



SPRED CORE TRAINING 2 - 1

Day 3

Contract for Catechists

- The importance of the catechist community as the foundation for the SPRED process

Parish: A Believing Church

- The context for the Revelation of and Faith in the mystery of God

Preparing the Environment

- The essentials and importance of a SPRED space – The Meeting Room and Celebration Circle

Preparation Process

- The rationale behind the Preparation Process
- Agape

**SPECIAL RELIGIOUS DEVELOPMENT
Archdiocese of Chicago**

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CONTRACT FOR SPRED CATECHIST COMMUNITIES

One of the most serious questions underlying the movement to develop SPRED communities is this:
Are persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities really educable in faith?

Superficial observation may tempt some to profound doubt. Research* and experience both support that they are educable in faith, if faith is seen as experiential, as the experience of the sacred, a sense of the church, a sense of Christ and a sense of God.

Everything thus depends on the faith tonality of the catechetical group of adults who provide the atmosphere for this experience. The common bond in faith that grows among them is the core education media for people with developmental disabilities. People with intellectual and developmental disabilities share the life of the group in varying degrees, but the burden of growth in faith falls primarily on the catechetical community.

For this reason, SPRED catechists participate in a Catechist Preparation session prior to each Total Community session. The effort is to be in communion with the deep mystery of life, the faith dimension according to the theme which will be the focus in the coming session with our friends with disabilities.

This shifts the style from a teacher – pupil pattern to growing together as a community of faith. Over a period of many years, as group after group experienced similar patterns of struggles and growth, an agreement or covenant was drawn up to facilitate growth.

The Catechists' Covenant to the SPRED Community

This agreement /covenant emphasizes the seriousness of our endeavor. This contract strives for high visibility, so that the group can put all the cards on the table. It sets forth for closest examination, of an approach that has been thought through in its goal, means, principles and its facing of group problems. This contract is an effort to respect you, your time, your faith life.

You are asked to examine it carefully. It recognizes that for many understandable reasons you might desire to agree or disagree. The group cannot settle to begin a serious task until all the members have examined the contract and have agreed to it.

Why Adults?

This contract subscribes to a catechesis of adults. All too often due to the pressure of time and due to adult's passion to teach children their religion, the emphasis of adult faith is bypassed. We submit that this is an error of major proportion. Religious education moves forward only when adults grown in faith. The adult faith community is primary so that others have a Christian community into which they can be welcomed.

Why the group?

You will be working with a small group of adults. Sound theology dictates that faith in the Lordship of Jesus will be found in a community of believers. The American experience and expertise in group dynamics are called upon to ensure the effectiveness of the group and the growth of the individual in it. The needs of the Christian today often call for smaller, more vibrant faith groups in a church that knows its catholic and universal nature all too well. Yet the group, like the individual, goes through growing pains. Group problems are outlined in the contract so that the group might be enabled to face them honestly when they arise.

Why the Faith Session?

If God speaks, it is in order to enter into the lives of persons, to save them and to win a loving response. Historically there is a shift in focus in religious education from the primacy of instruction (wherein the goal is the true) and from the importance of formation (wherein the goal is the good) to a more primary goal from which truth and value follow namely, initiation. Initiation is the process of advancing into a more and more interpersonal relationship with God, which by its very intimacy, is in some measure mysterious. When God speaks to us, it is to establish a life of communion. This life of communion is the experience of faith. From communion with God's presence in life itself, the truth will be known as personally meaningful and the good will be seen as personally valuable. This communion is the goal of the faith sessions.

MEANS

What are the means used in a Faith Session?

The process is known as symbolic catechesis or the *Method Vivre*. The French title, *Vivre*, is the one used by the method's originator Fr. Jean Mesny. In summary, the means used to prepare oneself to grow in faith are:

To unfold, to interpret life situations
Within a group
Through a symbol
In faith
In light of the Word
Moving toward communion
And witness.

PRINCIPLES INVOLVED IN THIS PROCESS

The symbolic process generally involves various phases. When a person settles down before a symbol, a call is received from the symbol itself. Becoming aware of how the symbol is calling, one must struggle to accept or to reject the movement of the symbol. This requires time. If the person decides to follow the movement of the symbol, a process of interior movement of entering into harmony with the symbol is accompanied by affectivity, feeling. If a person flees or protects self from this affectivity, the movement is destroyed. However, as the symbolic process is entered into, it leads the person, in the company of others, toward the deep of things where the Word of God can have a resonance.

