





A Conference for Catechumenal Ministers and Pastoral Leaders









REGISTRATION BOOKLET

"The future of the Church
is in our hands. The NGCI
will give you a chance to
reimagine and renew pathways to Christian Initiation
ministry in your parish."

— Patricia Hughes, DMIN 2018 NGCI Team Member



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"Christian Initiation is important to the life of the Church. As we approach the 30th anniversary of the RCIA, it is my hope that initiation ministers will take Pope Francis seriously when he says, we 'cannot leave things as they presently are' (The Joy of the Gospel, 25)."

-Donna Eschenauer, PHD, 2018 NGCI Team Member

Mission

To promote the liturgical formation "of the faithful and also their active participation in the liturgy both internally and externally, taking into account their age and condition, their way of life, and their stage of religious development" so all the faithful may "become thoroughly imbued with the spirit and power of the liturgy."

-Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, 19, 14

Misión

Promover la formación litúrgica "y la participación activa de los fieles en la liturgia, interna y externa, conforme a su edad, condición, género de vida y grado de cultura religiosa", de modo que todos ellos "se impregnen totalmente del espíritu y de la fuerza de la liturgia".

- Constitución sobre la Sagrada Liturgia, 19, 14

Contact Us



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Letter from the Director



e at Liturgy Training Publications are excited to host the second annual **National Gathering on Christian**Initiation™. This event explores the theoretical and practical aspects of initiation ministry as it promotes the full implementation of the Rite of Christian Initiation of

Adults. As we continue to fulfill our mission by supporting and training ministers, we maintain our focus on the role of Christian initiation in the life of the parish and the life of the Church. Through the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, the essential mission of the Church is lived out in the making and baptizing of disciples.

This year's **National Gathering on Christian Initiation**™ invites participants to an appreciation of the inseparable bond between liturgy and catechesis in the initiation process. This event aims to respond effectively to the current formational needs of parish leaders, initiation ministers, and regional or diocesan trainers while providing an opportunity for deeper conversation focused on their needs and challenges in parish ministry and diocesan training and formation. We hope you can join us and encourage others to attend this second annual event as we gather catechumenal ministers and pastoral leaders from around the country to explore the vision of the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* and its implementation in the 21st Century.

Sincerely,

Deanna M. Keefe

Diamary

Director

Liturgy Training Publications



What Is the National Gathering on Christian Initiation™?

The National Gathering on Christian InitiationTM is an annual two-day conference for parish Christian initiation ministers and diocesan catechetical, liturgical, and evangelization leaders. Steeped in the vision of the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, the National Gathering on Christian InitiationTM seeks to promote the vision of the Church as constantly evangelizing, catechizing, and initiating disciples. Liturgy, evangelization, and catechesis are the foundational elements of the gathering. Throughout the conference, participants will explore the theoretical and practical aspects of initiation ministry, learn from interactive multimedia presentations, engage in prayerful reflection on the liturgies of the RCIA, and share their knowledge and experience with initiation ministers from around the country.



"The Emmaus Story sets my heart on fire for <u>all</u> ministry in the Church. It is a paradigmatic narrative in which Jesus models sacred listening as they tell of their experiences, and sacred instruction as he does a little theological reflection with them, and shares his insights from the scriptures."

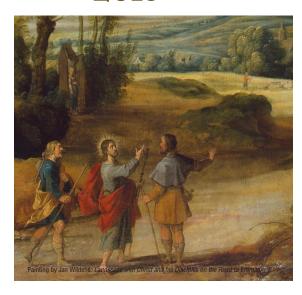
-Rev. David Loftus, 2018 NGCI Team Member



The National Gathering on Christian Initiation™ will have two tracks. Parish Leaders and Initiation Ministers will deepen and enrich their work as they gain practical skills, discuss common challenges, and share best practices. Regional or Diocesan Trainers will explore and discuss practical strategies for implementing effective training and formation in their local communities. The two groups will separate twice a day for deeper conversation and skills training as they focus on the needs and challenges of parish ministry and diocesan training and formation.

