particular Issues

- The place where the liturgy of the word is to take place should be chosen carefully. Spaces should be well prepared and the environment suitable for the worship of God.
- The books and objects used should be appropriate and give witness to the Church's reverence for the Scriptures.
- Full use of music should be used. The responsorial psalm should be led by a cantor and the gospel acclamation is always sung.

“The Mass is not an historical reenactment of the events of salvation history and care should be taken not to give the impression that the liturgy of the word is a play. This is not to say that dramatic elements may not be used, e.g., the readings may at times be divided into parts distributed among the children. However, the use of costumes, etc. is more appropriate in the context of other celebrations or services. Care should be taken especially at Christmas and during Holy Week and the Easter Triduum not to stage the various liturgies as plays. The Christmas Mass should not be presented as a birthday party for Jesus, nor should secular notions of Santa Claus be introduced into the Christmas liturgy.”

Introduction: Lectionary for Masses with Children

IV:52

# Liturgy: A Ritual Event

- The Church's liturgy is first and foremost ritual prayer, not a catechetical one.
- There should be careful preparation of the assembly and the ministers.
- Inappropriate resources may include:
  - Translations of the scriptures that obscure the meaning.
  - Activities that turn the proclamation of the word into a classroom lesson.
  - The use on non-scriptural readings.
- Catechetical activities are best used before the Mass to prepare the children, either in the RE program or at home.

# Common Format

“The preparation and celebration of liturgies for children begin with and flow from a clear desire to assist them to participate in the worship of the entire community. This is best accomplished when the basic shape of the ritual used with the children, its symbols, gestures, and language are similar to that of the full assembly. The children are thus enabled to celebrate the paschal mystery of Christ on their own level of understanding and are led to the celebration of those same mysteries in the full assembly of the faithful.”

Introduction: Lectionary for Masses with Children IV:53

“Although the Church permits the liturgy of the word to be celebrated in a place apart from the main Sunday assembly, it seeks to protect and foster the domestic church which is the Christian family. This might be weakened if all the Scripture readings heard by parents were substantially different from those heard by their children on the same Sunday.”

Introduction: Lectionary for Masses with Children

III.A.14



# Eucharistic Adoration



In the United States, we have witnessed a growing phenomenon in the participation of youth in Eucharistic Adoration services.

“Eucharistic adoration after Mass is a continuation of what occurs when we receive Holy Communion. In the Eucharist the Son of God comes to meet us and desires to become one with us; eucharistic adoration is simply the natural consequence of the eucharistic celebration, which is itself the church’s supreme act of adoration... The act of adoration outside Mass prolongs and intensifies all that takes place during the liturgical celebration itself.”

*Sacramentum Caritatis*, Pope Benedict XVI

"...Dear young people discerning your vocations: evangelization is done on one's knees... . Always be men and women of prayer! Without a constant relationship with God, the mission becomes a job. The risk of activism, of relying too much on structures, is an ever-present danger. If we look towards Jesus, we see that prior to any important decision or event he recollected himself in intense and prolonged prayer. Let us cultivate the contemplative dimension, even amid the whirlwind of more urgent and pressing duties."

Pope Francis, July 7, 2013

"Without prolonged moments of adoration, of prayerful encounter with the word, of sincere conversation with the Lord, our work easily becomes meaningless; we lose energy as a result of weariness and difficulties, and our fervour dies out. The Church urgently needs the deep breath of prayer, and to my great joy groups devoted to prayer and intercession, the prayerful reading of God's word and the perpetual adoration of the Eucharist are growing at every level of ecclesial life."

"How good it is to stand before a crucifix, or on our knees before the Blessed Sacrament, and simply to be in his presence! How much good it does us when he once more touches our lives and impels us to share his new life! What then happens is that 'we speak of what we have seen and heard' (1 Jn 1:3)."

*Evangelii Gaudium (Joy of the Gospel), Pope Francis*

- Adoration is the first attitude of man acknowledging that he is a creature before his Creator. It exalts the greatness of the Lord who made us and the almighty power of the Savior who sets us free from evil. Adoration is homage of the spirit to the "King of Glory," respectful silence in the presence of the "ever greater" God. Adoration of the thrice-holy and sovereign God of love blends with humility and gives assurance to our supplications.