The movement then is usually attraction by the symbol, a spontaneous response, moments of resistance, of struggle, acceptance, letting non-essentials drop, new awareness, harmony, joy.

This symbolic movement is mingled with the experience of faith. Faith, a mystery in itself as it is a gift, is not only an act of intellectual adhesion; it is a movement full of trust and love. It is a response of the whole person.

This movement is essentially free, dramatic, obscure, but leading to certain knowledge. It involves a turning (conversion), a dropping of non-essentials (purification), and the joy of new discovery (witness).

The core reality underlying everything is the life of the Trinity. This mystery at its deepest level is God himself. Through creation, the Trinitarian movement is given in a diffused manner in the universe. The transcendent God concentrates him immanence in Jesus. Through him, all life comes from and returns to the Father. Through his obedience of faith in the Father, expressed in his total openness to the experience of death and through the life of the Spirit poured forth in the resurrection, all reality is ultimately grounded in the risen life of Jesus. The inner core of any symbol ultimately touches this.

Through the mystery of the Kingdom, expressed in the Church, his new life is explicitly focused. In space and time, God calls each person to this life through the mysteries of covenant, salvation, election, sanctification and creation.

LEADERSHIP

Any group needs leadership. A SPRED group has tri-leadership, a leader catechist, an activity catechist and a parish chairperson. The leadership team has three functions; host, celebrant, educator. The ideal is that this threefold leadership will assist in creating a fellowship of believers who will be in communion with the presence of God in an awareness of life. In this sense, we subscribe to a shared and diffused leadership.

The function of host is to create an atmosphere of welcome and warmth so that persons will get to know one another, be more and more at ease and will lower their defensive barriers to each other. All

leadership team members share this role in a SPRED community. During the preparation session, the activity catechist in particular helps create a welcoming atmosphere and warmth. As host, the leader catechist presents the theme whereby the group is quieted, united interiorly and readied for a celebration.

The function of celebrant is to be in harmony with the core dynamic, the deep meaning of a life situation. The leader is to call the members into interiority and expression in view of this life situation, beginning thus with a concrete event, not from abstractions from the world of ideas.

The function of the educator is to stimulate the group to be aware of their own experiences and what is happening in each catechetical session so that it may be a more and more meaningful experience. The leader is to stimulate the group to reflect on the experience in the light of theology, pedagogy, as well as medical, psychosocial and personal data. As the group matures, lectures, readings, papers, bibliographies, etc. can be suggested to various members of the group.

GROUP PROBLEMS

The following problems sometimes emerge in this catechetical process. It is suggested that the group suspend the symbolic process to take time to face these problems if they appear. One meeting focused on an exploration of a group problem can free a group to return to the symbolic process with authenticity. The problems can gravitate around the leader, individual persons, or interactions in the group.

Leadership Problems

Overdependence on a leader

If the group suffers from overdependence on the leader, it will never arrive at mature fellowship. The leader's role is visible but the leader is to facilitate growth toward adult interaction and communion.

Domination by a Leader

Sometimes a leader might try to 'mother' or 'father' a group. The group must alert such a leader and help the person to "let go".

Personal Problems

Tyranny of the technical person

This type of person is closed to appreciating the world of the spirit and therefore the world of symbol. Such a mentality sees the symbolic process as esoteric, arty, overly feminine. Poetry, art, dance, music and silence make the person ill at ease. The western culture can produce this type of person.

Limitations of individual members

Lack of maturity, a closed mind, personality blocks, insensitivity to life, inability to communicate are some of the limitations that will block a full sounding of the mystery and fellowship. The group will move only as rapidly as the slowest member allows it.

Going it alone, apart from the adult faith community

Adult faith needs an adult community. No catechist can rely solely for growth in faith on his or her direct charges or disabled friends.

Threat of Self-Disclosure

There will be demands on every person within the group. You will be asked to be open about yourself. You will not be asked to reveal your past life or darkest secrets. You will be asked to accept others simply because they are, to encourage them to fulfill the contract, to positively respond to others in the group.

