



# The Notre Dame Catechist Academy Program Year 2018-2019

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Thank you for your interest in the Notre Dame Catechist Academy! Situated within the McGrath Institute for Church Life (MICL), the Catechist Academy supports the larger mission of the MICL—to **renew the Catholic Imagination to serve the Church**. We partner with the catechetical leadership of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend to serve parishes in the greater South Bend community.

In that light, we are committed to not only providing you with theological and practical groundings for this ministry, but ample space to imaginatively and creatively discover how to use your passions, interests and skills to lead students into a deeper understanding of and relationship with Jesus Christ.

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## Basic Program Information

### Placement

· *Where and who will I serve?*

You will work in any number of partner parishes in South Bend/Mishawaka serving a variety of students, all the way from Kindergarten to Confirmation age (typically 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade). There is a *possibility* of some other catechetical placements in RCIA, Youth Ministry and Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (*see page 5*).

· *Will I get to pick where I serve?*

You get a LARGE say in the process. The Diocese of FWSB will be working with area parishes to determine their catechetical needs and to find available placements for 2018-2019. After those are finalized, we will do our best to match you with a placement that will be a good fit for you.

To do this, we gauge your interest in working with a particular age group and the times that you are available to serve. Also, particular qualifications and background experience like Spanish speaking ability helps to narrow the choices in regards to the particular parish in which you will serve.

· ***Will I serve with someone?***

The best answer here is: **it depends!** In many placements, catechists will serve with someone else, so you will not be by yourself in the classroom. You might serve with another catechist (Notre Dame student) from the Catechist Academy, or with a catechist in the parish. We can match you based on your comfort or ability or who you would like to serve with. We do, however, have students who lead classrooms by themselves. It's all up to you!

· ***Do I need a car?***

No! Having a car is not required. We place people together in placements at similar times so that those who have a car will be able to carpool & take care of those catechists who do not have a car!

· ***So, I'm going abroad in the Fall/Spring? Can I still serve?***

No problem. There are always catechists going abroad! We normally are able to accommodate those catechists who are leaving and those who are coming back. Just please make note of this on the application form so we can plan ahead of time!

· ***What does the time commitment look like?***

You should plan on *at least* 3-4 hours a week. This accounts for time in the classroom, time spent planning & time spent going to and from your placement site. If this is a new ministry for you, be gentle on yourself and allow some more time for lesson-planning and reflection. **There are weekend as well as weekday placements, although most of our placements occur on Sunday mornings.**

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## **Teaching**

· ***I'm nervous about teaching! Do I have to be an experienced teacher or catechist to participate in the Catechist Academy?***

No experience is required! You will be supported regardless of your previous teaching/catechetical experience. New and returning catechists will have the support of (*and are required to attend*) an orientation session and four workshops spread out over the course of the *year*---Fall 2018 and Spring 2019. These 1.5 hour workshops will be run by staff from the McGrath Institute and will introduce many important practical and theological concepts that will be

essential for success in catechetical ministry. Not to mention, we will have a lot of fun too! *Dates are to be determined, but approximately two will take place in the Fall and two will take place in the Spring.*

Most importantly, we have three different levels of responsibility that we use to place you in a classroom role designed to accommodate your time availability and desired commitment (see page 6).

· ***If I'm a new catechist, does that mean I have to start as an Assistant Catechist?***

Absolutely not! Depending on the type of role you would like to play in the classroom, we will work with you to make it possible. Our workshops and extensive mentorship should be enough to support you no matter what level you would like to begin.

· ***Ongoing Support***

Scott Boyle, the Catechist Academy coordinator and a staff of “Mentor-Observers” provide ongoing individual support and opportunities for consultations. Each catechist will be visited twice throughout the program year and will receive a detailed write-up immediately following. This report will form the basis for a personal one-on-one conversation each semester. Catechists are invited to seek additional support from staff whenever it is needed!

· ***Who are these Mentor-Observers?***

Each of these mentors has some sort of catechetical background in either education or religious education. They have been specially trained and are excited to get to walk with you! They are there for support and for outreach at any time you might need!

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## **Odds and Ends**

· ***How many people will serve in the Catechist Academy for 2018-2019?***

We will place at least 30 with capacity for 45 depending on interest and availability.

· ***When should I submit my application? Is it competitive?***

We will be filling spots for catechists on a rolling basis based on available placements, previous experience and need. So, if this sounds like something you are interested in, don't wait to apply.

· *I love this stuff! I'm interested in going a bit deeper.*

In Fall 2018, Professor Tim O'Malley is offering a 3.0 credit course called "Intro to Catechesis" (THEO 40874) that can be taken in conjunction with your service in the Catechist Academy. This course provides an introduction to the historical, theoretical, and practical foundations to the art of catechesis both in parishes and in Catholic schools. Contact Prof. T. O'Malley if you are interested: [tomalley@nd.edu](mailto:tomalley@nd.edu)

· *When will I know if I have been accepted?*

We will be in contact with everyone who has applied (*at the latest*) near the beginning of summer with a notification of your acceptance to the Catechist Academy as well as a notification of your initial placements. These placements are subject to change based on parish need.

