

# Instituted Ministries

## Catechist and Lector

Diocesan Day for Catechists • 12 November 2022  
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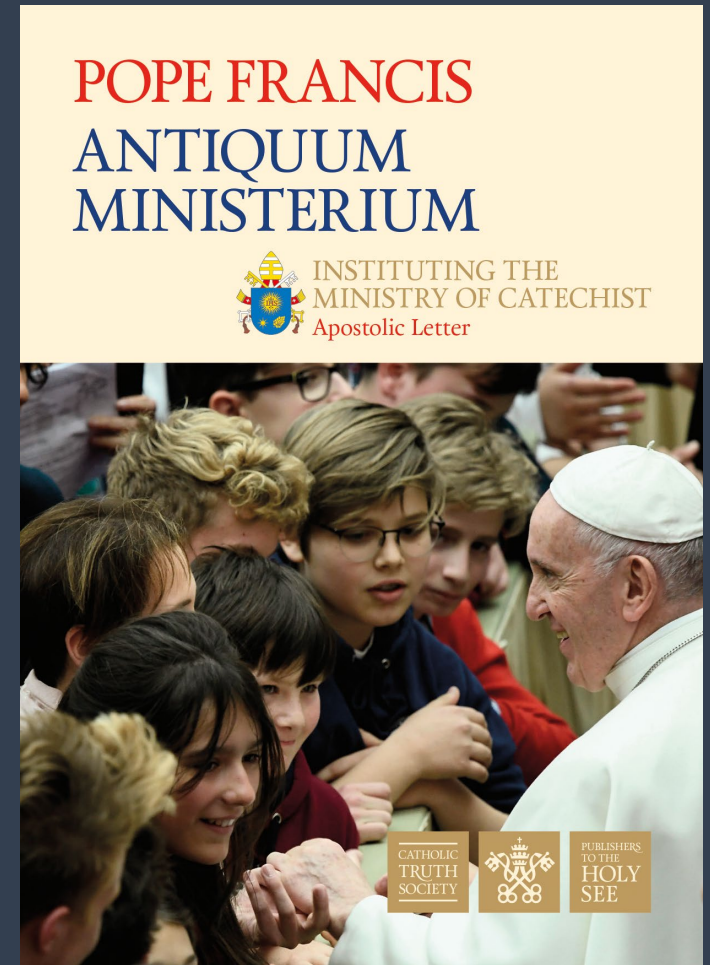


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# Instituted Ministries

In 2021, Pope Francis announced that there was to be a new ministry of Catechist and that the ministries (minor orders) of Lector and Acolyte were to be open to lay people on a stable basis.

- Historical and Global contexts



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# Historical Context

Each one of us has been given their own share of grace, given as Christ allotted it. To some, his gift was that they should be apostles; to some, prophets; to some, evangelists; to some, pastors and teachers; so that the saints together make a unity in the work of service, building up the body of Christ.

Ephesians 4:11-12 (see also 1 Corinthians 12:28 and Romans 12:7)

For centuries [many people] devoted their lives to catechetical instruction; some founded orders, others died as martyrs (AM 3)



# Historical Context

Worthy of praise are the ranks of men and women catechists, well deserving of missionary work to the nations. Imbued with the apostolic spirit, they labour much to make an outstanding and altogether necessary contribution to the spread of the Faith and of the Church.

In our time, when there are so few clerics to preach the Gospel to such great numbers and to exercise the pastoral ministry, the position of catechists is of great importance.

Ad Gentes 17



# Historical Context

St Pope Paul VI issued the Apostolic Letter *Ministeria Quaedam* (1973) which allowed the adapting of the ministries of Lector and Acolyte to changed historical circumstances (cf. *Spiritus Domini*), but also to encourage Episcopal Conferences to promote other ministries, including that of Catechist (and Porter, Exorcist).

AM 7 (cf also EN 73)



# Global Context

Pastors... know that they were not established by Christ to undertake by themselves the entire saving mission of the Church to the world. It is their exalted task to shepherd the faithful and acknowledge ministries and charisms so that all may serve the common task in separate ways.

Lumen Gentium 30 (AM 11)

Role of the Catechist in other parts of the world (e.g. Latin America and Africa) such as Estêvão Tomais in Angola.



# The Institution of Catechists - Ritual

The Lord Jesus Christ, before his return to the Father, commanded his disciples to preach the Gospel to the ends of the earth. Since the day of Pentecost, the Church, sustained by the Holy Spirit, has fulfilled this command faithfully in every time and place, handing on the faith by the words and example of countless witnesses. The same Spirit does not cease to enrich the Church with a variety of his **charisms** for the sake of the common good.

From The Roman Pontifical, draft English translation of the Institution of Catechists





# The Institution of Catechists

As sharers in Christ's office of Priest, Prophet and King, all the baptised take their own active parts in the life and action of the Church. Some of them receive a **particular vocation** to exercise ministries instituted by the Church.



# The Institution of Catechists

You, who **already devote** yourselves assiduously to the Christian community, are now called to the **stable** ministry of Catechist, so that you may live out the apostolic spirit more eagerly, following the example of those men and women who helped Paul and the other Apostles spread the Gospel.



# The Institution of Catechists

Let your ministry ever consist in a deep life of **prayer**, let in be built up in **sound doctrine** and animated by genuine **apostolic zeal**.

You will bring to the Church people who are perhaps distant from her; you will diligently work together in handing on the **Word of God**; you will continually foster a sense of the local Church, of which the parish is a single cell.



# The Institution of Catechists

As witnesses, teachers, and guides in the mysteries of the faith, **companions and instructors** in the name of the Church, you must associate your work with ordained ministers in various forms of the apostolate. As stewards of the mission entrusted to the Church by Christ, you must be always ready to give an answer to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you.

From The Roman Pontifical, draft English translation of the Institution of Catechists



# Instituted Ministries

Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales – working on a charter for the ministry of Catechist. Guidelines that will give instructions for:

- Call, discernment and selection
- Training and ongoing formation

Diocesan response will come from Archbishop John via the Agency.



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# Ministry of Catechist

The Charter draft contains these sections:

- Introduction
- Ministry of Catechist (identity, competencies and formation, rite and mandate)
- Vocation of the Catechist (invitation, institution)
- Bishop; Local Church; Responsibilities; Qualities; Discernment; Formation)



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# Instituted Ministries

Future roles of the instituted catechist

- From teacher to leader
- Relationship with Some Definite Service

Our parishes are changing and needs in are parishes are changing too. Might the role of the catechist from one supporting catechetical and formation programmes to one of more sustained community leadership be seen in our diocese?

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# A question or two

What do you think the benefits of having the stable ministry of catechist would be in the Archdiocese of Southwark?

How would we differentiate the Instituted Catechist with the typical parish catechist we have today? How might language need to shift?



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