Process Problems

Inability to experiment

All the members of the group must participate wholeheartedly if it is truly to become church. Participation is learned by doing. Let there be a climate of experimentation. Members should not prejudice the experience by reserving their judgment or giving self-fulfilling prophecies. Participation will be enhanced by evaluation. Cooperation with one another must be reached. Let the reality have its emotional impact. Let language be colored by feeling.

Remaining on a superficial level

Sometimes members can sabotage the dynamics of the group and prevent the group from accepting the depth of the mystery. Often this will happen by a tacit understanding. Engaging in interaction is not easy. The forms of flight to be avoided are humor, silence and withdrawal, abstract interpretations, tacit decisions not to talk about certain subjects, cynicism.

Getting sidetracked from the primary goal.

The primary goal is the experience of faith before the mystery. Analysis, evaluation, theoretical discussions are benefits but are secondary.

SPRED Chicago 1987

**Paulhaus, Euchariste, L'Educabilite Religieuse des Deficients Mentaux, Emmanuel Vitte, Lyons. France, 1962*



PARISH - A BELIEVING CHURCH

The Context for the Revelation of and Faith in the Mystery of GOD

1. What kind of context does SPRED advocate?
 - i. A Program rooted in the parish/congregation, structure
 - ii. Groups whose characteristics are family –like, i.e.
 - Highlighting face to face
 - Unspecialized
 - Small number of people
 - With relative permanence and intimacy
 - iii. Who explore creational and relational experiences (the visible) while searching for other levels of meaning (the invisible) as they are **lived and celebrated** in the life of the wider assembly of believing people.
 - iv. Who place these experiences **in the light of the** (creative, summoning, saving, covenanting, sanctifying) **transforming WORD** as manifested in space and time in the history of a family, a people, a nation, a Person.
 - v. Who try to be the “consciously Christified portion”: in the world, **servicing** and recognizing ‘the beyond in the midst’, focusing on persons with developmental disabilities

2. What is the Church?

It is the Mystery of the people of God made one in the unity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

3. Is the Church the Kingdom of God”

Some would identify the Church and the Kingdom, more, today, would see the Church as an agent of the Kingdom: the Church is the minority at the service of the majority, working to bring the Kingdom.

4. What are some images of the Church?

Models of the Church by Avery Dulles, SJ

“The presence of God who calls the members to himself, sustains them by His grace, and works through them as they carry out the mission of the Church.”

Mystery

The Church is a mystery that the human mind is incapable of understanding. Use models to give us a better understanding.

“The Church is a mystery. It is a reality imbued with the hidden presence of God. It lies, therefore, within the very nature of the church that to always be open to new and ever greater exploration.”

Pope Paul VI, Opening address at the second Session of the Vatican II council.

“The mystery of the Church is not a mere object of Theological Knowledge; it is something to be lived, something that the faithful soul can have a kind of connatural experience of, even before arriving at a clear notion of it.”

Pope Paul VI, First Encyclical, *Ecclesiam Suam*

Church as an Institution

- Visible Society- Robert Bellarmine
 - Profession of the True Faith
 - Communion in the Sacraments
 - Submission to legitimate pastors
- Standard feature of Roman Ecclesiology from the late Middle Ages until the Middle of the 20th Century.
- Church of Christ could not perform its mission or minister effectively without stable organizational features.
- Helps to unite nation
- Powers and functions
 - Teaching
 - Sanctifying
 - Governing
- Boat to the shores of Heaven

Bonds of Unity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Profession of approved Doctrine • Participation in Legit Sacraments • Subjection to appointed pastors
Beneficiaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The members
Assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong endorsement of Church doctrine • Link between Present and Past • Strong sense of identity
Liabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lacks support from Scripture and early church • Clericalism • Juridicism • Obstacles to creative and fruitful Theology • Out of touch in today's society
SPRED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Archdiocesan Organization Model • Parish Chairperson

Church as a Mystical Communion

- Complete opposite from the Institutional Model
- Personal Faith
- Small Informal Interpersonal Community similar to a brotherhood/sisterhood
- A fellowship of persons with God and one another thru the Spirit
- Biblical images of communion
 - Body of Christ
 - People of God
- Church exists to bring people in Union with God not merely a vehicle to lead people to heaven
- Basic Communities in which ordinary relationships are healed and enriched by the common commitment to Christ and the Gospel.

