

# THE PARTNERSHIP FOR ADOLESCENT CATECHESIS

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## The National Initiative on Adolescent Catechesis

The Partnership for Adolescent Catechesis began in 2003 from a desire to develop a common vision for adolescent catechesis in order to address serious lapses in the Church's formation of adolescents. Since its inception, the Partnership has worked to complement the themes and approaches for catechesis with adolescents as presented in the National Directory for Catechesis (2005), the U.S. Church's guide to religious formation which is shaped by the Vatican's General Directory for Catechesis (1997).

Concurrent with these developments within the Catholic Church, the National Study of Youth and Religion identified serious challenges regarding the ability of Catholic adolescents to articulate their faith and live as a disciple of Jesus Christ. The CARA Report, digesting the NSYR research, reinforced among Catholic leaders the growing need for parish and school leaders to rethink the Church's pastoral ministry and educational outreach with young people. Uppermost on the minds of pastoral and educational leaders is the quality and quantity of the resources, including trained personnel, dedicated to responding to the religious and spiritual hungers of our young people. In response to these developments, the Partnership for Adolescent Catechesis has begun the groundbreaking development of a seven-year National Initiative on Adolescent Catechesis.

## 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)

*Promoting comprehensive and contemporary approaches to adolescent catechesis*