Theme: To Emmaus and Back: Liturgy and Catechesis 2018

The disciples who met Jesus on the road to Emmaus recognized him in the breaking of bread, but they first needed to be catechized. With their hearts and eyes opened by Scripture and careful teaching, they could see the Risen Lord. Then they joyfully raced back to Jerusalem to share the good news. Those involved in initiation ministry walk that same Paschal journey with catechumens and candidates year after year. The theme for the 2018 National Gathering on Christian InitiationTM, To Emmaus and Back: Liturgy and Catechesis, invites parish and diocesan leaders to reflect on this journey and on the essential bond between liturgy and catechesis, specifically in the process of Christian initiation. Those who attend the NGCI will be challenged to consider the ways in which "catechesis both precedes the liturgy and springs from it" (National Directory for Catechesis, 33).





Goals of the 2018 Gathering

- Participants will grow to appreciate the inseparable bond between liturgy and catechesis in the initiation process.
- Participants will understand the importance of mystagogical reflections throughout the catechumenal process.
- Participants will consider the ways in which liturgical catechesis forms the Christian community for mission.
- Participants will explore the skills needed to practice what Pope Francis calls "the art of accompaniment."



The schedule for the National Gathering on Christian Initiation™ has been intentionally formulated to offer an engaging balance of presentations, prayer, fellowship, discussion, and skills training. Twice a day, we will break into two smaller groups— Parish Leaders and Initiation Ministers and Regional and Diocesan Trainers—for an in-depth focus on the needs and challenges of parish ministry and diocesan training and formation. The optional opening reception on July 4 will offer the opportunity for networking and fellowship with initiation ministers from around the country.

Opening Reception July 4, 2018

7:00pm — 9:00pm • Opening Reception and Fireworks on the Riverwalk

Join us for a special opening reception in the Sheraton Fountainview Room, overlooking the Chicago River, with an open bar. After the reception, participants are invited to watch the Independence Day fireworks from the nearby Riverwalk. **Tickets are \$30.**

Day One July 5, 2018

8:00am - 8:50am • Registration

Check in and introduce yourself to other participants.

9:00am — 9:10am • Welcome, Introductions

Greetings, opening remarks, and introduction of the 2018 team.

9:10am -10:00am • Celebration of the Word and Catechesis

Reflecting on "To Emmaus and Back," Luke 24:13-35

10:00am −11:15am • Morning Session

Accompaniment and Relationship at the Heart of Catechesis

Just as Jesus accompanied the disciples on their journey to Emmaus, so are we to accompany inquirers, catechumens, and candidates on the journey of initiation. In this session, NGCI team members will encourage participants to use this Gospel as a model for how the baptized community is to enter into relationship with those who are seeking God.

11:15am-11:30am • Stretch Break

11:30am-12:30pm • Breakout

Parish Leaders and Initiation Ministers:

Workshop: Mastering the Art of Accompaniment

Building on the morning session, participants will explore the skills needed to practice what Pope Francis calls "the art of accompaniment" in *Evangelii gaudium*, 169. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we are invited to build strong relationships between the Christian community and the inquirers, catechumens, and candidates so they may encounter the living God on their faith journey.

Regional or Diocesan Trainers:

Discussion: Strategies for Diocesan and Regional Initiation Teams and Committees

This conversation will explore Pope Francis' idea of accompaniment at the diocesan and regional levels. During this time, diocesan and regional trainers will discuss strategies and best practices for developing diocesan and regional initiation teams and committees.

12:30pm − 1:30pm • Lunch

Continue discussions, network, or go for a walk along the Chicago River.

1:30pm − 3:00pm • Afternoon Session

Initiation Catechesis: Gradual and Complete, Dogmas and Mystery

The wisdom of RCIA 75.1 is that this is to be a gradual process. What is catechesis in the catechumenate supposed to look like? Why and how does it need to be "accommodated to the liturgical year?" What is a "profound sense of the mystery of salvation," and how do we instill it in the catechumens and ourselves? NGCI team members will present a vision of what this extended time of formation and instruction looks like.

3:00pm − 3:30pm • Coffee Break

3:30pm − 5:00pm • Skills Training Workshop

RCIA 75.1 Catechesis Accommodated to the Liturgical Year

This skills workshop invites participants to think outside the box. Working in teams, participants will design sample catechumenal sessions that engage and benefit the whole community. While focusing on RCIA 75.1, each team should also consider the other three aspects of catechumenal formation found in paragraph 75: the life of the community, liturgy, and apostolic service.