Bonds of Unity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interior Grace • Gifts of the Holy Spirit • Transforming mystical union
Beneficiaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members seen in a spiritual sense • Those animated by faith and charity
Assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sound basis in scripture • Notion of Communion was essential for early Christian Communities • Fuels spiritual Renewal • Appealing to many people in Today's society
Liabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fails to give identity and mission • Fails to clearly address the relationship between the spiritual and visible dimensions of the church
SPRED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catechist Sessions

Church as a Sacrament

- Helps bring the institutional and mystical communion models together.
- A sacrament is a sign of Grace. A sign could be a mere pointer to something that is absent but a sacrament is a sign of something really present.
- Council of Trent- Sacrament is a visible form of invisible Grace.
- “If Christ is the sacrament of God, the Church is for us the sacrament of Christ; she represents him, in the full and ancient meaning of the term, she really makes him present. She not only carries on His work, but she is his very continuation, in a sense far more real than that it can be said that any human institution is its founder’s continuation.” Henri de Lubac
- “All sacraments are essentially sacraments of the Church. They are intrinsically social and derive their efficiency from the Church. They in turn build up the Church and make it the Sacrament that it is.” Henri de Lubac.
- “The Church is a kind of sacrament of intimate union with God and of unity for all mankind; that is, she is a sign and instrument of such union and unity.” Vatican II Constitution.
- Sacraments have a dialogic structure. They take place in a mutual interaction that permits the people together to achieve a spiritual breakthrough that they could not achieve in isolation. A sacrament therefore is a socially constituted or communal symbol of the presence of grace coming to fulfillment.

- The church appears most fully as a sign when its member are united to one another and to God through holiness and mutual love, and when they visibly gather to confess their faith in Christ and celebrate what God has done for them in Christ.
- Faith happens in community
- Offices and rituals of the church must appear as actual expressions of faith and love otherwise it would be an inauthentic sign of something not really present and therefore not a sacrament.
- God is the loving Father of all and all receive his Grace.

Bonds of Unity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All the social and visible signs of Grace • Grace comes to expression in them when they manifest their faith, hope, and charity by witness, worship, and service
Beneficiaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active believers
Assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relates institution and mystical communion models • Gives scope of divine grace without neglecting the visible church • Produces strong loyalty to church but makes room for criticism.
Liabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little warrant in scripture or early church tradition. • Insufficient place for service in church's mission • Defies popularization - difficult concept to grasp.
SPRED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SPRED Sessions • Evocation of the Human Experience • Liturgical evocation

Church as a Herald

- Word of God Primary. Sacrament Secondary
- Church gathered and formed by the Word.
- See Church as Herald: One who receives the Word and passes it on.
- The local church is not just a section or province or the Church, but it is the Church itself fully present in each assembly.
- Gospel not a system of abstract propositional truths nor a written document but an event of proclamation.

- Word seen more than a representation of ideas or source of information, but an expression of the person.
- Vatican II Constitution on liturgy: “Christ is present in his word since it is he himself who speaks when the Holy Scriptures are read in the church. He is present finally when the church prays and sings. When two or three are gathered. Constitution also addresses Christ’s presence in the sacraments.
- Pessimistic with regards to the possibilities of human efforts to establish a better human society.

Bonds of Unity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faith as seen in response to the Gospel • Unity of the church will be seen in the fact that they are responding to the same Gospel.
Beneficiaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those who hear and believe in the word of God
Assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good Biblical Foundation • Gives clear sense of identity and mission. • Word as Dialogue between persons
Liabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appears that Word did not become flesh. • dissolving of the Bible into a series of totally disconnected happenings
SPRED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biblical Evocation

Church as a Servant

- Only model that does not give primary and privileged position to the Church.
- God comes to the world through the Church and vice versa.
- Article 3 of the Vatican II constitution: “Just as Christ came into the world not to be served but to serve, so the Church carrying out the mission of Christ, must seek to serve the world by fostering the brotherhood of all people.”
- “So it is that the Church announces the coming of the Kingdom not only in word, through preaching a proclamation, but more particularly in work, in her ministry of reconciliation, of binding up wounds, of suffering service, of healing....And the Lord was the ‘man for others,’ so must the Church be a community for others.” Cardinal Cushing, Boston “The Servant Church” 1966