—*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 2628

Eucharistic exposition and benediction are no longer considered devotions, but rather are a part of the Church's official liturgy. Whereas in the past benediction was frequently added on to the end of another service or devotion, this is no longer permitted. Eucharistic exposition and benediction is a complete liturgical service in its own right and is to be celebrated as such.

USCCB

The importance of Eucharistic Adoration is shown in the fact that the Church has a ritual that regulates it: the Rite of Eucharistic Exposition and Benediction. This is an extension of the adoration of the Blessed Sacrament which occurs in every Mass: "Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb." Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament flows from the sacrifice of the Mass and serves to deepen our hunger for Communion with Christ and the rest of the Church. The Rite concludes with the ordained minister blessing the faithful with the Blessed Sacrament.

USCCB

"During the exposition there should be prayers, songs, and readings to direct the attention of the faithful to the worship of Christ the Lord. To encourage a prayerful spirit, there should be readings from Scripture with a brief homily or exhortations to develop a better understanding of the eucharistic mystery. It is also desirable for the people to respond to the word of God by singing and to spend some periods of time in religious silence

USCCB

# Guidelines for Eucharistic Adoration

- It is not a question of why parishes and youth groups partake in Eucharistic Adoration, but how these parishes and youth groups participate in Eucharistic Adoration.
- Caution should be taken that the rubrics for Eucharistic Adoration be followed so the Rite can be experienced to its fullest.



# Pastoral Recommendations and Strategies for Implementation

- If there is to be a eucharistic procession, it is fitting that it begin after a Mass and that the host carried in the procession is consecrated at that Mass.
- At the conclusion of Exposition and Benediction, it is advisable to have adult volunteers who can facilitate small faith-sharing groups with the participants so they can discuss and discern the eucharistic activity they just experienced.
- Immediately following adoration, the youth could be involved in a social justice activity such as serving at a soup kitchen to help them make the connection between prayer and service.
- The youth could organize and facilitate a six-week Lenten celebration of liturgy for the entire parish that might include the Liturgy of the Hours with Eucharistic Adoration. This is a way to highlight the gifts and talents of the young people as they experience community.

Eucharistic Exposition and Benediction has been part of the worship life of the church for hundreds of years and is being enthusiastically celebrated today more than ever. As catechists we are called to introduce our teens and youth to the richness of all the varied liturgies within the Catholic Church with Eucharistic Adoration as one element of that richness. It is our task highlight and situate eucharistic worship in its fullest context within the celebration of Sunday Eucharist which is the source and summit of our Christian life. In this way, we empower our teens and youth to fully comprehend the significance of Sunday and the true essence of the Eucharist.

# Reconciliation Services

- The purpose of Reconciliation Services is to help our students focus on the reason for the sacrament (whether it is their first time or one of many in their lifetime), help to put them right with God and with others.
- These services acknowledge the reality of sin and our sinful actions but are not meant to induce guilt or dwell on the negative aspects of a child's relationship with God.
- They acknowledge a child's need for forgiveness, for sorrow, for change, reform and growth.

- Reconciliation Services can be done in the Church, the classroom or at home in preparation for the sacrament.

Reconciliation Services include:

- ❖ An opening song and prayer.
- ❖ Readings from Scripture that speak of our need for forgiveness and God's never-ending love for us.
- ❖ An Examination of Conscience that is appropriate to the age of the students (group recitation of the Act of Contrition – optional)
- ❖ Participation in the Sacrament of Reconciliation (with parents and other adults if time permits).
- ❖ Background music while confessions are heard.
- ❖ Closing prayer as a group.

# Mystogogy for First Communion, First Reconciliation and Confirmation

Mytagogical catechesis is the name given to the process of gradually uncovering the meaning of the mysteries of sacraments that have already been celebrated.

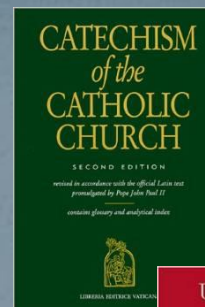
This type of catechesis goes back to the early Church when it was preached in sermons to the neophytes after their initiation at the Easter Vigil. These instructions are rich in images and symbols that help the newly initiated come to a fuller understanding of the sacraments they have celebrated and are now living out.