5:00pm − 7:00pm • Dinner on your own



7:00pm — 8:45pm • Evening Session

Presenting the Vision: The Bond between Liturgy and Catechesis

The Catechism of the Catholic Church states, "Catechesis is intrinsically bound to every liturgical and sacramental action" (1074). This evening, participants gather for a firsthand experience of how catechesis both precedes a liturgical celebration and springs forth from it (see National Directory for Catechesis, 33).

8:45pm-9:00pm • Night Prayer

We pray for God's pardon, peace, and protection throughout the night.

Day Two July 6, 2018

9:00am — 10:00am • Morning Prayer & Mystagogical Reflection

10:00am − 11:15am • Morning Session

Were Not Our Hearts Burning: Becoming Mystagogues

Mystagogy is the art of "breaking open" the Paschal Mystery. The two disciples on the way to Emmaus realized their hearts were ablaze when in Christ's presence. Like them, we must recognize the flame of Christ's presence in our lives and fan it into Gospel living. As mystagogues, we teach the newly baptized and those preparing for Baptism to recognize that flame and keep it burning. In this session, we will ask: Why is mystagogy important? What are the skills of a mystagogue? How do you identify, train, and utilize mystagogues in the parish community? How do you incorporate mystagogical reflections throughout the initiation process? In the parish community?

11:15am - 11:45am • Coffee Break

11:45am — 1:00pm • Breakout

Parish Leaders and Initiation Ministers:

Workshop: How to Prepare and Facilitate Mystagogical Reflections

Inquirers, catechumens, candidates, and neophytes are led to "a fuller and more effective understanding of mysteries through the Gospel message" that they are discovering during their faith journey (RCIA, 245). This workshop will present the practical skills needed to prepare and facilitate mystagogical reflections that will lead to a deeper understanding of and communion with the Paschal Mystery.

Regional or Diocesan Trainers: Workshop: Training Parish Leaders to become Mystagogues

"The mystagogue . . . leads the neophytes 'into the divine mysteries,' [and] helps neophytes open their eyes to their experience[s]" (Mary Birmingham, *Year-Round Catechumenate*, 129). This workshop will provide pedagogical tools and strategies to help diocesan leaders train parish initiation leaders.

1:00pm — 2:00pm • Lunch

Participants have the opportunity to continue discussions, network, or go for a walk along the Chicago River.

2:00pm — 3:30pm • Afternoon Session

Liturgical Catechesis in the Parish Community

If the Eucharistic liturgy is truly the source and summit of our lives and the lives of our communities, what is the role of liturgical catechesis in our parishes? "The liturgy is . . . the privileged place for catechizing the People of God" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1074). What do we need to consider when teaching *from* the liturgy, not only *about* the liturgy?

3:30pm-3:45pm • Stretch Break

3:45pm-4:45pm • Breakout

Parish Leaders and Initiation Ministers:

Workshop: Liturgical Catechists and Catechetical Liturgists

The General Directory for Catechesis states, "The practice of catechetics testifies to a weak and fragmentary link with the liturgy" (30). The catechumenal process provides the parish community with a great opportunity to explore the liturgical year, symbols, texts, music, gesture, and Scripture, but who is responsible for it? How do we make sure it does not get lost? In this workshop, we will consider the collaborative and complementary ministry of liturgists and catechists.

Regional or Diocesan Trainers:

Discussion: Effective Methods of Collaboration between Diocesan Offices

Too often diocesan offices find themselves working in silos, yet there is so much intersection possible within diocesan ministry. This discussion will provide diocesan and regional trainers the opportunity to identify and discuss effective methods of collaboration between diocesan offices of worship, faith formation, evangelization, and the continuing formation of clergy.

4:45pm — 5:00pm • Closing and Prayer

The 2018 NGCI Team

Each year, a different team of presenters will work together with an LTP representative to plan the major presentations and breakout sessions of the event. Team members have been invited not only because of their understanding of the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* and the Church's mission of evangelization, but also because of their vast parish and diocesan experience. As a true collaboration, the individual gifts and ministerial experience of each team member will shape the NGCI experience.



