



ESSENTIALS FOR NEW PARISH CATECHETICAL LEADERS: Training | Formation | Preparation



The Parish Catechetical Leader (PCL) orientation program is designed to present some essential skills and principles needed for catechetical leadership and to introduce PCLs to the resources available to assist them through the Archdiocesan catechetical staff, staff from other Archdiocesan Departments and Offices, their peers in the catechetical community, and the larger world of faith formation professionals.

All parish catechetical leaders who are beginning or have recently begun ministry in parishes throughout the Archdiocese of Newark are expected to take part in the orientation process if they have not already done so.

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)

ESSENTIALS FOR NEW PCLs | 2025-2026

Important Dates for your Calendar

DATES and LOCATIONS	TOPICS
Tuesday – Aug. 19 8:45 AM – 4:00 PM* In-person at the Archdiocesan Center 171 Clifton Ave., Newark, NJ 07104	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welcome and Introduction to Essentials for New PCLs• Catechesis and Evangelization• The Tasks of Catechesis• Catechetical Leadership: Administration as a gift of the Holy Spirit
Wednesday – Aug. 20 8:45 AM – 4:00 PM* In-person at the Archdiocesan Center 171 Clifton Ave., Newark, NJ 07104	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sacramental Preparation• Pastoral Care for Catechists• Legal Issues and Handbooks followed by Q & A• Publisher's day
Thursday – Aug. 21 8:45 AM – 4:30 PM* In-person at the Archdiocesan Center 171 Clifton Ave., Newark, NJ 07104	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Safe Environment Policies, Empowering God's Children, and Q & A• Safety, Crisis Management Plans, and Q & A• Catechist Formation and Learning Management• Communication• OCIA with Children & Children missing years of Faith Formation• PANEL: Making It Through Your First Year
November 12, 2025 10:00am – 2:00pm* In-person at the Archdiocesan Center 171 Clifton Ave., Newark, NJ 07104	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ministry with Persons with Disabilities• Who is in my parish? Ministry in multi- and inter-cultural parishes• "Ask us anything" Topics of Interest to the Group
February 12, 2026 10:00am – 2:00pm* In-person at the Archdiocesan Center 171 Clifton Ave., Newark, NJ 07104	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Justice, Service, and Catechesis• Parent and Family Engagement• "Ask us anything" Topics of Interest to the Group
May 20, 2026 10:00am – 2:00pm* In-person at the Archdiocesan Center 171 Clifton Ave., Newark, NJ 07104	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Thriving in Ministry and Avoiding Burnout• Looking Ahead: Evaluation and Planning for the Future.• Topics of Interest to the Group

***The "Essentials for PCLs" Program Fee of \$250 includes presentations and materials for all orientation sessions, the complete set of six booklets from *The Effective Catechetical Leader series* - published by Loyola Press, and complete access to all 9 Catechist Formation courses. The fee of \$250 represents a substantial discount considering that the course is valued at \$650. All fees for orientation and professional development programs offered by the Catechetical Office should be budgeted and paid for by the parish.**

[REGISTER HERE](#)

Essentials for New PCLs 2025-2026

Training: You will learn how

- to effectively work with families for sacramental preparation.
 - parish leaders accompany catechists, manage time, plan fruitful programs and events, and collaborate with pastoral staff in a Christ-centered way.
 - a job description will help you understand your role, maintain boundaries, remain focused, and evaluate your goals.
 - to provide a safe and healthy environment for catechetical staff, volunteers, and families.
 - to develop a crisis plan.
 - to effectively communicate program expectations and policies with parents /guardians.
 - to evaluate programs in a way that provides valuable data and how to set attainable goals.
 - to ensure your programs are compliant with RCAN safe environment requirements.
 - to recruit, form, and retain catechists who love Jesus and are eager to proclaim the gospel.
 - to welcome and accompany older children and adults who desire to receive the sacraments.
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Formation: You will better understand

- how catechesis and evangelization are related and necessary for the vitality of a flourishing parish community.
 - what sets apart dynamic Christ-centered leadership from complacent management focused on administration.
 - the importance of the sacraments as the source of grace from which all Christian living flows.
 - the need to prepare families for the sacraments, not just children.
 - the importance of adult faith formation and the need for effective programming which ministers to the various needs of adults in our parish communities.
 - how prioritizing self-care, professional development, and our relationship with Jesus, are vital to fruitful and sustained ministry.
 - how the dynamics of change impact the planning and implementation of new faith formation initiatives.
 - how Catholic Social Teaching is central to the Gospel message and why service and justice are essential parts of a comprehensive catechetical process.
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Preparation: You will be prepared

- to serve a multi-cultural Church.
- to engage and form parents in sacramental preparation and intimate encounters with Jesus.
- to work with local Catholic Schools with a spirit of collaboration and common mission.
- to address crisis and emergency situations that may arise during catechetical programming.
- to accompany families with persons with disabilities and to ensure that all have access to catechesis, sacrament preparation, and full participation in the life and mission of the Church.

CONNECT: You will meet and connect with . . .

Office for Lifelong Faith Formation Staff

Office for Lifelong Faith Formation - Archdiocese of Newark

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Archdiocesan Staff from other offices

Catholic Schools, Hispanic Ministry, Ministry with Persons with Disabilities, Legal, Protection of the Faithful, Parish Vitality and Social Concerns, Divine Worship and RCIA, and more...

Representatives from Publishers of Catechetical Material and Resources

Ongoing Essentials

COUNTY PCL MEETINGS

- Build relationships with colleagues who are the only people in the world who understand what your job is like.
- Engage in fruitful conversations relevant to your ministry concerns, challenges, and questions.
- Share successes and be encouraged.
- Have an opportunity to share your successes and challenges with catechetical office staff.
- Stay up to date with current events, policies and professional development opportunities.
- Be on the cutting edge of catechetical ministry.
- Each county meets four times a year.
- Meeting locations are determined during the year. Virtual meeting options are available.
- Meeting details and agendas are shared via email.

PCL Quarterly Meetings: (10 AM – Location TBD)

Bergen: Oct. 8 | Dec. 3 | Feb. 27 | Jun. 3

Essex: Oct. 8 | Dec. 11 | Mar. 5 | Jun. 3

Hudson: Oct. 8 | Dec. 3 | Feb. 27 | Jun. 3

Union: Oct. 8 | Dec. 10 | Feb. 26 | Jun. 3

ALL Counties Meeting for Part-time and Volunteer PCLs: (7:30 PM via Zoom)

Oct. 8 | Dec. 4 | Mar. 5 | Jun. 4

Meeting for Spanish speaking PCLs: (7:30 PM via Zoom) Oct. 4 | Dec. 6 | Feb. 28 | Jun. 6

***OTHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND FORMATION OPPORTUNITIES**

October 25th: THE CATECHETICAL CONVOCATION**

A day of professional development, catechist formation workshops, and an opportunity to meet others serving in catechetical ministry throughout the Archdiocese.

January 29th: WINTER ENRICHMENT**

An annual day that brings together all the PCLs of the Archdiocese for professional development and fellowship.

March 19th: PCL RETREAT DAY**

A Lenten retreat for PCL's from around the Archdiocese to renew and nourish your soul as you accompany others during this sacred liturgical season.

June 18th: SUMMER ENRICHMENT**

An annual day that brings together all the PCLs of the Archdiocese for professional development and fellowship.

**These are events for which an additional fee will be required.

FOR A COMPLETE OFFICE CALENDAR
[PLEASE VISIT THE LIFELONG FAITH FORMATION WEBSITE](#)