



THE ECHO

A newsletter for CATECHISTS and RE TEACHERS



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The ROLE of the CATECHIST

There are many roles and different ministries in the Church. Crucial among them is the ministry of the **Catechist**.

A catechist is someone who is called to help in the **proclamation of the word of God** to others. This is normally a ministry carried out within parish setups when catechists lead groups of children, young people or adults for sacramental preparation and other formation groups. The Directory for Catechesis outlines three roles every catechist should have, namely:

A WITNESS Being an example of someone who is a **true follower of Christ** in real life situations; someone who has already 'encountered' Jesus and is therefore a sign of hope for others.

A TEACHER On the example of Jesus the teacher, a catechist **helps transmit the content of our Faith** to others and introducing them to Christian life and its beliefs, practices and liturgy.

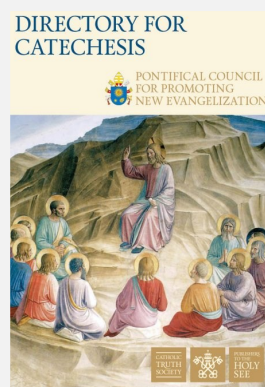
AN ACCOMPANIER someone who becomes a **travelling companion** on the journey every Christian is called for. This is done through listening and being there to support under the guidance and promptings of the Spirit.

In the multiplicity of ministries and services with which the Church realises her mission of evangelisation, the **'ministry of catechesis'** occupies a significant place, indispensable for the growth of the faith.

From **DIRECTORY OF CATECHESIS** paragraph 110

The **catechist** is a Christian who receives a particular calling from God that, when accepted in faith, empowers him for the service of the **transmission of faith** and for the task of **initiating others** into the Christian life.

From
DIRECTORY OF CATECHESIS
paragraph 112



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The word '**CATECHIST**' comes from the Greek word meaning '**to echo**'. As Catechists or teachers of RE we do not proclaim our own word. We echo the message of Jesus Christ our Lord.

This newsletter aims at providing parish catechists and teachers of RE in schools some support in terms of reflections, ideas, useful resources they can use and so on. Feel free to make more copies for other colleagues and friends. There is also an online version on our website **www.sdc.me.uk**

The YEAR of ST FRANCIS

This Year **2026** has been designated as a special **Jubilee Year of Saint Francis of Assisi**. This is to mark the eighth centenary from the death of Saint Francis who passed away to eternal life on the **4th October 1226**.



The young Francis went through a conversion process over a number of years. Growing up within a rich and business minded family, he first had normal worldly ambitions, including ones related to wealth and worldly glory. When he realised such thoughts and ambitions were not really fulfilling for him, he turned his attention to the Gospel values and being a disciple of Jesus rather than a wealth and partying.

The event of Jesus' call to Francis, '**Rebuild my Church**' was the spur which convinced him of God's real call from him. Once convinced by this divine call, he started his community. Other young men joined him in his '**Friar Minors' community**, embracing the virtue of **poverty** and working in the most simple and charitable way among those who most in need. For him every human being was a brother or a sister!

Today Francis of Assisi is also known for his thoughts on God's love for us through what he's created for us. His Hymn of creation '**Canticle of the Sun...**' is renowned the world over.

Later on new communities were established in so many countries, not just for the Friars but also for the '**Poor Clares**' a community of Franciscan women as well as the lay movement known as the '**Third Order**'.

This year is an invitation for us all to think about and discern on who we really want to follow on our life journey. Is God the one I am really following or am I just wandering aimlessly having lost the right direction that leads to the one that can truly be the source of fulfilment in life?

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Pentecost is often described as the **Birthday of the Church**.

It was when the Holy Spirit descended on the small group of Apostles, 50 days after Easter Sunday.

As evidenced in the Acts of the Apostles, on that day, about 3000 people were baptised.

This amazing day should therefore be a day in which we reflect and **celebrate**.

We celebrate and rejoice for being part of this wonderful **One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church** and we ask the Holy Spirit to continue to inspire us all in being missionary members of this community of followers of Jesus Christ.



SDC in LONDON

AWAY DAY

Our Lent Away Day for the **SDC Associates Group** this year took place on Sunday, 15th February 2026.

The day started with mass at the parish church of St John the Baptist in Purley. We then proceeded to the **convent of the Poor Clares** just outside Arundel where we gathered for a Bible reflection in the common room and prayer in the convent chapel. As this is the **year of St Francis**, our reflections were on the theme of **Joy** and this special saint.



On our way back we stopped for some time in the small village of Billingshurst. Superior General Roberto Zammit who was visiting our London centre at the time, also joined us on this trip.



SDC is a Catholic organization that works in the field of catechesis within Catholic Parishes. It was founded in 1907 by St George Preca. For more information or to download resources for parish or school catechetical programmes visit our website **www.sdc.me.uk**.
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