

# THE PARTNERSHIP FOR ADOLESCENT CATECHESIS

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## PRESS RELEASE

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### **The Partnership for Adolescent Catechesis Receives \$525,000 to Fund National Initiative**

*An historic partnership leads to a ground-breaking national initiative to examine the formation of teens in their Catholic faith.*

The Partnership for Adolescent Catechesis has received two grants totaling \$525,000 to implement a National Initiative on Adolescent Catechesis, a comprehensive seven-year, six-step process designed to explore how Catholic teens can more effectively be formed in their faith. The grants include \$450,000 from the Lilly Endowment Foundation and \$75,000 from an anonymous donor which will provide funding through 2011.

The Initiative is developed by the Partnership for Adolescent Catechesis, a national collaborative focused on promoting a comprehensive and contemporary vision of adolescent catechesis in the Roman Catholic Church. The three national organizations comprising the Partnership for Adolescent Catechesis are the:

- National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry (NFCYM)
- National Conference for Catechetical Leadership (NCCL)
- National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA).
- Additional support is provided by representatives from the USCCB (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops).

There is a growing concern throughout the Catholic Church around the effectiveness of current approaches to the faith formation of adolescents. To begin addressing this, the Partnership will host an invitation only National Symposium on Adolescent Catechesis next November, 2008 in Maryland as part of their National Initiative. The event is designed to create a think-tank setting where national, diocesan, parish and Catholic school leaders and practitioners will gather with bishops, publishers and academicians to critically examine what is and is not working in the current system of adolescent faith formation.

“We believe that this cross-pollination of experience and perspective will yield a deep and thoughtful dialogue that will lead the Catholic Church toward a transformation in adolescent catechesis” says Michael Theisen, who serves as convener for the Partnership.

The Partnership has hired Elzbieta “Ela” Milewska, a doctoral student in catechetics at The Catholic University of America, to serve as the project coordinator for the National Initiative. Ms Milewska began her duties this month.

More information on the Partnership for Adolescent Catechesis can be found at <http://www.nfcym.org/resources/components/adocatechesis/pac.htm>

*Promoting comprehensive and contemporary approaches to adolescent catechesis*



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## **Current Members of the Partnership for Adolescent Catechesis:**

- **Michael Theisen** - Convener, Partnership for Adolescent Catechesis and Director of Membership Services, NFCYM
- **Dr. Robert J. McCarty** - Executive Director, NFCYM
- **Leland D. Nagel** - Executive Director, NCCL
- **Diana Dudoit Raiche** - Executive Director, Department of Religious Education, NCEA
- **Gary Meyerl** - Assistant Executive Director, Secondary Schools Department, NCEA
- **Sr. Eileen McCann** - Coordinator for Youth and Young Adult Ministries, USCCB

## **The Six Steps of the National Initiative on Adolescent Catechesis**

1. Develop and publish through each organization, ten monographs focusing on various dimensions and issues impacting adolescent catechesis today and compile and publish these into a first volume of articles (2004-2008).
2. Convene a National Symposium on Adolescent Catechesis, a think-tank comprised of a select and culturally diverse multidisciplinary groups of 100 leaders representing parish, school, diocesan and national organizations, bishops, academicians, parents and publishers who will address the key question: *"What is necessary for effective adolescent catechesis in the Catholic Church given the current and emerging environments in the United States?"* (November 5-8, 2008).
3. Publish a second volume containing the major Symposium synthesis paper by Dr. Michael Horan plus other major addresses from the Symposium, the Symposium outcomes, and the next steps which emerge from the Symposium dialogues. Symposium outcomes will also be presented at each organization's national conferences during 2008-2009 (Winter/Spring, 2009).
4. Conduct research using insights and outcomes from the National Symposium which will be utilized in the assessment and training programs (in Step 6) and publish a third volume containing the research results (Fall 2009-2011).
5. Establish partnerships with publishers and other interested organizations in developing resources for new approaches to adolescent catechesis and the formation of catechists (Fall/Winter 2008-2011).
6. Conduct regional training in-services for diocesan, parish and school leaders using newly developed insights, resources, and assessment and training tools arising from the previous steps of the National Initiative. Training programs will focus on how parishes and schools can assess current strategies and structures in order to develop new models and methods that can more effectively form adolescents in their faith and their Catholic identity. Spanish versions of resources will be made available (2009-2011)