# Practical Suggestions for Mystogogy

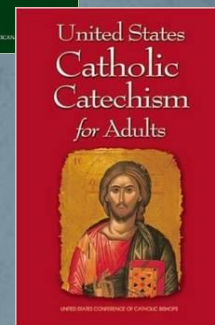
- Shortly after the celebration of First Communion or Confirmation, gather the students and their families to reflect on their experience of the celebration incorporating prayer spaces that include the primary symbols of water, oil, cross, Bible or lectionary, bread and wine.
- Periodically hold gatherings for those who have received the sacraments of initiation (could also include RCIA) to reflect on their experience of receiving these sacraments and how they are living them out in their lives.
- Incorporate service projects post-sacrament to encourage their connection between prayer and service.
- Plan a family gathering during the Easter season for all those who have celebrated the sacraments that spring.
- Encourage members of the parish community to seek out and welcome them.
- Offer ongoing parish-wide sacramental catechesis to encourage parents and their children and teens to continue to actively participate in the liturgical life of the Church.

# Resources

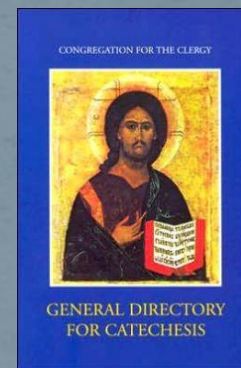
❖ 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition of the Catholic Catechism - 2000



❖ United States Catechism for Adults - 2006



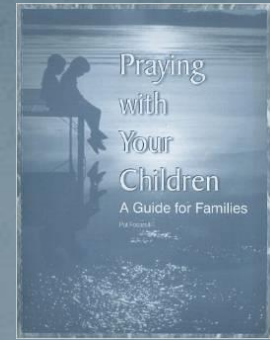
❖ General Directory for Catechesis – 1971



❖ National Directory for Catechesis – 1979  
Revised in 2003



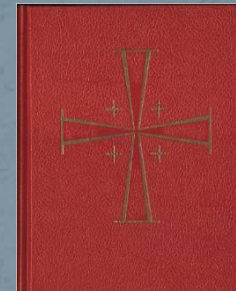
# Praying with Your Children: A Guide for Families, Pat Fosarelli, Resource Publications



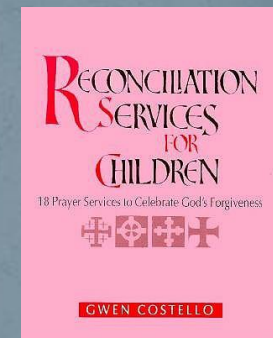
## Lectionary for Masses with Children

How to use the Lectionary for Children

<http://www.npm.org/Sections/images/Children%27s%20Lectionary.pdf>



## Reconciliation Services for Children, Gwen Costello, Twenty-Third Publications





# DIOCESE OF BOISE OFFICE OF CATECHESIS



Bottom row l-r: Sr. Chela Gonzalez, Director of the Office of Catechesis; Cathy Wheaton, Administrative Assistant & Resource Center Coordinator

Top row l-r: Santiago Robles, Coordinator of Adult & Family Catechesis; Jackie Hopper, Coordinator of Children's Catechesis; Chris Kreslins, Coordinator of Youth & Young Adult Catechesis

*We're here to serve – and only a phone call or email away!*

# Reflection Questions

- What new prayer methods would you consider incorporating into your classroom?
- How can you engage the parents of your students as prayer partners for your students?
- What are some ways you can include Mystogogical experiences in your curriculum?

# Basic Catechist Certification

7<sup>th</sup> Session Webinar

Ecclesiology

February 12, 2015

6 pm PST, 7 pm MST

# Closing Prayer

Almighty God and Father,  
as you commanded the disciples to “let the children come to me”, open wide my spiritual arms as I welcome and embrace the students in my class and the children you have entrusted to my care.

Bless the space in which we teach, so that the goodness of your truth may be shared.

Bless the time we have with them, so that the power of your love may be discovered.

And bless me, Lord, that I may share your Good News with joy and confidence.

Amen