Donna M. Eschenauer, PhD has served in pastoral ministry for more than twenty-two years in the Diocese of Rockville Centre, New York, as a religious educator, liturgist, and director of the catechumenate. Currently she is associate dean and associate professor of

pastoral theology at St. Joseph's Seminary and College in New York, where she teaches "RCIA: Theology and Practice," among other courses. She is the author of *The Role of the Coordinator in Christian Initiation: A Pastoral and Practical Guide* (LTP, 2017) and has had several articles published in *Pastoral Liturgy*® and *Catechumenate: A Journal of Christian Initiation*.

Why is the National Gathering on Christian Initiation™ important?

Christian initiation is important to the life of the Church. As we anticipate the thirtieth anniversary of the RCIA, it is a special opportunity to come together and renew our enthusiasm for the Church's vision of the Rite.

Why is "now" the time to reinvigorate and invest in the process of Christian initiation?

As we approach the thirtieth anniversary of the RCIA, it is my hope that initiation ministers will take Pope Francis seriously when he says, we "... cannot leave things as they presently are" (The Joy of the Gospel, 25). We need to look at the Rite with a new enthusiasm and recognize how we can implement it according to its original expectation.



Patricia Hughes, DMIN, began her ministry in the Church as a parish organist. She earned an undergraduate degree in elementary education, a master of arts in pastoral theology from Loyola University (Chicago), and a master of divinity and a doctor of

ministry from the Catholic Theological Union (Chicago). She has served as director of music ministry and liturgy in Ohio, Indiana, and Pennsylvania, and has taught undergraduate and graduate students. Currently the director of the office of worship for the Diocese of Dallas, she previously directed the worship office for the Diocese of Grand Rapids (Michigan), and served as director of worship for the Cathedral of the Assumption (Louisville, Kentucky). She serves on the boards of the Southwest Liturgical Conference (FDLC Region 10), Sacred Liturgy Ministries (Portland, OR), and Mayslake Ministries (Chicago). She is a member of the North American Academy of Liturgy, and the National Association of Pastoral Musicians. Dr. Hughes writes "Worship Meeting Agenda," a regular column in *Pastoral Liturgy*, published by Liturgy Training Publications.

Why is it necessary for diocesan offices to collaborate in the ministry of Christian initiation?

Wherever the responsibility for the RCIA process rests in a diocesan plan, catechesis and worship should not only shake hands, but they need to be hugging each other to shape the RCIA process for their parishes. The benefits for evangelization can increase exponentially if there's a rich, collaborative spirit that the diocesan offices initiate.

Why is the National Gathering on Christian Initiation™ important?

There are only three reasons to miss the second annual NGCI in Chicago this July: if you have evangelized everyone in your parish, if everyone in your diocese has perfected mystagogical reflection, and if you are weary of vibrant, practical, life-giving presenters for the RCIA process.



Fr. David Loftus is pastor at Our Lady of Lourdes Church in Northridge, CA. He served for ten years at the archdiocesan office of religious education as coordinator for adult faith formation and for both basic and advanced catechist formation. A graduate of

both All Hallows College, Dublin, and Boston College, Fr. Loftus has a passion for working with adults engaged in exploring their faith. He has presented at conferences and consulted with parish staffs and diocesan offices in the United States and abroad. His ministry continues to be informed and shaped by his experiences at national, diocesan, and parochial levels.

How does the story of the Journey to Emmaus rouse your heart and spark your imagination around initiation ministry?

The Emmaus Story sets my heart on fire for <u>all</u> ministry in the Church. It is a paradigmatic narrative in which Jesus models sacred listening as they tell of their experiences and sacred instruction as he does a little theological reflection with them, and shares his insights from the scriptures. Lived human experience is brought into conversation with the faith tradition of the travelers on the road, and it leads, ultimately, to the recognition of the real presence of Jesus in our lives. In turn, the fears of the disciples are banished, they get back on the road, even though evening approaches, and they make their way to the Upper Room to proclaim the truth they have come to know with certainty. They simply can't contain themselves. They themselves have been brought to a deeper conversion, a deeper turning of their hearts into their relationship with Jesus. As they share this experience, their ardor, their passion, ignites the flame of faith in others who hear them.