- The Church is the Church only when it exists for others. The Church must share in the secular problems of ordinary human life, not dominating, but helping and serving, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *“Letters and Papers from Prison.”*
- The world was passing the Church by, while the Church proudly assumed it had all the answers.
- Anglican Bishop John A.T. Robison argued that the Church is in a drastic need of stripping down the of its structure which can be an obstacle to the mission to be of service, the church must work within the structure of the world rather than build a parallel structure.
- Church mission not to gather more recruits but help men and women wherever they are.

Bonds of Unity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fraternity/Sorority that springs up among those who join in Christian Service to the world.
Beneficiaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All brothers and sisters throughout the World, who hear from the Church a word of comfort or encouragement, or who obtain from the Church a respectful hearing, or who receive from it some material help in their hour of need.
Assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can motivate the world to service • Dispels corporate egoism • Can give church spiritual renewal
Liabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of Biblical Foundation- does not seem to envision the task of the Church as service. • Term Servant can be misconstrued
SPRED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serves those with developmental disabilities by providing Catechesis

Conclusion

A balanced theology of the Church must find a way of incorporating all Models.

Must keep all model in perspective. Each model calls attention to certain aspects not brought out by the other.

Prophetic Voice #1 Fr. Peter Shannon

A Cursillo Talk given 9/24/68

I see the Church as a movement within the world community. The Church is or should be a movement of change within the world, an attempt to transform the institutional relationships within the world so that they can better express the relationships between people.

The Church is, or should be, a movement of truth within the world, challenging the world to see itself, in part at least, as a world of hatred, war, bitterness, property and bigotry.

The Church is, or should be, a movement of light within the world, a light which enables humans to see themselves in communion with one another, with all other be they socialists, Christians, Marxists or Buddhists.

The Church is, or should be a movement of freedom within the world. A movement to free humankind from irrational fears and oppression and injustice. In effect, the Church is a movement to free us - to love.

The Church then is simply Christ – Christ the Way, the Truth and the Light. The Church then is the risen Christ acting among and within human beings through his Spirit. Do we have Church today: Have we ever had Church: No, not really. We are always becoming Church. Becoming the Christ present to the World.

Where is Church today? Church is anywhere, where a group of Christians believing in Christ and trusting in one another are striving to move the world toward freedom and truth and justice. That is where Church is.

Where is Church today? Wherever there is a group of Christians who believe that nothing in the world is profane.

Where is Church today? The Church is anywhere a group of Christians come together to celebrate in liturgy what they are becoming and what they will and may become through the Spirit.

Where is Church today? Look around yourself, see for yourself. See where there is Church; and where there is unChurch. Look at your family, your parish, your diocese. Look to any group of Christians with whom you share and with whom you work. Look and decide for yourself.

For only you can answer in your world, in your environment, where Church is or is not.

*I see unChurch in those of us who sit back and let the institutional arrangements in our society continue to crush human beings, who remain unmoved as violence, bitterness and bigotry permeate our lives,; who reject those of other ethnic groups and religions; and who live in fear as injustice triumphs all around us. Whenever we as Christians allow these things to happen – there is unChurch. I see unChurch in so many areas, but I also see Church. Often we may find it hard to see the Spirit, to feel, to touch the Spirit, to feel its presence and understands its love. And yet we know, through faith, it is there. The church basically is a movement, the movement of Christ with the community of the world – **AND YOU ARE THAT CHURCH.***



ENVIRONMENT AND PREPARATION PROCESS

The Environment of a SPRED center and the process of preparation with the total community share common elements. Each is a support to the moment of catechesis in the celebration room. Each is capable of feeding the human spirit, preparing the way for the Lord's manifestation. Each holds implicitly the mystery of Covenant, Election, Creation, Salvation, and Sanctification. Each needs our attention and challenges us to be mindful of God's desire to be with us.

