

What Do I Do Now?

A Guide for the Reluctant Catechist

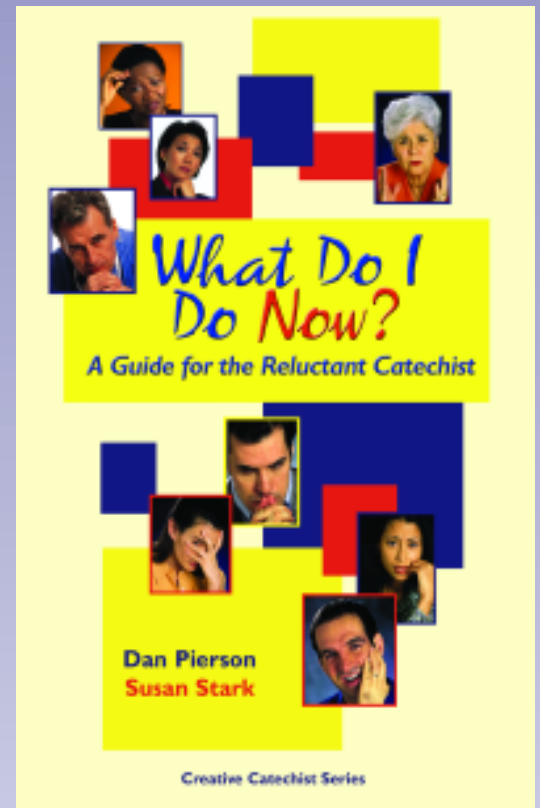
By Dan Pierson and Susan Stark

Here's a lighthearted but very serious companion for those catechist who feel that same reluctant tug the disciples felt when they were sent out, two by two, to spread the Good News of God's Kingdom. *What Do I Do Now?* is filled with simple and clear advice for catechists: answers to pressing questions, short reflections to build confidence in handing on the Catholic Faith, and oodles of resources to help catechists in their own formation.

Contents are organized in five "Connections"—

- The Catechist Connection
- The Catechist-Lesson Connection
- The Catechist-Student Connection
- The Catechist-Home Connection
- The Catechist-Parish Connection

Additional features include suggested readings, Internet links, "Quick Hits" – short answers to nagging questions – and an annotated bibliography. The book also gives a brief overview of the new *National Directory for Catechesis*. No catechist, reluctant or otherwise, should be without *What Do I Do Now?*



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In this Product Preview you'll find these sample pages . . .

- Table of Contents (pages 3-4)
- Am I Really a Minister? (pages 12-13)
- I Do Not Know Much About the Bible (pages 18-19)

Scroll down to view the pages.

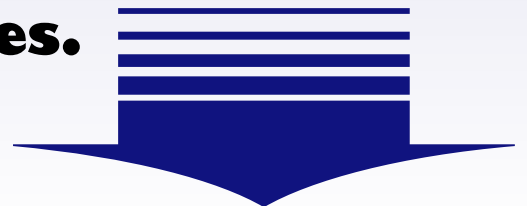


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Am I Really a Minister?

Yes! Catechists are ministers. It can be both heady and frightening to be told that you are a minister. And you might have moments when you feel like a fraud. “Me, a minister?” It might not have been what you had in mind when you signed up to be a catechist.

Take heart. Catechetics is a process—a pilgrimage, of coming to know, love, and serve God. You are a guide and companion to the young people you are serving in your role as catechist.

Your role as a minister includes the five traditional dimensions of ministry. (Get ready to learn five fancy Greek words, too.) *Kerygma* is the Greek word for proclaiming of the Good News and preaching about Jesus and God’s reign. *Didache* is the word for teaching. You help the children interpret the Gospel; you relate the Gospel message to their own life experiences. *Koinonia* is the word for developing community. Simply being a person of faith willing to share yourself with the young people does the trick. Your willingness to tell your story about how God is a part of your life will encourage them to open up and make connections with each other about God in *their* lives. A community of faith naturally emerges from such connections and faith sharing. *Leiturgia* is the word for worship and prayer. Maybe you have never led a group of twenty-two third graders in prayer. Do not worry.

Prayer takes practice, so you and the children can practice prayer together. You and the young people will feel more comfortable and

confident praying together as the year progresses. And now for one final fancy Greek word! *Diakonia* is serving others. As a catechist, you are a role model of service to the faith community, and you can encourage a spirit of service among the children you work with.

Perhaps most central in your role as a minister, you are an integrator. This means that you reflect on life, in every aspect, and connect it with faith. There is no separation between faith and life. This happens in your own personal spirituality and in your work with young people.

Being a catechist is accepting the challenge to live faith, to do faith, to practice faith, to grow in faith. You have said yes to the adventure of discipleship.

The Lord Jesus invites men and women, in a special way, to follow him, teacher and formator of disciples. This personal call of Jesus Christ and its relationship to him are the true moving forces of catechetical activity. “From this loving knowledge of Christ springs the desire to proclaim him, to ‘evangelize,’ and to lead others to the ‘Yes’ of faith in Jesus Christ.”

General Directory for Catechesis (GDC), 231



I Am Bread Broken: A Spirituality for the Catechist by Howard J. Hubbard

I Do Not Know Much about the Bible

Like the majority of Catholics, you may find that you do not know much about the Bible. There may be many good reasons for that fact. Nonetheless, now is the time to learn a little more about the Bible, to integrate the Bible into your daily prayer, and to make it a part of each catechetical lesson.

Since the Vatican II Council, Catholics have been encouraged to study and read the Bible. In his autobiography, *The Confessions*, St. Augustine tells about his conversion from a life of pleasure, excitement, and love of material possessions. While sitting in the garden he heard a child chanting, “Take and read. Take and read.” He opened the Bible randomly to a passage from Saint Paul’s letter to the Romans (13:13-14), which urged him to cast aside the past and begin a new relationship with God.

As a catechist you are also invited to “Take and read. Take and read.” All good catechetical programs have woven Sacred Scripture into each catechetical lesson at each level. This gives you an opportunity to learn a little more about the Bible as you share the lessons with your class. And don’t forget about the Sunday readings. They are a source of study for you, and it never hurts to share them with your students.

In his very popular introduction to the Bible, Steve Mueller offers the following as goals for Bible reading: “Bible reading can deepen our spiritual life. Bible reading can help us change our priorities. Bible

reading can help us re-orient our work life. Bible reading can help us find more meaning in life. And most importantly we can meet Jesus again for the first time and come face to face with the God who loves us.”

What life can there be without knowledge of the Scriptures, for through these Christ Himself, who is the life of the faithful, becomes known.

St. Jerome, Letter 30



The Seeker's Guide to Reading the Bible: A Catholic View by Steve Mueller

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