Listening to the stories of those who journey in faith to the point of entering the catechumenate is always a humbling and hugely enlivening experience. My own faith is fanned into flame and my spirit refreshed and renewed as I listen to fellow pilgrims narrate their life's experience in light of their experience of God's saving power at work in their lives.

What is your greatest joy in initiation ministry?

Sharing stories of lived faith, inviting people to join me in the font, pouring oil on those being confirmed.



Michael Ruzicki is the training and events manager at Liturgy Training Publications and the director of music for Notre Dame de Chicago Parish. Before arriving at LTP five years ago, he served as a team member of the North American Forum on the Catechumenate, a

parish pastoral associate for liturgy and, for the Archdiocese of Baltimore, as coordinator of adult and sacramental formation and director of the archdiocesan music ministry. He is the author of *Guide for Training Initiation Ministers: An Introduction to the RCIA* (LTP, 2018).

How would you describe the relationship between liturgy and catechesis?

What are we talking about when we consider vibrant liturgy? A solid proclamation of the Word, a lavish use of our symbols, intentional ritual gestures, dynamic preaching, spirit-filled music, a comfort with prolonged silence, and an authentic sense of welcome and hospitality. Now add an assembly that has spiritually prepared for the liturgy and reflected on its impact and meaning following its celebration. How can this not catechize? It is crucial for those in parish leadership and initiation ministry to maximize on the inherent bond between catechesis and liturgy. If the catechist asked, "how can I be more liturgical" and the liturgist asked, "how can I be more catechetical" and the pastor provided the resources and atmosphere for this plan forward, they would be working together to form disciples for today's world.

What are you looking forward to at the National Gathering on Christian Initiation™?

After last year's NGCI, I'm looking forward to another "Emmaus" experience with fellow initiation ministers—a chance to share stories, walk together, interpret the Word, and break bread together. Like the two disciples who encountered Jesus after his resurrection, the NGCI provides me with the excitement and nourishment to continue the journey of ministry. How many other opportunities do we have to gather with "RCIA folks" from all around the country? I look forward to hearing how others are doing things in their parishes: How are liturgies celebrated? What does catechesis look like and feel like? How are they keeping hearts aflame?



Travel & Accommodations

Location

The 2018 **National Gathering on Christian Initiation™** will take place at the Sheraton Grand Chicago Hotel, located one block west of Lake Michigan, overlooking the Chicago River in the heart of the city. Easily accessible by bus, train, or car, the Sheraton offers Chicago visitors a prime location within walking distance of Chicago attractions such as Navy Pier, Michigan Avenue, Grant Park, Buckingham Fountain, the Art Institute, architectural river tours, shopping, dining, and entertainment.

Hotel Information

A limited number of hotel rooms are available at the Sheraton Grand Chicago for a specially discounted rate of **\$154.00** per night. This rate is available for those who book before May 28, 2018, for the evenings of July 3rd–July 6th.



Sheraton Grand Chicago

301 East North Water Street Chicago, IL 60611 www.sheratonchicago.com

Phone: (312) 464-1000 Check in: 3:00 pm Check out: 12:00 pm

To reserve a room at the Sheraton Grand Chicago Hotel, please call 312-464-1000 and mention NGCI, or visit https://www.starwoodmeeting.com/Book/NGCI2018.

Directions

To / From O'Hare International Airport

GO Airport Express Shuttle*

Single one-way \$34.94 Single round trip \$64.94

Pair one-way \$25.94 per person Pair round trip \$23.97 per person

The shuttle service from O'Hare International Airport for the downtown hotels departs every 10 to 15 minutes. Sheraton guests save 15% on shuttle service. Call 1-888-284-3826 and mention code word: Sheraton.

Taxi service \$35-\$40 UberX \$32-\$41 Lyft \$26-\$32

Blue Line Train:

24-hour service; cost is \$2.50 one-way per person (from O'Hare a \$5.00 premium fare applies); travel time to downtown is 40 minutes; exit train at **Lake/Clark**. The hotel is approximately a 20-minute walk or \$5.00 taxi ride from the train station. For more information visit: http://www.transitchicago.com.