THE ENVIRONMENT

The Environment of a SPRED Center supports the goal of the catechesis. This implies that the environment has the potential to carry a message that it has the power to convey a spirit of:

Communion ~ Unity
Simplicity ~ Welcome
Respect

So that the potential of each can be maximized in view of the goal, care is given to the basic elements of the place for the SPRED community

Line ~ Space
Color ~ Light ~ Sound

The challenge for each community of faith is to become conscious of how the presence of God can be sensed in space where one feels:

Gathered
Called
Fully alive
Loved
Renewed

**The GOAL of
SPRED Catechesis is
communion with God
through the process of
Evocation within a group
in faith
in the light of the Word.**

**The process of
evocation calls us:
to live in the "within"
of a life experience,
to choose to respond,
to focus our attention**

**so that
we will be ready
to receive the message
of Jesus who
leads us to the Father.**

The PREPARATION PROCESS and the TOTAL COMMUNITY

The goal of the process of preparation is to become ready to enter into the evocation process, the process which leads to an explicit experience of the Sacred, Jesus present in the community and in the heart of each person.

This implies a process that helps each person to become focused, more able to listen, more able to receive.

Within the environment of preparation activities are available that encourage concentration and lead to an experience that fosters harmony.

Materials respect the age of persons within the group and act as an invitation to relate.

The challenge for each community of catechists is to choose to engage in personal work that has value only in relation to its capacity to prepare one's spirit for a new awareness of the gift of Life.

CORE TEAM RESPONSIBILITIES AND THE PREPARATION PROCESS

	Parish Chairperson	Activity Catechist	Leader Catechist
A room for preparation	X		
Funds to purchase materials	X		
Suitable furniture and basic equipment	X		
An environment equipped with suitable materials		X	
Catechists prepared to welcome persons with disabilities	X	X	X
A trained core team and a trained helper catechist for each person with disabilities	X		
Basic information pertaining to each person with disabilities	X		X
A person able to guide the community in the work of preparation for the total community session		X	

PHASES OF THE PREPARATION PROCESS

PHASE	ACTIVITY CATECHIST	HELPER CATECHIST	LEADER CATECHIST	PERSON WITH DISABILITIES
Greeting	Is ready to welcome each as he/she enters	Each is seated at a table with work	Assists AC in greeting each person	Is greeted by AC, LC and encouraged to greet each person
The choice of creative work	Is available to help each person in choice of work	Chooses personal work before Friend is welcomed	Chooses work when most of the community has been seated	Is encouraged to choose appropriate work
Resting in creative work	Is alert to encourage and to guide when necessary	Is encouraged by AC to focus and enjoy personal work	Needs to be free, to remain absorbed in work	Works independently whenever possible
Choosing a second or third work	Needs to be aware of each person and their needs	Only changes work when the personal need arises	Only changes work when the personal need arises	Often needs guidance
Invitation to finish work	Asks each person if they are ready to go to the celebration room	Is invited to finish work and join the circle for the silence activity, assists Friend if needed.	LC & AC confer regarding the readiness of the group	Is invited to finish work and come to the circle for the silence activity
The silence activity	Makes sure there is a place for each person in the circle, calls each by name to go to the celebration circle	Joins the circle and sits next to special friend	Begins the silence activity and then leaves to go to the celebration room	Comes to the circle, sits next to his helper catechist and goes to the celebration circle when he/she hears his name called

THE AGAPE

What is the Agape?

The agape is a special time of sharing that follows the sacred experience of catechesis. It is characterized by the sharing of food by the community and the sharing of joy and praise in the form of conversation and song.

Who prepares the Agape?

As the group assembles in the meeting room following catechesis each assumes some responsibility in preparing for the agape. The correct number of placemats, plates, tableware, glasses or mugs, napkins, candles, flowers are available (organized by the Activity Catechist) so that each person can have a part in preparing the table. Others help to arrange the chairs, making sure that there is a place for each person. The Chairperson assumes responsibility for the physical environment ensuring the suitability of furniture and equipment. The Activity Catechist makes sure that there is an adequate amount of food for all. He or she coordinates the work of the group to prepare the table.

Who leads the Agape?

The Leader Catechist assumes responsibility for group interaction during the agape. Each catechist is attentive to draw his/her special friend into the conversation and song.