



# Catechist Certification

Updated 2014

## Basic Catechist Certification Requirements

### Overview and Requirements

To achieve Basic Certification, catechists must complete the Archdiocese of Atlanta's Office of Child and Youth Protection\* screening and training in addition to the following courses:

### **Catechist** (5 hours total)

- BC1 Ministry of Catechesis (2 hours)
- BC2 Spirituality of the Catechist (1 hour)
- BC3 Spiritual Enrichment (2 hours)

### **Theology** (12 hours total)

- BT1 Overview of Scripture (2 hours)
- BT2 Catholic Morality (2 hours)
- BT3 Church History (2 hours)
- BT4 What the Church Believes (2 hours)
- BT5 Liturgy and Sacraments (2 hours)
- BT6 Prayer and Spirituality (2 hours)

### **Learner** (3 hours total)

- BL1 Faith and Moral Development (2 hours)
- BL2 Spirituality of the Child/Adolescent (1 hour)

### **Methods** (Varies with age level)

Specific methodology hours vary according to the age level certification. Requirements for each age level are listed below:

#### **Early Childhood/Elementary** (4 hours total)

- BM1 Effective Catechesis and Session Management (1 hour)
- BM2 General Methods Elective (1 hour)  
Suggested topics include: session planning, using texts and resources, using technology, engaging the learner, faith formation session management
- BM3 Session Observation (2 hours)

#### **Adolescent Grades 6-12 in a Faith Formation Session Setting** (4 hours total)

- BM1 Effective Catechesis and Session Management (1 hour)
- BM2 General Methods Elective (1 hour)  
Suggested topics include: session planning, using texts and resources, using technology, engaging the learner, session management, evangelization of adolescents
- BM3 Session Observation (2 hours)

#### **Youth Ministry Grades 6-12 in a Youth Ministry Setting** (18 hours total)

- YM1 The Vision of Youth Ministry (2 hours)
- YM2 Developing Leadership in Youth and Adults (2 hours)

- YM3 Youth Ministry Planning (2 hours)
- YM4 Evangelization of Youth (2 hours)
- YM5 Adolescent Development and Pastoral Care of Youth (2 hours)
- YM6 Ministry with Diverse Populations (2 hours)
- YM7 Liturgy, Worship and Music (2 hours)
- YM8 Moving From Service to Justice (2 hours)
- YM9 The Legal Environment of Youth Ministry (2 hours)

#### **Young Adult/Adult** (6 hours total)

- AM1 The What and How of Adult Faith Formation (3 hours)
- AM2 Focusing on Adult Faith Formation (3 hours)

#### **Timeline**

The catechist is encouraged to complete Basic Certification requirements within two years of starting to teach. A catechist may be working toward all three certification levels at the same time; however, he/she must complete Basic Certification before an Intermediate or Advanced Certification will be issued.

#### **Renewal of Basic Certification**

To renew Basic Catechist Certification, a catechist should complete at least 15 hours of documented faith formation classes/activities every five years. These hours may be applied toward Intermediate and/or Advanced Certification.

#### **\*Safe Environment**

The Archdiocese is committed to providing safe environments for all participants, volunteers and staff. All must be in compliance with screening and training requirements in accordance with the Archdiocesan Office of Child and Youth Protection.

#### **Credit for Education Degree, Teaching Certificate and Certification Experience**

A catechist may receive credit for a maximum of six hours of Methods and Learner hours for each year of teaching or related catechetical ministry (one hour per year of experience). Credit for such exemptions is not cumulative; but rather is awarded once in the certification process.

#### **Transferability, Equivalency and Special Circumstances**

Catechists certified in other dioceses, at the request of the appropriate catechetical authority, may be certified in the Archdiocese of Atlanta based on the equivalency of their prior status (proof of competence or evidence of previous formation required). The parish catechetical leader trained in implementation of Communicating the Catholic Message may grant Basic Certification and, on behalf of the catechist, apply to the Office of Formation and Discipleship for Intermediate or Advanced Certification.

## **Intermediate Catechist Certification Requirements**

#### **Overview and Requirements**

In addition to the Basic Certification requirements, Intermediate Certification requires a minimum of the following topic areas:

#### **Catechist** (6 hours total)

- IAC Spiritual Enrichment (see chapter 4)

#### **Theology** (24 hours total)

Divided equally among the following six areas of theology:

- IAT1 Scripture
- IAT2 Catholic morality
- IAT3 Church doctrine and history
- IAT4 Prayer/Spirituality
- IAT5 Sacraments
- IAT6 Liturgy

## **IALM Methods and Learner** (12 hours total)

Possible topics include:

- Curriculum development
- Psychology of the learner
- Learning styles
- Use of media and resources
- Catechesis in specialized circumstances (i.e. family, multicultural, disability, and aged)
- Liturgical catechesis
- Study of catechetical documents and resources

### **Timeline**

The catechist is encouraged to complete Intermediate Certification requirements within three years of attaining Basic Catechist Certification.

### **Renewal**

To maintain Intermediate Certification, a catechist should complete at least 15 hours of documented faith formation activity every five years. These hours may be applied toward Advanced Certification.

## **Advanced Catechist Certification Requirements**

Overview and Requirements

In addition to Basic and Intermediate Certification, Advanced Certification requires a minimum of the following topic areas:

### **Catechist** (12 hours total)

- IAC Spiritual Enrichment (see chapter 4)

### **Theology** (24 hours total)

12 hours must be concentrated in one area of theology; the remaining hours should be accomplished in the remaining theology topics:

- IAT1 Scripture
- IAT2 Catholic morality
- IAT3 Church doctrine and history
- IAT4 Prayer/Spirituality
- IAT5 Sacraments
- IAT6 Liturgy

## **IALM Methods and Learner** (12 hours total)

Choose from one of the following categories:

- Early childhood/elementary catechesis
- Adolescent catechesis/youth ministry
- Young adult/adult faith formation
- Leadership skills
- Catholic school religious education
- Family catechesis
- Catechesis for special needs

### **Timeline**

The catechist is encouraged to complete Advanced Certification requirements within three years of attaining Intermediate Catechist Certification.

## Renewal

Those with Advanced Certification are encouraged to continue to pursue personal spiritual growth and faith formation opportunities. To maintain Advanced Certification, a catechist should complete at least 15 hours of documented faith formation activity every five years.

## Master Catechist

Master Catechists are lay people and professed religious sisters and brothers who have been recognized by the Archdiocese of Atlanta as exemplifying the ideals of catechesis. These are people who demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of our Catholic faith tradition and effectively communicate this knowledge using a variety of processing skills and methodologies. To apply for a Master Catechist:

1. Complete the Application for Master Catechist Certification,
2. Provide supporting evidence of his/her religious education formation and coursework. It is expected that the applicant has completed a minimum of eighteen hours of academic credit related to catechesis, such as a graduate degree or certificate program in religious education, theology, or pastoral studies, or its equivalent
3. Have at least three years of experience as a catechist.
4. Comply with current Safe Environment requirements.
5. Submit at least three recommendations from catechetical leaders or peers at his/her parish or school. At least one of these recommendations must be from the pastor or Catholic school principal.

If you are interested in pursuing a certificate program in religious education, theology, pastoral studies or youth ministry, please contact Joyce Guris, [jguris@transfiguration.com](mailto:jguris@transfiguration.com), 770.977.1442, ext 155.