To / From Midway Airport

GO Airport Express Shuttle*

Single one-way \$29.94 Single round trip \$52.94

Pair one-way \$21.94 per person Pair round trip \$37.94 per person

The shuttle service from Midway Airport for the downtown hotels departs every 20 minutes. Sheraton guests save 15% on shuttle service. Call 1-888-284-3826 and mention code word: Sheraton.

Taxi Service \$25-\$40 UberX \$23-\$29 Lyft \$20-\$26

Orange Line Train:

Hours are 5:15am to 11:30pm; cost is \$2.50 one-way per person; travel time to downtown is 25 minutes; exit train at **Lake/Clark.** The hotel is approximately a 20-minute walk or \$5.00 taxi ride from the train station. For more information visit: http://www.transitchicago.com.

All prices are approximate and subject to change without notice.

Bus and railway options are also available. The Greyhound bus station, Megabus stop, Grand/State CTA station, Union Station, Clark/Lake CTA station, and Ogilvie Transportation Center are all located within two miles of the hotel and are easily reachable by taxi. Discounted parking is available at the Sheraton. Cheaper parking options may be found at nearby garages. For more details and for driving directions, visit www.NGCI.org/travel.



Extending Your Trip

Welcome to the Windy City

Festivals, concerts, art, comedy, and baseball—the summer sun glistening off Lake Michigan and tourists gathering in Millennium Park. There is no better time to visit Chicago than the summer. Scheduled to follow the Fourth of July weekend, and featuring discounted rooms at the Sheraton Grand Chicago from July 3 to July 6, the National Gathering on Christian Initiation™ offers the perfect opportunity to extend your trip to the Windy City and enjoy all that Chicago has to offer.

Attractions

- Millennium Park
- 360 Chicago at the John Hancock Building
- Navy Pier
- Lincoln Park Zoo
- Willis Tower Skydeck
- Architecture Tours

Museums

- Art Institute of Chicago
- Adler Planetarium
- The Field Museum
- Museum of Contemporary Art
- Museum of Science and Industry
- Shedd Aquarium

Comedy

- The Second City
- iO Theater

Festivals (6/28-7/10)

- Chicago SummerDance
- Millennium Art Festival
- Maxwell Street Market
- Millennium Park Summer Film Series

Sports

- Chicago Cubs
 - Cubs vs. Detroit Tigers at Wrigley Field on July 3 and July 4
- Chicago White Sox
- Chicago Sky
- Chicago Fire
- Chicago Red Stars

Concerts (6/28-7/10)

- Dave Matthews Band
- Radiohead
- Styx / Joan Jett & The Blackhearts with special guests Tesla
- Millennium Park Summer Music Series

Theater (6/28-7/10)

- Hamilton
- The Cher Show
- Waitress
- Heartbreak Hotel
- Bible Bingo
- Late Night Catechism

Catholic Churches

- St. Mary of the Angels
- St. Hedwig
- Holy Name Cathedral
- St. Hyacinth Basilica
- St. Stanislaus Kostka Church
- St. Clement
- ...And many more!



Join us in the Windy City!





To Emmaus and Back: Liturgy and Catechesis 2018



Register by May 11, 2018, to guarantee your spot!

Name	
Address	
City State Zip	
Parish Role	
Phone Indicate: Home / Cell / Work	_
E-mail Address	
Indicate Dietary Restrictions or "None"	
How did you hear about the NGCI?	
I am registering for the:	
Parish Leaders and Initiation Ministers Track Regional or Diocesan Trainers Track	
\$250 Individual Registration, by May 11, 2018. Includes lunch for July 5th & 6th.	
\$30 July 4th Opening Reception and Fireworks on the Riverwalk. Optional. Includes hors d'oeuvres and open bar.	
To reserve a room at the Sheraton Grand Chicago Hotel, call 312-464-1000 and mention NGCI, or visit https://www.starwoodmeeting.com/Book/NGCI2018.	
To register, please complete and return this form with a check payable to: Liturgy Training Publications Attn: NGCI 3949 South Racine Ave. Chicago, IL 60609	

To register online, visit: www.NGCI.org. Registration terms and conditions are available at www.NGCI.org/register/register.

Contact us at ngci@ltp.org or 773-579-4900, ext. 3532 with any questions.