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### **Signing-Up!**

Sign-up by following the link below!

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2018catechistacademy>

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### **Additional Questions?**

E-mail Scott Boyle at [sboyle2@nd.edu](mailto:sboyle2@nd.edu) or call 574-631-0459.

## Other Catechetical Placements

*Although not guaranteed, there is a possibility that the Catechist Academy will be able to offer a few other catechetical placements in addition to classroom catechesis. On your application, please **select** those ministries that would be of interest to you. If we are not able to offer these placements this year, your interest in these positions will help us to gauge demand for future years.*

- ***Catechesis of the Good Shepherd***

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd derives from the work of two Roman Catholic laywomen in Rome: Sofia Cavalletti and Gianna Gobbi, who were inspired by the educational principles of Maria Montessori.

Children gather in one of three levels (organized by age: 3-6; 6-9; 9-12) in a special classroom referred to as the Atrium. This prepared sacred space contains beautiful, yet simple materials that aide the child in developing a relationship with God and an understanding of life in the church. Children are invited to engage in “works” (lessons and materials) that engage the child’s imagination and senses to invite them into a deeper relationship with God. Those in this placement would serve as an assistant with someone who is been trained in the methods of Catechesis of the Good Shepherd.

- ***RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) Ministry***

Each year, the RCIA helps to prepare catechumens (those who are seeking to be baptized into the Catholic Church) and candidates (those who have been baptized, but have not received their First Communion or Confirmation in the Catholic Church). Students in this placement would participate as a team member for a parish’s Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults. Students could expect (among other things) to serve by assisting the Director of Religious Education by contributing content, assisting/leading small group, and other duties as assigned. This is a ministry where you would interact with folks of different ages, most likely high school age to mature adults.

- ***Youth Ministry***

Each Youth Ministry program is different, but participants who engage in this placement will have the opportunity to meaningfully assist (alongside a Director of Youth Ministry) with Youth Ministry programming. This can consist of, but is not limited to, leading prayer, presenting talks, leading small groups, learning and assisting with behind the scenes preparations. Most times, Youth Ministry is separated into high school age (grades 9-12) and middle school (grades 7-8).

## Catechist Academy Placements- 2018-2019

<b>Capacity (Assignment)</b>		<b>Primary Catechist</b>
Participation		Active teaching and classroom responsibilities is to be expected a majority of the time.
Description		Students who choose this option will be responsible for overall teaching and facilitation within the classroom space. While students will most likely serve as co-catechists (either with someone from the parish or Notre Dame), they may have (or look forward to) the opportunity to manage a classroom by themselves. Consistent attendance and communication is required.
<b>Capacity (Assignment)</b>		<b>Co-Catechist</b>
Participation		Active teaching and classroom responsibilities are shared with another catechist. Active teaching is to be expected at least 50% of the time.
Description		Students who select this option can expect to share teaching and lesson planning responsibilities with another catechist, either with someone at the parish or with another Notre Dame student. Consistent attendance and communication is expected and required.
<b>Capacity (Assignment)</b>		<b>Assistant Catechist</b>
Participation		Active classroom responsibilities are in support of the primary catechist. Active teaching responsibilities comprise no more than 50% of the role.
Description		While 'formal' lesson planning may be the responsibility of the primary catechist, students who are open to this option can expect opportunities to contribute meaningfully to the classroom while supporting the primary catechist in an auxiliary capacity. Catechists in this role may find themselves working more individually with students to build classroom culture and support the goals of the primary catechist. Consistent attendance and communication required.

# Catechetical Support

## *Fall 2018, Spring 2019*

### Orientation Session

#### **Description:**

Students will meet with MICL staff along with diocesan representatives to receive an overview and orientation to the year.

- 1) **Monday, August 20th** from 10:00am-12:00noon
- 2) **Wednesday, August 29th** from 6:30-8:30pm (serious Aug. 20th scheduling conflicts only. Must be in contact with Scott (sboyle2@nd.edu))

### Catechetical Workshops

#### **Description:**

These workshops will complement the catechetical service students perform in partnership with local parishes. They will offer lessons on theological and doctrinal topics and workshops on pedagogical approaches to teaching the faith. By focusing on the tasks of catechesis, students will grow in their identity as a catechist and in their command of teaching strategies.

#### **List of Workshop Meeting Dates/Times:**

TBD, but roughly two in the fall and two in the spring (schedule to be sent early summer)

### Catechist Mentor-Observer Meetings (over the course of the semester)

#### **Description:**

Students will also benefit from an assigned mentor who will meet with them to reflect practically and theologically on their catechetical service throughout the year.

- Intro meeting with Mentor before placement visit
- Debrief meeting after placement visit